

# Making urban excreta and wastewater management contribute to cities' economic development: a paradigm shift 🛒

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Cities, as engines of economic growth and social development, require large quantities of natural resources to meet their inhabitants' economic and social needs. Good infrastructure and reliable service provision are key to sustaining cities' development. In this regard, they enhance investment opportunities and service access to vulnerable populations. In response to the lack of sanitation infrastructure, many governments, development agencies and NGOs usually implement programmes to provide latrines to poor and vulnerable populations. These programmes often do not link infrastructure provision and its necessary management requirements. As a result, the majority of 'latrine-based' cities do not have a reliable solution for emptying latrines, and for the transportation and treatment of faecal sludge and wastewater. When these infrastructures are available, they are disconnected from business opportunities which use resources such as water, nutrients or biosolids for their productive activities. This lingering failure in sanitation is putting a huge financial burden on municipalities who have to rely on permanent subsidies to operate and maintain infrastructures. The recent WHO guidelines on safe use of wastewater, excreta and greywater opens doors for reuse opportunities other than agricultural irrigation. It is leading towards a new paradigm. This paper discusses research needs to link urban sanitation management to cities' economic development agenda.

**Keywords:** [Business in sanitation](#), [Excreta](#), [Faecal sludge](#), [Resource recycling](#), [Sanitation planning](#), [Wastewater](#)

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