Southern Punjab is a neglected place having very limited access to sanitation facilities. The situation of sanitation and hygiene is very bad and it is a major cause of diseases especially among children. People are not aware of using good health and hygiene practices to shun illness.

Sanitation marketing is an emerging concept in Pakistan to fulfill the demands of sanitary items and facilities in different areas at the door step of beneficiaries. The main aim is to make possible the availability of good and low cost sanitation solutions in remote areas. Sanitation marketing uses social and commercial marketing approaches to manage the demand and supply chain for sanitation facilities. It markets the sanitation products and services in an attractive manner through which the customers can purchase/use sanitation products and services.

Muslim Aid, a committed NGO started a WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) related project by using Pakistan Approach towards Total Sanitation (PATS) in 100 villages of Koat Chutta, Dera Ghazi Khan. DFID was donor and UNICEF was monitor in the project. The project was based on two main areas, first community mobilization activities and second sanitation marketing solutions by motivating local shopkeepers to become an entrepreneur to fulfill the sanitary need of local community.

It was a big challenge to start and establish a new business in area like Kot Chutta, Dera Ghazi Khan where people did not consider sanitation as a business. It was a tough task to agree shopkeepers to enter in a new business for the sake of their own people and benefit for themselves. To counter the hurdles in the way of sanitation marketing a comprehensive
sanitation marketing strategy was developed by sanitation marketing specialist of Muslim Aid under the kind supervision of project manager. The strategy was written after conducting a quick market assessment in target areas.

Field visits were done to get the firsthand knowledge about the location and common trends in the targeted area. The main focus of this field study was to know Details of current businesses in the selected villages, availability of existing sanitary products and services and where does the community go to buy sanitation products? Answers of these questions helped a lot in shaping sanitation marketing strategy.

After completion of marketing strategy, the next step was to discover energetic and active people who want to be entrepreneur and ready to start sanitation business in their respective areas. Around fifty entrepreneurs identified and shops were selected using guidelines and selection formats. Conducting training activity was another step in sanitation marketing process. Different marketing strategies and tools were discussed with participants.

A big challenge was to agree the trained entrepreneurs on establishing sanitation business and invest in it. Sanitation Marketing Specialist tried to convince entrepreneurs to start sanitation business without any support. Discussions with some trained entrepreneurs were fruitful for starting sanitation business by utilizing their own means. Now three sanitation enterprises are established in three union councils of Koat Chutta. A big achievement is that these enterprises have linked three to four sanitation marts with them. These outlets are helping communities by providing them sanitary items along with building material to construct latrines. It’s a good sign and highly appreciated achievement to sustain the sanitation activities.
“Best thing in starting sanitation business is that I am helping my community to prevent from diseases.”

Sanitary Entrepreneurs M Yousaf from Village Faqeer Wala.

“I thought selling sanitary items is a useless activity and cannot give much profit but with the help of Muslim Aid my sanitary business is growing.”

Sanitary Entrepreneur Muhammad Mosa from Village Kalay Malay.

“Muslim Aid has opened new opportunities of business in the area. I am happy with my extra earning through selling sanitary items.”

Sanitary Entrepreneur Abdul Jabar from Village Jamal Wala.