

A collaborative efforts towards making Defence colony a Zero-Waste Zone

It only needed the awakening of a community to bid riddance to rubbish, simply showing that community can bring a big difference in the environment. But it needs to be mentioned that the success so far has not come easily. It is the result of intensive efforts from every stakeholder associated with the program.

Working closely with the issue related to toxics and waste, Toxics Link is an organization, which has been delving into research and taking the responsibility of disseminating information and creating awareness amongst all the stakeholders. Apart from these, policy advocacy has been the biggest challenge, which this organization has consistently battled on.



The joint initiative of Defence Colony, A-Block and Toxics Link is mainly a result of the widening gap between the services rendered by municipalities and the burgeoning problem of waste in cities. The problem of filth around the overflowing community dhalaos has been prevailing in this colony. In spite of bringing it to the notice of the concerned departments, it remained unattended. Taking the program in a broader perspective, Toxics Link aimed to develop a demonstrable Community Based Zero waste Management model for managing solid waste in a sustainable manner through capacity building and awareness raising of all stakeholders. Driven by the interest of the RWA, MCD-Central Zone, a crucial stakeholder also extended their support to the endeavour.

Initially, the community showed reluctant attitude in participating in the program but gradually, every member was mobilized. Toxics Link, in partnership with RWA conducted a series of awareness and training workshops for the residents and the waste collectors in order to sensitize and build capacity of the stakeholders. Because of the availability of land, the initial phase of the project intended to cover 500 households of the total 1000 households. Though door-to-door-collection of waste existed through waste collectors employed by the RWA, there was no practice of segregation. The waste collectors would collect mixed waste or they would mix up even if some residents handed over segregated waste to them and dump into the community dhalao. The organic waste was simply treated as filth.

The initiative has brought a great significance today with 30% of households segregating waste and handing over in an unmixed form source. Also the waste collectors are capable of segregating on the rickshaw itself if the waste are mixed. Not only this, the community does not waste the organic waste any longer. Compost pits have been constructed within the colony where the waste collectors dispose the organic waste. Toxics Link provided training on composting to the collectors and today, they are independently composting. The coordinator of the program from the association has also been abreasted with the method for carrying out monitoring over the work of the collectors. Approx. total 350 Kg of wet waste generated from 500 households is managed daily. Not only this initiation has helped in getting rid of the filth in the community, but it has also helped in supporting livelihood of the waste collectors through sale of recyclables, which are recovered through segregation.

The strength of the initiative lies on the active involvement of the RWA members, especially Ms. Shammi Talwar who have kept a strict vigilance on the waste collectors and the compost turners. Apart from, full cooperation of the residents who are educated through meetings and distribution of information materials has contributed hugely in achieving the success so far. Inspired by the success of the initiative, the association has resolved to extend the program to the whole of A-Block covering 1000 households. In fact, the federation of Defence Colony has also up scaled the program to the whole colony.

A small initiative taken up in Defence Colony has been able to create a ripple effect. Its impact does not confine only in the community, but this has resulted in reducing quantity of waste taken to landfills, which is of great significance as landfills are exhausting in Delhi. Besides, it has created a support to livelihood for the

waste collectors. This initiative can be taken as a model for any community willing to make a difference in society.

Estimated Cost Analysis of SWM in 500 households of middle-high income group:

Establishment Cost (In Rupees)		Recurring Cost (Rupees) Monthly		Revenue Generation (Rupees) Monthly	
Elements	Cost (Rs)	Elements	Cost (Rs)	Source	Amount (Rs)
Two rickshaws @ Rs.6, 000/ rickshaw	12, 000	4 Workers @ 4375/worker (Distribution of the monthly user fee)	17, 500	User fee @ Rs 35/HH	17, 500
Digging of 4 pits required for sustaining the programme @ Rs.750/pit of (6x4x3 cubic ft in size)	3, 000	2 bottle of EM solution @ 210/bottle & 4 Kg Jaggery @ Rs.24/Kg	420+96 = 516	Sale of compost	3, 000
Construction materials for 4 pits	12, 000	Monitoring cost	500	Average sale of recyclables @Rs.50/worker/day (Additional earning of waste collectors)	6, 000 (Rupees 1, 500 per worker)
Pit construction labor cost 4 @ Rs. 500 /pit	2, 000	Labor cost for the worker (Turning & Sprinkling)	500		
Equipment cost: (Barrel, spade, fork, ganti, bucket, mug, spring balance, jute and plastic sheet) Apron, gloves and 1 pair boots	5, 000	Sieving cost @ Rs.500/ month	500		
Capacity building of workers	5, 000	Incidental cost	500		
IEC materials	5, 000				
Total	44, 000		20,016		26,500

➤ *This model is for the middle income group community where the private door to door waste collection is already into practice and the monthly user fee and income through recyclables directly goes to the waste collectors*

Note:

- In order to make the project self sustained the cost like (Monitoring, Labor and Sieving) should be born by the waste collectors as all earning through monthly user fee and by selling the recyclables directly goes to the workers or they themselves should perform these activities
- On the other hand, since RWA is the owner of the manure so they will be bearing the monthly cost of EM solution & jaggery and Incidental cost
- Estimated cost of organic cost: Rupees 10/Kg

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