

**Community managed primary collection of solid waste***Shahid Mahmood, Pakistan*

PRIMARY COLLECTION OF solid waste is perhaps the most vital component of solid waste management strategy. In Pakistan the Municipalities /local council's are responsible for the delivery of this service. In spite of their best efforts Municipalities are failed to provide this service upto the satisfaction of the local residents. The situation is going to be worst due to the high population growth and rapid urbanisation.

Faisalabad is the third largest city of Pakistan with an estimated population over 2.0 million. As per recent survey a considerable proportion of the population is living in Slums and Katchi Abadies.

Faisalabad Municipal Corporation FMC is responsible for the management of solid waste in the city. The city has been divided into 140 Municipal wards for its administrative control.

For the management of solid waste, the city has been divided into two zones i.e. North and south Zone. Each zone is headed by a chief medical officer. The system is being operated through a hierarchy of chief sanitary Inspector , Inspectors and then Supervisors.

Solid waste management problems / issues at primary level

CAP field investigations / visits identified a number of problems in prevailing system of solid waste management. These issues are associated at all stages of service i.e. house waste collection, sweeping service, filth depots and transfer points, waste collection and transportation to ultimate dumping sites.

We restrict our discussion to the problems /issues related to primary collection only;

- Majority of the household are not satisfied with the quality of service rendered by the municipal sweepers and most households have to pay illegally for the service to these sweepers.
- Presently Municipal Corporation do not charge any waste collection tax from the residents, so the sanitary workers are not supposed to be responsible for door to door collection of waste.
- Many households are removing the waste from their homes themselves or through domestic servants, But in most cases there is no formal and convenient collection point to which waste may be taken / dumped.
- Due to non availability of collection points and poor collection service from the FMC, The private sweepers, households and even the sanitary workers often dump waste on vacant plots scattered throughout residential areas.
- Solid waste dumps in developed areas are usually on 'Public' land for which there is no clear ownership and responsibility.
- Over 80 per cent of the total sanitation budget is just spent on the salaries of the staff.
- The work force involved in the primary collection represents more than 80 per cent of all Municipal Employee.
- The open deposits of waste on the ground, often left for several days before removal, provides a natural growth place for flies and related health issues.
- There is no formal role of the community in the present system.
- The sanitation staff is deputed as per political will and hence not rational distribution.

Table 1. Total budget allocation for sanitation and establishment expenditures

Year	Total Sanitation Budget (Rs.million)	Establishment expenditures (Rs million)	% age of the total Budget
1995 - 96	109.15	91.59	84.00 %
1996 - 97	125.90	103.90	82.50 %
1997 - 98	141.84	116.97	82.50 %
1998 - 99	155.10	126.10	81.30 %
1999 - 2000	165.23	145.13	87.80 %

- Weak law enforcement against the polluters.
- No treatment of municipal solid waste is carried out at any stage even at disposal site except informal sorting by scavengers.

A successful experience

A system of primary collection of solid waste is successfully operating in Liaquat Town Faisalabad by “Liaquat Town Welfare Society” a community based organisation which emerged to address community level issues. To run the system the society worked through the following steps;

- Formulation of Community based organisation in the area.
- The issue regarding collection of solid waste was discussed with all the residents of the area.
- A consensus was drawn from the residents of the area on the issue.
- After getting agreement from all the households planning was done by the society members.
- A committee was formed to supervise the work.
- Before the start of the collection system, cleanliness campaign was arranged by the society and the majority of the household took part in that campaign.
- Due to unreliable service by the municipal service, the executive committee decided to hire private collector who will be accountable to the society.
- All the residents were motivated by the committee to keep their waste inside their houses not to throw the waste in the streets / open plots.
- It was also decided that for this purpose each house will pay Rs. 25/- per month for this service and payment will be made directly to the collector within first week of each month.
- The collector was directed strictly to dispose off the waste at the transfer point not in other places nor in vacant plots.

- The system is operative successfully for the last three years and the process is monitored for further improvement.

CAPs findings

This experience demonstrate the following key points,

Strengths

With this initiatives the society is now;

- confident and empowered enough and started demanding other services for their area from the government departments.
- More clear about the role and responsibilities of the line departments.
- Politically more awared.
- Monitoring of the service provided by municipal staff.

The way forward

The experience shows that the grass root level institutions (CBOs and NGOs) can be the best alternative to run the primary collection of solid waste in a cost effective and efficient manner.

For this purpose these NGOs and CBOs should be strengthened through training's and also provided with legal authority to perform their role in a better way in the existing system.

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