

## NGOs: A New Allegiance towards Solid Waste Management

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### Introduction

Non-Governmental Organization are explained & defined as “classified organization which conduct and chase activities to ease sufferings, endorse the interests of deprived provide essential communal services or undertake community development”. In wider usage, the term NGO can be applied to any non-profiting organization which is independent from the government. NGOs are value based organizations which depend on charitable donations and voluntary services. Though the Non

Governmental Organizations sector has become gradually more specialized over the last two decades, ideology of unselfishness and voluntarism remain key defining characters.<sup>1</sup> They have the specialized man power and technical know how to implement their objectives. Thus, they can be the best source to improve the management of waste generation. It is estimated that, in India there are approximately 1.5 million NGOs working different causes. Therefore, the government of India has issued its National Policy on voluntary sector and the main object of the policy is to encourage,

enable and empower an independent, creative and effective voluntary sector, so that it can contribute to the social, cultural and economic advancement of people of India.<sup>2</sup> The World Bank defines Non Governmental Organizations as classified organization that trail activities to alleviate distress, endorse the interests of the underprivileged, guard the environment, provide basic societal services or undertake community development.<sup>3</sup>

The public sectors in many countries are unable to deliver waste management services effectively, resulting in uncollected waste on roadsides and in other public places. Hence, there is an urgent need and opportunity to involve the private sector, civil society organizations and communities in waste management. There is increasing evidence of successful participation of community and civil society organizations in MSW management. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil societies in India have recently started to get involved in improving waste management services. NGOs may help in the building up of capacity of people or community groups to help them play an active role in local SWM by contributing to their awareness of waste management problems.

The numerous non-governmental organizations are functioning in the area of solid waste management. For example, Clean Ahmadabad Abhiyan, Ahmadabad; Waste-Wise, Bangalore; Exnora, Chennai; Mumbai Environmental Action Group, Mumbai; Swabhiman, Bangalore, Vatavaran and Srishti in Delhi; CDC, Nagpur Vishal Protection Force in Old Faridabad and so on.<sup>4</sup> These organizations are successfully creating awareness among the citizens about their rights and responsibilities towards solid waste and the cleanliness of their city. These non-governmental organizations support ecological edification and consciousness in schools and involve communities in the management of solid waste. By and large, the major programmes that NGOs undertake are:

1. Creating mass awareness, ensuring public participation in segregation of recyclable material and storage of waste at source;
2. Providing employment through organizing door-to-door collection of waste;
3. Organizing rag pickers into a professional sanitation workforce;
4. Ensuring public participation in community based primary collection system;
5. Encouraging minimization of waste through in-house backyard composting, vermicomposting and biogas generation;
6. Creating awareness among citizens their right to live in a clean environment, and responsibility to keep the environment clean.

#### **Important NGOs working for solid waste management in different part of India are as follows**

- I. This study highlights the activities and services of Shuddham, an NGO functioning in the town of Puducherry within the Union Territory (UT) of Puducherry in South India. Shuddham was formed by a group of local residents to improve waste management services by initiating source segregation and adaptation of sustainable recycling and composting practices. To accomplish this, they had to gain the confidence of the municipal body and work closely with the local community to change patterns of waste disposal. Puducherry, dealing with the Heritage Town section formally known as Raj Bhavan ward. Unlike private individual contractors engaged for the same services, waste management undertaken by Shuddham followed a set of well defined policies under an organizational set-up with the objective of achieving a 'clean and green environment'.

The organization was formed in 2002 by a few local residents, who mobilized the rest of the community and took up the responsibility of managing the waste generated in the ward. The project was implemented with funding from Puducherry municipality. A team of 30 members: A manager, a supervisor, 24 female sanitation workers known as 'beautifiers' and four residents-formed the core of the project. The priority for sanitation workers was to collect segregated waste at the source, at the household level, and to minimize the waste sent to the dump yard. A key focus was education; they carried out regular waste management awareness campaigns for the residents, including education individually imparted at their doorsteps.

One of the first initiatives of the implemented programme was to remove the outdated concrete rings (bins) in the streets where residents had previously thrown their garbage (zero-bin approach). Because household waste was being picked up door-to-door, there was no need for these community bins. Removing the rings was done to prevent the residents from continuing to throw their mixed garbage into the rings, thereby bypassing the segregated collection. Removal of

the rings had multiple benefits: it created healthier living conditions for people by removing the cattle menace on the street as well as disease-bearing pests, such as rats and mosquitoes. It contributed to the development of tourism activities by providing clean, litter-free streets.<sup>5</sup> It is a successful story of Indian NGOs governing management of waste and clean India.

- II. There is another NGO named KWAMS (Khaba Waste Management System) in Imphal, Manipur. They collect waste from the ward no. twenty three only within the civic areas with the perceptiveness of Workers' Union Manipur. They also accumulate from the government and public offices and institution. They mostly cover the region outside municipality. Every household is not subscribed to the respective NGO. In ward no twenty four and twenty five the main markets and other commerce/commercial establishment subscribe to the four NGOs who cover two wards each and also earn revenue. Collection is done daily. Local clubs and meirapaibees (women's organization) also extend social services especially during some strikes of the municipal workers.<sup>6</sup>
- III. The non governmental organizations, Vatavarana & Toxic Link have organized local collection systems in twenty nine residential colonies in Delhi where waste workers collect, segregate and process waste locally.<sup>7</sup> The environment NGOs study along with University of Sussex-based STEPS centre and Centre for Studies in Science Policy, JNU, recommends decentralization of waste collection. Toxic Link is also engaged in implementing a solid waste management in one middle income GROUP settlement in Delhi, in order to get first-hand experience and knowledge regarding the factors that pose hindrances in upscaling decentralized community-based waste management programmes. It has been also, actively campaigning on the issue of safe management of e-waste in the country through various researchers, reports and awareness building exercises.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, Vatavarana's model 'zero garbage area' is a decentralized employment generating, low investment, labor intensive, resident friendly and land fill sites. It has set up many 'Cleaning Brigades' in low, middle and high income residential localities, education & bazaar sector and resettlement

colony etc with the help of communities. Cleaning Brigades manage solid waste for at least 2.5 million residents in Delhi.<sup>9</sup> It operates along simple and sustainable lines. The garbage is collected from door to door, at a nominal charge of Rs. 60 per month per house. Out of which, the biodegradable waste is used for making organic compost through the pit system and sold at ₹5 per kilogram. The money collected through the scheme is distributed back to the workers in form of pay. The cleaning brigades manage garbage for a maximum number of people without using heavy vehicles, loaders, machines or plants.

## Conclusion

The elementary aim is to act as medium in bringing about national, local & intercontinental initiative and community participation in overall development in quality of life. It would also assist the administration to attain significant information for promoting and facilitate the implementation/execution of key environmental programs. That the collaboration of NGO's government and community is the imminent need of the hour. The NGOs are the watch dogs of the environmental issues. The Multi-sectoral harmonization convergence & holistic and sustainable development can only be accomplished with active participation of non-governmental organization. That the NGOs should also be able to partake in or influence the making of policy decisions.

It would not be wrong if the municipalities coordinate with other local civic bodies, NGOs and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). They should also undertake phased program to guarantee community participation such as meetings at regular interval with local resident welfare associations, etc. NGOs can also develop recycling units and generate resource. They can become entrepreneurs and this can lead to employment generation and monetary betterment of the province. The non governmental organizations can also make extraordinary contribution in the management of municipal solid waste.

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