



*Figure 1: Waste collectors dumping segregated wet- waste in the container at the entrance of Mula Road for PMC to collect*

# A STORY OF COMMUNITY MANAGING THEIR WASTE AT MULA ROAD-8, PUNE CITY

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**MULA ROAD**, one of the biggest slums in Pune city, comes under Ghole Road administrative ward. The slum comprises of about 1200 households and about 6,000 people.

As Sangeeta Tai, a resident of the area, took me around the slum, that is inhabited by several families, living in small single- storeyed houses, built close together.

It was amazing to see that inspite of being an urban slum, where the houses are knitted together; the area is cleaner in comparison to many other slum- pockets.

As we walked down the street to the compost pits, I was further amused to find the waste collectors, collecting waste from each and every household, even though it was raining. To my further surprise, the waste collected was segregated by the families themselves.

As we proceeded towards the compost pits, we met Kanta Bai, an elderly lady, who stays in Mula Road since 45 years. She expressed her opinion regarding the slum and the program by CHF India Foundation.

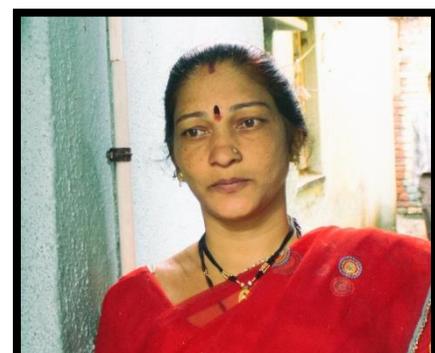


*Figure 2: Kanta Bai, a resident of Mula Road- 8*

The 'vasti' used to be very dirty. All the residents threw garbage out on the road. I could never imagine that such a difference can be brought about. It is wonderful that you have started the activity to get the area clean. Everyone must segregate the waste and give to the women who come to collect them. This must be done in all the slums.

Sangeeta tai, who also works as an outreach worker of the project on community- led solid waste management, further mentioned that this was not the scenario a year ago. A year ago from now, the residents threw the waste from their houses in open dumping areas. Abandoned piles of household garbage, bags of yard waste, appliances, old barrels, used tires, and demolition debris such as lumber, shingles, pipes and asbestos can threaten the health of humans, wildlife, and affect the environment as a whole. As a result of this, the health condition of the residents deteriorated day by day.

To make the area cleaner and with an aim to generate awareness among the residents of the slum, CHF India Foundation, with the support of Crisil Foundation and in association with Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), started a community- driven solid waste management program in Mula Road. It was formally launched on 9th April 2015 at Mula Road.



*Figure 3: Sangeeta Tai, an outreach worker*

To quote Sangeeta tai, “earlier, the families did not want to give waste to the waste collectors. They would go and dump them in the container or on the road. This resulted in a foul smell all around the slum. After a lot of intervention, now 440 households segregate the waste, give them to the waste collectors, and also pay Rs. 30 per month to the waste collectors as remuneration for collecting waste from their houses. Most of the people have understood the importance of segregating waste. We are trying to cover all the 1200 households under the project”.



**Figure 4: Compost pit in Mula Road**

Her words made me more and more inquisitive about the whole project, the compost pits and the way waste segregation is done.

The compost pits, developed by the project are structures that can be room to 40 kilograms of wet waste, which will then be produced into compost product after 45 days. In the compost unit, four such pits are there.

The project reaches out to 400 households in Mula Road, from where approximately 140 kilograms of wet waste is generated. This wet waste can be brought to the pit and a manure of 140 kilograms can be prepared.



**Figure 5: Door to door waste collection done by waste collectors**

A year ago, when CHF India Foundation initiated the project, the community members threw the waste in the open areas, outside their houses, dumped them in corners of the streets. In spite of the efforts of Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) of door to door waste collection system, the residents were dissatisfied as the services were irregular.



**Figure 6: Waste collectors, waiting for PMC car, after segregating waste**

It took quite some time to generate awareness among the people regarding solid waste management. Focus group discussions were conducted focus involving the slum residents, including men and women. Through the focus group discussions, an attempt was made to understand the existing situation of Solid Waste Management, level of awareness on waste segregation, regularity in waste collection services and establishing compost plant at slum level. CHF India Foundation also conducted baseline survey for the purpose of waste audit and presented to the community for better understanding,

The community people were made aware that they need to give waste to the waste collectors, after segregating them into wet waste and dry waste. The waste collectors can dump them, after further segregation to the respective dump yards. The wet waste will be dumped in the waste pits,



**Figure 7: Transportation of waste to the compost unit**

where compost will be made of the waste. The dry waste will be dumped in the container, which will then be carried by the PMC.

After a whole year of awareness generation and working closely with the community, at present 440 households are giving segregated waste to the waste collectors, who then carry out the process of dumping wet waste and dry waste in respective dumping pits.

CHF India Foundation formed a committee of women from the community, consisting of 10 women, who motivate the community people regarding segregation of dry and wet waste through door to door visits with waste collectors and by organizing pocket meeting with the community to ensure their effective participation. Additionally, awareness generations programs have been conducted with the community and a system of door to door collection of segregated waste has been set up. CHF India Foundation has created a facility for composting of organic waste to demonstrate that a decentralized waste management is possible where community takes the lead.



*Figure 8: Meeting of members of women's committee*

The committee members meet once in two weeks, and discuss the progress made by the community members, in segregating waste. They play a vital role in motivating the community members in segregating waste and give them to the waste collectors. They are also involved in putting the waste in the compost pits and have been trained how to prepare compost.

The waste collectors are the pillars of the project. In any climate, one can see these four women, in their gloves and masks, collecting segregated waste from the households in the area, segregating them and then dumping the dry waste in the container of PMC, while they take the wet waste to the road and deport it to the truck carried by PMC.

A discussion with one of the waste collectors, revealed their zeal for the work. Lata Londe, a waste picker working in the community, recalls the previous days, when they did not get any community support and no one would appreciate her work. “Sab kachra baahar phekte the; kisiko pata nehi tha kachra humko dena hai. (Everyone threw the waste out on the road. No one knew that they should give waste to us). Nowadays, they segregated waste and give it to us. We also earn Rs. 30/- per month from each house as remuneration. With this, there has also been a rise in our monthly income.” Even in heavy rainfall, the waste collectors are seen working in the community from morning. Apart from a little extra income, they also like being a part of the initiative. As I was waiting with Lata Tai on the road, the truck of PMC arrived to collect wet waste.



*Figure 9: Lata Londe, a waste collector*

Gulab Sk., who is the driver of the truck and two waste collectors, Sunil Kenger and Rajendra Kotey stepped down, collected the wet waste, dumped them in the truck and halted for a break. After a brief introduction, we discussed about the system of waste collection, over a cup of tea.

They mentioned that PMC has segregated the area of operation into teams, each comprising of two waste collectors and a driver. They cater to two wards of PMC, Ghole Road Administrative ward and Shivaji Nagar ward. They start their journey at 7 am from Bhola Road, collect waste from the whole area of Shivaji Nagar and then come at Mula Road. They collect waste in two trips in a day and have to work for 26 days in a month. In a day, they collect approximately 4 tonnes of waste from both the wards.



Figure 10: Discussion with PMC waste collectors



Figure 11: Waste Collection by volunteers of Crisil Foundation and the photo below is painting messages on walls



Crisil Foundation, apart from being a partner in the project of community- led solid waste management, are also involved in volunteering activities in Mula Road. From collecting wastes, segregating them and dumping them in the pits to prepare compost, the volunteers from Crisil Foundation, have been an active part in the activities of the project.

## STEPS FOLLOWED



Focussed group discussions with community

Formation of women's committee and imparting trainings to them waste management

Awareness generation of community members on segregation of waste

Initiate door to door segregated waste collection by waste collectors

Prepare compost in the pits



*Women's committee members decorating the area with Rangoli where open dumping took place earlier*