

CLEAN STREETS FOR DHAKA CITY

Our clean streets program was a pilot project for waste management. We installed publicly accessible waste bins to help keep the streets and public spaces of Dhaka City clean.

Keywords:
Public Space, Advocacy, Environment, Community, Waste Management, Urban Health

Project Partner:
Work for a Better Bangladesh Trust

Location: Dhaka City,
Bangladesh

Duration: 12/2014 - ongoing

Target Issue and Target Group

Dhaka city has a waste management system for household waste but trash cans are not available for people in public spaces. So people ended up instantly depositing their litter in the streets, which is helping to ruin the aesthetic beauty of Dhaka City. Moreover waste deposited in this way results in stopping the water from rains from properly draining causing immense suffering for urban residents.

The project targeted all citizens who live in Rayerbazar district of Dhaka, which was the pilot area. Stakeholders such as the local ward commissioner, community members, local businesses, school authorities and students are actively took part in our activities.

In the initial pilot, we reached approximately 45,000 people who live in Rayerbazar. With the expansion of the pilot, to all areas of the city, every resident can now use the new waste bins, which is approximately 8 million people.



As part of the project cleaning campaigns were held to raise visibility of the issue to be dealt with.


Strategies Employed within Project


Work for a Better Bangladesh (WBB) engaged in a diverse campaign that involved research, facility improvements (waste bins), community outreach, and advocacy to clean the streets of Dhaka City.



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Activities

Research: prior to commencement of the program, conducted a mapping study to determine possible locations for the waste bins.

Meetings with Government Officials: We prepared a proposal and had face-to-face meetings with officials of Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC).

Improvement of Facilities: We installed 20 waste bins in the pilot area in order to determine if people would use the waste bins and if they could be properly emptied by the city. This allowed us to see how successful the project would be as a way of convincing other communities. The installation is easily replicable in other areas at very little cost.

Community Engagement: We organized a Clean Up Day campaign wherein WBB, local residents, and local businesses went through the community and picked up trash. To ensure proper use of the waste bins we conducted further awareness campaigns once the bins were installed.

Advocacy: We disseminated the results of the pilot to Dhaka North City Corporation and Dhaka South City Corporation. We used the results to advocate for the program to expanded to the rest of the city.

Preliminary Results

Both Dhaka North City Corporation (DNCC) and Dhaka South City Corporations (DSCC) worked with us on this project. DNCC has since installed 3000 more waste bins in its constituent area. DSCC has installed 2000 similar types of waste bins in its area. People are now using waste bins and as a result the amount of litter in the streets and public spaces has decreased.

Impact

The amount of garbage in the streets has decreased. However, several unanticipated challenges emerged. Some waste bins were stolen or removed from the pilot area. In addition, household waste is frequently thrown in these waste bins though they are meant to be exclusively used by the public. So we are trying to educate people through awareness activities such as talking with community members, distributing information materials, announcements by microphones, murals and other awareness raising activities.

Take-away Messages from the Project:

- Identify the problem and the solution properly. By conducting research initially we were able to identify the proper spacing and placing of the waste bins. For future such initiatives we should have further sought the input of community members in order to address at the beginning the challenge of community members wanting to use the waste bins for their home trash.
- Prepare a specific proposal and workplan for the project. This helped us convince local government officials of the merits of our program.
- Ensure involvement of city officials and the community. Involving the community and officials in the campaigns supported the success of the event and will assist us in addressing the challenges.


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