



Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, is home to 18 million people. It generates more than 10,000 tons of solid waste every day, with 120,000 people employed to gather and process it.

Household garbage goes through the following waste collection process:



Figure 1: Waste collection process (BIGD, 2015)

Waste collection is a lengthy process, in which roles are often differentiated by age and gender. Collection of waste from the streets, dustbins, drains, rail and bus stations is mostly done by children, while women are involved in sorting, cleaning and grading at bhangari (scrap collecting and recycling) shops. Men are involved primarily in transportation, bailing, crushing, and machine operation.

Our goal

To develop a model for safer lives and livelihoods of people who work with waste in Dhaka city.

Our approach

We worked with people who work with waste, and their communities, to identify their needs and set up five community platforms to function as central points for service delivery.

Basic healthcare services were provided through health camps. Awareness sessions were conducted to raise awareness on vital issues, including safe management of waste, hygiene, financial inclusion and road safety. Water, sanitation and hygiene blocks were established to increase access to sanitation facilities, and personal protective equipment was distributed.

Voices from the community

“I was suffering from high blood pressure for a long time. Regular check-ups and medication are costly, so I could not continue them. I consulted with a physician from the health camp, and I am now regularly taking medicine, free of cost. It is a relief that we can continue seeing doctors through the health camps.” – **Minara Begum, a waste collector from Beltola Korail (an informal settlement)**

“Attending the awareness sessions at the community service centres has been a great way to listen to stories about things that matter. I learnt that touching unknown things can make me sick. I also learnt the rules of the traffic signals and zebra crossings in the city. The stories taught me how to tell a good touch from a bad touch”. – **Bonna Akter Taslima, an attendee of the children’s awareness session**



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The *Bandhan* (Connection) project

The life cycle of waste in Dhaka



Risking lives to keep the city clean

People who work with waste face health risks and unhygienic and hazardous work environments. In addition to existing vulnerabilities due to low incomes, people often lack access to basic services such as safe drinking water, education, housing, healthcare and nutrition, and sanitation facilities. Ensuring a better environment is challenging, as there is no formal group, organisation or cooperative to negotiate their working conditions.



What is the Bandhan project?

BRAC Urban Development Programme, in partnership with the Coca-Cola Foundation, is implementing a pilot project to target the wellbeing of people working with waste in Dhaka. 3,500 people are receiving a tailored service package delivered through community service centres. This project is titled as Bandhan.

Partners

Local city authority
The Coca-Cola Foundation



Implementation strategy

- Collaborating with local city authority, community development organisations, local waste recycling entrepreneurs, and non-government organisations such as Primary Waste Collection Service Providers.
- Using door-to-door surveys to target workers living in the most vulnerable situations.
- Formulating a community action plan through a participatory approach, to identify:
 - › Suitable locations for water, sanitation and hygiene blocks and community service centres
 - › Community needs, through field assessments

- Encouraging behavioural change, through:
 - › Awareness sessions for waste workers
 - › Awareness sessions for children of waste workers
 - › Distribution of personal protective equipment and hygiene products
- Improving the wellbeing of people working with waste, through:
 - › Construction of water, sanitation and hygiene blocks
 - › Establishing health camps with free-of-cost consultation and medicine
 - › Establishing community service centres

In numbers (January 2021 – December 2021)

- **3,500** people have access to improved living conditions in **13** communities
- **5** community service centres established
- **8** water, sanitation and hygiene blocks constructed
- **120** awareness sessions conducted on safe management of waste, hygiene and financial inclusion
- **200** awareness sessions arranged for children on road safety, hygiene, good touch and bad touch
- **25** health camps ensured access to consultation services and medicine free of cost
- **10,500** personal protective equipment and 70,000 hygiene products distributed

Duration

January 2021 – December 2021

Locations

13 low-income informal settlements in Dhaka North and South City Corporation including Dholpur, Maniknagar, Shohidnagar, Korail Sonar Bangla, Korail T&T Satellite, Korail Boubazar, Korail Jamaibazer, Sattola East, Sattola West, Korail Beltola, Vashantek, Duaripara, and Kallyanpur.

