

First Global Strategic Workshop of Waste Pickers: Inclusive Solid Waste Management

Pune, India 2012



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Summary Statement – Purpose and Outcomes

From April 27-29, waste pickers from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe participated in the Global Strategic Workshop in Pune, India. This workshop was hosted by KKKPK, a trade union of waste pickers in Pune, and SWaCH (an autonomous waste pickers' cooperative) on behalf of the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers with support from WIEGO and the Inclusive Cities project.

The workshop's objectives were:

1. to develop a common understanding across continents of terms and concepts such as integration and inclusion, regulated and formal, public, private and public-private partnerships, etc.
2. to share details and analyses of SWM models, including logistics, genesis, roles and responsibilities, revenue, technical and political realities; and advantages/disadvantages of various models
3. to discuss current and emerging threats and global trends toward models that exclude waste pickers, including examining the genesis and reasons/rationale for these trends, and the arguments against them
4. to examine policies and legal provisions that enable inclusive or exclusive SWM models
5. to explore actual or potential advocacy efforts that can enable inclusive models and ensure their sustainability

Representatives in attendance came from waste pickers' organizations across India and in Argentina, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Indonesia, Madagascar, Mali, the Netherlands, Nepal, Peru, Senegal, Serbia, South Africa, the Philippines and Uruguay (a full list of participants is included in the Appendixes). The workshop offered them a chance to share their realities, their challenges and their solutions, and to formulate new ideas. In addition, allies and supporters from WIEGO, GAIA, WASTE, and MIT were at the workshop to facilitate and learn from the discussions.

Considerable time was spent describing and discussing various models of inclusion, and what's working in different circumstances. Concurrent with the workshop, interviews were conducted with select participants from different regions, and case studies or snapshots of how waste is handled in their location were developed. These will be made available soon.

In exploring threats to their livelihood, the waste pickers found considerable common ground, and determined that the greatest threats across all continents are privatization of access to waste (and the related move of final waste disposal systems toward incineration and waste-to-energy schemes)



Group photo at Pune 2012.

and government corruption. The need to rely on middlemen rather than selling directly to industry, declining prices, and a lack of adequate equipment and space to do the work were also identified as challenges.

Discussion on solutions focused on the need for waste pickers to be recognized and included in solid waste management systems. To achieve this they need strong, democratic organizations, improved relationships, especially with municipal bodies, adequate research (e.g. financial figures) to help frame arguments for inclusion, and more visibility for the important work of waste pickers. As often happens, some of the most important conversations took place off the record, as waste pickers from different places talked through their realities, shared their knowledge, and forged bonds.

What emerged in the workshop most clearly was the need for more communication and knowledge sharing at the global level and among local groups, so that waste pickers can benefit from the experiences and creative solutions of each other, while building an international sense of solidarity. At the concluding meeting of the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers to determine future directions, a clear definition emerged of the alliance as a knowledge base and tool for facilitating the integration of waste pickers in a profession recognized as vital worldwide. However, it was stressed that while the Global Alliance should serve as a uniting force, the focal point for advocacy and action will continue to be the local, national and regional organizations.

Find more information:

Information about the workshop and the participating organizations can also be found in the May 2012 Alliance of Indian Wastepickers (AIW) newsletter, available at <http://globalrec.org/2012/05/27/aiw-newsletter-may-2012/>

You can download this report at <http://globalrec.org/global-meeting/global-strategic-workshop-waste-pickers-pune/>

This narrative report was made by Leslie Vryenhoek (WIEGO), revised and edited by Chris Bonner, Federico DeMaria and Lucia Fernandez. Designed by Pablo Rey Mazón (Basurama).

Report of Workshop Proceedings

Advance Field Visits



Field trip visit with the SWaCH waste team.

To set the stage for discussions on the integration of waste pickers into municipal systems, participants in the workshop were taken on a guided tour of the integrated and decentralized solid waste management (SWM) system utilized in the Pune municipality. Participants saw informal waste pickers who are organized through KKKPK, the waste pickers' union, at work. Through a contract between the Pune Municipal Corporation and KKKPK's affiliated cooperative, SWaCH, the workers are contracted to do door-to-door collection, segregation, waste disposal and composting. The tour included visits to two composting sites where wet waste is turned into valuable natural fertilizer and used in gardens and flower beds on a university campus and the grounds of a research facility using various methods. Dry waste sorting sheds and the cooperative fair trade scrap shop run by KKKPK were also visited, as was a biogas facility. The process was narrated by guides, and participants were invited to ask questions of the workers to ensure the fullest ability to learn from the experience.

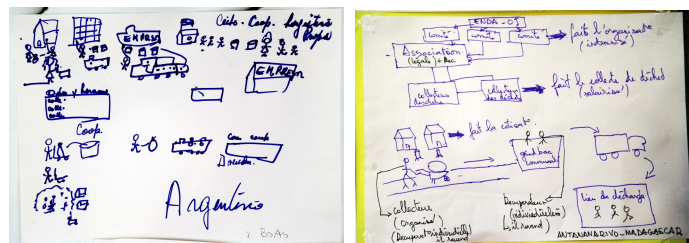
Day 1 – April 27, 2012

Opening a Space for Solutions

Anne Scheinberg, an invited guest of the organizers from WASTE in the Netherlands, opened the conference. Noting, "There is something about working with waste that is dark and heavy," she shared her own dark moment. She then invited the assembled waste pickers to draw the moment when each thought, "I really need help, I need a partner so we can offer solidarity to each other." The waste pickers were asked to tell their difficult story to someone sitting nearby, and then to discard their drawing in a bag that was passed around.

"Why are we doing this?" Scheinberg said. "We are making space inside for solutions."

Sharing the Various Models



The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC)/SWaCH partnership model of waste management, which most workshop participants had already witnessed firsthand during field visits, was sketched out and explained. Then workshop participants were asked to draw a schematic of the solid waste management flow in their municipal area – how the waste moves, who handles it (formally and informally), and what forms of revenue change hands.

Pictures of these drawings are posted on the GlobalRec blog: <http://globalrec.org/2012/04/28/drawing-from-drawing-waste-picker-models-session/>

Participants then broke up into geographic groups – Asia, Africa and Latin America (Europe was represented only by Serbia) – and discussed their drawings, offering information and answering questions on the systems in their cities. What emerged were a number of shared commonalities and challenges, which were presented back to the group on Day 2.

Day 2 – April 28 2012

Sharing the Realities and Challenges from the Regions

The second day of the workshop opened with presentations from each regional group on what common realities and challenges they had discovered through sharing their models the previous afternoon.

See next pages for:

- Africa
- Serbia
- Asia
- Latin America



Africa

Commonalities

Everyone is relying on the middleman instead of selling directly to recycling industry.

Most sell recyclables.

In most African countries, waste pickers don't deal with organics (Egypt is one exception – here, Zabaleen collect wet waste for pig feed; in Mali, organics are sold to farms.)

In Mali and Madagascar, there are some similarities to the integrated Pune system, but in most of Africa there is little integration.

Many different types of work, many different words: those who collect materials, those who collect and sell recyclables. It's important to know who does what type of work.

Challenges

Contracts with private companies are squeezing out waste pickers.

Foreign companies make contracts with middlemen not waste pickers (Cairo).

Need to know how to properly build associations/unity among waste pickers or reinforce the existing associations.

No relationship exists between those who create garbage and those who collect/recycle waste.

There is a lack of organizational development to get waste pickers across Africa under one umbrella and networking.

In francophone Africa, there are different names for those who engage in different parts of the system, rather than one umbrella term as used in English; this can complicate pan-African communication.

There is little knowledge yet about how to work with organic waste.



Serbia (Cacak City)

Challenges and Opportunities

The history of organizing waste workers is very short and there is limited knowledge on how to proceed.

Prejudice is strong against waste workers, who come from a very low position in life.

The collectors are not organized, they mostly collect from the containers or landfills, which is against the law.

They are mostly collecting metals and some cardboard, paper and plastic.

Serbian waste workers are not yet collecting organic waste, but there is a system for collecting organic waste in Cacak and a local man who is helping waste pickers get involved. There is great potential; this is a step forward.

Across Balkan countries, waste is still publicly managed by municipal corporations.

They fight for health protection and they pay a lot of attention to education and keeping children away from waste collection. Stopping child labour in waste collection is one thing they have been able to achieve in Cacak (but not throughout Eastern Europe).

While hard hit by economic difficulty, nations and municipalities must still meet EU requirements related to amounts of waste sent to landfills, toxic waste, etc. This opens opportunities for waste pickers to be integrated.

There is not the kind of pride in waste picking that he is seeing at the workshop, and he wants to take home the materials and t-shirts that others have brought so he can show people at home.



Miroslav Mitrovic of Cacak, Serbia.



Asia

Commonalities and Disparities

High levels of poverty exist in this sector.

Children are involved in waste picking (this is mitigated where strong organizations exist, as in Pune).

A significant number are women, though the gender balance differs widely between countries.

Levels of integration are low. Discrimination and poverty are high.

There is an increasing threat of privatization, waste-to-energy and incineration. In places like China and Bangladesh, state control remains strong.

Waste pickers are seen in all common municipal maintenance systems, but their work is not always recognized.

Challenges/Issues

We must ensure access to waste for waste pickers and open up spaces for waste pickers to continue work.

Waste pickers require better training, education and marketing skills.



Latin America

Commonalities

Door to door or territorial circuits, supported by municipality and some by the service, are found in Brazil and Argentina.

Waste pickers are not being paid by households or municipalities, and are not being recognized in many places.

Collection on the street/at source occurs; material is sold to middleman.

Challenges

One common challenge is that the infrastructure does not belong to waste pickers.

There are parallel systems that are competing (sometimes) like incineration.

Privatization is expanding; there are new interested parties, such as big corporations.

Most of the municipalities are not supporting waste pickers.

There is still not good source segregation because there is a lack of citizen involvement, the materials are all mixed.

In some places waste pickers are not allowed to transport waste.

There is an ongoing fight for legislation to get recognition.

The technology to handle recycling properly is often lacking.

Adequate space to handle processing is often lacking.

Waste pickers are trying not to have differences among countries – they want to be united as equals.

Government corruption is a problem, especially because it transfers access to waste from waste pickers to private companies.

About Privatization (Eduardo Ferreira):

“There can be a lot of money in a few people’s hands, or some money in a lot of people’s hands.”

It was noted that in Colombia, a new system is just about to be approved that will see collection, transport and recovering materials, in an up-to-date way with source segregation, organized by waste pickers.

Inclusive Model Presentation

Waste picker representatives from several countries delivered brief presentations on inclusive models – some using PowerPoints or videos (links to which are provided in the text below) – on how formal and informal waste management systems are integrated in their cities and/or country. These presentations enabled all participants to see a diversity of models, and to consider advantages/disadvantages as well as possibilities for adaptation in their own countries. Questions and answers rounded out the information.

In tandem with the conference, interviews were conducted with selected representatives to gather information and create case studies of waste management models. These profiles of several cities will contain snapshots of waste pickers, their organizations, and the relationship between formal and informal waste management systems in their municipalities. A report containing these profiles will be issued shortly.



At the conference room.



India Presentation

Shalini from SEWA made the presentation.

- Waste collection is governed by urban local bodies (ULBs), which have sole control over systems.
- There is great diversity in models. The system is either informal or formal, and waste pickers are involved both formally and informally. This is at the discretion of the ULB. But waste pickers are everywhere.
- Waste pickers generally pick waste from the roadsides, landfill sites, and transfer stations.
- The waste pickers who are engaged informally are at the mercy of ULB employees, who sometimes require bribes or who collect the recyclables themselves.
- Very few instances occur where waste pickers are involved in the processing of wet waste, less than 10 per cent of waste pickers working in wet waste.

Door-to-door collection variances

Many cities in India have door to door collection, but no single system is followed throughout the country.

- Some have direct user fee collection only; this generally ranges from Rs. 10-14 per household.
- Some places pay a fee that covers both collection and management cost.
- In some places, management costs are subsidized by the waste pickers' organization; waste pickers are primarily involved in direct collection.
- Collection is done by ULB and given to the entity that collects waste.
- Entities bid for tenders in waste collection.
- Privatization of door to door collection is happening.

Some features of integration

- Roadside sweepers who are ULB employees play a major role.
- In many cities, privatization has not been successful. For example, in one, collection work has been again given back to waste pickers with carts because private contractors were not able to service narrow lanes with their trucks.
- In some cities, dry waste collection centers/sorting sheds are given to waste pickers by ULBs.

- In cases where ULB pays, the payment sometimes is not received for up to six or seven months and the waste pickers are forced to take action, which usually leads to fast payment of arrears.
- In many cities the ULBs have recognized and given identity cards to the waste pickers.
- In many cities, pushcarts are given by ULB, but maintenance is not provided, so once the equipment begins to fail, the waste pickers are not always able to repair it.
- In other cases, investment for pushcart is made by waste pickers' group.
- Integration is highly dependent on the collective bargaining power of the organization working in the location, and on the relationship of the organization to the municipality.
- ULBs are not always keen to recognize the role of waste pickers.
- Trend toward privatization is seen.
- There is no inclusion right now in waste-to-energy.

See the PowerPoint presentation on waste pickers and ULBs in India (http://globalrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/pune2012_ulb.pdf).

– PowerPoint on waste collection in Mumbai

http://globalrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/pune2012_mumbai.pdf

– PowerPoint on inclusive strategies in Delhi

http://globalrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/pune2012_dehli.pdf

– PowerPoint on waste initiatives in Chintamani

http://globalrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/pune2012_chintamanit_p.pdf

– PowerPoint on waste collection in Pune

http://globalrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/pune2012_pune.pdf



Santa Cruz, Bolivia Presentation

There are more than 1,350 waste pickers in Santa Cruz. The majority are women with very few men, and women are eager to show that this is work they can succeed in, and thus provide for households and educate their children.

- Photos were shown of the waste pickers in official uniforms, which the waste pickers make themselves, protesting to secure their rights.
- They asked the government for support, arguing that they are helping the environment.
- This action has resulted in an ordinance, expected to be passed in May, that confers recognition, medical and life insurance – rights that any other worker gets.

- The waste pickers have a small space for sorting, which they are renting, but they are confident the government is soon going to provide bigger space.
- Waste pickers buy their own equipment – bicycles, motorized carts, etc.
- During her presentation, Maria noted that the waste pickers have had support from an NGO and from an official who is helping support them in many important things.

See the presentation:

<http://www.slideshare.net/Cobonei/yaniles-muoz-organizacion-red-de-recolectores-santa-cruz>



Natal, Brazil Presentation

(Presentation about the co-op "COOPEMAR" in Natal (Severino Lima), Brazil)

The Waste Work

- The city of Natal has a population of 800,000, so is a very small part of the country/global picture.
- Waste pickers are paid by the municipality – have a contract.
- They have convinced the municipality that with all the money the waste pickers save the city, they ought to be paid.
- The waste pickers do not work on landfills, only on the streets.
- They are trying out hydroelectric carts.
- Currently 128 workers; 78 per cent are women. They cover 60 per cent of the city.
- They collect 600 tons/month of the 900 tons of garbage created daily in the city each month, and are paid by weight (\$75/ton).
- Three collection fees are involved: collection; transport to sanitary landfill; final disposal.
- The fees/savings were analyzed to determine how the waste pickers reduce the cost; from that savings, the waste pickers are paid.
- The personal relationships that waste pickers have with neighbours from whom they collect are a bonus; the people recognize the waste picker, and the service they provide.
- The contract they have depends on the working capacity.
- They need to optimize and increase the waste that they're working with.
- They have determined the composition of waste (as demonstrated in a pie chart in presentation). This knowledge is important for understanding how to improve their services.

However, they are only handling now about 2 per cent of the total kinds of waste. They want to expand their knowledge, to find out what they don't know about the other 98 per cent.

– Promotion of their work is considered very important.

Organizing

- In Brazil, they talk about different models that change from north to south — different cooperatives. There is much variation between places, and changes taking place after more than 10 years of struggle.
- There are 11 different organizations representing waste pickers in Brazil, and two cooperatives working in the city.
- This information relates to the cooperative COOPEMAR.
- When they started their salary was about US \$150; now has reached US \$400 per month.
- Working inside a cooperative generally means much higher pay for a person.
- Not all are organized. Those who are not collect the waste which is remaining on the streets and they sell it to the intermediary persons.

Future Vision

- 540 recyclers will be involved in the process.
- 90 per cent of the city will be covered.
- 25 per cent of waste will be collected by the waste pickers.
- New enterprises will emerge.
- National legislation to recycle can lead to benefits for the waste pickers.
- There is a desire to strengthen the process locally, while maintaining a good relationship federally as they now have.
- Opportunities and newly acquired skills will be created through exchange of information with other waste pickers in other places.

See the presentation (in Portuguese)

http://globalrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/pune2012_natal.pdf

More information: MNCR: <http://www.mncr.org.br/> (Movimiento Nacional de Catadores)



Buenos Aires, Argentina Presentation

Cristina from El Ceibo cooperative showed a video called "From Exclusion to Inclusion: Bringing Dignity to our Work."

“We need to recover people so they can recover materials ... Most of us have difficult personal stories and backgrounds. Part of our efforts have gone into first recovering the human beings, our lives.”

Cristina Lescano

Organizing

- They started with the garbage bags, working at night, risking imprisonment.
- The government was saying that the garbage was their property or that of the private sector.
- A group of eight women got together and organized. Now many years later, they have 67 members.
- There are 15 Argentinean co-ops in the Lacre Movement, of which El Ceibo RSU is one.
- They decided that this is a social enterprise and they need to come together to maximize income.
- They realized they would have to change first. They did not have identity cards, did not know how to talk on mobiles, did not have education. They started by making identity cards for waste pickers.
- Now there are new practices in solid waste management. Historically, waste pickers were exploited, now they have machines, now they have life insurance, they pay taxes, and the enterprises they are selling to ask for official papers and accounts.
- Right now, they are paying lots of money to have their accounts put in order.
- Lack of respect for waste workers still exists. Those who are not organized have a harder time.
- Collective decision-making occurs in the organization.

The Waste Work

- In the video, a woman says the waste pickers get attention from media because they are doing this environmental work for free.
- They were pioneers in Argentina for segregation at source, the organized waste pickers carry out door to door campaigns teaching people how to separate their garbage – paper, plastic, etc.
- People can contact the waste pickers directly for pick up.
- In some places the richest areas are restricted; waste pickers don't have access.
- They needed machines to scale up. There was a mix of allocation; some were donated by the government, others were from private companies.

“We are environmentally helpful... but at the end of the day, we need to make a living.”

Cristina Lescano

- Two trucks bring resources to the centre.
- Sorting space is provided by government.
- Now there is some payment received through contracted services.
- They don't yet process the recyclable materials. Currently they are working just in the collection, but want to engage with the commercialization in the near future.

Issue: Private Companies

There are more and more private companies that approach with ideas that at first seem interesting (i.e. incineration), but Cristina believes the waste pickers must be cautious because these companies want to take control of the entire system, divide the waste pickers and make them disappear.

See the video "From Social Exclusion to Inclusion: Bringing Dignity to Our Work." <http://youtu.be/F7IgQvzCMps>



Dakar, Senegal Presentation

Aliou Fare from BOKK DIOM (Association Des Recuperateurs et Recycluers de Mbeubeuss — Associations of Waste Pickers and Recyclers of Mbeubeuss)

Organizing

- Bokk Diom has 1,200 members, but there are many waste pickers working in the dumpsite who are not members.
- Problems arise because those who are not integrated, who work on their own, have improper training.
- The local government has given them status as an association and they also have a partnership with WIEGO and others. They also have better visibility through partnerships.
- There is a training center for young women with computers/Internet and the students are taught how to sew and make shoes.
- For the children, the association has proposed an education centre to ensure that children are not a part of waste picking, this project is still in pipeline.
- They have a health centre, which provides the necessary service and also serves as an important revenue generator. Revenue from this is distributed back into the health centre, and toward a training centre for children.
- They have established a community hall for everyone to use – an important gathering place.
- They would like partnerships to support their training center, to provide support for the children, etc.
- In May, going to have elections for a new president. They want to increase negotiation and leadership capacity, and be able to have bargaining power with government to achieve better status for workers.

The Waste Work

- There are three sets of actors: state and public authorities;

waste pickers; and the private companies.

- There are two types of waste pickers — those who pick it up and those who are recyclers at the landfill.
- The waste management system in Dakar is not inclusive for all waste pickers.
- By segregating and recycling one third (1/3) of the waste that arrives in the landfill, the waste pickers offer an essential contribution to the city waste management. However their contribution is not formally recognized.
- They collect waste in two rotations: 334 trucks, 14 tons/vehicle, about 4776 tons of waste is being sorted by the waste collectors.
- Government agents measure amount of waste at the site for payment.
- Waste is received from households, industrial units, hospitals, markets and other services.
- Types of waste:
 - plastic (bottles, sacks, chairs, shoes)
 - metallic waste (aluminum, iron, copper, bronze, metallic pieces)
 - electronic waste (radio, tvs, computers)
 - organic waste (rice, fish, food residue)
 - other waste (glass, artificial hair, chiffon)
- The recycling system has three steps:
 1. Segregation - Waste is not segregated when collected, but rather when everything is collected in the landfill, for instance using a magnetic instrument to separate metal. Food residue is taken by the women, used to feed pigs, for example.
 2. Recycling - (plastic is the most easily recycled material)
 3. Commercialization - Every waste picker has a small area where he can go and sell materials (1x per day or 1x per week).
- Waste pickers do pick up all waste, including e-waste, but they sell it to intermediaries so are not dealing with the hazards themselves. The intermediaries have a connection with a German company. Waste pickers do not directly sell the waste to the company.

Issue: Closing the Dumpsite

- There are 1,800 waste pickers at the landfill.
- With landfills closing, jobs and solidarity are threatened. The government wants to close the landfill and allow waste pickers to work at a segregation center, but is asking for only 350 workers in the center, so all the rest will not have work.
- The workers at the segregation center will be expected to pay an exorbitant fee to work there.
- There was no consultation with waste pickers regarding closure. The proposition has not been clearly defined.
- Aliou is asking for international support and pressure to ensure the landfill is not closed. Would like Global Alliance to help send a strong message by writing letters to Senegalese embassies.

See the Dakar presentation (French).

http://globalrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/pune2012_dakar.pdf



Cairo, Egypt Presentation

Presentation made by representative of Spirit of Youth Association.

Issue: Privatization

- Waste pickers used to collect from citizens, but in 2003 municipality got into the system and made contracts with foreign private companies.
- Public authorities established a collection tax; these revenues go directly to the multinationals.
- Waste pickers' incomes have dramatically declined.

The Waste Work

- In Cairo 14,000 tons per day (household and commercial) – waste pickers collect 8,000 tons/day.
- They segregate the waste into organic and dry waste.
- Organic waste is divided into two: one type is used to feed the pigs, while the rest is sold. About 55 per cent of the waste goes to the landfill.
- The recyclable waste is segregated and then sold to intermediaries.
- There are six areas of waste pickers in Cairo.
- The multinational companies collect around 4,000 tons per day.
- About 2,000 tons remains uncollected every day.
- The foreign companies also sell organic waste for compost and sell recyclable waste, but they only recycle the 20 per cent of the waste, while at the same time their system is very expensive.
- Apart from collection and segregation, the waste pickers also carry out some processing of the materials. With the plastic, they do many things, including make toys and household items; they do not make food packaging.

Organizing

- Spirit of Youth Association, an NGO established in 2004 to provide opportunities for youth and children, has been working with waste pickers to help recover their rights.
- After the revolution in 2011, waste pickers were finally able to form a union in Egypt.
- They use trucks only for internal transport.
- The Union has 3,000 members and provides services: ID, Pension and Health.
- The formation of the union, and the equipment/infrastructure,

was funded by the NGO and the 3,000 members.

– The objective of this union is to communicate with NGOs and other groups, unite them all under the same umbrella so that they can collect and segregate the waste. They are also helping another organization to improve the waste management services to the citizens.

– They are fighting foreign private companies.

Wastepickers are denied their rights, after they have been in the sector for 60 years.

– The organization's projects include:

- 1) waste segregation at source
- 2) involving national, and not international companies in waste management
- 3) sustaining small scale workshops
- 4) improving recycling
- 5) running a recycling school: training workers (created with the support of some funding): they also encourage the waste pickers' children to collect the empty bottles, and then they teach them what to do with them.

See the presentation about waste work in Cairo.

http://globalrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/pune2012_egypt.pdf



Bamako, Mali Presentation

Presentation made by the President of COGIAM

Organizing

- Established in 1992, COGIAM has more than 1,000 members (312 in Bamako) who work in waste management.
- Waste collectors are now organized in COGIAM, but waste pickers are not yet organized; however there is intent to include them in organization and to work together.
- The association makes sure equipment like waste bins are maintained, but the equipment is not always efficient.
- They organize training sessions.
- There are 712 districts so there's a lot of decentralization.
- They are interested in partnerships, in more networking internationally to help reinforce and strengthen their work.
- More than half the workers are women, and six in the administration of the organization. Waste management is a women's sector, something they work in.

The Waste Work

- The households pay waste collectors for door-to-door collection.
- Groups with resources use donkey carts, tractors, small

trucks, etc. In 1992, it was all push carts.

- The collectors have a contract with the municipality. The public authority ensures a good quality service is provided.
- The waste collectors displace the waste to the transfer stations – the municipality is then supposed to transport it to the landfills.
- The recyclable materials are segregated both by the employees doing the door-to-door collection and by waste pickers at the transfer stations.
- They also recover a lot of organic waste that is composted and goes to the farming fields. (In Mali waste pickers, who are also partly in the agriculture world, scavenge for organic waste.)

Issues

There is no landfill in Bamako so that the transfer stations, which are supposed to be evacuated weekly, have been turned into permanent open dumping sites.

See the video about Mali's waste recovery.

<http://youtu.be/Fhy-FE7IKrE>



Quezon City, Philippines Presentation

By Eileen Belamide, Ecowaste Coalition of the Philippines

Organizing

- In 2000, a “trash slide” killed 200 waste pickers on a landfill where 2,000 typically worked unrestricted (3,000 people more, including the underground economy, were heavily dependent on dumpsite operations). This drew attention to waste pickers and their conditions.
- Waste pickers organized into 13 associations (12 during daytime & 1 for nighttime operations) which were assigned sub-dumping areas at the dumping table.
- In 2010, the national government resolution decreed that local governments should integrate waste pickers into their formal systems.
- This establishes who can access waste, and recognizes the waste pickers.
- The legislation also states that waste pickers should organize into associations.
- The informal waste sector is being recognized as a partner of public-private sector.

– Waste pickers are integrated into private sector waste management and manufacturing.

The Waste Work

- The different spaces for inclusion have subsequently been enumerated: e.g. transfer stations, trucks that offload onto barges, barges.
- Trucks tip hauled waste on designated dumping areas and each waste picker association is allowed 20 – 30 minutes to pick through the dumped waste, helping to avoid infighting. Efficiency in the recovery of recyclables significantly increased.
- Metro-Clark Sanitary Landfill handles sanitary and industrial waste from several cities/municipalities & industries. Work includes recycling, composting, and sanitary landfill technologies that conform to European standards.
- As part of its corporate social responsibility, Metro-Clark has engaged the services of former waste pickers in the landfill to work in its Materials Recovery Facility inside the facility.
- Waste pickers formed three cooperatives within one organization.
- Organization has 721 workers: 552 males and 169 females.
- Uniforms and I.D. are required.
- No segregators/waste pickers allowed to do sorting at the garbage pit area.
- There is a pilot project for composting.
- There is Plastic Densifying Technology at site that turns residual waste such as polystyrene (styrofoam) and polypropylene plastic bags into useful products (e.g. paving blocks, planter and furniture) – and provides additional income for waste pickers.
- The municipality has provided space for transfer stations where segregation takes place.

Emerging Issues

- The municipality has been promoting segregation at source to the citizenry. Now, more and more, recyclable waste is sold to dealers by the households.
- City is questioning the economic feasibility of continuing to process plastic and sell to industry, because of the rising fuel costs.

See the presentation Examples of Integration: Philippine Experience.

http://globalrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/pune2012_philippine.pdf

For more information on the Philippines, see the presentation on Cebu City.

http://globalrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/pune2012_cebu.pdf

Key Points Emerging from the Session “Inclusive Model Presentation”

(Discussion led by Nohra Padilla)

- There are many different models. Models can be very different, based on population, context and growth, but still be inclusive (or exclusive).
- In some places, legal mandates are facilitating inclusion of waste pickers; in other places the mandates are hindering access of waste pickers to waste.
- Need to be mindful of how mandates to divert waste, as well as mandates to include waste pickers, are actually translating at the local level.
- In some places, relationships with the municipalities are strong and waste pickers benefit from inclusion. In other places, there is a hostile environment and the municipality is not willing to collaborate, so there is a long fight ahead.
- Organizing workers is a slow process.
- In some places, waste pickers are utilizing technology and adding value to the waste, boosting their incomes.
- People and the conditions of their lives and work, not just the efficiency or effectiveness of the system, must be considered. All this has to do with workers and especially with decent work.
- Access to waste is the key aspect – if we lose it we lose our work.
- Privatization, in particular, seems to represent the biggest threat.
- We need to articulate ways in which the municipal solid waste management system and the informal recycling sector can be interrelated.



African representatives.

Inclusion and the Process of Integration

KKPKP founder, Poornima, led the discussion on understanding integration. She asked the waste pickers to consider these points:

1. Wastepickers are already part of municipal systems.

- Often, there are two systems in a city – the formal one recognized by the city or contractor and the informal one

that waste pickers have always been part of.

- How do we bring these together in a way that is good for waste pickers, the environment, and public services?
- In many instances waste pickers are integrated in ways that are bad for the environment, bad for integration, bad for the waste pickers. How can it be good for the people and for the environment?

2. Integration is a process, it doesn't happen overnight.

- When we see a model like Pune, we have to realize we can't just take it home and have it in our city instantly.
- It took KKPKP a long time to decide what they want, and how to achieve it. And even now, maybe it's not ideal; there may be improvements needed.
- This system may not even work in Dakar. So we need to understand the process required to get what will work best.

3. Inclusion is also not linear.

- It took KKPKP a long time to decide what they want, and how to achieve it. And even now, maybe it's not ideal; there may be improvements needed.
- As you struggle you may have to tweak your demands to accommodate the reality in your city and you may get new ideas along the way. Things may not work out the way you want, but you may get another idea.

4. We have to look at the sustainability of the integration or inclusion model.

- How do we make sure the model will be here five years from now?
- If it is not sustainable in terms of our energy, not providing a good service, not making enough money, then it is not going to work.

5. Inclusion can also create exclusion.

- There will always be waste pickers who don't want to be included or who aren't included and we have to think about how we continuously try to include as many waste pickers as possible.

The Resources Needed in Every System

- machinery
- money
- training
- social connections
- recognition

Considerations in Analyzing Inclusion

Rules/laws/policies/contractual arrangements related to labour and financing: How do these facilitate or inhibit inclusion? What do we need to be demanding legally/contractually?

Practices: What are the changes that have been brought in the process of inclusion (mechanization, technology, trucks, segregation by conveyor belts, changes in the ways that we collect and process waste)? And how are we fitting into it?

Resources: How are we accessing resources? Where are they coming from?

Who is involved: Who are the people doing the work? Who are we bringing in, and who are we pushing out?

Power: What is our collective bargaining ability? What active

role are waste pickers playing in their inclusion? Who decides and on what basis? Does inclusion enhance or reduce collective bargaining?

NOTE: Profiles of some municipal waste systems will be issued in a subsequent report.
See also "Brief Overview from 4 Latin-American Cities, Where Municipalities Are Investing In Waste Pickers Integration"
http://globalrec.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/pune2012_latinaamerica.pdf

Day 3 – April 29, 2012

Threats

The participating waste pickers at the workshop were asked to write down on cards the threats that they face (the full list of what was written is found in Appendix 2.) They then discussed the biggest threats to their work, their income and their futures. Despite the great differences in their local contexts and models, they discovered they face many common threats.

Privatization

Privatization was highlighted by the waste pickers as probably the greatest threat, as it directly impacts their access to waste and so their livelihoods. The key points made about this were:

Privatization takes the resources of a country (i.e. public resources) and gives them over to private corporations. This has implications for government relations with its citizenry, the delivery of public services, and how money flows within communities. Companies, in turn, use aggressive tactics to push technology, further limiting access of others to waste – and negatively impacting the environment.

The fight against privatization, it was contended, must be waged early and hard. "Once the contract has been signed," one representative from South Africa noted, "it is very difficult to turn it back."

Anne Scheinberg, a researcher with WASTE in the Netherlands, however, noted that there is a strong political interest in privatization that makes it very hard to battle. She believes waste pickers must find a way to co-opt it. "We have to say that integration is fair privatization," she said. "We have to say we are offering a better kind of privatization for the society."

Corruption

Corruption occurs within governments – at all levels – as well as within organizations and companies, the waste pickers said. An example that was given involved municipal workers who, instead of allowing waste pickers the mandated access to waste, either strip the waste of its most valuable components first or demand bribes to allow access. Points included:

All countries have laws mandating waste management, and where those laws beneficial to waste pickers are not followed, it is a violation of their rights.

Corruption leads to issues in security. Corruption infects everywhere – leads to health and political problems. It infringes on human rights.

The worst corruption occurs at the level where the public asset that is waste is given to private entities in exchange for financial or social capital for those in power. This is a betrayal of the public trust, and harms people (environmental and health implications) well beyond the waste pickers.

A related concern was distrust of authorities that makes it difficult to begin to build relationships that are necessary for integration.

Transport invites corruption. The private companies want the contract for transportation to go to the dumping ground. If we say we want to integrate the wastepickers, we need to address transport if the dumping grounds are privatized.

Corruption within organizations that are not structured democratically involves leadership acting in its own best interests, instead of in the interests of the membership.

Waste to Energy/Incineration

Neil Tangri from GAIA made a presentation explaining how waste to energy technologies and incineration are being sold to governments and the public as safe, clean and green – but that burning waste pumps harmful gases into the atmosphere and is a far less "green" choice than recycling. He offered some strong arguments to help counter the misperceptions, especially that everything useable can be recycled and the rest burned, noting that the most flammable things – paper, cardboard, plastics – are the most easily recycled and the remaining organic matter, which is too wet to burn, is what's left.

Other Named Threats:

- Lack of access to waste
- Lack of official integration of waste pickers
- Organizational challenges
- Health, social protection and well-being
- Coca Cola: wants to recycle PET bottles with or without waste pickers
- NGOs – both a dependence on, and the threat that they arrive on the scene and divert resources to their own ends

Where the Threats Can Come From

1. local government
2. national government
3. huge international institutions (e.g. World Bank)
4. private companies and multinationals
5. NGOs and consultants
6. the market
7. waste pickers themselves, and organizations if not democratically organized

It was noted that sometimes one threat can have multiple drivers, so we have to determine where to target actions.

A complete list of the threats identified and written by waste picker participants is included in Appendix 2.

Remarks about Threats/Exclusion and Inclusion

Melanie Samson concluded the session. This is a summary of her remarks:

Inclusion, as I have understood from the models presented here is actually integration ... to be integral to, but not part of. So we have business models of waste collection and processing and service provision but not employment in municipalities.

Inclusion is a process. It starts with some kind of acknowledgement like [in Senegal] when some health facility and land was provided by the government.... At the other end of the spectrum we have seen that in Brazil and other countries of Latin America, governments have made laws, provided capital and resources to waste pickers after they were organized.

Informal waste workers are excluded in many ways. They are excluded as workers, and as members of particular social groups like caste, religion, race, women, migrants and immigrants. Some waste pickers don't even have citizenship rights In other countries waste pickers are not recognized as workers. Ending this exclusion is core to the mission of the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers.

Outcomes: New Ideas and Strategies

“It is the status we want to change, not the profession itself.”
Jelene (Serbia)

New Ideas

Presentations and discussion of the preceding days highlighted new technical (composting, biogas, segregation at source, etc.) and practical ideas of how to improve integration, build relationships with other stakeholders, improve social protection and working conditions, and investigate new markets. In this session, participants were invited to offer new ideas or strategies that had not yet been discussed.

(Pune) **Leveraging new information for improvements to existing partnerships:** The Pune Municipal Corporation has been very supportive of Pune's waste pickers (in fact, officials dined with the waste picker participants at a local restaurant). However, the partnership is not without flaws, and the information of what's happening in other places, shared in presentations at the Strategic Workshop, can be used to strengthen the system. SWaCH can leverage the good feelings and good coverage the workshop provided to ask for improvements and guarantees.

(Anne Scheinberg) **Practical manual for inclusive waste**

management: This could help municipalities calculate how much recycling is going on already, to calculate the benefits for the city and to calculate how much more they can save, and to see what else is happening in other locations, how inclusive models are working.

(MNCR, Brazil) **Integrated partnerships with private waste companies possible:** The current integration system in this state of Brazil, which has been ongoing for 30 years, is really more of a private company that has a contract for managing the waste, and contracts with other companies, with cooperatives and waste picker organizations. Integration came after an 11-year fight via the MNCR.

(Chile) **A sign or stamp that indicates waste worker is part of an organization:** This would both ensure that the one offering a service is part of an organization – at a national, regional or world level – and brings that professionalism to the job. It would also raise visibility/validity of the profession of waste pickers and the organization.

(SMS Mumbai, India) **A learning or training hub:** Here, organizations with specific expertise (for example in composting, or dry waste, or a particular model) could share with those interested in trying this in their own location.

(India) **Develop simple graphic models of each municipal system** that shows how waste flows, what role waste pickers play, how they are included, who pays, who gets the model.

(Lakshmi; India) **A tool to judge levels of integration:** It was suggested that the waste pickers could collectively come up with a checklist of simple parameters that can be used in all models to gauge inclusion. This would allow better comparisons between locations and models (for waste pickers' purposes) but could also be developed into a "report card" that organizations could use to grade/score their municipalities and inspire them to do better.

(Lucia) **Better dissemination of information moving from local to global:** Communication processes/tools that take the information from the base and move it out to the regions and globally would improve everyone's understanding and share knowledge more effectively.

(KKU, Delhi, INDIA) **Campaign for an international agreement/convention regarding waste pickers:** A campaign for a convention on waste pickers at the international level (e.g. pressuring ILO) would raise visibility of waste pickers' work and their difficult circumstances, and make the point that they must have rights and respect. It was suggested that waste picker organizations begin a dialogue aimed at forming alliances with national and international trade unions that take up issues at international level.

(Ecuador) **A worldwide profile campaign:** Develop a world day/week to mobilize around (e.g. in Ecuador, March 1 is the day of the recycler) – could unite together around this.

(Mali) **Formulate a Strategy for Visibility of Waste Pickers:** Start with national-level seminars that every country has to talk about recommendations – these can be transmitted and discussed at a continental-level seminar, and then transmitted to the global level.

(Argentina) **Shared agreement between different countries**

in network on material pricing: This would give waste pickers greater control in determining the price for their materials.

Strategies Going Forward

Participants were asked to reflect on what they had learned or encountered at the workshop that they would be taking home and trying out. (Specifics for different countries are listed in Appendix 3.)

At the local level, most spoke of the need to do more organizing and strengthen their relationships with governments and other stakeholders (e.g. private companies), to seek training opportunities and to incorporate technical ideas – composting and biogas, in particular – into their existing work. Others wanted to learn more about what they had seen, especially how the integrated system in Pune was achieved.

One of the key agreements was that the first priority must be the worker, and the worker's well-being and empowerment. Even where people do not or cannot be integrated, they should not be ignored. The second priority is organizational strength – and that most important is to strengthen the local, base organizations, as these are crucial to having a strong global network.

“The Global Alliance of Waste Pickers is a force – if we are united, no one can stop us.”
Silvio, Colombia

The need to empower organizations at every level, to get better at exchanging information, to fight collectively and to ensure decisions are always made in a democratic manner was stressed.

Another important aspect raised was the will for solidarity. It was suggested that the network has not done this well enough and needs to get better at sharing information and building unity through the available communication technologies.

Meeting of the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers



Immediately following the workshop, a meeting of the Global Alliance was held. Delegates discussed the global environmental importance of their work and the need for an

alliance through which knowledge sharing and technical exchange is possible. The alliance should be a tool to help waste pickers who want to get integrated, to have protection for themselves and their work, and to remain in the profession.

“We need a strategy to revolutionize the waste pickers conditions. Let's go beyond talking, let's start with direct actions.... We have seen here waste pickers who work in very hard conditions. These are the people for which we need to work.”
Alex, Porto Alegre

The assembled waste picker representatives agreed that they face common threats and challenges, and that there is a need to continue to foster this global community of waste pickers, assisted by technical experts, for the purposes of knowledge sharing and solidarity to counter the threats. They also agreed that the need for organizing and action must carry on at the local and national level.

Labour Day March and Positive Announcement



The Global Alliance of Waste Pickers marches on Labor Day - Pune, India

Following the workshop, on May 1, many of the international representatives remained in India to take part in the Labour Day march, where the Pune Municipal Corporation presented SWaCH with an award and announced that it will extend the integrated “zero waste” system piloted over the past year with SWaCH into 15 more wards.

List of Appendixes

1. List of participants/organizations.
2. Threats (as listed on the cards)
3. Take home knowledge and ideas
4. Press releases sent by Global Alliance of Waste Pickers and the Alliance of Indian Wastepickers
5. List of cities for which profiles of waste management systems are being prepared

Appendix 1

List of participants/organization

Priyanto, KASBI, Indonesia
 Fedrico De Maria, University of Barcelona, Spain
 Alain Rabarijaona, PLAFCO, Madagascar
 Miroslav Mitrovic, CACAK, Serbia
 Jelena Nesic, DTI, Serbia
 Li Jiamin (Camin), CWIN Wuhu Ecology Centre, China
 Anne Scheinberg, Consultant - WASTE, Netherlands
 Nonhlanhla Mhlophe, WIEGO, South Africa
 Simon Mbata, SAWPA, South Africa
 Kouyate Fatoumata, GOGIAM, Mali
 Maria Benita Ortiz Justiniano, RED Santacruz, Bolivia
 Magdalena Duarte, MNCR, Brazil
 Alexandro Cardoso, MNCR REDLACRE, Brazil
 Martha Elena Iglesias Escobar, ANR, Brazil
 Eduardo Ferreira de Paola, MNCR REDLACRE, Brazil
 Severino de Lima Junior, MNCR, Brazil
 Exequiel Estay Tapia, MNRCH, Chile
 Denisse de Lourdes Moran, MNRCH, Chile
 Silvio Ruiz Grisales, ARB, Colombia
 Ana Isabel Martinez, ARB Colombia
 Estela Soria, REDCICLAR, Uruguay
 Lorenza Maldonado, REDCICLAR, Paraguay
 Maria Laura Guanoluiza, REDLACRE ECUADOR, Ecuador
 Aliou Faye, BOOK DIOM, Senegal
 Esther Kosi, ACCRA Water Dump, Ghana
 Bamadou Sidibe, COGIAM, Mali
 Michael Hanna Shukri Badrous, SYNDICATE CAIRO, Egypt
 Marilza de Lima, MNCR, Brazil
 Claire Markgraf, MIT, USA
 Nohra Padilla, ARB, Colombia
 Maria Cristina Lescano, EL CEIBO, Argentina
 Chris Bonner, WIEGO, Johannesburg
 Paola Cubides, AVINA, Colombia
 Felipe Toledo, AVINA, Ecuador
 Leslie Vryenhoek, WIEGO, Canada
 Anna Gross, MIT, USA
 Deia de Brito, WIEGO, Brazil
 Neil Tangri, GAIA, USA
 Lucia Fernandes, WIEGO, USA
 Melanie Samson, WIEGO, S. Africa
 Kapita Tuwizana, WIEGO, S. Africa
 Libby McDonald, MIT, USA
 Anne Larracas, GAIA, Philippines
 Mariel Viella, GAIA, Spain
 Shalimar Vitan, GAIA, Phillipines
 Pablo del Rey, WIEGO, USA
 Shaikh Akbar Ali, AIKMM, New Delhi, India
 Lufthar Bin, AIKMM, New Delhi, India
 Shashi Pandit, AIKMM, New Delhi, India
 Nalini Shekar, AIW, Pune, India
 Lakshmi Narayan, AIW, Pune, India
 Imran Khan, Chintan, New Delhi, India
 Bharti Chaturvedi, Chintan, New Delhi, India
 Kasim Ali, Chintan, New Delhi, India
 Rahul Gupta, Janvikas, Indore, India
 Deepabai, Janvikas, Indore, India
 Kamal Shirke, KKPKP, Sangli, India
 Manda Parit, KKPKP, Sangli, India

Vikas Udanshive, KKPKP, Ahmednagar, India
 Prakash Kumar, KKU, New Delhi, India
 Kamlesh Das, KKU, New Delhi, India
 Santu, Safai Sena, New Delhi, India
 Roshan, SAHWAS, Kanpur, India
 Dharmesh Singh, SAHWAS, Kanpur, India
 Janhavi Dave, SEWA, Ahmedabad, India
 Shalini Sinha, SEWA, Ahmedabad, India
 Santok Parmar, SEWA, Ahmedabad, India
 Sushila Sable, SMS, Mumbai, India
 Jyoti Mhapsekar, SMS, Mumbai, India
 Malati Gadgil, SWaCH, Pune, India
 Maitreyi Shankar, SWaCH, Pune, India
 Suman More, SWaCH, Pune, India
 Baby Mohite, SWaCH, Pune, India
 Surekha Gaikwad, SWaCH, Pune, India
 Laxman Mane, SWMIM, Aurangabad, India
 Sheshabai Kamble, SWMIM, Aurangabad, India
 Sufiya Khatun, Tiljalashed, Kolkata, India
 Afsar Ali, Tiljalashed, Kolkata, India
 Haider Ali, Tiljalashed, Kolkata, India
 Leelavathy, Unorganised Federation, Chennai, India
 Rani Sen, Unorganised Federation, Chennai, India
 Roji Mapali, Unorganised Federation, Chennai, India

Appendix 2

Threats

These are the threats that waste pickers identified and wrote on cards, Global Strategy Workshop, April 28, 2012.

1) Corruption/Institutional problems:

Decision making is made secret and in a small/closed group (Serbia)
 Exclusion from law, corruption (Ezquiel/Denies, Chile)
 Distrust in authorities and their leaders (Serbia)
 Political corruption (MNCR, Belo Horizonte, Brazil)
 Corruption (MNCR, Brazil)
 Corruption (MNCR, Brazil)
 Corruption (MNCR, Brazil)
 Failure to comply the laws on policies we have managed to achieve (Implementation failure)
 Government doesn't do anything (Paraguay)
 Government corruption
 Lack of landfills (COGIAM, Mali)

2) Waste-to-energy

3 W-t-E plants (AIKMM, Delhi)
 CDM (Clean Development Mechanism)
 Waste-to-energy plants: threat to livelihood (Safai Sena, Delhi)
 Waste-to-energy (Suman More, KKPKP, Pune; India)
 Waste-to-energy (Vikas, Nagar)

3) Private companies

The threat is the private companies that want the recyclable materials to make a profit out of it, while we -the wastepickers- remain with their problems (Maria Ortiz, Santa Cruz, Bolivia)
 Big private companies together with the municipality that will come out with proyectos encubiertos (like incinerators,...) that will make us disappear (Cristina, Argentina)
 World Bank, Coca Cola, WtE pretending/saying/claiming to be including wastepickers

4) Privatization

Contracting waste to private companies (AIKMM, Delhi)
 Middlemen and private companies becoming owners of waste (Martha Elena, Rionegro Antioquia, Colombia)
 Privatization (Shalini, SEWA)
 Waste collection contractors (Suman More, KKPKP, Pune, India)
 Municipalities are giving contracts to private contractors for collection of waste from door-to-door
 Privatization (Simon, SAWPA)
 Privatization in solid waste management (No wastepickers inclusion), outsourcing of waste (Jai Prakash Choudhary, Safai Sena)
 Existence of multinational companies in waste system (El Cairo, Egypt, Michael H., Soy)
 That the wastepickers will not be able to decide for their work future + privatization of their recycling work (Uruguay)
 Private waste contractors exclude wastepickers (Eileen Belamide, Philippines)
 Privatization (Aliou Fare, Book-Dion, Senegal)
 Private companies pressure to manage the "clean system": technologies, public policies, vertical integration
 Lack of access to waste due to privatization (SEWA)
 "100 days plan": the way that multinational companies capture the waste management
 Private companies
 Privatization (COGIAM, Mali)
 Pressure from private companies (Technologies, PP, Vertical integration (ANR, Colombia)
 Privatization of collection services

5) Social security (Health, pensions,...)

Closure of transfer stations (COGIAM, Mali)
 Unstable prices of recyclable materials (China)
 No insurance, no economic support for old age (pension) (China)
 We don't get old age pension (Suman More, KKPKP, Pune, India)
 We don't get pensions
 Safety, Health insurance, Income guarantee (India)
 Unstable land use, volatility prices of the recyclable materials, no social insurance and services

6) Access to waste

Recognition to waste pickers (China)
 Forced eviction, harassment as criminal by community or

police (Indonesia)

Except for those who run a recycling company, most waste pickers are not regarded as a career and can't be protected as a regular laborer. Now Chinese government is trying to draw up into category of flexible employment (ICO, China)

There has been no industrial association for WPs in China. And WPs cannot voice their right and don't know whom to turn to when they most difficulties and they feel helpless like edged people. Now Chinese government & advocating harmonious society hoping WPs have their own NGOs.

Voice for WPs NGO (China)

No recognition

Exclusion policies (SEWA, India)

Government and municipal assemblies should recognize waste pickers

They have a right

Door-to-door collection

No access to waste if segregation at source

Difficulties in safe and secure access to waste at privately operated transfer station (Philippines)

Access to waste is becoming a problem (Nalini)

No access to waste (KKU, Kamlesh Das)

Of waste pickers not integrated in the system then no access to waste for them if there is segregation at source

Livelihood

Losing access to recyclable materials (Isabel Martinez, Colombia)

Lack of technology to ensure processing of materials (machines!)

The dump sites should be sprayed gradually because flies have invaded the (Ghana)

We need the compost machines how to deal with organic waste (Ghana)

The union needs a recycling unit so that they can work with themselves (Ghana)

Include waste pickers in MSWM

Inclusion of WPs (Brazil)

Inclusion of WPs (Brazil)

Inclusion of WPs (Brazil)

Inclusion of WPs (Brazil)

Other threats:

WPs are not organized

Awareness education to wastepickers

Lack of knowledge and education

Children stay at village when parents go to cities for earning a living

On these conditions, it is difficult to provide our children with education and provide them with an option of alternative profession

Dependence on NGOs

Foreign or national consultants don't know - or have no time to learn- local situation in relation to wastepickers.

Extracted from

<http://globalrec.org/2012/04/29/threads-to-waste-pickers-workshop-notes/>

Appendix 3

Take home knowledge and ideas

Participants were asked to reflect on what they had learned or encountered at the workshop that they would be taking home and trying out.

Ahmedabad – wants to try to adapt composting into their model

Mali – 1) intends to hold a collective meeting of everyone all together to make sure that our work is profitable in all the territories of the country, then focus on professional trainings to ensure that waste pickers become real professionals in their work; 2) will take information about composting back to composting team to perhaps improve the system.

Ghana – needs to focus on organizing, to form a wastepicker organization - need to get in touch with SWaCH and others to learn from them, and seek help from the gathered international waste pickers' community to help with this.

Uruguay – would like more companies to participate in the process and respect and back waste pickers as workers.

Delhi (Safai Sena) - 1) work to improve conditions at the landfill (as in Philippines); 2) try to forge strong relationship with municipality; 3) work with private companies as well as government

Bangladesh – try new organizing strategies and share learnings.

Delhi - have to prioritize workers' rights. Workers rights have to be secured.

Ahmedabad - will demand a sorting shed

Indonesia - how to build relationship with the government in a big city and how to organize

Mumbai – try to more fully understand how the integration in Pune was created, and work with more relevant stakeholders than before

South Africa - find out more about composting and how to market organic waste

Brazil - trying to find better ways to share information about processes , models and threats more rapidly

Kolkata – mobilize and more overtly proclaim waste pickers' rights and the environmental value of the work

Shenzhen, China – work on organizing waste pickers and getting more support from the community.

Mumbai, India – learn more about how integration came about; work more with more relevant stakeholders (e.g. involving private sector in the early stages or organizing)

India – send out a note from AIW or global alliance to all municipalities in India saying we want to know what you have done to enumerate waste pickers in your cities and see if we get a response.

Serbia – create strong arguments and financial (+ job creation, + social spending savings) figures to help us demonstrate the benefit of involving waste pickers in the system

Appendix 4

Press releases sent by Global Alliance of Waste Pickers and the Alliance of Indian Waste Pickers

Press Release: Waste pickers frame common struggles and demands

Pune, India – April 26, 2012

In the final day of the National Convention of Waste Pickers, waste pickers from India and across Asia spoke of their successes and challenges. This was the second national convention organized by the Alliance of Waste Pickers in collaboration with the Pune and Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporations. It was held at the Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration in Pune.

The convention was preceded by the Consultation of Urban Local Bodies on Integration of Waste pickers in Solid Waste Management on 24th April. Municipal officials from 17 municipalities participated in that event.

The waste pickers' convention started in the morning with a song by veteran labour leader of informal workers, Dr Baba Adhav. This was followed by a presentation by waste pickers on the situations they face in their cities.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

In Pune, the SWaCH cooperative model, in which waste pickers have gained local government support and improved working conditions, is seen as an example of integration around the world.

"The work we do is a service to society and this work has been recognized in Pune," said a member of a waste pickers' association in Ahmedabad. "We want all cities and governments to provide the same recognition for our work."

A waste picker from Manila, Philippines, said, "When I go back home, I will bring the lessons I learned here in Pune and share them with my organization."

Representatives came from 18 cities in 9 states of India including Ahmedabad, Ahmednagar, Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Nagpur, Sangli, Aurangabad, Indore, Bhopal, Ujjain, Chennai, Kanpur, Kolkata, Katihar, Latur, Beed and Surat.

There were also delegates from Indonesia, Bangladesh, China, the Philippines, Nepal, Vietnam, and Cambodia. Despite geographical differences, the waste pickers expressed a number of concerns in common.

Landfill closure on account of privatisation was a concern that came from delegates in many cities. Waste collectors from Delhi spoke about the problem of the waste to energy plant in Delhi that is being constructed despite public resistance. It has impacted their livelihoods and they were

concerned about how they would earn a living once the plant becomes operational.

While delegates from Nagpur shared how they were already facing destitution on account of waste processing by Hanjer Biotech at the Nagpur landfill whereas those from Mumbai said that about 10000-15000 waste pickers had been displaced at the Deonar landfill. Left with little choice they had turned to making bead jewellery. They complained that it did not pay as much as collection of recyclables. Waste pickers from SEWA had started making paper folders after they lost the contract for doorstep collection of waste.

Contracting out of waste collection through contractors was another discontent that simmered among the delegates. Waste collection has been contracted out in Delhi, Beed, Surat, Ahmedabad, Aurangabad and Sangli. Waste pickers are not integrated into those systems. As a result of which they do not have any access to waste. Sometimes in places like Delhi, they have to pay the contracted workers so that they are permitted to salvage recyclables from the truck.

One woman waste picker from Kanpur took a stand against corporate recycling. "We have to fight against privatization in Kanpur," she said.

Many municipalities are reluctant to issue identity cards to waste pickers despite guidelines issued by the Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India in 2010. Delegates from Ujjain, Bhopal, Indore regretted that their city had not given identity cards till now.

In sharp contrast, a delegate from Bangalore talked about how an organization helped them receive identity cards. The Bangalore Municipality called a meeting and organised a survey and handed out ID cards.

A delegate from Chennai said how she has to do multiple activities to make ends meet. "Living is so expensive" she said. "The rent has to be paid, rice is so expensive, vegetables and meat are quite unaffordable. I will go back and tell people in Madras that there are so many people in the world who collect waste and I met them."

Fusheng from China said city development leads to frequent displacement of recycling markets and that causes some difficulty and instability. This is similar to the situation in Delhi where recycling markets are periodically shifted out of the city on grounds of causing pollution and nuisance.

Waste pickers also shared stories of improvements achieved after years of struggle and organizing. Some Indian waste pickers shared that police harassment has reduced since they became organized, while others have been able to access ID cards and health insurance through their organizations.

The Surat Rag Pickers' Association started in 1997 with ten women working together in a slum. The number has grown to 130. Today, they work regular hours, have eliminated the middlemen, and they even give bonuses.

Many delegates appreciated what had been accomplished in Pune and Pimpri Chinchwad and said they wished that their municipalities would exhibit the same concern and cooperation. They did comment that waste pickers in Pune and the rest of the country had no social security.

The waste picker delegates visiting Pune were able to make field visits yesterday to several biogas and composting projects in the city, at which several KKPKP members work. The representative from the Philippines who belongs to a 400-member waste picker cooperative who has been working as a waste picker since 1972 expressed concern that composting has not been happening in Manila, and biogas was a new concept to him. "When I get home to the Philippines, I will try to study this," he said.

RESOLUTIONS

The meeting wrapped up with a declaration by the Alliance of Indian Waste Pickers to take a strong stand to get children out of waste work.

"We should never take our small children to work. They should go to school and learn," said Rebecca from SWaCH.

In Pune, KKPKP has succeeded in getting this message out, and the number of children working in waste has decreased greatly. KKPKP has been working to help families overcome the challenges sending children to school presents, including making sure children have birth certificates and speaking to school authorities when children are treated badly by other students or by teachers. It was agreed that a national campaign to get children out of work and into school would be undertaken in India.

The gathering also resolved that the government should provide for pension for aging unorganised workers. The Indian delegates resolved to participate in the Pension Parishad scheduled to be held in Delhi from 7-11 May 2012.

CULTURAL PROGRAMME

The convention was followed by a performance of *Beti Aayi Hai* by Stree Mukti Sanghatna Mumbai. The play was a huge hit and much mirth and laughter ensued when the punch lines were said. It meant a lot because three fourths of the audience consisted of women.

The concluding activities included a puppet show in which Sugandhabai, the SWaCH mascot "trains" SWaCH members in citizen outreach. Afterwards, Taal Inc led a drum circle using drums made from waste materials, as well as other cultural activities.

GLOBAL STRATEGIC WORKSHOP

The National Convention will be followed tomorrow by the first ever Global Strategic Workshop of waste pickers. At that event, which runs from April 27-30, waste pickers from dozens of countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia will convene to discuss inclusive models of integrated solid waste management, sharing strategies and ideas as well as the threats and challenges they are facing. The countries represented include Serbia, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile, Madagascar, Colombia, Ecuador, Argentina, South Africa, and Senegal.

Waste pickers and organizers with the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers will be available for interviews.

Press Release: A First Taste of Solidarity

Pune, India – April 28

Today was the second day of the First Global Workshop of Waste Pickers, hosted by the SWaCH cooperative and the KKPKP union on behalf of the Global Alliance of Waste Pickers. Waste picker organizations from Africa, Latin America and Asia came together with allies to discuss different models of inclusion in municipal solid waste management systems and the threats they are facing as waste pickers.

Miroslav Mitrovic, the only European waste picker at the workshop, was one of the presenters. After his presentation, with the help of a translator, he eagerly requested that the Latin American waste pickers give him t-shirts, flags, banners – any paraphernalia representing their hard-won rights as waste pickers.

When he returns to Kacak, Serbia, he's set to appear on television to talk about the newly formed cooperative that he's helped start. It's the first waste pickers' cooperative in Serbia. The municipal and national governments are supporting the process – providing equipment, space, and help with management. In Eastern Europe, most waste pickers are Roma and face discrimination.

So when Mitrovic requested t-shirts, it wasn't just to take them back to Serbia as souvenirs. It was to show his community that waste pickers in other parts of the world are proud of what they do, and aren't afraid to show it.

In Serbia, "there's a fear of losing welfare if they start to work formally," said Jelena Nestic, with the Democratic Transition Initiative, an NGO working with waste pickers to form the cooperative. Coming to Pune, India, where waste pickers with SWaCH are receiving municipal support and improving their working conditions, has been an important experience for Mitrovic and other waste pickers gathered here for the global workshop.

"They exist as a social problem but not as a livelihood activity," said Anne Scheinberg, a researcher with WASTE. "In a country that denies that you exist, you sometimes don't have the idea that there's solidarity elsewhere in the world."

That solidarity was palpable today, as waste pickers from 26 countries across Latin America, Asia, and Africa shared the way they fit into the solid waste management systems of their towns and cities.

"Becoming organized is a difficult process. In every country in the world, waste pickers have been invisible," said Nohra Padilla, a waste picker and organizer with the Waste Pickers' Association of Bogotá (ARB), Colombia. "This situation only changes when we begin to organize."

The global workshop continues until April 30 as discussions on strategic issues about the integration of waste pickers in solid waste management progresses. Waste pickers and organizers will be available for interviews.

Press Release: The Global Workshop of Waste Pickers Concludes

May 1, 2012

In the final day of the First Global Workshop of Waste Pickers, representatives from 26 countries wrapped up their session. The workshop has been held in Pune at Yashada April 24-30.

The representatives discussed the threats that waste pickers across the globe are facing. They came to the conclusion that the main threats are corrupt governments that are privatizing public services.

Big multinational corporations are also often against the interest of waste pickers. Waste pickers perform a public service, collecting recyclable materials and protecting the environment.

One of the other threats that was identified by the global delegation of waste pickers was incineration – the burning of waste.

“Waste-to-energy is being sold to governments as an environmentally clean solution,” Neil Tangri, of the Global Alliance of Incinerator Alternatives, said. “But what’s going to burn is paper, cardboard and plastics. The very things that are recyclable.”

“Incineration burns the recyclable materials, generating toxic pollution behind,” said Alex Cardoso, a waste picker from Porto Alegre, Brazil. “That means more drilling for oil and other virgin materials.”

The global workshop began with waste pickers from around the world visiting the SWaCH Cooperative door-to-door collection system and the KKPKP union scrap yard.

Waste pickers learned about biogas technology and composting projects that they can take home to their countries. The waste pickers agreed to organize themselves locally and work towards forming national alliances.

May 1: Labour Day + Maharashtra

The global workshop is over but will be followed by an action tomorrow, May 1, which is celebrated around the world over as Labor Day and additionally as Maharashtra Day. KKPKP and SWACH invite our brothers and sisters from across the world to join us in 2 programs.

SWaCH has been working since a year with PMC and other Civil Society Organisations in Pune, to create a ‘Zero Waste’ ward. Based on the success of this initiative the ruling party that has recently been elected to power after the municipal elections plans to launch this initiative in 15 more wards. The formal inauguration of this program is also on 1st May at 9.30 am. Please do join us in expressing our unequivocal support for truly decentralized initiatives like this.

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