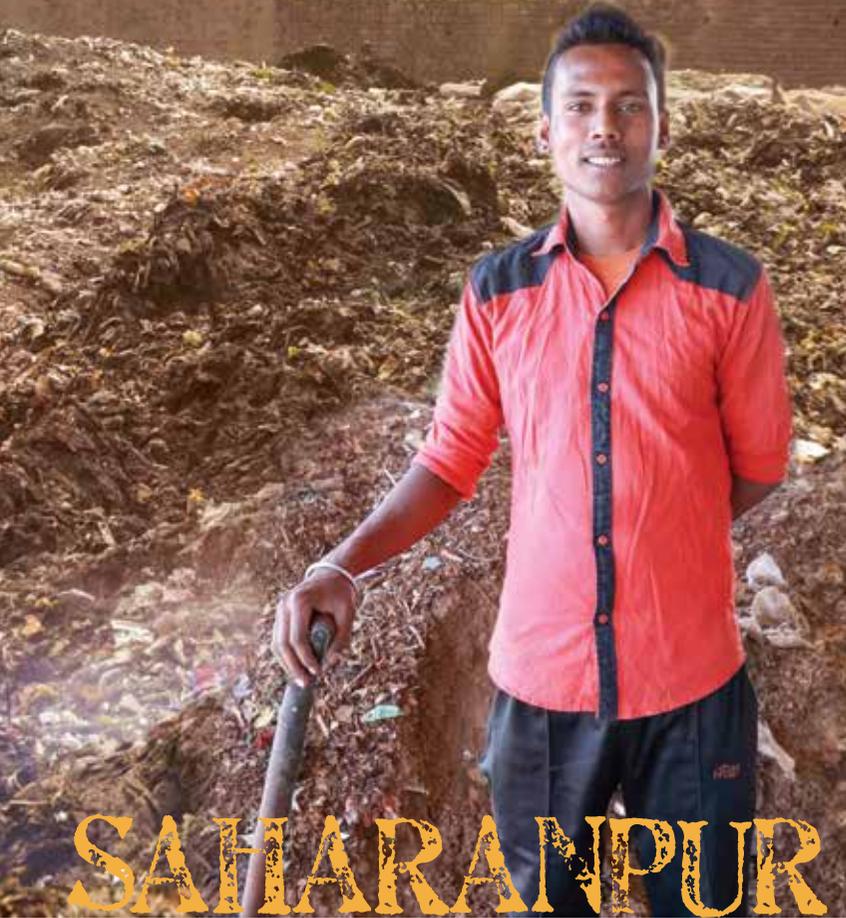
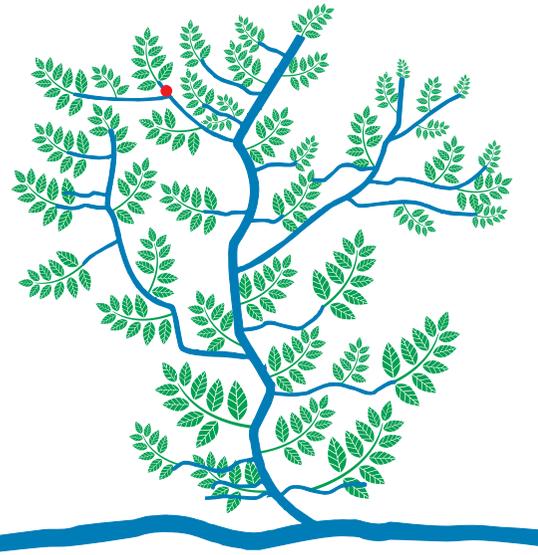


A public-private-people  
**PARTNERSHIP MODEL**  
**TO REDUCE SOLID WASTE**  
**POLLUTION IN RIVERS**



**SAHARANPUR**



24-year old, Jayrool Haqhas is a waste collector in Saharanpur. He earns Rs 6900 at Muskan Jyoti Samiti, a Lucknow based national NGO also working in Saharanpur. The NGO works on municipal solid waste management. Haqhas covers approximately 250 households a day, collecting garbage before handing it over to the segregation and processing team for recycling and turning into organic compost. Although he studied till class VII, Haqhas chooses to be in this profession. He feels a sense of pride at being part of a sanitation movement that is making his city cleaner.

**Debunking common harmful practices and enlisting support**

Muskan Jyoti's efforts at organising the garbage disposal system in the city have been managed with efficiency and profit. With over two decades of experience, they began their work in Saharanpur in 2006 by entering into a Public Private Partnership with ITC, who has since supported them with funding and infrastructure.

Their door-to-door garbage collection follows a systematic low cost, labour intensive approach. Waste collectors heap garbage atop hand carts which are then transferred to the composting sites. Here, primary sorting of organic and inorganic waste (cardboard, paper, plastic, rubber, leather, fabric, metal, glass, etc.) is carried out and material which can be recycled is collected separately. A bio-compost site has been created in the open with a series of pits where dry compost is produced in 45 days. This manure is packaged for sale to households, nurseries, corporates and hotels. While the income is not enough to make the NGO sustainable, it gives them the satisfaction of creating awareness amongst locals on the role they can play in



cleaning their environment. To push the bar on profitability, they have recently leased a plastic factory and are recycling plastic into plastic granules which is a step forward in the zero waste economy.

### **In spite of not being a pleasant task, turning it into a collective project**

Supervising different steps in garbage sorting and processing has its own constraints. Challenges of cleanliness and hygiene remain. They do weekly sprays for mosquitoes and flies but this is clearly not enough. An independent industrial consultant visited Muskan Jyoti recently and gave them ten parameters around which they must upgrade their facility. This includes a better fire safety system, drainage, enhanced medical and accident insurance cover for their workers etc. The NGO is exploring ways of recycling their current use of water, so it can be pumped

back and reused for washing plastic and thus becoming more water efficient. In spite of limited resources they are aware they must upgrade their systems and HR practices since their Saharanpur operations alone employ 110 people directly and another 110 indirectly. The network is further expanded with rag pickers and part-time garbage collectors drawn in from the informal sector.

### **Demonstrating success but many miles to go still**

As the initiative gains momentum, the vision is to move to the stage where other local bodies like Resident Welfare Associations (RWA), mohalla committees push for segregation and make women, children, schools, householders more aware. Additionally, more commercial establishments, hotels, hospitals and bus stations need to join the movement. The



## **Wealth from waste**

As of 2015-16, the NGO covers 21,000 households, generating revenue of Rs54,00,000 through 2,32,330kg of waste collected, producing compost for Rs16 lakh.

Apart from household collection, it clears municipal dumps too. From 3,68,215kg of waste collected from these dumps, it produces 1,61,985kg of manure.



*It is tough to make profit from garbage since there is a critical viability gap which must be filled by corporates, local governing bodies and others, before we can reach desired scale of coverage.”*

*Sunil Dutt Trivedi, Senior Project Manager,  
Muskan Jyoti Samiti, Saharanpur*



NGO has plans of reaching wedding venues and processions/public morchas/congregation sites to clear their waste and garbage with prior planning and intimation to agencies like theirs. Eventually, they aim to cover all households in the city which are about 100,700 approximately.

“It is a brave effort but given the size of the city, our work is a flash in the pan”, says Maidul Islam, Dy. Manager for the plastic factory. Not wanting to rest on the visibility and appreciation they have received for their work, Muskan Jyoti wants to see people’s behaviour change towards waste so they can segregate garbage at source into solid and liquid waste categories. They feel enforcing a stringent regulatory system, having a community driven ‘shaming’ policy that runs parallel to commemorating champions and pushing for more active involvement of the municipality, RWAs and media, would be necessary before the vision of a clean, disease-free city is visible on the horizon.

### **Why Municipal Corporations should adopt this model**

- Use of organic compost improves soil health and water retention capacity. It helps in water conservation by reducing irrigation requirement for crops
- Recycling plastics stalls percolation of harmful chemicals in underground water
- Saves crores of rupees on transportation of waste
- Creates employment
- Prevents landfills
- Generates profit from waste, is self-sustaining, replicable and scalable.



## **WAY FORWARD**

- NGOs like Muskan Jyoti Samiti can raise awareness at household level for segregation of waste into organic and inorganic waste. They can provide training on managing, reducing and recycling their waste by preparing compost at home and knowing hazardous waste and its impact on health and environment. This will help change behaviours and ensure better waste management, preventing drains from being clogged and ultimately clearing rivers from plastics and other polluting solid waste.
- New revenue models must be adopted for scaling up efforts of NGOs like Muskan Jyoti such as converting non-compostable waste into briquettes which can be used as fuel and sold to generate revenue.

*Dr. Veena Khanduri, Executive Secretary, India Water Partnership (IWP)*