

Power of Community

Thela Mela: Harnessing the Benefits of Segregation



Using e-rickshaws as a mode of transportation & distribution, the initiative successfully encouraged waste segregation practices, leading to a significant reduction in waste sent to landfills and contributing to a cleaner surrounding in these areas.

Compost Distribution' or 'Thela Mela' outlines the implementation and impact of an initiative which was carried out for *independent plot layouts* located in Ward 32, in the city of Gurugram under the Project 'Alag Karo - Har Din Teen Bin.' The initiative aimed to promote waste segregation at the source by incentivizing residents through the distribution of free compost. Using e-rickshaws as a mode of transportation & distribution, the initiative successfully encouraged waste segregation practices, leading to a significant reduction in waste sent to landfills and contributing to a cleaner surrounding in these areas.



Credits: Saahas

Compost Distribution to Residents



The plan included community engagement activities and door-to-door awareness campaigns. Waste collectors were trained on a new system for collecting the solid waste separately.

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Door to Door Compost Distribution to Residents

There are four independent plotted colonies namely *Sector 45, South City-1, Sushant Lok C & AB Block* identified, within the ward, that faced challenges in implementing effective waste management due to low motivation & ownership among the residents for segregating their waste at source. The Resident Welfare Association of these plotted colonies recognized the pressing need to address this issue and decided to join hands with project Alag Karo.

The plan included community engagement activities and door-to-door awareness campaigns. Waste collectors were trained on a new system for collecting the solid waste separately. As the plan came into effect, it became clear that more needed to be done to sustain the initiative. This led to the creation of the “compost distribution” initiative, which recognized residents who were already practicing source segregation of waste and incentivized those who lacked ownership towards waste segregation at the source.

The initiative involved the following objectives:

1. Educating residents on the importance of segregating their waste into 3 categories, such as biodegradable, non-biodegradable, and domestic hazardous leading to maximised resource recovery.

The initiative was met with great enthusiasm from the community, resulting in active participation in waste segregation at the source. The residents discovered the advantages of compost for their gardens through this process.

Over the course of six months, the project was able to efficiently distribute compost to over 1,000 households through a series of 21 successful compost distribution drives.

2. Identify households that segregate their waste at source to encourage others to follow.
3. Promote the idea of 'REDUCE' by handing over compost at the doorstep, therefore reducing the use of SUP (Single Use Plastics) that would have been used to package this compost.
4. Promote the use of compost for nutrient-rich soil for gardens and green space.
5. Use electric-rickshaws as a sustainable & cost-effective mode of transportation for distributing the compost to residents.
6. Foster community engagement and instill a sense of environmental responsibility among the residents.

The initiative was met with great enthusiasm from the community, resulting in active participation in waste segregation at the source. The residents discovered the advantages of compost for their gardens through this process. The initiative gained widespread attention, even reaching individuals who were previously not receptive. This was accomplished by scheduling distribution days on weekends and using recorded audio invitations played on the megaphone.



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Door to Door Compost Distribution to Residents

The measurable success of this program serves as a compelling case study for other communities and societies seeking to implement similar sustainable waste management strategies.

The impact of the initiative was significant, resonating strongly with the community. Over the course of six months, the project was able to efficiently distribute compost to over 1,000 households through a series of 21 successful compost distribution drives. Notably, the initiative's operating cost was only Rs. 100 per hour, a testament to its efficient design. Each hour, compost was distributed to approximately 10-15 households, which was appreciated by the residents. . Often, residents would interact, share experiences, and express interest in motivating others to participate in the initiative. In total, through the drive 1,470 kgs of compost was distributed with an average distribution of 1.5 kgs to each household.

The waste segregation and composting initiative not only accomplished its tangible objectives, but also demonstrated the significant impact of education, engagement, and incentives in encouraging hesitant residents to adopt sustainable waste management practices. The measurable success of this program serves as a compelling case study for other communities and societies seeking to implement similar sustainable waste management strategies.

