

## 1 Rs/Person/ Month<sup>1</sup> - Operational cost of garbage removal and environmental sanitation in small towns.....

Managing healthy and sanitary conditions in growing urban settlements is a challenge. The cost of establishing systems for maintaining sanitary conditions is an important consideration for policy makers, administrators and citizens. Some urban municipalities in India have been experimenting with the ways and means of improving sanitation in their cities. Bodhan town in Nizamabad district in Andhra Pradesh is one such municipality.

Bodhan town has a population of approximately 74,000 people in 34 wards. Typically, Bodhan town had garbage bins in the corner of each street where people used to throw their garbage. Sanitary workers from the municipality would collect the garbage and take it away with tractors. Since the tractors were too big to enter the narrow lanes, the effectiveness of this system was limited. In addition, the citizens did not use the garbage bins properly and they were always overflowing. The streets used to be filthy with garbage.

In 2009, the Bodhan Municipality changed its strategy. They used Rs 30 lakhs funds available under 11th Finance Commission, Government of India to purchase 10 vans to collect garbage directly from households. The Municipality has appointed two people to work from each van, paying them each a monthly salary of 3,500/-. The expenditure for fuel is 1200 Rs/ van/ month.

Typically, a team of two sanitation workers with a van visit three to four wards each day 6 AM to 1 PM. They collect directly from households and discourage residents from throwing their garbage into the streets. They also segregate garbage into different categories. They take the garbage to a dumping site at Pandupuram, seven kilometers from Bodhan city. Eventually, garbage bins were removed from the streets. Citizens are happy with this “doorstep service”, which is also free of cost to the residents. However, the operational cost of garbage removal is about one rupee per person per month (Please see the box). Can the municipality sustain this effort? This is a question that only the future can answer.

| Operational Costs of Garbage Removal in Bodhan, a small town in Andhra Pradesh, India |        |
|---|--------|
| Total Population (No)   | 74000  |
| No of Vans  | 10     |
| Salaries/ Van (Rs/ Month)   | 7000   |
| Fuel Expenses (Rs/Month)  | 1200   |
| Total Expenses/ Van: Rs/Month   | 8200   |
| Total Expenses for 10 Van: Rs/Month   | 82000  |
| Total Expenses for 10 Van: Rs/Year  | 984000 |
| Cost: Rs/Person/Year  | 13.3   |
| Cost: Rs/Person/Month   | 1.1    |

Mr Dilip and Satish, who work as sanitation workers in Bodhan town, said, *“One year ago, our streets were filthy with household garbage and street dogs and pigs created havoc... the sanitation workers were fed up and were unable to collect all the garbage in the street. Now, our job is easy with this system and streets are clean and tidy.”*



<sup>1</sup> One US Dollar is approximately equal to 43 Indian Rupees in Dec 2010.