



SOLID WASTE COLLECTION & SEGREGATION: HEALTH & PROTECTION RISKS OF WASTE COLLECTOR CHILDREN IN QUETTA

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Syed AHMAD Ali Shah

Social AID, Satellite Town, Quetta, PAKISTAN.
sahmad_ali@yahoo.co.uk, ahmad@socialaid.org

ABSTRACTS

Waste collection is a worldwide affair. The valley of Quetta surrounded by barren hills, once called “Little London”, where streets were not only swept but also washed with water, now facing numerous problems due to the acute shortfall of water and improper waste collection systems. In Quetta waste is mostly manually lift and dump containers into the operational trucks. The solid waste collection in the largest province of Balochistan is only 5% whereas in Quetta city 55% solid waste (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey-MICS, Government of Balochistan, 2004) is collected and shifted to open landfill site.

In Quetta, the street children (both girls and boys) that collect waste from communal waste bins and waste heaps are mostly belong to very poor families and they contribute economically to their families for survival. These street children collecting waste are contributing the largest share in collection, shifting to the dumping sites / heaps and segregation for the recyclers. They are exposed to foul odours, dust, ants, flies and insects. They also faced health problems that include irritation, chemical burns, and wounds from disposable needles, broken glass, falling objects from overloaded containers and other diseases that may accompany solid waste. Beside all of this, Protection is one of the most important issues as they are vulnerable to mostly emotionally and physically abuses.

As service of waste collection is very important considering the effect of improper waste disposal on human health and natural environment. The street children collecting waste are contributing large share in waste segregation and recycling. These children are also human beings who deserve to be in good health, protection and to live a decent life. Therefore, a survey and interviews based study is conducted on the street children collecting waste and their health n’ hygiene, protection and socio-economic issues for selling to the recyclers to earn their and family livelihoods in and around Quetta city are considered.

Key words: Solid waste, collection, health n’ hygiene, street children, boys, girls, protection, scavengers/waste collectors, Quetta, Balochistan, Pakistan.