

Goa, 3-5 April 2008

Background note to the session on WATER SUPPLY, SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE

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How are Urban Local Bodies progressing in achieving compliance to the Municipal Solid Waste Management Rules, 2000?

Compliance with the MSWM Rules 2000 has, so far, been poor, with ULB's citing financial constraints as the main hurdle. The following sections highlight the main aspects of the regulatory requirements; the current scenario in Indian municipalities; the major gaps between the existing situation and the regulatory requirements, and the hurdles in bridging these. The last section indicates action points for a possible way forward.

Broad Regulatory Requirements:

Initiatives by the Government of India to regulate the management of municipal wastes have culminated in the Municipal Solid Waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000. Broadly, under the Rules, urban local bodies are required to

- Collect all the waste at point of generation
- Provide secondary collection facilities at neighbourhood level and attend to these daily. Avoid manual and multiple handling of waste.
- Provide source segregation facilities at intermittent storage spots, to separate bio-degradable, recyclable and other wastes.
- Use transportation vehicles designed to prevent multiple handling of waste
- Cover the waste during transportation
- Process the bio-degradable wastes by a range of technologies
- Recycle mixed wastes using any suitable technology
- Restrict the use of landfills to disposal of inert wastes, residues of waste processing, and pre-processing rejects¹

The Rules came into effect in 2000.

Current Scenario in Indian Municipalities:

- Collection at the point of generation is undertaken by the informal sector, community based organizations, and NGO's, with little inputs (regulatory, or financial) from the ULB
- All recyclable wastes are extracted by the informal sector. Bio-degradable and other wastes are dumped at the secondary collection point.
- Services provided by the ULB focus on secondary collection and transportation --- the average collection efficiency for MSW in urban areas is 70%. (TERI, 1998)
- Collection and transportation infrastructure are not integrated, resulting in manual handling of waste.
- Typically, waste is land disposed / dumped with no treatment.

¹ The rules attempt to optimize the requirement of land resources for waste disposal.. The rules further elaborate that under unavoidable circumstances, or until the installation of alternative facilities, landfilling shall be allowed following proper norms

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- Typically, 25 – 35% of the municipal services budget is spent on MSWM --- about 60 to 70 percent of this amount is spent on collection; 20 to 30 percent on transportation and less than 5 percent on final waste disposal
- In most ULB's, staff engaged in SWM constitutes as much as 30 to 50 percent of total municipal staff. Staff salaries account for 75 – 85 % of expenditure on SWM (NIUA, 2000)
- No attention is given to treatment; or scientific and safe disposal of waste².

Major Gaps

- Regulation of primary collection at point of generation to ensure service levels and effective segregation.
- Integrated collection and transportation equipment (trolleys, refuse collectors, compactors...etc)
- Adequate segregation during transportation
- Making land available for upgraded treatment and disposal systems
- Treatment facilities addressing different waste streams (organic, mixed, inert)
- Scientific landfill sites

Hurdles in Bridging Gaps

- Resource constraints of ULB's
- Constraints in augmenting financial resources (through PPP, debt...etc)
 - Issues in levying user charges
 - Payment risk of municipalities
 - Performance risk of municipalities
- Scarcity of land and poor image of existing waste dumps
- Integrating and addressing issues of municipal workers in alternative operating model (PPP)
- Lack of policy support to ensure successful operation of treatment facilities --- off take obligations end products --- compost, power, recycled building material...etc --- not in place
 - Quality specification & certification of end products

Way Forward

- Creation of a separate head of account for MSWM in municipal budgeting in order to derive reasonable user charges
- Mitigation of municipal payment risk through mechanisms such as escrow accounts
- Maximum enhancement of revenues through CDM route
- Securing of revenues through establishment of off-take obligations
- Rehabilitation of existing dump sites to release land for use
- Establishment of an independent regulatory & monitoring agency for MSWM, to oversee operations under PPP
- Training and drawing up of a responsibility and performance matrix for municipal workers absorbed into private sector operation.

² *Manual on SWM Management, CPHEEO, MoUD, GOI, (2000)*