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Solid Waste Management Through Community Mobilisation: A Case Study of Communicable Disease Management and Control in Sri Lanka

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Dengue is a communicable disease which spreads through a virus that contaminates through a mosquito (*Aedes* species) mainly breeds in many discarded containers. As a result of modernisation and commercialisation of peoples' livelihood patterns, commodities are packed in various types of containers, that they discard these containers into the environment irresponsibly making several health and environmental issues. Though, there is a method of collecting wastes from households by the local governance authorities (Pradeshiya Saba, Urban Councils, and Municipal Councils) there is no systematic way of handing over the garbage to collectors. The separation of solid waste and degradable waste is minimum and it makes a very complex issues of disposing the garbage. Especially, this is a common problem in all urbanized areas of Sri Lanka. Hence, communicable disease such as dengue has become an epidemic level in the recent history of Sri Lanka. The aim of the paper is to explore the research attempts done on solid waste management through a well-controlled community mobilization process and the results.

The objective of the research was to understand the relative importance of ecological, biological and sociological factors associated with different methods of waste management at household level and to identify appropriate intervention tools for the control of dengue in the district of Gampaha. This was mainly a qualitative study. However, the study team has made an effort to quantify certain finding using SPSS. Using both qualitative and quantitative findings it can be stated that the community mobilisation could be used for a proper and systematic way of solid waste management at household level which is minimizing the burden of local governing authorities in disposing waste. Especially, the methods introduced to households made several benefits such as preventing and controlling communicable diseases, increasing the possibility of growing organic vegetables at dwellings, community cohesiveness, and environmental sustainability. However, application of these research findings is a challenge since there are many institutional bottlenecks and barriers that need to pay especial attention.

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