

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT OUTREACH AND TRAINING SESSION AT KIS

Progress report – March, 2017

Table1. Particulars of the outreach sessions conducted at KIS

Participants	Date	No. of Participants	Mode of Session	Language & duration
KIS campus operational staff	18.03.2017	110	Power point and interaction	Tamil, 2.5 hours
Staff quarters housemaids	25.03.2017	31	Power point and interaction	Tamil, 1.5 hours

Program facilitated by Dr. R. Rajamanikam(SEEEO) with the support of Mr. William and team (KIS).

A. Solid Waste Outreach for KIS Campus Operational Staff

A half day solid waste management outreach and training session was organized for the KIS campus operational staff. All operational staff working in both main campus and Ganga compound was invited and around 110 of them (sweepers, waste collectors, recycling staff, kitchen and dispensary staff, gardeners, drivers, securities and other cleaning staff) participated. I've delivered a 2.5 hours outreach to them, from 1.20pm to 4pm. The program was designed to introduce to them waste management related issues, concept of sustainable solid waste management, resource recovery, importance of correct source and secondary segregation, importance of following guidelines in handling SW and role of individual in promoting and sustaining good SWM at KIS. I prepared specific power point presentation for them; the presentation had two parts, first part introduced present Kodaikanal waste management system and issues -environmental, economic and social issues of inappropriate solid waste management practice. The second part introduced them to KIS campus waste management system, its strength and weaknesses and the role of operational staff in minimising the weaknesses. After the outreach session we tried through volunteer staff to demonstrate correct segregation of waste materials into categories. Overall we tried to convey and convince them about their role in getting source segregated waste and its importance in entire process of sustainable waste management system.

Observations and recommendations:

- 1) The female staffs have given incredible attention and great willingness throughout the program. Their commitment was evident during the interaction session when they constantly engaged me with their doubts and perspectives regarding the program.
- 2) Inspirational attitude among the female staffs was evident; for my question "How do you feel when you find roads dirty with trash?" they answered " I feel bad seeing people throw garbage as well as dirty the surroundings; instantly my hands goes to pick up the waste and heart feels to clean it immediately".
- 3) After the interactive session we organized a training program regarding waste segregation. Samples were collected from the whole campus and staff volunteers segregated the waste in front of others. Unfortunately, most of them couldn't assign them into the correct categories.

They are not confident about many categories and hesitated to show their inability to others. So we announced that we will teach/train them about material categories and source segregation at their own work place.

- 4) In presentation I discussed about the occupational safety risks and health hazards faced by municipal sanitary workers and rag pickers at Kodai dump since they have not been provided with protective gears. This was intended to make them understand how well they have been treated by the KIS administration and their safety at work is ensured.
- 5) Most importantly, towards the end of the presentation, they realized that the source segregation of waste is not only helping the campus to minimize the landfill load and to reduce demand for virgin raw materials, but also preserves the natural resources for future generations. So I'm confident that here onwards they will segregate the waste not as a job, but as a duty to conserve the natural resources for their kids.
- 6) This program has helped them to develop a good understanding on why we keep many categories of waste bins in the campus and how to utilize them properly. They are very much willing and glad to be part of the KIS movement and ready to give their full support. However, at some places they have no appropriate categories of waste bins to segregate their waste properly. At many residential areas at KIS we have no food waste barrels and it's been mixed with other categories. So we told them that they can help us to update through feedback and we will upgrade the collection places with proper bins.
- 7) We instructed them to maintain and monitor the "waste collection point" at their work area so that we can assess each staff's performance and can have a clear idea on best practices and needed improvements.
- 8) We are starting onsite training process for the operational staff; we will be visiting their work area, clearing their doubts and crediting their good practices.
- 9) This kind of outreach sessions should be conducted once a semester, so that they can keep themselves updated, motivated and rewarded for their commitments.

B. Solid Waste Outreach for Housemaids of Staff Quarters

A solid waste outreach session of 1.5 hours was organized for the housemaids of Staff Quarters. Out of total 65 housemaids employed, 31 participated in the session. The PowerPoint was modified from the previous session to include current situation of Staff Quarters waste management. The PowerPoint included only two slides about KIS campus waste management scenario showcasing the good work done by KIS campus operational staff. Another addition to the presentation was the definition of roles and responsibilities in collecting, handling and disposing the waste and how to segregate the wastes correctly and dispose in the right barrels.

Observations and Recommendations:

1. All the participants responded that they have been uninformed about waste segregation and have been disposing the staff quarters waste without any segregation.

2. The participants were unable to recognize the categories of wastes into recyclable or not except paper and cardboard. They have given the justification that they haven't received any training regarding the identification of waste categories and proper segregation.
3. They also responded that the present classification system of waste categories is not clear and would like to have labels preferably with graphical representation that clearly convey the categorization.
4. Only 50% of the total maids turned out. The poor turnout was due to lack of communication or disinterest of house owners. Unless 100% of the workers get training through the session, the outreach may not achieve the desired result. So another outreach session is required to be organized for the remaining people which necessitates co-operation of all house owners, preferably by an official circular.
5. Another issue observed was that the housemaids consider it their duty to segregate if their masters tell them to do so. This is particularly important when new house maids take charge in future who might not have received the outreach. It is recommended to have a system where either 1) the house owner give the correct instruction to maids or 2) the house owner should connect with Mr. William for a training session for their maid.

MAIN RECOMMENDATION:

The outreach sessions have achieved the desired impact on the participants – educated and motivated them to commit to the existing waste management system. I'm giving the assurance that now all of them are highly motivated to participate willingly in the KIS waste management system. However, the confusion regarding the labels of bins (waste categories) continues to prevent them in properly segregating the waste. It has been decided that the workers can be trained on site (correct segregation and segregated disposal), once the categories and labels are finalised.

(A PowerPoint presentation with photo documentation viz. 'ppt2_Solid waste management outreach and training session at KIS' has been attached along for reference).