

Widening the scope of civic movement: Youths are the change maker

USAID-supported Dhaka CALLING Project promoted youth advocates to come forward to open a new door for bringing new changes



Different activities like one-one talking, Rally, poster pasting, leaflet distribution, campaign, and service providing to promote using bins under the movement of Boubazar, Balurmath, Korail and Mollas' slum Youth advocates Group (YAG)

Youth has started a movement for bringing changes in KAP of community people and informing them about their rights in Waste Management. Under the Dhaka CALLING Project, four youth advocacy group was formed with youth advocates from Boubazar, Balurmath, Korail, Mollas' slum at the very outset of the project implementation. As youths are one of the most important stakeholders, so they have been engaged in different meetings and informed about the project and project purposes. Moreover they were equipped with technical knowledge on video making. Youth advocates initially sit together and identified their existing problems and came up some actions for solving those problems.

Afterward youth advocates started their movement. In four slums youth advocates visited their neighbor households and local shops for talking with them regarding KAP towards proper waste management. Along with community people, Environment Pollution Prevention Committee (EPPC), CBO members youth advocates took part different community level mobilization like one-one talking, rally, poster pasting, human chain and so forth as well as social media campaign under the project to bringing changes in community people for promoting civic movement. Most importantly, to improve the overall situation of waste management, they have raised their voice in different advocacy event on behalf of their community people.

Along with community level campaign, Boubazar and Balurmath youth advocates formed Boubazar and Balurmath Environment Clubs separately with the other youth of those slums. So that they can keep working and raising their voice together for ensuring good governance whether Dhaka CALLING remains or not. The clubs members meet every months and discussed. They have provided bins to local shop owners by their own initiatives to promoting the practice level. Mahiya Rahman Oishee, member of Boubazar YAG, said "We could provide bins only a few shops, but surprising many other shop owners are now using waste bin in their shops afterwards our actions". She also added, "We are making fertilizer from household waste, previously our community were more polluted. But scenario has been changed from before. By reducing waste inside the slum, we are trying to help our government to make our community clean and pollution free."

Korail and Mollas' Slum youth advocates has been working to improve the waste management situation in their community as well. They have visited house to house and shops to observe the waste management practice, talked to people to dump waste in a specific places/ bins and monitored the overall situation of Community Led Waste Management system. They took part in different community level campaign, disseminated flyer and leaflet describing the message to the community people for best practice on waste management. Youth Advocate Smrity Akhter of Korail Slum said, "We have done many community mobilization activity, and talked in front of Mayor, MP and Minister in parliament, TV Talkshow, Roundtable discussion for our rights. Attitude of community people towards waste management have changed than before, but we need to keep working to see the best result"

Youth driven activities to bring changes in community is one of the best practice of Dhaka CALLING project, which is promoting good governance by widening the scope of civic movement.