

IBHA

Plastic Waste Management Project (PWM)

Launched in 2014, the Indian Beauty and Hygiene Association (IBHA) has pioneered the Plastic Waste Management Project (PWM): The 'zero-waste' plastic management project that focuses on collecting, segregating, and recycling post-consumer use multi-layered plastics (MLPs)

As the mantra of 'recycling of plastics' continues to be pushed as a way forward for a greener and cleaner future, what about plastics that cannot be recycled, and whose collection and segregation is a herculean task? Multi-layered plastics (MLP) are thin plastics used in fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), most commonly in shampoo sachets, food packets, and tetra packs. They are not degradable which leads to them being collected in garbage pits with no solution.

Launched in 2014, the Indian Beauty and Hygiene Association (IBHA) has pioneered the Plastic Waste Management Project (PWM): The 'zero-waste' plastic management project that focuses on collecting, segregating, and recycling post-consumer use multi-layered plastics (MLPs), which are considered

to be difficult to collect and recycle. This zero-waste project was piloted in Mumbai and later spread to other cities including Bengaluru, Chennai, Kolkata, and New Delhi.

Additionally, the association works on important issues and initiatives in the field of plastic waste management, safety standards, toxicology, and overall policy and regulatory issues of the personal care industry.

The PWM project addresses the primary problem of collection of MLPs at source by incentivizing rag-pickers to collect and segregate. Ragpickers get incentivized based on the weight of the plastic they collect, IBHA's PWM project has enabled them to earn a sizeable income, which is up to ₹4000 a month. IBHA also trains the waste workers on how to go about collecting and

segregating the thin plastic in a hygienic manner and introduced them to partners who would be willing to purchase MLPs and recycle it.

The impact has been realized because of IBHA's partners in this initiative like ISHA Fiber and Fuel Source (IFFS) in Bengaluru, Shakti Plastics in Mumbai, as well as NGOs like Stree Mukti Sanghatana (SMS) from Mumbai who have driven interventions leading to collection, segregation, and reuse/utilization of post-consumer flexible plastic waste. IBHA's intervention has helped 100 waste pickers in SMS who attended medical camps and supported their children by providing them scholarships.

This collected plastic waste is then recycled into fuel oil, material for road construction and even as fuel in cement factories. Other products that are manufactured from post-consumer MLP scrap also include furniture, household items, stationery, electronic appliances, and agricultural and automobiles products.

With a dual objective of saving the environment as well as investing in the up-skilling of the rag-pickers, the project has successfully collected and recycled around 55 tonnes of MLPs so far. The project is also an important commitment from the beauty and hygiene industry towards the Swachh Bharat Mission of the Government of India. ■

For more information please visit <https://www.ibhaindia.com/initiatives/plastic-waste-management>.

