

Yeshwanthpur Market – A Short Journey, A Strong Beginning

The **Yeshwanthpur** Retail Market Solid Waste Management Project began in June 2018, under Ward 37 of the **Aramane** Nagar constituency. It ran for about three months, and though short, it left behind important lessons and small systems that continue even today.

This project was designed with a clear purpose to reduce waste going to landfills, to understand the health impact of unmanaged waste on vendors, and to study existing sanitation practices within the market. We also aimed to build awareness among vendors, public, and nearby schools about segregation, dry waste management, and hygiene, and to assess the knowledge and practices of Pourakarmikas (PKs) working in the area.



Mapping the Market

We began with a detailed mapping exercise. The study revealed that the Yeshwanthpur Market had around **285 vendors and generated around 1-1.5 tonnes/ day**, the majority being vegetable sellers. During our observation, we noticed that almost all vendors were dumping mixed waste — vegetables, food, and plastic — at one common dumping site. Cows were seen eating directly from these piles, consuming plastic along with the food waste. It was clear that this situation was unhealthy for both animals and humans.

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Creating Change: From Dumpsite to Cow Feeding System



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Bins were distributed to all vendors for their wet waste, and Pourakarmikas began collecting it daily. This small step made a huge difference — about **300 to 350 kilograms of wet waste every day** was diverted from landfills and given to cow owners for feeding.

This simple, local system reduced pollution, kept the market cleaner, and benefited the cows — all without large infrastructure or machinery.



Health Awareness and Vendor Education

During this project, we also conducted a health survey among vendors to understand the relationship between waste exposure and health issues. The study and awareness sessions were supported by three doctors — **Dr. Vinita Bakle, Dr. Kishore Parajuli, and Dr. Farzana Begum** — interns from **Padma Shri School of Public Health, guided by Dr. Sandhya (BBMP)**.

They helped us conduct three rounds of data collection, correlating health outcomes with hygiene practices. Alongside, we held awareness programs on waste segregation and personal hygiene. These sessions built understanding among vendors about how segregation at the source protects their health and reduces disease risk.

Dry Waste Management in Schools

To build awareness among children and communities, we extended the project to schools near **Yeshwanthpur Market**. The goal was to teach students how to handle dry waste responsibly and create a working system in schools.

After securing permission, we conducted interactive awareness sessions in:

- **Yeshwanthpur Government Lower Primary School (80 students)**
- **Yeshwanthpur Government Higher Primary School (250 students)**
- **Yeshwanthpur Government High School (100 students)**
- **Rajarajeshwari Private School (200 students)**

Each school received IEC materials and jumbo bags for collecting dry waste. Students responded with enthusiasm, and teachers offered positive feedback.

We later expanded awareness to Approach Driven Public School and Chaitanya School, where dry waste collection systems are still being established.

Through this school network, around 50 kilograms of dry waste per week were collected and sent for recycling instead of ending up in landfills.

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Health Camp and Community Participation

As part of the program, we also conducted a health camp for market vendors and the surrounding community. Detailed findings and outcomes of this camp can be accessed through a dedicated link. The camp strengthened our understanding of how closely waste management, health, and hygiene are connected.

Challenges and Conclusion

Despite the positive impact, the project faced significant challenges — delayed response from higher authorities, limited funding, and political interference. These factors prevented the project from continuing beyond three months.

However, the work done in Yeshwanthpur left a valuable foundation. Vendors became more aware, schools adopted waste segregation, and small systems were put in place that still operate in parts.

In conclusion, the Yeshwanthpur Market Project reminded us that real change doesn't always need large budgets it needs understanding, coordination, and local action. With stronger support from the BBMP and consistent funding, such community-driven systems can thrive and scale across Bengaluru's markets.