WASTE PICKERS *in* DHAKA

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Using the sustainable livelihoods approach

Key findings and field notes

Jonathan Rouse & Mansoor Ali



Water, Engineering and Development Centre
Loughborough University
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Water, Engineering and Development Centre
Loughborough University
Leicestershire
LE11 3TU UK

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About the authors

Jonathan Rouse is a Research Assistant at WEDC. He graduated with a B.Sc. in Physics from the University of Nottingham in 1997 and from the University of Sussex with an MA in Rural Development in 1999. He has since been working for WEDC in the field of sustainable livelihoods, and in India on a rural household energy project. He undertook the fieldwork for this research in Bangladesh in 2000.

Dr Mansoor Ali is a Project/Programme Manager at WEDC. As a specialist in solid waste management for low- and middle-income countries, he has researched and published extensively. Some of his current research projects include Waste and Livelihoods, Micro-enterprise Development, Appropriate Landfilling and Recycling.

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Acronyms

DFID	Department for International Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Analysis

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Glossary

Bustee	Slum
Bangla	The national language of Bangladesh and mother tongue of all research participants.
Dealer	In the context of this report, a dealer is an individual to whom waste pickers sell their valuable waste after collection.
Eid	Islamic festival falling twice a year.
Livelihood	A livelihood comprises the means, activities, entitlements and assets by which people make a living. (See also below.)
Taka (Tk)	The currency in Bangladesh. At time of writing there were approximately Tk50 to US$1.00, Tk80 to UK £1.00.
Tokai	Bangla word for waste picker
Waste picker	An individual who collects and sells valuable waste as a livelihood.

Sustainable Livelihood

The following is a definition of sustainable *rural* livelihoods as defined by DFID. This is valuable (albeit in need of some adaptation) in understanding the nature of a sustainable urban livelihood.

> 'A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base.' (Carney, 1998: 4)