

DEEPA GANGWANI

Together As One

2010 Global Fellow



BIG BOLD IDEA

Develop a waste reduction social enterprise that builds demand for segregated waste and generates income opportunities for marginalized communities in India.

ORGANIZATION OVERVIEW

In India, waste is dumped in open spaces, landfills and waterbodies causing large-scale environmental pollution and health hazards. The waste collectors (mostly women), already living in dire indigence and neglect, are exposed to severe health hazards while conducting their vital role of scavenging.

TaO seeks to capture the economic benefits of waste as a green resource by harnessing the value proposition of waste-to-energy. Financial incentives are then directed back to create behavioral realignment of communities towards segregation and littering. Furthermore, they seek to establish an elevated social rank and a dignified way of life for the vulnerable waste workers through an organized platform for social and energy entrepreneurship. This tackles the root causes of social and economic inequity by transfiguring the waste workers into catalysts that convert waste, a now-established green resource, into productive applications.

PERSONAL BIO

Deepa Gangwani is the founder and CEO of Together as One (TaO), a social enterprise that enables waste management organizations to achieve economic and environmental sustainability and scalability through advanced waste to energy technologies and supply chain optimization. TaO's objectives are to achieve sustainable landfill-free municipal waste systems that integrate previously marginalized wastepickers with an emphasis on economic empowerment, health and safety, and social dignity. Deepa's professional experience includes fourteen years as an advisor to large multinationals across several industries, including international banks and development agencies. For the last six years, she has been working on sustainable development in India with a focus on health, energy, and education. Deepa's work in community-based initiatives led her to waste reduction, where she has volunteered with several waste management NGOs, serving as a board director. She holds an MBA and an MS in chemistry from Stanford University.

Issue area

Poverty Alleviation Economic Development

Organization/Fellow Location

Pondicherry, India

Impact Location

Asia

India

Organization Structure

Nonprofit

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