

PROJECT – CHC@PJ

Community Initiative on Household Waste Composting in Petaling Jaya (CHC@PJ)

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE
ON HOUSEHOLD WASTE COMPOSTING
IN PETALING JAYA
CHC @ PJ



A project implemented by
Centre for Environment, Technology & Development, Malaysia
[CETDEM]

An 18-month Awareness, Demonstration, Monitoring and Result Sharing Project on Community Household Waste Composting in Petaling Jaya funded by Danish International Development Agency Solid Waste Management Component (DANIDA-SWMC)

CHC@PJ Project

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Introduction

Most Local Authorities (LA) in Malaysia face a similar critical challenge in implementing effective solid waste management. While reducing the waste at source will help to conserve the environment and prolong the life span of landfill sites, the financial burden that each LA has to bear for collecting and disposing the waste is beyond the affordability of the LA. Even a LA with strong financial base like MBPJ is finding it tougher now to foot the solid waste management expenses.

The Community Initiative on Household Waste Composting (hereon referred to as CHC@PJ Project) was a project managed by CETDEM on behalf of Majlis Bandaraya Petaling Jaya (MBPJ) and funded by DANIDA-Solid Waste Management Component (SWMC) Funds Management Group (FMG). The target of CHC@PJ was to attract and retain the participation of 50 households (living with the jurisdiction of the MBPJ) over 18 months in composting efforts by these households.

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Background

CETDEM had begun promoting household composting through the Organic Farming Project. The Organic Farming Project, which started in 1986, is the longest running CETDEM project to date. From the experience gained through operating an Organic Farm for 10 years in Sungai Buloh, a number of publications (including multi-lingual VCD) have been produced.

The idea of having a community based composting project was mooted by CETDEM and Mr Lee of MBPJ LA21 Office in 2007. After much discussion, it was agreed that a pilot project be initiated. MBPJ then promoted the idea to DANIDA-SWMC and finally, the CHC@PJ Project took shape.

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Objectives

The main aim of the CHC@PJ project was to reduce kitchen and garden waste through the good practise of composting at household level.

The end product could be used as mulch/nutrient for fruit trees, vegetables, flowers and ornamental plants; or as a source for income generating.

It is hoped that successful participants would become resource people for future projects.

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Methodology

1. Recruiting Participants (briefing and selection)

Project Team members took the opportunity to distribute brochures at exhibitions participated by CETDEM and during talks given by CETDEM staff. Soft copies of the brochure were also uploaded into CETDEM and MBPJ website. Although the MBPJ LA 21 Office informed the Residents Associations (RAs) regarding the project, these RAs contributed only a few participants. A vast majority of participants were recruited through word of mouth and publicity via media coverage.

Slightly more than 100 application forms were received by the Project Team during the recruitment period. Only 53 were eventually selected to participate. 46 households managed to remain until the end project.



Ms Tan briefing potential participants

2. Composting Demonstration

The CHC@PJ Project Team held a series of 7 Composting Demonstrations (Compost Making Workshops) which were attended by all participants who had been selected at that point in time. The main objective of these workshops was to give project participants a hands-on experience on the process of compost making.



Participants attending a composting demonstration

A total of 59 people attended these workshops which were held in Sep, Oct. and Nov. 2008 at the CETDEM Organic Farming Community Centre [Sect. 19, PJ].

3. Baseline Data for Garbage Disposal

The first order of work for the participants was to fill a Record Booklet for amount of Household Waste generated in one month. This was done without segregating organic from inorganic waste. They were required to keep a record of garbage disposal for one month, prior to compost making activities.

4. Follow-up / On-site Visits to Participants' homes

The series of follow-up or on-site visits by Project Team members to participants' homes was one very important part of the project. Many participants cited this as a key element in sustaining their participation in the project. This activity was in fact very crucial, especially during the initial stage of the compost making activity.



Participants learning to turn the compost

The purpose of the on-site visit was to allow Project Team members a chance to view the actual storage condition and location of compost bin(s), advise the participants on the progress of their compost heap, and demonstrate to them on how to turn the compost heap when it was due.

5. Review Meetings

Based on the experience gained from a community-based project also managed by CETDEM in Petaling Jaya related to energy efficiency, the Project Team decided that it was necessary to have periodic Review Meetings with the participants. Eventually, 3 Review Meetings were held.



Ms Tan addressing the participants in the Review Meeting

The primary purpose of having these Review Meetings was to create an avenue for participants and family members to gather as a group. This would allow them to get to know one another and provide a forum for them to get updates on the project, as well as for them to share their good experiences and challenges as they proceeded with their compost making activities.

6. Data for garbage disposal towards end of project

The participants were requested to collect data for garbage disposal for another month. This was done towards the end of the project so that the Project Team could ascertain the effect that composting had on the amount of garbage disposed.

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Comments from Participants

Madam Lui How Tuck, SS4 (Press Briefing, 23 Jan 2009)

I came to know about this Project through Mr. Lee of MBPJ. I applied to participate because of my keen interest in gardening and the recycling activities in the various organizations in the community and at the same time help to reduce waste from my household. My family members also take part in this project by assisting me making compost in various stages

Initially, I encountered the problem of it not producing sufficient heat due to putting in too much of dry materials and there were also flies and ants around the bins. The constant visits of the project team members have corrected my method, since then I have managed to produce the compost successfully.

The end product as you can see from the sample is used to add to the soil of the trees, vegetables and flowering plants. This humus, in my opinion, is more fertile than the black earth that I purchased from the nursery.

Lee Moi Yin, SS 1, PJ (at Closing Ceremony)

I started the home compost project sometime in September 2008. Prior to that, I had been looking to learn how to make compost for my fruit trees and plants in my garden. I heard about this project from a friend. This project has also opened my eyes that household and garden waste can be recycled into home compost. My family has also reduced the amount of garbage disposed of. More than half of our household garbage has been recycled.

It had been a challenge initially when I started. I had to overcome the smells and the maggots and flies. We also found out that we did not have enough fresh garden leaves and grass to add to our compost. At Miss Tan's suggestions we were able to source the leaves, and grass from our neighbourhood.

The compost was used in my garden for my many banana plants and flowers and some vegetables. Some of the compost was given to families and neighbours. As there are 7 people staying in my home, the amount of organic household waste was much reduced. My family members have come to accept that composting and waste reduction is here to stay. Also we have also started another home project with garbage enzyme to be used at home and in the garden.

Through the various meetings and sharing with fellow members of the project my household managed to make 15 bins of compost over the 14 months period. Even though the project is over, we will continue to make compost.

Results

3 households recorded more than 80% reduction in solid waste disposal, 3 households had less than 10% reduction. We decided to leave out the data from 3 households that recorded an increase in disposal as they attributed this to anomaly to cleaning activities during the recording period.

A majority of the project participants were able to record 40-60% reduction in solid waste disposal by the end of the project.

On the average, each participating household was able to reduce the monthly waste put out for collection by Alam Flora by 47%.

Fruits of their labour

The participants had given more than a year of their time to participate in this project. With the compost they have made, the participants have managed to grow vegetables as well as improve their existing fruit trees and ornamental plants.



Participants pose with fruits of their labour

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Diary of Events

2008

Date

Event

28 May

Official Signing Ceremony held at MBPJ Head Office.



YB Edward Lee witnessing the hand over of the signed Agreement.
 (from left: Mr Anthony Tan, Ms Tan Siew Luang,
 Pn Sharipah Marhaini, En Puasa, YB Edward Lee,
 Mr Ib Larsen, Dr Tan Beng Hoe)

13 June

2008 Project officially starts.

2008 1st Steering Committee Meeting (CETDEM OFCC)

8 Aug



Steering Committee members officially meet the first time

Compost making workshop 1

14 Sep



Ingredients for making good compost

16 Sep

Compost making workshop 2

21 Sep

2008 Compost making workshop 3

23 Sept

Compost making workshop 4



29 Sept Compost making workshop 5 Home composting booklet

4 Oct Compost making workshop 6
 16 Nov Compost making workshop 7
 1st Review Meeting (Eco Green, TTDI)



14 Dec Group discussion in session

2009

Date Event

2nd Steering Committee Meeting (MBPJ Head Office)
 Media briefing (MBPJ Head Office)

23 Jan



Mr Lee Lih Shyan (LA21 MBPJ) and Ms Tan Siew Luang pose with project participants who are showing off their compost

16 May

2nd Review Meeting (CETDEM OFCC)

3rd Review Meeting (Eco Green, TTDI)



5 Sep

Group presentation in session

17 Sep

3rd Steering Committee Meeting (CETDEM OFCC)

Official Closing held at Section 19/22 Field, Petaling Jaya.



14 Nov

**Group photo of the CHC@PJ 'Graduates',
Project Team and Steering Committee members**