

# Cloud Lifts India's Waste Pickers Off Trash Piles Without Ending Recycling

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Photo credit: I Got Garbage Facebook Page

The third largest city in India piles up huge amounts of garbage every day, while recycling very little. Thousands of Bangalore's poorest citizens pick through dangerous trash heaps scouring for things to sell. The only ones doing any large-scale recycling, they only end up earning about \$72 a month for their hazardous work.

A brilliant scheme started by IT professionals, "I Got Garbage," is taking waste management into the 21st century, using the cloud to address the city's mounting trash problem. The company replaces the dangerous and unhealthy practice of landfill waste picking with a door-to-door model, collecting the valuables and recyclables before they end up in landfills. The service sends pickers to homes and offices to sort through the trash there and charges about \$1.60 a month to show up daily at a client's door to separate organics and recyclables.

So far, the project has rescued more than 5,000 waste pickers from trash heaps while doubling their income to about \$144 a month. If a husband and wife work together, that's enough to send their kids to school.

At the same time, "I Got Garbage," brainchild of the Mindtree consulting firm, has recovered 2,350 tons of recyclables that would otherwise have been added to Bangalore's trash heaps.

The team behind "[I Got Garbage](#)" has other business models in the works, including one in which pickers sell their clients composting kits to recycle organic waste at home.

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