



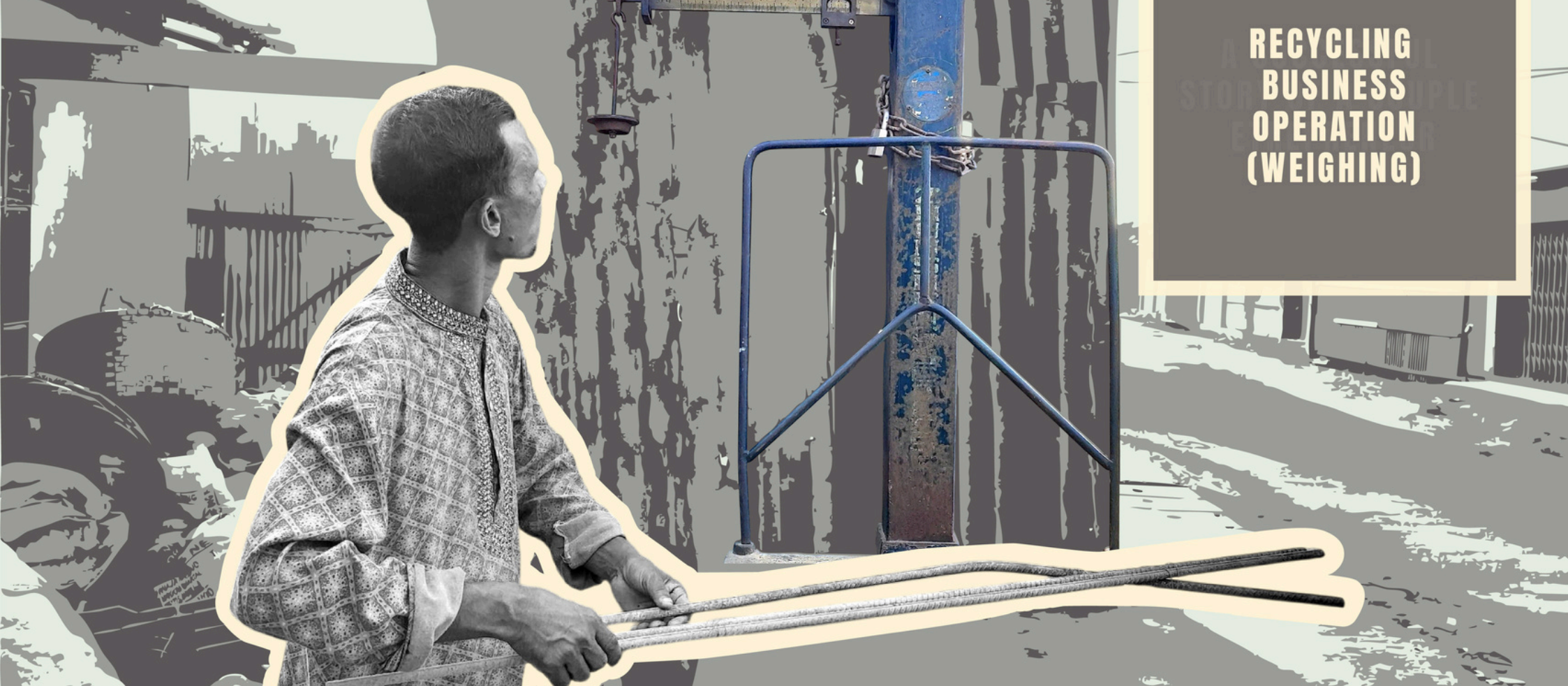


Dealing with scraps and waste is an incredible feat of endurance. It takes a great deal of courage to become fully and successfully involved in this business. Very few people work in the field of recycling hubs, waste management businesses, and scrap dealing. Most of the time, they are neglected by our smart society. If we observe them through the lens of philosophy, we see that they are the ones contributing enormously to keeping our environment clean and plastic-free. We

should really be thankful to them and motivate them by behaving kindly.

Now, let's look into a story about a couple (Abdul Motin and Runa Begum) who survived financial hardship and social humiliation to become successful entrepreneurs in the field of plastic recycling and scrap dealing in Cox's Bazar. Abdul Motin has been in the field of recycling and scrap dealing for almost 35 years. Before entering this business, he

worked as a farmer in a remote area in Barisal. He wasn't earning enough money to support his livelihood and was really upset at that time in his life. One day, a supportive friend of Motin told him to go to Cox's Bazar and start a scrap and recycling business. At first, he was unsure whether to listen to his friend or not. However, a few days later, Motin made up his mind as he had nothing to lose.



## RECYCLING BUSINESS OPERATION (WEIGHING)

After coming to Cox's Bazar, Abdul Motin joined a community of sanitation workers that was growing beside the Bakkhali River. While working with this community, he met Runa Begum. They shared their dreams and goals and immediately became friends. When interests and struggles align, friendships can form in a matter of seconds. They managed to make some money together, though it was really difficult for them at the time. With their earnings, they bought some equipment to

start their recycling and scrap business operations in rented shops. Thus, they began their journey. In the beginning, they collected recyclables and sold them to big scrap dealers, earning a decent income. After a few months of involvement in the business, they got married. Unfortunately, their struggles intensified. To his dismay, he was falsely accused of fraud by one of his fellow businessmen in 2012 and was sent to jail for two years. During that time, his wife took charge of the scraps and

recycling business. It was a really hard time for Runa Begum, but after one year of struggle, she learned how to run the business.

Abdul Motin was released on bail after two years. He came back home miserably and worn out. His wife motivated and inspired him, encouraging him to have the courage to start again. They began working together day and night to make their dreams come true. Their struggle paid off.



After three years of constant effort and hardship, they became financially stable. They now have three daughters and one son, all of whom help their parents run the business successfully.

In 2024, while they were still striving to scale their business, they surprisingly came across a formal training program initiated by BRAC to motivate informal waste workers and entrepreneurs to become formal entrepreneurs. They

enrolled in training sessions and learned about the full cycle of recycling operations. BRAC provided them with materials such as gloves, masks, boots, safety vests, helmets, and some medicine. They were fully encouraged. Motin and his family now own their shop. Motin said, “Our business is running very well after being guided by BRAC”. He and his wife have even started a new grocery business alongside their recycling and scrap business. They are really happy now.

In April, 2025 BRAC stepped in with a tailored business incubation package: an electric van worth BDT 180,000, a digital weighing scale valued at BDT 20,000, and an initial stock of safety materials and small logistics supplies worth BDT 50,000. Because transporting scrap by renting transport services was expensive, Runa used to stockpile materials until she had a full, heavy load. That strategy cut per-kilogram transport costs, but it also tied her to the timetable and prices. With the

electric van supplied under BRAC's PLEASE Project, she can now make smaller, more frequent rounds at a fraction of the cost, deliver directly to multiple buyers, and negotiate on her own terms. The business support increased Runa's collection radius while lowering transport costs. Since launching the segregated-plastic service, her weekly intake has climbed from 200–300 kg to 600–700 kg, streamlining the supply chain and boosting profits.

Some other successful entrepreneurs are working together with Abdul Motin and Runa Begum. From left: Runa, Rashida, Noor Begum, Josna, Moriom, Runa Begum, Runa Begum's Daughter, and Abdul Motin. All of them were trained by BRAC to become successful, formal recycling business entrepreneurs. Their operations mostly involve selling PVC, PET bottles, high-quality LDPE, and metal scraps. They also sell paper waste. However, their profit primarily comes from selling plastic bottles and recyclable plastic packaging materials.

Today she and the other women recyclers trained by the project collect and move roughly twice the volume of clean, sorted plastic they managed before. Every extra kilogram they intercept stays out of the water ways and, ultimately, the Bay of Bengal. Runa reflects that people in the community “no longer see recycling as shameful work but as a smart business.” Her story shows how a timely, modest investment—wrapped in training and trust—can turn an informal recycler into a catalyst for circular-economy growth and women's economic empowerment in coastal Bangladesh.

## Other Recycling Entrepreneurs with Abdul Motin & Runa Begum

Sumi

Rashida

Noor

Josna

Moriom

Runa

Runa's Daughter

Motin



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