


The KENYA INSTITUTE for PUBLIC
POLICY RESEARCH and ANALYSIS

Thinking Policy Together

Exploring the Contribution of Waste Management Sector to Job Creation in Kenya



Introduction



Kenya's waste management sector presents significant potential for both environmental sustainability and job creation. Despite generating approximately **8 million tonnes** of waste annually, the country faces challenges such as inefficient waste collection, inadequate recycling infrastructure, and weak policy enforcement.

The informal waste sector, which employs many youth, plays a crucial role but remains largely uncoordinated and underdeveloped. This highlights the need to strengthen waste management policies, invest in recycling infrastructure, and formalize informal waste workers to enhance employment opportunities.

Key Messages



1. High Waste Generation, Low Collection Efficiency

- Kenya produces approximately **22,000 tonnes** of municipal solid waste daily, but **less than 50%** is formally collected. This leads to environmental hazards and limits job creation potential.



2. Significant Informal Sector Contribution

- Around **60,000 people** are employed in the waste sector, mainly in informal waste picking and recycling, yet they lack institutional support and recognition.



3. Untapped Employment Potential

- A 1% increase in waste collection correlates with a 0.36% rise in employment, showcasing the sector's labour-intensive nature and potential for job creation.



4. Growing Circular Economy and Recycling Models

- Private sector-led initiatives (e.g., Mr. Green Africa, TakaTaka Solutions) point to viable recycling business models that create scalable employment.



5. Waste-to-Energy as a Green Job Driver

- Biogas and energy recovery solutions present additional avenues for employment while promoting environmental sustainability.



6. Need for Formalization and Infrastructure

- The sector remains underdeveloped due to poor policy enforcement, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of investment and technological adoption.



Policy Recommendations



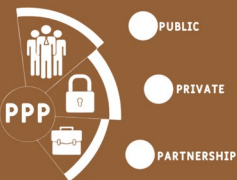
1. Formalize and Integrate the Informal Waste Sector

- Develop legal and policy frameworks that recognize and support informal waste workers through training, registration, and access to financial services.



2. Strengthen Waste Management Infrastructure

- Invest in modern collection systems, sorting facilities, and recycling plants, especially in urban areas with high waste generation.



3. Promote Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

- Encourage collaboration between government, private sector, and community organizations to scale up recycling and waste-to-energy initiatives.



4. Incentivize Recycling and Circular Economy Initiatives

- Provide tax breaks, grants, or subsidies to businesses engaging in recycling, composting, and upcycling to stimulate innovation and job creation.



5. Enhance Policy Enforcement and Coordination

- Improve monitoring and enforcement of waste management laws at county and national levels to ensure efficiency and sustainability.



6. Capacity Building and Vocational Training

- Roll out targeted training programs to equip youth and informal workers with technical skills in waste management, recycling, and green entrepreneurship.



7. Optimize Data and Technology

- Use data-driven approaches to plan waste collection routes, identify employment gaps, and measure sector performance for better policy planning.