

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste management is gradually becoming a serious concern in Tanzania due to limited sorting at source and improper storage, collection, transportation, treatment and final disposal. This implies that significant proportion of the waste generated end up in the environment in an unacceptable ways of disposal which accentuates environmental and public health risks. The waste management problem is more pronounced in squatter settlements, where 70-80% of the urban population resides without the necessary infrastructure and social services. Consequently, over 70% of diseases attended in health facilities in the country are water and sanitation related.

The main pollution sources include municipal wastewater, industrial effluent, and leachate from dumpsites, agricultural activities, gaseous emissions from industrial establishments and transportation activities and noise. The trend seems to worsen particularly in urban areas due to concentration of socio-economic activities and escalating population growth.

Domestic wastewater is the most serious source of water pollution since over 90% of the population use pit latrines and septic tanks for sanitation with walls which are not water tight and as such groundwater can flow freely in and out of the pit. Only about 10-15% of the urban population has access to the sewerage system, which further contributes to incidences of water borne diseases.

It is estimated also that the quantity of municipal solid waste generated countrywide amounts to more than 10,000 tones per day. The indicative generation rate ranges from 0.1 – 1.0 kg/cap/day. As much as 80-90% of solid waste generated in urban areas is not collected and most of the domestic waste, which accounts for about 60 % of the total solid waste generated daily, is disposed of by burning or burying.

Initiatives

- a) The government has engaged the private sector, Non Governmental Organizations and community Based Organizations to be involved in solid waste management (SWM) services. This has tried to reduce the amount of solid waste in urban areas, although more efforts are still required.
- b) Private sector and investors is encouraged to establish solid waste recycling systems in order to minimize the amount of the non-degradable waste materials. This is a potential source of employment,

jobs and income. Currently, there are minimal recycling activities for some types of waste materials in few towns. These materials include waste paper, metal, glass, plastic bottles and used tires.

- c) In recent years, the government issued a Public Notice to ban the manufacturing, importation, selling, buying, and use of plastic bags under 30 microns (or 0.03 mm) thickness and those with 65 microns (or 0.065 mm) thickness used for water and juice packaging. Also, it surtaxes other types of plastic bags (commonly known as Rambo) with 30 microns (or 0.03 mm) thickness and above, by more than 100%. The bags and packets polluted the environment, increased the possibilities of transmitting diseases like malaria and cholera, blocked drainage ditches and sewage systems, impaired land productivity and endangered livestock.
- d) Industry owners and investors are encouraged to promote the production of alternative bags in place of plastic bags, such as paper manufactured bags.
- e) The government is encouraging various stakeholders to exploit the potential of decomposing solid waste for Climate Change Mitigation through biogas flaring and generation of electricity. CDM project on Land Fill Gas Methane Recovery and Electricity Generation, at Mtoni Dumpsite, Dar Es Salaam is being implemented as the first CDM project of its kind in East Africa
- f) Some industries have started to make use of the waste generated for economic purposes including Biogas plants for energy needs. Recently, the world's first plant to produce electricity from sisal waste was inaugurated in one of Sisal Processing Plants in Tanga Region. It is meant to be another CDM Project in the area of Waste management. Likewise bagasse is used by some sugar factories as fuel for producing steam and electricity.
- g) Recently, a National Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan is prepared while Regulations on Solid and Hazardous Waste has been prepared.