

# Tanzania, United Republic of - 3.7 Waste Management and Recycling Infrastructure Assessment

## Overview

Waste collection in Tanzania is primarily carried out by local government authorities, private companies, and communities. There is a mix of formal and informal waste collection methods, with the involvement of both public and private entities. Additionally, community-based waste management initiatives are encouraged to promote sustainable waste collection at the grassroots level.

The Environmental Management Act [EMA 2004](#) provides for a legal and institutional framework for sustainable management of the environment, prevention and control

pollution, waste management, environmental quality standards, public participation, environmental compliance and enforcement. Under the EMA 2004 the National Environment Management Council ([NEMC](#)) is mandated to undertake enforcement, compliance, review and monitoring of environmental impacts assessments, research, facilitate public participation in environmental decision-making, raise environmental awareness through the collection and disseminate environmental information. Further details can be found on NEMC website: [NEMC](#)

Waste management services in Tanzania are provided by a combination of government agencies and private companies. Local government authorities often play a significant role in waste collection, while private companies are involved in areas such as waste transportation, disposal, and recycling. Community-based organizations also contribute to waste collection in many areas sorting waste into categories for disposal and recycling, selling the recyclable plastic, metal, and electronic waste to commercial recycling plants. In Zanzibar the CBO removes approximately 2.5 tons of plastic waste from the waste stream per day and sells this to commercial recycling companies on the mainland, significantly reducing the annual volume to landfill and providing an income stream for the community.

Tanzania local authorities are responsible for designating disposal sites for waste. Landfills are managed by local government authorities and private companies. The status of these landfills may vary across regions, some landfill sites currently in operation may not be approved by the local authority and therefore may not comply with either the Environmental Management Act, 2004, or the National Environmental Policy, 1997.

There are recycling initiatives in place across the country operated by a mix of public and private entities many of which are supported by community-based organisations (CBO) who organise the collection and sorting of waste and sell the recyclable plastics, metal, and electronic waste to private recycling companies. The scale of

recycling varies from region to region, some are large commercial operations producing high volumes of plastic items from recycled materials and some are small independent operations producing plastic pellets for sale to plastic manufacturing industry.



**Photos show a Small independent plastics recycling facility in Arusha producing plastic pellets for commercial use**

## **Hazardous Waste Disposal**

The disposal of hazardous waste is regulated by Environmental Management Act [EMA 2004](#) and audited by [NEMC](#). Transportation of hazardous waste within Tanzania requires a permit granted by the Minister's office and for export of hazardous waste a license is required accompanied by a permit issued by a competent authority of the receiving country. NEMC is also the authority for licensed disposal facilities for hazardous wastes, EMA 2004 places responsibility on the generator of hazardous

waste for its disposal and shall be liable for any damage to human health or environment damage.

Growth of an information society is becoming a common phenomenon in many developing countries, including Tanzania. This has resulted in an increase of users of Electrical and Electronic Equipment (EEE). The [2020 Electronic Communications Equipment Standards and E-Waste Management regulations](#), outlines the obligation of parties involved in managing electronic communication equipment end of life processes. Tanzania has 17 of the region's 39 EEE recycling plants in the East Africa. Tanzania is a party to the Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal and Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Trans-boundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes within Africa. The Minister of State – Environment at the Vice President's Office has issued [Guidelines For Management Of hazardous Waste](#) to serve as a quick reference on hazardous waste management so as to improve their management in the country, these guidelines elaborate the legal requirements and administrative procedures for handling of importation, transportation and disposal of hazardous waste as provided in the [Environmental Management \(Hazardous Waste Control and Management\) Regulations, 2009](#). To facilitate awareness and understanding of key stakeholders in effectively fulfilling their roles in achieving environmentally sound management of hazardous waste. Licencing for disposal or treatment of hazardous wastes are issued by the Director of Environment – Vice President's Office or respective authority at regional level. The licence restricts hazardous waste treatment plant or disposal sites to at least one thousand (1,000) metres away from a residential or commercial area and from water sources.

Health Care Waste Management (HCWM) is regulated for in [National Policy Guidelines For Health Care Waste Management In Tanzania 2017](#) the Ministry of Health is responsible for promoting a centralized biomedical waste treatment facilities and ensure an effective management of current health care waste disposal

sites. Tanzania Medicines and Medical Devices Authority (TMDA) have a project in process to developing a large capacity incinerator in Dodoma for the destruction of medical waste and expired medications, the project was delayed due to issues with the planned site proximity to a water source. TDMA have indicated they have identified a new site and expect construction to begin in 2024.

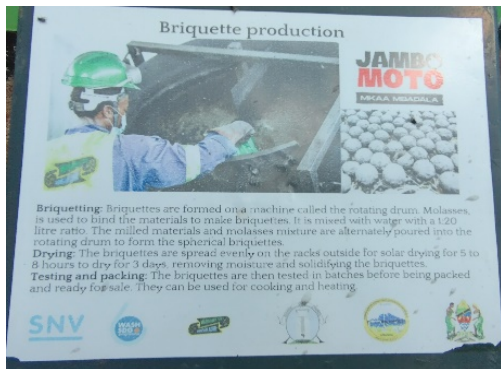
The disposal of waste oil in Tanzania is regulated by the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) under the Environmental Management (Hazardous Waste Control and Management) Regulations, 2009. These regulations prohibit the disposal of waste oil into water bodies, soil, or landfills. Instead, waste oil must be collected, transported, and treated by authorized hazardous waste management facilities. Some of the recycling companies visited during the LCA used waste motor oil as fuel for their furnaces to smelt glass, plastic, and biological waste for recycling.



Photos above show a community recycling initiative using used motor oil to fuel a furnace for recycling glass to support disabled people in Moshi

# Non-Hazardous Waste Disposal

More than 90 per cent of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) in Tanzania is believed to be disposed of in an unsatisfactory manner. Most of the MSW generated is disposed of in open and poorly operated dumpsites across the country, except for a few municipalities—including Arusha, Tanga, Mwanza, Mbeya, Dodoma, Kigoma and Mtwara—that have improved landfills (with lining and leachate collection system) constructed by the Tanzania Strategic Cities Project (TSCP). The management of biodegradable waste is challenging due to its perishable nature, its limited storage period, and its harmful impact when leeching out of landfills. However, it is also an area where significant improvements are possible by adoption of decentralized technologies such as composting and biomethanization. Some Municipal waste management sites have ongoing projects to generate biomass fuel for cleaner energy from a combination of blackwater and sawdust to make briquettes/charcoal for smokeless cooking.



Photos above show the Municipality landfill site in Arusha making charcoal for smokeless cooking from black water and sawdust for commercial sale.

The [Assessment of Solid Waste Management Ecosystem in Tanzania](#) report estimates “*Urban areas in Tanzania are projected by 2030 to generate about 26 million tonnes of solid waste annually. To accommodate this amount of waste, about  $10.6 \times 10^7$  cubic metres (m<sup>3</sup>) of landfill space is required; in terms of area approximately 200 hectares (about 494 acres) of land per year would be needed*”.

In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania's most populous city, the majority of households depend on community-based organizations (CBOs) for their solid waste collection. The collection frequency varies from one to three times a week, with residents obligated to pay refuse collection charges (RCC) to these CBOs for the services provided. However, around 10% of households opt for informal workers who collect waste more frequently at a lower cost compared to CBOs. Informal waste pickers gather the organic waste and low-value dry waste (such as plastic and paper) from households, discarding the non-saleable portion in drains or common areas after extracting items with market value. Consequently, only 40% of the waste reaches the landfill, while 60% is either burned at the household level, dumped on roadsides, drainage canals, sewers, or buried. The informal sector is responsible for collecting valuable dry waste, mainly plastic and metal and removing it from the waste stream for sale to recycling companies. Public awareness regarding sanitation and proper municipal solid waste (MSW) storage and disposal is lacking. Informal settlements and peri-urban areas, not under city or municipal council jurisdiction, commonly exhibit poor waste management practices.

The NEMC has also developed guidelines for the management of non-hazardous waste, which provide more detailed information on the processes, regulations, and procedures that should be followed. These guidelines cover topics such as waste characterization, waste minimization, waste treatment, and waste disposal.

In addition to the EMA and the NEMC guidelines, there are several other regulations and procedures that govern non-hazardous waste disposal in Tanzania. These

include:

- The Occupational Health and Safety Act ([OHS Act](#)) of 2003, which sets standards for the protection of workers from workplace hazards, including exposure to non-hazardous waste.
- The Public Health Act ([PHA](#)) of 1971, which regulates the disposal of waste in public places.
- The Local Government Act ([LGA](#)) of 1992, which gives local governments the responsibility for managing waste within their jurisdictions.

**Disclaimer: Registration does not imply any business relationship between the supplier and WFP/Logistics Cluster, and is used solely as a determinant of services, and capacities.**

**Please Note: WFP/Logistics Cluster maintain complete impartiality and are not in a position to endorse, comment on any company's suitability as a reputable service provider.**