

Solid Waste Management in Urban Area of Tanzania: The Case of Morogoro Municipality

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Location of fieldwork: Tanzania

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- Research background

The economy and urban population of Sub-Saharan Africa have grown at a substantial pace. One of the serious problems in this region is solid waste management (SWM). The responsibility of SWM largely lies with the local authorities (UN-Habitat 2000). However, it is difficult for them to collect the increasing amounts of wastes within their limited budgets. Besides, it is imperative for the local authorities to manage increasing and diversifying amounts of wastes by making improvements in the recycling systems.

- Research purpose and aim

Tanzania has utilized the private sector to address the issue of SWM. Dar es Salaam introduced a city development program in 1991, which involved the collection and recycling rate of wastes through privatization of SWM. In 1998 the government tried to introduce the same program in 10 other urban areas [Myers 2005]. The aim of this study is to analyze the performance of privatization of SWM in the urban Tanzania.

- Results and achievements by fieldwork

Interviews were conducted with the health officers in 19 out of 29 wards in Morogoro Municipality. The privatization of SWM started about 10 years ago in this area. Generally, small groups consisting of residents in each wards are in charge of collecting wastes from private residences and transporting to temporary collection spots (TCSs) [Figure1]. Then lorries hired by these groups ferry wastes from the TCSs to the final disposal site. According to the ward officers and group members, many groups face conflicts regarding the responsibility of collection and are dissatisfied because of shortage of municipal lorries [Figure 2]. In some wards, all the residences are not covered by the waste collection services owing to a lack of groups engaged in the services; they use pits which are dug outside their residences. They incinerate waste in the pits without sorting.

Autonomy of groups engaged in this service is a characteristic feature of SWM privatization in Morogoro Municipality. Money collected from the residents is used to pay wages and the rents for lorries. The municipality and the wards neither request working reports nor impose taxes on the groups. Thus, the partnership between the municipality and the groups is weak.

A substantial amounts of waste could be utilized for recycling and composting; however, only a few groups attempt to carry out trying both the activities. As it is turns out, the lack of local markets is an obstacle for the groups to adopt the practice of composting.



Figure 1 Waste from the local residences.
Source: author



Figure 2 TCS of Sabasaba ward: delay in collecting waste
by the municipal lorries. Source: author

- Implications and impacts on future research

This work showed the broad framework of SWM in Morogoro. However, there is a lack of quantitative data based on intensive fieldwork.

While enough information regarding recycling could not be collected through interviews conducted in the wards, observations made at the downtown area and roadsides indicated that individual collectors played an important role in recycling in Morogoro Municipality [Figure 3].

Thus, in the next fieldwork I intend to conduct participatory observations regarding waste collection, recycling, and composting by the local groups and individual collectors to collect additional data. For example, data collection will include the records of their history and accounting, the income and working conditions of individual collectors, and relationships among the various groups, individual collectors and residents. This study will clarify the effects of SWM privatization in Morogoro Municipality.



Figure 3 Plastic products collected by the individual collectors. Source: author

Reference

Myers, G. A. 2005. *Disposable Cities: Garbage, Governance and Sustainable Development in Urban Africa*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

UN-Habitat. http://www.waste.nl/sites/waste.nl/files/product/files/swm_in_world_cities_2010.pdf
(December 27, 2015)