WASTE PICKER INTEGRATION GUIDELINE FOR SOUTH AFRICA

Building the recycling economy and improving livelihoods through integration of the informal sector

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Foreword

Covid-19 has affected many sectors of South Africa's economy and negatively impacted the livelihoods of many people in the country. The waste sector has been hard hit during this tough period, with many in the waste management value chain, feeling the impact, including informal waste pickers. The post Covid-19 economic recovery demands that the waste sector rethink its approach to the protection of human health and the environment, and consider the urgent need to protect the livelihoods of those that are involved in the collection and selling of waste materials.

The visible impacts of poor waste management have taken hold in the imagination of the public in recent years, with images of illegal dumping and marine litter appearing frequently in the media. However, there is a social element of waste management that is also grabbing the attention of the South African public, and rightly so for the role that they play in South Africa's waste economy – the informal waste sector. It is estimated that there are between sixty and ninety thousand informal waste pickers working at the heart of South Africa's recycling economy, recovering mostly paper and packaging waste from the service chain and introducing these secondary resources into the country's value chain. Government, industry and civil society recognize the important role of waste pickers in the diversion of valuable resources away from landfill towards reuse and recycling.

In an effort to improve the working conditions and livelihoods of the informal waste sector and to better integrate pickers into the country's waste economy, the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) and the Department of Science and Innovation (DSI) developed this guideline document, with the support of the University of Witwatersrand. It fulfils the commitment made by the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) in the 2011 National Waste Management Strategy (NWMS) to "provide guidance to municipalities and industry on measures to improve the working conditions of waste-pickers."

This evidence-based guideline emanates from the first social science research grant project awarded under South Africa's 10-year Waste Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Roadmap, managed by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) on behalf of national government. The development of the guideline highlights the importance of combining research with the active involvement of waste pickers (represented by the South African Waste Pickers Association and the African Reclaimers Organisation), industry, government and academia, in order to create policy change of benefit to all.

The Chemicals and Waste Phakisa set a goal of a minimum of 50% of households separating waste at source in metropolitan municipalities by 2023. This will in part be achieved through the review, amendment and alignment of cities' waste management bylaws with national and provincial policies and regulations, and the integration of waste pickers through the municipal waste system. The waste sector already contributes 1.6% to South Africa's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), but it could contribute more. With waste picker integration, the waste sector can contribute to the country's GDP while mainstreaming and ensuring inclusive growth. Waste pickers are already helping municipalities save landfill space and budgets under the informal and often difficult conditions of waste collection. It is our understanding that waste pickers could collect more good quality materials through separation at source initiatives in municipalities. The guideline provides options on how municipalities could integrate waste pickers through separation at source initiatives.

The guideline is intended to support the implementation of South Africa's National Waste Management Strategy, and is recognised as contributing towards a just transition to a low carbon economy as outlined in the National Development Plan – Vision 2030, and to a more circular economy as outlined in the White Paper on Science Technology and Innovation. As the country moves towards the implementation of mandatory Extended Producer Responsibility, the guideline will be particularly relevant to Producer Responsibility Organizations and municipalities, to ensure greater integration of waste pickers in these schemes.

How the Guideline was developed

The second National Waste Management Strategy (NWMS) (DEA, 2011: 27) commits government to "provide guidance to municipalities and industry on measures to improve the working conditions of waste-pickers".

Government has undertaken a number of activities to fulfil this mandate. In 2012, the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries, which was then known as the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA), held a workshop in East London at which municipalities, industry and waste pickers acknowledged waste pickers' contributions to the recycling economy, and affirmed that waste pickers must be included in the formal system (DEA, 2012). In 2015, DEA hosted a national workshop for waste pickers, industry, research organisations and government to discuss how this could be done. The workshop focused on the legal framework, the institutional framework and operational issues related to the formal inclusion of waste pickers (DEA, 2015). The workshop also discussed the findings of a research project on waste pickers commissioned by DEA titled Determination of the extent and role of waste-picking in South Africa (DEA, 2016b).

Work then shifted to focus on how such guidance can be provided. In April 2016, the South African Cities Network (SACN) held a workshop that brought the metros and waste pickers together to discuss their experiences of waste picker integration (SACN, 2016). Subsequently, in November 2016, DEA hosted a workshop where Latin American experts shared their extensive experience on waste picker integration with South African stakeholders, including representatives from government, industry, waste picker organisations and NGOs (DEA, 2016a). That workshop was the first concrete step towards developing this Guideline.

Inspired by the Brazilian experience (Dias, 2011a; Gutberlet, 2008), this Guideline on Waste Picker Integration was developed through a participatory stakeholder process that drew on evidence from academic research, as well as international experiences and stakeholders' expertise. The knowledge, insights and needs of waste pickers were centred in the process.

Between June 2017 and April 2019, government convened a Waste Picker Integration National Stakeholder Working Group (SWG) that included representatives from waste picker organisations, industry associations, municipalities, national government departments and NGOs. This Guideline is the outcome of six participatory SWG workshops facilitated by Dr Melanie Samson (University of the Witwatersrand), who wrote the guideline. On April 9, 2019, DEA hosted a one day Waste Picker Integration Workshop to present the draft Guideline and receive feedback from a wider group of stakeholders.

The Guideline was informed by extensive research conducted by a team at the University of the Witwatersrand led by Dr. Samson under the Department of Science and Technology's research grant project Lessons from waste picker integration initiatives. The project received additional funding from DEA. Research conducted by other universities and science councils in South Africa over the past decade also played an important role in developing the Guideline. One of the stakeholder workshops took the form of a research conference where researchers shared their findings related to waste pickers with SWG members

The Guideline drew inspiration from several similar guidelines produced for Latin America, India and the Balkans (Chikarmane, 2012; Chintan, 2014; IADB, 2013; Scheinberg et al., 2018) and benefited greatly from inputs by leading global and national experts.

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Authors: Melanie Samson (University of the Witwatersrand) facilitated the Guideline process and is the author of the Guideline. Laura Alfers (WIEGO), Rico Euripidou (groundWork), Susan Oelofse (CSIR), Ana Carolina Ogando (WIEGO), Federico Parra (WIEGO), Rinie Schenck (UWC) and Leslie Vryenhoek (WIEGO) respectively authored Box 17, Box 16, Box 8, Box 7 (with M Samson), Box 10, Box 15, and Boxes 23 & 10.

Editing: The text was edited by Claire Ceruti (University of the Witwatersrand).

Layout: Funeka Simelane, Musuku Digital and Jennifer van den Bussche (Sticky Situations).

Art and design: Dylan Seegers (Atomic Energy), Jennifer van den Bussche (Sticky Situations) and Andrew Lindsay (Spaza Art) created art and diagrams for the Guideline.

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Definitions

Extended producer responsibility (EPR) – an environmental policy that extends a producer's responsibility to include the post-consumer phase of a product's life-cycle.

Integrated separation at sources – separation at source that integrates waste pickers and their informal separation outside source recycling system

Recycling – processing and manufacturing activities to convert previously used materials into new products or inputs.

Separation at source (S@S) – separation at source is the separation of different types of post-consumer waste materials at the site where they are generated. S@S typically focuses on the separation of recyclables (and often further disaggregation into different types of recyclables), organic waste and solid waste. Selective collection of separated materials ensures that they do not contaminate each other and that waste to landfill is minimised.

Separation outside source (SoS) – the informal system created by waste pickers working in streets, open spaces and landfills to salvage recyclable and reusable materials mixed into the waste stream, and to separate, clean and transport them to either sell, use themselves, or make new products.

Waste picker – someone who collects re-usable and recyclable materials from residential and commercial waste bins, landfill sites and open spaces in order to revalue them and generate an income.

Waste picker integration –the creation of a formally planned recycling system that values and improves the present role of waste pickers, builds on the strengths of their existing system for collecting and revaluing materials, and includes waste pickers as key partners in its design, implementation, evaluation and revision. Waste picker integration requires changes in a number of spheres and includes the integration of waste pickers' work, as well as the political, economic, social, legal and environmental integration of waste pickers.

Acronyms

ARO	African Reclaimers Organisation
DEA	Department of Environmental Affairs
DEFF	Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (previously DEA)
DSI	Department of Science and Innovation (previously DST)
DST	Department of Science and Technology
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EPR	Extended producer responsibility
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDP	Integrated development plan
IndWMP	Industry waste management plan
IWMP	Integrated waste management plan
KPI	Key performance indicator
MRF	Materials recovery facility
NEDLAC	National Economic Development and Labour Council
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PACSA	Packaging South Africa (now known as Packaging SA)
PETCO	PET Company
PRO	Producer responsibility organisation
S@S	Separation at source
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SAWPA	South African Waste Pickers' Association
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SoS	Separation outside source
WML	Waste management license
WPIP	Waste Picker Integration Plan

Introduction

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Section A

Section A

South African policy and legislation (DEA, 2011; DEAT, 1999, 2001) prioritise moving waste away from landfill towards value recovery. Together with reduction, reuse and recovery, recycling is identified as integral to this shift. Growing landfill constraints and new policy developments, such as the planned introduction of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), are further encouraging many municipalities and industries to move towards establishing official recycling systems and programmes. As the former Minister of the Environment recognised, waste pickers have been diverting recyclables from landfills for many years and have an important role to play in the continued development and expansion of the country's recycling economy (Molewa, 2016).

In the second National Waste Management Strategy (DEA, 2011:27), government committed to "provide guidance to municipalities and industry on measures to improve the working conditions of waste-pickers". Since then, the policy approach has evolved from focusing on formalising individual waste pickers through formal employment, to the more systemic approach of waste picker integration, which includes waste pickers and their informal collection system in official programmes in order to expand collection of recyclables and strengthen and transform the recycling value chain.

> ***"Waste pickers are an integral part of the waste management system, and help to divert recyclables away from landfill.***
>
> ***These are the people who have expert knowledge of the recyclables they deal with and would add a lot of value if they are to be considered whenever new recycling facilities are being developed."***
>
> *– former Minister of Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa (2016)*

This Guideline explains:

1. **why waste picker integration is important;**
2. **who waste pickers are, how they work, and the importance of recognising their contributions;**
3. **what waste picker integration is;**
4. **how to develop, institutionalise and implement waste picker integration plans.**

1. Why we need a Waste Picker Integration Guideline

There are a number of reasons why South Africa needs a Guideline on Waste Picker Integration. These include recognition that waste pickers are currently the key actors extracting recyclables from the waste stream; waste picker integration is global best practice; and waste picker integration promotes the achievement of a number of key government priorities.

1.1 Waste pickers are the key actors diverting recyclables from landfills

In 2015, 57.1% of post-consumer paper and packaging materials were recovered for recycling, putting South Africa on par with many European countries (Godfrey and Oelofse, 2017: 5). This impressive recycling rate is largely due to informal waste pickers who, in the absence of formal programmes to collect recyclables, realised that valuable materials were being buried instead of put to productive use. Having identified this gap in the market, waste pickers developed an informal system to separate and extract recyclable materials disposed of as waste, and then sell them into the value chain. They also salvage and revalue significant amounts of reusable materials.

Waste pickers are already deeply integrated into the waste management system and the recycling economy. They salvage approximately 80% to 90% of post-consumer paper and packaging collected in South Africa for recycling (Godfrey et al., 2016) and are the backbone of the current system that directs recyclables away from landfills and toward recyclers. As South Africa moves forward in achieving our goals related to recycling and EPR, we need to harness and capitalize on this existing strength for the benefit of waste pickers, the environment and the economy.

Box 1 – Support for Waste Picker Integration

Government recognises the pioneering role of waste pickers in the development of recycling collection systems in South Africa. Waste picker integration is necessary to ensure that waste pickers' incomes, conditions, job security, position in the value chain and dignity are improved as the recycling economy is expanded. Waste picker integration advances key government priorities related to job creation, poverty alleviation, environmental protection and economic transformation. It is an innovative way to include the informal economy. Waste picker integration ensures that official recycling programmes are appropriate for the South African context and increases their viability by building on (rather than competing with) waste pickers' informal collection system.

1.2 Waste picker integration is global best practice

South Africa's situation is not unique. Waste pickers make the same contributions across developing countries and are increasingly playing a role in developed countries as well. Waste picker integration into local and regional waste management systems and recycling economies is now global best practice. Countries including Serbia, Brazil, Tunisia and the Philippines are now focussing on waste picker integration as a key component of official recycling systems (Dias, 2016; Scheinberg et al, 2018; Scheinberg et al., 2015). Waste picker integration is advocated by the World Bank (2019) and Inter-American Development Bank (2013), and the OECD (2016) recognises it as an important part of EPR.

1.3 Waste picker integration advances key national government priorities

Waste picker integration advances a number of key policy priorities in South Africa. Waste pickers have created their own form of green jobs and make significant environmental contributions. As noted above, waste pickers play a key role in diverting waste from landfill and providing inputs to the recycling industry. In addition, because waste pickers provide a non-motorised form of collection (trolleys and horse carts), waste picker integration helps to contain greenhouse gas emission related to recycling.

Waste picker integration supports South Africa's commitments to realising 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): amongst others, SDG 1 on eradiating poverty; SDG8 on economic growth and good jobs for all; SDG 10 on reducing inequality; and SDG 11 on creating sustainable cities and communities (UN General Assembly, 2015). Waste picker integration also advances the objectives of the National Development Plan, or NDP 2030, (National Planning Commission, 2012) to eliminate poverty, reduce inequality, create an inclusive society and economy, and create decent work for all.

Given South Africa's history of colonialism and apartheid, and persistent racial inequalities, waste picking is profoundly racialised, with impoverished black people creating their own jobs and surviving off the detritus of wealthier, predominantly white households. In line with the goals of NDP 2030 (National Planning Commission, 2012), waste picker integration and the improvement of waste pickers' incomes, conditions and status contribute to redressing racial and class inequality.

To date, waste pickers have been marginalised socially and politically; they have not been seen as key actors in recycling and waste management systems, and have not been included in decision-making processes related to these sectors. As discussed further below in Section D, the involvement of waste pickers in decisions that affect their lives and the future of recycling is a key principle of waste picker integration. Waste picker integration therefore also promotes political transformation and the deepening of democracy by including people who have been stigmatised and marginalised in policy-making processes.

2. Objectives

This Guideline is designed to provide all parties involved in recycling and waste picker integration with information and analysis necessary to develop a common understanding of:

- what waste picker integration is;
- the principles that underpin waste picker integration;
- why it is important;
- how it is related to formal recycling programmes;
- the forms that waste picker integration can take;
- key issues related to waste picker integration that need to be considered;
- how to develop and implement a waste picker integration programme and plan through an agreed participatory process that includes waste pickers as key partners.

3. Flexible approach

Because there are so many differences between waste pickers, municipalities and industries, there cannot be a one size fits all approach to waste picker integration.

The Guideline therefore provides principles in Section D that should underpin recycling and waste picker plans and programmes, while also giving stakeholders knowledge and tools to develop the approach most relevant for their context.

4. Participation and partnership

Waste pickers know best how their existing recycling system works, how official recycling systems affect them, and what their needs are. The design and implementation of waste picker integration programmes must therefore be participatory and negotiated with reclaimers. Rather than taking the form of shallow consultation, it is important that waste picker participation is meaningful and that waste pickers are understood as equal partners in the integration processes (Chikarmane and Narayan, 2005; Dias, 2011b; Nas and Jaffe, 2004; Nzeadibe and Anyadike 2012; Gutberlet, 2008; Scheinberg, 2012). As integration forms part of the Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP), waste pickers should work as partners on the IWMP as well.

Waste pickers should also receive information about, and take into consideration, how industry and municipalities function and the possibilities and constraints they face. Ensuring that waste pickers have access to, and develop reciprocal relations with, municipal and industry officials provides a strong foundation for integration.

Photo Credit: Melanie Samson

5. Process to develop and implement waste picker integration

The Guideline offers a basic participatory process that can be used to develop and implement evidence-based waste picker integration plans and programmes (see Section H), and to generate commitment to implementing them. While it is recommended that the sequence outlined in the Guideline be followed, stakeholders can develop their own sequencing and also add additional elements. Annexure 1 includes a template for a Waste Picker Integration Plan that can be completed by conducting the activities suggested in the Guideline.

6. Intended users

South Africa is in the process of implementing mandatory EPR, a system that makes producers responsible, financially and/or operationally, for the end-of-life management of products they produce. Both industry and municipalities will need to be involved in programmes to collect recyclables. Industry will be involved as under EPR the producers are responsible for ensuring that their products are extracted from the waste stream and the materials are sold as inputs for production. Municipalities will be involved as the collection of recyclables affects the amount of waste to be collected for disposal, which is a constitutional responsibility of local government. In addition, collection of recyclables happens in municipal public space . Both industry and municipalities will therefore be involved in waste picker integration, and both will benefit from this Guideline.

Many other stakeholders work directly with waste pickers or indirectly affect them. These include:

- companies that support recycling and waste picker integration through corporate social responsibility programmes;
- companies that collect waste;
- buyers and buy-back centres who purchase recyclables from waste pickers;
- private companies and community cooperatives providing separation at source services;
- small businesses, schools, religious institutions and other organisations that undertake recycling initiatives;
- non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and donors that support waste picker and other recycling projects;
- municipal officials, elected representatives, consultants and professionals who work on issues related no waste management and recycling, and who develop plans and make decisions that affect waste pickers;
- resident associations that make decisions about waste pickers' access to their neighbourhoods;
- retail outlets and street traders who discard recyclable materials.

The Waste Picker Integration Principles presented in Section D of the Guideline should inform how these organisations work with waste pickers. The inclusive waste picker integration process presented in Section H can also be modified to assist these organisations in developing a coherent and principled approach to their programmes.

The Guideline is primarily intended to educate and guide organisations other than waste pickers' organisations whose work affects waste pickers and who should work with waste pickers on waste picker integration. Waste picker organisations played a key role in developing the Guideline and their concerns, needs and ideas have been prioritised. The Guideline can also be useful for waste picker organisations in providing them with ideas to inform their own analysis, proposals and demands. However, as the Guideline focuses on guiding non-waste-picker organisations on how to partner with waste pickers, develop waste picker integration plans and integrate waste pickers, it does not present a strategy waste pickers can follow to initiate and negotiate waste picker integration. Such a strategy is related to questions of organising and is something to be developed by waste pickers and organisations that support them.

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7. Overview of the Guideline

This document is divided into 11 sections.

Box 2 – Overview of the guideline

SECTION	CONTENT
A – Introduction	Section A explains why we need a waste picker integration Guideline and how to use it.
B – Understanding waste pickers and their contributions	Section B explains who waste pickers are, what they do, how they relate to formal recycling and waste management systems, and how they fit into the local and global recycling value chain.
C – Understanding waste picker integration	Section C explains the concept of waste picker integration.
D – Waste picker integration principles	Section D explains the principles that underpin waste picker integration that should be included in all waste picker integration plans and integration initiatives.
E – Some common challenges to be addressed as part of waste picker integration	Section E presents some common challenges faced by waste pickers, municipalities and industry that should be addressed as part of waste picker integration. Annexure 2 presents possible ways to address each of these needs, and Section H presents a participatory process through which these and other challenges can be identified, prioritised and addressed.
F – Integrated Separation at Source	Section F discusses why waste pickers must be involved in Separation at Source and how this can be done.
G – An enabling national environment	Section G outlines changes to be made at a national level to create an enabling environment for waste picker integration.
H – Implementing waste picker integration	Section H presents a seven step participatory waste picker integration process. Working through the process will enable stakeholders to develop and complete the Waste Picker Integration Plan included in Annexure 1.
I – Conclusion	Section I concludes the main body of the Guideline
J – References	Section J provides references used in the Guideline
K - Annexures	Section K includes three annexures. Annexure 1 provides a template for a waste picker integration plan. Annexure 2 presents possible ways to address some typical issues related to waste picker integration encountered by municipalities, industry and waste pickers. Annexure 3 provides links to useful resources and videos on waste picker integration.

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Photo Credit: Jonathan Torgovnik, courtesy of WIEGO

Understanding Waste Pickers and Their Contributions

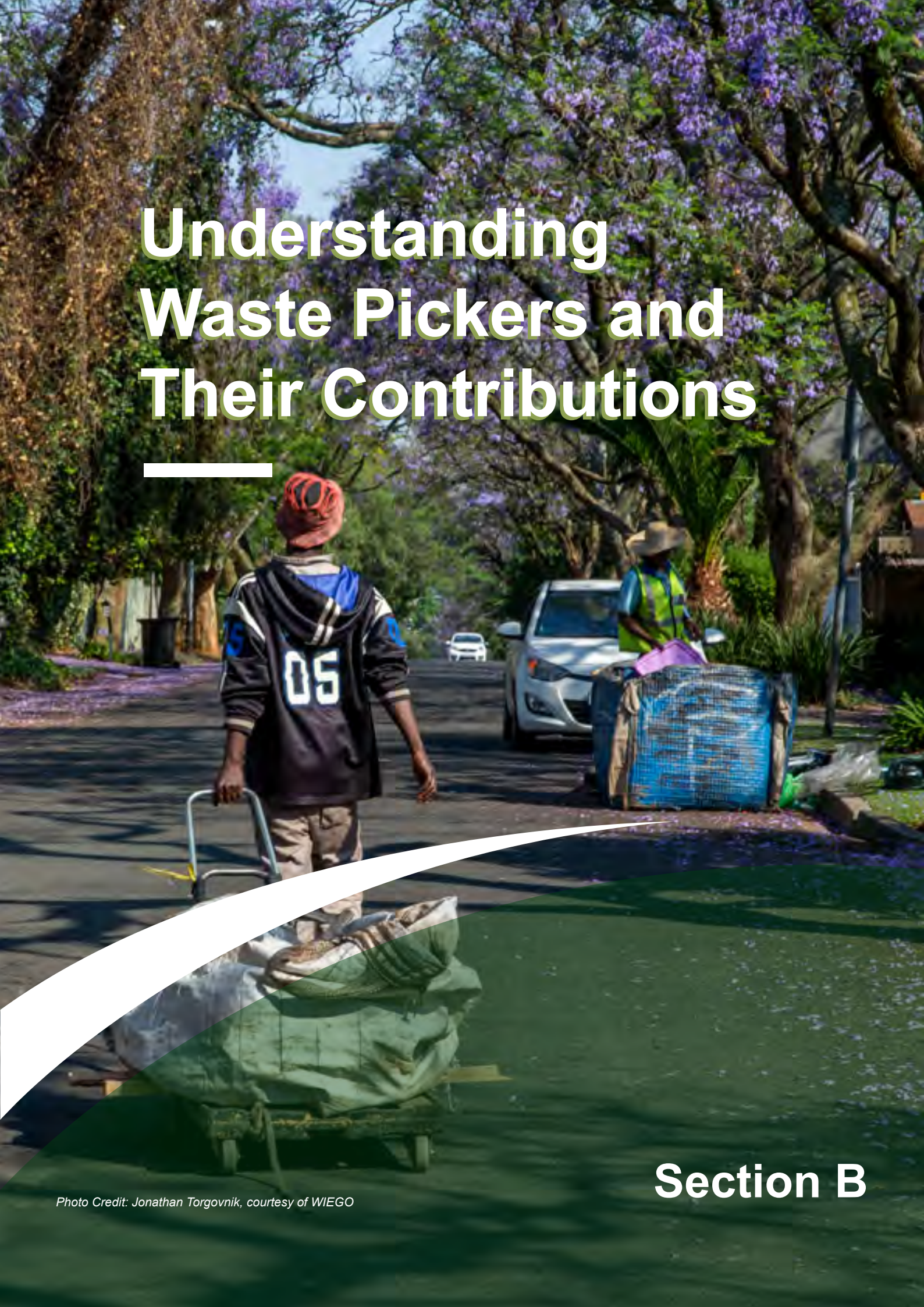

Photo Credit: Jonathan Torgovnik, courtesy of WIEGO

Section B

Section B

Overview of Section B

Section B explains:

- who waste pickers are;
- the work that waste pickers perform;
- why they work as waste pickers;
- the contributions waste pickers make to the economy and the environment.

Outcomes

After reading this section, the reader will:

- have increased appreciation of waste pickers and their work;
- understand that waste pickers are the backbone of the existing system for collecting recyclables;
- understand why waste pickers must be paid for the services they provide.

1. Who are waste pickers?

Waste pickers are people who collect re-usable and recyclable materials from residential and commercial waste bins, landfill sites and open spaces in order to revalue them and generate an income. Estimates of the number of waste pickers in the country range from approximately 60 000 (DEA, 2016b) to as high 215 000 (Godfrey and Oelofse, 2017:6). The planned creation of an occupational classification for waste picking and registration of waste pickers, as key components of waste picker integration, will also assist in generating more accurate data.

Box 3 – A typical day of a male street waste picker

My name is Tshepo and I work as a reclaimer in the City of Johannesburg. I am 34 years old and have been doing this work for the last six years. I used to work in mines as a casual worker, but I lost my job when the mine started retrenching. I have a 5 year old daughter who I need to support and there are no jobs out there, so I decided to become a reclaimer after I saw others doing this.

I usually start work at three am in the morning. I pull my trolley from Booysens and work in a different wealthy northern suburb each day of the week. On Thursdays and Fridays I work in Sunninghill, which is more than 29 km away. It takes me two and a half to three hours to get there. It is very dark when we start and we usually travel as a group to where we need to work in order to protect ourselves from criminals. I pull the trolley and at times run so that I can get there in time. Some residents put their bins out the night before, so we start working on those. However, usually we wait for domestic workers to arrive at different homes and start when they take out the bins. We also have to look out for private security because in some streets they do not allow us to collect materials. We are often threatened with arrest and some of us have been assaulted. We sometimes pay security guards to allow us to collect from a few bins before residents report us.

I go through bins to collect clean materials for a few hours until the Pikitup waste collection truck arrives at around 10h00 or when we are chased away by security guards. I usually take a break and buy something to eat and then start the long journey home. On a good day I can collect up to 200 kg of material that I have to haul back. The return journey is longer than the one to Sunninghill because of the routes I take to avoid traffic and the challenge of climbing hills with such a heavy load. At times I can save time and preserve my energy by surfing down hills on my trolley. It takes me around five hours to get back to the area where I sort and store my materials together with other reclaimers. Once I get back around 5pm, I start sorting through what I collected by separating the various grades of materials. I usually finish work by 6pm, wash, cook my supper and then I am asleep by 7pm.

Box 4 – A typical day of a female landfill waste picker

My name is Thabisile and I work at a landfill site in KwaZulu Natal. I am 60 years old with three children and have been doing this work since 1992. At first it was very hard to work at the dump – it stank and I didn't want to touch the garbage. But I needed the work so I got used to it. Two of my children are in tertiary colleges and this work has sustained my family all this time. I also support my granddaughter who lives with me.

I take taxis like everyone else who is going to work. I leave my house at 06h30 in the morning and arrive at the landfill by 07h00. I arrive at the place where I store my materials, change into my work clothes and carefully store away my street clothes to change into at the end of the day. Trucks start arriving at the landfill from 07h30. Trucks are directed to tip at a certain area and once a few have done so, we go over to that area and start working. I move as quickly as I can to sift through the waste to find good quality materials. The young men always get the more valuable materials first, so I usually take white paper, cardboard, PET bottles, and milk containers. I put all the materials I collected into a sack and then go back to search for more.

I usually stop at noon to buy a freshly cooked meal from one of the eating places opened by some of my fellow workers and community members. After a 20 minute break I get back to work. When I have collected enough material or the time is getting late, I take my materials to my sorting space at the bottom of the hill and divide them into categories based on what buyers will purchase together. We mostly sell our materials on Fridays to buyers who have stalls at the landfill.

My day finishes at 16h00 when I change back to my regular clothes. I clean up the best that I can before I take a taxi home and start caring for my granddaughter, helping her with homework, cooking a meal, putting her to bed, cleaning the house, and finally go to sleep.

Photo Credit: Melanie Samson

1.1 Waste pickers and inequality

Waste picking only exists at such a large scale in South Africa owing to the country's exceptionally high levels of both income equality and unemployment; in 2018 the World Bank ranked South Africa as the most unequal country in the world, and in the second quarter of 2019 the unemployment rate was 29% using the simple definition or 38,5% using the expanded definition that includes discouraged work seekers (Stats SA, 2019; World Bank, 2018). Waste picking is predicated on some people being so wealthy that they throw away items that can still be used or sold, and others being so poor that it becomes a viable economic option to salvage these materials (Beall, 1997). Particularly in South Africa, class cannot be separated from race (National Planning Commission, 2012: 458), and waste picking is visual testimony to the pressing need for measures such as waste picker integration as well as broader structural transformation to address and transform racial and class inequality in the economy.

Many waste pickers' families rely solely or primarily on income from waste picking. From the money they earn selling recyclable and reusable materials, waste pickers buy daily necessities, build homes, pay school fees, send money to relatives and pay for their children to go to university, amongst many other expenses.

Box 5 – Materials collected by waste pickers

Currently waste pickers in South Africa collect a very wide range of materials, primarily from the paper and packaging waste stream. The choice of materials is based on those for which economic value has been created through the development of local, regional and international end-use markets, that is, demand and resultant value. Just some of the items they collect are:

- *polypropylene – (yoghurt containers, butter containers, plastic chairs, pot plants, Tupperware, children's toys);*
- *high density polyethylene or HD (milk containers);*
- *clear, green and brown Polyethylene Terephthalate or PET (soft drink bottles, tomato sauce bottles, cooking oil containers, etc.);*
- *mixed plastics – plastic carrier bags;*
- *clear plastics;*
- *aluminium cans;*
- *white paper (HL 1);*
- *glass bottles;*
- *cardboard (K4);*
- *common paper (glossy paper such as advertising inserts);*
- *newspaper;*
- *light steel – (corrugated iron sheets, coffee tins, camp chair legs, metal broom handles, screw drivers, etc.)a;*
- *aluminium;*
- *heavy steel;*
- *copper wires;*
- *electronic mother boards and electronic components;*
- *aluminium foil;*
- *printer Cartridges;*
- *PVC (plastic boots, cable insulation covers, hose pipes, etc).*

A number of materials that could be recycled are not collected because there is no market or prices are too low. With the introduction of EPR, industry should provide incentives and opportunities for waste pickers to collect these and other materials that currently fetch insufficient value. Owing to an increased focus on diverting waste from landfill, municipalities should also support waste pickers to collect new materials such as organics, and to move up the value chain and into new occupations.

Waste pickers also salvage items that they can make things out of or sell informally, such as:

- *toys;*
- *clothes;*
- *foam;*
- *building material (such as frames, bricks, tiles);*
- *old electronics;*
- *furniture;*
- *household items;*
- *cell phones;*
- *wood.*

Photo Credit: Melanie Samson

Box 6 – Collecting organic and reusable materials

Although waste pickers in South Africa do not typically work with organic waste, waste pickers in other countries do so as a way to diversify their work and increase their incomes. Organic waste contaminates paper and packaging recyclables and comprises 16% of general waste in South Africa (DEA 2018). Extraction of organic materials from the waste stream is receiving increasing attention in the country as a way to further decrease waste going to landfills, obtain more and cleaner recyclables, and prepare for expected implementation of requirements and targets regarding organic waste. Particularly due to the limited commercial value of organic waste, municipalities will need to pay for service providers to collect the organics. In this context, the collection of organics by waste pickers should be considered as a component of waste picker integration that would generate benefits for waste pickers, municipalities, industry and the environment. The collection system would need to be designed to meet the needs of the municipality as well as waste pickers, and would require formal agreements specifying the work to be conducted and the support to be received .

Although virtually all research on waste pickers in South Africa focuses on their collection of recyclable materials, waste pickers regularly salvage materials that can be reused, repaired, and used to create new items. Waste pickers keep these items for themselves and also sell them informally. When the value of recyclables drops, waste pickers have been found to start collecting more items that can be reused and refashioned. There are waste pickers who specialise in these reusable materials and do not collect recyclables (Reyneke, 2017; Samson, 2017). Some residents separate these materials for waste pickers. Waste picker integration in South Africa should include a focus on facilitating separation at source for these items so that they are not contaminated by waste, and so that waste pickers can access them more easily. It can also include the development of centres where waste pickers can be trained and have access to space and equipment to repair, refurbish and create new items for sale. This will make an important contribution to reducing waste going to landfill and improving waste pickers' livelihoods. It can be part of a broader shift to create new businesses and jobs by unlocking value in non-recyclable waste (Godfrey, 2019).

Photo Credit: Melanie Samson

Photo Credit: Jonathan Torgovnik , courtesy of WIEGO

1.2 Choosing waste picking

People decide to work as waste pickers for a number of reasons. The primary reason is that they are unable to find other work owing to South Africa's high unemployment rate. Many waste pickers say that waste picking is preferable to other low-skilled jobs such as domestic work, gardening and construction as they retain their independence, can work when they want, and do not have to answer to employers who may be exploitative and racist. In addition, waste picking allows women the flexibility required to look after children.

As a result, strategies to integrate waste pickers should be designed to meet these requirements to the greatest extent possible. It must, however, be noted that any approach to integration will require waste pickers who participate to make changes to how they work, and that some waste pickers will likely find it challenging to adjust to new ways of working (Dias and Cidrin, 2008). Alternative income generating options should therefore be provided to waste pickers in the transition to new recycling collection systems.

1.3 Diversity amongst waste pickers

Although we talk about "waste pickers", they are not an homogeneous group. While most waste pickers have a low level of education, there are also professionals such as teachers and electricians, as well as students who were forced to quit university because they could not pay their fees.

Another difference amongst waste pickers relates to location - waste pickers on landfills and in the streets work in very different conditions, have different relations to residents and the authorities, face different challenges, and have different needs (see Mkhize et al., 2014; Schenck et al., 2018; Schenck et al.,2016; Sentime, 2011).

Men typically use their greater physical strength to monopolise the highest value materials, so women generally earn less (Nzeadibe and Adama 2016; Ogando et al 2016; UNEP 2018, 95). Women also face greater safety risks working on the city's streets. Coupled with the heavy weight of loaded trolleys this can often lead women to migrate to landfills, or to work within a much smaller area of the city, limiting the amount of material they can collect (Mokobane 2016).

Box 7 – Gender and waste picking

All waste pickers encounter multiple challenges in securing their livelihoods. Women waste pickers face further constraints due to gender inequalities in the sector and society. Across the world, waste pickers are frequently from oppressed and marginalised groups based on race, religion, caste and nationality, amongst others. Women waste pickers' challenges are therefore intersectional - not all women are affected in the same ways and some women encounter additional forms of oppression and exploitation (Dias and Ogando, 2015b).

Women waste pickers must frequently decrease the hours they work as waste pickers due to social assumptions that they are primarily responsible for the unpaid labour of caring for their children. This leaves them with less time to generate an income than men (Dias and Fernandez, 2013).

Research conducted on women waste pickers in Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America found that they suffer far greater indignities and health hazards than men due to lack of ablution facilities on landfills and in the streets. They also face the additional risk of gender based violence and harm on both landfills and streets. Women waste pickers frequently prioritise access to water and sanitation and a decrease in exposure to violence. to lack of ablution facilities and exposure to violence (Dias and Ogando 2015b; Ogando et al 2017).

High levels of street crime and gender based violence in South Africa (and elsewhere) significantly constrain the daily work of women who are street waste pickers. Women street waste pickers in Johannesburg report working with male friends or partners in order to reduce their vulnerability. They also design their collection routes to avoid certain areas (which can make it further for them to get to the same place than for men) and restrict their routes to much smaller areas (Mokobane, 2016). The physical challenge of transporting heavy loads of recyclables back to their sorting areas at the end of day contributes to many women street waste pickers collecting lighter materials, working in smaller areas and migrating to landfills. In addition, men (and particularly younger men) use their greater physical strength to monopolise the highest value materials and seize first access to materials at both landfills and on the streets (Nzeadibe and Adama, 2015 Ogando et al., 2017 UNEP, 2018).

All of these factors contribute to women waste pickers having lower incomes, more hazardous working conditions and less control over their own work than their male counterparts. Adding another layer to gender inequalities, research conducted in multiple sites in Africa found that the gender division of labour has resulted in women facing greater exposure to health risks, with profoundly negative effects on both women and their children (UNEP 2018, 95). Technology and equipment, such as trolleys, designed on the assumption that they will be used by men can create additional physical strains for women waste pickers.

Women waste pickers also face gender inequalities within their own movements, as waste picker organisations (like many other organisations) tend to be dominated by men. It can even be assumed that women should prepare food for meetings, limiting their participation and increasing their workload. As a result, women's issues and concerns are not prioritised and women are constrained from reaching their leadership potential and from shaping the visions and strategies of their organisations (Ogando et al., 2016).

Creating gender equity in the sector will require commitment and work from all stakeholders – waste pickers, waste picker organisations, local government, national government, industry, NGOs and academics. It is important to remember that an intersectional approach must always be adopted so that differences and power relations amongst women will be identified, taken into consideration and addressed. Some possible actions are listed below, but this list is by no means exhaustive. Note that all activities should be grounded in meaningful participation by women waste pickers.

Photo Credit: Melanie Samson

Box 7 – cont'd

Photo Credit: Melanie Samson

1. *Make explicit commitments to creating gender equity.*
2. *Respect women's knowledge, contributions and leadership.*
3. *Provide child care for male and female waste pickers when they are working, at meetings and doing organising work.*
4. *Hold meetings with women waste pickers to identify their key problems and concerns, as well as their proposed solutions.*
5. *Create safe platforms for women waste pickers to share their experiences and ideas.*
6. *Ensure that women waste pickers' issues are prioritised in waste picker organisations, as well as municipal, national and industry policies, forums and programmes.*
7. *Create spaces and programmes for women waste pickers to share their experiences and knowledge of gender issues and to deepen their understanding.*
8. *Facilitate provision of information on and access to social services available to support women.*
9. *Provide ablution facilities for waste pickers that meet women's needs.*
10. *Provide crèches for male and female waste pickers' children.*
11. *Commit to gender sensitive planning, policy and programme design, implementation and evaluation.*
12. *Ensure that all research and data analysis is disaggregated by gender (as well as other key social categories).*
13. *Prioritise and support research on women waste pickers as well as on gender dynamics in the sector.*
14. *Develop programmes for men to ensure that they understand gender inequalities, reflect on and transform their own gender biases, and have the knowledge and skills required to work with others to create gender equality.*
15. *Provide education and toolkits for all parties on gender, intersectionality, gender and waste picking, and the importance of including gender analysis in all phases of policy development and programme activities (see Dias and Ogando, 2015a; 2016).*
16. *Secure and increase all waste pickers' access to materials and ensure that women have equitable access (for example separating women and men, and rotating access to trucks that arrive at the landfill).*
17. *Prioritise women when opening up new, higher income generating activities in the sector.*
18. *Create dedicated budgets for work with women waste pickers and on gender issues.*
19. *Develop short and longer term plans to raise gender awareness amongst waste pickers and waste picker organisations with support from academics, NGOs, and different levels of government.*
20. *Hold general meetings at times when women are available.*
21. *Ensure that all meeting tasks (including preparing food) are equally shared.*
22. *Develop women waste pickers' leadership skills and ensure gender equity in leadership of waste picker organisations and waste picker representation on all fora in the sector.*

It is important to note that when women waste pickers begin to challenge the gender-based roles assigned to them, they can be subject to increased physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, political and intellectual backlash and gender based harm (Dias and Ogando, 2015b). Care must be taken to prevent this to the greatest extent possible, to provide networks of infrastructure and support for women waste pickers facing gender based harm, to ensure that women waste pickers have knowledge and information on gender-based harm and options available to them, and to create safe spaces for women waste pickers to share their experiences, amongst other appropriate interventions.

Photo credit: groundWork

In cities like Johannesburg, a significant proportion of waste pickers left their homes in neighbouring countries due to economic crises and political unrest. Non-South African waste pickers form an important part of the local recycling economy. If they are ignored or excluded, policies and programmes will not be relevant to the local context and their prospects for success will be undermined.

These differences amongst waste pickers, based on gender, nationality, age, education and so on, must be taken into account when developing waste picker integration and recycling programmes, otherwise some waste pickers will be left out and will experience deteriorating conditions, and the programmes will likely not achieve their goals.

2. The economic and environmental contributions of waste pickers

Waste pickers make important economic and environmental contributions. In most countries in the global South, waste pickers recognised that valuable materials were buried in the trash long before municipalities and private companies did. Municipal waste management systems were designed to collect and dispose of waste in what Scheinberg calls the “service chain”, and waste pickers played a critical role in linking the “service chain” to the recycling “value chain” (OECD, 2016: 166; Scheinberg and Simpson, 2015: 976). Without waste pickers, recyclable materials would remain in the service chain and be buried in landfills.

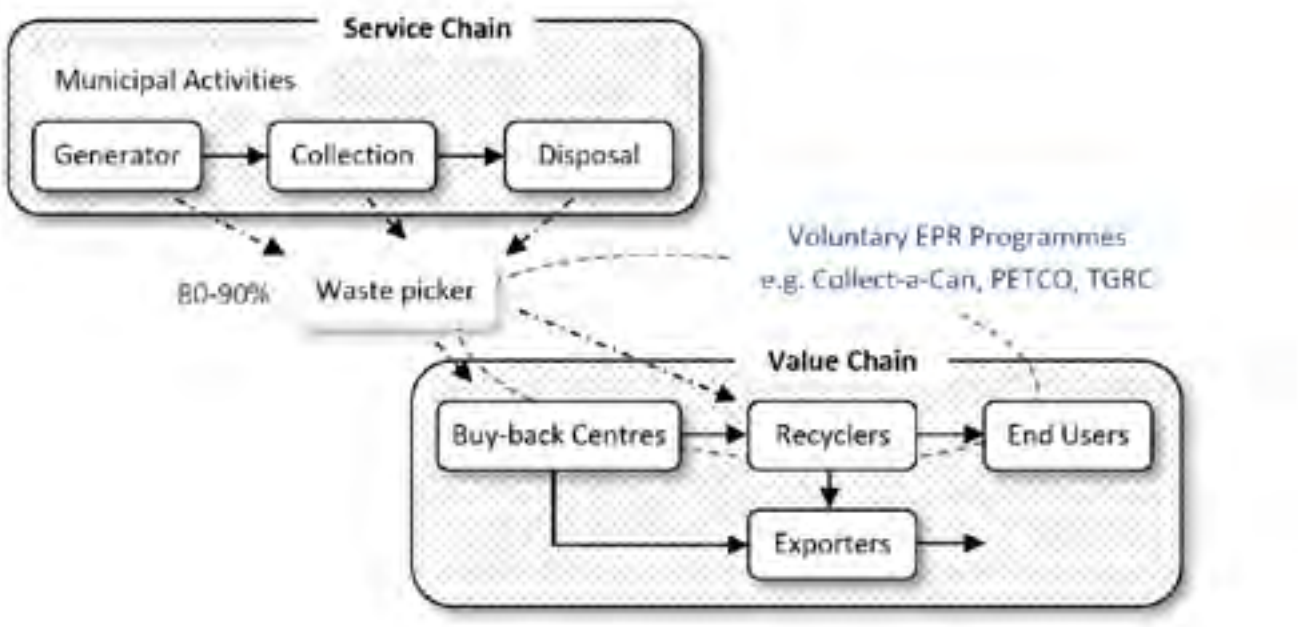

Diagram 1: Connecting the service chain and the value chain (adapted from OECD (2015) by Godfrey and Oelofse, 2017)

Box 8 – The recycling value chain

Recycling is an important part of waste management in South Africa, as it reintroduces resources back into the economy, and reduces the need to produce more virgin resources. It also contributes to job creation and economic growth by adding value to the recovered materials, and reducing social and environmental costs of having to manage the materials as waste (DST, 2014).

In South Africa, waste pickers sell materials to buy-back centres, who sell to larger collection companies, before the materials are sold to recycling companies that reprocess the material for input into manufacturing. When large companies are contracted to collect recyclables they can sell directly to reprocessors. The recycling companies and manufacturers may be in South Africa or as far away as China or India. (See Diagram 2 for a schematic illustration of the recycling value chain.)

It is estimated that, in 2011, a 10% recycling rate returned R8.2 billion worth of resources back into the South African economy that year (DST, 2014). A further R17 billion worth of resources (at 2013 prices) could be recovered back into the economy if a 100% recycling rate is achieved (DST, 2014).

In 2017, China introduced a ban on the import of certain waste streams (WTO, 2017) and India recently followed suit. This has had a significant effect on the global recycling market. As South Africa's existing voluntary extended producer responsibility schemes have invested in developing local end-use markets we have been less affected by these changes than many developed countries.

The growth of the local recycling industry is important for waste picker integration so that there is stable and growing demand for the materials waste pickers collect. However, particularly given that waste pickers receive only a very small proportion of the value of these recyclables, it is important that they benefit directly from industry support.

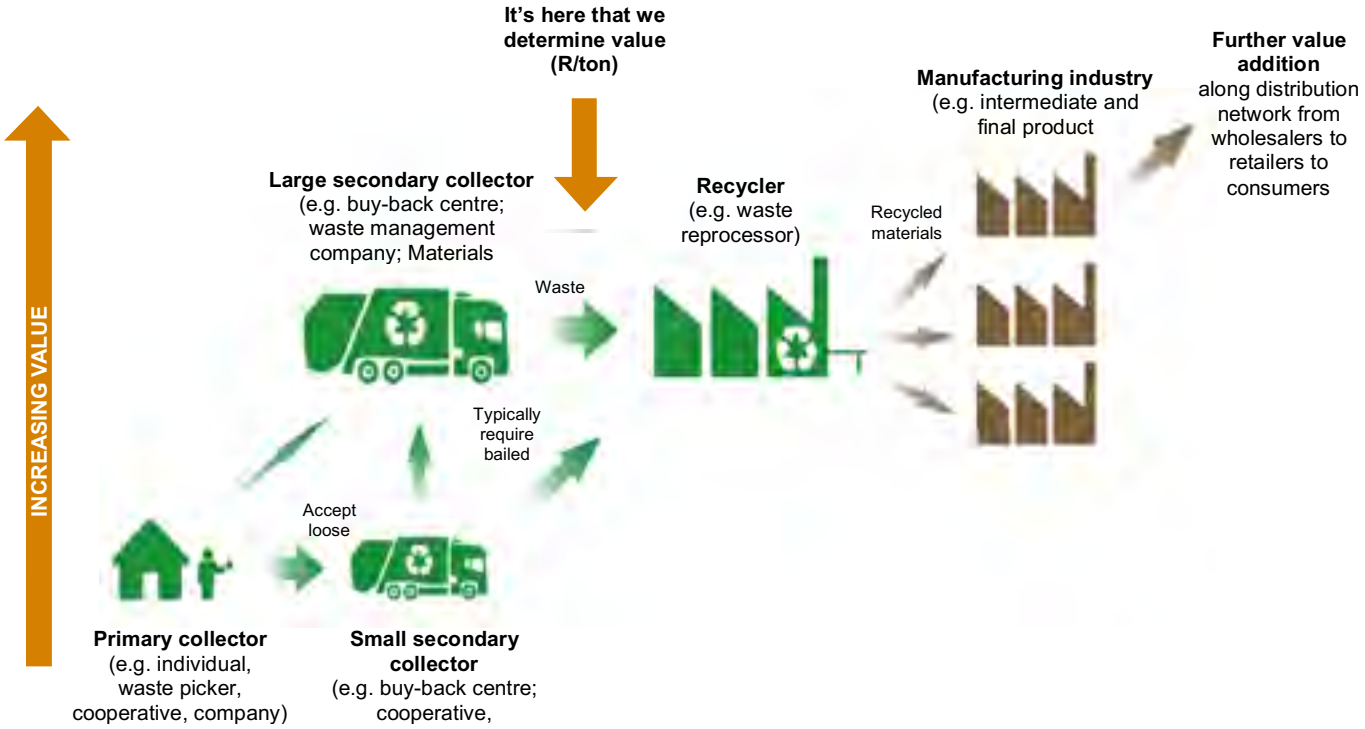

Diagram 2: The recycling value chain (Adapted from DST, 2014)

2.1 Economic contributions

Having made the connection between the service and recycling value chains, waste pickers link supply and demand for recyclables through a well-developed "separation outside source" (SoS) system (Samson, 2019). As noted above, according to industry's own figures, waste pickers are responsible for collecting at least 80% of post-consumer paper and packaging that enters into South Africa's recycling economy, supporting direct and indirect jobs in the downstream recycling and manufacturing sectors. As waste pickers extract valuable materials that residents and companies carelessly throw away, they currently extend the life of landfills and save municipalities somewhere between R300 million and R750 million a year in landfill airspace (as of 2014), at little to no cost to government (Godfrey et al., 2016).

Photo Credit: Melanie Samson

Box 9 – Separation outside source (SoS)

It is often assumed that waste pickers are isolated individuals who simply rummage through trash. This is far from the truth. Because residents don't separate recyclables at source, these valuable materials are buried in household trash. Waste pickers have therefore developed a complex 'separation outside source' (SoS) system (Samson, 2019) to access, salvage, transport, sort, clean and sell recyclables, launching them on their journey to be turned into new products.

Diagram 3 provides a simple overview of the SoS system. It shows waste pickers extracting recyclables from waste in two key places: 1) rubbish bins placed outside of people's homes, and 2) landfills.

The first group of waste pickers salvage the recyclables from rubbish bins before they are collected. They then transport the recyclables to their sorting areas, where they sort and clean them before transporting them again to sell to buy-back centres.

Recyclables that are not separated before the trash is collected end up at landfills. When garbage trucks offload the waste to be buried, landfill waste pickers salvage recyclables from the growing mountain of waste. They sort and clean the materials and sell them to buyers who are usually located at or near the landfill.

Waste pickers also salvage materials from rubbish bins put out by businesses, public bins, open spaces and other locations where waste can be accessed. These waste pickers work in a manner similar to the street waste pickers.

When waste pickers sell their materials to buyers and buy-back centres they are paid a market price per kilogram linked to global commodity prices for each material. Currently this is the only income that they receive. Unlike private companies contracted to collect separated recyclables, waste pickers are not paid for the work of salvaging, transporting or cleaning the materials.

The buy-back centres and buyers usually sell the recyclables to larger companies. They are then either sold for export or converted domestically, used as inputs for new products, and purchased by households and businesses, starting a new cycle of consumption, disposal and possible extraction by waste pickers.

Box 10 – Paying waste pickers for services provided

Private companies contracted by municipalities to collect recyclables as part of Separation at Source (S@S) programmes are paid a service fee by the municipality and also generate income through the sale of the recyclables. However, the waste pickers who collect the overwhelming majority of recyclables that are salvaged and reintroduced into the value chain are not paid for this service. As a result, waste pickers are saving costs for municipalities and industry. This is not in line with the objectives of the National Development Plan or Sustainable Development Goals discussed in Section A.

Waste pickers are often blamed for not collecting all materials and for leaving a mess when they salvage from rubbish bins. However, as they are not paid for collection they are forced to focus only on items with higher market value and must rush from bin to bin to collect as many of these materials as possible.

In cities like Bogotá in Colombia, Diadema in Brazil, Buenos Aires in Argentina and Pune in India, waste pickers are paid for their collection services, environmental services, or the savings they generate for municipalities by reducing landfill and transport costs (Balch, 2016; Chikarmane, 2012; Dias, 2011a; Parra, 2013; Samson, 2015).

If waste pickers in South Africa were paid an appropriate fee for collecting recyclables in addition to the money they earn from selling the materials (just like private companies), it could make it economically viable for waste pickers to start collecting additional types of recyclables and reduce time pressures so that it would be easier for them to work in a tidier and safer way (See Section F for further discussion).

Diagram 3: Separation outside source, Diagram by M. Samson, D. Seegers and J. van den Bussche

2.2 Environmental contributions

Waste pickers also generate important environmental benefits. Research by the Chintan Environment Research and Action Group published in 2009 found that the informal recycling sector in Delhi reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 962 133 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent each year, which was comparable to removing 176 215 passenger vehicles from the roads each year (Chintan, 2013: 6). When waste pickers divert waste from landfills they reduce the need to allocate more land to dumping facilities, as well as the environmental externalities associated with landfilling and dumping. Waste pickers also reduce the extraction of virgin materials through the substitution of recyclate.

Waste pickers in other countries have mobilised for recognition and compensation for these contributions. In 2012 the Brazilian state of Minas Gerais began paying waste pickers a “recycling bonus” for their environmental work. The bonus is calculated based on the weight of materials sold and is paid by the state to registered waste picker cooperatives, who then pay the bonus to their members (Dias, nd).

Box 11 – Health hazards and waste picking

While waste pickers make so many important contributions, they pay a high price in terms of their physical and mental health. Waste pickers undertake arduous physical labour in unsanitary and hazardous contexts and are exposed to significant health risks. These risks can be divided into biological hazards, chemical hazards, physical hazards (Parizeau, 2015: 69) and mental health hazards. Specific health hazards waste pickers encounter during their working day include:

- *being injured or killed by trucks at landfills, as well as cars and other vehicles on the roads;*
- *exposure to gases and smoke from the burning of waste, including electronic waste burned to extract metals;*
- *contact with hazardous waste and chemicals;*
- *contact with dead babies and foetuses;*
- *contact with faecal matter;*
- *limited access to shelter and protection from the elements;*
- *limited access to clean drinking water and ablution facilities;*
- *burns and cuts from waste materials;*
- *risk of HIV infection and hepatitis B and C from medical waste not properly disposed of;*
- *musculoskeletal damage from pushing and carrying heavy loads;*
- *exposure to bio-aerosols and volatile compounds (Gutberlet and Uddin, 2017; Mothiba et al., 2017; Parizeau, 2015; Schenck et al., 2019).*

Based on a comprehensive review of literature on the topic, Gutberlet and Uddin (2017) report that these and other hazards result in "respiratory problems, infectious diseases, gastrointestinal issues, muscle pain, fever, headache, fatigue, irritation of eyes and skins, mechanical trauma, pulmonary problems, chronic bronchitis, musculoskeletal damage and hearing loss, poor emotional well-being, and other specific types of injuries" (Gutberlet and Uddin, 2017: 301). In Buenos Aires, approximately one third of waste pickers in a 2007 study reported experiencing mental health issues such as insomnia and anxiety, which were found to be positively related to other health issues (Parizeau, 2015: 69). Similarly, in Johannesburg 37.5% of waste pickers surveyed reported common mental health disorders, which was more than twice the rate in the general South African population. As in a number of international studies, women waste pickers in Johannesburg were more likely to report common mental health disorders than their male counterparts. The authors of the study note that this could be due to women waste pickers experiencing more stress in trying to secure a basic income and men dominating access to materials (Makhubele et al., 2019).

Waste pickers' health is compromised by their living conditions as well as their work environments (Gutberlet and Uddin, 2017; Parizeau, 2015). A study of waste pickers working at nine landfill sites across South Africa found that 60% lived at landfill sites or in informal structures, the veld or the bush. Half did not have access to ablution facilities (Schenck et al., 2019). Similarly, waste pickers in the Buenos Aires study had worse access to sanitary services and secure shelter than other city residents. Sorting materials at home exposes all family members to health risks (Parizeau, 2015: 70).

Due to the highly physical nature of waste pickers' work, their typically inadequate access to health care, and their lack of coverage by health and safety legislation, poor health can have profoundly negative consequences on their ability to work and generate an income (Schenck et al., 2019).

Box 12 – Decreasing health risks and improving waste pickers' health

Gutberlet and Uddin (2017) present a number of useful recommendations to decrease risks to waste pickers' health. These include:

- *mapping and addressing waste pickers' health risks;*
- *providing waste pickers with vaccination against infectious diseases;*
- *providing personal protective equipment, modified so as to not compromise waste pickers' work;*
- *prioritising areas where waste pickers work when conducting municipal pest eradication initiatives;*
- *collaborating with municipal waste departments and other measures to secure access to ablution facilities and to address other health risks and factors;*
- *training on health and safety;*
- *providing regular medical check-ups;*
- *educating residents on the importance of cleaning materials in order to reduce health hazards for waste pickers;*
- *establishing door to door selective collection by waste pickers to reduce their exposure to health risks;*
- *implementing safe collection and sorting procedures;*
- *conducting research and gathering and analysing data on health risks and challenges.*

The nongovernmental organisation Asiye eTafuleni (AET) in Durban, working in partnership with Women in Informal Employment, Globalizing and Organizing, the University of KwaZulu Natal and the Durban University of Technology, amongst others, has hosted on-site day clinics and wellness days at the Warwick Junction market to provide market traders with health screening and medical services (Alfers and Xulu, 2015; Xulu, 2019). AET has also designed first-aid kits for market traders (Alfers 2015). Similar initiatives could be designed and conducted for waste pickers.

Photo Credit: PETCO

4. Recognising and valuing waste pickers

Despite all of their contributions, waste pickers in South Africa and around the world face extreme discrimination and stigmatisation. They are frequently dehumanized and referred to as 'scavengers'. Typically they are harassed and not seen as part of official 'modern' waste management and recycling systems. This has negative consequences, not only for waste pickers but also for the economy and environment, as waste pickers are not able to contribute their knowledge and expertise in the development of recycling systems. As the OECD notes:

Cities in emerging economies should consider how they could best draw on the knowledge of waste pickers and junk shops; they are often the only stakeholders with practical experience, knowledge to maximise recycling under local market conditions, and incentive to adapt quickly to new value chains and market opportunities *(OECD, 2016: 47).*

Photo Credit: Frank Ferro

Box 13 – Valuing waste pickers

South Africa is committed to ending the stigmatization of waste pickers and discrimination against them, and to recognising and valuing waste pickers and their contributions.

What is Waste Picker Integration?

Photo Credit: groundWork

Section C

Section C

Overview of Section C

Section C explains:

- how approaches to waste picker integration have evolved
- defines waste picker integration

Outcomes

After reading this section, the reader will understand that:

- waste picker integration is about the integration of waste pickers and their informal collection system
- waste picker integration is a process that develops over time
- waste picker participation is central to integration.

1. Moving beyond the charity approach

The meaning of waste picker integration has changed over time. The earliest forms of waste picker integration focused on 'helping' waste pickers. This 'traditional development' approach did not see waste pickers as an important part of the recycling system or ask them what they wanted and needed. Instead, outside 'experts' or officials decided what would be done (Velis et al., 2012: 60). These approaches treated waste picking as a marginal, survivalist activity, and saw integration as a charitable act (Samson, forthcoming). Unsurprisingly, waste pickers often withdrew or contested these kinds of programmes.

The traditional development approach still underpins many industry and municipal initiatives in South Africa. There have been some important shifts in recent years as municipalities and industry have started to work more closely with waste pickers. As in other parts of the world, this has often been in response to mobilization by waste pickers through organisations such as the South African Waste Pickers Association and local waste picker organisations.

The Guideline is designed to support the move beyond the charity approach and ensure that waste picker integration in South Africa is meaningful and achieves all of the environmental, economic, and social benefits of working with waste pickers.

2. The importance of participation and partnership

It is now widely accepted that waste picker participation in the design, implementation, evaluation and revision of integration initiatives is an essential part of waste picker integration. Such participation must be meaningful. Tokenistic participation, such as when waste pickers are invited to comment on a fully developed proposal, is inadequate (Chikarmane and Narayan, 2005; Dias, 2011b; Nas and Jaffe, 2004; Nzeadibe and Anyadike, 2012; Gutberlet, 2008; Scheinberg, 2012). When waste pickers are not involved as partners in integration programmes they often decide against participating. If they do participate they may withdraw, as programmes frequently don't meet their needs and can even make them worse off. For example, one South African municipality created a pilot project in which waste picker cooperatives provided separation at source services. Although the integration of waste pickers into separation at source was a positive initiative, waste pickers were not paid for their collection service and were required to sell to one particular buyer who paid low prices. As a result they earned less money than when they worked independently and decided to return to the landfill (Pholoto, 2016; Sekhwela, 2017).

For waste picker integration to succeed it must meet real needs and improve waste pickers' conditions and incomes. The best way to ensure this is for waste pickers to be centrally involved as partners in all phases of waste picker integration initiatives and recycling programmes; starting from project inception through implementation and including revisions and the start of the next cycle (Nas and Jaffe, 2004; Nzeadibe and Anyadike, 2012; Scheinberg, 2012).

Participation also plays an important role in rectifying the historical, political and social marginalisation of waste pickers (Chikarmane and Narayan, 2005; Dias, 2011d, Gutberlet, 2008). The Brazilian experience has demonstrated that the establishment of participatory structures such as "Waste and Citizenship Forums" (see Box 24) is a crucial component of waste picker integration (Dias, 2011d).

It is not only waste pickers who must participate. Integration requires meaningful participation by municipal and industry representatives, which includes openness to changing their assumptions about waste pickers and informal recycling systems, their visions of what a recycling system should look like, and their historical ways of relating to waste pickers (Scheinberg, 2012).

Academics and non-governmental organisations with experience working with waste pickers can play a crucial role in waste picker integration by assisting municipalities and industry to understand waste pickers and their work, as well as how to approach collaborating with waste pickers. They can also support waste pickers to strengthen their capacity to mobilise and negotiate, as the NGOs groundWork and WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment, Globalizing and Organizing), amongst others, already do in South Africa. As few academics and NGOs in South Africa have direct experience working with waste pickers, waste picker integration should include strengthening the knowledge of other organisations and academics in the social sector so that, when appropriate, they can draw on their existing skills to facilitate engagements between the stakeholders and support integration.

3. Integration is about integrating systems as well as people

There is also growing recognition that waste picker integration includes integrating both waste pickers and the SoS system they created. Velis et al. (2012) identify that it is necessary to integrate the informal recycling system with both the formal waste management system and the recycling value chain. They also highlight that this requires strengthening waste picker organisations so that waste pickers can be meaningfully represented in these processes.

It is necessary to explicitly integrate waste pickers' SoS system when developing new formally planned recycling systems for a number of reasons.

- Simply starting a new recycling system does not make the SoS system magically disappear. When careful consideration is not paid to how to positively integrate the two systems, then they can have multiple negative effects on each other as both systems are trying to collect and revalue the same materials.
- If the SoS system is not considered, it is not possible to plan how to prevent or mitigate these negative effects, draw on the strengths of the SoS, or ensure a smooth and positive transition from the informal system to the official S@S programmes.
- Recognising that waste picker integration is about integrating systems as well as people means that these negative consequences can be avoided and the best, most appropriate recycling system will be established.

Box 14 – Definition of waste picker integration

Waste picker integration is the creation of a formally planned recycling system that values and improves the present role of waste pickers, builds on the strengths of their existing system for collecting and revaluing materials, and includes waste pickers as key partners in its design, implementation, evaluation and revision. Waste picker integration includes the integration of waste pickers' work, as well as the political, economic, social, legal and environmental integration of waste pickers.

4. Defining waste picker integration

The definition of waste picker integration provided in Box 14 is based on the above analysis of the role that waste pickers play and the relationship between informal and formal recycling systems. Waste picker integration does not mean that waste pickers should continue to work in exactly the same way that they do now. Building on the strengths of waste pickers' existing separation outside source (SoS) system also includes making changes to address areas of weakness in that system. This must be done in ways that are agreed with waste pickers through a participatory process and which improve their working conditions, security and income.

5. Waste picker integration is a transformative process

Waste picker integration transforms waste pickers' work, their lives and the recycling system. It is multi-staged and multi-dimensional (Masood and Barlow, 2013) and cannot be achieved overnight (Dias, 2011b). Each municipality, industry and organisation that undertakes waste picker integration is starting from a different point and must develop an approach appropriate for the relevant context. This approach will necessarily evolve as more experience is gained, more information is gathered, and more fundamentals are put in place (Dias, 2011d). What is important is that each intervention is seen as part of a pathway to integration and is guided by the Ten Principles of Waste Picker Integration outlined in Section D.

Box 15 – Integration in rural areas and small towns

Waste picker integration in smaller towns and rural areas confronts a distinct set of challenges. Although some have materials recovery facilities (MRFs), well-functioning buy-back centres and nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), others have no waste management services at all. In these contexts, when buy-back centres exist they play a stronger role and have more influence than in larger cities. The farther the towns and rural areas are from major city centres, the more it costs the buy-back centres to transport their materials to sell them. If the buy-back centres rely on larger purchasers travelling to buy materials directly from them, they receive even lower prices. As a result, the buy-back centres often only purchase higher value scrap metal, and other materials remain buried in the waste stream. As in urban areas, when the buy-back centres face lower prices they can pass a disproportionate amount of the decrease on to waste pickers.

Approaches to waste picker integration must always be context specific. It is clear that waste picker integration in smaller towns and rural areas will take different forms than in large cities. Buy-back centres could possibly play a more central role, but it is crucial that they commit to the waste picker integration principles, pay waste pickers fair prices, and are transparent. As elsewhere, there is little point in collecting recyclables if there is no market to sell them. The introduction of EPR (extended producer responsibility) in South Africa should help to make conditions more conducive for recycling. However, special initiatives will have to be created to ensure that smaller towns and rural areas are not left behind and that recyclables are purchased from these areas. In addition, more support can be provided to encourage reuse and the creation of new goods out of waste.

Waste Picker Integration Principles

Photo Credit: Jonathan Torgovnik, courtesy of WIEGO

Section D

Section D

Overview of Section D

Section D presents ten principles that underpin waste picker integration.

Outcomes

After reading this section, the reader will:

- understand key elements of waste picker integration;
- have clear criteria to evaluate whether and to what extent proposed recycling and waste picker programmes promote waste picker integration.

Based on the discussions between stakeholders in the Working Group, ten principles were identified that underpin waste picker integration:

1. **Recognition, respect and redress** – Waste pickers' role in the recycling system is recognised and taken into account. Waste pickers are engaged respectfully. Unequal power relations between waste pickers and municipal and industry officials, as well as those rooted in gender, race, class, nationality and so on are recognised and addressed.
2. **Value waste pickers' expertise** – Officials cannot presume to know what waste pickers want, how they are affected by changes in the recycling and waste management system, what the best form of integration would be, or how waste pickers work. Successful integration programmes are based on waste pickers' needs and interests – as communicated by waste pickers.
3. **Meaningful engagement** – Legitimate platforms are created to meaningfully include waste pickers as equal partners in decision-making related to recycling programmes and waste picker integration. Waste pickers are supported to organise themselves so that they can better represent themselves.
4. **Build on what exists** – Waste pickers' informal system for collecting, preparing and selling recyclables is recognised and valued, and provides the basis for the development of new formal recycling programmes and contracts.
5. **Increased diversion and cost effectiveness** – New waste picker integration and recycling initiatives increase diversion of recyclables from landfills through cost-effective means.
6. **Evidence-based** - Waste picker integration and recycling policies and programmes are evidence-based. Piloting can assist in generating necessary evidence. Information generated through monitoring and evaluation contributes to revisions and future developments.
7. **Enabling environment** – Enabling environments for waste picker integration are created at national, provincial and local levels.
8. **Improved conditions and income** – Waste picker integration and recycling policies and programmes improve waste pickers' working conditions, incomes and social security. Waste pickers are provided with alternatives and compensated for any displacement, deterioration of conditions, or decrease in income resulting from official waste picker integration and recycling programmes and contracts.
9. **Compensation for services and savings** – Waste pickers are remunerated for the collection services they provide, for costs avoided by municipalities and industry because of waste pickers' services, and for the environmental benefits they generate.
10. **Holistic integration** – Successful waste picker integration requires changing how waste pickers are seen and engaged by residents, industry and government. Waste pickers are recognised as active and equal participants in political, economic, social, cultural and environmental processes.

Some Typical Stakeholder Needs Related to Waste Picker Integration

Photo Credit: Jonathan Torgovnik, courtesy of WIEGO

Section E

Section E

Overview of Section E

Section E presents some typical needs identified by waste pickers, municipalities and industry related to waste picker integration.

Outcomes

After reading this section the reader will:

- be aware of some of the typical challenges and needs of different stakeholders;
- understand some possible actions to respond to these needs;
- be aware that Annexure 2 includes detailed ideas of how to address many key challenges;
- understand the Ten Basic Actions to Kick-start Integration that can be undertaken immediately while preparing to develop a comprehensive Waste Picker Integration Plan (see Section H).

This section presents some key needs related to integration frequently identified by waste pickers, municipalities and industries. Annexure 2 presents some ways in which each need identified here could be addressed. It is, however, important to remember that the challenges and needs of each stakeholder must be identified in each specific context and sector, and must be prioritised within collaborative processes with waste pickers. Section H presents a participatory process that can be followed to identify and prioritise needs, and to agree on how they will be addressed as part of the implementation of waste picker integration plans.

1. Municipalities

Some issues frequently raised by municipalities include the need for the following:

1. registration of waste pickers;
2. waste picker organisations to engage;
3. stronger relationships with waste pickers and ways to work with them;
4. improved safety and cleanliness in landfills, streets and parks;
5. guidance on how to integrate waste pickers;
6. funding for waste picker integration;
7. support and funding to strengthen internal capacity (including knowledge, data, skills and human resources);
8. inclusion of work with waste pickers in key performance indicators (KPIs) so that officials have time to work on integration;
9. guidance on how to engage non-South African waste pickers;
10. guidance on how to meet S@S targets and promote waste picker integration at the same time;
11. supportive legislation, policy and bylaws.

2. Industry

Industry has many of the same needs as municipalities related to waste picker integration. In addition, there are some specific industry needs:

1. increase separation, collection and sale of recyclables;
2. reduce contamination and improve quality of recyclables sold;
3. increase collection of recyclables with low market value;
4. ensure steady supply of recyclables;
5. integrate waste pickers in and up the value chain, and include waste pickers in transformation of the of the industry;
6. expand the industry to utilise increased volumes of recyclables;
7. strengthen relations and engagements with waste pickers;
8. provide relevant support to waste pickers;
9. improve the conditions and incomes of waste pickers;
10. include waste pickers in EPR.

3. Waste pickers

Waste pickers working in landfills and the streets share many common needs. These include:

1. **Recognition, respect and social inclusion**:
   - registration and identification cards
   - elimination of stigmatisation, harassment and social exclusion
   - recognition of their occupation
   - appreciation of their contributions.
2. **Engagement as equal partners in participatory decision-making**:
   - partners in design, implementation and revision of waste picker and recycling programmes and initiatives
   - participatory processes
   - access to government officials.
3. **Fair and improved income**:
   - access to materials
   - trucks and other vehicles to transport materials
   - equipment and support to move up the value chain
   - consistent, fair and transparent prices
   - equitable distribution of profits in the value chain
   - payment for collection
   - first preference as S@S providers and inclusion in all S@S
   - contracts and agreements with private and public institutions.
4. **Infrastructure and space**:
   - covered, secure, safe space to sort and store materials and equipment
   - recycling centres and recycling hubs
   - infrastructure for offices, meetings and so on
   - ablution facilities
   - crèches.
5. **Improved health and safety**:
   - reduction of health hazards
   - occupational health and safety coverage
   - medical care
   - access to clean water and ablution facilities
   - safe working conditions in landfills and streets
6. **Gender-specific needs**:
   - commitment to gender equity and gender transformative planning
   - equipment designed for use by women
   - access to clean water and ablution facilities
   - secure access to all materials
   - protection from gender-based violence
7. **Skills development and accredited training**
8. **Needs related to S@S and existing waste picker projects**:
   - elimination of harm
   - social plans and compensation for harm when waste pickers' livelihoods and working conditions are negatively affected by recycling programmes and contracts
   - inclusion in S@S
   - partners in the development, implementation and revision of future recycling and waste picker programmes
   - partners in the development, implementation and revision of future recycling and waste picker programmes
9. **Support for organising, organisations and democratic waste picker cooperatives**:
   - Core funding
   - Funding for organisers
   - Funding for organising campaigns
   - Funding for pilot projects.
10. **Multiple approaches to integration**:
    - support for integration of democratic waste picker cooperatives
    - support for approaches to integrate independent waste pickers

3.1 Special focus on landfill waste pickers

Box 16 – Amending landfill licenses to permit waste picking

Historically waste pickers were not allowed to work on landfills in South Africa. The National Environmental Management: Waste Act 2008 (Republic of South Africa, 2009) creates the opportunity to change this because the Waste Act encourages and emphasises the consideration of other waste management options such as recycling, reduction, reuse and recovery of waste other than landfill disposal as long as it's done in an environmentally sound manner.

Section 51(1) of the Waste Act deals with contents of waste management licences. Specifically it allows waste pickers to undertake their activities on existing landfill sites as long as the waste management licence specifies the "conditions in terms of which salvaging of waste may be undertaken" (Republic of South Africa, 2009, 61-2).

Municipalities and private landfill owners can amend their landfill licenses to permit salvaging by following these steps:

1. *Seek an application for Transfer, Variation or Renewal of a Waste Management Licence. Chapter 5 of the Waste Act (Republic of South Africa, 2009) provides for the transfer, variation, and renewal of a waste management licence (WML); the process requirements are contained in the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations, 2014 (Republic of South Africa, 2014b).*
2. *An exemption from certain provisions of the WML application process can be applied for and must follow the exemption application process described in the National Exemption Regulations of 4 December 2014 (Republic of South Africa, 2014a).*
3. *An applicant who might have unlawfully commenced with a listed waste management activity (for example, having already begun a recycling project), may submit an application to rectify such unlawful commencement in terms of section 24G of the National Environmental Management Act (Republic of South Africa, 2014b).*
4. *The NEM: WA Waste classification and management regulations (Gazette no. 36784) specifies that some waste management activities do not require a WML. Section 9(1) states that any person may to the Minister to list a specific waste activity as an activity which does not require a licence.*

The Waste Act also requires all spheres of government to develop integrated waste management plans (IWMPs). These plans will include the strategy to achieve goals and set targets, and describe how they will be achieved, including methods to monitor and measure progress against targets.

Box 17 – Social plans for landfill waste pickers

While landfill licenses should be amended to permit existing waste pickers on site to continue to work, it is important to make plans to protect these waste pickers' livelihoods when the landfill is full and closes. In addition, S@S will also result in economic hardship and possibly complete loss of income for landfill waste pickers.

The NGO Women in Informal Employment, Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) sets out key principles to support waste pickers' livelihoods in the face of dump closures and recycling programmes (Dias, 2018). The core principle establishes that:

> *"Any change to the way solid waste is managed—whether upgrading from dumps to controlled landfills, introducing recycling schemes or 'modernizing' a system—must begin with a comprehensive plan that considers the needs of the informal workers who are already engaged in gathering, sorting and recycling waste. Any suppressed activity should be replaced with another of at least equal value to waste pickers. And waste pickers must be involved as equal partners in all phases of planning and implementation" (Dias, 2018: 2).*

The Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) acknowledges that efforts must be made to minimise harm to waste pickers when landfills are closed. It also identifies that including waste pickers in landfill closure plans can provide an opportunity to improve waste pickers' conditions and incomes, provide them with new opportunities, support waste picker organising and advance waste pickers' inclusion in solid waste management systems (IADB 2013, 10). The IADB therefore developed an Operational Guide on Preparing Informal Recycling Inclusion Plans that presents steps to follow to develop an inclusion plan (IADB, 2013). The Guide has been used in several countries and many of the ideas can be incorporated into the process to develop waste picker integration programmes and plans discussed in this section of the Guideline.

4. Ten basic actions to kick-start waste picker integration

Section H of the Guideline sets out a process for developing a Waste Picker Integration Plan (WPIP). WPIPs help to ensure that there is a coherent approach to waste picker integration that abides by the waste picker integration principles in Section D.

Industry, businesses, metros, municipalities and organisations that already work with waste pickers are well positioned to follow the process in Section H and are strongly encouraged to do so.

Smaller and rural municipalities that do not currently have any waste picker programmes may find it challenging to embark immediately on the full waste picker integration process. This section presents Ten basic actions to start waste picker integration that could assist these municipalities to take the initial steps towards waste picker integration. They would then be in a better position to follow the full process to develop a WPIP.

If a municipality or other organisation thinks they should start with these initial actions, this should be discussed and agreed with waste pickers. The process must still be rooted in partnership with waste pickers and based on meaningful participation by waste pickers. It should be agreed how these initial activities will lead to the more comprehensive process to develop a WPIP.

Any process followed should be documented.

The Ten basic actions to start waste picker integration are:

1. **Understand** – Ensure that staff in the organisation go through the Guideline and other resources, and engage with pickers to develop an informed understanding of:
   a. who waste pickers are;
   b. why waste pickers must be respected;
   c. waste pickers' role in and contributions to waste management services, the recycling economy and the environment;
   d. how waste pickers currently salvage and revalue recyclable and reusable materials;
   e. the key challenges faced by landfill and street waste pickers and how these can be addressed;
   f. the specific challenges faced by women waste pickers and how these can be addressed;
   g. how waste pickers can be harmed when they are excluded from recycling collection programmes and how this can be addressed;
   h. what waste picker integration is;
   i. why waste picker integration is necessary;
   j. what a waste picker integration plan is and why it is important to develop in the medium-term.
2. **Commit** - Commit to the waste picker integration principles and to implementing waste picker integration together with waste pickers.
3. **Engage**, work together and share – Create a team and assign a team leader in the organisation to be responsible for engaging and working with waste pickers. Start meeting with waste pickers and their organisations on a regular basis and establish a waste picker integration committee with elected waste picker representatives as soon as possible. Engage and work collectively with waste pickers to the greatest extent possible based on their level of organisation. Share all relevant information with waste pickers and NGOs and academics who support them.
4. **Support** – Provide and help to secure support for waste pickers to strengthen their capacity to organise, represent themselves and more fully participate in discussions about waste management, recycling and waste picker integration.
5. **Facilitate access** – Improve waste pickers' access to recyclable materials by:
   a. allowing them to salvage recyclables from the streets - even if there is an S@S programme in place, arrangements should be made for waste pickers to collect separated materials, as well as to salvage materials still placed in rubbish bins;
   b. making arrangements at landfills where waste pickers are already working so that waste pickers can work safely and salvage materials before they are covered;
   c. simultaneously revising the landfill permit to allow waste picking (see Box 16);
   d. informing officials, police, private security, waste Wmanagement workers, recycling workers and residents that they should not harass waste pickers or confiscate their materials.
6. **Provide basic infrastructure** - Create/provide access to places to safely sort and store materials, provide access to ablution facilities and clean water for waste pickers at landfills, and seek ways to make the same provisions for waste pickers working in the streets.
7. **Reverse harm** - Ensure that any programmes that are negatively affecting waste pickers are cancelled or revised.
8. **Address real needs** - Find out from waste pickers what their main problems are and what they most want. Ensure that the different needs of landfill waste pickers and street waste pickers are identified, as well as the specific needs of women waste pickers. Reach agreements with waste pickers about how these needs will be met. When waste pickers see the benefits of working with the organisation, this will foster trust and facilitate better working relations.
9. **Register** – Register all waste pickers without discriminating. It is important to know all waste pickers working in the municipality. Pay waste pickers to be part of planning and implementing registration – they are the experts on what would encourage waste pickers to register, and waste pickers will be more likely to trust other waste pickers to register them.
10. **Plan and move forward** - Plan together with waste pickers how to move forward with the development of a WPIP and implementation of waste picker integration and initiate the process.

Integrated Separation at Source (S@S)

Photo Credit: Jonathan Torgovnik, courtesy of WIEGO

Section F

Section F

Overview of Section F

Section F explains the relationship between S@S and waste picker integration. It develops the concept of integrated S@S and provides some examples of how it can be implemented.

Outcomes

After reading this section, the reader will:

- understand how waste pickers are affected by S@S programmes that do not include them;
- understand why integrated S@S benefits all stakeholders;
- be familiar with some ways to approach integrated S@S that could be adapted and implemented in their context;
- understand that S@S programmes must be developed through an agreed participatory process that includes waste pickers as partners, complies with the principles in Section D, and results in formal agreements and accountability mechanisms.

1. Benefits of S@S

Separation at source (S@S) is a crucial component of initiatives to reduce waste to landfill. Successful S@S can result in:

- more recyclables being recovered;
- decreased transportation costs;
- decreased landfill costs;
- increased lifespan of landfills;
- reduction in contamination of recyclables;
- cleaner inputs for recycling processes and reduced processing costs;
- improved incomes and working conditions for waste pickers.

Diagram 4: S@S that excludes waste pickers, Diagram by M. Samson, D. Seegers and J. van den Bussche

2. Effects of S@S programmes that exclude waste pickers

If S@S is done exclusively by private companies or cooperatives made up of people who are not waste pickers, it can have profoundly negative effects for waste pickers, as well as contracted providers, municipalities and industry.

Diagram 4 demonstrates the effects of S@S that excludes waste pickers and their SoS system.

In Diagram 4 the official S@S system is depicted in red. Residents separate their materials and place them outside their homes to be collected by vehicles that only collect recyclables. The recyclables are then sold directly to recyclers who convert them into inputs for production (or to larger buyers who sell to the recyclers) or export them. The private company or non-waste picker cooperative providing the S@S service is paid for collection by industry or government (depending on who is responsible for S@S), as well as by the recycler for the materials.

The SoS system (depicted in green) is still present, as waste pickers salvage materials not separated by residents from rubbish bins and landfills, and also access separated materials before they are collected by the private company. However, the waste pickers and their SoS system have now been pushed to the margins. There are fewer waste pickers, who collect fewer materials and earn less money as a result.

Negative effects for waste pickers include:

- they lose access to materials;
- they are forced to sleep rough in public spaces or wake up extremely early to ‘beat the trucks’ and salvage what they can before official collection;
- their working conditions get worse;
- their incomes decrease significantly or are lost entirely;
- their ability to provide basics for themselves and their families, including food, shelter, education, health and transport, decreases;
- they are accused of ‘stealing’ recyclables
- they face greater harassment.

Negative effects for the providers include:

- they collect fewer materials than expected;
- they are unable to report the actual recycling rate as materials collected via SoS are not captured;
- they are implicated in loss of livelihoods;
- they face protests and conflicts with waste pickers;
- they are forced to develop post-hoc strategies to engage waste pickers.

Negative effects for industry include:

- inaccurate data on the recycling rate;
- negative and possibly hostile relations with waste pickers and waste picker organisations;
- the number of waste picker livelihoods lost must be factored into calculations of job creation arising from recycling.

Negative effects for municipalities include:

- goals of poverty alleviation, job creation and economic and social inclusion are undermined;
- conflict and tension in public roads, at landfills and so on;
- likely development of negative and possibly hostile relations with waste pickers and waste picker organisations.

Box 18 – S@S and landfill waste pickers

Discussions about separation at source and waste pickers typically focus on waste pickers who work in the streets. But waste pickers on landfills are deeply affected by S@S. The whole point of S@S is to prevent recyclables from going to landfills. As a result, landfill waste pickers have access to fewer and fewer materials. This is true regardless of whether S@S is collected by private companies, cooperatives or autonomous waste pickers.

Landfill waste pickers need to be taken into account when S@S is planned and implemented. They should fully participate in discussions related to S@S. The potential effects for landfill waste pickers should be analysed and factored into decision making. Landfill waste pickers should be included in new work opportunities, such as working at materials recovery facilitates (MRFs). A social plan should be developed for landfill waste pickers, whose jobs are lost in the pursuit of broader environmental and economic goals. These social plans can include, but should not be limited to, training, provision of alternative work possibilities, and meaningful assistance to secure a job and financial compensation.

Refer to Box 17 for further discussion of social plans for landfill waste pickers.

3. Integrated S@S

S@S does not need to exclude waste pickers. Waste pickers already collect recyclables from households via separation outside source (SoS) and are an important part of South Africa's waste management system and recycling economy. Appropriate models for S@S integrate waste pickers. They also include waste pickers' SoS collection system as they transition to full participation in S@S.

Box 19 – Transitioning from Separation Outside Source to Separation at Source

All stakeholders agree that the long-term goal is to have full participation of residents, businesses and other waste producers in S@S, and to have waste pickers integrated into S@S. It is, however, a notoriously slow process to increase participation rates in S@S.

While we are working towards that vision, residents, businesses and other waste generators will continue to put recyclables in their rubbish bins. Until larger socio-economic problems are addressed, poor people will continue to support themselves by working as waste pickers and salvaging these materials via the SoS system. During the transition to full participation in S@S, integrated S@S therefore includes allowing SoS collection and improving the conditions and earnings of waste pickers doing SoS collection.

Waste pickers can play an important role in facilitating this change. Involving waste pickers who currently collect materials from bins and landfills in S@S collection and resident education is an effective way to improve resident participation, because when residents and other waste generators have a personal connection with waste pickers and understand how separation assists them, they can be more willing to participate.

In the South African context, it is important to include the SoS system as part of the transition to full S@S.

Integrated S@S protects waste pickers' livelihoods, improves their working conditions and income, increases recycling rates, generates more accurate data, and is cost-effective.

The remainder of this section presents four approaches to integrated S@S:

- separation of materials for waste pickers;
- remuneration of waste pickers for collection;
- contracting waste picker cooperatives to collect separated recyclables;
- companies with S@S contracts including or hiring waste pickers.

These are only a few examples. Others can be found in the reference list in Section J and Annexure 3.

Each particular approach to integrated S@S must be relevant to the specific context. Stakeholders cannot just replicate the examples provided. It is crucial that they engage in an agreed participatory process to identify what forms waste picker integration should take in their context, and then modify the models provided here or used in other places, or develop new, contextually appropriate, ideas.

Box 20 – Residents and waste pickers separating together

In 2018, the African Reclaimers Organisation (ARO) began reaching out to residents' associations in Johannesburg. ARO wanted to meet with the associations to introduce themselves, explain the work that they do, and discuss how they could work together with residents.

Some members of residents' associations in the suburbs of Brixton and Auckland Park responded enthusiastically and invited ARO to meet with them. Over a series of meetings, ARO and the residents developed their own S@S programme.

Residents agreed to separate recyclables and give them to the reclaimers who had already been working in the area. The PET Recycling Company (PETCO) donated clear plastic bags for the pilot. The reclaimers put stickers on the bags with their names and contact details so that residents know who collects from them. Reclaimers give the bags directly to the residents, which gives them a chance to talk to each other. Reclaimers report that more residents began to participate once they began to understand how much accessing separated materials improves the reclaimers' working conditions and income.

Some reclaimers who collect in the area already worked in an informal group. Before residents starting separating, members of the group would work the entire day. Now they work shorter hours, are making more money, and their group is becoming more united. The community S@S is catalysing more formal organisation.

The resident associations and ARO are actively building social relationships between residents and reclaimers. Reclaimers have conducted clean-ups for the residents. In turn some residents in Brixton have started providing tea, snacks and access to ablution facilities on the days when reclaimers collect from their streets. When Brixton had a community fair and market in an open park, reclaimers spent the day giving children rides on their trolleys and chatting to residents. Reclaimers were involved from the very beginning when Auckland Park began planning an Open Streets day held in April 2019. Reclaimers learned more about the people who live in the area and residents learned more about who the reclaimers are, where they live and what they do.

Waste pickers and residents have undertaken similar collaborations in other parts of the world. For example, in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, the Asmare cooperative of catadores (collectors of reusable and recyclable material) opened a bar and restaurant staffed by waste pickers, where waste pickers and other residents socialise together. For many years the municipality also collaborated with Asmare and other cooperatives to hold a carnival celebrating catadores and waste workers. Evidence from Belo Horizonte demonstrates that building social relationships between waste pickers and residents transforms social relations in the city, increases respect and appreciation for waste pickers, and strengthens S@S (Dias, 2011a).

Box 21 – Integrated S@S starts with an agreed, participatory process

The purpose of this chapter is to establish why S@S must be integrated, and to provide some ideas about the form that this can take. Integrated S@S will not be possible if waste pickers are not included as equal partners in designing, implementing, monitoring and revising the integrated S@S plan and programmes. Even if S@S programmes include waste pickers in some way, if waste pickers have not agreed to the programme it will have multiple negative effects and will not have the intended results. Integrated S@S and waste picker integration cannot be separated from each other and must be developed through an agreed participatory process. Section H sets out a basic process that can be followed.

It is easier to have an agreed participatory process when waste pickers are organised. This is why providing support for waste pickers to organise and represent themselves is a key part of waste picker integration and integrated S@S. But even where waste pickers have not started to organise, the municipality, industry or other initiating organisations must develop ways to have meaningful engagements with waste pickers through which agreements are reached.

3.1 Separating for waste pickers

Many residents already separate their recyclables for waste pickers. On garbage collection day they put the recyclables outside their homes in a special bag or bin for waste pickers to collect. They often also put out reusable materials. Residents do this of their own accord as they want to assist and support waste pickers.

A very simple and quick way to start S@S is to encourage residents and other generators of municipal waste to separate their materials for waste pickers. Waste pickers, municipalities and industries should communicate to residents the kinds of materials waste pickers in the area collect and that should be separated for them. Knowing that the initiative is supported by the municipality and industry will encourage residents to participate.

Waste pickers in Johannesburg have reported that more residents start separating materials once waste pickers establish a personal relationship with them and the residents understand how much difference it makes to waste pickers if they do not need to dig through rubbish bins. Waste pickers who collect in an area should therefore play a central role in resident education about the initiative to ask residents to separate materials for waste pickers. If waste pickers are registered they can be provided with bags to give to residents, which helps them to establish a personal connection. This promotes both S@S and waste picker registration.

This type of initiative can start by asking residents to separate the materials most commonly collected by waste pickers in the area. Over time, industry can work with waste pickers to develop ways to increase collection of other materials through EPR and other mechanisms.

This approach brings immediate benefits to waste pickers and introduces a culture of separating recyclables. It is not a long-term solution, but it can get up and running while other plans are developed. It will generate information and ideas that can inform these plans, and can be a stepping stone to other integrated S@S approaches outlined below.

The next logical step is to implement the compensation of waste pickers for collection outlined in subsection 3.2 below.

3.2 Compensating waste pickers for collecting recyclables via SoS and S@S

A key principle of waste picker integration is that waste pickers must be compensated not only for the resource value of the materials they salvage, but also for collecting recyclables and the economic and environmental benefits and economic savings they generate.

The vast majority of waste pickers in South Africa work independently. Many collaborate informally, but collect and sell materials individually. Both municipalities and industry in South Africa provide training and equipment to individual waste pickers, but have not yet developed mechanisms to pay them. Municipalities face a particular challenge, as legal restrictions prevent them from contracting individual waste pickers as service providers. There are, however, ways of paying or compensating individual waste pickers that don't require a contract or direct payment to each individual waste picker.

One innovative example comes from Bogotá, Colombia, (see Box 22) where the municipality established a system to pay individual waste pickers (and subsequently cooperatives) for their services directly into their bank accounts. The waste pickers were paid a top-up fee for their services based on kilograms collected and sold at registered buy-back centres and aggregation points (Parra, 2013) . Linda Godfrey of South Africa's Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has developed a similar potential model for South Africa, in which industry would use extended producer responsibility (EPR) levies to pay waste pickers via registered buy-back centres (Godfrey, 2016; Godfrey et al., 2016). The Bogotá example demonstrates that starting with this approach can lay the foundation for other forms of S@S, such as collection by waste picker cooperatives.

This approach to paying individual waste pickers via buy-back centres or other agencies could be highly appropriate and effective in South Africa. In addition to ensuring that waste pickers are fairly compensated for collecting materials, it would facilitate registration of both waste pickers and buy-back centres, as well as the gathering of data on the amount and types of materials collected. Cooperatives that sell materials collectively would also be paid, and information on cooperatives would be generated.

Rather than paying each individual waste picker directly (as in Bogotá), municipalities and industries could contract buy-back centres, an NGO, or a private company fully committed to the waste picker integration principles to facilitate payments and provide ongoing support to waste pickers. In line with the integration principles, waste pickers would need to be fully engaged in the decision to employ this approach, as well as in the development, implementation and revision of the payment system and capacity building programmes. Once waste picker organisations are sufficiently developed, they could be supported to act as the mediating and capacity building agent.

As previously noted, paying waste pickers a higher rate to collect recyclables that are not currently salvaged because the sale price is too low could assist relevant industries to achieve EPR targets and increase recycling rates and diversion from landfill. As some of these materials are very light, it may be necessary to pay the fee per bag as opposed to per weight.

Compensating waste pickers for collecting recyclables on the basis of quantities sold also means that they would receive payment for all materials collected. One advantage of this approach is that, until participation in S@S is 100%, waste pickers still collecting from bins and landfills would be included and compensated, and their materials would be recorded.

Diagram 5: S@S by Waste Pickers, Diagram by M. Samson, D. Seegers, and J. van den Bussche

Photo credit: Melanie Samson

Photo credit: PETCO

Box 22 – Paying Individual Waste Pickers and Cooperatives in Colombia

Waste pickers in Colombia historically faced harassment and violence, and successive governments imposed regulations to prevent them from accessing waste. In 2003, the municipality began contracting private companies to collect recyclables, which threatened and compromised waste pickers' livelihoods. Between 2003 and 2011, the Asociación de Recicladores de Bogotá (ARB) went to court to secure waste pickers rights, winning seven challenges. This culminated in a 2011 Constitutional Court ruling that the municipality needed to give waste pickers the exclusive right to recyclables in the city, create an integrated waste management system that built on the existing informal system, and pay waste pickers for the service they provided to the city (Abizaid, 2015; Parra, 2013; Samson, 2015).

The ARB, with support from its allies, subsequently created an operational, economic, political and social proposal to incorporate the entire waste picking community into the public waste management system (WIEGO, 2014).

Traditionally, recicladores earned only what they could get through private sales of recyclable materials. After the 2011 court ruling, ARB negotiated with the city government to create a payment scheme that rewards waste pickers for the service they provide. The waste pickers' in-depth knowledge of waste collection and value chains meant they were able to negotiate a payment structure that was fair and reasonable. The payment scheme was implemented in 2013.

From 2013 to the present, new public policies at the national level have partially reflected the orders of the Constitutional Court and have established a scheme for the recognition and official integration of waste pickers and their organizations as providers of public recycling services.

The first phase of implementation focused on paying individual waste pickers. To be eligible, active waste pickers had to register with the program, have an identification card, and have access to a banking system. Those who did not have bank accounts were assisted to open them. Municipally owned buy-back centres and some privately owned ones were registered as part of the system. Once the waste pickers were registered, when they sold their materials to registered buy-back centres they received the regular payment for the sale of their recyclables. In addition, every two months they received an electronic payment from the municipality for the service provided. This payment for the service was paid by the municipality based on the amount of recyclable material they had sold, records of which were kept by the accredited centres (Abizaid, 2015). Mobile buy-back centres reduced the distances waste pickers needed to travel to sell their materials, enabling them to collect more and work fewer hours.

The court had ruled that payment should be made to cooperatives. After the system to pay waste pickers was established and functioning, the second phase, in which the payments are made to registered waste picker cooperatives who then pay the individual waste pickers, was implemented. The cooperatives are granted five years to fulfil their conditions as formal service providers. They report the tonnes of recyclable materials collected, transported and sold in the unique government information system for public service providers.

This is more than a payment scheme; it is a comprehensive integrated recycling system. Informal waste picker associations — affiliated to ARB — use trucks to pick up segregated recyclables from routes throughout the city, as well as from businesses and institutions. ARB offers training on segregating waste to clients to improve outcomes. Waste pickers who are not part of the routes collect waste from trash in public spaces or private houses. Material is then delivered to one of the many recycling centres (warehouses or buy-back centres) throughout the city run by ARB or its affiliates, or to specific collection points in the city. At these points, trucks weigh the materials, record it to the registered waste picker's account, and transport the material to a warehouse.

Box 22 – cont'd

One element of successful integration—mandated by the court—involves ensuring that there is support in place to help waste pickers and their organizations build capacity to ensure they are able to work safely, professionally and effectively. ARB has worked with the National Training Service of Colombia (SENA) to design and deliver a certification process focused on the specific qualifications required for recycling services. Certification gives the public additional confidence in the service providers who collect their recyclables.

At present, ARB collects from 400 fixed sources of recycling (institutions, shopping centres and residential complexes) and, along with many affiliated organizations, covers hundreds of residential routes throughout the city every week (http://asociacionrecicladoresbogota.org/). More than 10 000 waste pickers had their earning increase four-fold, allowing them to buy necessities and pay school fees. The public and the municipal budget benefit, too. These workers recovered about 1200 tonnes a day, keeping 19% of the city's discarded material from reaching landfill. Today this model to remunerate waste picker organizations for services provided is being implemented in 24 cities in Colombia.

3.3 Contracting waste picker cooperatives

Waste picker cooperatives provide S@S services in many cities around the world. In South Africa, national government, municipalities and industry have all prioritised working with cooperatives. The South African Waste Picker Association (SAWPA) actively encourages and supports its members to form cooperatives. Box 23 discusses the SAWPA S@S pilot programme run by the Ikageng-Ditamating cooperative in Sasolburg.

Photo credit: groundWork

Box 23 – S@S by the Ikageng-Ditamating Waste Picker Cooperative in Sasolburg

Since 2014, the Ikageng-Ditamating (ID) waste picker cooperative in Sasolburg has provided S@S services to 3000 households in the upper income suburb of Vaal Park. ID also runs the Vaal Park Recycling Centre. Both the South African Waste Pickers Association (SAPWA) and Packaging SA (previously PACSA) see the initiative as a pilot project. The pilot was developed as a collaboration between SAWPA, PACSA and several constitutive industry bodies, and all levels of government. Private companies and donors have also contributed to the pilot.

ID was formed out of the merger of two cooperatives of waste pickers working at the local landfill. The waste pickers were aware that the landfill was reaching capacity. Through the NGOs groundWork and WIEGO, as well as exchanges with waste pickers in other countries, the waste pickers learned about waste picker cooperatives providing S@S services and began to think about how they could do the same (groundWork, undated; Ntuli, 2019; Vryenhoek, 2016).

At the same time, PACSA was drafting an industry waste management plan and had been informed by the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA) that it needed to include waste pickers. In 2011 PACSA organised a trip to Brazil to meet its Brazilian counterpart CEMPRE and learn more about how Brazilian industry works with waste pickers and how waste picker cooperatives are involved in recycling. PACSA invited Simon Mbata, who was a leader in SAWPA and Ditamating, to join them. Upon completion of the trip, they decided to create a pilot project based on the Brazilian model in which ID would provide S@S services in parts of Sasolburg and establish a recycling centre to sort and bale the recyclables for sale.

Between 2011 and 2014, a task team met monthly to rally support and move towards implementing the pilot. The task team included all key stakeholders and had representatives of SAWPA, ID, the Recycling Action Group (RAG), the waste management company Waste Plan, Rejuvenation (a non-profit organisation established by the company Sasol, which dominates the region), the Metsimaholo local municipality, the Fezile Dabi District Municipality and the Free State provincial government.

A number of stakeholders contributed resources to the pilot. With assistance from PETCO, ID won R225 000 in the ILO Free State Competition, which it used to purchase a bakkie (a small pickup truck). The local municipality provided land for the Vaal Park Recycling Centre. The province contributed R550 000 and shipping containers for an office and storage space, and upgraded and secured the site. The District provided an electric baler and roof – although, as the site still does not have electricity, it cannot be used. DEA provided 6000 recycling bins for households. Taken together, contributions by a number of industry organisations included assisting ID to register the cooperative and open a bank account, and providing trolleys, a manual baler, access to water, a platform scale, personal protective equipment, a small kitchen, basic furniture for the office, a laptop computer, signage, conversion of the vehicle, one year of vehicle insurance, training, and support with book keeping and recording of data.

Box 23 – cont'd

Just under five years since the launch of the pilot, ID has had a number of successes: 2100 out of 3000 households are separating their materials, which is a relatively high participation rate. The cooperative has developed good relations with the residents, who see them as professional (Pholoto, 2018). ID increased its volumes by branching out and collecting recyclables from private businesses.

As with all S@S projects, independent waste pickers continued to collect in Vaal Park. ID developed an innovative solution to this problem: the cooperative met with the independent waste pickers and they agreed that the independent pickers can still salvage from rubbish bins on garbage collection day, but will not interfere when ID collects the separated materials on a different day. ID offers better prices to the independent pickers and most sell at the Vaal Park Recycling centre because of its convenient location.

The pilot and ID have, however, encountered a number of problems. Most relate to the way the pilot is designed and managed. Perhaps because of the newness of this type of collaboration in South Africa it is highly informal. Key problems, which have also been identified in pilot waste picker integration projects in Johannesburg (Pholoto, 2016; Sekhwela, 2017), include:

1. *There is no contract or memorandum of understanding between ID, industry and the municipality. Each party has very different assumptions and expectations, resulting in tensions and disputes. There is also no agreed dispute resolution mechanism.*
2. *ID is not paid a fee to collect the recyclables and must sustain itself based solely on the sale of materials. This is compounded by the fact that the financial model was based on the incorrect assumption that there were 8000 households in Vaal Park, and the area was not expanded to include more residences. As a result, ID struggles financially. Cooperative members earn less than when they were at the landfill and pay low wages to the casual workers who assist them.*
3. *Gathering data and keeping financial records were new skills for cooperative members. Although industry provided training and mentorship, the waste pickers were not happy with the mentors. The cooperative continues to struggle and a training programme more specifically tailored for this type of initiative is likely required.*
4. *The pilot has not been fully institutionalised in municipal plans.*
5. *While a number of stakeholders made financial and in-kind contributions to the pilot, there is no formal project plan. Contributions were ad hoc and key needs, such as the provision of electricity, remain unmet. There was no system to monitor, evaluate and revise the pilot, no end date for the pilot, and no agreement on what will succeed the pilot.*

In early 2019, SAWPA and relevant producer responsibility organisations began to discuss an evaluation of the pilot, which will generate important insights and lessons to improve the Vaal Park initiative and provide grounded guidance for the development of waste picker integration programmes around the country.

Waste pickers played a central role in initiating the Vaal Park pilot project. This is one of the key reasons for its ability to sustain itself and diversify, as the members are committed to working collectively and making the project succeed.

In other municipalities, moves to include waste pickers in S@S via cooperatives have been top-down, driven by the municipality. These have had limited success, as the cooperatives were frequently made up of people who had not previously worked in the sector, were formed by the municipality or in response to a requirement from the municipality, did not receive sufficient support, and were not paid for the collection service (Godfrey et al., 2015; Pholoto, 2016; Sekhwela, 2017; Sekhwela and Samson, 2019).

Overall, 92% of waste cooperatives in South Africa fail (Godfrey et al., 2016). If waste picker cooperatives are selected as a modality for S@S in specific municipalities or industries, certain conditions must be met for them to thrive. These include:

1. an evidence-based decision that cooperatives are the best modality for S@S;
2. the members of the cooperative should be interested in and committed to working collectively as a democratic worker cooperative;
3. a formal contract between the cooperative and the industry/municipality that sets out commitments, roles, responsibilities, budget, duration, monitoring and evaluation, revision, dispute resolution, and so on;
4. a fully developed and properly funded multi-year programme plan;
5. support for waste picker cooperatives to develop bids for tenders;
6. payment to the cooperative for the collection service;
7. an area for S@S collection large enough to be economically viable;
8. agreements between the cooperative and independent waste pickers to work together;
9. a comprehensive capacity building and mentorship programme specifically designed to support waste picker cooperatives providing S@S services;
10. facilitators, mentors and support people who have a strong understanding of and commitment to waste picker integration, and waste pickers should be involved in selecting them;
11. complete transparency regarding all aspects of the programme;
12. programme governance by a stakeholder committee;
13. provision of space for sorting, storage, baling and possibly processing that has all required services, facilities and infrastructure ;
14. regular monitoring and evaluation, which should result in revisions to improve the programme

Photo credit: Jonathan Torgovnik, Getty Images Reportage

3.4 Integration into new integrated S@S contracts with private companies

As with all other approaches to integrated S@S, a decision to contract a private company to provide S@S services must be based on objective analysis of the context and comparison with other approaches to S@S (Section H provides a participatory process to generate the relevant information and make evidence-based decisions). It is essential that waste pickers in the area are meaningfully engaged and given the opportunity to present alternatives before a contract is awarded. Effects on waste pickers should be a key criteria in the evaluation of different approaches to S@S and bids by different companies.

If an informed decision is made to contract a private company, careful steps need to be taken to ensure that waste pickers are integrated, harm is minimised, and they are compensated for any loss of livelihood. These must be captured in the company's contract, and where waste picker cooperatives exist there should be a formal agreement with them as well. There are a number of ways in which this can be done. It is, however, crucial that the affected waste pickers and waste picker organisations participate in decisions regarding how they can be integrated so that waste pickers are provided with meaningful options. Some key actions could include:

- employing registered waste pickers in full compliance with labour laws and minimum wages (although this has worked in other contexts, it should be noted that waste pickers in South Africa frequently report that they are not interested in becoming employees);
- contracting and paying waste pickers to collect recyclables, instead of drivers with trucks;
- permitting waste pickers to continue to collect materials and paying them a collection fee on top of the market price. Because they are collecting, the company will need to deploy fewer trucks and such like, so the savings should be passed on to the waste pickers.

Even if waste pickers are integrated in these ways, the SoS system will not disappear, and waste pickers will continue to salvage recyclables. This needs to be factored into the model and contract. A key way to do this is to establish a forum with waste pickers who work in an area where they can raise their concerns, needs and proposals, and where they can raise issues when they arise. The options in 3.1 above will still be relevant.

4. Conclusion

Integrated S@S achieves multiple goals – it increases recycling rates, improves waste pickers' working conditions and incomes, preserves and improves existing green jobs, and is cost effective. It also helps to transform relationships between waste pickers and residents that are still rooted in apartheid dynamics to create more socially integrated municipalities.

Some municipalities (particularly small and rural ones) do not have any waste pickers. Although they won't integrate waste pickers and their system into S@S, it is still useful for the municipality and industry to carefully analyse different options for S@S in these areas and make evidence-based decisions.

In municipalities that do have waste pickers, they may not work in the streets in all areas of the municipality. However, as landfill waste pickers will be affected by S@S they should be integrated into S@S in these locations.

Section H presents a participatory process to make evidence-based decisions on S@S and all aspects of waste picker integration.

An Enabling National Environment for Waste Picker Integration

Photo Credit: Jonathan Torgovnik, courtesy of WIEGO

Section G

Section G

Overview of Section G

Section G provides an overview of initiatives and commitments at the national level to support waste picker integration.

Outcomes

After reading this section the reader will:

- be better able to design recycling and waste picker programmes that are feasible within the existing national environment;
- have a deeper understanding of the kinds of changes required to create an enabling environment for waste picker integration.

Experiences from around the world show that creation of an enabling national environment is important to facilitate successful waste picker integration. Key aspects include: legislation and policy, integrated extended producer responsibility (EPR), funding mechanisms, creation of an occupational classification, support for organising waste pickers, awareness programmes, and provision of social benefits.

1. Legislation and policy

A large number of policies and acts affect waste pickers and waste picker integration in South Africa. These include the National Environmental Management: Waste Act, the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, the Municipal Systems Act, the National Road Traffic Act, the National Waste Management Strategy, the Industrial Policy Action Plan, and the Waste Phakisa.

Experience from Brazil demonstrates that successful integration requires the alignment of existing acts and policies with the goal of waste picker integration (Dias, 2011b). Government, through the Department of Environmental Affairs, will explore whether and how to revise relevant legislation and policy to facilitate waste picker integration.

2. Integrated extended producer responsibility

As previously discussed, South Africa is in the process of establishing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). Government, through the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) has confirmed that waste picker integration is an important component of EPR, and industry has been actively involved in the development of this Guideline. The definition of waste picker integration, the waste picker integration principles, and the waste picker integration process in the Guideline provide a strong basis for the development of “integrated EPR”.

Photo credit: African Reclaimers Organisation

Box 24 – Brazil Inter-ministerial Council and Waste and Citizenship Forums

Brazil is one of the world's most progressive countries in integrating waste pickers into solid waste management and recycling systems. Many achievements in this integration are owing to the existence of participatory bodies called Waste and Citizenship Forums. The National Waste and Citizenship Forum (FNLC) was established in 1998 under the leadership of UNICEF. Subsequently, national, state and municipal forums were launched (Dias, 2011c).

Waste and Citizenship Forums bring together diverse government and non-governmental actors, including organizations from civil society and from the public and private sectors, to discuss and debate public issues related to solid waste management. Significantly, they involve the organisations of waste pickers (catadores), and serve to explore the most effective ways to integrate these informal workers into municipal systems (Dias, 2011c).

At the national level, a federal inter-ministerial committee for the social inclusion of waste pickers (the CIISC) was created by President Lula in 2003. The CIISC holds regular meetings with representatives of the National Movement of Catadores (Dias, 2011c).

The open and ongoing dialogue made possible through the CIISC and the Waste and Citizenship Forums has been essential to improving the livelihoods and working conditions of Brazil's informal waste pickers, while helping to expand recycling programs and thus reduce the strain on landfills (Dias, 2011c).

In the ten-city Informal Economy Monitoring Study (see http://www.wiego.org/wiego/informal-economy-monitoring-study-iems), surveys and focus group discussions held in 2012 in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, revealed the positive impact of the participatory process. Unlike in other cities, the waste pickers who participated in Belo Horizonte identified government as one of their most important supporting institutions (Ogando et al., 2017). Most had positive opinions about the policies and practices of the city agency, which has worked in partnership with informal waste pickers since the early 1990s (Dias, 2011c).

3. Funding mechanisms

One of the main challenges confronting municipalities is the lack of funding mechanisms dedicated to supporting waste management in general and waste picker integration in particular. As a result, municipalities draw on other funds, such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) to finance waste picker programmes. These funding mechanisms can create unnecessary restrictions on the kinds of activities that can be undertaken.

There is a pressing need to secure funding opportunities to support waste picker integration programmes. There are some ways that municipalities can secure additional funding for waste picker integration. Crucially, as extended producer responsibility (EPR) is implemented, this should unlock new funding for waste picker integration.

Municipalities should consider the reallocation to waste picker activities of operational funds saved through the diversion activities of informal waste pickers. For example, for every tonne or cubic metre of landfill airspace saved by the work of waste pickers, the equivalent value and associated municipal collection cost should be diverted to support the work of waste pickers through integrated S@S activities.

Municipalities can also access funds made available as a result of national government's Waste Phakisa (https://www.environment.gov.za/projectsprogrammes/operationphakisa_chemical_waste_economy) to integrate waste pickers into separation at source. The Waste Bureau, Treasury, EPR and donors are all possible sources of funding.

It is important that waste picker organisations be involved in deciding how all funds from various sources should be allocated. Requiring all programmes that receive funding to collect recyclables to promote waste picker integration and abide by the Waste Picker Integration Principles will ensure that funding is available for waste picker integration, and that recycling programmes advance rather than undermine waste picker integration.

4. Occupational classification

Waste picker integration requires official recognition of waste pickers and the work that they do.

In 2002, Brazil created an occupational classification for catadores (collectors of reusable and recyclable materials). The classification differentiates the work of catadores from people who collect solid waste. Creating this occupational classification officially recognised the work of catadores, enabled catadores to declare their profession, and enabled the Brazilian government to collect accurate statistics on the number of catadores in the country (Dias, 2011b).

The DEFF and the Stakeholder Working Group have developed a draft job description for the work that waste pickers perform and are in the process of registering an occupational classification for waste picking.

Photo Credit: groundWork

5. Support for organising waste pickers

Organised waste pickers are better able to develop proposals regarding how recyclables should be collected, the role they should play in the recycling economy and value chain, and the form that waste picker integration can take. They are also better placed to engage and negotiate with other stakeholders. The South African Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA) was formed in 2009. It has coordinators and members in all provinces. There are also locally based organisations in a number of municipalities and many waste pickers at landfills have elected committees to represent them. Much work remains to be done to strengthen these organisations and help them to grow, and to support the development of democratic waste picker organisations across the country.

Industry, national government and municipalities are committed to providing resources to waste picker organisations, NGOs and academics for waste picker organising as a key component of waste picker integration. It is important to note that waste picker organising initiatives and waste picker organisations must remain independent, and other stakeholders should not seek to influence or control them.

6. Waste picker integration support programme

This Guideline is designed to guide municipalities, industry, other relevant organisations and waste pickers as they develop and implement waste picker integration initiatives. The next phase of the Waste Picker Integration Guideline process is the development of a waste picker integration support programme that will create additional resource materials, increase stakeholders' knowledge and capacity to implement integration, and support participatory waste picker integration processes. Waste pickers must play a key role in the design and implementation of the support programme. The Waste Bureau, national government, EPR,and donors are possible sources of funding for this programme. DEFF commits to developing and seeking funding for the Waste Picker Integration Support Programme.

7. Awareness campaigns

Conducting awareness campaigns to change perceptions of waste pickers and deepen understanding of the importance of waste picker integration is an essential part of creating a supportive environment for waste picker integration. Such campaigns can be run by a number of different organisations including national government, the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), the South African Cities Network (SACN), Packaging South Africa and other industry bodies. Ideally they should be coordinated. It is essential that waste picker representatives and NGOs that support them are involved in designing, overseeing and implementing all awareness campaigns. Waste picker organisations and NGOs may also run awareness campaigns, but it is important that other stakeholders take responsibility for raising awareness within their constituencies, as well as amongst the general public.

Photo credit: groundWork

Photo credit: African Reclaimers Organisation

Box 25 – Social Benefits for Waste Pickers

Social benefits such as unemployment, sickness, maternity, child care and pension benefits provide support to workers at times when incomes are insecure. Social benefits can prevent vulnerable informal workers from falling into even worse forms of poverty, and are especially important for waste pickers whose incomes are regularly at risk and who often do not have savings to rely on when they are unable to earn (Lund & Srinivas, 2005). For women waste pickers, care of children and of other family members can severely reduce the amount of time they have available to work and generate an income.

There is increasing global recognition that providing informal workers with social benefits is important, not only because it is a human right, but because it makes economic sense by reducing poverty and is an investment in building a healthier and more stable workforce (Alfers et al., 2017). Section 20 of R204, the recommendations of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) concerning transition from the informal to the formal economy, states that "Members should progressively extend the coverage of social insurance to those in the informal economy and, if necessary, adapt administrative procedures, benefits and contributions, taking into account their contributory capacity" (ILO, 2015). Section 25 further states that members should reduce registration costs, length of registration and compliance costs, promote access to public procurement; and improve access to inclusive financial services, skills development, and social security coverage.

The South Africa Law Reform Commission is currently investigating the possibility of extending a maternity benefit to self-employed informal workers through amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Fund to allow contributions from the self-employed. This could be widened to include unemployment insurance coverage for all self-employed informal workers, including waste pickers.

The Decent Work Country Programme's Recommendation 204 Task Team, which operates through the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) and in which waste pickers are represented, has turned its attention towards social protection. A dormant discussion exists within NEDLAC about the integration of social benefits into a National Social Security Fund, which should include simplified contribution arrangements for own-account and other informal workers. Proposed reforms to the health system (through the National Health Insurance) and early childhood development schemes may increase opportunities for waste pickers to access better quality social services.

There is also a need to explore interventions specifically tailored to meet waste pickers' needs. For example, due to the hazardous nature of waste pickers' work and the unhealthy conditions they work in, an enabling environment could include the provision of additional health care services such as mobile clinics.

Photo credit: PETCO

Seven Steps To Integrate Waste Pickers

Photo credit: Melanie Samson

Section H

Section H

Overview of Section H

Section H:

- presents a participatory process that can be followed to design and implement waste picker integration programmes and plans;
- provides examples of how key challenges related to waste picker integration can be addressed;
- highlights that waste picker integration should deepen and develop over time.

Outcomes

After reading this section the reader will:

- know how waste pickers can be meaningfully engaged in the development and implementation of waste picker integration and recycling policies and programmes;
- have concrete ideas for waste picker integration activities that can be modified and implemented;
- understand how to work collectively with other stakeholders to develop a Waste Picker Integration Plan.

1. Introduction

Currently few, if any, South African municipalities or industries have comprehensive plans to integrate waste pickers. As a result, projects with waste pickers tend to be ad hoc and do not necessarily address the most crucial issues or improve waste pickers' working conditions and incomes. Insufficient attention has been paid to the possible effects of recycling programmes on waste pickers, and the selection of approaches to remove recyclables from the waste stream have generally not been evidence-based.

The participatory process outlined in this section can assist stakeholders to reach agreements on the form integration should take and to implement waste picker integration. Given the long history of stigmatization and exclusion of waste pickers, this will not be easy. It will require firm commitments by municipalities and industries to transform assumptions about waste pickers and waste picking and to address unequal power relations. All parties will need to commit to the principles and the process, and be open to developing new understandings and approaches.

The process is generic and designed as if stakeholders are starting from scratch. Stakeholders in each industry and municipality will need to tailor it to fit their current reality. Smaller municipalities with fewer resources and less capacity will likely have to follow a truncated process. If there are no waste pickers in a municipality then the process will not apply.

Box 26 – Evidence-based policy making

The South African government advocates 'evidence-based policy making and implementation'. This ensures that decisions and plans take into account as many relevant factors as possible and that the best decisions are made.

South African municipalities and industries have very little information on waste pickers or their system of separation outside source. Programmes to collect recyclables and support waste pickers have therefore been developed without a clear understanding of their potential effects on waste pickers. As a result, many programmes and contracts have not achieved their desired results and waste pickers have been negatively affected and compromised.

It is essential to start gathering evidence and generating data. Evidence does not only come from formal research. The lived experiences of waste pickers and other parties are crucial sources of evidence and information. Piloting and monitoring and evaluation processes are also sources of evidence. In addition, analysis of experiences in other contexts also generates ideas and lessons that can inform decisions.

The waste picker integration plan process therefore gathers evidence required to develop a baseline and develop the plan, as well as to ensure that data is generated for use in future revisions and planning processes.

2. Participatory waste picker integration process

As participation is an essential component of waste picker integration, the process for developing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating and revising the waste picker integration plan must be participatory.

The level and form of participation in waste picker integration processes in each context will vary based on historical relationships between waste pickers and other stakeholders, as well as the level of waste picker organisation. The key point is that the form of participation must be agreed and there should be a commitment to deepening the form of participation over time. Measures should be put in place to strengthen waste picker organising so that waste pickers can more fully represent themselves during the period of the plan and in the development of future plans.

It is important that all types of waste pickers participate so that plans do not exclude or harm them and they can each contribute their knowledge about the recycling system and their ideas. This means that any waste picker integration process should include the following types of waste pickers:

- female and male
- street and landfill
- South African and non-South African
- old and young
- all other relevant groups.

3. Seven steps for waste picker integration

There are seven key steps for waste picker integration:

The remainder of this section presents detailed guidance on how to move through each step. Box 27 provides a detailed overview of the seven step process.

Box 27 – Overview of Seven Steps for Waste Picker Integration

1. ***Prepare***
   a. *Establish internal team – Establish an internal waste picker integration team.*
   b. *Learn – Deepen knowledge about waste pickers and waste picker integration.*
   c. *Commit – Commit to implementing waste picker integration.*
   d. *Analyse – Analyse existing commitments and programmes.*
2. ***Partner***
   a. *Connect – Connect with waste pickers.*
   b. *Engage, listen and share – Start meeting with waste pickers on a regular basis, listen to their perspectives and the issues they raise, share all relevant information.*
   c. *Collaborate – Establish an inclusive waste picker integration working group to plan and oversee waste picker integration.*
   d. *Forge a common understanding of what exists – Gather data and develop a common understanding of the existing recycling system and different stakeholders' roles, priorities and issues.*
   e. *Support – Provide waste pickers with support to organise and strengthen existing organisations.*
3. ***Plan***
   a. *Rectify problems – Address negative effects of existing recycling programmes.*
   b. *Register waste pickers – Register all waste pickers.*
   c. *Meet key needs – Address waste pickers' most pressing needs.*
   d. *Integrate into new programmes – Integrate waste pickers and their informal system into new recycling programmes.*
4. ***Enable***
   a. *Align regulatory environment – Align by-laws, permits, policies, plans.*
   b. *Secure skills – Ensure the internal team has the relevant skills to implement waste picker integration.*
   c. *Educate staff – Provide ongoing training for officials.*
   d. *Educate the public – Run awareness campaigns and conduct educational activities.*
   e. *Secure funds – Raise funds for waste picker integration and collection of recyclables.*
5. ***Institutionalise***
   a. *Include in planning documents – include in Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), Integrated Waste Management Plans (IWMPs), Business Plans and so on.*
   b. *Create new KPIs – make waste picker integration part of relevant staff's KPIs.*
   c. *Monitor, evaluate and revise – Revise the WPIP based on evidence from M&E.*
   d. *Create a platform – Establish a permanent waste picker integration platform.*
   e. *Adopt the WPIP – Finalise and adopt the WPIP.*
6. ***Implement***
   a. *Implement the WPIP – implement all activities in the WPIP.*
   b. *M&E – Monitor and evaluate the implementation.*
7. ***Revise***
   a. *Revise the WPIP – Revise the WPIP based on evidence generated from implementation.*
   b. *Institutionalise changes – Make relevant changes to policies, planning documents, KPIs and so on.*

4. Developing waste picker integration plans

Successful waste picker integration requires a programmatic approach that gives effect to the Waste Picker Integration Principles. Waste picker integration plans (WPIPs) are an important tool to help achieve this goal.

The objectives of waste picker integration plans are to:

1. involve waste pickers in all decisions that affect their work, livelihoods and lives;
2. ensure that waste pickers and their SoS system are integrated into formal systems to collect recyclables and all levels of the value chain;
3. develop locally relevant, cost-effective programmes aligned with the waste picker integration principles that increase current diversion of recyclable and reusable materials from landfills and grow the recycling economy;
4. generate data required to develop a comprehensive understanding of the intended and unintended effects of each integrated recycling option, and make evidence-based decisions when selecting options;
5. ensure that waste pickers' conditions and livelihoods are improved and not worsened by formal recycling and waste picker integration programmes;
6. minimise and mitigate harm caused to waste pickers by existing recycling and waste picker programmes to t h e greatest extent possible;
7. create alternatives for affected waste pickers when negative effects cannot be avoided;
8. develop a coherent waste picker integration plan with a clear budget, timeline and allocation of responsibilities to ensure effective implementation.

If stakeholders work through the Seven Steps they will be able to complete the template for a WPIP in Annexure 1.

It is acknowledged that if municipalities retain responsibility for separation at source and waste picker integration, many may require additional funding and support to fully implement the approach to waste picker integration outlined below.

5. Implementing the Seven Steps

The remainder of Section H guides stakeholders through the seven steps in the participatory waste picker integration process. For each step it provides:

- some background information to understand relevant issues and why the step is necessary;
- objectives;
- key questions to ask;
- suggested actions.

Photo Credit: groundWork

STEP 01

PREPARE

// Establish an internal team

// Learn

// Commit

// Analyse

1. Establish an internal team

It is important that the organisation initiating waste picker integration establishes an internal team that will be responsible for its role in the waste picker integration process.

Ideally this team should include people from relevant levels (decision makers and people on the ground) and relevant departments, with a range of relevant skills required (facilitation, outreach/organising, technical and so on).

It is essential that the internal integration team is led by someone with decision-making authority so that the group can actually make decisions and progress. The integration team should have the support of the CEO, MD or Municipal Manager.

Objective

- To create a team in the initiating organisation that has the relevant knowledge, skills and powers to work towards successful waste picker integration.

Questions

- What knowledge does the organisation need to develop a waste picker integration plan?
- What skills are needed?
- What are all of the relevant departments/units of the organisation?
- Who will represent these departments and units?
- Who has decision-making authority and can lead the team?

Suggested Actions

Leadership:

Appoint someone with decision making authority to lead the organisation's work on waste picker integration and assume responsibility for establishing and managing the team.

Departments:

Identify all of the different departments in the organisation whose work affects waste pickers and which should have representation on the team. In municipalities these may include waste management, local economic development, parks, police, environment, roads and social development. In industry this may include people or units responsible for EPR and recycling programmes, and members of decision-making bodies.

Skills:

Identify all of the skills required by the team. These include:

1. Budgeting
2. Financial analysis
3. Outreach and organising
4. Facilitation
5. Translation
6. Communication
7. Planning
8. Policy analysis and development
9. Development of by-laws
10. Programme design
11. Programme management
12. Monitoring and evaluation.

Brief: Develop a brief for the team that includes responsibility for the organisation's role in all WPIP activities, and commitment to the Waste Picker Integration Principles.

Establish the team: Establish the team and hold a first meeting where team members receive the brief and develop a work plan according to the sections below.

Note - If resources permit it could be useful to partner with an organisation with relevant expertise, collaborate with an academic institution, or contract an external facilitator to assist in catalysing support within the organisation and designing and facilitating this processes.

2. Learn - Develop the internal committee members' understanding and commitment

Historically, waste pickers have not been considered to be part of official waste management and recycling systems. They have been seen as nuisances who mar the image of cities and do not belong in modern waste management systems. Industry has been aware of the volume of inputs provided by waste pickers, but has not seen waste pickers as key stakeholders in the industry.

In South Africa, all levels of government and industry are starting to recognise the contributions of waste pickers and the need for waste picker integration. Yet due to pre-existing assumptions and beliefs about waste pickers, this requires a major shift in the way waste pickers and their role in waste management and the recycling value chain are understood and valued.

Before work can be started on developing programmes, it is necessary to ensure that all members of the internal team understand:

- who waste pickers are;
- the role waste pickers play in the recycling economy;
- the contributions waste pickers make to industry, municipalities and the environment;
- why waste pickers must be respected and their contributions valued;
- how the formal and informal recycling systems work and relate to each other;
- how waste pickers can be harmed by formal recycling programmes;
- what waste picker integration is;
- the Waste Picker Integration Principles;
- why waste picker integration is necessary;
- why waste pickers must be involved in the process of developing, implementing and monitoring waste picker integration.

Objective

- To ensure that all members of the internal team have the base knowledge required to begin working on waste picker integration.

Questions for the internal team

- Do we value waste pickers?
- Do we listen to waste pickers and address their concerns?
- Do we know how waste pickers collect and revalue recyclables?
- Do we understand what waste picker integration is?
- Do we understand why it is necessary to integrate waste pickers?
- Do we understand why a participatory process is so important?
- Do we understand how separation at source and waste picker integration are related?

Suggested Actions

1. Read and discuss Sections A to G of the Guideline, as well as other resources listed in Annexure 3.
2. Invite waste pickers and representatives from waste picker organisations, as well as NGOs and academics who have expertise on waste picker integration, to come and talk with you.
3. If possible, ask an outside facilitator with relevant expertise to design and facilitate a workshop for you based on the Guideline.
4. Ask waste pickers to show you how their recycling system works.
5. Spend a day working alongside a waste picker.

3. Commit to waste picker integration

Waste picker integration is often driven by individuals who are passionate about the issue. If they leave the organisation, work on waste picker integration can fall by the wayside. There is therefore a need to develop an institutional commitment to working with waste pickers and developing a WPIP.

Objective

- To ensure that there is a formal commitment to developing a WPIP and implementing waste picker integration.

Questions for the internal team

- What is the appropriate structure to establish a formal commitment to WPIP?
- What processes must be followed to secure this commitment?

Suggested Actions

1. Draft a simple statement that commits to:
   b. integrating waste pickers;
   c. developing and implementing a WPIP that is aligned with the Waste Picker Integration Principles;
   d. deadlines for the completion of the WPIP and commencement of integration programmes.
2. Follow correct procedures to ensure that the commitments are formalised.

4. Analyse existing policies, commitments, programmes and projects

Before starting work on integration, it is important to know what the organisation has already committed to that directly or indirectly affects waste pickers.

4.1 Policy commitments and targets

Objective

- To have comprehensive information on all current organisational policy commitments and targets related to waste pickers and recycling.

Questions for the internal team

- Which policy documents and plans include commitments and targets related to recycling and waste pickers?
- What are the commitments?
- What are the time frames?
- What are the targets and indicators?
- What are the budgets?
- Who is responsible?

Suggested Actions

1. Assign someone or a small group to collect all relevant documents within a specific time-frame.
2. Write a report including a table that presents the following information for each document: all relevant commitments, targets, time-frames, indicators, budgets and people responsible (see the WPIP Template in Annexure 1 for an example).

Photo credit: PETCO

4.2 Gather data on existing and planned recycling and waste picker programmes

In order to take decisions about how waste pickers and their separation outside source system should be integrated, it is necessary to understand the existing formal recycling system and programmes, as well as any current plans to change the system or create new programmes.

Objective

- To gather all relevant data on the organisation's existing and planned recycling and waste picker programmes.

Questions for the internal team

- What are all of the existing official recycling and waste picker programmes, contracts, and projects (including details of the time-frames, activities, budgets and so on)?
- How are these funded?
- What new recycling and waste picker programmes and projects are planned (including details of the time-frames, activities, budgets and so on)?
- How were decisions made about current and planned recycling and waste picker programmes and projects (for example, what evidence is it based on, is it based on a model, and so on?)?
- For municipalities and landfill site operators:
  - Are waste pickers working on our landfills? Are they legally authorized to work there? When is each landfill scheduled to close?
- For municipalities:
  - What are the relevant by-laws? What do they say?

Suggested Actions

1. Assign someone or a small group to write a document within a specified time frame that addresses all of the questions listed above (see the WPIP Template in Annexure 1 for an example of a table that captures this information).

4.3 Analyse the data

Objective

- To develop an evidence-based understanding of existing and planned recycling and waste picker programmes, and how these affect or will affect waste pickers if implemented as planned.

Questions for the internal team

- What does the data tell us about the current system, programmes and projects?
- What does the data tell us about how waste pickers have been considered?
- What are some areas we think could be changed in order to address negative effects? [Take note that this is about developing your own understanding, not about developing a fixed position to stick to when you start meeting waste pickers].

Suggested Actions

1. Assign a person or group of people to write a short document that presents and analyses the data gathered. The document should also describe how the official recycling system functions and where official waste picker projects and programmes fit in.

STEP 02

PARTNER

// Connect with waste pickers

// Engage, listen and share

// Collaborate

// Develop a common understanding

// Support organising and strengthening organisations

1. Connect with waste pickers

Now that the internal team has developed an understanding of waste picker integration and the organisation's existing recycling and waste picker programmes, it is sufficiently prepared to connect with waste pickers and invite them to work together to develop a waste picker integration programme.

It is important that existing waste picker organisations and all different types of waste pickers are included. If the organisation already has a committee that engages with waste pickers do not assume that it is the most appropriate forum to work with waste pickers, as it may not be fully inclusive, and may have entrenched power dynamics that will undermine developing a new working relationship.

The initiating organisation may be responding to demands from waste pickers related to integration and the effects of existing recycling programmes. If it is waste pickers who raised the issue, it is important for the internal team to start by meeting with them to understand their concerns and proposals, and to commit themselves to a process to work with them respectfully and according to the principles in the Guideline. If the initial approach is made by waste pickers, it is even more important that the internal team prioritises understanding waste picker integration and analysing the formal programmes so that it can meaningfully engage the waste pickers.

Objective

- To successfully connect with all types of waste pickers and inform them about the initiating organisation's interest in working with them and their representatives to develop a waste picker integration programme.

Questions for the internal team

- How do we connect with waste picker organisations?
- How do we connect with waste pickers on landfills?
- How do we connect with waste pickers working in the streets?
- How do we ensure that we include women and men, the young and the elderly?
- How do we connect with non-South African waste pickers?
- How do we build trust?

Suggested Actions

1. Start by finding out about relevant waste picker organisations, waste picker forums, NGOs and academics.
2. Below are some suggestions regarding how connections can be made with waste pickers:
    - Contact the waste pickers you already know. These include waste pickers you have met with, waste pickers who have participated in the organisation's projects to date, waste pickers who have registered with the initiating organisation or other organisations, waste pickers who have attended workshops, waste pickers who have lodged complaints, requested meetings, or protested. Inform these waste pickers and ask them to tell other waste pickers they know about the proposal to develop an integration plan and the meeting.
    - People who work in industry recycling projects, municipal waste management services and at landfills meet waste pickers on a daily basis. Municipal departments, such as Local Economic Development, and corporate social responsibility programmes may also have connections with waste pickers. Explain the integration initative to them and ask them to assist in reaching out to waste pickers.
    - Make everyone aware of the need to prioritise connecting with waste pickers of all ages, women waste pickers, non-South African waste pickers and to actively seek different groups and kinds of waste pickers. Ideally other women waste pickers and non-South African waste pickers should play a leading role in this process.
    - Make conscious efforts to ensure that you seek out all different kinds of waste pickers in all possible locations, so that some groups are not inadvertently prioritised over others.

2. Engage, listen and share

Generally, waste pickers have had negative experiences with municipal officials and industry. They have been stigmatized, harassed, and treated extremely disrespectfully. They have not been consulted in the design of recycling and waste picker programmes, and have been negatively affected by separation at source programmes as well as other recycling initiatives. Many have tried and failed to secure meetings with local government and industry representatives. As a result, they may be very wary when approached about integration.

It will take time to create the positive relationships necessary for waste picker integration. Meeting regularly and respectfully, sharing all relevant information, being transparent, being open to learning, and meaningfully engaging issues raised by waste pickers are all important to build trust. Waste picker engagement should be as inclusive as possible; all types of waste pickers must be engaged, and different approaches may be required with different groups.

Objective

1. To build trust with waste pickers and waste picker organisations.
2. To learn more about the daily lives of all different kinds of waste pickers, how they work, what issues they face, and what ideas they propose.
3. To get to know waste pickers and waste picker organisations.
4. To share information.

Questions for the internal team

- How will we start or improve discussions with waste pickers?
- How can we work together with waste picker organisations, NGOs and academics to do this?
- What form should meetings and exchanges take?
- How can we transform power relations?
- How will we ensure that we meet with all types of waste pickers?
- How can we ensure that women participate fully and raise their own issues?
- What information do we need to share with waste pickers about the waste management system, waste picker programmes, recycling programmes, the recycling value chain, local and national government policies, and industry plans?

Suggested Actions

1. Start meeting with waste pickers and their organisations on a regular basis.
2. Agree with waste pickers and their organisations on how they would like to be engaged.
3. Listen to and understand waste pickers' concerns and proposals.
4. Acknowledge that waste pickers have been mistreated in the past and commit to changing this.
5. Acknowledge the unequal power relations between your organisation and waste pickers. Be conscious of the power you hold and consciously work to relinquish it and create equitable relations. Listen to waste pickers about how this can be done. Agree with waste pickers on how to create an equitable space.
6. Ensure that you meet with all different kinds of waste pickers – young and old, South African and non-South African, landfill and streets, and so on. Be sure to meet women and men in each of these groups and to create spaces for women to identify and share their needs, concerns, demands and proposals.
7. Share all relevant information with waste pickers, as well as NGOs and academics who support them.

3. Collaborate with waste pickers

3.1 Plan and hold the first formal meeting on integration

As already discussed, waste pickers must be centrally involved in waste picker integration. It is vitally important to work with existing waste picker organisations to plan and run the first formal meeting on integration. If there are no waste picker organisations, or if they are weak, when you meet with waste pickers in the 'engage and share' phase, ask them to share ideas about what they would want from a first formal meeting on integration and how it should be organised. They may nominate people to represent them. At the first meeting on integration, make clear that you would like elected representatives to be involved in the future. Be humble. Acknowledge that you are there to learn.

The focus of the first formal meeting should be to hear from waste pickers what problems they face, what their needs are, how these could be met, and how they would like to approach integration. Conclude the first meeting by agreeing on an inclusive working group that will develop the integration plan.

Objective

- To hold a successful first formal meeting on integration with waste pickers and other relevant parties and agree on a way forward for developing a waste picker integration plan.

Questions

- Who will organise the first meeting?
- Who should attend the first meeting?
- When will the meeting be?
- Where will it be?
- What budget is needed (including transport money for waste pickers)?
- What should be discussed?
- How will it be organised?
- How will decisions be taken forward?

Suggested Actions

1. Allocate someone within your organisation to be responsible for your organisation's role in organising the first meeting.
2. If there are waste picker organisations, relevant NGOS or academics working at the appropriate scale (local, provincial or national), establish a team with them to organise the first meeting.
3. Agree on the agenda.
4. Make a plan regarding how information about the first meeting will be disseminated and widely shared.
5. Ensure that representatives from all relevant parts of your organisation are aware of the meeting and will attend.
6. The first meeting could be focused on learning more about waste pickers' key issues and what they would like to be done, discussing the importance of working together to integrate waste pickers, and agreeing on a way forward.
7. Organise a venue that is easily accessible to waste pickers using public transport.
8. Schedule the meeting at a time convenient for waste pickers. Waste pickers are only paid when they work. If the meeting is held on a weekday they will earn even less than they already do. The ideal day is on a sunday (most waste pickers sell on Saturdays). Remember, if officials in the initiating organisation are employed, they will not suffer financial harm if they attend a meeting on a weekend. Holding a meeting at a time convenient for waste pickers also demonstrates respect and understanding of the work they do.
9. Budget for catering and to pay for waste pickers' transport to the meeting.
10. Organise translators if necessary.
11. Ideally, the first meeting should be quite open so that as many people as possible are made aware of the process.
12. Elect members to the Stakeholder Waste Picker Integration Working Group. Note that it may be necessary to meet a number of times before it is appropriate to hold elections.
13. Agree on the date for the next meeting.
14. Agree on a small team to plan the next meeting.

3.2 Establish an inclusive and accountable Stakeholder Waste Picker Integration Working Group

The working group should include representatives of all relevant parts of the initiating organisation, all different kinds of waste pickers (women and men, young and old, street and landfill, South African and non-South African and so on), NGOs and academics with relevant expertise.

The working group members should agree to some basic ground rules regarding how to work together. These include:

- mutual respect;
- listening to each other;
- being open to changing your minds;
- ensuring that everyone participates equally.

The working group will also need to agree on how decisions will be made, and what the group will do if agreement cannot be reached.

Everyone should keep in mind that this working group is not a permanent body. The role of the working group is to develop the Waste Picker Integration Plan. Longer-term structures and processes to oversee implementation and future work will be agreed to in the plan. It will be easier to agree on more permanent structures once the different stakeholders develop a common understanding of the issues and have experience working together. So, it is important not to spend months negotiating how the working group will work.

It is essential that close to the beginning of its work, the working group agrees on the deadline to complete and adopt the WPIP and commence integration activities (some of which could start before the finalisation of the entire plan).

Objective

- To establish a legitimate Waste Picker Integration Working Group that includes all relevant parties and has decision-making authority.

Questions for the stakeholders

- Are all relevant groups represented on the working group? If not, how will we ensure that they are?
- How will we organise the first meeting?
- What will we discuss at the first meeting?
- What ground rules should guide the work of the working group?
- How will the group make decisions and resolve disputes?
- How will working group members communicate with each other?
- What is the time frame for the development of the plan?

Suggested Actions

1. Allocate a small team to organise the first meeting.
2. Confirm the date with all working group members.
3. Secure a budget to pay for the waste picker representatives' transport and to compensate them for lost earnings.
4. At the first meeting:
   a. agree on who will chair the first meeting;
   b. agree on how the chair will be rotated amongst stakeholders in future meetings;
   c. agree on basic ground rules including mutual respect, listening to each other, being open to changing your minds, and ensuring that everyone participates equally;
   d. check whether there are any other people who should be part of the group;
   e. agree on the process you will use to develop the plan (ideally it will be based on this process in Section H of the Guideline);
   f. agree on how members will communicate with each other, how minutes will be circulated, and so on;
   g. agree on support to be provided to waste pickers to ensure that are able to communicate, meet and prepare for future meetings, get mandates and so on;
   h. Agree on the time frame for the process to develop the WPIP;
   i. Agree on the date for the next meeting, who will organise it and how minutes and agendas will be circulated, keeping in mind that waste pickers typically have limited internet access.

4. Forge a common understanding of what exists

Stakeholders in the working group often have little experience of working together. They may have a history of hostile relations and likely do not have a strong understanding of what the other stakeholders do and what their priorities and problems are.

In addition, each stakeholder likely has a different understanding of the formal and informal recycling systems. The first step in developing a WPIP is, therefore, for stakeholders to get to know and understand each other, and to create a comprehensive view of the waste management and recycling systems that includes the formal and informal actors and processes.

Objective

- To build a common understanding of the entire existing recycling system to act as a foundation for all other work.

Questions for the working group

- What work do we each do, and what are our respective priorities related to recycling?
- What are the main challenges and problems we each face related to recycling?
- What does the entire recycling system in our municipality or industry look like? Who are all of the key actors and how does it work?

Suggested Actions

It is important to take time to answer these questions. If stakeholders don't develop a common understanding of the system, they won't succeed in developing an integration plan as they won't know what is being integrated. Once stakeholders understand each other a bit more and have the experience of listening to each other and reaching a shared understanding of the existing system, it will become easier to trust each other and continue working together.

The following process is based on activities conducted in the first workshop of the National Stakeholder Working Group that developed the Guideline on Waste Picker Integration. Your working group could follow a similar process. The process can be completed in a two day workshop. It is best to have an outside facilitator (preferably with knowledge of waste picker integration), or a skilled facilitator from one of the stakeholders organisations (for example someone from the Local Economic Development Department in a municipality, or an educator or organiser in an NGO).

National Stakeholder Working Group process:

1. Start by having each person introduce herself or himself. Each person should share his or her greatest hope and greatest fear related to waste picker integration.
2. Participants should break into their stakeholder groups to discuss what they do in a typical working day, noting which activities relate to recycling. There should be separate groups for waste pickers working in the streets and those working in landfills, municipal officials, industry representatives, national officials, NGOs and so on. Each group should ensure that they discuss the different experiences of men and women. The groups should then present their day to the plenary. Take time for people to ask questions. Participants will be surprised at what they learn.
3. Break into stakeholder groups again. Each group should be given a large piece of paper and koki pens to draw the most comprehensive diagram possible of the recycling system in their municipality or industry. Each group should hang their picture on the wall with prestik. The groups will then present their picture to the plenary. The plenary then discusses the commonalities and differences, and works together to develop one common picture that is as comprehensive as possible. Make sure to mark where waste pickers are active, what they are doing, how their system works, and how they are affected by changes in the formal syste
4. Collectively create a list of all of the different actors in the recycling system and note what they do, whom they relate to and what kind of power they have. Add any actors who weren't included in the picture.
5. Either before or after going through the process above, each member could spend a day or a few days working with someone from a different stakeholder group (waste pickers with staff and vice versa) to learn more about each other's realities.

Photo Credit: PETCO

5. Support waste pickers to organise and strengthen existing organisations

The importance of supporting waste pickers to organise is discussed in detail in the Guideline. When waste pickers are organised in democratic movements and organisations they can collectively deepen their knowledge of the waste management system and global recycling value chain; identify and analyse key issues affecting them; develop positions, proposals and demands; have a mandate to engage other stakeholders; negotiate agreements; and play an active role in waste picker integration processes.

Support can come in many forms. Examples are provided in the suggested actions below.

Objective

- To support the development and sustainability of democratic waste pickers' organisations that can represent waste pickers' interests; engage with other stakeholders at local, provincial, national and industry levels; and play an active role in integration.

Questions for the working group

- What kind of financial support can be provided?
- What kind of infrastructural support can be provided?
- What information and analysis should be provided?
- What human resources does the initiating organisation need to support waste pickers to organise?
- How can the initiating organisation become more accessible to waste pickers?

Suggested Actions

1. The working group should ask waste pickers and existing waste picker organisations what support they need. Waste picker members should lead this process.
2. The working group should develop clear plans to support organising and waste picker organisations.
3. The initiating organisation should provide waste pickers with access to appropriate buildings and spaces for meetings.
4. Ensure that waste pickers, waste picker organisations and NGOs and academics who support them receive all information needed to understand the formal service and value chains, the initiating organisation, waste picker integration and so forth via written documentation, videos, workshops, meetings and the like.
5. The initiating organisation should provide waste picker organisations and NGOs that work with them with funding to support organising, strengthen their organisations, and assist them in accessing other sources of funding.
6. Ensure that the initiating organisation has staff with skills relevant to providing meaningful support to waste pickers and ensure that they have time to do so.

STEP 03

PLAN

// Rectify problems

// Register waste pickers

// Meet needs

// Integrate into new programmes

In order to develop the most appropriate plan for integration, stakeholders should follow the steps below to develop programmes to:

- rectify existing problems;
- register waste pickers;
- meet key needs;
- integrate waste pickers in the development of new programmes.

It is important to keep in mind that stakeholders do not need to choose just one type of approach to waste picker integration. It is also useful to pilot different approaches to see what works best in specific contexts, and to revise these approaches as conditions change. As stakeholders develop more experience and expertise, and as the foundation for integration is solidified, more extensive approaches can be adopted.

Box 28 – Key features of pilot projects

Pilot projects must have:

- clear objectives;
- specified start and end dates;
- a clear process for monitoring, evaluation and extraction of lessons learned;
- mechanisms for drawing on these lessons in full-scale implementation and the design of other initiatives;
- direct waste picker participation in all phases of the pilot.

It may seem like piloting will take too much time. However, it will save time and resources in the long run by ensuring that waste picker integration programmes are evidence-based and contextually relevant.

1. Rectify problems - Address negative effects of existing formal recycling programmes

As already discussed, waste pickers are often negatively affected by formal recycling programmes, as these programmes typically ignore the existence of the waste pickers' system of separation outside source and are designed as if no recycling system already exists. Often private companies are contracted to do separation at source and are paid a fee for collecting separated recyclables, which are the same recyclables that waste pickers' livelihoods depend on.

As discussed above, these kinds of formal recycling programmes reduce or eliminate waste pickers' access to materials, exacerbate their poor working conditions, criminalize waste pickers and increase the harassment that they face. Waste pickers' incomes can decrease to such an extent that waste picking is no longer a viable economic activity and they lose the jobs they created for themselves.

They also don't necessarily increase recycling rates, as the S@S programme collects many of the materials previously collected by waste pickers. As resident participation rates are low, many recyclables remain in the trash, but now waste pickers find it harder to access them.

There is also evidence that even programmes designed for waste pickers can have negative effects, such as leading to a decrease in income (Ahmed and Ali, 2004; Pholoto, 2016; Samson, 2019; Scheinberg, 2012; Sekhwela, 2017; Sekhwela and Samson, 2019). Section F identified a number of ways that waste pickers (and other stakeholders) are negatively affected when waste pickers are not included in S@S programmes. When waste pickers join integration programmes, they may earn less than when they worked independently and also lose their autonomy.

Addressing the negative effects of existing approaches to recycling and waste picker programmes and ensuring that they are revised to align as much as possible with the waste picker integration principles is one of the most urgent first steps in waste picker integration.

1.1 Analyse what exists and how it affects waste pickers

In order to rectify problems and hardships suffered by waste pickers as a result of existing waste picker integration and recycling initiatives, it is necessary to conduct careful analysis to identify all problems and issues, as well as their sources.

Objective

To identify how existing official recycling and waste picker projects, programmes, contracts and commitments affect waste pickers and waste picker integration positively and negatively.

Questions for the working group

- What are the existing commitments related to recycling and waste pickers?
- What are all of the existing official recycling and waste picker projects, programmes and contracts?
- How do they align with the Waste Picker Integration Principles? Which principles are upheld and which are undermined?
- How have they affected the different kinds of waste pickers and waste picker integration? How have they affected women waste pickers? How have they affected landfill waste pickers?
- What is the existing system for collecting and disposing of waste?
- How does the existing system for collecting and disposing of waste affect waste pickers and waste picker integration?

Suggested Actions

1. The initiating organisation should share the information gathered in Phase One about existing policies, commitments, programmes, projects, and contracts.
2. All types of waste pickers should share their experiences of how they have been affected. It is important to ensure that women and landfill waste pickers participate. Other members of the committee should ask questions to learn as much as possible.
3. NGOs and academics who do research on waste pickers should share their knowledge about how waste pickers have been affected.
4. The information shared in 2 and 3 above is often sufficient to identify required revisions. If more information is required, conduct research on the effects. This research does not need to be formal or academic – it can be done by stakeholders. If it is conducted by researchers it should be as participatory as possible. This is even more important if waste pickers are weakly organised or not organised at all.
5. Discuss and reach a common understanding of the effects on waste pickers. Pay attention to the different kinds of waste pickers (gender, ethnicity, landfill and street, nationality and so on).

1.2 Develop measures to redress negative effects of existing waste picker integration and recycling programmes

Objective

- The primary objective is to quickly redress the negative effects of existing recycling programmes and waste picker initiatives for waste pickers.

Questions for the working group

- What negative effects of recycling programmes have been identified?
- What negative effects of waste picker projects have been identified?
- What caused the negative effects?
- What changes need to be made to eliminate these negative effects?
- How can these changes be made?
- When can these changes be made? Which ones can be addressed immediately and which ones require more time?
- How can affected waste pickers be compensated for negative effects that cannot be addressed before the end of the existing project, programme or contract?
- What meaningful alternative work can be provided for affected waste pickers?
- What education and training can be provided to affected waste pickers?
- What lessons have been learned for future projects, programmes or contracts?

Suggested Actions

1. Based on the analysis, decide on concrete actions to redress the negative effects.
2. Box 29 below presents some ways waste pickers can be integrated into existing S@S contracts. Many of these proposed actions can also redress negative effects of other recycling initiatives (such as paying residents for their recyclables) and waste picker projects. When waste pickers are displaced by new recycling programmes this can be seen as a form of retrenchment, and consideration should be given to provision of alternative ways to generate income and compensation for loss of income.
3. Develop an implementation plan to redress negative effects, including objectives, outputs, targets, time frames, budget, allocation of responsibilities, and KPIs.
4. Form an inclusive team to implement these actions within clearly specified time frames. Include waste pickers.

Box 29 – Integrating waste pickers into existing S@S contracts

As discussed in Section F, S@S contracts with private companies can have multiple, devastating effects on waste pickers as they lose access to the materials on which their livelihoods depend. In South Africa, we have seen how this can result in protests by waste pickers, public outcry and a deterioration of relationships amongst stakeholders in the sector.

The negative effects of existing contracts should be taken into account when developing the next round of S@S programmes. In addition, when negative effects are identified, it is important that these be rectified as soon as possible.

Members of the working group should agree on immediate actions based on the specific problems identified and the context. Some ways to possibly reduce the harm of existing contracts include:

- *permitting waste pickers to collect materials from bins and from bags for recyclables;*
- *informing workers, security guards and residents that waste pickers are permitted to collect the materials so that they do not harass waste pickers or accuse them of stealing;*
- *permitting waste pickers to sell materials to their choice of buyer;*
- *paying higher prices and a collection fee when waste pickers sell to the company or a linked buy back centre (This is possible as private companies receive higher prices than waste pickers because they sell in bulk and are also usually paid a collection fee);*
- *providing mobile buy-back centres that also pay better prices and collection fees;*
- *when there are vacancies, prioritise hiring registered waste pickers who work in the area or at landfills affected by S@S;*
- *paying waste pickers rather than owner-drivers to collect recyclables;*
- *compensating affected waste pickers for loss of livelihood;*
- *providing training programmes and assistance for waste pickers to move into new occupations in waste management, recycling and other sectors;*
- *holding regular meetings with affected waste pickers to discuss ongoing problems and solutions.*

2. Register waste pickers

There is widespread agreement that registration is a fundamental component of waste picker integration. Registration ensures that as many waste pickers as possible know about integration; provides accurate data on how many waste pickers there are, who they are and where they work; and, if designed properly, allows waste pickers to experience the first benefits of integration.

Many attempts by municipalities in South Africa to register waste pickers have failed, as waste pickers could not see any benefits and were fearful of how the information would be used. When waste pickers are involved in designing and running registration campaigns, and when there is a clear benefit for waste pickers, registration has a greater chance of success. It is important to recognise that when waste pickers work on registration they are forfeiting their daily income, so the registration campaign should include a budget to pay them for their work.

At a minimum, registration should include the provision of a photo identity card that includes the name of the waste picker, the municipality, industry or business that is registering the waste pickers, and a registration number. Registration forms should capture this information, as well as additional information including: gender, race, age, how long they have worked as a waste pickers, where they work, work that they did before waste picking, work that they do alongside waste picking, whether they work individually or collectively, whether they sell individually or collectively, contact details.

In many places in the world waste pickers are registered by municipalities. In South Africa, municipalities, industries and businesses have all expressed interest in registering waste pickers. The DEFF is working to create a common registry for all waste pickers. In the meantime, registration must proceed, and ways of combining the registries will be explored.

Questions for the working group

- Why do we want to register waste pickers?
- Who should do registration?
- How should registration be done?
- How will we pay waste pickers who are part of the registration team?
- What is the budget for registration?
- What is the time-frame for registration and issuing cards?
- How will we ensure that we register women waste pickers?
- How will we ensure that we register non-South African waste pickers?

Suggested Actions

Some actions the working group could undertake to design and implement a successful registration process are:

1. Discuss why each stakeholder is interested in registration and what they hope it will achieve.
2. Ensure that there are clear benefits of registration for waste pickers and the organisation registering them.
3. Recognise that registration works best when waste pickers play a central role.
4. Agree on what information and documents waste pickers will require for registration. Ensure that these do not exclude non-South Africans.
5. Agree on how waste pickers will prove that they work as waste pickers. Verification is best done by other waste pickers.
6. Agree on what kinds of information will be included on the cards and in the registry.
7. Develop strategies to reach all kinds of waste pickers (landfill and streets, men and women, South African and non-South African, old and young). To reduce apprehension, it is useful to include women in registering other women, and non-South Africans in registering non-South Africans. It is also important for waste picker representatives to make advance visits to each area to meet with waste pickers, explain the benefits of registration, explain how the registration process will work, and obtain numbers of waste pickers who will help to mobilise others on registration day.

8. Identify registration venues that are easily accessible to waste pickers.
9. Agree on time frames for completing registration and issuing cards.
10. Develop a budget that includes paying waste picker representatives who are conducting registration for lost earnings and for their work on registration.
11. Ask for advice from metros and municipalities that have run successful registration campaigns.

3. Meet key needs

Although waste pickers are successful at extracting recyclable and reusable material from the waste stream, they work under harsh conditions and face many obstacles. They have a number of pressing needs that affect their daily work which can be addressed while new official recycling programmes that integrate waste pickers are put into place.

These include:

- secure access to materials on the streets and at landfills;
- sorting spaces;
- ending harassment and improving relationships with residents, security guards and police;
- improved access to municipal and industry officials;
- meaningful engagement;
- social plans for landfill waste pickers.

They also have needs related to broader aspects of integration, such as:

- empowering women;
- addressing gender inequalities in the sector;
- amending landfill licences to permit waste picking while it is being phased out and ensuring appropriate plans are made for landfill waste pickers;
- improved occupational health and safety and access to health services;
- obtaining identity documents;
- training, education and work placements to facilitate career mobility within and beyond the sector;
- building organisational capacity;
- improving their social status and recognition of their work.

As these needs and their relative importance are context specific, waste pickers involved in and affected by each particular integration process must identify and prioritise their own needs. It is important to note that action can be taken on many of these issues while the WPIP is still being developed. This will improve waste pickers' conditions, demonstrate commitment to integration, and build the trust required to sustain the integration process.

Objective

- To identify the waste pickers' key needs related to their current work.
- To identify waste pickers' key broader needs related to integration.
- To develop plans to meet these needs to the greatest extent possible.

Questions for the working group

- What process will be used for waste pickers to identify and share their pressing needs?
- How will these needs be prioritised?
- How can funding be sourced to meet these needs?
- Who will be responsible for overseeing the programme to address key needs?

Suggested Actions

- Agree on a process through which all of the different kinds of waste pickers can identify and prioritise their needs. This could be, for example, through a series of workshops with each key group, one large workshop that breaks into groups, general meetings held by waste picker members of the Working Group, or participatory research.
- Ensure that women in each group are provided with opportunities to identify and share their needs, that these are recorded and prioritised, and that a programme is developed to address them.
- Identify funds available to address the prioritised needs and raise new funds.
- Agree on a detailed plan for meeting key needs to the greatest extent possible. The plan should include objectives, outputs, targets, time frames, activities, budgets, allocation of responsibility, and KPIs.

Photo credit: PETCO

4. Integrate into new recycling programmes

By this step in the process, working group members have:

- developed a common understanding of what waste picker integration is and how the current waste management and recycling systems (both formal and informal) function and relate to each other;
- analysed how waste pickers are affected by existing projects, programmes and contracts;
- taken steps to mitigate any negative effects.

The working group now has all of the information required to make evidence-based decisions on new waste picker integration approaches and programmes. As discussed in Step 3, it is useful to pilot, monitor and evaluate approaches before moving to full-scale implementation.

It is important to explore how each proposed initiative affects the entire waste management and recycling system.

Objective

- To develop new waste picker integration and recycling programmes aligned with the waste picker integration principles.

Questions for the working group

- How will we develop new recycling and waste picker integration initiatives in line with the Waste Picker Integration Principles?
- What approaches are relevant to our context?
- Which are feasible?
- How can we pilot them?
- What are the targets, indicators, budgets and time-frames? Who will be responsible?
- How will we review the pilots and make revisions for implementation?

Suggested Actions

1. The committee should review all of the work done in Step 1.
2. Go through Section F on Integrated S@S, Annexure 2 for some ideas to address key challenges, and the resources in the reference list and Annexure 3 that could be useful for gaining a better understanding of different ways waste picker integration has been approached.
3. Discuss how these approaches could be relevant to your situation and what would need to be changed. Discuss other ideas proposed by members of the group.
4. Remember that new programmes, including S@S, should align with the waste picker integration principles. Section F includes several approaches to integrated S@S that should be considered.
5. Based on the working group's understanding of the waste management and recycling systems, identify all of the different ways that waste pickers could be negatively affected, and whether the Waste Picker Integration Principles could be undermined. Identify ways to eliminate these problems.
6. Agree on which approaches and activities to undertake in this WPIP.
7. Agree on which ones will be piloted and how.
8. Develop targets, indicators, budgets and time-frames and allocate responsibility for each initiative.

STEP 04

ENABLE

// Align regulatory environment
// Secure skills
// Educate staff
// Educate the public

Successful waste picker integration requires an enabling environment. As discussed in Section F, national government is committed to creating an enabling national environment. Municipalities and industries should also create enabling environments. The creation of an enabling environment includes a number of different types of interventions. Start with the ones that are most important and most feasible and develop time frames for the rest.

1. Align the regulatory environment to facilitate waste picker integration

Historically in South Africa, waste management bylaws and landfill permits were written to enforce collection, transportation and burial of waste at landfills. They did not promote either recycling or waste picking. Unless they are changed, they will undermine waste picker integration and the achievement of separation at source targets. But waste bylaws are not the only ones that affect waste picker integration. Bylaws on issues such as transportation and registration of service providers are also relevant.

Even though the revision of bylaws relates more directly to municipal waste picker integration programmes, business and industry integration initiatives may also require engagement with municipalities to amend their by-laws.

Objective

- To ensure that bylaws and permits enable waste picker integration.

Questions for the working group

- Which bylaws affect waste pickers and waste picker integration?
- How do they affect waste pickers and waste picker integration?
- How does the landfill site permit affect waste pickers and waste picker integration?
- How should the bylaws and permit be revised to support waste picker integration?

Suggested Actions

1. Assign a person or small group to gather all of the relevant bylaws and identify how they affect waste picker integration and the achievement of S@S targets.
2. These findings should be presented to the working group so that the group can identify how they should be revised.
3. A team of people with relevant skills should revise the bylaws and present them back to the group for finalisation.

2. Secure skills

Work on waste picker integration requires a range of skills that are not typically found in waste management departments or industry bodies. In Belo Horizonte, Brazil, the waste management department created a social mobilisation unit and hired sociologists and social workers to facilitate work with catadores [collectors of reusable and recyclable materials] (Dias, 2011d).

Objective

To ensure that the initiating organisation has the skills required for waste picker integration.

Questions for the working group

- What skills do we need to implement waste picker integration?
- Do we have all of these skills in the department responsible for waste picker integration?
- Which other departments have skills we require?
- How can people with relevant skills be co-opted into or hired by the lead department?
- What relevant knowledge and skills do current staff and officials possess?

Suggested Actions

1. Identify which skills and knowledge are required for waste picker integration. These include expertise in working with informal workers, facilitation skills, translation skills, organising skills, outreach skills, participatory planning, and development of popular forms of communication.
2. Conduct a skills audit of staff working in the department responsible for recycling programmes and contracts and waste picker integration to identify which skills you already have. Many staff may have relevant skills that are not currently being put to use.
3. Try to reallocate people with necessary skills to focus on waste picker integration and explore whether it is possible to make work on waste picker integration a component of the work of staff with relevant skills in other departments.
4. Add work on waste picker integration to all relevant staff's KPIs.
5. Apply for funding to contract new staff.

Photo Credit: Jonathan Torgovnik, courtesy of WIEGO

3. Educate – Build officials' skills and knowledge

Municipal officials, elected representatives, and staff in industry organisations and businesses who are working on recycling programmes and waste picker integration must be educated and capacitated to implement waste picker integration. It is particularly important that officials, representatives and staff who are working on separation at source and recycling programmes and contracts receive this training, as otherwise they will continue to unintentionally undermine waste picker integration.

Objective

- To ensure that relevant staff, officials and elected representatives working on recycling and waste picker integration have the knowledge and skills required to design and implement programmes and contracts that advance and do not undermine waste picker integration.

Questions for the working group

- What additional knowledge and skills are required?
- Who can design and provide the education and training to address knowledge and skills gaps?
- How will the working group ensure that education and training is ongoing?
- What role will waste pickers play in providing the education and training? How will they be remunerated?
- How can this education and training be integrated into people's work?

Suggested Actions

1. The working group should work with experts in the field to develop an ongoing training programme.
2. Drawing on the skills audit, the working group and experts should identify the key knowledge and skills required.
3. The programme should include all people who work with waste pickers and recycling.

Photo Credit: Jonathan Torgovnik, courtesy of WIEGO

Photo Credit: Melanie Samson

4. Educate the public

Objective

- To ensure that residents and businesses understand what waste picker integration is and why it is important.

Questions for the working group

- What are the key messages?
- What are the best ways to disseminate these messages?
- How frequently will awareness activities be conducted?
- How will waste pickers be involved in the dissemination and how will they be paid?
- What is our budget for the awareness activities?

Suggested Actions

1. The working group should review Sections A to E of the Guideline and other resources that relate to understanding waste pickers and waste picker integration.
2. Drawing on this material as well as working group members' experiences, discuss what members of the working group think the key messages should be. Ensure that these align with the waste picker integration principles.
3. Develop an action plan.
4. Secure the budget.
5. Ensure that the people running the campaign receive sufficient education, training, payment and support.

STEP 05

INSTITUTIONALISE

// Align policies & plans

// Process to monitor, evaluate, revise

// Create a platform

// Adopt the WPIP

1. Align policies and plans

Waste picker integration will only be prioritised if it is included in key strategy and planning documents. For municipalities, these include the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Integrated Waste Management Plan (IWMP). Industry, businesses and other organisations will have business plans and strategy documents.

Objective

- To ensure that commitments to waste picker integration and the WPIP are institutionalised.

Questions for the working group

- What are the key planning and strategy documents that need to include these commitments?

Suggested Actions

1. Representatives of the working group should prepare submissions, advocate for them and participate in the revision and drafting of the relevant documents.
2. Ensure that the required commitments and targets are included in the relevant documents.

2. Process to monitor, evaluate and revise

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of how recycling programmes (such as S@S) and waste picker specific programmes are advancing waste picker integration and waste diversion are essential components of WPIPs. It is also crucial that evidence gathered through the M&E analysis leads to necessary revisions in the programmes and informs the development of new plans and programmes. Waste pickers have the greatest insight into how these programmes are affecting their work. M&E must be participatory and include waste pickers as well as all other relevant stakeholders.

Objective

- To ensure that negative effects and failures of existing recycling and waste picker programmes are identified and corrected.
- To ensure that strengths of existing programmes are identified so that they can be replicated.
- To ensure that the development of new plans and programmes is evidence-based.

Questions for the working group

- What are all of the recycling and waste picker specific programmes that must be monitored and evaluated?
- How frequently should monitoring and evaluation take place?
- How will the monitoring, evaluation and revision (ME&R) system be developed?
- What needs to be monitored and evaluated to ensure that recycling and waste picker specific programmes advance waste picker integration?
- What indicators have been established?
- What form will the M&E take?
- What mechanisms will be used to ensure that revisions are made based on evidence from the M&E?
- How will waste pickers and all relevant stakeholders be involved in all phases of the ME&R?

Suggested Actions

1. If necessary, co-opt additional members from the stakeholder groups with expertise in monitoring, evaluation and revision or outside experts or both.
2. Develop a comprehensive ME&R plan.

3. Create a platform – Establish a Waste Picker Integration Committee

Experiences in South Africa and around the world demonstrate that initiatives to integrate waste pickers cannot succeed unless waste pickers are involved in their design, implementation, evaluation, and revision (Dias, 2011c; Nas and Jaffee, 2004; Nzeadibe and Anyadike, 2012; Gutberlet, 2008; Scheinberg, 2012). The WPIP should therefore include the establishment of a permanent waste picker integration committee. Municipal committees should include representatives from: waste picker organisations; representatives elected by autonomous waste pickers if there are no organisations; all relevant local and district municipal departments; academics; and NGOs. These committees could also include representatives of buy-back centres and industry. Industry committees should include representatives from relevant industry organisations; recyclers; waste picker organisations; relevant levels of government; academics; and NGOs. They can also include brand owners.

3.1 Designing and agreeing on the committee

Objective

- To establish a permanent waste picker integration committee to oversee and ensure the success of waste picker integration in the municipality, industry or company.

Questions for the working group

- Who should be represented on the committee?
- How should the committee be structured?
- How often should the committee meet?
- What is the committee responsible for?

Suggested Actions

1. The working group should identify any existing committees or forums that perform some of the functions that will be part of the committee's work.
2. Assess how they are functioning – identify strengths and weaknesses that can inform the design of the new committee.
3. Identify relevant organisations and key people who should be part of the committee.
4. Convene an initial meeting to discuss different ways the committee could be structured that align with the Waste Picker Integration Principles.
5. Develop concrete proposals.
6. Agree on a set period of time within which the stakeholders will obtain mandates.
7. Meet to reach agreement. This could take several meetings.

3.2 Decision-making

The Waste Picker Integration Committee is designed to discuss key issues, make decisions related to waste picker integration and recycling, and ensure that they are implemented. It therefore needs to have an effective mechanism to make decisions within reasonable time frames. There must also be a mechanisms for resolving disputes.

Objective

- To ensure that clear decision-making processes are agreed, and that there is an agreed way to resolve disputes.

Questions for the working group

- How will decisions be made?
- How will disputes be resolved?

Suggested Actions

1. All decisions should be informed by the Waste Picker Integration Principles.
2. It is ideal to make decisions by consensus.
3. There are a number of different ways that disputes could be resolved. The committee's rules could allow for some or all of them to be used in combination. There must, however, be written agreement on which processes could be used in which order.
    a. Bring in a representative from the DEFF or an expert on the issue to provide advice and help the committee to reach agreement.
    b. Bring in an outside facilitator who is familiar with the issues to assist the working group to rethink how they are approaching the issue.
    c. Involve more senior representatives from each organisation.
    d. Bring in a mediator.
    e. Bring in an arbitrator.

4. Adopt the WPIP

Objective

- To ensure that the WPIP is officially adopted.

Questions for the working group

- What processes must be followed to formally adopt the WPIP?

Suggested Actions

- Follow correct processes to formally adopt the WPIP.

Photo credit: Jonathan Torgovnik, courtesy of WIEGO

STEP 06

IMPLEMENT

// Implement

// Monitor and Evaluate

1. Implement the WPIP

Once the WPIP has been formally adopted, full implementation can begin. It is important to remember, however, that implementation does not need to wait for the plan to be adopted. Initial work to address pressing issues and those that can be commenced with existing resources should be started as soon as possible after they are agreed by the working group.

Objective

- To implement the WPIP

Questions for the working group

- What are the first steps required to implement the WPIP?

Suggested Actions

1. Convene a meeting of the Waste Picker Integration Committee.
2. Develop and agree on the implementation plan.
3. Begin formal implementation of the plan.
4. Meet regularly to review progress in implementation and address problems

2. Monitor and evaluate implementation

Once the WPIP has been formally adopted, full implementation can begin. It is important to remember, however, that implementation does not need to wait for the plan to be adopted. Initial work to address pressing issues and those that can be commenced with existing resources should be started as soon as possible after they are agreed by the working group.

Objective

- To generate data required to revise and improve the approach to waste picker integration.

Questions for the working group

- What does analysis of the data generated through monitoring and evaluation tell us about the successes of the programme?
- What does the analysis tell us about problems encountered?
- What lessons can be drawn?

Suggested Actions

- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation are implemented as per the WPIP.
- Agree on a small team to analyse the data on a quarterly basis.
- Regularly review the analysis at working group meetings in order to identify strengths, challenges and ways to address these.

STEP 07

REVISE

// Revise the WPIP

// Institutionalise changes

1. Revise the Waste Picker Integration Plan

Objective

- To revise the WPIP based on lessons drawn from monitoring and evaluation as well as new needs and contexts.

Questions for the working group

- What lessons can be drawn from the monitoring and evaluation reports?
- How has the context changed?
- What new needs have emerged?
- What new knowledge and skills have been developed?
- How can we strengthen existing programmes?
- Which programmes should be suspended?
- What are the key priorities?
- What new programmes should be put in place?
- How must the budget be revised?

Suggested Actions

1. Follow the agreed process to revise the WPIP.
2. Ensure that the process is fully participatory.

2. Institutionalise the changes

Objective

- To institutionalise the revised or new WPIP.

Questions for the working group

- What processes need to be followed to formally adopt the revised or new WPIP?
- Which policy and planning documents must be revised to include new commitments and targets?

Suggested Actions

1. Follow the correct processes to ensure that the revised WPIP is adopted and new commitments, targets and activities are included in relevant policy and planning documents.

Conclusion

Photo Credit: Frank Ferro

Section I

Section I

Conclusion

For decades waste pickers were the only people systematically removing recyclables from the municipal solid waste stream. Without them landfills would have filled more quickly and the recycling industry would have been constrained in terms of growth. Waste pickers are an important part of the foundation of South Africa's local recycling economy. Unfortunately waste pickers have not received the recognition, respect and remuneration they deserve. Waste picker integration will ensure that waste pickers are included, valued and rewarded for their important work and contributions in diverting waste away from landfill towards reuse and recycling. Waste picker integration will also ensure that the expansion of the recycling economy builds on and benefits waste pickers' thriving informal separation outside source collection system, advancing a new way of integrating the informal economy.

When the stakeholders began developing this Guideline their main concern was that it should be implementable. The Guideline has explained who waste pickers are, what waste picker integration is, why it is important, and how to implement it. Now is the time for all stakeholders to work together to make waste picker integration a reality in South Africa and to achieve all of the many benefits for waste pickers, industry, municipalities, the economy, the environment and society.

Photo credit: Jonathan Torgovnik, Getty Images Reportage

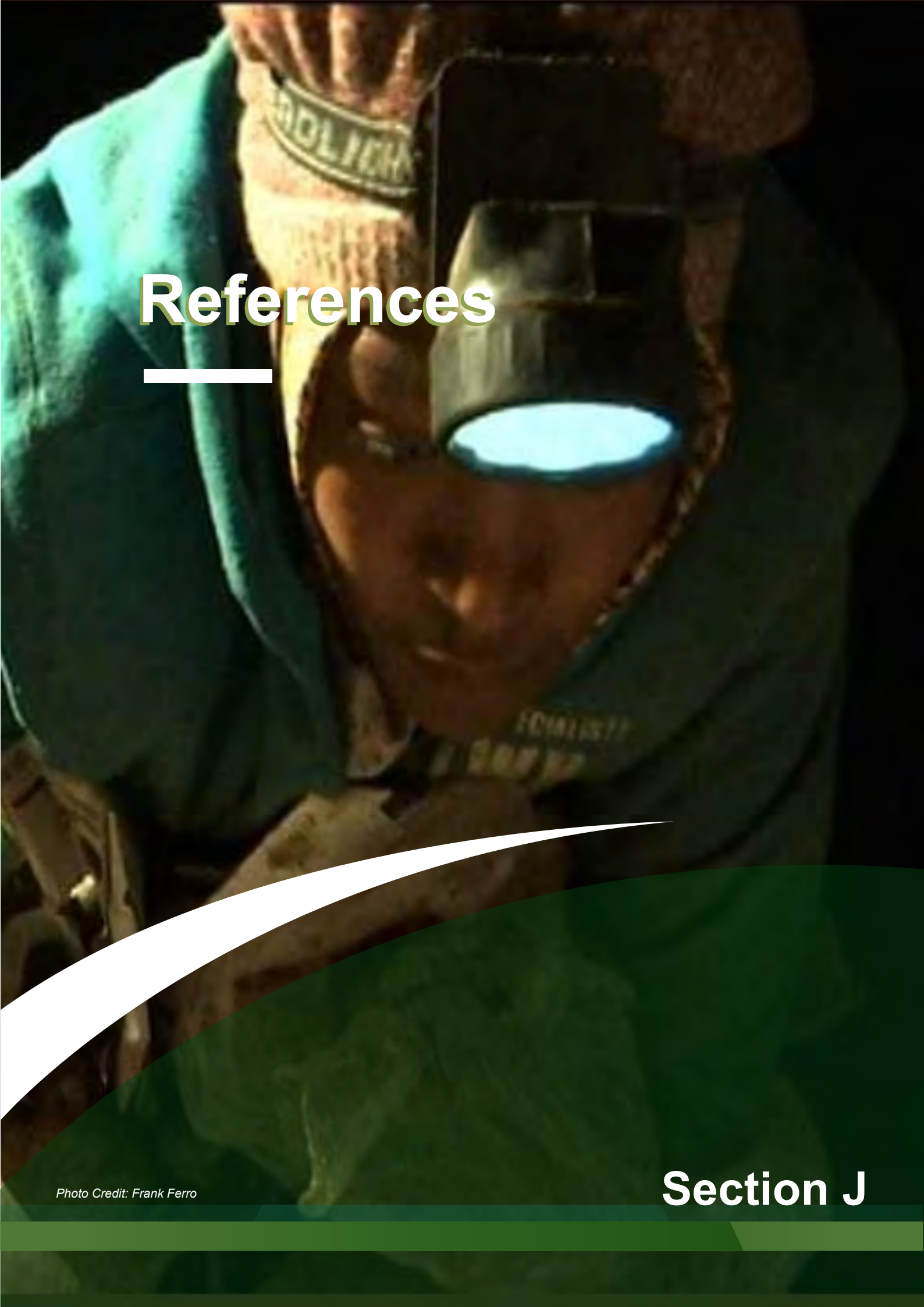

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Photo Credit: Frank Ferro

Section J

Section J

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Annexures

Photo Credit: PETCO

Section K

Section K

Annexure 1 – Waste Picker Integration Plan Template

This annexure presents a simple template for a waste picker integration plan (WPIP). It can be used by municipalities, industries, and any company or organisation that works with waste pickers or provides recycling collection services.

The template is designed to be used with the Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries Waste Picker Integration Guideline for South Afriica. The Guideline provides information on who waste pickers are, what waste picker integration means, why it is important, how to integrate waste pickers, and why WPIPs are necessary. Section H of the Guideline presents a participatory process to develop a WPIP. Following these steps will generate all of the information required to complete this WPIP template.

The template includes text drawn from the National Guideline. Instructions are in square brackets. They should be deleted when the section is complete. Text that is underlined indicates where specific information should be inserted. The template also includes tables that can be used to present information. A WPIP can also include additional sections.

[Name of Organisation] Waste Picker Integration Plan 20xx – 20xx

Table of Contents

[Insert Table of Contents]

Abbreviations

IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IWMP	Integrated Waste Management Plan
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
WPNIP	Waste Picker Integration Plan

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

This Waste Picker Integration Plan (20xx – 20xx) sets out how waste pickers and the system they have created to salvage and revalue recyclable and reusable materials will be integrated with the formal waste management and recycling systems and programmes in name of municipality/company/sector.

[Add a description of how the plan was developed in your municipality/industry – who was involved, how were they involved, the period of time when was it developed, any challenges encountered when developing it, areas that need to be strengthened in future WPIPs, and so on. Include information on how waste pickers and NGOs that assist them were involved in the process.]

1.2 Aim

The aim of this WPIP is to ensure that waste and recycling policies and programmes in name of municipality/ company/sector recognise, value and integrate waste pickers and the systems they have created, build on the strengths of the existing system, improve the work and livelihoods of waste pickers, and increase recycling rates.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this plan are to:

1. involve waste pickers in all decisions that affect their work, livelihoods and lives;
2. ensure that waste pickers and their separation outside source (SoS) system are integrated into formal systems to collect recyclables at all levels of the value chain;
3. develop locally relevant, cost-effective programmes that increase current diversion of recyclable and reusable materials away from landfills and align with the waste picker integration principles;
4. generate data required to develop a comprehensive understanding of the intended and unintended effects of each integrated recycling option and make evidence-based decisions on the selection of options;
5. ensure that waste pickers' conditions and livelihoods are improved and not worsened by formal recycling and waste picker integration programmes;
6. minimise and mitigate harm caused to waste pickers by existing recycling and waste picker programmes to the greatest extent possible;
7. create alternatives for affected waste pickers when negative effects cannot be avoided
8. develop a coherent waste picker integration plan with a clear budget, timeline and allocation of responsibilities to ensure effective implementation.

2. Principles

This WPIP is guided by the following principles:

1. Recognition, respect and redress – Waste pickers' role in the recycling system is recognised and taken into account. Waste pickers are engaged respectfully. Unequal power relations between waste pickers and municipal and industry officials, as well as those rooted in gender, race, class, nationality and so on, are recognised and addressed.
2. Value waste picker expertise – Officials cannot presume to know what waste pickers want, how they are affected by changes in the recycling and waste management systems, what the best form of integration would be, or how waste pickers work. Successful integration programmes are based on waste pickers' needs and interests – as communicated by waste pickers.
3. Meaningful engagement – Legitimate platforms are created to meaningfully include waste pickers as equal partners in decision-making related to recycling programmes and waste picker integration. Waste pickers are supported to organise themselves so that they can better represent themselves.
4. Build on what exists – Waste pickers' informal system for collecting, preparing and selling recyclables is recognised and valued, and provides the basis for the development of new formal recycling programmes and contracts.

5. Increased diversion and cost effectiveness – New waste picker integration and recycling initiatives increase diversion of recyclables from landfills through cost effective means.
6. Evidence-based - Waste picker integration and recycling policies and programmes are evidence-based. Piloting can assist in generating necessary evidence. Information generated through monitoring and evaluation contributes to revisions and future developments.
7. Enabling environment – Enabling environments for waste picker integration are created at national, provincial and local levels.
8. Improved conditions and income – Official waste picker integration and recycling policies and programmes improve waste pickers' working conditions, incomes and social security. Waste pickers are provided with alternatives and compensated for any displacement or deterioration of conditions and incomes resulting from official waste picker integration and recycling programmes and contracts.
9. Payment for services and savings – Waste pickers are remunerated for the collection services they provide, for costs avoided by municipalities and industry, and for environmental benefits they generate.
10. Holistic integration – Successful integration of waste pickers requires changing how they are seen and engaged by residents, industry and government. Waste pickers are recognised as active and equal participants in political, economic, social, cultural and environmental processes.

3. Accountability and decision-making

3.1 Responsible official

[Provide details of the responsible official, who should have a senior position with decision-making authority].

3.2 Waste picker integration engagement platform

[As discussed in the Guideline, initiatives to integrate waste pickers cannot succeed unless waste pickers are involved in their design, implementation and evaluation. The WPIP should, therefore, include a waste picker integration engagement platform. The platform should include representatives of all waste picker organisations working at the relevant scale; representatives elected by independent waste pickers; and representatives from all relevant local and district or company or industry departments. In this section, describe the engagement platform. The Guideline suggests discussing this closer to the end of the process once concrete issues have been discussed and relationships have been developed]

3.3 Decision making process

[Provide information on how decisions related to waste picker integration will be made through the engagement platform and how they will be finalised.]

3.4 Resolving disputes

[Provide information on how disagreements between stakeholders will be resolved]

4. Analysis of the current system

[As discussed in the Guideline, before changes are made to the current waste and recycling systems it is important to know what exists.]

4.1 Current commitments related to recycling and waste pickers

[Complete the table of current targets and commitments related to recycling and waste pickers.]

Document	Committments	Targets	Indicators	Timeframe	Responsibility

4.2 Baseline information on waste pickers in the municipality or sector

[Provide as much information as possible on the number, gender, race and nationality of waste pickers, the areas where they work, the materials they collect, where they sell, how much they earn, and so on. See the Guideline for some ideas regarding how to collect this information.]

4.3 Overview of the existing and planned recycling systems

[Provide an overview of the formal and informal recycling systems and how they intersect. Include all parts of the systems, including buy-back centres, sorting spaces etc. It would be useful to include a diagram].

4.4 Existing and planned official recycling and waste picker programmes and contracts

[Provide information on all official waste picker-specific programmes as well as all recycling programmes and contracts. The Guideline includes a process for gathering this information]

Programme/ Contract	Start Date	End Date	Areas	Activities	How waste pickers are included	Targets	Indicators	Budget	Responsible
Recycling programmes and contracts									
Waste picker specific projects and programmes									

4.5 Current challenges in the formal and informal recycling systems

[Provide information on the current challenges in the formal and informal recycling systems]

4.6 Effects of existing official programmes and contracts on waste pickers

[Provide information on the effects of existing recycling and waste picker programmes and contracts on waste pickers.]

5. Addressing adverse effects of current programmes and contracts

[The most immediate priority of a WPIP is to address the adverse effects on waste pickers of current programmes and contracts. Follow the Guideline process to develop initiatives to address the adverse effects identified in Section 4 of the WPIP, and present them in this section. This section should also include ways to strengthen positive effects of existing initiatives. It can be useful to present the information in the table below and also provide a written overview.]

Contract/ Programme	Effects for waste pickers	Redress actions	Time frame	Targets	Indicators	Budget	Responsible

6. New recycling and waste picker specific programmes

[The Guideline provides some ideas of different ways to integrate waste pickers and their informal recycling system. Follow the process in the Guideline to develop an appropriate approach to integrate waste pickers and their system in the development of new official recycling programmes and projects. Ensure that these are in line with the principles. In this section, provide details on the planned projects, including why they were selected, targets, indicators, time frames, budgets and responsibility. Identify how waste pickers will be included as well as possible negative effects for waste pickers and how these will be mitigated. It is important to include ALL recycling programmes, projects and contracts, as well as all waste picker specific programmes.

It is also useful to complete the summary table below.]

6. (cont'd)

Programme/ Contract	Start Date	End Date	Areas	Activities	How waste pickers are included	Targets	Indicators	Budget	Responsible
Recycling programmes and contracts									
Waste picker specific projects and programmes									

7. Building capacity and support

[Successful waste picker integration requires strengthening the capacity and support of officials, waste pickers, businesses or industry, and residents. Provide details of how this will be done. Include time frames, targets, indicators, budget and allocation of responsibility.]

8. Institutionalizing waste picker integration

[As discussed in the Guideline, to institutionalize waste picker integration, clearly state in this section what targets and so on will be included in relevant documents and what changes are required to bylaws (if relevant), policies and plans in order to achieve your commitments to waste picker integration.]

8.1 IDP [for municipalities]

8.2 Bylaws [for municipalities]

8.4 KPIs

8.5 Existing policies

9. Implementation Plan

[Provide a detailed implementation plan]

10. Monitoring, evaluation and revision

[*Provide details on how the WPIP will be monitored and evaluated, how this will feed into revision of the plan and activities, and how waste pickers will be included in this process.]*

11. Financial Framework

11.1 Budget

[Provide a full budget for official programmes and budgets to implement the WPIP. Ensure that sufficient funds are allocated to support meaningful engagement by waste pickers]

11.2 Funding sources

[Identify potential sources of funding from all levels of government, the private sector, donors and so on. Identify the person or people responsible for raising funds.]

11.2.1 Municipal funding

11.2.2 Provincial funding

11.3.3 National funding

11.4.4 Private Sector Funding

11.4.5 Donor Funding

11.4.6 EPR funding

12. Appendices

[Attach any necessary appendices]

Annexure 2 – Some ideas to address key challenges

This Annexure includes ideas for some possible ways to address key issues related to waste picker integration which are often faced by municipalities, industry and waste pickers. Neither the lists of challenges nor the suggestions are exhaustive, and not all stakeholders may agree on the specific challenges or the possible solutions presented in the Annexure. They are included here to provide a starting point for discussion.

As the Guideline states, key issues and ways to address them should be identified and agreed through a fully participatory process in which waste pickers are equal partners.

All waste picker integration principles should be complied with when attempting to address any of the challenges discussed below.

Rather than dealing with the challenges in isolation, it is best to address them as part of the participatory process, outlined in Section H, to develop and implement at Waste Picker Integration Plan.

Addressing some key municipal and industry challenges and needs.

Municipal and industry challenges	Possible solutions (to be decided and implemented with waste pickers)
Guidance	
Lack of guidance regarding implementation of waste picker integration	• read through this Guideline document • follow the process to develop and implement a Waste Picker Integration Plan in Section H • request assistance from the DEFF • request assistance from waste picker organisations, NGOs and academics with relevant expertise • contract consultants, waste picker organisations, academics and/or NGOs with relevant skills and commitment to the waste picker integration principles
Lack of a comprehensive approach	
Existing projects and programmes are ad hoc	• commit to the Waste Picker Integration Principles • establish a committee to oversee waste picker integration that includes waste pickers as equal partners • follow the process in Section H to work with waste pickers and develop, implement and revise a Waste Picker Integration Plan
Funding	
Waste department budgets are already over-stretched and do not include funds for waste picker integration	Municipalities • include waste picker integration activities in Integrated Development Plans • apply for EPR funds • seek funding from donors, corporate social investment • work with national government to create dedicated funds for waste picker integration • allocate funds to agreed priorities • develop phased implementation plans to work within budget Industry • prioritise waste picker integration and engage waste pickers on allocation of funds from EPR. • agree with other stakeholders on priorities for waste picker integration • encourage business to allocate corporate social investment funding to waste picker integration

Limited internal capacity	
Weak knowledge of waste picking and recycling	• internal education as part of Step 1 in the preparation phase of WPIP development process in Section H • ongoing internal education
Lack of data to make evidence-based decisions on recycling programmes	• gather and analyse existing information as part of the process to develop a waste picker integration plan, described in Section H. • ensure that all data is disaggregated by gender • ensure that data includes all types of waste pickers • conduct pilot projects • waste picker integration committee monitors and evaluates pilot projects and existing programmes to generate required data • partner with universities to create research projects for postgraduate students, conduct research on policy, practice and experiences of different stakeholders, and conduct participatory research with waste pickers • learn more about different approaches to recycling and separation at source
Lack of reliable data on recyclables extracted from the waste stream	• partner with waste pickers, buy-back centres, commercial collection companies and producer responsibility organisations (PROs) to record data on materials purchased from waste pickers and other sources
Insufficient skills to work with waste pickers and implement integration	• include staff from other relevant municipal departments (such as local economic development or social development) in the internal waste picker integration committee • seek new appointments and interns
Inadequate time to work on waste picker integration	• include staff from other relevant municipal departments (such as local economic development or social development) in the internal waste picker integration committee • seek new appointments and interns
Inadequate time to work on waste picker integration	• include waste picker integration in key performance indicators • ask for secondments of people with relevant skills from other departments • hire new staff and interns specifically tasked with working on waste picker integration

Weak relationships and low trust with waste pickers	
Weak relationships and levels of trust with waste pickers	Municipalities • follow the process in Section H to develop positive working relations with waste pickers and establish a representative and accountable waste picker integration committee • Commit to the waste picker integration principles • Engage waste pickers as partners and include waste picker representatives in all decision making processes • hold meetings at times and places convenient for waste pickers • allocate officials to be responsible for engaging waste pickers with clear office hours for meeting with waste pickers • circulate the official's contact details and location to waste picker organisations and NGOs, and post them at buy-back centres • remember that it takes time to build trust and that respect and benefits for waste pickers are crucial Industry • Establish forums that include waste picker representatives as partners at sector and industry level to oversee waste picker integration and collection of recyclables • Follow the process in Section H to develop sectoral and industry WPIPs • Include waste pickers on sector and industry decision-making bodies • Work with waste pickers to develop Industry Waste Picker Integration Plans
Weak or no waste picker organisations	
Difficulty meeting with waste pickers, reaching decisions and implementing them because there are no representatives	Support waste picker organising by: • meeting with waste picker organisations and waste picker activists, asking what they need to organise and strengthen their organisations and work to support these needs • allocating an official or group of officials with relevant skills to assist waste pickers in connecting with each other • contacting and working with existing waste picker organisations • collaborating with NGOs to support waste picker organising • providing meetings spaces for free • encouraging waste pickers to use registration as a way for waste pickers to organise • together with waste picker representatives, holding regular waste picker meetings across the city • ensuring that all types of waste pickers are involved • ensuring that women waste pickers are supported to take leadership roles • allocating a budget to support waste picker organising, including core funding, offices, funding for organisers and organisational work, services, and exchanges with organisations in South Africa and internationally • getting to know, respecting and working with waste picker organisations

Registration	
Difficulty registering waste pickers	Waste pickers are often wary of registering as they do not trust municipalities and industry, and are fearful of what will be done with their information. To overcome this: • design and implement registration programmes with waste pickers • involve existing waste picker organisations and NGOs that support them in the registration campaign and pay the waste pickers • ensure that the benefits for waste pickers of registration are clear and are received within a relatively short period after registration • ensure that registration cards are received within a specified, short timeframe • develop strategies to register all different kinds of waste pickers (men and women, landfill and street, South African and non-South African) • assure waste pickers that the register will not be shared with other parts of the state
Waste pickers without identification documents and non-South African waste pickers	
Some South African waste pickers do not have identification documents	• invite Home Affairs to provide on-site services for waste pickers to apply for identification documents
Undocumented non-South African waste pickers	• remember that many non-South Africans have documentation permitting them to be in South Africa and work in South Africa • include non-South African waste pickers in registration as it is essential to know how many waste pickers there are, where they work and what work they do • liaise with waste picker organisations and consulates to assist undocumented non-South Africans who do not have any identification to obtain identification from their home country • develop ways to include non-South Africans in programmes (working with industry can assist with this) • seek guidance and assistance from DEFF
Improving success of existing programmes	
Some projects not meeting expected outcomes	Follow the steps outlined in Section H to evaluate and revise existing projects. Some of the key activities include: • establishing a committee with waste picker representatives and project participants to analyse, evaluate and revise existing projects • Agreeing on a process to evaluate the project, identify problems and make appropriate revisions • Developing a holistic support programme • Developing and agreeing on a detailed project plan, including monitoring, evaluation and revision for the remainder of the existing projects

Struggling cooperatives	
Some waste picker cooperatives struggling, collapsing, not keeping records, not collecting materials	• together with waste picker representatives and cooperative members, evaluate and address needs of cooperatives already included in programmes related to support, infrastructure and equipment • learn from examples of successful cooperatives discussed in the Guideline and in the references and resources • learn from examples of successful incubation and support programmes discussed in the references and resources • work with waste picker cooperatives to develop capacity building and support programmes that address real challenges and take a holistic approach • support waste pickers who want to form cooperatives to do so, but do not force waste pickers to form cooperatives in order to be integrated • develop ways of integrating waste pickers who do not want to join cooperatives (for example, payment of collection fees via buy-back centres; create sorting and storage spaces and infrastructure hubs that independent waste pickers can access) • ensure that cooperatives have the necessary infrastructure, equipment, services and support • ensure cooperative models are financially viable - cooperatives must collect from a sufficient number of houses and receive a collection fee
Improving waste pickers' incomes and conditions	
Ensuring that programmes improve waste pickers' conditions and incomes	The improvement of waste pickers' conditions and incomes is central to waste picker integration. • commit to the waste picker integration principles in Section D and to following the process in Section H to ensure that waste picker and recycling programmes do not have unintended negative consequences for waste pickers and achieve the goals of waste picker integration. • remember, the key to successful waste picker integration is to respect, recognise and work with waste pickers and their organisations as partners, and to make decisions through a participatory process.

Promoting gender equity	
Absence of programmes focusing on women waste pickers	Women waste pickers have many gender-specific problems and needs. These can include: increased safety concerns due to gender-based harm at work and at home; that women are more severely affected by lack of ablution facilities; equipment designed to suit men; male control of most valuable materials; and women's exclusion from leadership positions. Few examples exist in South Africa of gender sensitive planning and programming related to waste pickers. Some ways municipalities, industry waste picker organisations, NGOs and other organisations can address this are: • work with women waste pickers to hold meetings and workshops for women waste pickers (from both landfills and streets) to find out what particular challenges they face and to collaboratively develop initiatives to address these challenges. • provide education and training on gender, gender planning and gender and waste picking for officials and waste pickers • establish regular forums with women waste pickers, industry and relevant municipalities to monitor implementation of programmes and resolve ongoing problems • ensure that any innovations, such as new trolleys or sorting areas, are suitable for women as well as men • ensure that women receive appropriate personal protection equipment • develop measures to ensure greater access to materials for women (for example, at Palm Springs landfill groups of women alone and men alone take turns salvaging from trucks that enter the landfill) • ensure women are represented on committees and in participatory programme • ensure that the possible negative gender implications of all programmes are identified and eliminated • see Box 7 on Gender and Waste Picking for further discussion and recommendations.
Landfill safety and closure	
Safety issues at landfills	• agree with waste pickers on ways they can safely access, pick, sort and store materials, and demarcate spaces for each activity • amend the landfill licence to allow waste picking (see Box 16) • agree on plans to transition waste pickers off of landfills into other work opportunities (in recycling and other sectors) • have regular safety briefing meetings with elected waste picker representatives and managers at landfill sites
Landfill closure and S@S will displace waste pickers	• establish a committee with waste picker representatives to develop a social plan for landfill closure (see Box 17) • ensure that waste pickers have full access to information on expected dates of and plans for landfill closure • ensure that waste pickers are compensated and provided with alternatives

Lack of tidiness when collecting from bins	
Some waste pickers leave trash outside bins when they salvage materials	Waste pickers don't take all materials and often don't have time to tidy up as they need to collect as many valuable items as possible to support themselves. To maintain greater cleanliness: • meet with street waste pickers and waste picker organisations to find out how they think the issue could be addressed • encourage residents to separate materials so that waste pickers do not need to go into bins • provide waste pickers with bags for separated materials to give to residents • pay waste pickers a collection fee – greater income security and higher incomes will provide waste pickers more time to tidy up • work with waste picker organisations to discuss the importance of careful salvaging with street waste pickers
Informal sorting and storage spaces	
Existence of informal sorting and storage spaces	• meet with street waste pickers and waste picker organisations to learn why they create informal sorting spaces in specific locations • work with waste picker organisations and street waste pickers to identify and allocate appropriate land for sorting spaces • create ways to fast track allocation of land for sorting spaces • ensure sorting spaces have adequate facilities and equipment • support recycling hubs where waste pickers can sort and store materials, access other equipment, and access other services such as child care, health services, skills training and refurbishment work.
Waste frequently accumulates where waste pickers sort their materials	• meet with relevant waste pickers and waste picker organisations to discuss how they think this could be resolved and agree a way forward • encourage residents to separate materials for waste pickers – if waste pickers collect separated materials there will not be large amounts of waste in their sorting areas. • provide residents with bags or bins for recyclables, which can be provided by waste pickers • place skips in informal sorting and storage areas and collect them
Waste pickers in parks	
Some waste pickers sort and store materials and sleep in parks	• meet with waste pickers and waste picker organisations to understand why they sort, store or sleep in parks and how they think this can be addressed, and agree a way forward • allow waste pickers to collect separated materials – they won't need to sleep rough to be close to materials and "beat the trucks" • develop sorting and storage spaces in locations that are convenient for the waste pickers • demarcate areas in parks for recycling hubs or zones where residents can bring recyclables, and waste pickers can sort and store materials and equipment and access ablution facilities • work with other departments and agencies to assist waste pickers to access accommodation in relevant locations • in the meantime, provide skips to reduce waste in parks and agree on how park space can be used

Road safety	
Trolleys violate road safety	• partner with waste picker organisations, universities, NGOs, or companies to design trolleys that comply with existing regulations and that waste pickers want to use (provinces, national government or industry could work with waste pickers to develop prototypes) • amend bylaws to recognise approved trolleys as legitimate vehicles to transport recyclables • provide mobile buy-back centres and create buy-back centres in strategic locations to reduce distances waste pickers must travel; ensure that these pay prices comparable to other locations • involve the local traffic departments in discussions on increasing safety and visibility of waste pickers on public roads
Waste pickers and S@S	
Waste pickers take materials before S@S trucks collect them	• evidence from South Africa and around the world establishes that it is not possible to prevent waste pickers from collecting separated materials from public streets • meet with waste picker organisations and relevant waste pickers to understand how waste pickers have been affected by the S@S programme and why they are accessing the materials in this way • negotiate with existing contract holders and affected waste pickers regarding how waste pickers can collect the materials and have these materials included in recycling rates • follow the process in Section H to work with waste pickers to develop S@S systems that comply with the waste picker integration principles and include waste pickers
Legal restrictions on contracting and paying waste pickers to provide collection services	• pay individual waste pickers and cooperatives a collection fee via buy-back centres or service providers • explore other innovative ways to compensate waste pickers for collecting recyclables • contract worker controlled cooperatives of waste pickers
Concern that waste pickers will not collect all separated materials	• relevant industries could be requested to pay a higher fee out of PRO or EPR funds for collection of materials with lower value – waste pickers will extract the materials from the waste stream as there will be a financial incentive, and industry will more easily comply with EPR.
Concern about reliability of waste pickers	• develop collection systems and approaches together with waste picker organisations and relevant waste pickers • ensure that cooperatives and independent waste pickers doing selective collection of S@S materials are aware of the collection schedules and of the importance of collecting on specified days, at specified times • provide support and training to assist waste pickers to develop systems to provide, monitor and evaluate collection by waste pickers • facilitate meetings between waste pickers and residents to discuss service provision • work with cooperatives and independent waste pickers who commit to principles for collection • work with waste picker organisations that coordinate collection services • provide waste pickers with identification cards that include their names and contact details.

Already existing contracts with private companies and non-waste picker cooperatives	• meet with waste picker organisations and waste pickers working in or pushed out of the area to understand how they have been affected and how they think the situation can be improved • recognise that it will not be possible to completely stop waste pickers from accessing materials • negotiate with companies and waste picker representatives to include waste pickers who continue to work in the area • compensate negatively affected waste pickers and provide alternatives and support • distil lessons about how waste pickers have been affected and how they can be included for future planning
Resistance from waste pickers	Waste pickers resist and oppose separation at source when they are excluded from decisions about the form it will take, excluded from the S@S programme, and negatively affected (by loss of income, increased working time, increased distances, rough sleeping, and increased harassment, amongst other issues): • meet waste picker organisations and affected waste pickers to identify waste pickers' concerns and how they have been negatively affected • reach agreements on redress of harm, inclusion in decisions about S@S, inclusion in S@S, and improvement of waste picker incomes, conditions and security through S@S. • see Section H for detailed guidance on how to integrate waste pickers and their separation outside source system in S@S. • see Section F to learn about different approaches to integrated S@S
Opposition from residents	
Some residents oppose having waste pickers in their areas; some residents and security guards harass waste pickers	• work with waste pickers to conduct education campaigns to teach residents and security guards about the important role played by waste pickers and encourage them to sort materials for waste pickers • as part of the education, explain that waste pickers have been or will be registered and that their cards demonstrate that they are registered • facilitate meetings between waste pickers and resident associations • request residents' associations to instruct private security not to harass waste pickers • encourage residents' associations to develop relationships with the waste pickers working in their areas • invite waste pickers to community events and encourage waste pickers to participate

Addressing some typical challenges encountered by industry

Industry faces many of the same challenges as municipalities and other initiating organisations discussed in the previous table. This table addresses challenges that are specific to industry.

Municipal and Industry Challenges	Possible solutions (to be decided and implemented with waste pickers)
Achieving waste picker integration	
EPR will require industry to integrate waste pickers into and up the value chain	• Establish a committee that includes waste picker representatives as partners to oversee waste picker integration and separation at source programmes • Require recipients of industry funding to develop collections systems that advance waste picker integration • Fund pilot projects to test different approaches to integrated S@S and to integrate waste pickers into all levels of the value chain. • Make a commitment that all pilots and implementation of integration programmes will align with the Waste Picker Integration Principles and improve waste pickers' incomes, working conditions and status.
Industry transformation	• Prioritise waste pickers (and women waste pickers in particular) in gender and racial transformation of the industry and value chain • Include waste picker representatives on governing bodies and committees overseeing the transformation of the industry and value chain • Develop concrete programmes for waste pickers to be part of overall racial and gender transformation of the industry • Ensure that gender equity is an explicit part of transformation • Include waste picker representatives on committees overseeing how the industry understands the shift to a circular economy, and how it will achieve and will include waste pickers in it
Collection rates	
Increasing collection rates	• Meet with waste picker organisations to understand and agree how waste pickers could be encouraged and incentivized to increase collection rates • Work with waste picker organisations to develop mechanisms to pay waste pickers and waste picker cooperatives for the collection of recyclables.
Particular challenge of collecting materials that have a low purchase price	• Meet with waste picker organisations to understand how waste pickers could be incentivized to collect materials that are not being collected owing to low value. One option is to pay waste pickers a higher collection fee that makes it viable for waste pickers to collect them.
Quality of recyclable materials	
Recyclables are contaminated by organic waste	• develop programmes for waste pickers to collect organic materials to reduce contamination and provide a new income stream for waste pickers
Recyclables are mixed	• provide waste pickers and residents with different bags for different categories of recyclables • pay individual waste pickers and waste picker cooperatives to sort the materials • create materials recovery facilities that can be owned by, used by, or employ waste pickers
Capacity to absorb recyclables	
Expand the industry to use increased volumes of collected recyclables	• industry is already pursuing a number of initiatives to expand the industry. These initiatives should be transparent and waste pickers should be informed about them and included.

Addressing some typical waste picker challenges and needs

Municipal and Industry Challenges	Possible solutions to be agreed by waste pickers and municipalities or industry
Achieving waste picker integration	
Recognition and respect	• registration of the occupation nationally • registration and provision of identification cards • inclusion in all relevant municipal and industry planning documents and programmes (such as Integrated Waste Management Plans, Integrated Development Plans, Industry Plans, bylaws and landfill site permits) • fair payment for service provision, environmental protection and economic benefits • education of officials, residents, businesses, industry, police, security, school children and the general public on the important role of waste pickers
Harassment by police, security guards, officials, residents, companies	• waste pickers with municipality and industry facilitate meetings with residents and businesses to introduce local waste pickers and make clear that they should not be harassed or stigmatized • municipality or industry or both work with waste pickers to run workshops for police and officials on waste pickers' important contributions and the need to end all discrimination and harassment • address any concerns and misapprehension residents have on work done by waste pickers • municipality or industry or both pay waste pickers as advocacy and education officers, who meet and speak to residents about recycling and S@S, and address concerns
Seen and treated as criminals	• municipality or industry or both pay waste pickers as advocacy and community outreach officers to meet and deal with concerns from residents • ensure residents know who is collecting on their streets and ensure advocacy officers address concerns of residents and waste pickers • waste pickers, municipality and industry meet with security companies and community policing forums to address security concerns relating to waste pickers • register waste pickers and ensure all are issued ID cards • waste pickers with municipality or industry meet with security companies and community policing forums to address security concerns relating to waste pickers • include waste pickers in education programmes to residents on S@S
Lack of identification documents	• municipality and industry meet representatives of waste pickers to discuss how to assist all waste pickers to obtain ID documents • municipalities and industry could facilitate meetings between waste picker representatives and relevant government departments to resolve lack of ID documents
Registration	
Need identification card to be registered in relevant municipal, national and industry data bases; verify occupation as a waste picker; and verify identity	• See Section H(3) and Box 29 on how to conduct successful registration

Exclusion from decision making	
Waste pickers not included in decisions affecting their work and lives	Municipalities, industry, business, donors, NGOs and other organisations working with waste pickers: • commit to Waste Picker Integration Principles and inclusion of waste pickers in decision making • collaborate with waste picker organisations and representatives and follow the process in Section H regarding how to establish participatory decision-making processes • meet with waste pickers to hear their concerns and proposals and reach agreements on participatory decision making • collaborate with waste picker organisations and representatives to establish participatory committees with democratically elected representatives for waste picker integration and establishing recycling with waste pickers as partners (See Section H) • committees should have clear objectives, mandates and dispute resolution mechanisms
Little or no access to officials and representatives	Municipalities, industry, business, donors, NGOs and other organisations working with waste pickers: • allocate responsibility to several officials or staff for engaging waste pickers; publicise their contact details and the hours when they are available to meet waste pickers • work with waste picker organisations and representatives to establish forums to discuss the waste sector and recycling economy with waste pickers and other stakeholders • work with waste picker organisations and representatives to create spaces for waste pickers to inform officials or staff how they operate and are part of the waste sector and recycling economy • agree with waste pickers on regular dates for meetings of the committee - which includes waste pickers- overseeing waste picker integration
Limited access to materials	
Limited and decreasing access to materials	Municipalities and industry • allow waste pickers to collect separated and other materials where S@S contracts exist • require private S@S contractors to integrate waste pickers • support development of relationships between residents and waste pickers • encourage residents to sort materials for waste pickers • design S@S to have waste pickers collect materials Any public or private organisation wanting to support waste pickers • commit to giving all post-consumer recyclables to waste pickers and support them to collect the materials • as in Brazil, government could pass legislation requiring all government offices to give recyclables to waste pickers

Limited access to sorting and storage spaces	
No official place to sort and store materials	• municipalities and industries audit available land and decide with waste pickers which sites should be designated as sorting and storage spaces • relevant authorities create ways to fast-track allocation of land for sorting and storage spaces • relevant parties ensure sorting spaces have adequate facilities and equipment • municipalities, industry, business, donors and other organisations support recycling hubs where waste pickers can sort and store materials and access other equipment, ablution facilities and services • relevant parties allocate funds to support the provision of equipped and serviced sorting spaces
Low and insecure income	
Low and insecure income	Municipalities, industry, business, donors and other organisations working with waste pickers • payment of a fair collection fee to waste pickers • equitable distribution of profits in the value chain • consistent, fair and transparent prices • price support for waste pickers • provide trucks and other vehicles to transport materials • provide equipment to prepare and process materials, expand and move up the value chain • provide comprehensive employment linked programmes to move waste pickers into other, higher positions in the recycling value chain • provide comprehensive employment linked programmes to train waste pickers to move into other sectors of the economy • provide adult basic education and support for waste pickers to matriculate • provide bursaries for waste pickers to pursue post-secondary education • develop programmes for waste pickers to collect and process organic waste • connect waste pickers to companies that can purchase organic waste or recyclables directly from them
Accredited education and training	
Waste pickers require accredited education and training to improve their role in the recycling sector and move into other sectors	• waste pickers, municipalities, industry and SALGA collaborate with relevant Sector Education and Training Authorities to provide access to existing accredited education and training and create new education and training for waste pickers wishing to improve their role in the sector or move into another sector • efforts should be made to link accredited education and training with employment

Gender-specific needs	
Existing programmes and projects do not include sufficient attention to meeting gender-specific needs	Women waste pickers have many gender-specific problems and needs. These can include: increased safety concerns due to gender based harm at work and at home; that they are more severely affected by lack of ablution facilities; equipment designed to suit men; male control of the most valuable materials; and exclusion from leadership positions. These are some of the ways that any organisation working with waste pickers can address women's needs: • commit to gender sensitive planning • hold meetings and workshops for women waste pickers (from both landfills and streets) to find out what particular challenges women waste pickers face and develop initiatives to address these challenges. • establish regular forums with industry and municipality to monitor implementation of programmes and resolve ongoing problems • ensure that any innovations, such as new trolleys or sorting areas, are suitable for women as well as men. • consider measures to ensure greater access to materials for women • provide education for male waste pickers, officials and representatives about gender and waste picking • provide childcare for waste pickers • secure access to ablution facilities for women waste pickers • see Box 7 on *Gender and waste picking* for additional discussion and suggestions.
Women waste pickers are prevented from accessing the best materials	• waste pickers at landfills agree to a schedule that rotates access to trucks at landfills between men and women, as well as older and young waste pickers • waste pickers are supported to develop relationships with business to encourage them to allocate materials to women as part of their corporate social investment • new opportunities in the sector are made available to women first
Women waste pickers have greater safety risks	• municipalities and industry facilitate meetings with law enforcement agencies and private security to allow women to access help quickly • municipalities, industry and waste pickers' organisations ensure that women have access to and collect materials in day-light hours • municipalities, industry and waste pickers organisations change collection schedules where possible to accommodate safety concerns
Problems related to S@S that excludes waste pickers	
Loss of access and decreased income (landfills and streets)	See Sections F and H for comprehensive discussions of: • how to identify and eliminate harm owing to existing S@S and recycling programmes and compensate waste pickers for any harm from such programmes • how to develop evidence-based, locally relevant approaches to S@S • ways to integrate waste pickers and their collection system in integrated S@S • how to reduce harassment of waste pickers by residents, officials and security guards
Increased harassment	• S@S that excludes waste pickers can lead to an increase in harassment. See the section above regarding ideas about how to decrease harassment and discrimination

Challenges of landfill waste pickers	
Unsafe working conditions at landfills	Municipalities and private landfill owners: • agree with waste pickers on ways they can safely access, pick, sort and store materials and demarcate spaces for each activity • amend the landfill licence to allow waste picking (see Box 16) • agree on and implement plans to transition waste pickers off of landfills into other work opportunities (in recycling and other sectors) • have regular safety meetings with elected representatives at landfill sites
S@S leads to reduction in materials coming to landfills + landfill reaches capacity	Municipalities and private landfill owners: • keep waste pickers informed of S@S plans and plans to close landfills • work with waste picker organisations and affected waste pickers to design and implement a landfill closure social plan that provides landfill waste pickers with compensation, new skills, opportunities to complete their studies and pursue further studies, and placement in other income generating opportunities (see Box 17) • secure funds to pilot and implement alternative income generating opportunities such as composting, rubble for road construction, and so on. • explore continued use of the landfill as a sorting and storage site for materials
Access to clean water and ablution facilities	Municipalities and private landfill owners: • enable waste pickers to access clean water ablution facilities • provide clean water and ablution facilities specifically for waste pickers
Health risks	
Waste pickers' health is compromised	• See Boxes 11 and 12 for discussion of the health status of waste pickers and ways to decrease health hazards and improve waste pickers' health
Challenges faced by cooperatives	
Some municipalities create and contract cooperatives of community members instead of waste pickers, taking work away from waste pickers	National government, SALGA, municipalities, industry and other relevant bodies should ensure that: • officials understand that creating cooperatives of non-waste pickers means that waste pickers lose their livelihoods (unless it is a small town or particular area of a city where there are no waste pickers) • all members of cooperatives are registered waste pickers • waste pickers who join cooperatives do so based on their own desire to work cooperatively • waste picker cooperatives are democratic and that they work with independent street waste pickers (see Box 23 on the Ikageng-Ditamating Cooperative) See Box 23 on the Ikageng-Ditamting Cooperative for more discussion and suggestions regarding waste picker cooperatives

Inadequate support and infrastructure	Municipalities, industry, donors, NGOs and other organisations supporting waste picker cooperatives: • evaluate and address needs of existing waste picker cooperatives regarding support, infrastructure and equipment • learn about examples of successful incubation and support programmes • work with waste picker cooperatives to develop capacity building and support programmes that address real challenges and take a holistic approach • support waste pickers who want to form cooperatives to do so via a comprehensive support programme (rather than just training and so on) • ensure that cooperatives have the necessary infrastructure, equipment and services • ensure cooperative models are financially viable - cooperatives must collect from a sufficient number of houses and receive a collection fee
Not being paid for services	Municipality or industry responsible for collection of recyclables: • Pay cooperatives a fair fee for collection services based on number of households serviced or tonnes collected
Inadequate equipment and infrastructure	
Lack of access to equipment such as vehicles and baling machines	Municipalities, industry, business, donors, NGOs and other organisations supporting waste pickers: • provide cooperatives with infrastructure and equipment to increase incomes, expand and move up the value chain • create recycling hubs where independent waste pickers and cooperatives can access equipment and infrastructure to increase incomes, expand and move up the value chain • ensure that all provision of equipment is accompanied by training and ongoing support
Low levels of organisation	
The majority of waste pickers are not organised and do not have democratic organisations to represent them	All levels of government, industry, business, donors, NGOs and other organisations can support waste picker organising by: • asking waste picker organisations and waste picker activists what they need for organising and support this • allocating a budget to support waste picker organising, including core funding, offices, and funding for organisers and organisational work • assisting waste pickers to develop applications and project plans and apply for additional funding • supporting exchanges between waste picker organisation in South Africa and other countries • providing equipment, resources and training for waste picker organisations to produce their own videos, social media and the like. • providing free meeting spaces • not interfering in organising and not creating sweetheart organisations or forums

Annexure 3 – Useful resources

Websites of organisations working with waste pickers and waste picker integration

1. **Chintan Environmental and Research Group -** http://www.chintan-india.org/

   Chintan works for environmental justice in partnership with people and groups from diverse sections of society. Our focus is on ensuring equitable and sustainable production and consumption of materials, and improved disposal of waste.

2. **Collaborative Working Group** - http://www.cwgnet.net/

   The Collaborative Working Group, or CWG network for interaction in sustainable solid waste management, encourages interaction between partners on key solid waste management issues and provides opportunities for improving the standards and sustainability of the sector, focusing in particular in improved livelihoods and living conditions for the urban poor.

3. **Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)** - https://csir.co.za/

   Established through an Act of Parliament in 1945, the CSIR's current mission is collaboratively innovating and localising technologies while providing knowledge solutions for the inclusive and sustainable advancement of industry and society. The CSIR is a leader in research and innovation in waste and recycling centres and hosts the Department of Science and Technology's Waste RDI Roadmap (see 12 below).

4. **Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries** - https://www.environment.gov.za/

   The Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) South Africa is responsible for protecting, conserving and improving the South African environment and natural resources.

5. **The Department of Trade and Industry (the dti)** - https://www.thedtic.gov.za/

   The Department of Trade and Industry (the dti) is a department of the South African government, with responsibility for commercial policy and industrial policy. The dti and its subsidiary agencies are involved in promoting economic development and Black Economic Empowerment, implementing commercial law (including company law and intellectual property law), promoting and regulating international trade, and consumer protection.

6. **Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA)** - http://www.no-burn.org/

   GAIA is a worldwide alliance of more than 800 grassroots groups, non-governmental organizations, and individuals in more than 90 countries whose ultimate vision is a just, toxin-free world without incineration. GAIA's goal is clean production and the creation of a closed-loop, materials-efficient economy where all products are reused, repaired, or recycled.

7. **The Global Alliance of Waste Pickers (Globalrec)** - https://globalrec.org/

   The Global Alliance of Waste Pickers is a networking process, supported by WIEGO, among thousands of waste picker organizations with groups in more than 28 countries covering mainly Latin America, Asia and Africa.

8. **groundWork** - http://www.groundwork.org.za/

   groundWork is a non-profit environmental justice service and developmental organization working primarily in Southern Africa in the areas of climate and energy justice, coal, environmental health, global green and healthy hospitals, and waste. groundWork is the South African member of Health Care Without Harm and Friends of the Earth International. It works with waste pickers across South Africa, including the South African Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA).

9. **Hasiru Dala** - https://wastenarratives.com/

   Hasiru Dala is an organization of waste workers in Bangalore, India, that works towards improving the livelihood and quality of life of waste pickers by providing total waste management services, through them, to bulk generators of waste. It also provides social services and support to the waste picking community. Hasiru Dala therefore has an impact on both lives and the environment.

10. **International POPs Elimination Network** - https://ipen.org/

    IPEN is a global network of people and public interest organizations, which respects and enjoys a wide diversity of cultures, skills and knowledge. The Network aims for achieving a toxin-free future where chemical production, use and disposal does not harm people and the environment. IPEN's global network is comprised of more than 500 public interest, non-governmental organizations in over 100 countries.

11. **Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat (KKPKP)** - http://www.kkpkp-pune.org/

    KKPKP is a trade union of waste pickers and itinerant scrap buyers, registered in 1993, based in Pune, India. As of 2014, it had approximately 10 000 members, both women and men. KKPKP also formed a cooperative called SWaCH, which is contracted to manage waste removal in Pune.

12. **Waste Research, Development and Innovation Roadmap (Waste RDI)** https://www.wasteroadmap.co.za

    The vision of the Roadmap is to stimulate waste innovation (technological and non-technological), R&D, and human capital development, through investment in science and technology, and in so doing, maximise the diversion of waste from landfill towards value-adding opportunities, including prevention of waste and the optimised extraction of value from reuse, recycling and recovery, in order to create significant economic, social and environmental benefit. The Waste RDI Roadmap is the vehicle through which the South African Department of Science and Technology is fostering innovation, job creation and enterprise development within the South African waste sector. The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) hosts the Waste RDI and oversees its development and implementation.

13. **Wasteportal.net** - http://www.wasteportal.net/en

    Wasteportal is a website in which organisations and consultants which are active in waste management jointly work together to collect information on urban waste management with an emphasis on low-income and middle-income countries.

14. **Women in Informal Employment: Globalising and Organizing (WIEGO)** - http://www.wiego.org/

    WIEGO is a global network focused on securing livelihoods for the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy. They believe that informal workers need voice, visibility and validity. WIEGO creates change by building capacity among informal worker organizations, expanding the knowledge base, and influencing local, national and international policies. WIEGO works with waste pickers across several countries, including South Africa, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and countries across South America, Asia and Europe.

Videos

1. **Chronicles of a Fight for Inclusion** - https://vimeo.com/61184941

   This video presents the history of the successful struggle for inclusion and integration by the recicladores (waste pickers) of the Asociación de Recicladores de Bogotá (ARB).

2. **Full Circle** - http://www.cultureunplugged.com/play/3942/Full-Circle

   This is a thought-provoking documentary about the women of Pune, India, working with the recycling co-operative SWaCH. It discusses how their work impacts their lives and the environment around them and how they have bettered their lives and the chances their children have for a better future, by organizing.

3. **Just Recycling** - www.wiego.org/justrecycling

   Just Recycling is a 7-minute video that examines how waste pickers make their cities healthier and more beautiful, lower greenhouse gas emissions, preserve resources and save municipalities a lot of money. Yet despite their environmental and economic contributions, these workers are often overlooked, maltreated-even criminalised.

4. **Mainstreaming of Waste Pickers in City's Solid Waste Management System** – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=La1zZjvhjwg

   SWaCH is the only wholly owned waste picker cooperative in India. SWaCH is contracted by the Pune Municipal Corporation to provide a door-to-door collection service of waste and recyclables. Mainstreaming of Waste Pickers explains the SWaCH system and how it saves the municipality more than R2.2 million a year.

5. **Substitution of Animal Traction Vehicles**: https://vimeo.com/105281204

   In 2003, the national transit code sought to eradicate the animal-pulled carts used by recicladores (waste pickers) in Colombia. This video explains the recicladores' struggle to protect their rights, and the constitutional court ruling that upheld their demands and required municipalities to substitute –not eradicate– animal-traction vehicles in the understanding that these were the livelihood means for this population.

6. **Towards Compliance with Order 275 of 2011:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-bcTwAE96lM

   In this video members of the Asociación de Recicladores de Bogotá (ARB) in Colombia discuss the constitutional court ruling that nullified a waste management tender due to its failure to include recicladores (waste pickers), and which requires municipalities to recognise and remunerate recicladores for their work. The recicladores explain how the system works and how it has benefitted them.

7. **ARB Model of Recycling**: https://vimeo.com/191547979

   This video explains the innovative recycling system developed by the recicladores (waste pickers) in the Asociación de Recicladores de Bogotá (ARB) in Colombia

8. **Waste Pickers and Technology -** http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mrUSJRINJak

   Waste pickers and new-age technology seem an unlikely partnership – but take a look at what SWaCH and ProtoPrint, an enterprise that makes 3-D printer filament from recycled plastic litter, are doing together.

9. **Waste Workers in Pimpri Chinchwad : A Report by KKPKP** - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uLS9kEIE_Ik

   For two years, SWaCH members serviced 200 000 households in Pimpri Chinchwad. They ensured that recyclables were recovered and diverted away from the landfills and into recycling. This video is a report on the working lives of waste pickers who are now contract workers — their working conditions, payments, access to waste and earnings.

10. **We, Swach (Amit Thavaraj 2010, Marathi/English)** - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMvU5bOHpTU

    The film documents the door-to-door waste collection work of SWaCH. It won the first prize in the amateur category, at the Aapla Paryavaran Film Festival.

11. **WIEGO's Gender and Waste Project Brazil** - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_wnA0D7QwAQ

    WIEGO´s waste specialist, Dr. Sonia Dias, and waste picker leader Madalena Duarte, from the MNCR (Brazilian national movement), discuss the gender and waste project and its relevance for the empowerment of both women and men waste pickers.

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