

Waste Picker Organisations in South Africa

Waste pickers around the world are organising to address the challenges that they face, end their exploitation and exclusion, and build the future economy and society that they envision.

The Global Alliance of Waste Pickers website (<https://globalrec.org/>) provides information on waste picker organisations in many countries and how they provide solidarity to each other and work together on issues like climate change and Extended Producer Responsibility.

Waste pickers in South Africa organise in informal ways as part of doing their daily work. Some organise to work collectively so that they can get better access to materials and provide separation at source collection services to residents. They do this through cooperatives and by coordinating themselves as individuals through their organisation. Waste pickers also form small informal organisations in particular cities or parts of those cities.

Most waste pickers in South Africa are not members of formal organisations. But the two main organisations are working to change this.



- **The African Reclaimers Organisation (ARO)** was formed in 2017. It is a mass based democratic organisation of reclaimers from South Africa and other countries who work on the streets and at landfills. ARO started in Johannesburg, but has expanded to other cities and provinces. You can learn more about ARO on their Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/africanreclaimers> - and their website - www.africanreclaimers.org

LINK TO: FB PAGE



- **The South African Waste Picker Association (SAWPA)** was formed in 2009. It mainly organises on landfills sites and has members in all provinces. You can learn more about SAWPA on their Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/SAWPAZA> - and their website - <https://wastepickers.org.za/>

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Both ARO and SAWPA have been actively involved in the development of the Waste Picker Integration Guideline for South Africa, the development and implementation of the South Africa Waste Picker Registration System (SAWPRS), negotiating plans for Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), and the Reclaim, Revalue, Reframe waste picker integration training and capacity building programme.

The Case Studies section of the project website shares some of the integration projects developed and run by SAWPA and ARO and some leaders are profiled in the Reclaimer Profile section.



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**Building Capacity for
Waste Picker Integration**

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