Solid Waste Services Privatization in Dar Es Salaam City: Experiences and Challenges

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Abstract

Municipal solid waste management is an increasing burden of the day for almost all urban centers in Tanzania, being most felt in Dar es Salaam. This is the largest city in the country having a population of about 2.4 million and growth rate of 7-10% per annum. The city generates over 2000 tonnes/day, of which only 35-40% are hauled to the designated disposal site. Over the years, the city authorities have been struggling to cope with solid waste production but in vain. Many reasons are attributed to this including low budget allocation, inadequate awareness, low capacity in both technology and human resources etc. These inadequacies resulted into filth conditions in the city characterized by litter, rotting uncollected solid waste heaps, irregular waste collection schedules and very low collection levels. From 1994, the Dar es Salaam City Council, decided to privatize some of its principal services in waste management, specifically waste collection. The privatization entails involvement of private and popular sectors and communities in solid waste collection. For almost 10 years now since privatization, the city has gone through experiences as well as facing challenges. A remarkable feature is the improved collection level from 10-15% to 35-40% to-date. The challenge is the community willingness and affordability to pay refuse collection charges, which is essential requirement to ensure and sustain the private collector’s business. This paper shares these experiences and challenges of solid waste management as a contribution toward attaining safer and clean cities.

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