

FAST FACTS

United Nations
Development Programme



UN
DP

The PPP for Waste for Wealth in Lilongwe, Malawi

Malawi is the fastest urbanizing country in Africa, at 5.3% per annum, a fact hidden by the current scenario of only 20% urbanization. In addition, Malawi is also poor, the 12th most poor country and is ranked 160 out of 182 countries in the UN Human Development Index. Urbanization requires matching infrastructure and services, which were already behind the demand. In the capital city of Lilongwe, with approximately 700 000 inhabitants, only 30% of the waste was collected and brought to a poorly managed dumpsite. Hence, the population not only lacked infrastructure but also, their own existing low access to it was exacerbated by the solid waste management system.

This project sought to create a win-win by developing a PPP where multiple partners would manage over 80% of the waste, and create sustainable livelihoods from it, particularly for women. The partnership brought together the Lilongwe City Council, a higher academic institution with research experience, the largest private horticultural company in Malawi and leading NGOs already working with communities in urban Malawi.

Lilongwe City Council provided policy and strategic guidance as well as logistical support for the execution of all project activities. Bunda College provide capacity building support to the partnership. The NGOs mobilised communities and supported the waste entrepreneurs. Four Seasons Nurseries Limited provided the main market for the compost produced by the waste entrepreneurs.



Women of the Four Seasons Nurseries composting on their terrain.

December 2012

Project Information

- **Country:** Malawi
- **Municipality:** Lilongwe City Council
- **Project title:** The Lilongwe Waste for Wealth project
- **Objective:** To deliver waste management services in two low-income urban communities
- **Time frame:** 2009-2012
- **Key partners involved:** Lilongwe City Council, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Public Private Partnership for Service Delivery (PPPSP), UN- HABITAT, the University of Malawi (Bunda College of Agriculture), Four Seasons Nurseries Limited and two local Non Government Organizations (Centre for Community Organisation and Development and Sustainable Waste Management).
- **Results**
 - Increased livelihoods generated through waste, establishment of savings and credit groups, with 80% women, livelihood training for 200 women, at least 158 waste entrepreneurs created with capacity to undertake composting and an understanding that waste can generate livelihoods amongst the target community.
 - Shift in community understanding of waste and its knowledge, attitude and practices, overall capacity development from local leaders to at least 4000 households to undertake improved waste practices and participate in the project, multiple levels of capacity building, from school club levels to market level sanitation clubs, penetrating multiple audiences.
 - Technical skills increased through skills in compost making, delivering household waste collection services and creating artifacts from waste, Bunda College and Four Seasons Training on waste and composting to ensure quality as well as work with other universities to produce further literature on this.
 - Environmental benefits shared by all such as closure of 3 illegal dumpsites and handling of wet waste and campaigns on hygiene, resulting in improved community-wide health benefits.
 - A municipal waste management policy and bylaw for Lilongwe have been formulated.

Sustainable methods of managing wastes were introduced and were less costly than the methods the Lilongwe City council had been using in the affluent areas. In 2010 the waste entrepreneurs managed to remove all the waste illegal dumps in the project areas.

The project managed to identify 158 waste entrepreneurs which were trained in composting and good waste management practices. They said “We have found self employment through the project.”

The project promoted gender equality and women empowerment allowing the women in Mbandira and area 25 access to tangible resources which they had purchased using proceeds from compost sales. Some entrepreneurs bought pieces of land, iron sheets, while others were molding bricks and constructing houses apart from providing daily needs of their households. Women in area 25 reported of their contributions to the welfare of their households and others reported of local compost markets they had accessed within their locality. The project created opportunities for women through job creation to make them become self-reliant.

The challenges of the project were in terms of lack of potable water for compost production, low quality of compost, market and pricing mechanisms for the compost, mobilization of community members since the activity is seen as repugnant and availability of land or space for the production of compost.

The relation between the entrepreneurs and Four Seasons will continue after the end of the project. The private company has drafted a contract agreement to sign with the women to ensure sustainability of the programme.

The project had impact at multiple levels. At the grassroots, the PPP was able to leverage partnerships to train over 200 women, create waste entrepreneurs, and develop technical capacity to undertake composting, waste collection and its handling.

The participation of Bunda College of Agriculture provided the required pathway for research into use by communities. Participation of undergraduate students allowed hands-on experience in finding scientific solutions in handling waste. In addition, the project provided a very good platform for development of short course and teaching materials.

At the municipal level, the lessons learnt and best practices have informed a new municipal waste management policy and bylaw for the city which have now been formulated.

In general terms, the project managed to promote hygiene and sanitation amongst community members and was evident considering that the surroundings were clean, markets were clean and there were no longer illegal waste dumps in sight.

Overall, this was identified as a replicable, scalable model that would hold value for other cities in Malawi, thereby potentially preventing health mal-effects and increasing livelihoods for the poor across urban areas in the country.

Expected Results and Contribution to MDGs



1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

Poverty Reduction through improved local service delivery and employment opportunities



3 Promote gender equality and empower women

Women Economic Empowerment by supporting women to be service providers



7 Ensure environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability through improved environmental/waste management

UNDP and UN-Habitat, through PPPSD, provides technical and advisory services for the creation of an enabling governance environment with appropriate legal, institutional, financial and regulatory frameworks and support for the capacity development of all stakeholders.

WASTE provides technical and advisory support in urban waste management solutions for an improved service delivery in urban and peri-urban areas.

For more information, visit: www.undp.org/pppsd

Public-Private Partnerships for Service Delivery

Capacity Development Group

Bureau for Development Policy

United Nations Development Programme

pppsd@undp.org

