

Chapter 10

Solid Waste Management Practices in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This chapter covers different aspects of solid waste management (SWM) in Pakistan. Being a developing country, Pakistan is facing serious environmental issue as a result of improper and limited SWM practices. The current status of waste generation is far high than waste management operation working in the country. Detailed information has been provided on account of waste generation per capita, waste composition and types, current status of waste management practices, policy and legislations on solid waste management. Furthermore, particular challenges in local setups for achieving waste management goals have been highlighted. There is urgent need to look into the various options to deal with proper management of solid waste in the country. In this regard, various projects by governmental and private sector have been initiated. Particularly, projects related to waste to energy (WTE) have been planned and operational in certain parts of the country.

INTRODUCTION

Solid waste management is a key component in growth and development of countries. It not only address various environmental issue related to pollution control and management, but also contribute in social development, tourism, re-sale value of property and disease control thereby have direct and indirect impact on country's economy. However, solid waste management is a serious issue in developing countries as well as in Pakistan. Country planning directives have never considered poverty and environment as an important nexus to address. As a result, enormous increase in population, unplanned urbanization, agriculture and industry proliferation without necessary checks and regulation led to generation large amount of solid waste contaminating natural environment. Solid waste generation in Pakistan is 50,000 tonnes per day, out of which only 60% is collected and disposed off by local municipalities (IUCN, 2004). Like other developing countries, Pakistan lacks waste management infrastructure, creating serious environmental problems. Poor management of solid waste is threatening environment quality and health safety. Due to environmental issues regarding poor sanitation and pollution caused by improper waste management, more than 5 million people die out each year. The issues regarding environment protection and management are not adequately addressed by government during national decision making. The enormous increase in industrialization, miss managed urbanization; poor agricultural practices, improper construction and demolition are the major sources of producing solid waste in the country.

Unfortunately, there is no proper solid waste management system exist in any city of Pakistan. All procedure, from collection points to transportation and final disposal of solid waste are poorly managed. The collected waste is dumped on open ground which inturns contaminate environment and generated different environmental problems. The most important issues includes site quality degradation, hazardous waste pollution, seepage of leachate and ground water pollution, bad smell and breeding ground for rodents, flies and mosquitoes, that carry different diseases. The main problems in solid waste management in Pakistan are listed below:

- Lack of awareness in citizens about importance of proper waste disposal without compromising environment.
- Lack of awareness that environmental and public health problems are associated with improper waste management practices.
- Absence of proper waste collection, transportation and disposal system.
- Unplanned and open dumping of domestic waste on nearby streets or free land designated by community.
- Absence of waste separation facilities during waste dumping and collection.
- Absence of controlled (lined) waste disposal landfill sites.
- Lack of technical experience, human resources and equipment lower the capacity of municipalities.
- Absence of local taxation, employment and regulations in solid waste management (SWM).
- Less priority is given from political leaders and public.
- Lack of investment and review generation in waste disposal.
- Absence of relevant policies and regulations followed by ineffective implementation.
- Lack of public interest and incentives to adopt hygienic methods of waste disposal.

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