

**EVALUATION OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL
PERFORMANCE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PLASTIC WASTES IN MASAKA
MUNICIPALITY**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Plastic wastes constitute about 10-15% of the municipal solid wastes and therefore need attention. However, management of solid wastes inclusive of plastic wastes has become a challenge due to increasing population, production and consumption leading to the accumulation of solid wastes that have lead to pollution of the environment. The study was carried out in Masaka Municipality and assessed the environmental impacts of plastic wastes in order to identify sustainable management options. The specific study objectives included determining the plastic waste categories and their waste management options ,evaluating the infrastructure dimensions for plastic wastes disposal, determining the business opportunities in plastic waste management, the challenges and environmental impacts of the plastic waste management options in Masaka Municipality.

The researcher used a mixed research design where both qualitative and quantitative data was collected. A structured survey questionnaire was used to collect mainly quantitative data but some qualitative data was also collected especially with regard to people's perceptions. More qualitative data was collected using focus group discussions, interview guide and a panel of experts selected from the municipality staff and civil society organizations. The analysis of the data from the structured questionnaire was done using SPSS and content analysis for qualitative data.

The study found out that all the seven categories of plastics namely; PET, HDPE, LDPE, PP, PS, PVC and other plastics are used in Masaka but in different proportions as reflected in the plastic wastes generated. The main disposal options are burning, re-use and converting into crafts but very limited recycling into high value products mainly as a result of having no capacity (knowledge and capital). There is no system of plastic waste management and plastic wastes are mingled in other solid wastes. The facilities for plastic storage are mainly improvised containers and very few people use dustbins .It was also found out that there is little logistical support from Government and civil society to communities and this partly explains why the plastic wastes are inappropriately disposed off and little innovations to turn the wastes into economical resources. In this regard, the study found out that there are few businesses enterprises in plastic waste management apart from collection fees and selling to recycling plants in Kampala hence little revenue was being earned.

The utilization of all categories of plastic is on the increase and generation of the wastes follows suit in Masaka Municipality but there is no management strategy due to lack of facilities and inadequate knowledge on management. In addition, the plastic wastes are mingled with other waste categories and harmful disposal practices like burning are still being used. The business potential from plastic wastes exists but has not been fully tapped as reflected by very few plastic waste business enterprises and the little revenue that accrue from the sale of plastic wastes. The study therefore recommends the following: sensitization, development and implementation of a plastic waste management strategy, and promotion of investment in plastic waste recycling.