

State of the City Waste



PROBLEMS

- Corruption in waste management is rampant. Ironically, the government itself acknowledges that waste management in the city is run by a mafia.
- Although waste management is a municipal function, a parastatal has been established to do this. Its accountability to the corporations and elected councils is unclear.
- Segregation at source, which is the key to many of the solutions, has faced resistance from citizens, contractors and the state government, and is not fully implemented.
- Many campuses – both residential and commercial – have been forced to take responsibility for their waste, but face deficits in competence, knowledge and funds.
- The city lacks the capacity to evaluate and adopt appropriate technology advances in waste management.
- Producers are not held responsible for the waste their products and packaging generates. EPR is very limited.
- A large number of people have been employed in informal jobs in waste management, and their livelihoods could be threatened by some solutions.

THEREFORE ...

- An anti-corruption initiative specific to waste management is needed. This must be coupled to transparency in data as well as oversight by citizens in their respective wards.
- The responsibility for waste management must be restored to the corporations. If BWSML is needed, then it must have appropriate representation from the elected councils.
- Incentives and disincentives to encourage segregation at source must be enforced. Landfill reduction targets must be set to measure progress.
- Clusters of campuses must be encouraged to work together for solutions that each of them cannot individually afford, but which are affordable at scale.
- A technical advisory group must be established to help the corporations evaluate potential solutions.
- Producers of the largest types of waste going to landfill must be made responsible for collecting it back and reusing or disposing of it appropriately.
- Cesses from garbage must be applied for the welfare of waste pickers as well as pourakarmikas.