



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

DST/NRF/CSIR Chair in Waste and Society

“Waste is a social issue”

Professor Rinie Schenck

The DST/NRF/CSIR Chair in Waste and Society is made possible by:

1. The University of the Western Cape (UWC)
2. Department of Science and Technology (DST)
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Who and what is the Chair in Waste and Society?



Held by

**Professor Rinie Schenck (Department of Social Work
University of the Western Cape)**

A research chair is a professorship and research agenda that is supported by targeted funding.

Interdisciplinary team: Prof Derick Blaauw (NWU- Econ)

Dr Kotie Viljoen (UJ-Econ), Dr Melanie Samson (Wits-
Geography), Prof Anmar Pretorius (NWU-Econ)

The **waste pickers** on the streets and landfills

My **Family**

The current situation



Our waste environment – some figures



The formal waste sector employs
30,000 people



There are
60,000 - 90,000
informal (self-employed waste pickers who collect 90% of recyclable waste).



South Africans still send
R17 billion
worth of valuable waste to landfill every year.
Only 59% formally collected



For every
1 landfill job, 25 recycling jobs could be created
(if people recycle their waste).

Knowledge and solutions are needed to understand how to change behaviours, and how to unlock the social and economic value of waste in South Africa.

Our socio-economic environment-2018



53.7%

Youth
unemployment rate

37.2%

Expanded
unemployment rate

27.2%

Unemployment
rate

Knowledge and solutions are needed to understand how to change behaviours, and how to unlock the social and economic value of waste in South Africa.

What will the Chair do?

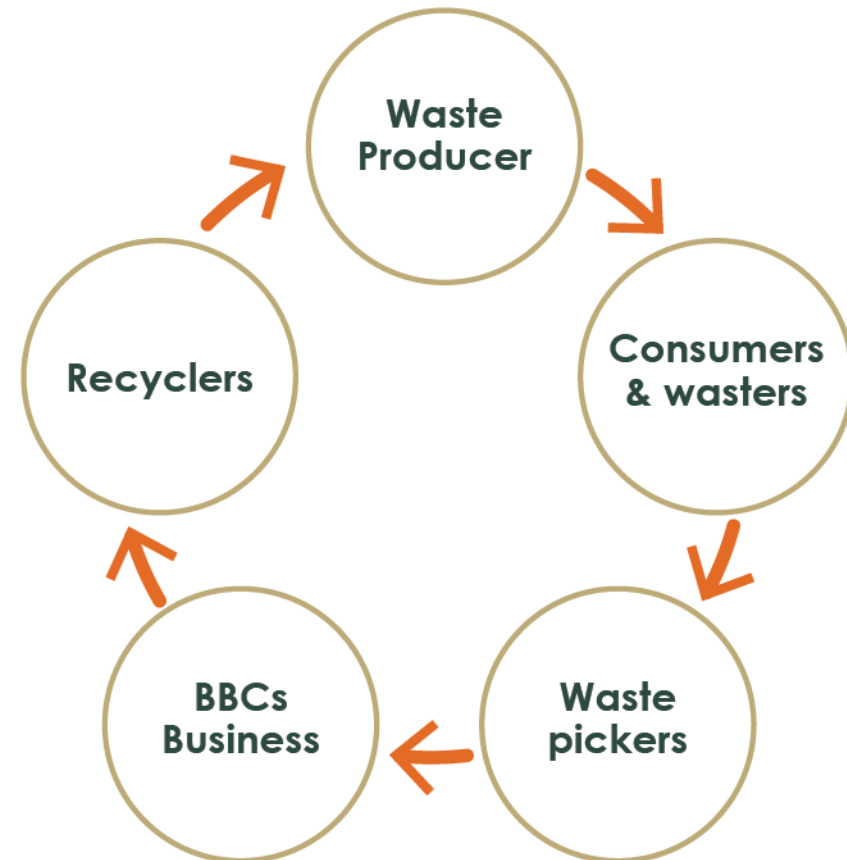
Aim: Using research to create an appreciation for the value of waste for the well being of people and the environment



How will the work be done?

The Chair will stimulate research with the aim to:

- 1 Understand perceptions and behaviour:** more recycling, less landfilling. Less littering “from the ground to the bin”
- 2 Explore job creation opportunities along waste value chain:** more diversion
- 3 Determine and develop business models, with a focus on SMEs in the waste sector**
- 4 Support & capacitate emerging researchers:** to inform the waste sector



Goal 1: Understand society's perceptions and behaviour to reduce landfilling and increase diversion



How can we create new lenses for South Africans to view waste as a resource, not as rubbish?



Goal 1: Understand society's perceptions and behaviour to reduce landfilling and increase diversion

90% of waste is
Landfilled

7.2%
Urban households recycle

6.2%
Rural households recycle

Unemployment is

27,2%

so why not recycle
and **create jobs?**



The Chair will research and develop behaviour change and waste diversion strategies for society, with a focus on integrating waste pickers.

Goal 2: Explore job creation opportunities along the waste value chain

*How can we create jobs by
diverting waste from landfill?*



Goal 2: Explore job creation opportunities along the waste value chain

4 jobs could be created in composting
10 jobs in materials recovery facilities
25 jobs in recycling (manufacturing)
296 jobs in computer reuse



**For 1 job
in landfilling**



The Chair will identify job opportunities in different waste value streams and in the waste value chain

Goal 3: Determine and develop business models, with a focus on SMEs in the waste sector

What type of business models would work and how can waste pickers be integrated into the formal economy?



Goal 3: Determine and develop business models, with a focus on SMEs in the waste sector



Many SMME opportunities in waste diversion.
National target to create 69k jobs and 2 600 SMMEs not yet reached.



Informal waste sector diverts **82.2%** of post-consumer packaging waste - understanding and integration is needed.



The Chair will identify best practice SMME models for the waste sector and for waste pickers.

Goal 4: Support and provide capacity to emerging researchers to support and inform the waste sector

How to grow the next generation of scholars to support the waste sector?



Goal 4: Support and provide capacity to emerging researchers to support and inform the waste sector

The Chair will involve students and researchers in research projects, develop research partnerships and host conferences, workshops and seminars.

Who will the Chair collaborate with?



Chair in Waste and Society

- **Academics /researchers:**
Prof Blaauw, (NWU), Prof Pretorius (NWU), Dr Viljoen (UJ),
Dr Samson (Wits) and more.
- **Students**
- **Waste industry**
- **Multilevel government**
- **DST/NRF/CSIR**
- **International collaborators**
- **Society / Communities?**

Ways to help appreciate the value of waste in South Africa

- **Research** opportunities
- Project **funding**
- **Collaboration**
- **Information** sharing



Visit our website or Facebook page
(in progress)

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Thank you

FROM HOPE TO ACTION THROUGH KNOWLEDGE.