BRIEFING NOTE

PILOTING OF A NATIONAL INFORMAL RECLAIMER REGISTRATION SYSTEM TO INFORM RECLAIMER INTEGRATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

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KEY FINDINGS

Waste picker registration is a central component of waste picker integration and is prioritized in the *Waste Picker Integration Guideline for South Africa*. This project developed an innovative stakeholder partnership approach to develop and pilot the South Africa Waste Picker Registration System (SAWPRS). The project resulted in the registration of 994 waste pickers and the finalization of the SAWPRS and registration process that can be rolled-out across South Africa. The research found that the participatory, partnership approach and the foregrounding of the knowledge and skills of waste pickers contributed significantly to the successful design of a user-friendly, context appropriate SAWPRS and registration process that are now ready for national implementation.

INTRODUCTION

Waste picker registration is a central component of waste picker integration and is prioritized in the *Waste Picker Integration Guideline for South Africa* (the Guideline).

This Briefing Note reports on the collaborative, participatory process employed to develop and pilot the South Africa Waste Picker Registration System (SAWPRS) between May 2021 and June 2022. The project was led by the University of the Witwatersrand, with support from Sticky Situations, as part of a larger project led by CSIR to develop the SAWPRS.

OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES

The primary objectives of the Partnership and Piloting project were to: 1) ensure meaningful stakeholder input into the design of the SAWPRS online system; 2) ensure that the SAWPRS system met stakeholders' requirements, and; 3) develop and pilot a system to register waste pickers to be refined and used in the roll-out of waste picker registration. The project was guided by the Waste Picker Integration Principles from the Guideline and additional project-specific principles.

STAKEHOLDER DEVELOPMENT OF THE SAWPRS

The Stakeholder Working Group that developed the Guideline developed a framework for waste picker registration. The stakeholders fleshed out the details of a concept note for the creation of the SAWPRS in their

collaborative work to draft a programme to support reclaimers during COVIID-19.

The project to develop and pilot the SAWPRS maintained the approach of stakeholder collaboration and consensus decision making. Stakeholders participated directly in the technical development of the SAWPRS through an online meeting held on May 24, 2021 and subsequently through a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) that held a number of in-depth meetings with the CSIR SAWRPS Development Team and reviewed and commented on draft wireframes. Waste picker input into the design was essential in ensuring that questions posed and answer options were relevant, would elicit the required information, and would minimize risks of non-reclaimers being registered on the SAWPRS. The participatory partnership approach to the development of the SAWPRS resulted in a simple, functional registration system that meets stakeholder needs and has stakeholder support.

PILOTING THE SAWPRS

The SAWPRS was piloted in four sites. The first two sites (Johannesburg and Msunduzi) were respectively selected by the two main waste picker organisations in the country, the African Reclaimers Organisation (ARO) and the South African Waste Pickers Association (SAWPA). The other two sites, the City of Cape Town (CoCT) and Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality (BCMM) were selected based on applications

submitted by the metros to the National Treasury's Cities Support Programme to participate in the pilot.

Commencing the pilot with waste picker organisations ensured that the project benefited from their expertise and better ability to connect with and encourage other waste pickers to register. Waste pickers trained in the first sites then served as experts in the remaining two sites, where they led mobilisation and supported local registration teams that included waste pickers and municipal representatives.

Piloting in each site was conducted collaboratively with the relevant partner institutions in six phases: 1) planning; 2) mobilization; 3) training; 4) registration; 5) evaluation; and 6) card distribution.

MAIN RESULTS
The project resulted in: the registration of 994 reclaimers (226 in Johannesburg, 256 in Msunduzi, 381 in the CoCT, 131 in BCMM); incorporation of waste pickers' and other stakeholders' knowledge and requirements in the SAWPRS; design of a three-phase process to implement waste picker registration in South Africa (mobilization, registration, and card distribution); development of a training methodology and workshop to train waste picker registration teams; increased understanding of waste picker integration and registration by municipal officials; and establishment of relationships between waste pickers and municipal representatives in the two metro pilot sites.

KEY FINDING
The report finds that the participatory, partnership approach to developing and piloting the online SAWPRS system and on-the-ground registration process, and the foregrounding of the knowledge and skills of waste pickers in these activities, contributed significantly to the successful design of a user-friendly, context appropriate SAWPRS and registration process that are now ready for national implementation.

LESSONS
Key lessons to inform future registration and integration programmes and initiatives are that: waste picker registration is a process, not an event; successful registration hinges on central involvement of and leadership by waste pickers; reclaimers and other stakeholders must be involved in "technical" processes; conscious attention to adhering to the Integration Principles is required; building trust and establishing legitimacy are essential to encourage reclaimers to register; AND registration programme management by professionals with experience working with waste pickers and in informal areas is important for successful integration.

RECOMMENDATIONS
There are five recommendations: 1) there is an urgent need to develop an SAWPRS app to facilitate registration in areas with poor internet connectivity, 2) stakeholders should create and co-govern a national waste picker registration campaign, 3) a co-governance committee should be established to oversee waste picker registration and integration in the country, 4) collaboration, co-governance, and stakeholder involvement in technical design in the development of EPR systems to pay reclaimers for their services; and 5) agreement must be reached on the long-term hosting and co-governance of the SAWPRS.

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This Briefing Note is produced as part of the Waste RDI Roadmap Briefing Note Series, an initiative of the Department of Science and Innovation managed by the CSIR. The Note stems from the findings of a grant project funded under the Roadmap, entitled *"Piloting of a national Informal Reclaimer Registration System to inform reclaimer integration in South Africa"*.