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GUIDANCE NOTE

MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT IN CRISIS AND POST-CRISIS SETTINGS

BUREAU FOR POLICY AND PROGRAMME SUPPORT

United Nations Development Programme



GUIDANCE NOTE

MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT IN CRISIS AND POST-CRISIS SETTINGS

This Guidance Note forms part of a series of UNDP's signature products which are aimed to respond to support Early Recovery in immediate crisis and post-crisis contexts. The main objective is to provide practical advice and guidance to UNDP Country Offices on how to plan, design and implement a project that offers immediate support for managing municipal solid waste.

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UNDP livelihoods recovery programme at work in Al Mintar, Syria. PHOTO: UNDP SYRIA/DIANE ARNOUK

OVERVIEW

This guidance note aims to support Government counterparts and strengthen UNDP Country Offices' and implementing partners' capacities to **plan, design and implement projects for municipal solid waste management (MSWM) in crisis or post-crisis settings**, as part of UNDP's early recovery response. The Guidance Note focusses in particular on livelihoods recovery and local government service delivery. It is assumed that readers do not have extensive experience in the area of MSWM. The guidance note is intended to inform UNDP COs and implementing partners on the type of programmes UNDP could support in the area of MSWM in an early recovery setting, and provide information on how to plan, design and implement such projects.

MSWM projects are intended to contribute to livelihoods stabilization through the creation of temporary employment opportunities as well as environmentally and economically sustainable livelihoods opportunities for crisis-affected men and women. This is not just a livelihood intervention; it also strengthens the service delivery of the local governments and works towards fostering the relationship between the State and society. This document complements the series of UNDP Guidance Notes on Livelihoods Recovery and Local Governance — i.e. 'Emergency Employment and Enterprise Recovery', 'Community Infrastructure Rehabilitation', 'Debris Management' (2013), 'Aid Management', 'National Recovery Planning and Coordination' and 'Restoration of Local Governance' (2014). This note has been developed following requests from COs for specific guidance on MSWM projects, as a specific sub-area under solid waste management,

alongside debris. This guidance note should therefore be considered as specific additional guidance to the existing UNDP 'Guidance Note on Debris Management'.¹

Outcome 6: *Early recovery and rapid return to sustainable development pathways are achieved in post-conflict and post-disaster settings*

Indicator 6.1.1: *Number of women and men benefiting from emergency jobs and other diversified livelihoods opportunities within 6 to 18 months after a crisis, disaggregated by vulnerability groups*

UNDP STRATEGIC PLAN (2014–2017)

incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded” and that “national and subnational institutions are able to lead and coordinate the early recovery”. In addition, important linkages are suggested for **Outcome 1**, supporting the transition towards growth and development and ensuring that it is inclusive and sustainable by developing productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for poor and excluded people.

In urban areas, municipal solid waste (MSW) generally comprises materials discarded by households, commercial establishments, institutions and street cleaning/sweeping. This guidance note does not address the management of other types of (hazardous) wastes, such as hospital waste, asbestos and industrial hazardous wastes, but refers readers to specific guidance and support in those areas.

In most countries, local authorities are responsible by law for delivering public services related to solid waste collection and disposal to safeguard public health and ensure the protection of the environment. A crisis or disaster has a severe impact on these authorities, which are faced with significantly higher volumes of waste (for instance, as a result of displacement or disaster/conflict debris), often combined with an overall lack of capacity, both technically as well as in terms of resources, often due to a loss of staff and equipment, lack of financial resources etc. Also, the MSWM sector may have already been underfunded and under resourced prior to the crisis.

Because of weakened capacity of the local authorities, the accumulation of municipal waste in (post-)crisis contexts poses particular challenges, as national authorities and municipalities are often unable to provide adequate MSWM services, while a crisis or disaster can also have led to a substantial influx and/or movement of population groups (i.e. internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees etc.), as well as foreign aid and relief into particular areas, leading to much higher waste generation rates (or accumulation in specific areas) and additional types of waste disposed.

The accumulation of municipal waste can hinder efforts towards fast recovery and development, and significantly increase public health risks in communities that are already particularly vulnerable. Solid waste thrown out by households, businesses and markets at random sites without regular collection and disposal can lead to outbreaks of water-borne diseases such as cholera, typhoid fever, diarrhea and malaria. Waste piles become breeding sites for insects and other harmful animals that can be vectors of diseases, increasing the likelihood of disease transmission.

1 UNDP, Guidance Note: Debris Management, UNDP, New York, 2013, available at <http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis%20prevention/SignatureProductGuidanceNoteDebrisManagement11012013v1.pdf>.

2 UNDP, Strategic Plan 2014–2017, UNDP, New York, 2013, available at http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/UNDP_strategic-plan_14-17_v9_web.pdf.

This document, like other recovery guidance notes, is aligned with the UNDP 'Strategic Plan (2014–2017)';² in particular **Outcome 6**, which specifies UNDP's focus on livelihoods, economic revitalization and governance as part of its integrated early recovery response in crisis and post-crisis contexts. Specifically, UNDP will support early recovery to “ensure the achievement of rapid return to sustainable development pathways in post-conflict and post-disaster settings” by “ensuring that growth and development are inclusive and sustainable,

Solid waste that is inadequately disposed of can also block water and sewerage canals and drainage systems and cause flooding. Also, it may result in water and soil contamination, air pollution (if waste is burned) and the formation of greenhouse gases as a result of decomposing wastes.

Whereas uncontrolled accumulation of waste poses many health risks to communities, improving services related to the collection, recycling and disposal of MSW can present a multitude of livelihoods opportunities and local economic recovery and also provide avenues for social cohesion and reconciliation. As an MSWM system is generally a good and highly visible indication of the capacity of a municipality, (re-)establishing a MSWM system might also restore community confidence in public service provision by municipality and local government structures.

This guidance note is based on the experiences of UNDP and its implementing partners in post-crisis contexts, including Burundi, Indonesia, Nepal, occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), Philippines and Timor-Leste. It provides lessons learned and good practices, as well as **checklists, sample outputs and activity results as a menu of options for a Resources Results Framework (RRF), assessment questionnaires and other practical tools** that might be helpful for project design and implementation in this area.

The document does not provide detailed technical information on how to undertake MSWM activities themselves, which is extensively covered in comprehensive publications by partner agencies such as UN-Habitat, UNEP, World Bank, WHO, UNICEF etc. (please see the reference list in Annex 2).

Table 1 provides an overview of the content in this guidance note:

TABLE 1: CONTENT OVERVIEW	
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	Describes waste categories and proposed waste management approaches for various waste streams
PLANNING	This section presents the main considerations when planning an MSWM intervention, following a structure that closely resembles the standard UNDP project document template
IMPLEMENTATION	Presents the main issues and challenges that arise, as well as some of the approaches and techniques for implementation of an MSWM project. This section also provides suggested components for a Resources Results Framework, as a menu of options as a basis to adapt to each specific context
LESSONS LEARNED	Highlights the key lessons learned from recent UNDP engagement in MSWM programming
ANNEXES	List of acronyms and abbreviations; resources and further reading; glossary of key terms; and referral to guidelines for dealing with hazardous waste streams. Also included are a template for a Waste Needs Assessment and a checklist for the design and development of an MSWM project

1. THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 WHAT CONSTITUTES MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE?

Effective programming of an MSWM project requires a clear understanding of MSW. Although the definition and classification of various waste streams differs to a great degree among organizations and across countries, for the purpose of this UNDP guidance note, the following descriptions will be used:

MSW refers to “waste generated by households, non-hazardous solid waste from industrial, commercial and institutional establishments (including hospitals), market waste, yard waste, street sweepings and gully emptying wastes.”³

By material, MSW can be divided into organic waste, paper, glass, metal, plastic, household hazardous waste, textiles, Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and other. The composition of MSW varies widely within and across countries, but in most cases organic waste takes up a majority of waste streams.⁴

For the purposes of these guidelines, MSW does not include materials that are discarded in gaseous form to the atmosphere, to a pit latrine or via a pipe or channel. However, it might include gases and liquids in containers, as well as sometimes human excreta.

In a post-disaster/post-conflict setting, MSW is most often generated from different sources:

- **by non-affected people or people who temporarily left their homes** but returned to their dwelling soon after they were able to;
- **by refugees and IDPs** (e.g. IDP/refugee camps); and
- **by the relief efforts** (e.g. packaging of water, food and health care-related items as well as an influx of relief workers who also generate waste).

This guidance note only focuses on MSWM. However, there are many other types of waste streams that are related to MSWM activities in a post-crisis/post-disaster setting but which are not addressed in this document. Some of these are debris/disaster waste, infectious health care waste and hazardous waste. In Annex 6 a summary of such waste streams is provided, as well as reference to the appro-

A resident makes a payment to a waste collector in Managua, Nicaragua. PHOTO: NGO WASTE



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