

## Waste-to-Opportunities: A Sustainable Option for Self-Reliance in the Informal Sector in Cameroon

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### ABSTRACT

*Waste management is a public health concern in Cameroon. Currently generated waste in the city of Yaounde exceeds the existing capacity for its collection, disposal and management (CDM) with potential environmental and health implications. Ironically, such waste may be recycled/reused by the informal sector as unconditional job opportunities. This paper reports on solid organic and plastic household and market waste (HMW) CDM by indigents in/around Acacia, Yaounde, and propose sustainable strategies to valorize solid organic and plastic HMW into opportunities in the informal sector. Structured questionnaires were used to collect information on HMW CDM in Acacia. The predominant type of waste was organic (90/150, 60%) followed by plastics (20%), mainly originating from the market (83%). Most participants (60%) had a basic knowledge of waste management, especially composting (60%). No participant practiced waste segregation. Proper information, communication, vocational education and training (PICVET) aim of increasing social corporate responsibility and community initiatives for proper waste management may simultaneously reduce the negative implications on the environment and health, while increasing self-reliance from waste to opportunities.*

**KEYWORDS:** Composting, Informal sector, Organic and plastic waste sorting, Recycling, Vocational training, Waste management, Waste-to-opportunities.

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