



PSI Municipal Waste Workers Network for English-speaking Africa

PLAN OF ACTION

We, the trade unions affiliated to Public Services International (PSI) representing municipal waste services workers in the English-Speaking Africa Sub-region gathered in Nairobi, Kenya on 25-26 October 2018.

In line with our deliberations and with the 2017 PSI Programme of Action, we resolve to take up the following joint commitments and implement them - as part of the mandate of the Africa Municipal and Local Government Network (AMALGUN) - as appropriate and as adapted to the context of our specific national and local realities:

1. Strengthen, prioritize and expand the municipal waste service members base within our organizations; systematically document and map their numbers, employment status, labour right challenges and working conditions, including pay levels, occupational health and safety risks (OSH), specific gender-related issues etc. in a view to build a strong knowledge base to inform organizing and advocacy for the sector;
2. Prioritize municipal waste worker organizing campaigns at the city, region or/and national levels (as appropriate), in a view to growth membership - especially among precarious/casual/outsourced workers - and build the necessary union power to win the respect of labour rights and decent working conditions in the municipal waste sector;
3. Review the statutes/constitutions of our trade union organizations and remove obstacles to organizing precarious/casual/outsourced and informal waste workers (e.g. provisions to represent only formal, permanently employed municipal waste workers) to expand the membership base in the sector and be legitimately entitled to represent and defend all workers across the municipal waste service spectrum;
4. Design and implement adaptable, progressive union fee structures that enable to deal with the income instability of precarious and informal waste workers and to identify effective alternatives to employer payroll-based check-off systems to ensure union membership portability through employer and job tenure change;
5. Promote the stabilization and formalization of employment and living wages in municipal waste services via campaigns, actions in collective bargaining, as well as access to a decent wage and social security for all workers in the waste sector, men or women; public or private; formal or informal;
6. Set-up dedicated services and branch offices at the grassroots level to be directly in touch, recruit and defend precarious/casual/outsourced and -where possible and practicable – informal waste workers;
7. Stand up and fight for equal treatment in terms of pay, social protection, pension rights, access to occupational health and safety (OSH) and personal protective equipment (PPE) for all municipal waste workers performing the same job regardless of their employment status;



8. Prioritize the issue of occupational health and safety (OSH) and the provision of adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) for municipal waste workers, including requiring public and private employers to establish joint worker-employer OSH committees for the improvement of workers' conditions and service quality alike;
9. Develop and/or strengthen existing measures within our trade union organizations to promote access and capacity building for women and young union leaders from municipal waste service professions in leadership positions;
10. Raise awareness, educate services users, communities, governments and employers about the essential role of municipal waste workers for public health, for the environment and for the local economic development; and enhance the visibility and profile in a view to fight the prejudice and marginalization they often suffer;
11. Raise awareness, educate services users, communities and governments about the specific occupational and safety challenges and risks faced by women in municipal waste professions including discrimination, harassment and violence at work by users and fellow workers; and advocate and seek for viable solutions to address the gender dimension of municipal waste work;
12. Promote the professionalization and capacity building of waste workers by identifying clear occupational profiles and matching them with adequate vocational training, pay premium and career development paths for municipal waste jobs in partnership and recognition by local, regional and national authorities;
13. Demand the inclusion of strong labour and decent work clauses in public procurement contracts covering municipal waste services;
14. Demand local, regional and central governments to establish reliable and comparable data collection systems for municipal waste management systems, including labour statistics for municipal waste workers to inform policy development, as well as national and international objective benchmarking;
15. Obtain recognition and engage into constructive dialogue with government authorities as experts and partners over urban policy development, notably over:
 - the design and implementation of fair, integrated, effective municipal waste systems and national frameworks that provide accessible, equitable, quality municipal waste services, while taking full advantage of potential represented by the circular economy to generate decent employment opportunities;
 - sustainable financing systems for municipal waste services;
 - public solutions to lack of investment in municipal waste service infrastructures, including viable alternatives to unsustainable open dumps and landfills that work for the communities and for the workers;
16. Develop or strengthen measures within our organizations to promote access and equality for women and young people of all professions related to waste and in union positions;



17. Document and disseminate good practices in the waste value chain and the fundamental role of workers and their unions in that success;
18. Change where possible and appropriate the name of the profession from “waste” services workers” into “environmental” services worker to encourage a positive perception of the profession and of role they play;
19. Prevent, uncover, fight and denounce corruption practices in the municipal waste services while requesting the passing of adequate, effective whistle-blower protection legislation;
20. Stand in solidarity with sister organizations under attack of their trade union rights or under the threat of privatization via reciprocal and mutual support (e. g. joint letters and petitions addressed to local, regional, national or private employers); raising the visibility of the respective struggles in the sector also via electronic communication;
21. Enhance the visibility of municipal waste workers issues and seek to put their issues high on the agenda of central, local and regional governments as well as regional policy organizations and financing institutions such as the African Union, SADC and African Development Bank.
22. Advocate for the in-sourcing / remunicipalization of municipal waste services also by documenting good practices and success stories of sustainable waste management service models of publicly-owned and managed utilities and that work in the public interest, not for private profits or shareholder returns.
23. Build dialogue and alliances with organizations of informal waste workers in our respective countries where practicable and possible, in a view to join forces to:
 - Demand decent working conditions for all workers across the municipal waste service spectrum;
 - Support each other in solidarity to demand that both actors are at the table in consultations over the design and implementation of integrate municipal waste systems and related urban policies;
 - Identify progressive and viable avenues to transition informal workers towards formal, decent employment and include them into collective bargaining coverage
 - Identify win-win opportunities for formal and informal waste workers to complement each other’s’ role in municipal waste services in a view to improve service delivery while improving livelihoods;
 - Challenge, change and – when possible - resist the implementation of repressive city by-laws and legislation criminalizing poverty and social protest or mandating forced evictions of informal waste workers.



Public Services International
Internationale des Services Publics
Internacional de Servicios Públicos
Internationale der Öffentlichen Dienste
Internationell Facklig Organisation för Offentliga Tjänster
國際公務勞運



Municipal workers
Services municipaux
Servicios municipales

Adopted on 26 October 2018 in Nairobi by:

BOTSWANA - Botswana Land Board & Local Authorities & Health Workers Union

GHANA - Civil and Local Government Staff Association of Ghana

KENYA - Kenya County Government Workers Union

NIGERIA - Nigeria Union of Local Government Employees

SOUTH AFRICA - South African Municipal Workers Union

SWAZILAND - Swaziland National Public Services and Allied Workers Union

TANZANIA - Tanzania Local Government Workers Union

TANZANIA - Tanzania Union of Government and Health Employees

TANZANIA - Tanzania Union of Industrial and Commercial Workers

UGANDA - Uganda Local Government Workers' Union