

Analysis of Solid Waste Management Problem in Jos Metropolis, Nigeria and Challenges to NGO Effective Intervention

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ABSTRACT

In recent times, Jos metropolis has witnessed a rapid increase in the numbers of NGOs involved in environment related interventions..This study is aimed at analysing the perspectives of NGOs involved in solid waste management initiatives in Jos metropolis and the main causes of solid waste management problems with a view to providing relevant data on these parameters that would hopefully facilitate collaboration with relevant local and international development partners on environmental issues. Using purposive sampling, 115 NGOs were identified in the study area and questionnaires administered to all of them. The findings revealed that thirteen major causes of the persistent solid waste problem in Jos metropolis are lack of prompt collection and disposal of wastes from collection points by responsible government agency (10.9%); inadequate equipment/materials (9.8%); lack of an all-inclusive/participatory solid waste management framework in use (9.2%); attitude of residents/public (9.1%); low/lack of community participation (8.9%); inadequate funding by government (8.6%) and low/lack of NGO participation (7.6%). The study also identified five major challenges facing NGOs in their work as follows: Government policy not creating room for NGO participation (28.0%); inadequate funding (23.2%); lack of continuity in government policies (19.6%); less interest by NGOs in solid waste work (16.4%) and violence/conflict in Jos (12.8%). It is recommended that the Plateau State government should consider the NGOs as partners in progress and adopt an all-encompassing frame work that allows for their active participation and all relevant stakeholders in the various environmental activities embarked upon by the responsible government agencies. By bringing the NGOs to the table, government would benefit from their reach-out and mobilising power, innovative approaches, wealth of experience and skill set and accountability and transparency among other things. Similarly, other local and development partners with interest in environmental management need to assist the NGOs by partnering with them through funding, technical support, research among other things.

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KEYWORDS: Environment, NGOs, Participation, Solid Waste Management

1. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations first coined the term Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in Article 71 in the Charter of the newly formed United Nations in 1945 to distinguish between participation rights for inter-governmental specialised agencies and those for international private organisations in its Charter

(Lekorwe&Mpabanaga, 2007; Mostashari, 2005). The idea was to give a consultative role to organisations which were neither government nor member states (Willets, 2002). NGOs worldwide perform a wide range of services aimed at human wellbeing and social welfare. NGOs are purposely established to fill

the gap or void of social equalities, and they work tirelessly towards bringing about development and positive change in society. The failure of government agencies to adequately discharge their responsibilities on development issues led to the emergence of some individuals and groups of like minds to take up the challenge. This ultimately led to the formation of many NGOs that embarked on a number of actions towards promoting discussion and debate on developmental issues outside the formal educational system.

NGOs are simply described as not for profit and voluntary organisations that operate independent of government. According to Charnovitz (1997), NGOs are described as groups of individuals organised for the myriad of reasons that engage human imagination and aspiration. Da Conceiao (1993) describes NGOs as organisations that are not governmental, non-partisan, and voluntary and are dedicated to national or regional development causes.

According to World Bank (1995) NGOs are private organisations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development activities. On a wider scale, NGOs may be referred to as any non-profit organisation which is independent from government. The World Bank (1995) further explained that NGOs include many groups and institutions that operate almost entirely independent of government, having primarily humanitarian or cooperative, rather than commercial objectives. They are typically value-based organisations which depend, in whole or in part, on charitable donations and voluntary service. Citizen groups that raise awareness and influence policy formulation and implementation are also considered as NGOs. Based on the above definition of NGO, it is reasonable to infer that NGOs are members of a broader Civil Society Organisation (CSO).

Realising that the concept of sustainable development can best be achieved through advocacy and creation of awareness, some NGOs contribute significantly in this respect by drawing the attention of policy makers on the functioning of ecosystems and how to achieve sustainable development. Such NGOs, often referred to as Environmental NGOs, also embark on policy engagement to seek participation in decision making processes by governments and implementation of public projects and programmes as well as conduct researches and disseminate their findings on the environment. Former Canadian Foreign Minister, Lloyd Axworthy once said, "Clearly, one can no longer relegate NGOs to simple advisory or advocacy

roles . . . They are now part of the way decisions have to be made" (Simmons, 1998). Furthermore, they carry out different actions using different innovative approaches to tackle other development related issues. Solid waste management is one of the interventions of these Environment NGOs!

Solid waste management problem is a global phenomenon, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria. In advanced countries where inclusive and participatory of municipal solid waste management systems have been employed, this have produced huge successes. Notwithstanding that some positive changes have been achieved in the NGO-state relations in some countries, there still exist some challenges, which could be region or country specific, or even globally prevalent. In a study in Kazakhstan, Kabdiyeva and Dixon (2014) categories challenges in to three: "Lack of trust (between government and NGO arising from accountability and transparency issues), ineffective mechanisms of social contracting and insufficient financial mechanisms at village. In Africa, policy and funding are major issues (Tukahiria, 2011; Sersah, 2013; Anierobiand Efobi, 2011).

Studies has shown that as the city of Jos expands in size, population and economy, its streets eventually become characterised with backlog of un-cleared refuse heaps (Ogboji et al, 2015). It is common to see indiscreet and illegal dumping of solid waste along streets, market places, uncompleted buildings, undeveloped plots, collapsed buildings (especially due to violence). The mining activity in Plateau State left so many mining pits some of which have become illegal dumping sites for residents. The relief of the area coupled with mining activities has made town palling difficult such that settlements are littered around leaving no adequate access for vehicles to collect solid waste hence constituting water and air pollution (Ogboji et al., 2015).

In recent times, Jos metropolis has witnessed a rapid increase in the numbers of NGOs involved in environment related interventions. However, detailed information about perspectives of NGOs involved in solid waste management initiatives in Jos metropolis on the main causes of solid waste problem and the challenges they face in their effort to fight the problem in the metropolis has yet to be fully exploited.

Therefore, this study was aimed to assess the perspectives of NGOs involved in solid waste management initiatives in Jos metropolis on the main causes of solid waste problem and the challenges they face in their effort to fight the problem in the metropolis with a view to providing relevant data on

these parameter that would hopefully facilitate collaboration with relevant local and international development partners seeking partnership relationships for intervention on environmental issues. This is also expected to increase job opportunities and the amount of funding that flows from Development Partners into the organizations for the execution of their planned activities.

2. Study Area

The picturesque Jos Plateau is a mountainous area in the north of the state with captivating rock formations. Bare rocks are commonly scattered across the grasslands, which cover the plateau. The altitude ranges from around 1,200 meters to peak of 1,829 metres above sea level and years of mining activity has also left the area strewn with deep gorges and tales (Ogbojiet *al.*, 2015).

The higher altitude gives Jos a near temperate climate with an average temperature of between 18 and 22°C. Harmattan winds cause the coldest weather between December and February. The warmest temperatures usually occur in the dry season months of March and April. The mean annual rainfall varies from 131.75cm (52 in) in the southern part to 146cm (57 in) on the plateau. The highest rainfall is recorded during the wet season months of July and August. The low temperature of Jos has led to a reduced incidence of some tropical diseases such as malaria. Jos is referred to as the hydrological centre of Nigeria by reason that it is the source of many rivers in northern Nigeria including the Kaduna, Hadejia, Gongola and Yobe Rivers (Ogbojiet *al.*, 2015).

The study area (Greater Jos) covers a land area of approximately 1362 km² and it is made of up of six local government areas/councils (Jos North, Jos East, Jos South, Bassa, BarkinLadi and Riyom) which are jointly referred to as Jos Metropolis in what is known as the Greater Jos. It is located in North central geopolitical region, 3 hrs away from the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja) by road. It lies between latitude 09° 52' N and longitude 008° 54' E. Jos is connected to other Nigerian cities by air, rail and road. The area is experiencing an increasing population; it has a combined population of 1,315,301 according to 2006 census with a growth rate of 4.5%. (Wapwera, *et al.*, 2015:FolaKonsult Limited, 2009).

The Headquarters of Jos North is located in the city centre of Jos and has an area of 291 km² and a population of 429, 300 based on the 2006 Nigeria National Census. The native tribes of Jos North are Anaguta, Afizere&Berom. Jos South is the seat of the governor at Shehe, Little Rayfield and can now be described as 'the de facto capital city of the state.' The headquarters is located in Bukuru town at

9°48'00"N 8°52'00"E. It has an area of 510 km² and a population of 306, 716 according to the 2006 Nigeria National Census. The native tribes of Jos South are the Beroms.

2.1. Data Collection and Analysis

A structured questionnaire was first designed which was pre-tested to ensure suitability and ethical compliance before finalisation and use in the field. Before administering the questionnaire, adequate explanation was given to the organisations about the survey and permission or consent of each NGO was obtained before participation. The administration of structured questionnaires to the various NGOs was done during working hours and in their offices. Each organisation was allowed to set a time that would not clash with their normal activities. The study did not set out to pick a pre-determined number of NGOs, but to identify as many NGOs as possible. By using purposive approach, 115 NGOs were identified in the study area and the questionnaires were administered to all of them. The data collected in the course of the investigation were reported using descriptive statistics in the form of charts and graphs.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Survey Participating NGOs

The study identified a hundred and fifteen (115) NGOs operating in the study Area (Jos south and Jos north). A total of ninety-six (96) NGOs, including Local and International NGOs, responded to the questionnaires, while nineteen of them did not, giving a response value of 83.5%. The respondent organisations comprise local and international NGOs some of which are faith-based NGOs, having different thematic areas of intervention and/or visions and missions. All the NGOs were found carrying out one form of intervention or the other (or a combination of interventions) across different thematic areas in Jos metropolis, the activities of some of the NGOs often beyond the metropolis.

3.2. Distribution of NGOs by Thematic Area of Intervention

The distribution of NGOs according to their thematic or core areas of intervention is as presented in Figure 1. The analysis reveals that of the nine different core areas considered, Peace and Conflict Resolution (PCR) accounted for the highest on the log with 18.9%, followed by Gender (16.9%), then comes Education with 15.3%, closely followed by Health with 15.0%. Other thematic areas identified as further revealed by the analysis are Poverty Eradication (13.6%) and Environment (11.3%). The least three thematic areas identified as presented in the figure are Governance, Food Security/Agriculture and Research each accounting for 3.7%, 3.3% and 2.0%, respectively.

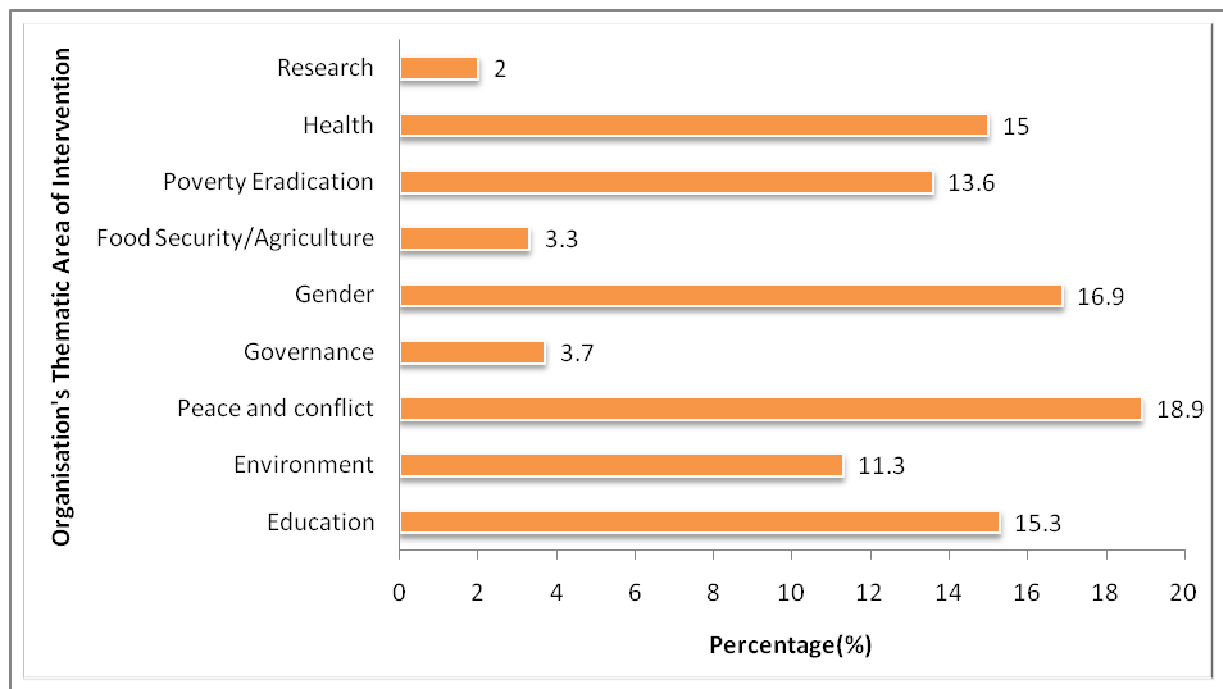


Figure 1: Distribution of Organisations by Thematic Area of Intervention

The study revealed that there are more NGOs involved in Peace and Conflict work (about 19%) in Jos metropolis than any of the nine core areas identified. This is a multiple response question and so it does not mean that an NGO found in Education, for instance, won't be in another thematic area as it was revealed all the NGOs that participated have multiple (more than one) thematic area of intervention.

It was also found that the NGOs depend mainly on grants from donor agencies and philanthropic organisations and individuals to fund their major project initiatives so availability of funding source could account for why the NGOs decide to go into one work area or the other. The scenario in Jos is obvious: the violent conflicts that the city of Jos has had to battle with in recent years has led to an influx of donors committing huge resources to various intervention initiatives in such areas as relief, settlement, trauma healing, sensitisation/public awareness, capacity building, etc. Consequently, there has been a surge of NGOs in Peace and Conflict work in Jos. During the conflict period some of the NGOs have won grants and moved to the city to implement the projects, whereas some are being registered as Peace and Conflict Resolution NGOs in anticipation of the funding due to the violent conflict in Jos experienced in recent years. With 16.9%, Gender is the second highest core area of NGO work. This could possibly be due to the conflict in Jos and the recent global focus on 'gender equality.' Universally, women are considered one of the most vulnerable groups in society and obviously one of the most affected during disasters, epidemics, violence and so on. Empirical evidence reveals that in almost all parts of the world women and girls are generally backward compared to men and boys! For this reasons, in order to bridge this gap, donors would naturally channel their funds to project initiatives that seek to address gender dynamics and particularly so in a violent situation.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) could also account for why many of the NGOs are into gender work. Governments and development partners channel resources more on gender work because of MDGs. As a result, in order to win grants, most NGOs now include Gender as a core area of intervention, or may mainstream it into their work. For instance, it is hard to do Peace and Conflict, Education, Health, Poverty Eradication, Environment and so on without Gender equality issues coming to bear. Gender, as such, is now treated as cross-cutting thematic area (Gender component is usually included in project and programme formulation) by almost every NGO nowadays. The MDGs could account for why there are many NGOs in Education, Health and Poverty Eradication. During the MDGs era a lot of resources were channelled towards these areas by the federal and state governments and international development partners (to achieve Universal Basic Education, eradicate HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and eradicate extreme poverty).

Although Environment is among the top core areas of NGO work in the metropolis, most of the work the NGOs do in environment, particularly solid waste management, is self-funded, small scale rather than big scale donor-funded initiatives, as in the case of Peace and Conflict Resolution, Gender and Education. NGOs in the study area carry out small interventions in environment work because they see the dire need and just want to contribute their quota toward service to humanity. Other areas identified by the study include Human Rights,

Relief/Humanitarian Services, Empowerment/Vocational Skills, Care and Support (to orphans and vulnerable children, internally displaced persons (IDPS), persons living with HIV/AIDS, etc.), Rehabilitation (drug addicts and ex-convicts), Preaching (faith and moral values), Counselling amongst others. Therefore, by this finding, one can infer that the NGOs in the study area have some capacity and diversity of skill sets that enable to make project and programme interventions that can help to address Solid Waste Management problem amongst other social issues of the study area.

3.3. Proportion of NGOs into and not into Solid Waste Management

The proportion of NGOs into solid waste management and those not into solid waste management is as presented in Figure 2. The analysis revealed that the NGOs into solid waste activities and those not into solid waste activities in the study area both account for 50%.



Figure 2: Proportion of NGOs into/not into solid waste management

The study revealed that the NGOs that are into solid waste activities and those that are not into solid any waste activities in the study are of equal proportion (50% each). In other words, there are the same number of NGOs that are into solid waste management and those that are not into solid waste management. This is not, however, to say that the proportion of Environment-based and non-Environment NGOs in the study is a 50-50 scenario, as it has been revealed earlier that, most of the non-Environment NGOs are still into solid waste activities and not all the NGOs registered as Environment NGOs are into solid waste management. Furthermore, this finding does not necessarily imply that NGOs in the study are making equal intervention on different major areas of work as the study also revealed. It means that the proportion of NGOs that are involved in solid waste management activities (whether or not registered as environment NGOs) is equal to that of NGOs that are not involved in any solid waste activity (whether or not registered as non-Environment NGOs).

3.4. Main Causes of Solid Waste Management Problem in Jos Metropolis

Figure 3 presents the main causes of Solid Waste problem in Jos metropolis. Thirteen major causes were identified. The analysis of the different responses recorded revealed that lack of prompt collection and disposal of wastes from collection points by responsible government agency is the highest cause accounting for 10.9%, followed by inadequate equipment/materials with 9.8% and lack of an all-inclusive/participatory solid waste management framework in use with 9.2%. Other causes identified include attitude of residents/public which accounts for 9.1%, low/lack of community participation (8.9%), inadequate funding by government (8.6%) and low/lack of NGO participation (7.6%). Also revealed by the analysis are: inadequate trained personnel, lack of continuity in government, poor accessibility hindering entry of vans to collect waste, low level of awareness by residents with each contributing 6.8%, 6.6%, 6.4% and 6.2%, in that order. Finally, the analysis revealed that corruption and politicisation of the process account for 5.2% and 4.7%, respectively.

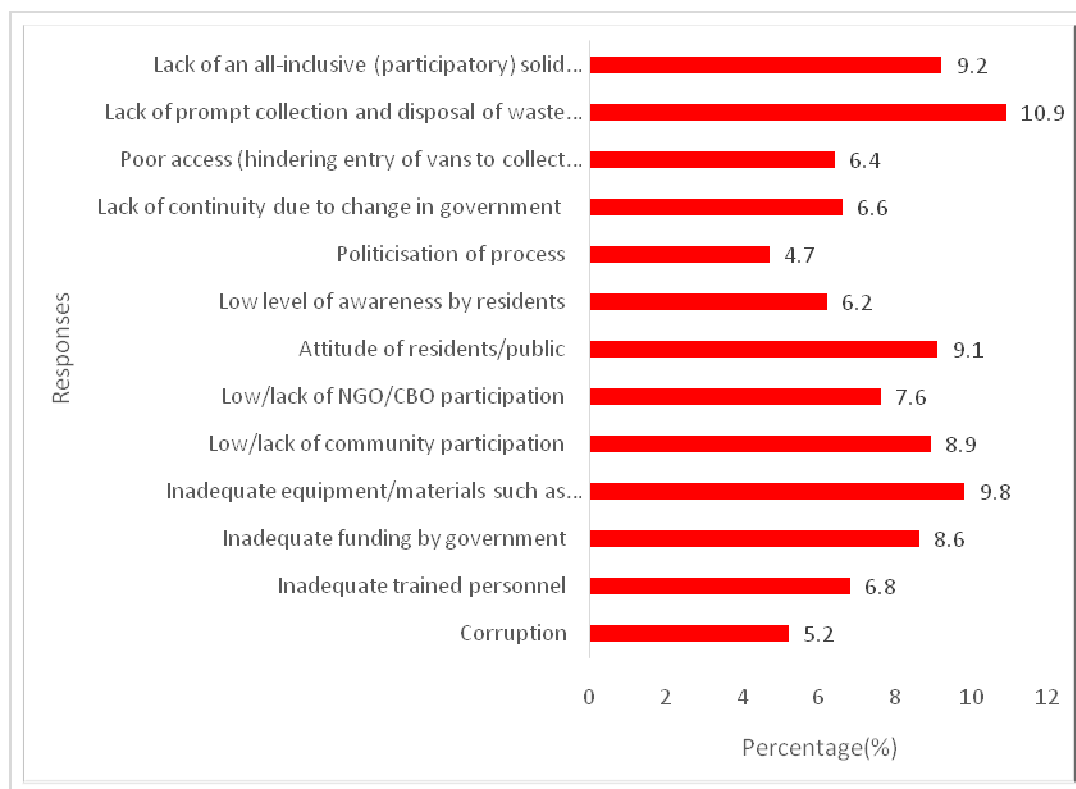


Figure 3: Main causes of solid waste management problem in Jos Metropolis.

Findings of the study revealed that solid waste management problem in the study area is multi-faceted as thirteen different factors were identified by the participating NGOs. Half of the factors identified, the study revealed, account for 64.1% of the causes. Most of the causes identified are associated with government. Lack of prompt collection and dumping of wastes from collection points by the responsible government agency, lack of equipment and effective and all-inclusive solid waste management framework/system that guarantees the participation of a broad spectrum of stakeholders including the NGOs and the communities as well as attitude of residents were the top causes identified in the study. Other causes include inadequacies of funding, personnel and equipment/materials, accessibility problem hindering collection vans to cover all locations, change in government policy and politicisation of government processes.

As revealed by the study, percentage figures are fairly distributed across the causes which is indicative of the fact that all of the causes identified are significant contributors to the problem (only lack of prompt collection and disposal has up to ten percent while only politicisation of process had below five percent). This could be that the problem is due to lack of prompt collection and disposal of solid waste which also affected by a host of other factors. Since almost all the causes identified are closely related to inefficiency or failure of government system, it could suggest that if government vested with the powers and responsibility of waste management would do the needful then the problem could be much less. Thus the argument here is that since the 'government do it alone' system has failed, there should be flexibility so that more participatory and inclusive systems are adopted which would bring together multiple stakeholders including the NGOs to participate in the solid waste delivery services of the metropolis. This is because it has become reality of the present age that societal development issues are better tackled in partnership with different, relevant stakeholders.

3.5. Main Challenges NGOs Face in Solid Waste Management

Figure 4 is a presentation of the major challenges NGOs encounter in carrying out Solid Waste Management initiatives. As can be seen from the analysis, five major challenges were identified of which Government Policy not Creating Room for NGO Participation accounts for the highest challenge with 28.0%, while Inadequate Funding of NGOs is second on the ladder, accounting for 23.2%. Also, Lack of Continuity in Government Policies is third highest challenge with 19.6%, closely followed by NGOs (themselves) Showing Less Interest in Solid Waste with 16.4%. The fifth and last challenge is the Violent Conflict in Jos which accounts for 12.8%.

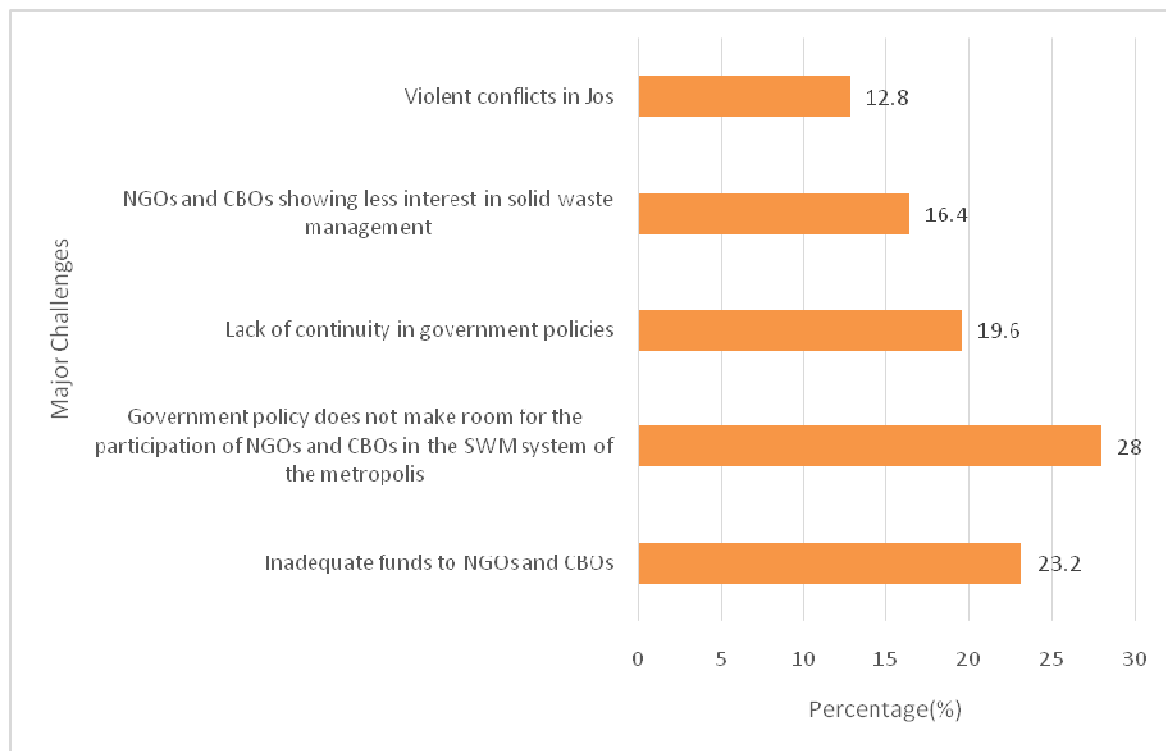


Figure 4: Major Challenges Facing NGOs in SWM in Jos Metropolis

The study identified five broad challenges encountered by NGOs in carrying out activities of their solid waste management project and programme initiatives. It was found out that most of the challenges are due to Government policy/ system (accounting for 28.0%) which does not allow room for NGO participation in the metropolis, further compounded by the fact that sources of funds are inadequate to the NGOs. Thus, as can be seen, although inadequate and available and accessible fund is a key challenge, lack of an effective solid waste management policy or system that accommodates NGO participation affects the NGOs seriously. This could be a factor why not many NGOs in the study area are into environment, or solid waste management initiatives.

NGOs, as their name implies, are non-profit making outfits and depend largely on donor/grant agencies and philanthropism for the funding of most of their intervention initiatives. This could be responsible for the absence of large-scale intervention on solid waste in the study area by NGOs as most of the solid waste management initiatives they embark upon are small-scale, usually funded from membership dues or personal contributions of members. The instability or lack of continuity in government policies is also a big challenge. There are scenarios where one government started implementing a policy and then another government that comes on board suddenly discontinues the programme. For instance, the privatisation of solid waste management in Jos was introduced a few years ago but was discontinued at a point and nothing has been done about it as yet. As

further discovered, a key challenge is that the NGOs themselves are not showing enough interest in solid waste work, although majority of the NGOs blame it on lack of funding sources and lack of NGO involvement by government which dampens their morale.

There are more NGOs in peace and conflict work, HIV/AIDS and gender in the study area which could be as a result of the funds grant makers and donors are channeling at the area. Violent conflict in Jos also throws a big challenge. During violence the agency workers usually cannot go to work leading to build up of heaps of refuse across communities in the metropolis, which sometimes scatters around, causing pollution and health-related problems. There are some areas in Jos metropolis that solid waste workers are sometimes attacked when they go for garbage collection. Residents at such 'no go' areas resort to dumping trash illegally, sometimes by the river, uncompleted houses, undeveloped land near their houses or by the roadside.

One can infer, therefore, that there are many challenges NGOs are confronted with in their effort to curb the raging and lingering solid waste problem in Jos metropolis, but lack of adequate and proper motivation for the NGOs particularly their accommodation by the solid waste management system in metropolis and available sources of funding stand sky high.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

This study provided the opportunity to discover a large number of environmental NGOs operating in Jos Metropolis most of them carrying out various

initiatives in environment and in particular solid waste management. However, these NGOs are faced with several challenges most mainly that of funding sources and a total lack of government recognition in the planning and implementation of environmental projects and programmes including solid waste management in the study area. No wonder the growing problem of solid waste in the metropolis! The impact of the little contributions made by the NGOs in the metropolis aimed at complementing the efforts of the constituted authorities (that has failed to address the situation) is easily felt by the beneficiary community. However, the apparent lack of involvement of the NGOs in the planning and implementation of government environmental programmes holds great danger and will only continue to worsen the situation. It is recommended that the Plateau State government should consider these NGOs as partners in progress and adopt an all-encompassing frame work that allows for their active participation and all relevant stakeholders in the various environmental activities embarked upon by the responsible government agencies. By bringing the NGOs to the table, government would benefit from their reach-out and mobilising power, innovative approaches, wealth of experience and skill set and accountability and transparency among other things. Similarly, other local and development partners with interest in environmental management need to assist the NGOs by partnering with them through funding, technical support, research among other things.

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