

Transformative Action to End Open Burning of Waste

Africa Roadmap and Kisumu City Action Plan

Recommendations for national governments to support the enabling environment to end open burning of waste.

41%
of households

worldwide dispose of their waste in an uncontrolled manner, either openly dumping or burning

Estimated up to
90%
of waste

of waste in Africa is openly dumped or burned

Context

Across Africa, open burning and uncontrolled dumping of waste remain urgent challenges with catastrophic impacts on human health, the environment, and climate. Nearly 1.2 million premature deaths are caused every year in Africa by air pollution to which open burning of waste is one of the primary contributors. Open burning of waste is responsible for an estimated 11% of global black carbon emissions, causing respiratory diseases, cancers and premature deaths, and accelerating climate change.

Political mandate and regional commitment

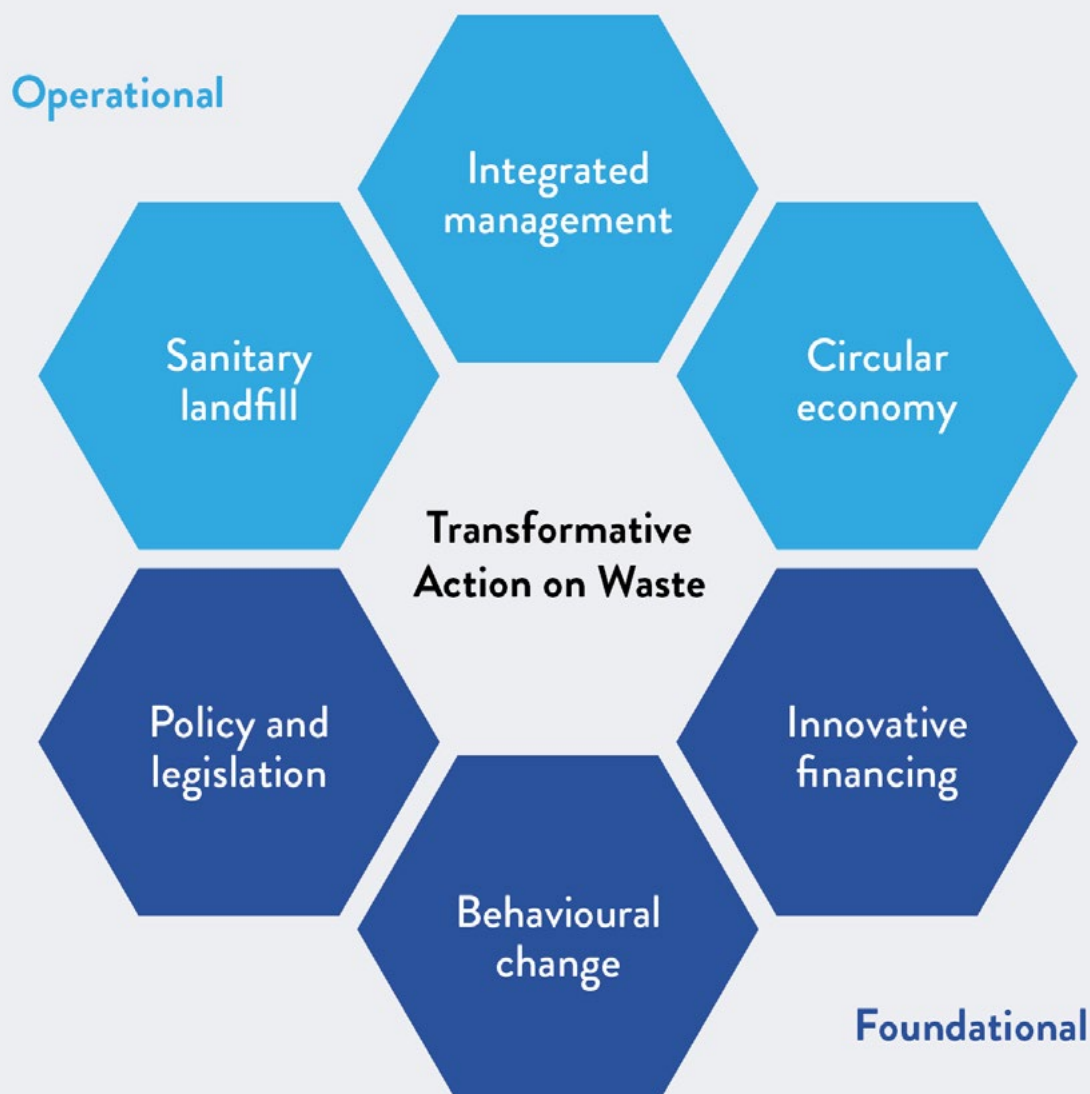
The Africa Roadmap on Transformative Action to End Open Burning of Waste identifies the key actions to address the systemic deficiencies in waste management and promote waste to resource conversion that could generate multiple social, economic and environmental benefits. In 2025, the African Ministerial Conference on Environment endorsed the Roadmap, calling on all African national governments and local authorities to take concrete actions to implement the Roadmap.

The Roadmap is split into sections, highlighting:

- **why** we should all take urgent action to respond to the waste crisis and end open burning,
- **what** action needs to be taken by national governments, local authorities and finance institutions, in the form of the transformative action framework and
- **how** these actions can be implemented.

The Africa Regional Roadmap was piloted in Kisumu City, Kenya to create a local transformational action plan and share lessons with the region. Using a multi-stakeholder approach led by Kisumu City, the Kisumu City Action Plan outlines specific actions under eight objectives aligned with the Regional Roadmap's transformative framework, grouped into three categories: no cost, low cost and investment.

Transformative Action Framework



Extracted from section 5.3, the recommended actions for national government, based on the foundational pillars of the transformative action framework are:

Policy and legislation

Addressing the existing limitations and gaps in policy and legislation is one of the primary tasks that must be undertaken by national governments and should include:

- Undertaking policy gap analysis and developing missing and/or revise existing legislation supported by implementation plans
- Prioritising waste and harmonise national policies by integrating open burning into existing legislation
- Taking steps to understand the country's specific status of open burning, through increased investment in technology and data collection systems
- Setting targets to address open burning in updated nationally determined contributions and national climate action plans
- Implementing proactive fiscal policies that incentivise circular economy approaches and support enterprises and people currently generating economic value from waste

Behaviour change

Achieving behavioural change both at the institutional and individual level is critical.

Key recommended actions include:

- Publicly recognise and raise awareness of the health impacts from open burning of waste
- Utilise increased evidence in national awareness raising campaigns
- Integrate waste segregation education into school curricula and install waste segregation bins in schools and other public spaces
- Engage local authorities to work with communities to design practical and affordable alternatives to open burning
- Recognise the critical contribution of waste pickers

Financing

There is a huge financial gap for waste infrastructure which affects actions at the local authority level. Recommended actions to address this include:

- Establish waste service fees in taxes embedded in other utility taxes, such as water, energy, to generate revenue
- Establish a national revolving fund to set up a mechanism to invest the raised revenue back into waste management systems
- Develop resource governance mechanism to bring relevant stakeholders under the coordination of national development financing institutions
- Establishment of national targets will increase access to finance, i.e., from the Green Climate Fund
- Set up Extended Producer Responsibility scheme to enhance the engagement of the private sector

