

# Waste

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## IN THE COMMUNITY

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higher education  
& training

Department:  
Higher Education and Training  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



Education  
Policy  
Consortium  
TRANSFORMING EDUCATION



This publication forms part of the Community Education Programme of Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training (CIPSET), Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. This publication is funded by the CHIETA with contributions from the Education Policy Consortium II (EPC II).

Published in 2017 by the EPC II programme.

The EPC II programme is undertaken by a research consortium consisting of:

CEPD : The Centre for Education Policy Development

NMI : The Nelson Mandela Institute for Education and Rural Development at the University of Fort Hare

REAL : The Centre for Researching Education and Labour at the University of the Witwatersrand

CERT : The Centre for Education Rights and Transformation at the University of Johannesburg

CIPSET : The Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

The EPC II programme is funded by the Department of Higher Education and Training. [www.educationpolicyconsortium.org.za](http://www.educationpolicyconsortium.org.za)

Written by the Community Education Programme at the Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training.

Design, typesetting and proofreading by Rabia Benefeld.

The ideas, opinions, conclusions or policy recommendations expressed in this publication are strictly those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent, and should not be reported as those of the EPC II, the Department of Higher Education and Training nor CHIETA.

**Acknowledge us as follows:**

Community Education Programme, 2017. *Waste in the Community: Picture Codes for Community Education*.

Port Elizabeth: Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

**ISBN 978-0-9947148-5-5**



## COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Community education emerges out of people's experiences and social interests generated within communities. Community Education enables democratic agendas to emerge at local levels to challenge and eradicate oppression linked to exploitation, marginalisation, cultural dominance, powerlessness and violence. Community Education exists neither to help people enter into the workplace, nor to place profit as the main objective. Instead it focuses on education that benefits the whole of society, bringing about social transformation.

## WHAT IS CEP AND WHAT WILL WE DO?

The Community Education Programme (CEP) is based at the Centre for Post-school Education and Training at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

CEP focuses on establishing a progressive model for a Community Education College. It sees the purpose of community education as supporting youth and adults to organise themselves to work and learn collectively, to provide mutual support and build unity, to claim their rights, and to develop their community and transform society.

It aims to broaden community participation in establishing more responsive community education linked to forms of socially useful work, livelihoods, and co-operatives.



## LEARNING CIRCLES

A community education learning circle is a group of 10-15 adults who meet regularly for a period of time to learn about something they are interested in. A learning circle is different from a formal classroom with a teacher and learners. In a learning circle learners are teachers too and a facilitator helps the group to share and build new knowledge. Everyone brings what they know, and they teach and learn together.

Anyone interested in the topic of a learning circle can join, there are usually no age, gender, language or literacy barriers. The facilitator works to ensure everyone can participate in a language they feel comfortable with, regardless of formal educational level or literacy. This education usually explores something that affects participants lives and communities. Many circles start because community members come together over a community problem and then want to learn more and find out what they can do about it.

Many learning circles help people to improve their literacy, but they also help people to become critical thinkers, co-operative learners and confident investigators, so that they can continue to learn about things that interest them and work together to change their communities.

## HOW TO USE THESE PICTURES

This collection of pictures was taken during planned walks through the neighbourhoods from where we live. We looked carefully at our communities to find things which we saw that interested us or were of concern to community members. We used photographs to show what we saw. We call this representation of a problem in its picture form a code. You could also represent a problem by drawing a picture or by writing a description of what you see, or by making a play

The pictures focus on on waste in the community. They show the social and physical environment in which working class adults and children live. The pictures provide a visual representation of issues and problems faced by community members. The pictures can be used individually or organised into thematic groups by the participants.

Each picture or group of pictures can be used to generate a critical dialogue within a community education learning circle. The discussion uses the knowledge and thinking of the group. Through dialogue the group focuses collective attention on the issue in the picture or group of pictures and connects the issue to their own experience and reality. The aim of this dialogue is the transformation of our understanding of ourselves and our world.



Participants use their own words to name problems and issues in the community, analyse the causes of these problems and start the process of working towards solutions.

The task of the facilitator is to use questions to get the discussion of the group to move from the specific – the detailed description of the situation represented in the pictures – to a critical analysis that reveals the root of the problem, and eventually back to the specific through exploring collective responses to the issue.

**Possible questions:**

- What do you see in the picture?
- What thoughts or concerns does this picture raise for you?
- How might others view this picture?
- What issue or problem connects your picture to other pictures?
- Has this issue or problem always been there? What changed?
- What could this group do about this issue or problem?

The facilitator documents the discussion and helps the group to develop a common list of issues or problems.

## MOVING INTO ACTION

Often we think of action as the same thing as protest or confrontation. These forms of action are sometimes necessary, but there are also other forms of action.

The group might decide that a first step is to find more information around the problem they identified. Taking action could then mean speaking to other community members, organising a meeting to discuss the problem, meeting representatives of local government, a school or a crèche to explore options. Or, investigating the problem in depth through community research, before taking the next action.

It is helpful to also think of action as a series of connected activities. Through action a problem can be addressed, but long term change requires working together as a democratic and collective group and connecting our actions to wider struggles.

Through action we participate in the life of our community. Through action we create hope, by showing that oppressive conditions can be changed by people acting collectively.



## OFFERING A CE WORKSHOP

Encourage participants to listen to each other by listening carefully yourself and not always talking or providing the answers

Allow the group to lead you into the next stages or different areas of the topic, or use questions to help keep the group on topic or heading into the next part of the workshop.

Use questions to help people to think widely and deeply about an issue or problem

Use participants' words to build on an idea, to show that their contribution is useful.

Start where people are.

### The workshop has three parts:

- **Current reality:** What have we seen in the community about this problem?
- **Critique:** Why is it like this? What is wrong with this situation?
- **Alternatives:** What have others done about similar situations? What might we want to learn about to change the situation?

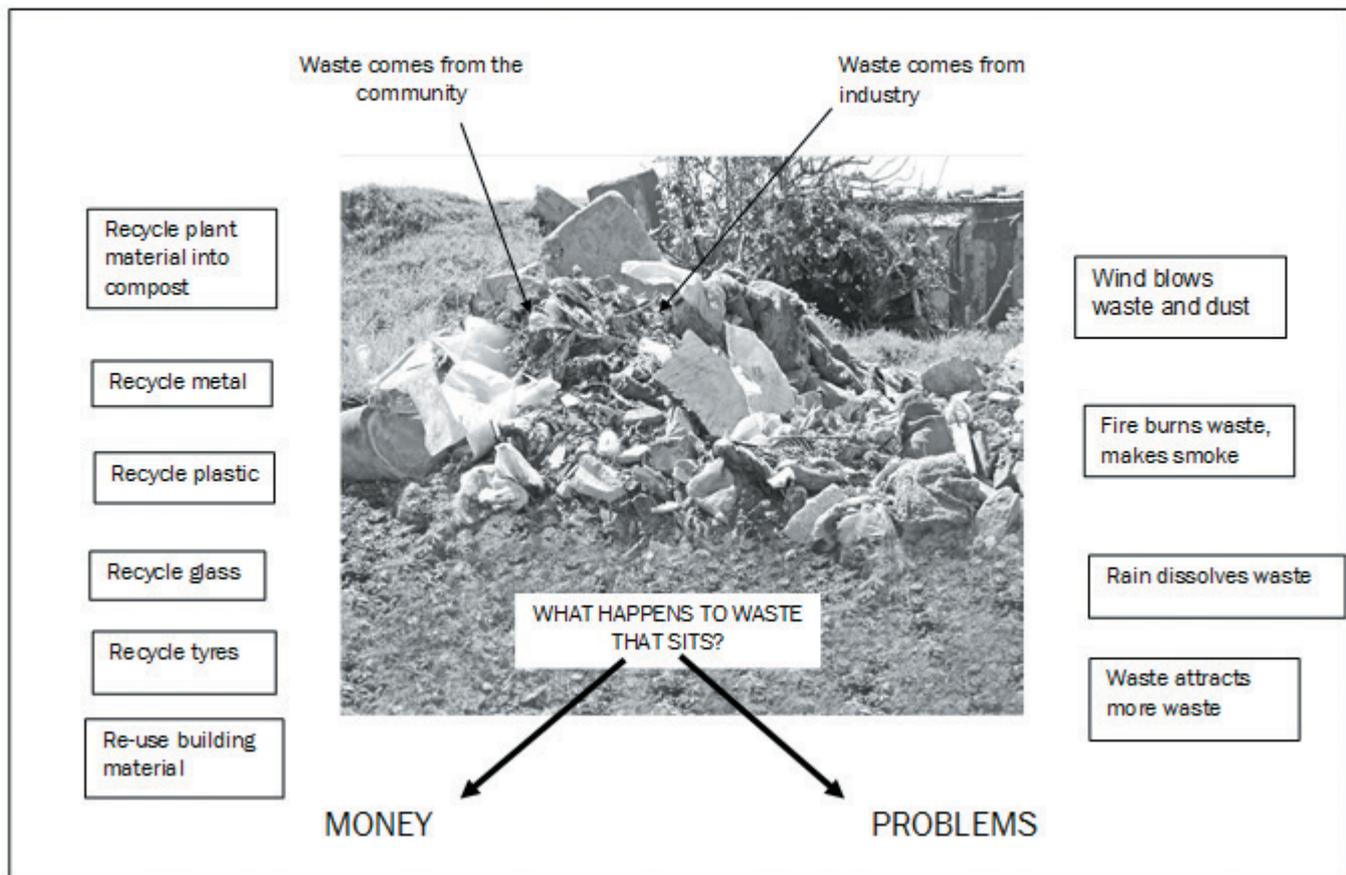
## QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE

1. **Current reality:** What have we seen in the pictures about this issue? What do you think the people in the community feel about waste? What happens to waste in your community? What are problems with waste?
2. **Critique:** What happened with waste 50 years ago? What has changed? What do we do with waste today? What hazards do uncollected waste cause? Who or what is most affected by the waste we produce?
3. **Alternatives:** What have others done about similar situations? What options for recycling and re-using exist? What might we want to learn about managing waste in our community?

The section, "Thinking about waste" offers ideas for input into the group discussion before exploring alternatives

## THINKING ABOUT WASTE

We see waste that is dumped and we think - uhhh that is so bad! But there is a lot more to think about.





## PICTURE CODES

1. Soweto-on-Sea, waste collected for recycling

2. Zwide, Household waste near a school

3. Zwide, Wooden pallets waiting to be reused/recycled

4. Soweto-on-Sea, bagged household waste

5. Soweto-on-Sea, Man burning wires to recycle metal

6. Soweto-on-Sea, Sewerage pipe being investigated for leaks

7. Soweto-on-Sea, Large mixed dumping site

8. Soweto-on-Sea, Burnt tyre waste

9. Soweto-on-Sea, reusing and recycling

10. Veeplaas, Collecting and burning mixed waste

11. Veeplaas, Chatty River with plastic waste

12. Veeplaas, Grazing area with building waste

13. Veeplaas, community waste dumping site

14. Ramaphosa/Chris Hani, Cattle drinking from polluted ponds

15. Missionvale, Bucket toilet

































**Telephone:** +27 11 482 3060

**Email:** [info@educationpolicyconsortium.org.za](mailto:info@educationpolicyconsortium.org.za)

**Website:** [www.educationpolicyconsortium.org.za](http://www.educationpolicyconsortium.org.za)

## **COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

### **Contact Information**

Education, Work & Society: Community Education Programme

Centre for Integrated Post-School Education and Training

DVC: Research & Engagement

Rm402 Building 519,

Missionvale Campus

Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

