

INTRODUCTION

The term Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE or E-waste) encompasses various forms of electrical and electronic equipment that are old, end-of-life electronic appliances or have ceased to be of any value to their owners (UNEP). E-Waste means electrical or electric equipment that is no longer functional, fit for purpose or has been discarded by the owner. E-waste includes electronics which are destined for reuse, resale, salvage, recycling or disposal.

SCOPE

Handling of e-waste in the country is based on the existing e-waste guidelines. The guidelines apply to the handling and management of various categories and elements of e-waste in Kenya. The guidelines provide a clear mechanism for the management of e-waste at various stages in the supply chain, the objective being to ensure the integrity of the environment is assured against the potential adverse impacts of e-waste and their elements.

EXISTING POLICY LEGISLATION

The country is in the process of developing e-waste regulations. However, guidelines for e-waste management are in place to:

- Provide guidance that will enhance environmental protection from e-waste
- Establish a basis for a policy and regulatory framework for e-waste management
- Raise public awareness on sustainable management of e-waste in Kenya

E-WASTE CATEGORIES

There are different categories of electrical and electronic appliances, the e-waste resulting from them and their respective levels of toxicity. There are two broad categories of e-waste based on mode of operation & function and based on elemental composition.



These are:

1. Large household appliances
2. Small household appliances
3. IT and telecommunications equipment
4. Consumer equipment
5. Lighting equipment
6. Electrical and electronic tools (with the exception of large-scale stationary industrial tools)
7. Toys, leisure and sports equipment
8. Medical devices (with the exception of all implanted and infected products)
9. Monitoring and control instruments
10. Automatic dispensers



IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH E-WASTE

E-waste is the most rapidly growing problem in waste stream due to its quantity, toxicity and carcinogenicity. Often, the toxic material is improperly disposed and thus poses a threat to human health and the environment.



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- Air pollution especially when it is burnt.
- Waste management problem of non-biodegradable equipment
- Toxicity and radioactive nature of e-waste to the human, soil and animals
- Blockage of water runoff channels
- Increased amount of waste and air pollution
- Waste management disposal problem

ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Substantial public spending on health care
- Investments on complex and expensive environment remediation technologies
- Loss/waste of resources that can be recycled for re-use
- Opportunities for recycling industries and employment lost
- Ozone depletion has led to unpredictable weather conditions. Prolonged droughts and floods cause use of resources which should have been deployed for growth and development in other sectors.