



Campaign to End Open Roadside Refuse Dumping in the Federal Capital Territory: Addressing Mpape, Karu, and Kurudu

Open roadside refuse dumping in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Nigeria, particularly in areas like Mpape, Karu, and Kurudu, poses significant environmental, health, and aesthetic challenges. The practice contributes to pollution, exacerbates landfill-related consequences, and undermines the FCT's vision as a model capital city. The Friends of Sustainability and Ecology Association (FOSEA) has launched a campaign to address this issue, aligning with Nigeria's sustainability goals and the Solid Waste Management Rules 2016. This essay explores the campaign's strategies to end roadside dumping in Mpape, Karu, and Kurudu, emphasizing community engagement, policy enforcement, and sustainable waste management.

The scale of roadside dumping in the FCT is alarming, with residents in Nyanya, Karu, Jikwoyi, Kpeyegi, Kurudu, and Orozo converting road medians into illegal dump sites. These sites, particularly along the Nyanya-Karshi road, have become eyesores, with refuse obstructing traffic and causing health hazards. In Mpape, illegal structures and shanties exacerbate the problem, as highlighted by the Federal Capital Territory Administration's (FCTA) 2021 demolition efforts. FOSEA's campaign focuses on raising awareness about the environmental and social impacts of such practices, advocating for systemic change.

Karu, a bustling commercial hub, faces significant challenges due to indiscriminate waste disposal. Traders in Karu Market, such as Mr. Chukwuemeka Eze, have cited the lack of designated dump sites as a reason for using road medians for waste disposal. The Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB) has placed large waste bins along roads, but these have inadvertently encouraged roadside dumping, turning dual-lane roads into single lanes. FOSEA's campaign seeks to address this by promoting proper waste segregation and collection systems, drawing inspiration from successful models like the Lagos State Waste Management Agency.

Kurudu, another affected area, experiences similar issues, with refuse blocking roads during heavy rains, causing traffic disruptions and flooding. Residents have expressed frustration over the AEPB's irregular waste evacuation, which exacerbates roadside dumping. FOSEA's campaign proposes the establishment of community-led waste collection points and regular evacuation schedules to ensure cleaner environments. By engaging local leaders, FOSEA aims to foster accountability and community ownership of waste management.

The environmental consequences of roadside dumping are severe, particularly due to its impact on water quality and landfill management. Open dumps, unlike sanitary landfills, lack liners to

prevent leachate from contaminating groundwater, posing risks to public health. In Mpape, Karu, and Kurudu, the absence of proper waste management infrastructure leads to pollution of local water sources, increasing the risk of diseases. FOSEA's campaign emphasizes the need for engineered landfills with high-density polyethylene (HDPE) liners, as mandated by Nigeria's Solid Waste Management Rules.

Landfill-related consequences, such as methane emissions and fires, are exacerbated by roadside dumping. The Bhalswa landfill in Delhi, which emits 208 tonnes of methane per hour, serves as a cautionary example for Nigeria, where similar practices could lead to significant greenhouse gas emissions. FOSEA advocates for waste-to-energy projects to reduce methane emissions and divert waste from landfills. By promoting composting and recycling, the campaign aligns with Nigeria's Energy Transition Plan (ETP) and circular economy principles.

Health hazards associated with roadside dumping are a major concern. In Karu, residents report respiratory issues and skin diseases due to exposure to rotting waste. The Dandora landfill in Nairobi, which receives 2,000 metric tons of waste daily, illustrates the health risks faced by communities living near dump sites, including increased dengue cases and respiratory problems. FOSEA's campaign includes health education programs to inform residents about the risks of open dumping and promote safer waste disposal practices.

The aesthetic impact of roadside dumping undermines the FCT's status as Nigeria's capital. The median along Nyanya-Karshi road, once a symbol of urban planning, has lost its beauty due to refuse accumulation. FOSEA's campaign collaborates with the FCTA to restore the Abuja Master Plan by clearing illegal dump sites and promoting green infrastructure, such as tree planting, to enhance the city's aesthetic appeal. The green grooves initiative, featuring moringa and neem, complements these efforts by improving air quality and sequestering carbon.

Policy enforcement is a critical challenge in addressing roadside dumping. The AEPB has acknowledged that the Karu dump site is illegal, yet residents continue to dispose of waste indiscriminately due to inadequate enforcement. FOSEA's campaign advocates for a special task force, as recommended by Nyanya-Karshi residents, to monitor and penalize illegal dumping. Fines and community service could deter offenders, aligning with global best practices for waste management enforcement.

Community engagement is at the heart of FOSEA's campaign. In Mpape, where demolitions targeted illegal structures obstructing roads, residents have called for better waste management infrastructure. FOSEA's approach involves training programs, inspired by the Nigeria Erosion and Watershed Management Project (NEWMAP), which trained 185,000 individuals in environmental management. By empowering residents with knowledge and resources, FOSEA fosters a green culture that discourages roadside dumping.

Public-private partnerships are essential for sustainable waste management. FOSEA

collaborates with private waste contractors to improve collection and disposal systems in Karu, Kurudu, and Mpape. The failure of private contractors in Indore, India, to prevent open dumping highlights the need for accountability and oversight. FOSEA's campaign ensures that contractors adhere to waste segregation and evacuation schedules, reducing reliance on roadside dumps.

Financing remains a significant barrier to effective waste management. The high cost of establishing sanitary landfills and recycling plants requires innovative funding mechanisms. FOSEA's advocacy for green bonds, as highlighted at the Africa's Green Economy Summit 2025, attracts investment in waste infrastructure. These funds support the development of waste-to-energy facilities and recycling centers, reducing the burden on landfills and mitigating roadside dumping.

The campaign also draws inspiration from successful waste management models, such as Indore, India, where community participation and segregation at source transformed the city's cleanliness. FOSEA promotes waste segregation at the household level in the FCT, encouraging residents to separate biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste. This approach reduces the volume of waste dumped on roadsides and enhances recycling efforts, aligning with Nigeria's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program.

Education and awareness campaigns are critical for changing behaviors. FOSEA's website, FOSEA.COM.NG, serves as a platform for disseminating information on proper waste disposal and the dangers of roadside dumping. By partnering with schools and community groups, FOSEA fosters a culture of environmental responsibility, ensuring that residents in Mpape, Karu, and Kurudu take pride in maintaining clean environments.

In conclusion, FOSEA's campaign to end open roadside refuse dumping in the FCT addresses the root causes of the problem in Mpape, Karu, and Kurudu. By promoting policy enforcement, community engagement, and sustainable waste management, the campaign aligns with Nigeria's sustainability agenda and global best practices. The integration of green infrastructure, waste-to-energy projects, and public awareness initiatives ensures a cleaner, healthier, and more aesthetically pleasing FCT. Continued collaboration with stakeholders and investment in infrastructure will be crucial to sustaining these efforts.

References

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