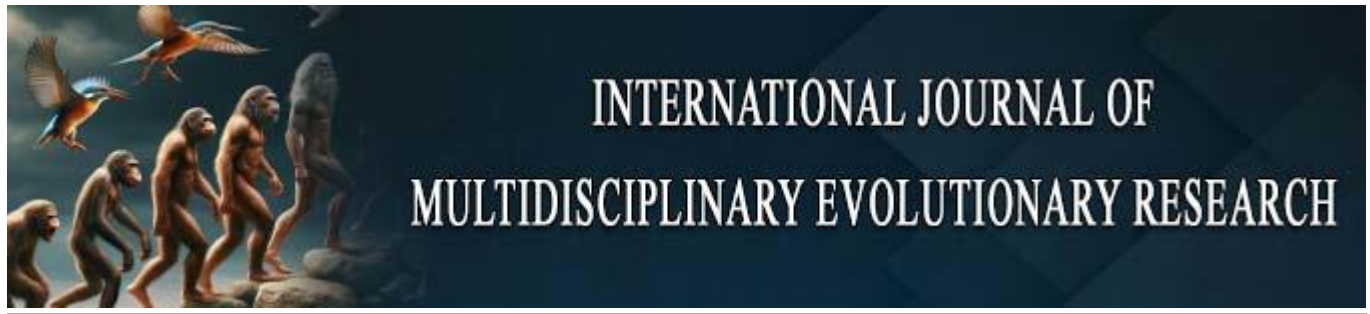




Designing a Circular Economy Governance Framework for Urban Waste Management in African Megacities

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Abstract

As African megacities continue to experience rapid urbanization, their waste management systems face unprecedented pressure, characterized by rising volumes, environmental degradation, and institutional fragmentation. The prevailing linear models, based on extraction, consumption, and disposal, have proven unsustainable and inadequate for addressing the multifaceted challenges of urban waste governance. This paper proposes a comprehensive governance framework that embeds circular economy principles into the design, coordination, and operation of waste systems in African urban centers. Drawing on interdisciplinary literature and governance theory, the framework emphasizes five critical pillars: strategic policy integration, multi-actor collaboration, regulatory and incentive mechanisms, institutional capacity building, and legal reform. The paper outlines how circularity can transform waste from a burden into a resource through prevention, reuse, and resource recovery, while also enhancing urban resilience, environmental protection, and socio-economic inclusion. It highlights the central role of governance as an enabler of this transition, arguing that technical solutions alone are insufficient without coherent policies, institutional alignment, and participatory structures. Key implementation enablers, including financial models, knowledge infrastructure, and stakeholder coordination platforms, are explored to provide actionable guidance for city policymakers and practitioners. The conclusion identifies future research needs around metrics development, digital integration, and political economy dynamics, emphasizing the importance of adaptive and inclusive governance systems in achieving sustainable, circular urban futures across the African continent.

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Keywords: Circular Economy, Urban Waste Governance, African Megacities, Sustainable Urban Development, Institutional Capacity, Policy Integration

1. Introduction

1.1 Context

Africa is experiencing one of the fastest rates of urbanization globally, with cities like Lagos, Kinshasa, Cairo, and Nairobi projected to house tens of millions of residents within the next few decades [1]. This rapid urban growth is straining public infrastructure and overwhelming existing waste management systems [2]. As population density increases in these megacities, so does the volume and complexity of municipal solid waste, including hazardous materials, plastics, organics, and e-waste. Unfortunately, most cities across the continent still rely on outdated, linear models of waste management that prioritize collection

and disposal, primarily through open dumping or poorly managed landfills, over resource recovery and sustainable reuse [3, 4].

The linear approach not only contributes to environmental degradation but also limits opportunities for economic and social inclusion. Land and water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and public health risks, particularly in informal settlements, are worsening due to unmanaged waste [5]. Moreover, the informal sector, which often plays a central role in waste collection and recycling, is largely excluded from formal planning and policy dialogues. As a result, many urban waste systems operate inefficiently, with little accountability or long-term vision [6].

In response to these challenges, the circular economy has emerged as a transformative paradigm capable of reimagining urban waste not as a burden but as a resource [7]. By encouraging waste minimization, resource optimization, and closed-loop systems, this model offers African megacities a pathway toward sustainability, resilience, and inclusive economic growth. However, to realize this potential, governance structures must be reconfigured to support and operationalize circular practices at scale [8].

1.2 Objectives and Significance of the Study

This study aims to design a governance framework tailored to the realities of African megacities that can enable a systemic transition from linear waste management practices to circular economy models. Rather than focusing solely on technical solutions such as recycling technologies or waste-to-energy plants, the research emphasizes the importance of governance, defined here as the rules, institutions, actors, and processes that shape how decisions are made and implemented in urban contexts. The proposed framework seeks to coordinate these elements in a way that fosters accountability, inclusivity, and innovation across waste systems.

The significance of this research lies in its policy relevance and practical implications. For urban planners and local government authorities, the framework offers a structured approach to integrate sustainability into waste policy and service delivery. For national governments, it aligns with broader goals of economic diversification, green growth, and climate resilience. Development agencies and civil society organizations may also find in this framework a tool for fostering collaboration across sectors and amplifying the voices of marginalized stakeholders, particularly informal waste workers and low-income communities.

Ultimately, this paper contributes to the growing discourse on sustainable urbanization by centering the role of governance in circular transitions. It argues that technical fixes alone are insufficient in African contexts without supportive institutional environments and collaborative policymaking. Therefore, the study does not merely advocate for circular practices; it aims to build the enabling conditions for their realization.

1.3 Conceptual Framing

To guide the development of the proposed framework, three core concepts anchor this study: circular economy, governance, and urban waste systems. The circular economy refers to an economic model aimed at minimizing waste and maximizing the lifecycle of materials through design innovation, reuse, remanufacturing, and recycling. It stands in contrast to the linear economy, which treats resources as

disposable and finite. Within urban waste management, circular practices can include composting organic waste, turning plastics into construction materials, or creating business models that valorize discarded goods.

Governance, in this context, encompasses the array of institutional arrangements, legal frameworks, decision-making processes, and stakeholder relationships that determine how urban services are delivered and regulated. Effective governance is essential for orchestrating the complexity of actors, municipal authorities, private companies, informal workers, NGOs, and citizens, who interact within the urban waste ecosystem. Without strong governance mechanisms, even the most advanced technical solutions risk failure due to a lack of coordination, accountability, or political support.

Urban waste systems themselves are seen here as socio-technical networks that combine infrastructure, services, behavior, and regulation. These systems are not static; they evolve in response to political, economic, and social forces. Integrating circular economy principles into such systems requires more than infrastructural change; it demands institutional innovation. This paper contends that governance must act as the systemic enabler of circularity, ensuring that urban waste systems transition from fragmented, disposal-oriented structures to cohesive, regenerative networks that deliver environmental and socio-economic benefits.

2. Theoretical Foundations and Literature Review

2.1 Governance in Urban Waste Management

Urban waste management is not merely a technical service but a complex socio-political process involving a range of institutions, stakeholders, and decision-making structures [9]. Theories of governance, particularly multi-level, networked, and polycentric governance, provide critical lenses through which the functionality and dysfunction of waste systems in African megacities can be examined [10]. Multi-level governance captures the interdependence between different tiers of government, national, regional, and local, and underscores the importance of vertical coordination in policymaking and resource allocation. In the context of waste management, this means aligning national waste strategies with municipal realities and capacities, a task often hindered by regulatory disjointedness and weak institutional mandates [11].

Networked governance expands the understanding of authority beyond the state, recognizing the crucial roles of non-governmental actors, private enterprises, and civil society in service provision and oversight [12]. Waste governance in African cities typically involves a mosaic of formal and informal actors, with the latter playing indispensable roles in collection, sorting, and recycling, especially in low-income areas [13]. However, informal waste workers often operate under precarious conditions and are excluded from formal governance structures, limiting the potential for integrated and inclusive waste systems [14].

Polycentric governance, which emphasizes multiple centers of decision-making authority operating autonomously but cooperatively, is especially relevant for African urban environments marked by institutional fragmentation and decentralization [15]. This model suggests that effective governance can emerge not from top-down control, but from coordinated, adaptive networks that include community organizations, market actors, and local governments [16, 17]. For urban waste systems to become circular, governance

must be reimagined not as a linear chain of command but as a web of shared responsibilities and negotiated outcomes. In this light, designing a framework for circular economy integration requires a grounded understanding of how governance already operates, formally and informally, within African megacities [18, 19].

2.2 Circular Economy Principles in Waste Management

The circular economy introduces a systemic shift from the traditional linear model by redefining waste as a resource and advocating for a closed-loop approach to material flows. In the context of urban waste management, this entails a hierarchy of preferred actions: prevention, reuse, recycling, recovery, and, as a last resort, disposal [20, 21]. Waste prevention starts at the design stage, where products are engineered for durability, reparability, and recyclability. Reuse involves extending product lifecycles through maintenance or second-hand markets. Recycling and resource recovery turn discarded materials into raw inputs for new production, closing the material loop and reducing dependency on virgin resources [22, 23].

Globally, several cities have operationalized circular waste practices with notable success. Amsterdam has implemented a circular strategy that mandates material passports for buildings and incentivizes business models based on reuse and repair. In Seoul, South Korea, the volume-based waste fee system has drastically reduced household waste and boosted recycling rates [24, 25]. In Latin America, cities like Curitiba and Bogotá have formalized waste picker cooperatives into municipal recycling systems, blending social inclusion with environmental goals. These examples illustrate how policy alignment, stakeholder engagement, and robust institutional support are foundational to circular transitions [26].

For African megacities, these principles hold significant promise. Many cities already exhibit elements of circularity, particularly through informal reuse and recycling networks. However, these practices often occur outside regulatory frameworks and lack infrastructural and financial support. Formalizing and scaling such practices, while ensuring social protection and environmental compliance, requires intentional governance arrangements [27]. Integrating circular economy principles into urban waste systems means not only embracing new technologies and policies but also recognizing and elevating the value of existing community-led and informal practices that already function within circular logic, albeit under adverse conditions [28, 29].

2.3 Barriers to Circular Transition in African Megacities

Despite the potential benefits of adopting circular economy principles, African megacities face multiple barriers that constrain their ability to transition from linear to circular waste management systems. Institutional fragmentation is a primary challenge [30]. Responsibilities for waste governance are often spread across multiple agencies without clear coordination mechanisms. This results in overlapping mandates, duplicated efforts, and policy incoherence, making it difficult to develop or implement holistic circular strategies. In many cases, local authorities lack the autonomy, technical capacity, or fiscal resources to design and enforce long-term plans, further compounding institutional inertia [31].

Financial limitations also play a critical role. Circular waste systems typically require significant upfront investment in

infrastructure, technology, and human capital. However, urban waste management in Africa is frequently underfunded, relying heavily on external aid or inconsistent municipal revenues [32]. The lack of viable business models and access to green financing tools deters private sector involvement and innovation. Moreover, without effective cost recovery mechanisms, such as user fees or polluter-pays schemes, cities struggle to sustain even basic waste services, let alone invest in circular upgrades [33].

Technological and logistical barriers are also prevalent. Waste segregation at source, a cornerstone of effective circular systems, remains rare due to a lack of public awareness, infrastructure, and incentives. Informal settlements, which dominate much of the urban landscape, often lack access to waste services altogether, making inclusive implementation even more difficult. Additionally, existing recycling and processing facilities are often outdated, informal, or poorly maintained, leading to inefficiencies and environmental externalities [34].

Governance-related constraints further exacerbate these challenges. Weak enforcement of environmental regulations, limited citizen engagement, and exclusion of informal waste actors undermine system-wide integration. Public participation in waste planning is often tokenistic, and the voices of vulnerable communities are rarely heard [35]. Corruption, bureaucratic red tape, and political instability in some cities also hinder transparency and accountability. For circular economy transitions to be feasible, these barriers must be addressed not only through technical interventions but through targeted reforms in urban governance, anchoring waste systems in inclusive, coordinated, and adaptive policy environments [36].

3. Core Elements of a Circular Economy Governance Framework

3.1 Policy Integration and Strategic Alignment

Achieving a circular economy in the context of urban waste management requires a deliberate effort to integrate circular principles into broader urban policy and planning structures. This goes beyond stand-alone waste strategies and calls for embedding circular thinking into land use planning, housing development, public health, environmental protection, and industrial regulation [37, 38]. In many African megacities, planning frameworks operate in silos, with little coordination between departments responsible for urban development, sanitation, and environmental affairs. This fragmented landscape hampers the ability of city governments to design policies that are mutually reinforcing and strategically aligned with long-term sustainability goals [38, 39].

A successful transition demands vertical alignment between national development goals and local urban strategies. Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), long-term development visions, and climate action plans should explicitly incorporate circular economy objectives to create enabling conditions for cities [40]. In turn, local authorities must reflect these priorities in their waste management bylaws, procurement practices, and zoning regulations. For example, aligning building codes with circular construction standards, such as mandating modular designs or recycled materials, can stimulate demand for circular products and reduce construction waste [41, 42].

Policy integration also involves horizontal coherence across sectors and institutions. Waste governance intersects with health, transport, energy, and education. Without

coordination across these domains, opportunities for circular interventions are easily missed. For instance, integrating organic waste recovery into urban agriculture policies can enhance food security while reducing landfill burdens [43]. Similarly, aligning waste transport logistics with public infrastructure plans can lower emissions and improve efficiency. This inter-sectoral integration ensures that circularity is not treated as an isolated objective but as a foundational principle guiding city-wide development [44, 45].

Moreover, institutional mechanisms are needed to facilitate strategic coordination. Inter-agency working groups, cross-ministerial task forces, and urban sustainability units within city governments can help streamline efforts and harmonize policies. These structures can support policy review cycles, promote adaptive learning, and ensure that circular initiatives are backed by data and evidence. Strategic alignment should also account for the unique urbanization patterns, cultural norms, and economic structures of African megacities, enabling cities to localize global circular economy ambitions in ways that reflect contextual realities [46, 47].

3.2 Multi-Actor Collaboration and Stakeholder Roles

The transition to a circular economy in waste management is fundamentally a collaborative process. No single actor, whether public or private, can drive such a transformation alone. African megacities are characterized by highly heterogeneous stakeholder landscapes, including local governments, private waste contractors, informal waste collectors, non-governmental organizations, community-based associations, and ordinary citizens. Each actor plays a vital role in the waste value chain and must be strategically engaged to ensure effective implementation and equitable outcomes [21, 48].

City governments are at the forefront of waste governance, with the authority to design policies, enforce regulations, and provide essential services. However, limited capacity, political instability, and financial constraints often undermine their effectiveness. Thus, partnerships with private enterprises are increasingly necessary [49]. Private sector actors can bring innovation, investment, and efficiency to waste systems, particularly in areas such as recycling infrastructure, logistics, and material recovery technologies. Nevertheless, these partnerships must be governed by clear contracts, accountability frameworks, and equity safeguards to prevent exclusion or exploitation of vulnerable groups [50, 51].

The informal sector is perhaps the most overlooked yet indispensable stakeholder in African waste systems. Informal waste pickers, often working in precarious and unsafe conditions, contribute significantly to recycling rates and resource recovery. Recognizing and formalizing their role within governance structures is crucial [52, 53]. Models such as waste picker cooperatives, integration into municipal collection schemes, or service-level agreements can provide recognition, protection, and income security. Furthermore, grassroots organizations and NGOs often serve as bridges between formal authorities and communities, facilitating awareness campaigns, behavior change, and localized innovation [54].

Community engagement is essential for participatory governance. Residents must be viewed not just as service

recipients but as active agents in circular transitions. Citizen involvement in source separation, neighborhood clean-ups, and composting initiatives strengthens social ownership and fosters collective accountability [55]. Mechanisms such as community forums, feedback platforms, and inclusive stakeholder consultations can amplify marginalized voices, particularly women and youth, who are often excluded from urban governance processes. Ultimately, multi-actor collaboration must be rooted in transparency, trust-building, and co-creation. Only through meaningful inclusion of all stakeholders can circular economy frameworks become durable, adaptive, and socially just [56, 57].

3.3 Regulatory Instruments and Incentive Mechanisms

Regulatory instruments are the backbone of any governance framework and are crucial for embedding circular economy principles into waste systems. In the context of African megacities, where enforcement capacity is often weak, it becomes even more important to design clear, enforceable, and context-appropriate regulations. Laws that mandate source separation, ban specific waste streams (such as single-use plastics), or require formal licensing for waste handling create the legal foundation for a circular waste system. Extended producer responsibility (EPR) policies, for instance, shift accountability upstream by making manufacturers financially or physically responsible for the post-consumer phase of their products [58].

However, regulation alone is insufficient without complementary incentives. Economic instruments can stimulate behavior change and catalyze investment in circular business models. Tax incentives for companies that incorporate recycled materials or design for reuse can encourage industry transformation. Subsidies or grant programs for start-ups in the recycling or repair sector can spur innovation. Municipalities can implement pay-as-you-throw systems or offer rebates to households that separate waste at source. These economic tools must be designed with equity in mind to avoid penalizing low-income households or informal actors.

Public procurement is another underutilized yet powerful lever. Governments can drive demand for circular products and services by prioritizing sustainability criteria in tenders, such as requiring recycled content in construction materials or awarding contracts to socially inclusive waste management cooperatives. Green procurement policies send market signals and help build viable supply chains for circular goods and services. Over time, such policies can normalize circular practices across sectors and institutionalize them within public service delivery frameworks.

Crucially, the effectiveness of regulatory and incentive mechanisms depends on monitoring, compliance, and adaptive feedback. Cities must invest in data systems that track material flows, measure recycling rates, and evaluate the impact of specific policies. Environmental audits, performance scorecards, and compliance registers can help ensure that rules are not only well-crafted but also properly enforced. Moreover, governance structures should allow for periodic review and revision of instruments based on emerging trends, stakeholder feedback, and technological changes. In rapidly evolving urban contexts, regulatory agility is key to sustaining momentum toward circularity.

4. Implementation Enablers and Institutional Conditions

4.1 Capacity Building and Knowledge Infrastructure

A robust circular economy governance framework cannot succeed without deliberate investment in capacity building across institutional, community, and sectoral levels. Most African megacities face acute human resource constraints, particularly within municipal waste departments that are often understaffed, undertrained, and lacking exposure to contemporary waste governance practices. Addressing these gaps requires structured technical training programs targeted at public officials, sanitation workers, private sector operators, and community leaders. Training should cover areas such as circular waste planning, lifecycle analysis, material recovery technologies, and environmental compliance monitoring, ensuring that actors throughout the waste chain are equipped with the skills to operationalize circular principles [59].

In parallel, cities must invest in knowledge infrastructure, including research hubs, think tanks, and innovation labs that specialize in circular economy solutions tailored to local contexts. These hubs can serve as platforms for experimentation, cross-sector collaboration, and policy incubation [60]. They also provide space for integrating traditional knowledge and indigenous practices into modern circular models, helping to localize and legitimize sustainability solutions. By supporting continuous learning and adaptive governance, such hubs strengthen institutional memory and allow cities to iterate policies based on evidence and lived experience [61, 62].

Public education campaigns are also essential to shift cultural attitudes and consumption behaviors. Circular economy success depends on citizen participation in waste segregation, product reuse, and the reduction of single-use materials. Cities should use schools, community centers, religious institutions, and digital platforms to promote environmental stewardship and awareness of circular practices. Outreach efforts must be inclusive, using local languages and culturally appropriate messaging to reach diverse demographic groups. Lastly, reliable data systems are crucial for effective policy design and oversight. Waste governance remains poorly documented in many African cities, with data on volumes, flows, composition, and treatment largely absent or outdated. Establishing digital monitoring systems that track waste generation, recovery rates, and emissions impacts enables cities to evaluate progress, adjust strategies, and target interventions. Integrated data platforms can also help identify hotspots, forecast infrastructure needs, and build public accountability. Without data-driven decision-making, governance risks remain reactive rather than transformative [63].

4.2 Financing and Resource Mobilization

The transition to a circular urban waste economy entails significant capital investment in infrastructure, services, innovation, and human development. However, most African city budgets are overstretched, and waste management is chronically underfunded. Therefore, diversifying funding sources and introducing sustainable financing models are vital steps in enabling implementation. One of the most effective approaches is through public-private partnerships, which allow municipalities to leverage private sector expertise and capital while retaining public oversight. When structured transparently and inclusively, these partnerships can accelerate the deployment of recycling plants, material

recovery facilities, and eco-industrial parks.

Waste fees and service charges provide another important financing tool, especially when designed to reflect the true cost of waste disposal and resource use. Volume-based or pay-as-you-throw pricing models can incentivize waste reduction while improving cost recovery. However, affordability and equity must be considered, especially in low-income areas. Revenue collected should be ring-fenced for reinvestment into circular economy initiatives, such as decentralized composting centers or mobile collection units in underserved neighborhoods [64, 65].

Environmental levies, such as landfill taxes, plastic bag surcharges, or e-waste disposal fees, can serve both regulatory and financial functions. These instruments not only discourage harmful behaviors but also generate funds for circular innovation and environmental restoration. Where appropriate, fiscal policies can be aligned with circularity goals by reducing import duties on eco-technologies or offering tax exemptions to circular enterprises. Green bonds and climate finance mechanisms also present opportunities, especially in collaboration with multilateral institutions or development banks. Cities can design project pipelines eligible for such funding by demonstrating environmental, social, and economic returns [66].

Transparency and accountability in financial governance are non-negotiable. Corruption and mismanagement of funds have historically eroded public trust and derailed infrastructure projects in several African cities. Therefore, all financial flows, whether from donor agencies, private investors, or municipal sources, should be subjected to rigorous auditing, public disclosure, and performance tracking [67]. Participatory budgeting and citizen monitoring tools can also help ensure that financial decisions align with community needs and circular economy goals. Long-term success depends not only on the amount of funding secured but also on how equitably and efficiently it is managed [68].

4.3 Legal and Institutional Reform

Establishing an enabling legal and institutional environment is a foundational requirement for embedding circular economy practices into urban waste management. In many African megacities, the current legal landscape is characterized by outdated laws, ambiguous mandates, and weak enforcement. Legal reforms are therefore essential to provide clarity, modernity, and enforceability. These reforms should begin with comprehensive reviews of existing waste management legislation to identify inconsistencies, gaps, and overlaps. Laws should be updated to explicitly include circular economy principles, define new waste categories, and assign clear responsibilities to government agencies, private actors, and communities.

Clarifying institutional mandates is equally important. Waste governance is often distributed across multiple ministries, agencies, and local authorities without a central coordinating mechanism. This fragmentation results in inefficiency, duplication of efforts, and confusion among stakeholders. Streamlining roles and establishing clear hierarchies or collaborative arrangements can significantly enhance operational efficiency. For example, designating a lead agency or task force responsible for circular economy coordination can improve accountability and ensure strategic coherence across sectors and levels of government.

The establishment of new governance platforms may also be necessary to facilitate cross-sector collaboration and policy

integration. Urban Circular Economy Councils or Multi-Stakeholder Waste Boards, for instance, can bring together representatives from government, business, academia, civil society, and the informal sector. These bodies can provide guidance on policy implementation, mediate conflicts, and drive innovation through joint planning and pilot initiatives. Institutionalizing such participatory platforms fosters shared ownership and helps embed circular thinking into the bureaucratic culture of city governance.

In addition to horizontal coordination, vertical legal alignment is required. Local waste bylaws should harmonize with national and regional legislation, enabling cities to act without conflicting directives or bureaucratic bottlenecks. This includes ensuring that urban authorities have the legal autonomy to enforce local circular economy initiatives, issue permits, and implement penalties. Decentralization frameworks should be revised where necessary to empower cities with the legislative and fiscal tools needed for sustainable waste governance. Legal reform must also include access to justice provisions, enabling communities to challenge environmental harm or policy failures through formal legal avenues. A strong legal backbone reinforces the governance framework. It ensures its resilience in political, economic, and environmental change.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Synthesis of Key Insights

The transformation of urban waste systems in African megacities requires more than infrastructural upgrades or technological interventions; it demands a deep, strategic reconfiguration of governance. This paper has argued that a circular economy approach provides an integrated and regenerative alternative to the conventional linear waste management paradigm, ill-suited to the rapid urbanization and resource pressures facing African cities. The rationale for a governance framework lies in recognizing that circularity is a set of technical processes and a governance-driven transition requiring coordination, innovation, and accountability across multiple levels of urban life.

The proposed governance framework focuses on five key pillars: policy integration, multi-actor collaboration, regulatory and incentive mechanisms, institutional capacity building, and legal reform. Each component addresses specific bottlenecks and opportunities in the African urban waste ecosystem, offering a structured approach to embed circular principles into planning, operations, and service delivery. For instance, aligning waste governance with broader urban policy, while incorporating informal actors and grassroots innovation, enhances inclusivity and system resilience.

A central theme that emerges from this synthesis is that governance transformation is not ancillary but foundational to sustainable urban development. When cities govern waste as a shared resource rather than a disposal problem, they unlock opportunities for green jobs, environmental restoration, and circular innovation. Therefore, the framework outlined in this paper is not only a roadmap for waste system reform but a strategic blueprint for realizing urban sustainability, climate resilience, and social equity through circularity. It positions cities not just as administrators of waste, but as orchestrators of regenerative urban futures.

5.2 Policy and Practice Implications

Translating the proposed framework into action demands deliberate effort and sustained political will from urban policymakers, development agencies, and civil society actors. For local governments, a key recommendation is the establishment of multi-sectoral waste governance councils that institutionalize stakeholder coordination and foster joint ownership of circular initiatives. These bodies can co-design localized waste solutions, monitor performance, and ensure that marginalized groups, particularly informal workers, are part of planning and implementation processes.

Capacity investment is equally crucial. Governments must prioritize technical training for public officials, regulatory staff, and waste practitioners to ensure alignment between policy ambition and administrative execution. Partnering with academic institutions and technical colleges to embed circular economy modules into curricula can create a pipeline of future professionals capable of sustaining the transition. Development partners, including multilateral donors and international NGOs, should channel support toward innovation hubs, pilot projects, and public education programs that build system-wide awareness and experimentation.

Civil society organizations have a critical role to play in bridging governance and grassroots action. They can mobilize communities, facilitate behavior change, and hold institutions accountable through participatory governance tools. At the same time, private sector actors should be incentivized to adopt circular business models and collaborate with local governments in areas such as material recovery, waste logistics, and eco-design.

Ultimately, the success of any policy or practice hinges on long-term commitment and institutional memory. Circular transitions require time, experimentation, and the ability to adapt to changing conditions. Governments must embed feedback loops into their governance systems, allowing policies to evolve based on data, stakeholder input, and emerging technologies. This adaptive governance model ensures that circular economy strategies remain relevant, responsive, and resilient in the face of urban transformation.

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