
Advocacy toolkit case studies

WASTE MANAGEMENT IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

THEME: Environment

ADVOCACY APPROACHES: Government officials: lobbying
Research and analysis

In Goma, DRC, there used to be no official waste management system and large piles of rubbish were commonplace throughout the town. Joel Tembo Vwira, a local resident supported by the Tearfund Inspired Individuals initiative, decided to research whether Goma's inhabitants would be willing and able to pay for an organised waste management system, and also what the local authorities' legal responsibility was for rubbish collection. Using local students to conduct the research, Joel found that the majority of households, businesses and NGOs would be prepared to pay for a professional service. He also discovered that the local authorities were responsible for the general cleanliness of the town.

With the results of the research, Joel lobbied Goma's council officials and the provincial environment minister. He provided evidence that waste management was a huge problem, he reminded them of their legal obligations, and he asked them to provide an organised waste management system. As a result, the city authorities provided a place, 15km outside Goma, where recycling could take place. Joel worked with the authorities, the landowners and a private business to provide Goma with a professional service that collects, sorts and recycles the rubbish from thousands of residents. Due to better management of waste at household level and reduced rubbish tips in the town, there have been positive health impacts and people who use the service have commented that there are fewer mosquitoes.