Pictorial analysis of circular economy and environmental health in South Africa

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Where LMICs mostly apply CE
Figure 9. Cottage Industries operating in Walmer Township and Wells Estate: Spray-painting of cars (A), and car battery recycling (B).

Figure 10. Prevalence (%) of cottage industries reported for Walmer Township and Wells Estate, 2015 - 2019. Examples of 'other' included sales, needlework, beadwork, childcare, photography, carpentry, money lending and laundry.
Five Opportunities for CE in LMICs

- CE solutions in food systems can help the continent feed its growing population while driving green growth and employment.

- Solutions for improved waste management, particularly for waste-to-compost/soil enhancers conversion, offer an immediate opportunity for increased circularity in the system.

- In packaging, opportunities for scaling plastic recycling offer an immediate opportunity for increased circularity.

- PET recycling is thus a critical solution when it comes to managing large amounts of plastic waste.

- CE solutions will support a low-carbon built environment that drives green growth and employment. E.g., mass timber for sustainable building material.

- In electronics, there are significant CE solutions for improved electronic waste management.

- Investing in recycling facilities and increasing producer responsibility will be crucial to improving outcomes in the sector.

- CE solutions in fashion and textiles will drive green manufacturing and growth on the continent.

- There are CE solutions to revolutionize second-hand clothing by upcycling products to meet the growing global demand for sustainable fashion.

Policy Recommendations for CE in LMICs

- Public waste management policy should involve those already working in the waste picking and informal recycling sector, supporting them to formalise in order to access social protection, improve incomes and working conditions, increase recycling rates and reduce costs for government.

- Governments should revise existing policies that inhibit circular business models for organic waste unnecessarily (such as free landfill collection or some unnecessary restrictions on treatment of human waste). Circular models for organic waste promote wider provision of sanitation to poor communities and reduce carbon emissions.

- Governments should support nascent remanufacturing and repair industries through public procurement, and by working with representatives of micro- and small-/medium-size enterprises in these sectors to ensure that appropriate services (electricity, connectivity etc) are provided, in order to create jobs and reduce waste.

- The circular economy offers an unparalleled opportunity. It’s good for the economy, good for society and good for the planet. Supporting the transition would save lives and create employment, accelerating progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Source: Virtuous Circle: how the circular economy can create jobs and save lives in low and middle-income countries, August 2016.
Five Big Bets for the Circular Economy in Africa
African Circular Economy Alliance

VIRTUOUS CIRCLE
How the circular economy can create jobs and save lives in low and middle-income countries