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Challenges faced by Kenyan Universities on waste management and disposal during COVID-19 pandemic

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a global emergency and continues to raise serious issues with waste management practices. This study emphasized the challenges of increased waste disposal during the COVID-19 crisis and its response practices in Universities in Kenya. Data was sought from the scientific research papers, publications from the government and media reports in order to quantify the effect of the pandemic towards waste generation in these institutions. A huge increase in the amount of used personal protective equipment (facemasks, gloves, and other protective stuffs) was found. These factors caused existing waste treatment facilities in these institutions to be overwhelmed. This article discusses the ways the operation of those facilities must be improved to cope with the challenge of handling medical waste, as well as working around the restrictions imposed due to COVID-19. The article also highlights the need for short, mid, and longer-term responses towards waste management during the pandemic. Furthermore, the practices discussed in this article may provide an option for alternative approaches and development of sustainable strategies in Universities in Kenya towards mitigating similar pandemics in the future.

Keywords: COVID-19; Disposal facilities; Incinerator; Infectious wastes; Waste management

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