

# Dandora - A Tour through Kenya's largest Dumpsite with Cricket Writes

Key Learnings

## An Informal System Organising Kenya's Waste Flow

Kenya lacks comprehensive formal waste management infrastructure, and most waste is delivered unsorted to Dandora. Trucks enter, weigh in at the city council's bridge, pay fees, and offload mixed materials. Once the waste is dumped, **waste pickers at the site begin sorting immediately**, separating plastics, metals, glass, cotton and paper. Each category is sold to recycling buyers: **metals for about one dollar per kilogram and plastics for only a few shillings**. This informal process recovers materials that would otherwise be lost and **provides income for thousands of independent workers**.

## Unsafe Work and Structural Poverty

The dumpsite functions beyond the reach of Kenya's labour laws and safety standards, people handle waste with **minimal protection** while heavy trucks move nearby. **Injuries and illness are common**, and the **open burning of waste produces smoke linked to respiratory disease**, yet **healthcare remains out of reach** for many due to cost and limited access. Because public schooling still requires fees, many **children support their households through waste collection**.

## Community Art Strengthening Awareness and Solidarity

The Artistic Junction Collective in Korogocho **uses theatre, poetry and film to address social challenges** surrounding the dumpsite, including **gender-based violence, exclusion and unemployment**. Its short film raised awareness and encouraged open dialogue within the community. **Former offenders lead theatre groups sharing stories of personal change**; **women use the space for peer learning and therapy**. Through creative activity, the collective **builds understanding, supports resilience and fosters community**.

## Creative Spaces Building Visibility and Opportunity

The collective also **repurposes materials from the dumpsite** such as glass, timber and metal to construct performance spaces, a library and training areas. **A new community centre will provide access to books and skills workshops for women** who previously relied on waste picking. The creative spaces create opportunities for expression and education, **giving people a voice and turning familiar surroundings into open spaces for learning and change**.

Listen to the full episode here:

<https://circularity.fm/dandora-a-tour-through-kenyas-largest-dumpsite/>

