**SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE** (SEDI)

**A communique Issued at the Stakeholders’ Workshop on Pathways to Municipal Waste Management in Edo State – Thursday 9th September, 2021**

The Sustainable Environment Development Initiative (SEDI Nigeria) with financial support of the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA) organized a workshop on Pathways to Municipal Waste Management in Edo State at the WHARC Event Centre, Benin, Edo State, Nigeria on 26 August, 2021.

The forum brought together over 40 participants drawn from Government, Waste picker practitioners, Academia, Media and civil society groups among others, and deliberated on issues bothering on municipal waste management in Edo State.

During the meeting participants **observed** the following:

1. Nigeria, like many nations is faced with gross environmental problems and solid waste stands as one of the major challenges. Solid waste generation has consistently expanded both in volume

and complexity due to the rapid increase in population over the years, socio-economic development, industrialization, technology advancements, changing lifestyles and consumption

patterns.

2. The increasing complexity and quantity of wastes produced in Edo State has been of increasing concern in recent years.

3. However, waste management has not been matched by adequate provisions which include funding and infrastructural facilities to sustainably manage this ever growing quantum of waste.

4. Open and indiscriminate burning of hazardous and non-hazardous solid waste as a disposal method, is still a common practice among the citizenry.

5. Nigeria solid waste management policy (2020) presents an overarching principle for solid waste management based on the principles of sustainability in line with economic vitality and ecological integrity.

6. The National Policy on Solid Waste Management (SWM) has been developed as a shared national vision of how solid wastes should be managed more sustainably.

7. It is necessary for Nigeria to tackle the issue of solid waste with all seriousness and to align with international best practices and thus adopt solid waste management trends that will: Promote job creation and improved economic activities by establishing waste to wealth schemes and Comply with international best practices in environmental health and safety standards for SWM sector.

8. Aware of the Federal Government Gazette concerning the 3R”s of waste management which was expanded to 5R”s, namely: Reduce, Repair, Re-use, Recycle and Recover.

9. Waste management entails a holistic approach, which spans from reduction, sorting, reuse, collection, storage, transport, recovery, recycling, treatment and disposal in an environmentally sound manner.

10. The Edo State Ministry of Environment provides overarching guidance; including policies, legal and regulatory framework for waste management in the State.

11. The Local Government Authorities are statutorily charged with direct responsibility for the management of refuse within their domains. However, they presently lack the technical, financial and personnel capacity to fulfill this obligation effectively.

12. Proper recycling of the municipality waste which is plastic could have significant impact on

socio-economic development of the municipality since it would enhance conservation of

natural resources, reduce greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions, and reduce the production of

Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPS), especially when the plastics are burnt in waste dumps.

**Recommendations**

1. Designing and implementing proper solid waste management techniques aid in creating employment through the different chains including waste pickers involved in sustainable and sound management practices.

2. Ensure occupational health and safety measures are always adhered to for waste pickers.

3. It is imperative to incorporate water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services to encompass aspects of SWM in conjunction with NGOs.

**Resolution**

Assembled this 9th September 2021, we the stakeholders of Edo State:

* Call for the Edo State government to prohibit the open burning of household, industrial and biohazard waste.
* Urge the Edo State government to ensure a properly managed solid waste management programme with “best environmental practices” in place and utilizing “best available technology” options which will integrate and improve capacity and techniques for waste collection and management of an already existing informal sector (waste pickers), develop a platform to embed them and create new employment opportunities.
* Media sensitization through social media engagements on the need for sustainable solid waste management practices