

# ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS PAPER

## CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS EMERGING FROM THE SUMMIT

A thematic synthesis of deliberations across all Summit sessions reveals a set of cross-cutting issues that collectively define the strategic direction required to improve environmental quality and advance sustainable waste management in Botswana. These issues cut across policy, governance, technology, behaviour, and economics, and require coordinated, system-wide responses rather than isolated sectoral interventions.

### LEADERSHIP AND INSTITUTIONAL COHESION

Leadership challenges identified during the Summit were largely attributed to limited cohesion and coordination among government institutions responsible for waste management, rather than to individual capacity alone. Across multiple sessions, delegates highlighted fragmented mandates, overlapping responsibilities, and weak inter-agency collaboration as key constraints undermining effective implementation. This institutional misalignment has resulted in inconsistent policy application, delayed project execution, and uneven regulatory enforcement across national and local levels.

There was strong consensus that improved institutional cohesion, supported by clearly defined roles, harmonised planning frameworks, and strengthened coordination mechanisms, is essential to creating an enabling environment for accountability, innovation, and cross-sector collaboration. Enhancing institutional capacity through coordinated leadership structures, joint planning platforms, and aligned mandates at both national and local levels was identified as a priority for improving service delivery and achieving sustainable waste management outcomes.

### BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY

Behavioural transformation was repeatedly highlighted as a foundational requirement for sustainable waste management systems. Delegates emphasised that policy reforms and infrastructure investments will remain ineffective without parallel shifts in public attitudes and daily practices. Entrenched cultural norms, low household-level waste segregation, and limited environmental literacy were identified as persistent drivers of illegal dumping, open burning, and poor waste handling.

The Summit underscored that awareness campaigns alone are insufficient. Effective behavioural change requires culturally grounded, sustained, and repetitive interventions, reinforced by visible enforcement and positive incentives. Integrating waste literacy into schools, workplaces, traditional leadership structures, and community institutions was identified as a critical long-term investment.

### TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND ENABLING SYSTEMS

Technological innovation featured prominently as a driver of efficiency, resilience, and economic opportunity. Evidence presented demonstrated that advanced waste management technologies—including automated sorting systems, digital monitoring platforms, low-emission incineration, and resource recovery solutions—can significantly improve recycling rates, reduce operational costs, and minimise environmental harm.

However, the Summit highlighted that technology adoption remains constrained by limited access to finance, skills gaps, and weak regulatory incentives. Delegates agreed that technology alone cannot resolve systemic challenges unless supported by appropriate financing mechanisms, capacity-building programmes, and policy frameworks that actively encourage uptake and scaling.

## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND LOCAL OWNERSHIP

Community participation was identified as central to the long-term sustainability of waste management interventions. Presentations demonstrated that communities with active involvement of traditional leaders, youth groups, women’s cooperatives, and local organisations consistently achieved better environmental outcomes than those driven solely through top-down municipal directives.

This finding reinforced the importance of localising waste management solutions through culturally aligned approaches that empower communities to take ownership of environmental stewardship. Strengthening community-based structures and integrating them into formal waste governance systems was identified as a critical pathway for improving compliance, accountability, and social acceptance.

## WASTE AS AN ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

A unifying theme across the Summit was the repositioning of waste management as an economic development opportunity aligned with national growth and diversification objectives. Delegates demonstrated that recycling, material recovery, and circular economy enterprises can generate significant employment—particularly for youth and women—while reducing reliance on landfilling and imported raw materials.

There was strong agreement that waste management should no longer be viewed primarily as a cost centre, but rather as a catalyst for green growth, small enterprise development, and private sector investment. Unlocking this potential requires coherent policy alignment, market-enabling incentives, and targeted support for emerging circular economy businesses.

**Table: Cross-Cutting Themes Identified Across All Summit Sessions**

CROSS-CUTTING THEME	DESCRIPTION	EXPECTED IMPACT
Leadership	Stability, continuity, and technical competence in institutions	Stronger implementation, coordination, and accountability
Behavioural Change	Mindset transformation and environmental literacy	Increased compliance and reduced pollution
Technological Innovation	Adoption of modern waste management technologies	Higher efficiency and lower long-term system costs
Community Participation	Engagement of traditional leaders, youth, and women	Greater local ownership and improved outcomes
Economic Opportunity	Waste as a driver of green growth and employment	Strong incentives for investment and enterprise development

## OVERALL STRATEGIC DIRECTION:

The Summit concluded that achieving meaningful and sustained improvements in Botswana’s waste management system requires integrated reform across leadership, behaviour, technology, community engagement, and economic policy. Progress will depend on coordinated action, institutional coherence, and a shared national commitment to transforming waste from an environmental challenge into a driver of sustainable and inclusive development.