

Tool 7.1.1 – Summary – Waste Survey

The waste survey aims to rapidly estimate the amounts of waste and its composition at both the household and non-household levels through simple interviews. The results of this assessment approximate the amount of waste generated per person per day and may include information about its composition.

Description

A defined number of households and/or non-household waste generators (including commercial, institutional, and public spaces) are visited and surveyed to gather information about waste amounts or measure these on-site. This rapid assessment is typically functional when time and resources are limited and a rough estimate is still needed. This can be useful for gaining initial insights into waste generation and composition, and having more precise data than the 0.5 kg/person/day recommended in the Sphere standards. However, for long-term planning and the design of waste management services, a waste audit is preferred, as it produces more accurate and detailed data to guide decisions. This guide is based on the [Waste Wise Cities Tool – Steps 2 and 3 \(UN-Habitat, 2021\)](#). It includes both household and non-household waste surveys, which can be conducted either in parallel or in sequence, depending on the availability of human resources.

Steps for a waste survey

Refer and follow the guidance in the complete guide: **Tool 7.1.2 – Guide – Waste Survey.**

1. Plan and prepare the study (5 days)

- a. Adapt the survey process to your needs and available resources
- b. Inform and engage local authorities and key stakeholders
- c. Prepare the survey team, materials and equipment
 - i. Size the survey team
 - ii. Train the survey team
 - iii. Equipment and materials
 - iv. Personal Protective Equipment
- d. Prepare official information and informed consent letters
- e. Determine random sampling points
- f. Validate the schedule and confirm dates

2. Conduct the survey (1-7 days depending on team size)

3. Analyse and process the data and report the results (1-2 days)

Resources

Tool 7.1.2 – Guide – Survey

Tool 7.1.3 – Reporting Sheet

Tool 7.1.4 – Training Template

Tool 7.1.5 – Survey Form