

Regional News

Vendors at the Jinja Central Market, one of the affected areas, are now struggling to sell their goods, with customers avoiding the area because of the bad smell and unhygienic conditions.

BY DENIS EDEMA

Residents of Jinja City have raised concern over uncollected garbage that has piled up along several roads for more than a week.

The most affected areas are roads surrounding Jinja Central Market, where heaps of waste have blocked sections of the road, producing a foul smell and making access to the market difficult.

Mr Charles Busulwa, the secretary general of Jinja Central Market, said the garbage, which has accumulated since last week, has severely affected the market environment due to the strong stench from rotting waste.

He explained that the piles of garbage around the market have created an unpleasant atmosphere for both vendors and customers, disrupting normal business operations.

Mr Busulwa said many vendors are now unable to sell their goods as customers are avoiding the area because of the bad smell and unhygienic conditions caused by the waste.

The situation, authorities say, has led to financial losses for traders who rely on daily sales to earn a living.

However, Mr Busulwa blamed Jinja City Council for the problem, accusing it of failing to manage waste collection effectively. He said the authorities have not developed a lasting and sustainable solution for garbage disposal despite the city's growing population and increasing waste generation.

"For nearly two weeks, garbage has not been collected, and the entire market area, including the roads, has been filled with all sorts of waste and a terrible smell. With the rainy season, the situation has become even worse," Mr Busulwa said.

Mr Vin Lawrence Semaganda, the chairperson of Alidina Road Village, where large volumes of garbage are collected before disposal, said the problem in Jinja City is mainly caused by a landfill that is full and has limited



Residents walk past a heaps of uncollected garbage packed in sacks around Jinja Central Market on Tuesday. For a week, the waste has created a foul smell in the area, discouraging people from buying foodstuffs. PHOTO/DENIS EDEMA

Garbage chokes Jinja City

access to the site during the rainy season.

Mr Semaganda, who secured the garbage collection tender under Cheedlah Investment U Ltd, said the company is currently facing challenges accessing the landfill site.

He explained that their trucks cannot reach the dumping area because the access road has been blocked by accumulated waste and poor road conditions caused by the recent heavy rains.

"What Jinja City needs to do is acquire equipment such as graders and bulldozers to create space by pushing some of the garbage to other sections of the landfill before the situation gets worse," Mr Semaganda said.

He noted that without proper equipment, it has become difficult for garbage trucks to offload waste at the site, contributing to the backlog of uncollected garbage in parts of the city.

Mr Semaganda also explained that some organic waste from fruits and food items such as pineapples, watermelons, banana peels, cassava, and po-

tatoes can be sorted by individuals and later sold to farmers as organic manure. Some of the waste is used in ar-

myworm farming as feed for birds and fish.

Mr Rajab Kito, the Jinja City Coun-

cil public relations officer, on Tuesday confirmed the challenges surrounding the uncollected garbage.

COST OF GARBAGE

In January, Jinja City improved garbage collection and sanitation after reclaiming a landfill previously encroached upon by residents, City Mayor Peter Kasolo said.

The 13-acre Masese site, which had long served as a dumping ground, was given to investor God Will Agencies in exchange for 12 acres in Musima Village, under a land swap deal with the defunct Jinja Municipal Council.

Mayor Kasolo told *Daily Monitor* that reclaiming the landfill enabled the city to reorganise its waste management system and introduce more sustainable approaches.

However, the garbage problem seems to be demanding a long-term solution despite Mayor Kasolo saying the reclamation and restructuring efforts mark a significant step in improving sanitation in Uganda's industrial hub.

Cost of garbage collection

In Jinja City, households and businesses pay monthly waste fees ranging from Shs5,000 to Shs30,000, depending on the volume generated.

A 2021-2022 survey by the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development estimated that 182.6 tonnes of solid waste are generated in the city daily.

Rainy season

Mr Kito explained that heavy rains have made it difficult for garbage trucks to access the landfill, disrupting waste collection in several parts of the city.

He said some areas of Jinja City, especially around the Central Market, have been affected by delays in garbage collection because the road leading to the landfill has become impassable.

However, he noted that city authorities are working closely with the works department to reopen the road as soon as possible.

"As a city, we face a shortage of equipment such as graders, bulldozers, and forklifts needed to level the landfill and repair the damaged access road. Hiring such equipment is very expensive daily, but plans are underway to resolve the problem before the end of the week," Mr Kito said.