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Iranian improvement perspective in solid waste management system, a non-technical challenge with technical difficulties

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Iran is a special country in a special geopolitical and geographical state of affairs. A country with huge oil, gas and mineral resources, highly educated citizens but in everlasting conflict with main economic and political powers in the region. This is a unique composition that affects every aspect of life in IRAN including solid waste management. High subsidies in energy, food and medical sectors inhibited any serious campaign of source reduction. The waste generation per capita is increasing on annual basis. Use of plastic bags with almost no cost is a versatile practice. These subsidies also affect other aspects of solid waste management. The use of compost is not viable for agricultural sector because of subsidized price of chemical fertilizers. Energy production from waste is also a hectic task due to low energy prices. Government access to financial resources has not encouraged public participation and the system does not seek much participation in public. Consequently public is unwilling to participate in waste issues and is reluctant to pay for waste management fees. On the

contrary to all current problems and in line with new economic and social changes in circumstances, there emerged some potential for improvement. Financial difficulties is making cut in subsidies and also make government to seek for assistance from public. Higher costs of goods and services make incentives for source reduction of the waste; especially spoilage in food is seemingly decreasing. Furthermore rapid development in social electronic networks has emphasized on importance of environmental issues and makes public more sensitive towards waste management issues. The improvement in solid waste management system will require better practice in landfill and compost facilities, introduction of new technologies like incineration and anaerobic digestion and also progress in waste collection techniques and machinery. But all those mentioned will only be possible to look at non-technical side of the predicament like public participation and influencing procedures on market behavior.

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