

Recycling of Solid Waste and the ‘Yan Bola’ Underground Economy: A Survey of Environmental Entrepreneurs in Central Nigeria

Ibrahim Umaru

*Department of Economics, Faculty of Social Sciences, Nasarawa State University,
P.M.B. 1022, Keffi, Nigeria*

Telephone: 0803 331 18420; 0802 867 1466, E-mail: iumaru@yahoo.com

KEYWORDS Hazardous Waste. Environment. Sustainable Development. Nigeria. Enterprise. Model

ABSTRACT In a society where environmental concerns over inadequate disposal of hazardous liquid and solid wastes and recycling are officially treated with somewhat nonchalance, the activities of human scavengers of metal, rubber, paper/paperboard yard and wood waste products, variously referred to in one of Nigeria’s major local languages (“Hausa”) as ‘Yan Bola’ or ‘Yan Gwangwani’ or ‘Yan Tinka’ squarely fit into the definition of ‘environmental entre-preneurs’ in Nigeria. Though their existence and activities are largely ignored by national statistics and indeed past policy interventions, the contribution to income generation, employment, tax revenue, skill/technology transfer and value added of this rather underground economy seems overwhelming. With cross-sectional data from four States in Central Nigeria, this study uses quantitative method to examine the contribution of the underground economy to income generation, employment and value added. The findings of the study merely go to confirm the increasingly important role the ‘Yan Bola’ business is playing in the local economy of the area.