

## KNOW YOUR RECLAIMERS

Reclaiming waste,  
Reclaiming dignity,  
Reclaiming livelihoods,  
Reclaiming environment.

Working together...



Have you ever stopped to speak to a reclaimer? To ask them what they do? To ask them why they do what they do?

"Let's recycle together!"  
**Paula and Eva, reclaimers from ARO**



"We are the environmentalists, not the thugs!"  
**Mashinini, reclaimer from ARO**

"I am a mother of three. I am an entrepreneur, a local organiser and chairperson of the local reclaimers organisation. I have been reclaiming for over two decades. Being a reclaimer has taught me to be independent and self-reliant."  
**Eva, reclaimer from ARO**

"I have been reclaiming for roughly 20 years. I have built strong relationships with local institutions. I am mainly sorting out materials around Wits University."  
**Motlatsi, reclaimer from ARO**



"We have realised that the reclaimers are responsible for most of the recycling. Residents here have formed a partnership with ARO to address our recycling requirements in the neighbourhood, providing the opportunity to work with a group of people stigmatised in our society and completely misunderstood. We have also started to develop a friendship, getting to know one another, which is such an important part of growth and understanding in our country."  
**Angela, Bordeaux resident, Randburg**

## What is ARO ?

ARO is the African Reclaimers Organisation. ARO's mission is to unite informal recyclers and to improve their livelihoods and relationship with fellow residents, businesses and municipalities. Their aim is to foster better understanding about their work and to remove the stigma and social taboos connected with their work.

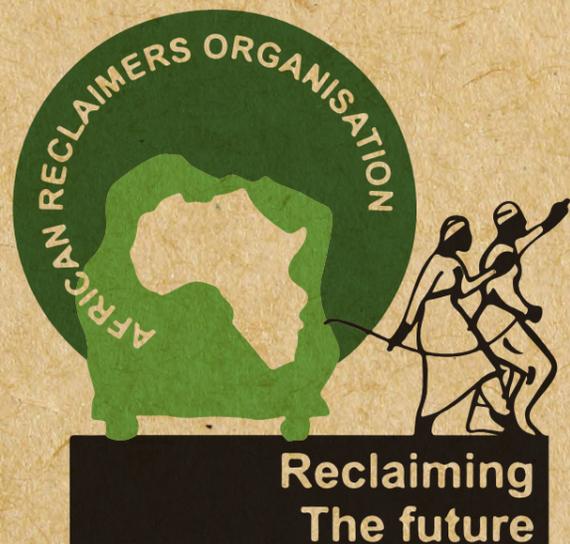
Don't hesitate to contact ARO to see what you can do to help recycling:

 @africanreclaimers

Email: africanreclaimers@gmail.com

Tel: 060 321 5800

**6 000** reclaimers transporting **150Kg** of waste a day means roughly **1.5** million tons of waste being directed out of landfills.



Johannesburg has an estimated network of **6 000** reclaimers.



With the help of reclaimers, South Africa recycles around **60%** of recyclable materials, on par with global trends in **2017**.

(global trends for 2017: Europe, 45%; UK, 43%; United States, 35.2% )

Reclaimers collect an average of about **100-150 kg** of waste a day.



This is equivalent to roughly **1** baby elephant.



## WHAT YOU CAN DO:

**A** Allow reclaimers access to recyclables.

**B** **DRY:** plastic bottles, paper, cardboard, glass, metal.



Clearly label any medical waste or dangerous waste you might have.



**C** Request your Resident Association to meet up with reclaimers in your area.

**Sort your RUBBISH BETWEEN**

**WET:** food scraps, food-tainted items, paper napkins, nappies, polystyrene containers.



*WET rubbish means all items that are organic, including: food items (cooked or uncooked), teabags, eggshells, cooking oil, tissues, paper towels.*

**D** Remember the 3 'Rs' : Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. Use your food-scrap to make a compost.



Reclaimers save local authorities up to **R750 million** annually in landfill costs.



Reclaimers recycle **70-80%** of household goods.



Reclaimers have provided a free recycling service for a very long time. It is time to recognize their invaluable contribution.



Residents and Reclaimers, working together to

- build bridges
- challenge stereotypes
- foster relationships
- save the environment

Let's reclaim together, let's reduce our impact on the environment together.

This document was edited by Hayley Gewer and designed by Mzwandile Buthelezi, with the support and coordination of the French Institute in South Africa (IFAS-Recherche/-FAS-Culture), in collaboration with the African Reclaimers Organisation, Sticky Situation and Boundless City, as part of the project Reclaiming Waste. Want to know more: [www.reclaimingwaste.org](http://www.reclaimingwaste.org)