Impact of small-scale sawmill operations on wellbeing of adjoining residents in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria

Presenter: Folaranmi D. Babalola; University of Ilorin
Presenter Email: babalola.fd@unilorin.edu.ng
Authors: Folaranmi D. Babalola, University of Ilorin

Urbanization has led to expansion of residential areas to location of sawmills which previously were in remote areas. Small scale sawmills dominates sawmilling in developing countries among which is Nigeria. Disposal of wood waste and pollution from these sawmill machines have been major concern in locations where they are sited. The study examined the impacts of operations of small-scale sawmills on adjoining residents in Odo-Okun located in Ilorin, the capital city of Kwara State, Nigeria. Data for the study was obtained through site visit to observe the operations of the sawmills. Oral interviews were conducted on the residents living adjacent and around the sawmills. Also, structured questionnaire was administered to the workers in the sawmills. The presence of sawmills in the study area provided benefits to the residents in the form of employment generation and provision of wood products to households. Identified waste generated in the sawmill under study include sawdust, tree barks, plain shavings and wood offcuts. Open air burning of sawdust was the only treatment adopted in disposing waste in the sawmills. However, the noise and fumes pollution from sawmill machines, as well as dust and smokes generated from sawmill wastes constituted negative impacts to wellbeing of the adjoining residents. From responses, the pollutions emanating from the sawmills are having both direct and indirect negative impacts on wellbeing of the adjoining residents. There is need for proper waste disposal and maintenance of sawmill machines to reduce pollution. Concerned government agencies should embark on regular checking on the waste management of sawmills and enforcement compliance to operation standard.