



Building a Circular South Asia: Innovations, Inclusion, and Policy Pathways

28 November 2024

Westin Josun Busan, Republic of Korea



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Opening Remarks

Norbu Wangchuk

Director General
South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP)

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Introduction to PLEASE project

Anjalie Devaraja

Project Director, Project Implementation Unit (PIU)
South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP)

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Project Overview

Implemented by South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme (SACEP)

Supported by United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

- **Regional initiative** to strengthen innovation and coordination of circular economy solutions to plastic pollution flowing into South Asian Seas
- Fosters **regional cooperation** and addresses **cross-border issues**
- Implemented in **8 nations of South Asia**: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka
- **Funded by the World Bank**
Budget: \$37,000,000



Project Components

Supporting Competitive Block Grant Investments to Reduce Plastic Waste

1.1 Investing in Circular Solutions to Reduce Plastic Waste

- In total, **28 grants** have been awarded through the project, consisting of **12 Regional Block Grants (RBGs)** and **16 Innovation Grants (IGs)** in **Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan** and **Sri Lanka**

Regional Block Grants (RBGs)



Innovation Grants (IGs)



Project Components

Supporting Competitive Block Grant Investments to Reduce Plastic Waste

1.2 Promoting Knowledge Exchange and Public Awareness

- **Grants Management Support Workshops** were conducted across all six countries targeting public communications and advocacy
- Participation to **relevant high profile global events**, i.e. INC, COP, engage discussions and organize side events and active participation to **advocacy activities** organized at the country level by Ministries and other relevant stakeholders
- Production of **documentaries and video snippets**
- Organization of a **Regional Hackathon** to engage the youth in South Asia around sustainable and innovative practices in January-February 2025
- **Final Symposium** at the end of the project to facilitate knowledge exchange among grantees in May 2025



Nepal Grantee Workshop ©UNOPS



Bhutan Roundtable Discussion ©UNOPS



UNOPS Programme Management Advisor, PLEASE Project Director, Director General of SACEP ©UNOPS

Grant-supported projects implemented impactful activities, such as...

- Construction of Recycling Business Units (RBUs) and conducting market scoping in **Bangladesh**
- Development of strategies and partnerships and sign boards for waste management centers in **Bhutan**
- Production and distribution of reusable cloth bags in the **Maldives**
- Distribution of Waste Smart Club Kits and initiating Waste Smart Schools in **Nepal**
- Commissioning of the development of the plastic sorting facility in **Pakistan**
- Conduct waste hotspots survey in **Sri Lanka**
- Grant Management System (GMS) was introduced to all grantees to report progress against targets, and a dashboard was developed to provide regional, national, and project-level snapshot



Red Orange Communications Bangladesh ©BeyondBordersMedia



Creasion Nepal ©Beyond Border



Eco Waste Solutions Bhutan ©BeyondBordersMedia

Grants Contribution under the PLEASE Project

- 12 RBGs and 16 Innovation Grantees enrolled

Project Contributions



Project Components

Leveraging Public and Private Sector Engagement and Solutions

2.1 Enabling Policies, Standards, and Analytics

- Supporting development of enabling Policies, Strategies, Action Plans, developing database for plastic life cycle analysis through **Technical Assistance (TA)** addressing on the requirements of the national government, the Ministry/Department of Environment
- 7 TAs** - 1 completed, 3 ongoing, 2 in the pipeline

BANGLADESH	Training Program on Plastic Waste Reduction and Single Use Plastic (SUP) Alternatives and SUP Value Chain Study, Including Dissemination Workshops and Report Publication
BHUTAN	Nationwide GIS mapping of waste facilities, data collection of waste streams and GHG emissions from waste sector, including plastic waste [20 November 2024 to 30 June 2025]
MALDIVES	Design & Development of end-to-end smart solid waste management system in Maldives [1 March 2024 – 31 Dec 2024]
NEPAL	Preparation of Plastic waste inventory of Nepal [4 October 2024 – 4 May 2025]
PAKISTAN	Development of a National Plastic Waste Management Plan and Establishment of IT- based Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism for Pakistan [23 Oct 2023 – 30 Nov 2024]
SRI LANKA	Public awareness campaign on 3R based plastic waste management [9 May 2023–8 Nov 2023–extended-30 Apr'24]
	Development of a Master Plan for controlling Plastic Pollution in selected Rivers in Sri Lanka

Project Components

Leveraging Public and Private Sector Engagement and Solutions

2.2 Enabling Regional Public and Private Engagement

- **Supporting circular use of plastic in the economy** through meetings of representatives from public and private sectors at Round Table Discussions
- **6 National High-Level Roundtable Discussion** in Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Maldives, Bangladesh, Bhutan
- **Marine Litter Consultations** with fisheries communities, coastal tourism & hospitality sector, representation from coastal communities to discuss challenges related to marine plastic litter, share insights, and develop actionable strategies to mitigate its impact on marine ecosystems and local livelihoods through citizen engagement approach
- 16 such consultations targeted: Consultations in Bangladesh and Maldives completed



Project Components

Strengthening Regional Integration Institutions

3.1 Building SACEP's Institutional Capacity:

SACEP HQ new building

- New SACEP Regional HQ (1,610 square meters) highlights **regional collaboration and environmental stewardship**. A state-of-the-art office space designed to achieve the Gold Certification of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED)



Visual model for SACEP HQ in Colombo, SL ©UNOPS



SACEP HQ Construction plans ©UNOPS



SACEP HQ Construction in Colombo, SL ©UNOPS

Project Components

Strengthening Regional Integration Institutions

3.1 Building SACEP's Institutional Capacity:

SACEP Institutional and Capacity Building

- Capacity building assessment is starting
- Aim at facilitating SACEP to fully implement its mandate as a regional environmental institution and enhance its Secretariat



Regional Capacity Building Programme on Marine Pollution Responses in the South Asian Seas Region
©SACEP



16th Meeting of the Governing Council of SACEP in June 2024 ©SACEP

THANK YOU



Chakra Suthra Sri Lanka ©BeyondBordersMedia



Greener Way Bhutan ©BeyondBordersMedia



©BPCL

Grants Activities

- 12 RBGs and 16 Innovation Grantees enrolled

DRAFT - PLEASE Project Dashboard

Regional Programme Level

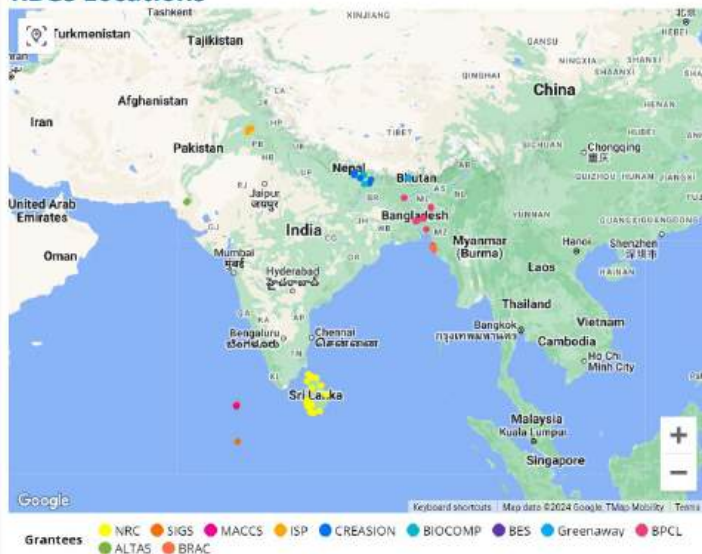
Country Programme Level

Project Level

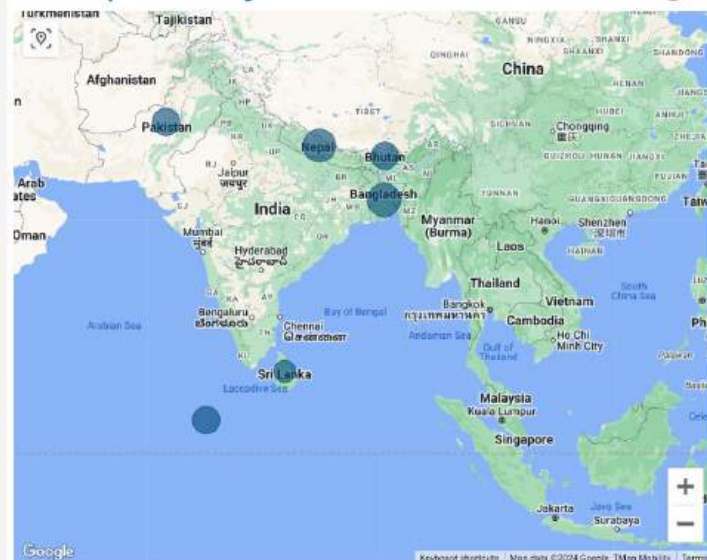
RBGs- PLEASE project

Regional Programme Level

RBGs Locations



Grants per Country





Section I:

Reimagining Plastic: Transformative Innovations for a Cleaner South Asia

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Overview of PLEASE Approach to Innovations

Sivakumaran Sithamparanathan

Technical Specialist - Environment, PLEASE Project, UNOPS

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DEFINITION OF THE INNOVATION

**NEW APPROACHES, TRANSFER OR
ADAPTATION OF EXISTING AND/OR
PROVEN APPROACHES TO NEW
CONTEXTS AND/OR GEOGRAPHIES, NEW
POLICIES, NATIONAL AND REGIONAL
STRATEGIES, STANDARDS, ETC.**

INNOVATION IN REGIONAL BLOCK GRANT

PLEASE Project
Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia



Bhutan

BES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ UR Bricks (Useful Recycled Bricks) using plastic waste for constructing temporary structures.❑ Installing waste traps/ waste interceptors systems in Bhutan
Greenerway	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Introducing and Establishing Waste Banks in Bhutan❑ Developing and introducing the waste bank mobile app as a virtual waste bank



Bangladesh

BRAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Behavioral Nudge Innovation: Testing and Scaling Using the TESTS Model (Target, Exploration, Solution, Test, Scale)❑ Integrated Modular Innovation: Combining Extrusion and Compression Molding for Versatile and Sustainable Recycling Solution❑ Open Sourcing Product Design and Development
BPCL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Establishment of Recycling Business Units (RBUs) to bypassing intermediaries.❑ Blockchain-Enabled Supply Chain Tracking and Comprehensive Database for Plastic Waste Management❑ Digital Payment Gateway to facilitate transparent and secure transactions for waste workers, ensuring timely and fair compensation

Maldives

SIGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Launch of Biodegradable Bag Pilot Production Facility in the Maldives❑ Exploring Local Raw Materials for Bioplastic Production by testing local Resources ras raw materials❑ Establishing a quality testing laboratory for Bioplastic Bags❑ The Kids innovation TV Show- to explore the innovative and inventive minds of children
MACCS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Inclusive Awareness Programs: Engaging Women, Medical Professionals to Promote Awareness of Sustainable Menstrual Products

Nepal

BIOCOMP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Production and introduction of composite boards made from low-grade plastics and used beverage cartons in Nepal❑ Ensuring safety and effectiveness in collection of Used Beverage Carton packaging and low-grade plastics incorporating barrier analysis report.
Creasion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Recycling colored PET waste into straps through industrial manufacturing❑ Segregating Machinery-Induced Air and Water Contaminants to Prevent Environmental Pollution



Pakistan

ALTAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Establishment of a PE plastic film waste recycling plant in Pakistan❑ Manufacturing recycled manhole covers made from waste plastic
ISP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Installation of reverse vending machines in identified hotspots across Pakistan❑ Development of a mobile application connected to reverse vending machines❑ Introducing the production of eco-bricks in Pakistan from recycled plastic waste



Sri Lanka

NRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ New River Barrier Design with environmentally friendly materials❑ Development of the Wood Plastic Composite (WPC) material with compositions of - 57%, saw dust or coir dust 40%, 3% non recyclable❑ Fully functioned individual Woman owned Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs)
ICI	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Development of quality standard for the recycled plastic pallets that could be mixed with virgin resin to produce packaging for FMCG product in Sri Lanka



INNOVATION IN INNOVATIONS GRANTS

PLEASE Project
Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia



Bangladesh

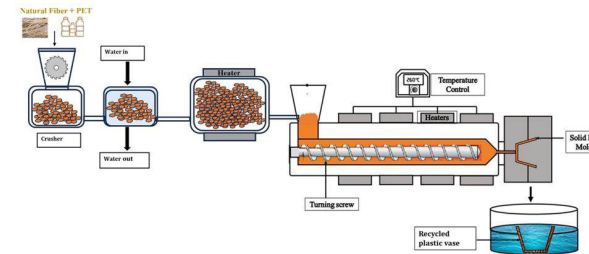
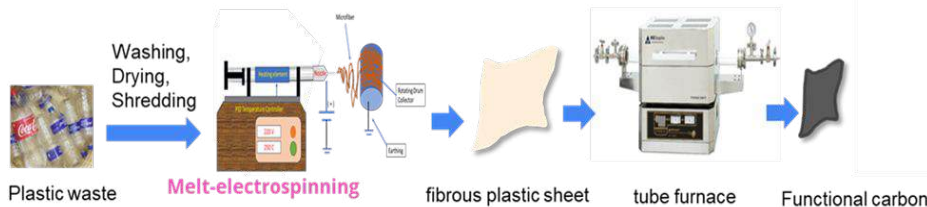
Arannayk Foundation	❑ Digital registration for waste workers and , recording and monitoring system.
IMS	❑ ALDFG hotspots identified and mapped by awareness and knowledge sharing sessions with marine fishers
RedOrange	❑ Installation of Barriers which provide improved interception methods to stop waste efficiently



Bhutan

Clean Bhutan	<input type="checkbox"/> Transforming PET Plastic Waste into Sustainable Polyester Wool for Local Product Development
Green Road	<input type="checkbox"/> Conversion of recycled plastic into flower pots and 3D printing filaments
Eco waste solution	<input type="checkbox"/> High-Efficiency Sorting System for Optimal Waste Recovery

Doko Recyclers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Semi-automatic mechanized sorting of waste materials in the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF)
CIUD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Upcycling of low value plastic waste in to a furniture ❑ Installation of Thrash Broom (catchment net) at the Balkhu river to collect waste low value plastic waste
University of Tribhuvan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Injection molding mixture of waste plastic and natural fiber into a porous composite material ❑ Using melt electrospinning technology to process PET plastic into micro fibers and then carbonization into advanced functional material



Maldives

Clean Maldives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Innovation and Knowledge Platform❑ Prototyping furniture of the plastic furniture from the recycled plastics
CEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Testing the Installation of water purification machines to the Fishing Vessels

Pakistan

Davaam Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Refill Stations as a new method of retailing❑ Smart Innovations in Sanitary Napkin Machines
Otium consultant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Digital marketplace for plastic waste trade❑ Digital Data to Shape Plastic Credit Policy



Sri Lanka

INSEE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Develop Eco Friendly recycle packaging material for Homecare Product
Chakrasuthra	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Setup and operation of 10 Trash2Cash units for PET❑ Establish an eZ Cash platform and register 10 shops onto it after it is established
Save a Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Banana Fiber Products: Single-use cups, lunch sheets, and sanitary pads made from banana fiber



INNOVATION IN REGIONAL BLOCK GRANTS & INNOVATION GRANTS

PLEASE Project
Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia



DEFINITION OF THE INNOVATION

**NEW APPROACHES, TRANSFER OR
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CONTEXTS AND/OR GEOGRAPHIES,
NEW POLICIES, NATIONAL AND
REGIONAL STRATEGIES, STANDARDS,
ETC.**



Redorange Bangladesh ©BeyondBordersMedia



Social Innovation

- ❑ Women Owned MRF facilities
- ❑ Sustainable Menstrual Products from silicon
- ❑ Waste bank for plastic waste
- ❑ Behavioral Nudge Innovation
- ❑ Recycling business unit
- ❑ Use of reverse vending machine connected to mobile application
- ❑ Standards for recycled pallet to produce FMCG products



Technological Innovation



- ❑ Combination of **extrusion and compression** molding
- ❑ **Open source product design** from the plastic waste to plastic product
- ❑ Blockchain-Enabled **Supply Chain Tracking and Comprehensive Database** for Plastic Waste Management
- ❑ **Digital payment/ online / Crypto currency** for the plastic waste business
- ❑ **Bio degradable bags** from waste rice, Corn and Cassava
- ❑ Recycled **brick / Interlocks**
- ❑ New material for the **waste trap / trash broom** in lagoon / channels / river
- ❑ **Composite board** from used beverage cartoon Eg. Furniture
- ❑ **PET strips from coloured PET plastic** through industrial manufacturing process
- ❑ **Automated segregation system**
- ❑ **Manhole cover** for plastic film

Technological Innovation



- ❑ **Digital registration for waste workers** and , recording and monitoring system.
- ❑ **ALDFG** hotspots **identified and mapped** by awareness and knowledge sharing sessions with marine fishers
- ❑ Transforming PET Plastic Waste into Sustainable **Polyester Wool** for Local Product Development
- ❑ Conversion of recycled plastic into **flower pots** and **3D printing filaments**
- ❑ Production of **composite compound - Porous and non porous product**
- ❑ Melt electrospinning technology to process PET plastic into **micro fibers and then carbonization into advanced functional material**
- ❑ Testing the Installation of **water purification machines to the Fishing Vessels**



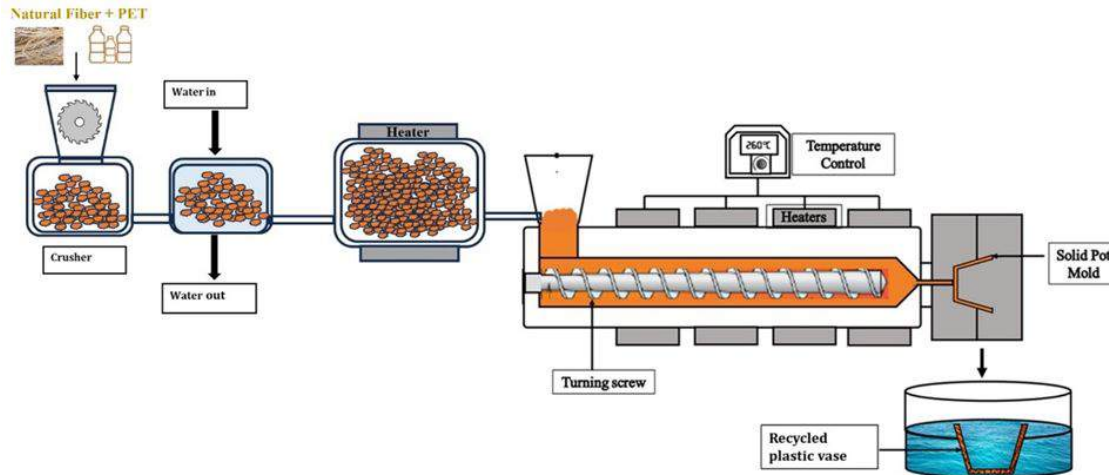
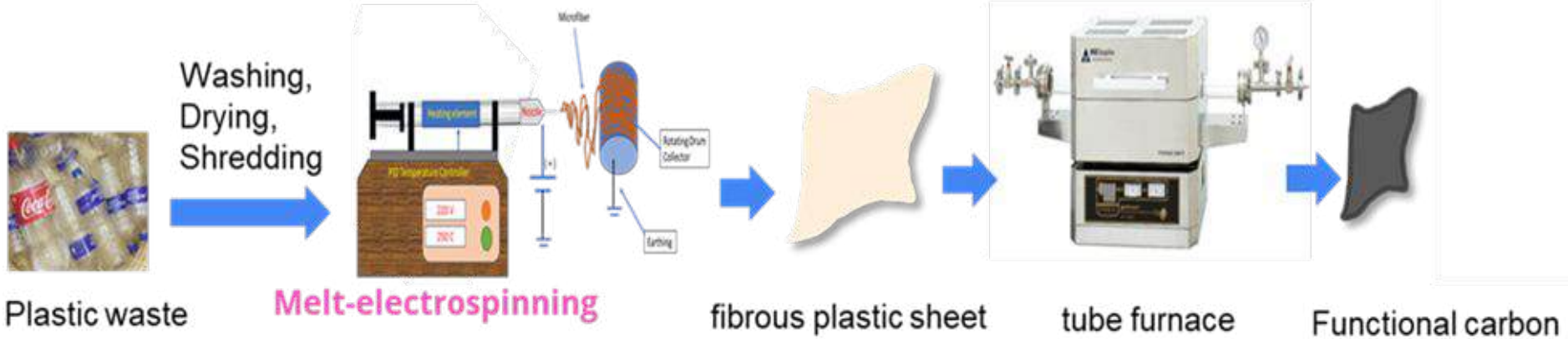
INNOVATION IN INNOVATIONS GRANTS

Technological Innovation

- ❑ Setting up **refilling station** for products like edible products,
- ❑ **Digital market for plastic waste** and **Digital Data to Shape Plastic Credit Policy / eZ Cash platform**
- ❑ Production of **FMCG packaging materials** Eg. Paint containers
- ❑ **Banana Fiber Products: Single-use cups, plates and etc**









Spotlight Talks: Inspiring Solutions and Stories

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Bangladesh Petrochemical Company Limited (BPCL)

Bangladesh

Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:





KHADEM MAHMUD YUSUF

MANAGING DIRECTOR & CEO
BANGLADESH PETROCHEMICAL COMPANY LIMITED



Implemented by:



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Bangladesh Petrochemical Company Limited

Who We Are



The only Bangladeshi company fulfilling global standards of food grade plastic recycling. We have collected and recycled over 28,000+ MT of PET bottles



Till today BPCL has earned \$ 25+ million in revenue from 50+ local customers and export sales



We have customers and partners like PepsiCo, Coca-Cola & Unilever



We will 4x our capacity by 2026 to meet the growing demand of rPET in Bangladesh

Our Products



PET Flakes



rPET Resin

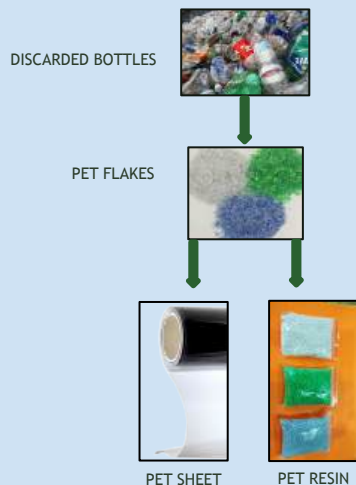


PET Sheet



PET Forming Products

Our Process



Current Plastic Supply Chain in Bangladesh

Problem in Supply Chain

Fragmented Collection Chain:
Inefficient & non-transparent

Multiple Layer of Middlemen

Untracked Cash Transactions

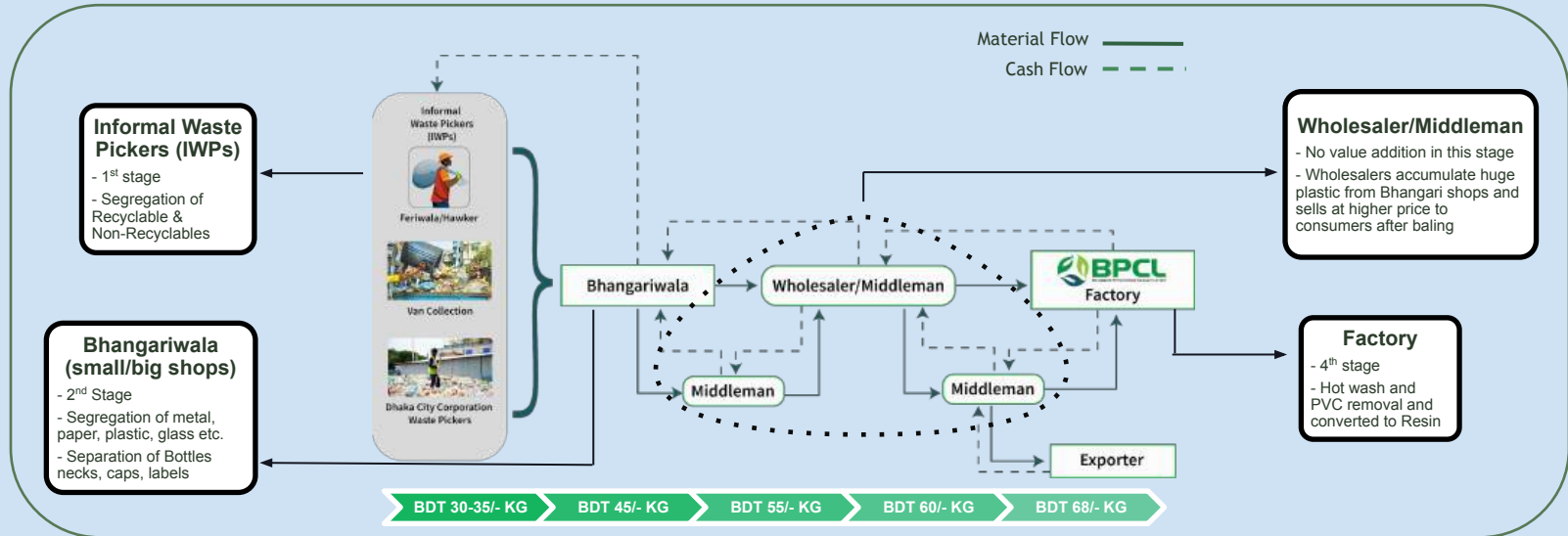
Inadequate Financial Inclusion and Fair Compensation

Environmental Leakage:
Plastic in landfills & waterways

Unsafe Working Conditions:
Hazardous environment

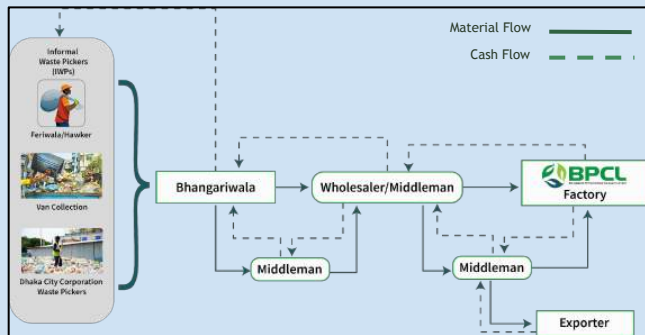
Economic Exploitation:
Low wages, no social security

Current Plastic Supply Chain Tiers in Bangladesh

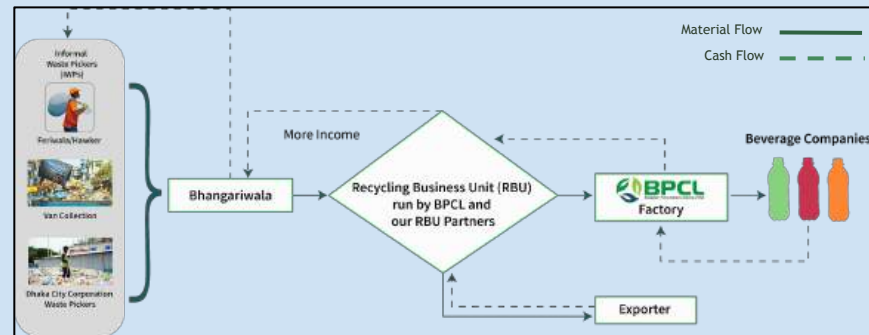


Innovation 01: Collecting plastic waste from informal waste collectors intervening the influence of middleman

Why Recycling Business Unit (RBU)?



Plastic Value Chain to be Intervened



Simplified Plastic Value Chain with Fully Functional RBU

Recycling Business Unit (RBU) and its functions

RBUs are independent social ventures formed in partnership with BPCL, Local Entrepreneurs and CDIP (an NGO) to increase the collection and also to bring fairness into the chain of recycling.

RECYCLING BUSINESS UNIT (RBU)



Run by BPCL and its Local Partner

Local Partner

- ✓ Operation, running and management of RBUs
- ✓ Sell HDPE, PP, LDPE to local established recycling companies



- ✓ Set-up RBUs and provide logistic support
- ✓ Ensure quality of recyclables
- ✓ 100% PET buy back



- ✓ Financial support
- ✓ Health improvement programs
- ✓ Education support for the deprived community



Innovation 02: App-Based Supply Chain Tracking System with Integrated Digital Payment Gateway

The supply chain tracking system currently utilizes KoboToolbox and Google Sheets for data collection and management using a single integrated app

Enhance Efficiency:

Streamline data collection, tracking, and payment processes.

Real-Time Monitoring:

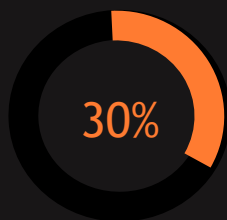
Enable real-time supply chain tracking for improved decision-making and transparency.

Scalability:

Support growing supply chain operations and a user base without system lags.

Digital Payments:

Provide secure and instant payment processing to reduce transaction delays.



Operational Efficiency: A 30% reduction in time spent on manual data entry and reconciliation.



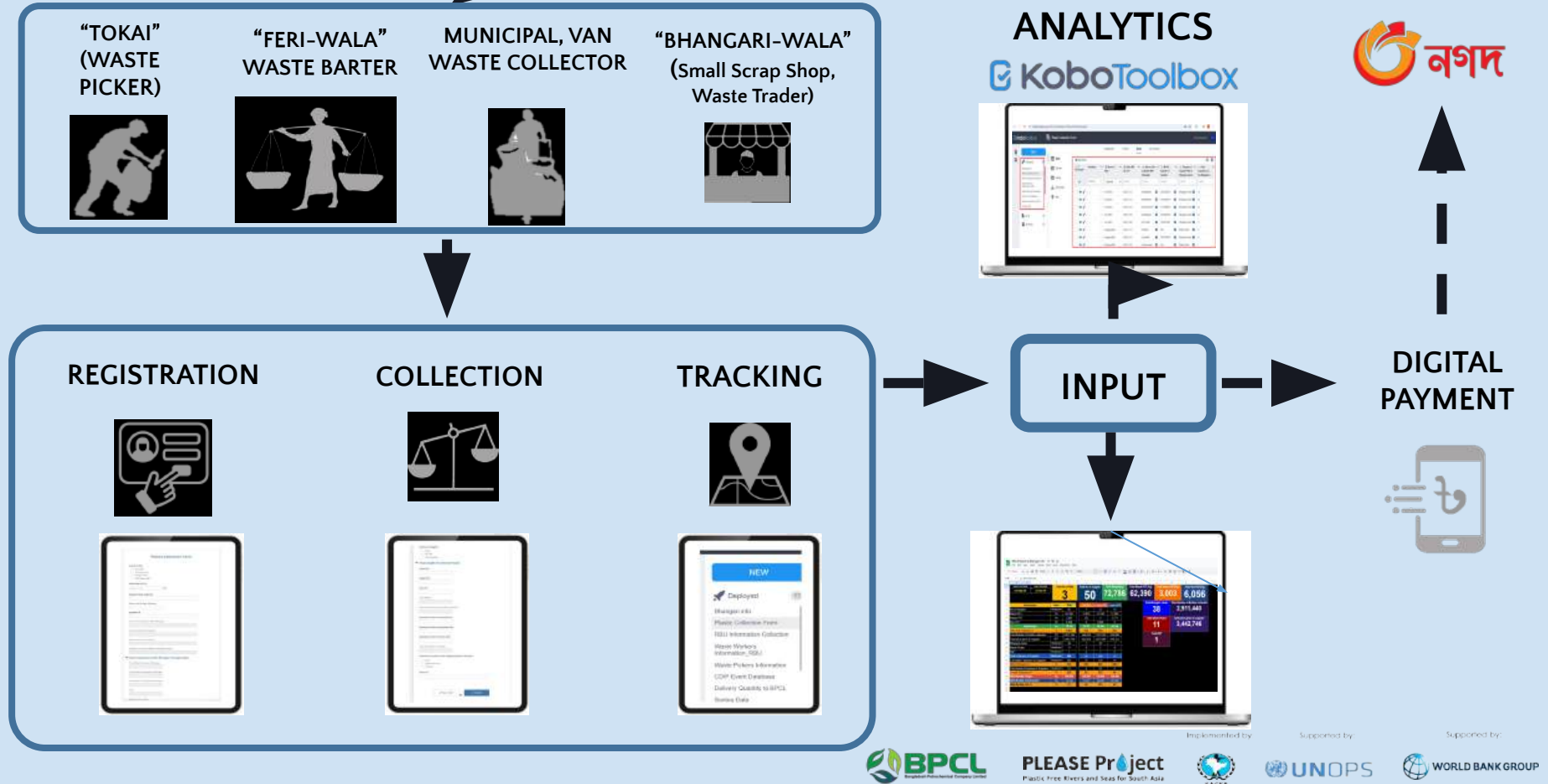
Cost Savings: An estimated 20% decrease in operational costs due to automation.

Environmental Benefits: Reduced reliance on paper-based processes, lowering the carbon footprint.

User Satisfaction: Improved accessibility and usability for supply chain stakeholders.

BPCL, in partnership with NAGAD, is enabling waste pickers without access to banking to become financially included through Mobile Financial Services (MFS).

Innovation 02: DATA-FLOW, ANALYTICS, DIGITAL PAYMENT





Negombo Recycling Club (NRC)

Sri Lanka

Implemented by:



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Supported by:



DAMITHA SAMARAKOON

PROJECT MANAGER - BLUECAP PROJECT
NEGOMBO RECYCLING CLUB



Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:



Redesign:Sustainable Material Innovation: Project



Small Island Geographic Society (SIGS)

Maldives

Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:





DR. MIZNA MOHAMED

DIRECTOR, SCIENCE & INNOVATION
SMALL ISLAND GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



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REMoving PLAstics from our Coastal Environment (REPLACE)



SIGS Website



**REPLACE Project
updates**



COMMERCIAL TESTING HUB

SIGS will be setting up a pilot production of plant-based bioplastic bags to potentially replace plastic bags. The performance and physical properties of these bags will be tested, as well as researching locally sourced materials.





BIO COMP

Nepal

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Supported by:



Supported by:





MAARTEN NIJHOF

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER - BIOCOMP NEPAL



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The Problem

- 600 tons plastic daily in Nepal.
- Low-grade plastics are not recycled
- No collection value chain



Technology Used

- First facility in Nepal
- All types of plastics
- Scalable



Recycled Composite Boards







Davaam Life

Pakistan

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Supported by:



SALMAN TARIQ

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER - DAVAAM LIFE



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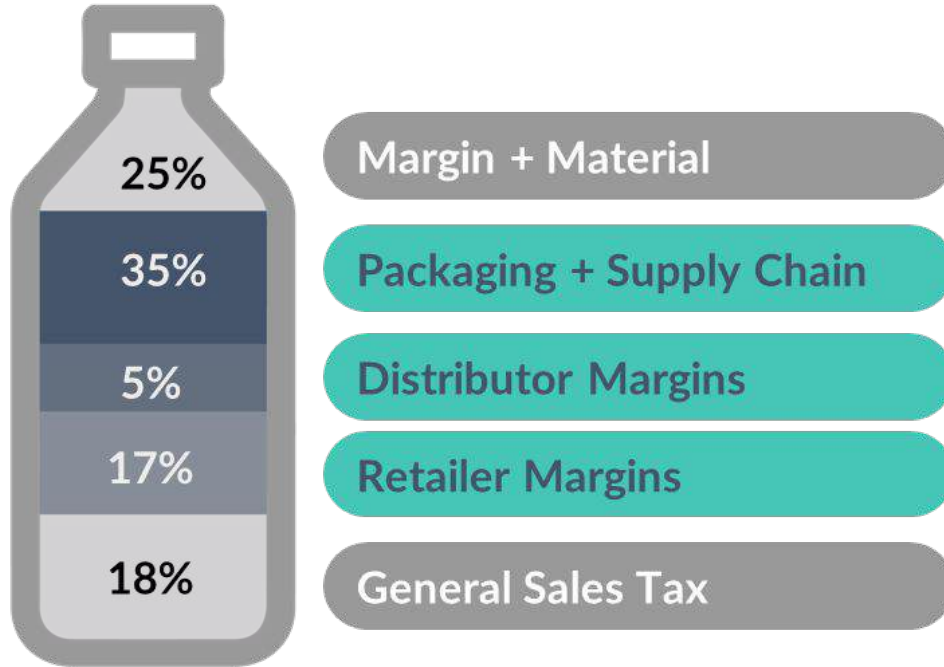
The Insurmountable Peak



3.9 million tons of plastic waste in Pakistan equivalent to twice the height of K2

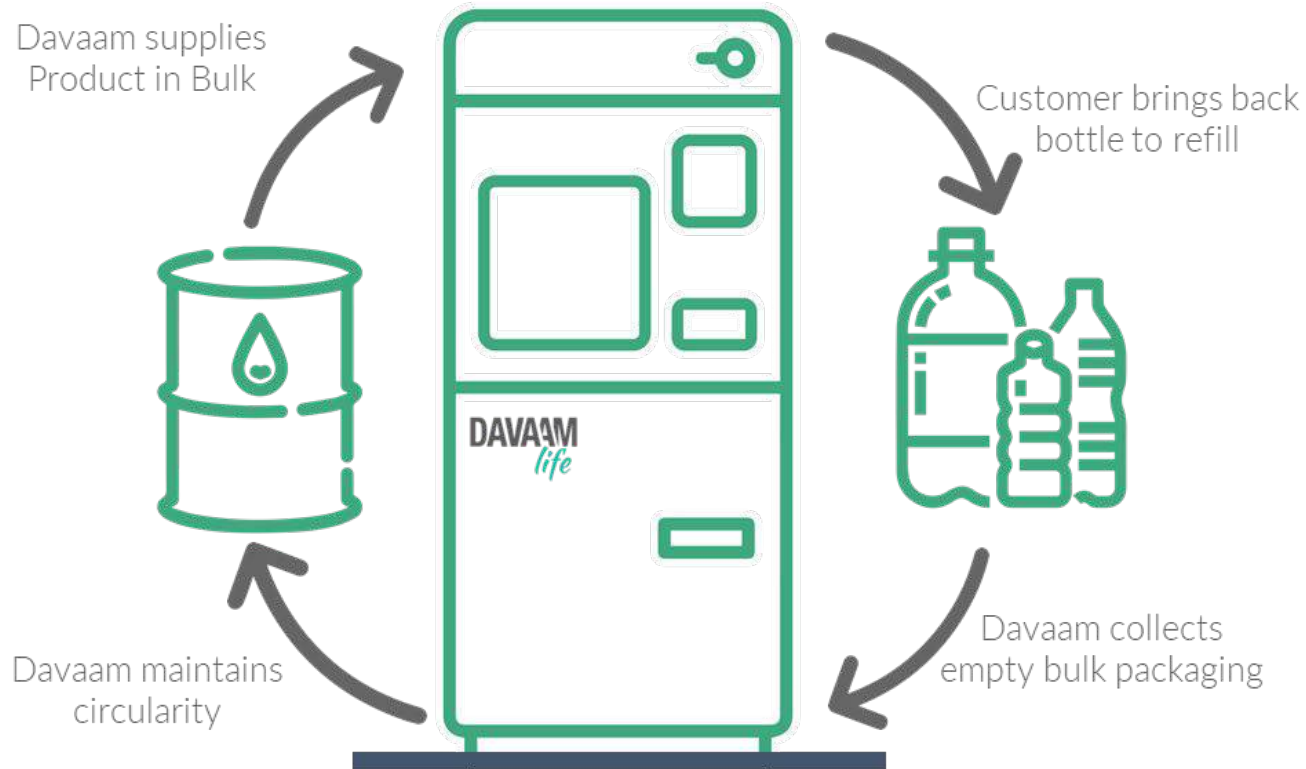
If left unchecked this waste is estimated to reach 12 million tons by 2040

The Financial Cost



More than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the price of any product can just be the packaging, which is discarded after one use

Avoidance: Key to Circularity



Refill & Save

Refill stations can be placed for purchase of everyday necessities:

Hand Wash

Shampoos

Cleaning Detergents

Cooking Oil

Multi-Purpose Liquid Dispensing



Early Success: Refill at Workplaces



Textile Factory: 200 textile laborers and 18 management staff refill 3 liter each (~650 liters a month) every month.

(annual estimated waste avoidance of **200kg** from one machine + consumer behavior change)

PLEASE Project



60 refill stations

manufactured and deployed
under the PLEASE project



The Green Roads

Bhutan

Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:





RIKESH GURUNG

FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR - THE GREEN ROAD



Implemented by:



Supported by:



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The Green Road

"Environment friendly & Socially responsible"

THE GREEN ROAD

The Green Road is Bhutan's first recycling company that utilizes waste plastic in construction of durable and environment friendly roads. started in October 2014, the company has blacktopped **159 kilometers** of road and reused **844 tonnes** of waste plastics and replaced the same in the consumption of bitumen.



OUR SOLUTIONS

Proper disposal of waste plastic

Better and durable roads

Import substitution of bitumen

Cost saving in repair & maintenance

Plastic roads cuts CO2 emissions by upto 72% compared to conventional paving. Primum/ Netherlands Enterprise Agency/UNEP.





Open Discussion

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Section II: Empowering Communities: Inclusive Solutions and Decent Job Creation

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PLEASE Project

Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia



Inclusive Solutions and Decent Job Creation

Lian Zhang

Programme Management Advisor
UNOPS

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What PLEASE tries to achieve...

- Promote circular economy innovations with impacts on **job creation for vulnerable groups** within recycling, upcycling, and waste management sectors.
- Prioritize the allocation of Regional Competitive Innovation and Block Grant investments to **women-led organizations and community-based organizations (CBOs)**.
- Ensure minimum of **30%** coverage of business development **support for women** through the PLEASE project.
- Ensure minimum **30% women participation** at PLEASE project and grants activities in all levels.
- **Empowering citizens** with knowledge on mitigation strategies, conducting consultations with stakeholders, and implementing a grievance redress mechanism.
- Ensure inclusion and social protection especially for **women and children** across the plastic waste value chain.



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- Ensure inclusion and social protection especially for **women and children** across the plastic waste value chain.



What PLEASE has achieved...

Women Participation and Leadership

- **60%** (N= 28) of grant investments allocated for women-led organisations across the countries in the region.
- **36%** of business development supports allocated for women.
- Adopt **gender and PSEA policies and guidelines** across all grantees, MRF facilities, recycling facilities, and other settings where women are engaged.
- Established **7** women-owned MRF facilities and aggregator facilities in **Sri Lanka and Nepal**
- Women have been recruited in **decision-making** roles at the PLEASE project, as well as in grants management, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), finance, environment, communications, and engineering.

Engagement of Youth and Children

- Launch Regional Hackathon encouraging **youth** innovators in the region.
- **Youth leadership** in conducting awareness and clean-up campaigns in **Nepal and Sri Lanka**.
- **Resource provision and educational sessions** in implementing AIR framework at Schools in all 6 countries.
- **Childcare facilities** for IWW, MRF and Recycling facility workers.
- Engagement of **university students** in implementing AIR framework in **Nepal, Pakistan**.

What PLEASE has achieved...

Empowering vulnerable communities and citizen engagement.

- Supported **2,545 IWWs (36% women)** by introducing digital platforms that allow transparent trade for plastic waste, thereby contributing to fair price; providing waste sorting skills, enhancing occupational health and safety and ensuring access to social protection schemes in **Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh**
- **Improved access** for business and individuals on the plastic waste value chain by sharing plastic waste information, through introducing mobile applications in **Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh**
- Included **fisheries communities** in stakeholder consultations on marine litter actions in **Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Maldives and Pakistan**
- **36,627** people from diverse communities reached through in person awareness and capacity building activities in the region
- Promotion of **menstrual hygiene** through introducing vending machines, and distributing menstrual hygiene products in **Maldives and Pakistan**.

Job creation and livelihood opportunities

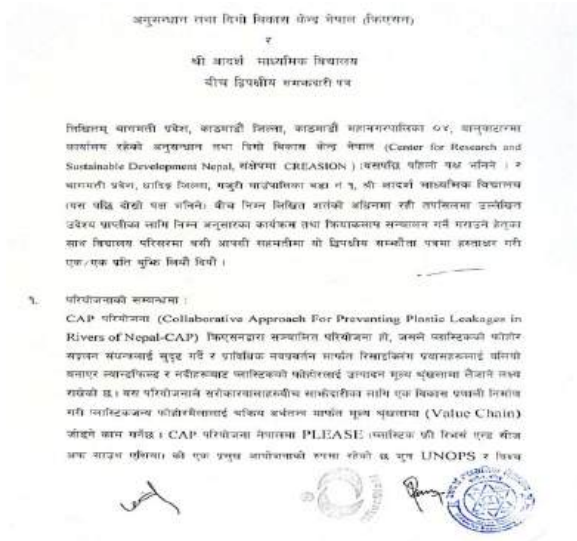
- **372** decent jobs created in the plastic value chain.
- Ensure **equal pay** for women and men at PLEASE grants, MRFs, and recycling units.
- Introduction of accessible, incentivized plastic **waste collection platforms** through initiatives like reverse vending machines, waste banks, MRF facilities, and mobile applications.
- **Training, provision of tools and technology** for producing alternative products in **Nepal, Maldives**

Highlights from PLEASE grantees

- Community-driven clean-ups, waste segregation, women's empowerment, upcycling, youth engagement, and stakeholder collaboration to **create a sustainable waste management system** in the Rohingya camps by **BRAC** and **BPCL** in Bangladesh
- **Women friendly infrastructure facilities** in MRFs and Recycling facilities of **CREATION** and **BIOCOMP** from Nepal, **NRC,INSEE** from Sri Lanka, **ISP** from Pakistan, **BES** from Bhutan
- Plastic Free Rivers Hackathon, 22 teams from across western Bhutan, including students with disabilities and the monastic body, came together to tackle the pressing issue of plastic waste by **BES** from Bhutan.
- Formation of Waste Smart Clubs in 10 schools, with both male and female students receiving training, e-libraries , Waste Smart Kits, and the installation of a Waste Smart museum by **CREASION** from Nepal.
- Youth engagement in R&D activity of Tribhuvan University Nepal in producing microfiber and converting them into functional materials through carbonization.
- Greener way, Bhutan has successfully established 10 Waste Banks, with 4 additional Waste Depository Houses currently under construction, total of 21 BWB Managers and Scale Operators (comprising 20 females and 1 male) have been hired and trained along with the launch of the Bhutan Waste Bank App is imminent.
- Integrating Gender inclusion into Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for MRFs and Recyclers by **ICI** from **Sri Lanka**
- Train 76 women to produce reusable bags from second-hand clothes and support them in establishing links with shops and businesses for sustainable market opportunities by **MACCS** from **Maldives**

Project Achievements

Activity 7 : Establishment of 12 Waste Smart Schools



MoUs with Schools



Training and Workshop of Waste Smart School to Teachers and Students



E-Library Setup and Orientation to the teachers and students on its application

Project Achievements

Activity 7 : Establishment of 12 Waste Smart Schools



Badge Distribution to the Waste Smart Club



Oath Taking Ceremony to formalize the established Waste Smart Club



Waste Smart Kit Handover to the Waste Smart Schools

Plastic Free Rivers Hackathon, 22 teams from across western Bhutan, including students with disabilities and the monastic body, came together to tackle the pressing issue of plastic waste by BES from Bhutan



ZWAS Session at Schools





Spotlight Talks: Inspiring Solutions and Stories

Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:





Small Island Geographic Society (SIGS)

Maldives

Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:





DR. MIZNA MOHAMED

DIRECTOR, SCIENCE & INNOVATION
SMALL ISLAND GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY



Implemented by:



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SIGS Website



**REPLACE Project
updates**

KIDS INNOVATION TV SHOW

To increase awareness, and actively engage children and youth in addressing the SUP issue, an innovation TV show is planned. Children can pitch their ideas for solutions to plastic pollution and will be given the opportunity to develop their pitch into a prototype.



Davaam Life

Pakistan

Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:



SALMAN TARIQ

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER - DAVAAM LIFE



Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:



Lack of Access to Menstrual Hygiene

According to UNICEF

44%

of girls DO NOT have access
to menstrual hygiene
facilities at home, workplace
or school

Sanitary Napkin Vending Machine



1. Malls
2. Universities & schools
3. Corporate offices
4. Industries & factories
5. Public places (sports facilities)

Access to Menstrual Hygiene



Enabling
Inclusive
Facilities

More than
25 locations
providing
access to
~3,000
women

Corporate Napkin Allotment Program

Davaam machines provide a tangible DEI initiative:

Corporates can place the machine and allocate napkins to their female employees free of cost.

6 organizations have already enrolled in the program with a growing list

Improving Circularity

Avoided Multi-layered
Plastic (MLP)
packaging;

Upstream intervention
at the supplier level

30

Machines will be
installed under the
PLEASE Project





Bangladesh Petrochemical Company Limited (BPCL)

Bangladesh

Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:



KHADEM MAHMUD YUSUF

MANAGING DIRECTOR & CEO
BANGLADESH PETROCHEMICAL COMPANY LIMITED



Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:



Impact on Marginal Communities, Women Participation, Improved Livelihood

Goal: Contribute to inclusive and efficient plastic recycling in Bangladesh.

Outcome 1: Improved occupational health and wellbeing of IWPs, Hawkers and Bhangari through decent work.

Outcome 2: Enhanced recyclable plastic supply system, processes and profitability.

Targets

23,775
Beneficiaries

7620
Waste Pickers

7
Collection Hubs
(RBUs)

≈385
MT/Month
Collection

1500
Bhangari (small
collection shop)

Marginal community in plastic waste sector

- Waste workers in the RBUs and in Bhagari (Collection shop)
- Women in waste management
- IWP (Informal Waste Pickers)
- Children in waste picking
- Migrant workers
- Elderly people
- Slum dwellers

Empowering Marginalized Waste Workers

Key Strategies for Empowerment

Improved Working Conditions and Income Stability :

- Provided 250 safety gears & health services to 344 workers.
- Ensured fair wages, fair value for the plastic waste.

Capacity Building and Skill Development :

- Training in waste sorting, accounting, & entrepreneurship.
- Provided tools for productivity.

Building a Robust Worker Networks :

- Awareness programs & health tracking.
- Created worker associations.
- Promoted entrepreneurship.



Empowerment fosters dignity—transform Waste Workers into proud Waste Professionals

Empowering Women in Waste Management

Key Focus Areas

Promoting Gender Equity:

- Fair income & reduced wage gaps.
- Promoted women in leadership.

Creating Safer Workplaces:

- Anti-harassment policies.
- Toilets, Sanitary napkin support, childcare & changing rooms.

Driving Impact

Boosted women's workforce participation.
Empowered communities & improved livelihoods.
Promoted entrepreneurship for sustainability.



Impact on Marginal Communities

Inclusion & Job Creation
Formalized IWPs and Bhangaris,
Provided skill-building opportunities

Health & Safety:
Access to Healthcare, Clean Toilet,
Changing Room with Sanitary napkin.

Economic Upliftment:
Fair Wages, Fair Value for the
collectibles. Skill enhancement Training

Life Skill Based Education



Health Camp



Staff Development Training



PPE Distribution



Job Creation



5 trainings provided.
Total participants -119
(Female 57) in 3 RBUs

Target: 1400 IWPs, Waste
Workers through 56
Training (per training 25
participants)

7 Health camp completed,
Total participants- 344
(Female: 173)

Target: 28 (per hub 4)
health camp for 1400 IWPs
and Waste Workers.

12 trainings provided
Total participants -156
(Female: 71) in 3 RBUs

Target: 700 IWPs and
Waste Workers through 28
trainings (per training 25
participants)

250 sets of PPE & First
Aid Boxes were
distributed to Waste
Workers and IWP

Target: 1400 PPEs for
the factory workers,
Bhangari shops
employees and IWP

Jobs created -133 till
October 31 with 68
women in 3 RBUs

Target 1400 in 7 RBUs (per
hub 200 direct waste
workers, IWPs and
Bhangari owners.



Negombo Recycling Club (NRC)

Sri Lanka

Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:



DAMITHA SAMARAKOON

PROJECT MANAGER - BLUECAP PROJECT
NEGOMBO RECYCLING CLUB



Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:







Project BLUECAP Building a Blue Lanka by Uplifting



The Green Roads

Bhutan

Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:





RIKESH GURUNG

FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR - THE GREEN ROAD



Implemented by:



Supported by:

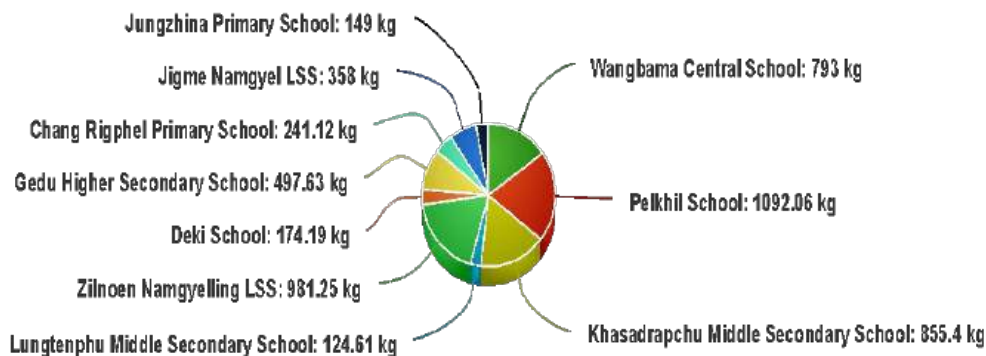


Supported by:



PLASTICS COLLECTED FROM DIFFERENT SCHOOLS

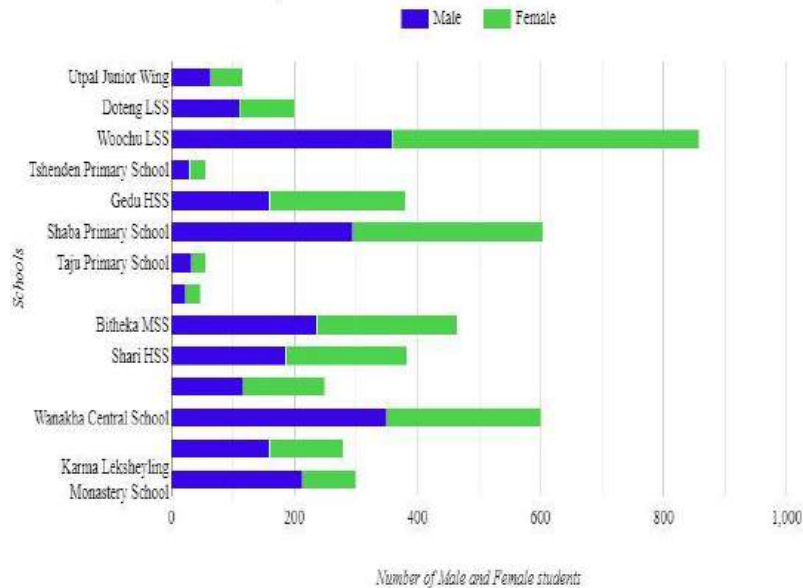
The Green Road



August- September.
Total = 5276.56kgs



Students Advocacy Chart

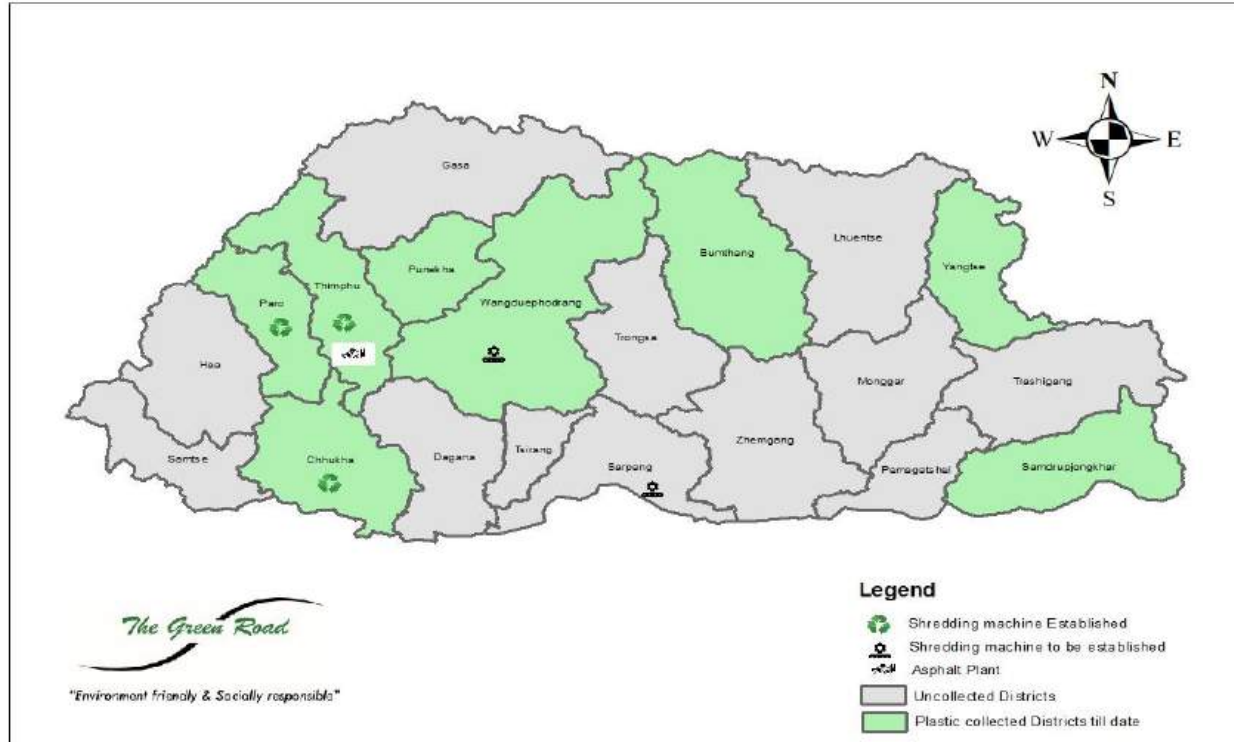


Total students - 5230
Female - 2397
Male - 2469

Collaboration & New Projects

Total waste plastics collected from Private sectors including Druk Trash Solutions= 30504 kgs

26th september 2024





10th Foundation Day Giveaway!

Let's come together to help the environment and celebrate our journey so far! The winner will be announced on 5th October. Good luck, and let's make a positive impact!

How to participate:

1. Create your own Eco Bricks by filling plastic bottles with waste plastics.
2. Snap a photo of your creation and share it on Facebook.
3. Use the hashtag #EcoBricksForChange and tag our page.

The post with the highest likes will win a cash prize of Nu. 10,000!



**CELEBRATING
10TH FOUNDATION
DAY**

UNFOLDING FREEBIES

**THE BEST VIDEOS WILL WIN AN
ATTRACTIVE PRIZE OF NU.25,000/-**

Social Media/ Advocacy/10th Foundation Day



PLEASE Project
Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia



The Green Road
"Environment friendly & Socially responsible"





Open Discussion

Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:





Section III: Policy Pulse: Shaping a Sustainable Future

Implemented by:



Supported by:



Supported by:





Key Insights and Recommendations on Plastic Policy from the High-Level Roundtable on Plastic Waste Management

Prakriti Kashyap

Plastic Expert, PIU, SACEP

Implemented by:



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Supported by:



6 High-Level Roundtable Discussions (RTD) on Plastic Waste Management Challenges and Solutions in South Asian Countries



Sri Lanka Round Table Discussion, 15 March 2024

44 participants



Nepal Round Table Discussion, 8 May 2024

63 participants



Pakistan Round Table Discussion, 22 July 2024

72 participants



Maldives Round Table Discussion, 20 August 2024

75 participants



Bangladesh Round Table Discussion, 30 September 2024

72 participants



Bhutan Round Table Discussion, 8 October 2024

77 participants

High-Level Roundtable Discussions (RTD) on Plastic Waste Management Challenges and Solutions in South Asian Countries

PLEASE High Level Round Table Discussion is a **truly multi-stakeholder gathering** to

- enable **policy discussion and dialogues**,
- **share measures/interventions/innovations undertaken** by different stakeholders to tackle plastic pollution, and
- **explore synergies and collaboration opportunities** and

With a long-term outcome to provide insights for policymakers donors and private sectors to **strategize solutions to challenges, prioritize future interventions**, including catalyzing policy revisions and **generate greater impact**

A High Level Participation with a typical profile of RTD participants including

- National Government representation of policy makers and policy enforcement agencies - Minister, Advisor to the Minister, Secretary from the Ministry and Department of Environment, Ministry of Industry, and Ministry of Finance
- Local Government representation from Department of Environment, local councils/municipalities, Provincial Environmental Protection Agency and state-owned waste management service providers
- Donors and Development partners with waste management and plastic pollution management projects, and ambassadors representing the donor countries
- Corporates, recycling companies and alliances / networks of producers and manufacturers, and other private sector actors in the plastic value chain
- Civil society organizations and community based organization representatives
- Research and academic sector representatives

RTD - a moderated discussion with **three thematic** sessions:

1. Policy and Regulatory matters related to plastic waste management and and plastic pollution control
2. Initiatives by Bilateral & Multilateral Development Partners
3. Showcasing initiatives by private sector, civil society, and PLEASE Grantees in plastic waste management

POLICY as cross-cutting theme across the session,

- **Measuring policy pulse** - existing policies, policy enforcement, and future policy direction
- **Churning out the way forward, and prospects for collaborations**

SAR plastic policy landscape - insights from the High-Level RTDs

- **All South Asian countries started its plastic policy journey with ban and phase out of single use plastic (SUP) items**, especially with the plastic shopping bag, gradually adding other SUP items
- But, with **rare enforcement success** due to lack of human resources, financing to monitor the compliance as well as failure to provide cheaper alternatives to plastics; **still a policy favourites**

Afghanistan	<p>Plastic bag ban (2011): In 2011, ban was announced for the import and usage of plastic bags in all shops in the cities and provinces across the Country. However, the ban did not last more than three days, with plastic bags sold openly in the market.</p> <p>Recently, on 15 August 2023, the Ministry of Finance has once again announced prohibition on import of any kind of plastic bags in the country.</p>	Maldives	<p>Single-Use Plastic Phase Out Regulation, 2020: involved controlling the production, import, and consumption of specific 14 SUPs, as well as promoting sustainable alternatives. The Plan was able to phase out 13 out of the 14 identified SUPs.</p> <p>From 18 April 2023, Regulation on Collecting Plastic Bag Fee by Persons Registered for GST, charges (MVR) Maldivian Rufiya 2 per single-use plastic shopping bag (non-woven reusable bags are exempted from the levy). The levy collected goes to the Maldives Green Fund.</p>
Bangladesh	<p>Notification ban on polyethylene bags (2002): ban polyethylene plastic shopping bags (below 55 microns) . The ban had limited results, mainly because of the lack of institutional resources and absence of cost-effective alternatives</p> <p>High Court order in Single-use-plastic products (2020): On 6 January 2020, the High Court ordered ban on 6 SUP (drinking straws, cotton swabs, food packaging, food containers, bottles, plates, plastic cutlery, plastic bag) in coastal areas and all hotels and motels across the country. The High Court also reinforced the previous plastic bag ban through strict monitoring.</p> <p>Bangladesh enforced a ban on polyethene shopping bags starting with Supermarket chains from the 1st of October 2024. It further plans to extend such prohibition to other single-use plastic (SUP) products eventually and making Saint Martin's Island, Kuakata beach, and the Sundarbans free from SUP.</p>	Nepal	<p>After the unsuccessful implementation of the plastic ban two times earlier (in 2015, 2018), Nepal Government has reinforced a complete ban on plastic bags below 40 microns by publishing a notice in the Nepal Gazette on 15 September 2021. The Action Plan for Ban on Plastic Bags, 2022 was recently approved by the Council of Ministers that empowers the monitoring committees of all three levels of government (Federal, Provincial, and Local) to confiscate plastic bags from firms, companies or persons that produce, collect, sell, distribute or store plastic bags below 40 microns. However, the plan has not been enacted as of now</p>
Bhutan	<p>Notification on the Ban of the Use/Sale of Plastic Carry Bags, Doma Wrappers and Homemade Ice Cream (Pepsi) Pouches letter No. MTI/VIII-3/427 (April 20, 1999): but failed due to lack of strict enforcement and provision of alternatives to plastic bags. Bhutan reinforced the ban once again in 20025,2009, and recently in 2019. April 1, 2019 announcement fines BTN 500 for the initial offence and BTN 1000 for the second offence and cancellation of the business license if business owners found selling plastic carry bags. However, there still are abundance of plastic bags in the market</p>	Pakistan	<p>The Single-Use Plastics (SUP) (Prohibition) Regulations 2023 - Import and Use of Single-use Plastics Banned in Islamabad effective 1 August 2023.</p> <p>Sindh Environmental Protection Act, 2014 (No. VIII of 2014): - No person shall import, manufacture, stockpile, trade, supply, distribute or sell any scheduled plastic product which is non-degradable. The scheduled plastic products must be oxo-biodegradable and the pro-degradant used must be approved by the Agency or any other department or agency and in such manner as prescribed</p>
India	<p>Plastic Waste Management (Amendment) Rules, 2021, 2022: prohibits identified SUP items which have low utility and high littering potential [ear buds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice-cream sticks, polystyrene/Thermocol for decoration; plates, cups, glasses, cutlery such as forks, spoons, knives, straw, trays, wrapping or packaging films around sweet boxes, invitation cards, and cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100 micron, stirrers] by the year 2022</p>	Sri Lanka	<p>Regulations on Polythene & Plastic Management 2017: •Prohibition of Polythene or any polythene product of 20 micron or below in thickness (Order No. 2034/33) (2017) •Prohibition of food wrappers from polythene (Order No. 2034/34) (2017) •Prohibition of high-density polyethylene bags (Order No. 2034/35) (2017) •Prohibition of food containers, plates, cups and spoons from expanded polystyrene (Order No. 2034/38) (2017)</p>

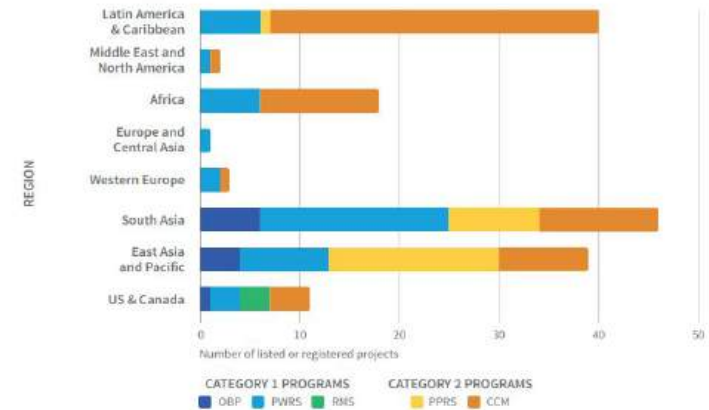
- Plastic recycling is picking up in SAR, however, there is **lack of recycling processes and products standards ensuring safe recycling** including
- **Lack of harmonized standards and certifications** for traceability of plastic collection, and recycled content product certification scheme
- A national standard for plastics recycling helps **resolve confusion that exists around the plastics recycling process**, and ensure that measured and reported recycling rates, targets, and policies used by regulators and governments are accurate
- Recycling standards and certifications **adds confidence of consumers** to use recycled plastic products and strengthen and stabilize market demand for post-consumer resin (PCR) and other recycled plastic products
- Such certifications for traceability of plastic collection and recycled content helps **transparent implementation of EPR and Plastic credit schemes**

- SAR countries are looking for advanced policy approach like **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)** to make producer responsible for collection and management of their plastic waste
- Out of eight South Asian countries, only **India has recently implemented mandatory EPR schemes** including plastics packaging
- **Maldives has drafted the EPR framework – EPR Regulations and EPR Roadmap are under review** - by 2028, the Maldives aims to establish a sustainable, safe, and cohesive national waste and resource management system along with implementing EPR
- The **EPR policy in Bangladesh is currently it is with the Ministry of Law for review**
- Central Environment Authority (CEA) **Sri Lanka has announced plans to introduce new laws** that will make companies using plastic packaging and bottles under EPR scheme
- Nepal, Pakistan, Bhutan are positive about EPR as one of the policy solutions to plastic pollution

SAR plastic policy pathways : Plastic credits

- Plastic credits are being seen as **innovative finance mechanism** that allow companies to make downstream investments in new or expanded plastic waste collection and recycling infrastructure, adding value to plastic waste
- **Plastic credits are issued per metric ton or per kilogram and are primarily issued under a plastic crediting program.** Programs are initiatives run by standard setting organizations such as
 - Verra Plastic Waste Reduction Standard (PWRS);
 - GreenBlue Recycled Material Standard (RMS);
 - Zero Plastic Oceans Ocean-Bound Plastic (OBP) Neutralization Certification
 - PCX Solutions Plastic Pollution Reduction Standard (PPRS)
 - BVRio Circular Credits Mechanism (CCM)
 - These organizations provide the rules, standards, procedures and methods to measure, monitor, and verify the results of plastic pollution interventions
- The plastic credit market is at a **very early stage of development**

FIGURE 1: Distribution of Registered and Listed Plastic Credit Projects across Programs and Regions



Source: Verra n.d.; OBP n.d.; BVRio n.d.; PCX n.d.; RMS n.d.¹⁹

Source: World Bank, 2024. UNLOCKING FINANCING TO COMBAT THE PLASTICS CRISIS Opportunities, Risks, and Recommendations for Plastic Credits

From discussion to innovation: Potential for plastic policy innovation in SAR

Is South Asia's late start of plastic policies like EPR, plastic credits and Recycling standards and certifications an opportunity to policy innovations?

- ❑ What can south Asian countries learn from other countries and regions who have walked the EPR path?
- ❑ Can EPR in Asia add upstream innovations to existing EPRs and Plastic credits? Such as incentivize producers to rethink their production by embracing upstream solutions by including design for reuse and recycle for reuse and design for reuse and recyclable packaging in EPR, and adding Avoidance credits (e.g., avoidance of plastic, substitution for alternative materials), plastic innovation credits, in Plastic Credit mechanisms?
- ❑ How can SAR develop inclusive and innovative plastic pollution prevention, control and management policies that
 - Puts people first
 - Accelerates positive change through policy enablers
 - Celebrates wins and innovates policies



Panel Discussion: Policy Pathways: Driving Changes

Moderator:

Janaka De Silva
Senior Programme Coordinator
IUCN

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Panelists: Policy Pathways: Driving Changes

Thierry Sanders

Director, BVRio Institute
Brazil

Angeline Callista

Founder and CEO, Sirsak
Indonesia

Hemantha Withanage

Chairperson, Center for Environmental Justice,
Sri Lanka

Dr. Hyo-Sun Kim

Vice Chair, Korea Carbon Finance Association
Republic of Korea

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KOLEKT

**PackFee for
South Asia**

South Asia (excl India) is leaving **USD 7.6 bn per year** on the street !

	Afghanistan	Pakistan	Bangladesh	Sri Lanka	Bhutan	Nepal	Maldives	Total
The Challenge...								
MSW (MTA) 2023	7.7	71.0	52.5	7.0	0.3	9.0	0.2	148
MSW (MTA) 2030	9.4	81.3	59.1	7.1	0.3	10.2	0.2	167
% change MSW 2023-30	22%	15%	13%	1%	6%	13%	13%	13%
The Opportunity...								
PackFee 2026 (\$ mln)	137	3,128	3,484	551	23	335	25	7,684
Total Infra Investm. 2023-2030	636	16,869	19,982	2,679	120	1,834	134	42,254
The Price ...								
PackFee \$ / KG avg packaging	0.09	0.16	0.21	0.25	0.27	0.15	0.39	0.19
\$ increase of a bottle of Coke 500ml	0.002	0.003	0.004	0.005	0.005	0.003	0.007	0.004
The Impact on ...								
Recovery / Collection								
MSW Recovery % 2023	13.75%	15.17%	45.93%	47.86%	48.13%	14.77%	50.56%	
MSW Recovery % 2030	37.50%	37.50%	55%	78.43%	78.92%	37.50%	83.52%	+16%
Recycling								
MSW Recycling % 2023	0.75%	2.17%	2.93%	4.86%	5.13%	1.77%	7.56%	
MSW Recycling % 2030	3.39%	9.75%	13.20%	21.88%	23.09%	7.95%	34.04%	+9%
Jobs								
New Jobs in WM 2026-2030	83,571	659,353	453,497	91,468	1,435	82,981	498	1,372,804



Practical, fast, top-down, independent fund & 100% is the only EPR target.

The Structure



EPR in 2-4 years, not 10-15 years.

The Roadmap

	<i>Steps</i>	<i>Duration</i>
1	Diagnostics	Up to 3 months
2	Legislation development	12 - 24 months
3	Organisation, system, fund localization	6 - 12 months
4	Communications & Implementation	6 - 12 months
5	Company trial period	Starting at 24 - 48 months after Step 1
6	Operation & full revenues	Up to 3 months
Contact us for a detailed breakdown of the PackFee Roadmap		

Our hidden gem: the IT Systems & Team



The PackFee System



Kolekt App & Dashboard

The Advisory, Legal & Tech Team



Thierry Sanders
EPR & Tech Strategy
NL, Indo, Moz, Vietnam
Founder Kolekt

[LinkedIn](#)



Pedro Moura Costa
Policy Strategy
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Making
the world
cleaner
by
connecting
corporations
with
waste
collectors
around the
globe.

200 transactions per day
47,000 transactions since Dec 2021
11,500 tonnes recovered
10,000 users in 56 countries
8,000 waste pickers served, 70% women

TRANSACTIONS (46,991)

WEIGHT (11,498,388 kg)

COUNTRIES (56)

USERS (9,833)

ALL TRANSACTIONS (46,991)



KOLEKT
WISSENMANNEN SURFEN



How can we help you ?

Let's explore
the possibilities !

EMAIL ME

thierry@kolekt.com

Thierry Sanders



Closing Remarks

TAO WANG

Senior Environmental Specialist
World Bank

Implemented by:



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Announcement: HACKATHON

Implemented by:



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Supported by:



PLEASE Hack

Plastic Free Rivers and Seas for South Asia

COMING SOON

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