



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

WORKING TO END OCEAN PLASTIC POLLUTION WHILE CREATING AN INCLUSIVE CIRCULAR ECONOMY



A Challenge We Can Solve

- Ocean plastic pollution is a complex, global problem
- Threatens public health and safety
- Negatively impacts economies and the environment
- Major challenges in the countries where USAID works



Congressional Launch of Save Our Seas Initiative

- Expanding existing programming in key countries
- Growing programming into new geographies
- Catalyzing investment from donors, partner countries, and the private sector



Ocean Plastics Program Geographic Scope



USAID's Ocean Plastic Pollution Programs

MUNICIPAL
WASTE
RECYCLING
PROGRAM



2016-2021

CLEAN CITIES,
BLUE OCEAN



2019-2024

CIRCULATE
CAPITAL LOAN
GUARANTEE



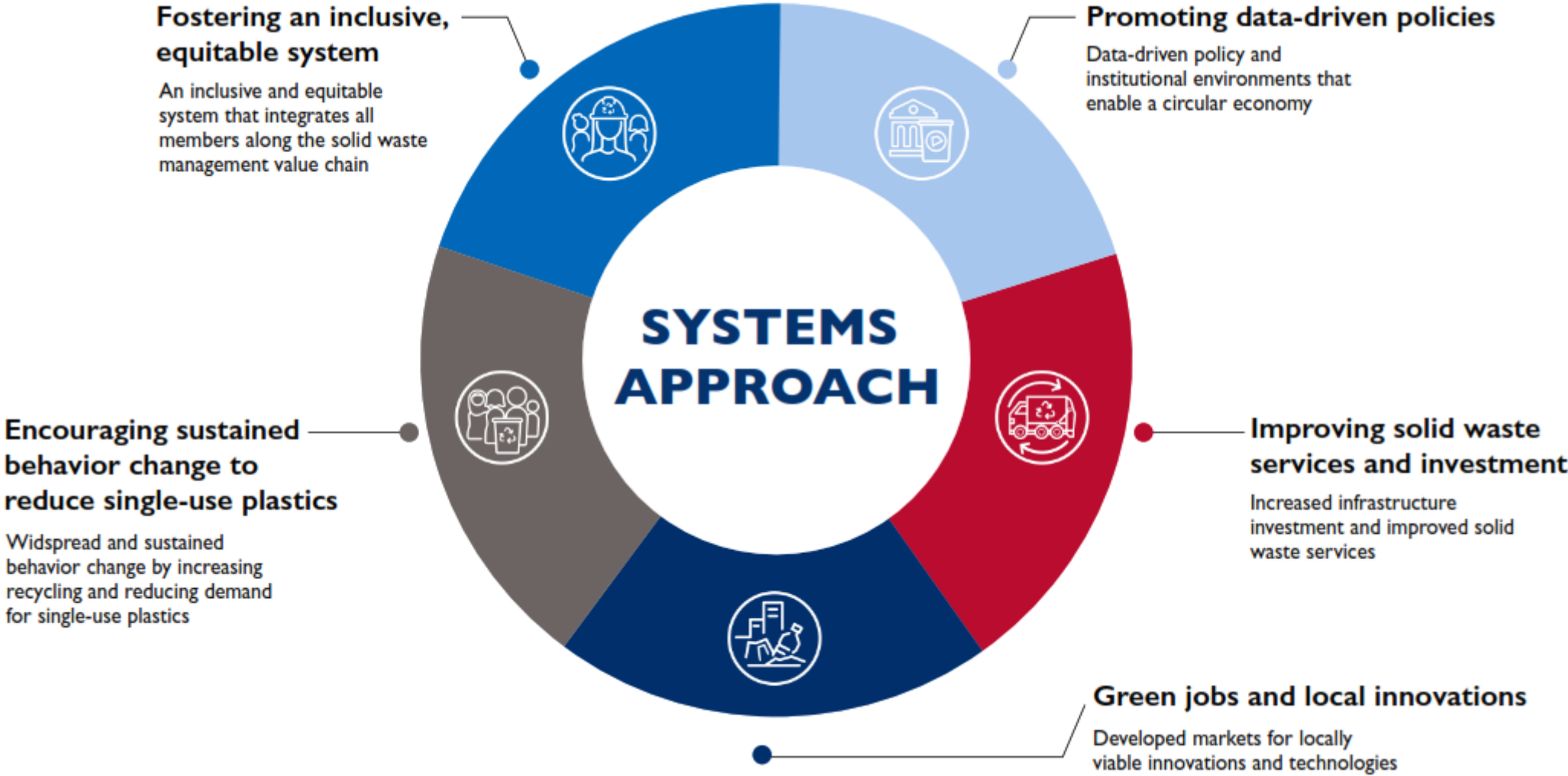
2019-2028

SAVE OUR
SEAS
INITIATIVE



2022 - Onwards

USAID's Local Systems Approach



Data-driven Policies to Enable a Circular Economy

Sri Lanka:
Facilitating
dialogue
between
public and
private
sectors on
Extended
Producer
Responsibility
(EPR) policies



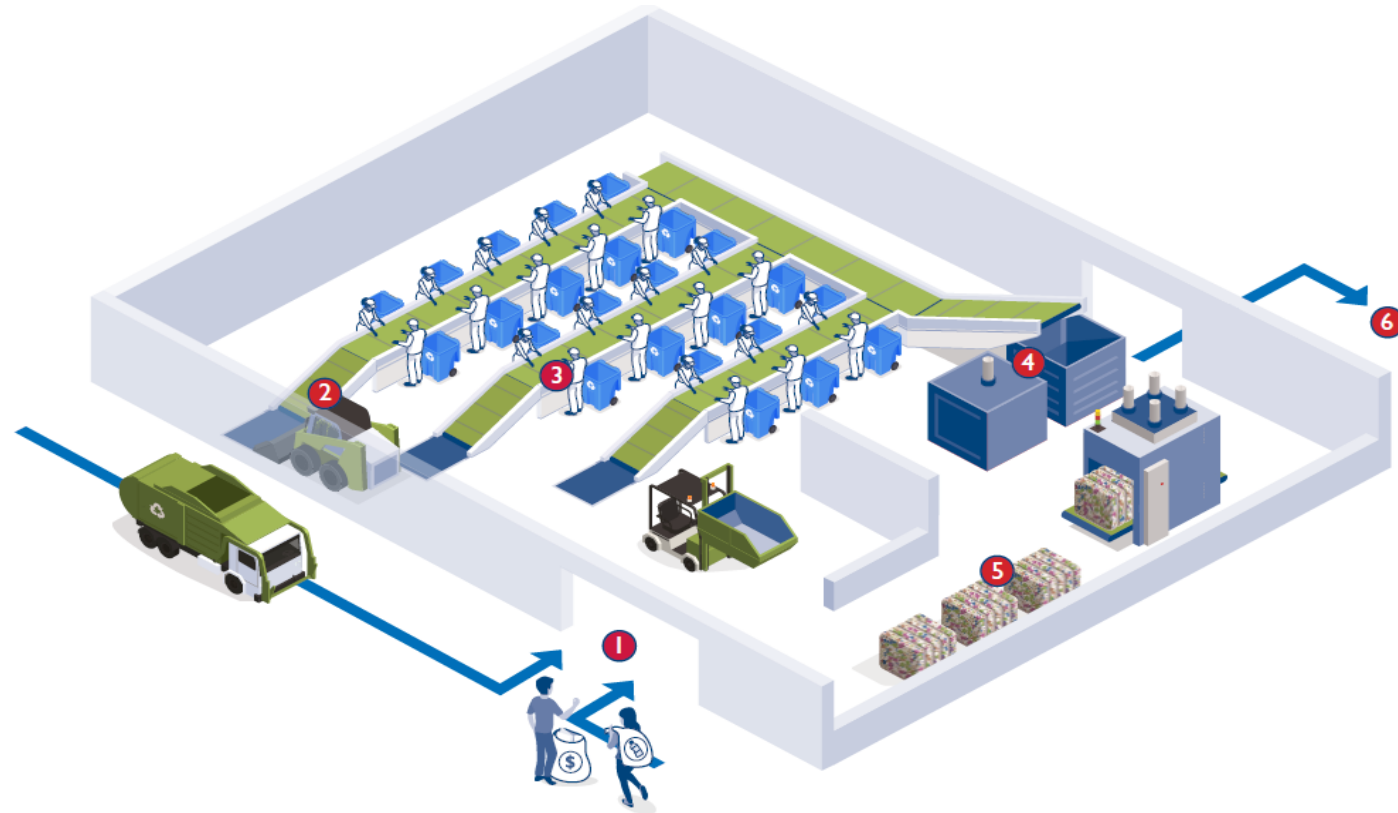
Indonesia: Plastic Bag Diet Movement
assisting cities on regulating plastic
bags usage.

Improving Solid Waste Services and Investment



Pisco, Peru:
Improving route optimization

Paranaque, Philippines: Right-sized, investable MRF solutions



- 1 Materials enter the facility from local collection services and informal waste collectors
- 2 Materials enter the sorting system
- 3 Materials are cleaned and sorted by type
- 4 Cleaned, sorted materials are compacted; residuals are separated out of the system
- 5 Recyclable and reusable materials are compacted and baled for efficient transportation
- 6 Materials exit the facility for recycling and reuse

Solid Waste Capacity Index for Local Governments

Component	City 1 Score	City 2 Score
Planning	0%	56%
Policy & Legal Framework	48%	58%
Financial Management	20%	40%
Service Delivery	33%	31%
Human Resources	35%	65%
Community Engagement	25%	57%
Overall	26%	51%

SCIL Score	Indication
0-30%	Insufficient capacity has been established
31-50%	Basic capacity has been established
51-70%	Additional capacity needed for efficient and environmentally sound system
71-90%	Capacity to operate a sound system, with targeted capacity building needed
90-100%	Best practices implemented; minimal capacity building needed

Green Jobs and Local Innovations

Manila, Philippines: Waste -to -cash stations



Phu Quoc, Vietnam: Green Joy's biodegradable straws

Promoting Sustained Social and Behavior Change

- Working with local grantees to conduct action research
- Establishing practices for waste segregation and reduced single-use plastic usage



CLEAN CITIES, BLUE OCEAN

Trials of Improved Practices Manual: An Introduction to Reality Testing for Sustainable Waste Behaviors



Building an Inclusive, Equitable System



Champion women as recycling leaders:

- Technical training, mentoring
- Personal empowerment
- GBV prevention

"Eco-Warriors" in Puerto Princesa, Philippines



Plastic Pollution Knowledge Resources

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CASE STUDY — Samaná Province, Dominican Republic

A model for waste site remediation to reduce climate impacts and ocean plastic pollution

Case in Brief

Until recently, most of the over 11,000 metric tons of daily waste generated in the Dominican Republic (DR) has been discarded in informal and open dumpsites due to limited landfill sites and management capacity—this leads to the contamination of waterways from unlined disposal areas, polluting the air from gases emanating from the waste, and creating spontaneous combustion fires from the buildup of methane. In the DR, Clean Cities, Blue Ocean provides technical assistance to the national government's strategic programs unit to stop the environmental damage from these open dumpsites.

Since 2021, with USAID's support, the DR has remediated two of the four dumps in Samaná Province on the north coast of the Dominican Republic, which will eventually be closed and serve as transfer stations once the Province's new regional sanitary landfill is developed (with additional technical assistance from Clean Cities, Blue Ocean). These efforts have resulted in the safe management of more than 357,000 metric tons of waste—including over 47,000 metric tons of plastic, the equivalent of 188 million plastic bottles—from the two dumpsites in Samaná Province. The improvements have reduced plastics leakage and greenhouse gas emissions, positively impacted community health, and enhanced conditions for the workers who sort and manage waste on site.

This solid waste management model is expected to be replicated across the country's hundreds of legacy open dumpsites and introduced nationally as part of a new approach to solid waste management planning that will reimagine the way waste is managed in the DR.

Dominican Republic At a Glance

- 240 informal and open dumpsites across the country
- 25% of households without regular waste collection services

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ADVANCING A CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND EMPOWERING THE INFORMAL WASTE SECTOR

THE CHALLENGE

The informal waste sector is critical for creating a more circular economy and helping to end plastic pollution. Informal waste collectors are the foundation of waste collection, sorting and recycling—they are responsible for over half of all plastic waste collected and recycled globally. The informal waste sector is one of the world's greatest defenses against ocean plastic pollution, especially in coastal, urban areas, and in places where the formal sector does not adequately respond to waste management needs. Despite their importance, informal waste workers are commonly overlooked, undervalued, and under resourced, facing major challenges such as:

- Stigmatization, marginalization, and high risk**—Across the world, especially in low- and middle-income countries, the informal waste sector usually represents the most vulnerable and socially disadvantaged groups in society. Informal waste workers frequently face exploitation, social exclusion, and marginalization. Communities often see waste collection as a desperate source of daily living collectors can be subject to stigma, harassment, and even violence. Informal waste workers have little access to basic personal protective equipment and tools—such as carts—increasing the risk associated with the work. Their activities are characterized by unsafe and unhealthy working conditions, low or irregular incomes, long working hours, and a lack of access to markets, finance, training, and technology.
- Insufficient inclusion of workers in decision making**—Informal waste workers lack political and legal representation, which makes it difficult for them to influence decision making in solid waste management policies. Major decisions that impact the waste sector and worker livelihoods—such as dumpsite closures—are often made without workers' participation. During such critical transitions as dumpsite closures, the exclusion of informal waste workers can lead to the loss of local know-how, the breakup of recycling value chains, and the disruption of vital income generating activities for the poorest in society.

AT A GLANCE

As many as **20 million people** worldwide work in the informal waste sector and are responsible for 58 percent of all plastic waste collected and recycled globally.

Clean Cities, Blue Ocean has increased the capacity of **over 500 informal waste collectors**—improving their health and safety, livelihoods, and technical skills while expanding local waste services.

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CLEAN CITIES, BLUE OCEAN — FEBRUARY 2023

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OCEAN PLASTICS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Informal Waste Collectors (IWCs) Webinar Notes

Webinar Date: Thursday, February 23, 2023, 8:30-9:30 a.m. EST
Hosting Mission/OU: USAID Indonesia

Webinar Overview

USAID Indonesia hosted Informal Waste Collectors (IWCs) Webinar Notes in the Philippines, and Thailand countries, the solid waste sector has been largely overlooked, unable to effectively collect waste. IWCs therefore waste management but by local governments for stigmatized for their work designed to improve five building blocks of an equitable system. Working conditions, and opportunities to co-private enterprise, and livelihoods as part of ur

Key Takeaways

By self-organizing and their livelihoods.

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EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY AS A POLICY TOOL TO REDUCE PLASTIC POLLUTION IN LOWER- AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES

HIGHLIGHTS FROM A THOUGHT LEADERS ROUNDTABLE

In May 2022, USAID's Green Cities Division brought together 41 diverse voices from leading private sector companies, development agencies, national and local governments, academia, and NGOs for a virtual roundtable to discuss the challenges of implementing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) as a policy tool to reduce plastic pollution in lower- and middle-income countries (LMICs). The Roundtable was the first in a series of conversations with the goal of long-term collaboration to enable and promote effective EPR implementation for plastics.¹

WHAT IS EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY?

EPR is a promising policy approach to reduce plastic pollution and promote a circular economy, transferring the responsibility of the entire life cycle of a product or packaging back to the producer, which can include raw material manufacturers, packers or fillers, brand companies, and retailers. In the case of plastic waste, once consumers have used and disposed of plastic packaging, producers are responsible for collecting, segregating, and transporting this waste for recycling or safe disposal. Producers and importers of products typically pay a fee to cover the life-cycle costs of their products. Ideally, EPR will incentivize producers to redesign their packaging to reduce waste, to be more easily recyclable, and/or to use more recycled content. EPR can be implemented in a voluntary manner by the private sector, but it is more effective when implemented as a mandatory national policy that fully integrates different sectors, including informal waste collectors (IWCs).

USAID promotes a **local systems approach** to enable a circular economy, with data-driven policies as a core building block. Amidst growing attention on policy instruments to reduce plastic pollution, including the 2022 United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) resolution to develop a global plastics agreement, we recognized the need to better understand the role, mechanisms, and effectiveness of policies such as EPR.

¹ All opinions are presented anonymously as this roundtable followed Chatham House Rules to encourage open discussion.

URBANLINKS.ORG/OCEAN-PLASTIC-POLLUTION USAID EPR THOUGHT LEADERS ROUNDTABLE SUPPLEMENT 1

Case studies describing impacts of tools and approaches

Fact sheets providing informative briefs

Technical insights from our community of practice

Knowledge resources can be found on UrbanLinks (issue: Ocean Plastic Pollution): <https://urbanlinks.org/issue/ocean-plastic-pollution/>



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urban-links.org/ocean-plastic-pollution



Online training hub:
bit.ly/ccbohub

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