



Issue No. 7 | March 2025

## 3RproMar and AMUSE Newsletter



### Updates on combatting marine debris within ASEAN

A service by GIZ project 3RproMar – Reduce, Reuse, Recycle – protect marine environment and coral reefs and GIZ project AMUSE – ASEAN Municipal Solid Waste Management Enhancement

Dear Readers,



Marcial C. Amaro Jr.  
Assistant Secretary for Biodiversity and

Mabuhay - and a special welcome to the ASEAN 3RproMar community from the Philippines!

On 22nd of March, we again celebrate the World Water Day, a globally recognised event dedicated to raising awareness and for the sustainable management of all freshwater resources on our planet. This day serves as a reminder of the crucial importance of safeguarding water as a vital resource for all life on earth.

As we reflect on our collective efforts to protect the environment, ecosystems, rivers, lakes, and marine waters, it is clear that the challenges we face are growing. Water pollution, in particular, is becoming an increasingly severe issue, not just in ASEAN Member States, but worldwide.

well as packaging waste that needs to be managed in order to avoid pollution of water resources and the broader environment.

We all know the alarming statistics about marine plastic pollution. Current studies suggest that 8 to 12 million tons of plastic end up in our ocean every year, the equivalent of one garbage truck full of plastic dumped into the ocean each minute. However, less than 20% of plastic leakage originates from ocean-based sources like fisheries and fishing vessels. This means that over 80% of ocean plastic waste comes from land-based sources. Once plastic is improperly managed, it may leak into waterways and the ocean, hence the critical need to reduce pollution on land and avoid the leakage of harmful substances and waste into our water bodies.

You may recall that in 2019, the Bangkok Declaration which was agreed upon and signed by all ASEAN Member States, calls for collective action to jointly tackle the issues related to marine littering, increase efforts to maintain healthy water systems, and combat water pollution across the region.

In line with this, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources developed the *Philippines' National Plan of Action for the Prevention, Reduction and Management of Marine Litter* (NPOA-ML) which was announced to the international community as a national contribution during the 7th International Marine Debris Conference (7IMDC), held in Busan, Republic of Korea on 19 September 2022. The NPOA-ML provides a comprehensive framework for addressing marine litter issues in the Philippines through a participatory multi-stakeholder process, NPOA-ML aims to address marine litter and empower involved stakeholders through a participatory, multi-stakeholder process. It aims to empower stakeholders by capacity-building, awareness-raising, complimentary legislative action, and financing appropriate actions for its effective implementation.

The NPOA-ML also calls for greater involvement from the academic sector to enable science and evidence-based establishment of baseline data and monitoring. With the NPOA-ML, the Philippines is guiding stakeholders to identify solutions that allow a suited and context-based response to the marine litter issue.

In addition, the Philippines passed Republic Act 11898 in 2022, which introduced the Extended-Producer-Responsibility (EPR) mechanism mandates large enterprises to reduce their plastic footprint by up to 80% in 2028- a significant step in tackling plastic pollution at the source.

Lastly, allow me to highlight that the Philippines continues to actively support the ongoing negotiations for an international legally binding instrument to end plastic pollution which we hope will be agreed upon in 2025.

As we celebrate World Water Day, let us renew our commitment to protecting and preserving our precious water resources. Together, we can ensure a sustainable future for generations to come.

Let's unite in our efforts to safeguard the environment and our water resources for the benefit of all!

**Warm regards,**

**Marcial C. Amaro Jr.**  
**Assistant Secretary for Biodiversity and concurrent Director**  
**Department of Environment and Natural Resources**  
**Biodiversity Management Bureau**

**Dear Readers,**



Nguyen Minh Cuong  
Deputy Director, Domestic Waste  
Management Division

I would like to warmly welcome all distinguished readers of the 7th edition of the 3RproMar and AMUSE Newsletter and to express my sincere gratitude for your continued interest and enthusiastic support of the projects. Almost a year of this joint forces newsletter has fostered a synergy between the two projects to elaborate more on circular economy and waste management in the ASEAN region.

This March will mark the important event, World Water Day on March 22 with the theme “Glacier preservation”, which serves as a global reminder of the importance of sustainable water management. This momentum aligns with the release of our 7th newsletter edition this month, as we continue our global efforts to promote environmental sustainability across the ASEAN region.

This month also brings a busy agenda for the ASEAN member states to accelerate the environmental co-operation action plans of the various ASEAN Working Groups, including the ASEAN Working Group on Environmentally Sustainable Cities (AWGESC) and the ASEAN Working Group on Coastal and Marine Environment (AWGCME).

This edition provides the latest updates and events from both projects, with several key highlights from AMUSE project, as follows:

- o Highlights include the successful effort to strengthen the regional cooperation for UNESCO heritage sites in ASEAN, marked by the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the environmental management of Angkor and Borobudur to promote sustainable tourism.
- o We also share exciting updates from Vietnam, where 3RproMar and AMUSE conducted joint Waste Segregation Training at schools in Soc Trang as a part of the green school initiatives.
- o This edition also features articles on AMUSE’s effort in mainstreaming gender into Da Lat’s waste management and tourism. Furthermore, highlight AMUSE’s effort in mainstreaming gender into Da Lat’s waste management and tourism.
- o In Cambodia, we showcase the collaboration between business community and the Siem Reap City to promote water refill station and highlight Wat Bo Village as a model for sustainable tourism.
- o In Thailand, the development of comprehensive waste management strategy for Nan Province.
- o Finally, from Lao PDR, we present the completion of pre-feasibility study for the Circular Economy-based waste management system in Vang Vieng District, a visit to AMUSE pilot project in Vang Vieng, a tourist satisfaction survey on cleanliness of Vang Vieng, and the ongoing survey on the public-private cooperation, which will serve as the foundation for strengthening future cooperation.

In this edition, you will be able to read more about updates and events by two GIZ projects: 3RproMar and AMUSE, in the topic of waste management and sustainable tourism. We hope this newsletter serves as a platform to share our journey, best practices, and inspire you for building a more sustainable future. Happy reading!

**Warm regards,**

**Nguyen Minh Cuong**  
**AWGESC Chairperson**  
**Deputy Director, Domestic Waste Management Division**  
**Pollution Control Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam**

## REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

- » Advancing EPR in ASEAN: Aligning National Efforts and Readiness with Global Commitments
- » Strengthening Marine Litter Prevention in the ASEAN Region through The Sharing Knowledge Platform
- » Securing ASEAN's Legacy: MoU Signed for an Environmental Management of Angkor and Borobudur for Sustainable Tourism

## CAMBODIA

- » "Today, I Do Not Use Plastic Bags" Campaign for Sustainable Shopping
- » Refill is Greener, Better, and Cheaper
- » Wat Bo Village: A Model for Sustainable Tourism

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- » Closing the Loop: Enabling Sustainable Plastic Recycle through Digital Return System (DRS)
- » Collaboration Towards Clean Indonesia through Capacity Development on Waste Management Fees and Retribution
- » Capacity Development for the Operation of Recycling Centers in Kudus and Palangkaraya
- » Scaling Up Local Enterprise and Go Beyond through SULE-WM Project

## LAO PDR

- » Introducing Circular Economy in Vang Vieng District
- » Collaborative Efforts in Enhancing Waste Management Initiatives in Vang Vieng, Lao PDR
- » Survey and Study: Tourist Satisfaction on Cleanliness of Vang Vieng and Public-Private Cooperation in Lao PDR

## PHILIPPINES

- » Strengthening Partnerships towards a Sustainable Philippines
- » Women Waste Worker at the Forefront

## THAILAND

- » Enhancing Midstream and Downstream Waste Management in Nan Province

## VIET NAM

- » Green School Initiative: Waste Segregation Training at Schools
- » Mainstreaming Gender Initiatives

## UPCOMING EVENTS

## USEFUL LINKS

## Regional Activities

### Advancing EPR in ASEAN: Aligning National Efforts and Readiness with Global Commitments

3RproMar Regional Knowledge Partnership for Marine Litter Prevention in ASEAN

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a policy framework that places significant responsibility on producers for managing the treatment or disposal of post-consumer products. This framework has been implemented in over 60 countries, including those in the Asia-Pacific region, and has been a fundamental aspect of waste management for the past two decades.

Under the "3RproMar Regional Knowledge Partnership for Marine Litter Prevention in ASEAN" the 3RproMar partnering with the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) as its knowledge partner, bringing a regional perspective from its work on EPR in the ASEAN region; as well as the Global Action Partnership for EPR that offers a more global outlook, through a webinar on 4 February 2025.



## Advancing EPR in ASEAN: Aligning National Efforts & Readiness with Global Commitments



**Tuesday, 4 February 2025**  
**14.00 - 16.00 (GMT+7)**  
Online via Teams



Scan to join the webinar  
Meeting ID: 322 403 255 620  
Passcode: mr9Vx7nB



**Ms Nadia Manasfi**  
Advisor for BMUV Global Support  
Project on Marine Litter, GIZ



**Mr Michikazu Kojima**  
Senior Research Fellow  
on Environmental Issues, ERIA



**Mr Kyriakos Parpounas**  
Consultant, Global Action  
Partnership (GAP) for EPR



**Mr Amrullah Rosadi**  
Managing Director,  
Divers Clean Action (DCA)



**Ms Athalie Reyes**  
EPR and Consulting Manager,  
PCX Solutions



**Ms Julia Giebel**  
Advisor for 3RproMar,  
GIZ



Advancing EPR in ASEAN: Aligning National Efforts and Readiness with Global Commitments flyer and speakers © GIZ

The webinar and beyond, showcasing practical examples, successes, and challenges to inform and inspire regional action. It emphasised the importance of knowledge sharing and collaboration on EPR in enhancing readiness for the implementation of the ILBI.

The webinar “Advancing EPR in ASEAN: Aligning National Efforts and Readiness with Global Commitments” aimed to share insights and experiences from EPR initiatives in ASEAN and beyond to provide a platform for ASEAN Member States and relevant stakeholders to discuss the potential pathways and challenges moving forward in advancing EPR mechanisms in the region and aligning with the global efforts.

This webinar was attended by over 175 participants from diverse backgrounds, from government to private sector. Five remarkable speakers sharing their insights and experiences on enabling EPR Scheme. The excellent speakers provided a comprehensive overview of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes in different regions, focusing on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and ASEAN Member States, underscoring the significant increase in industry participation and material recovery due to compliance with national and international standards. Overall, the discussions underscored the diverse approaches and common challenges in implementing EPR schemes, advocating for robust frameworks, collaboration, and capacity-building initiatives.

## Strengthening Marine Litter Prevention in the ASEAN Region through The Sharing Knowledge Platform

3RproMar Promotes Information and Knowledge Sharing through Know Waste Knowledge

Marine debris has been a common crisis for Southeast Asia Countries. Recognising this urgency, ASEAN-German Cooperation Project, 3RproMar has demonstrated commendable progress in addressing marine litter through Regional Knowledge Partnership for Marine Litter Prevention in ASEAN. This partnership involves the following organisations that are currently active in marine litter prevention in the region such as Regional Resource Centre for Asia and The Pacific (RRCAP) by Asian Institute of Technology (AIT). RRCAP developed an interactive and intuitive sustainable waste and resource management knowledge repository and capacity building platform, **The Know Waste Knowledge (KWK)**. The KWK provides information and knowledge sharing to support inform decision-making on marine debris in ASEAN.



The knowledge repository in the KWK is done by frequently collect documents on reports, guidelines, action plan, assessment and other lesson learnt and best practice documents, making them available and accessible by uploading them to the KWK platform. Since 2019, 3RproMar has published 20 documents from the pilot Member States.

Through the KWK, 3RproMar aimed to enhance regional cooperation of knowledge exchange to provides national and local lesson learnt or best practices available at the regional level and establish a knowledge management among AMS and the ASEAN working groups which working on the topic of reduction of land-based waste leakage into the sea.

## Securing ASEAN's Legacy: MoU Signed for an Environmental Management of Angkor and Borobudur for Sustainable Tourism

AMUSE to strengthen regional cooperation for UNESCO heritage sites in ASEAN

On 15 January 2025, the APSARA National Authority (ANA) and In Journey Destination Management (IDM) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance environmental and sustainable tourism management at the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Borobudur Temple in Indonesia and Angkor Archaeological Park in Cambodia. This collaboration, supported by AMUSE project, aims to protect cultural heritage while promoting mutual learning and community development in environmental management.

Under this MoU, both parties agreed to develop a Joint Work Plan 2025-2026, which formulated various activity programs to promote these Two World Heritage Sites' sustainable tourism and environmental management. Around 35 delegates participated in this event collectively, including representatives and key experts from APSARA, IDM, Angkor Enterprise, Indonesian Embassy in Cambodia, and GIZ AMUSE team.



MoU Signing Ceremony between APSARA and IDM © APSARA

Following the MoU signing ceremony, participants also had the opportunity to explore sustainable tourism initiatives in Angkor Wat complex and Siem Reap City during the study trip on 16 January 2025, including the AMUSE pilot sites such as water-refilling station in Banteay Srei Temple and revitalization of Street 26 in Wat Bo Village.





Study visits at AMUSE pilot sites in Banteay Srei and Wat Bo Village © APSARA

## Cambodia

### “Today, I Do Not Use Plastic Bags” Campaign for Sustainable Shopping

3RproMar introduces net bags as an alternative to single-use plastic bags in supermarkets

On 3 March 2025, supermarket representatives in Phnom Penh followed the invitation of the Ministry of Environment to discuss a major step toward reducing plastic waste—replacing single-use plastic bags with reusable net bags for fruits and vegetables. The meeting, chaired by H.E. Meas



Chanthyda, Undersecretary of State, brought together Lucky Supermarket, Makro, Bayon Market, Thai Huot, and BigC alongside GIZ representatives to explore the transition toward sustainable alternatives.

The initiative builds on the success of the “Today, I Do Not Use Plastic Bags” campaign, a government-led effort to reduce Cambodia’s reliance on single-use plastics. The proposed net bags, lightweight and transparent, offer a practical and durable alternative. They align with supermarkets’ ongoing commitments to environmental sustainability, including tote bag availability at cashiers, waste segregation, and energy efficiency measures.



H.E. Meas Chanthyda, Undersecretary of State © Ministry of Environment of Cambodia

During the meeting, the GIZ team presented the net bags, their functionality, and potential impact, highlighting how supermarkets could integrate them seamlessly into their operations. Discussions focused on collaboration, merchandising strategies, consumer engagement, and promotional efforts to ensure long-term adoption.

Supermarket representatives expressed keen interest in the approach and will assess how best to integrate net bags into their stores. Their feedback will be instrumental in shaping the official launch of the initiative in the coming months. By introducing net bags as a standard alternative, supermarkets will help shift consumer habits and contribute to a more sustainable retail sector. The Ministry of Environment and GIZ continue to encourage collaboration, ensuring that this initiative sets a new benchmark for responsible consumption across the country.

## Refill is Greener, Better, and Cheaper

AMUSE promotes water refill in Siem Reap

Siem Reap and Angkor are embracing a greener future by promoting water refill options, encouraging both locals and tourists to refill bottles or tumblers instead of relying on single-use plastic. This initiative, led by AMUSE in collaboration with private sector partners, aims to make sustainable choices more accessible and revive Cambodia’s traditional culture of hospitality.



Sticker "Refill Here" in front of local businesses providing free water refills in Siem Reap © GIZ

To build a strong refill culture in Siem Reap, we're focusing on key initiatives: engaging restaurants, hotels, and shops to provide refill stations, and mapping these locations to create a reliable network. We will also launch the awareness campaigns to educate both tourists and locals about the benefits of refilling and collaborating closely with the Siem Reap Municipality to ensure long-term, sustainable water consumption solutions. Finally, we aim to reviving Cambodia's cherished tradition of hospitality, reminiscent of the water jars villagers once placed along roads for travellers, by encouraging businesses to offer readily available water.

The initiative aimed at reducing single-use plastic waste, protecting Cambodia's natural and cultural heritage, strengthening Siem Reap's reputation as an eco-friendly tourist destination, and enhancing visitor satisfaction through convenient refill options, thereby fostering a sustainable tourism.



## Find Refills



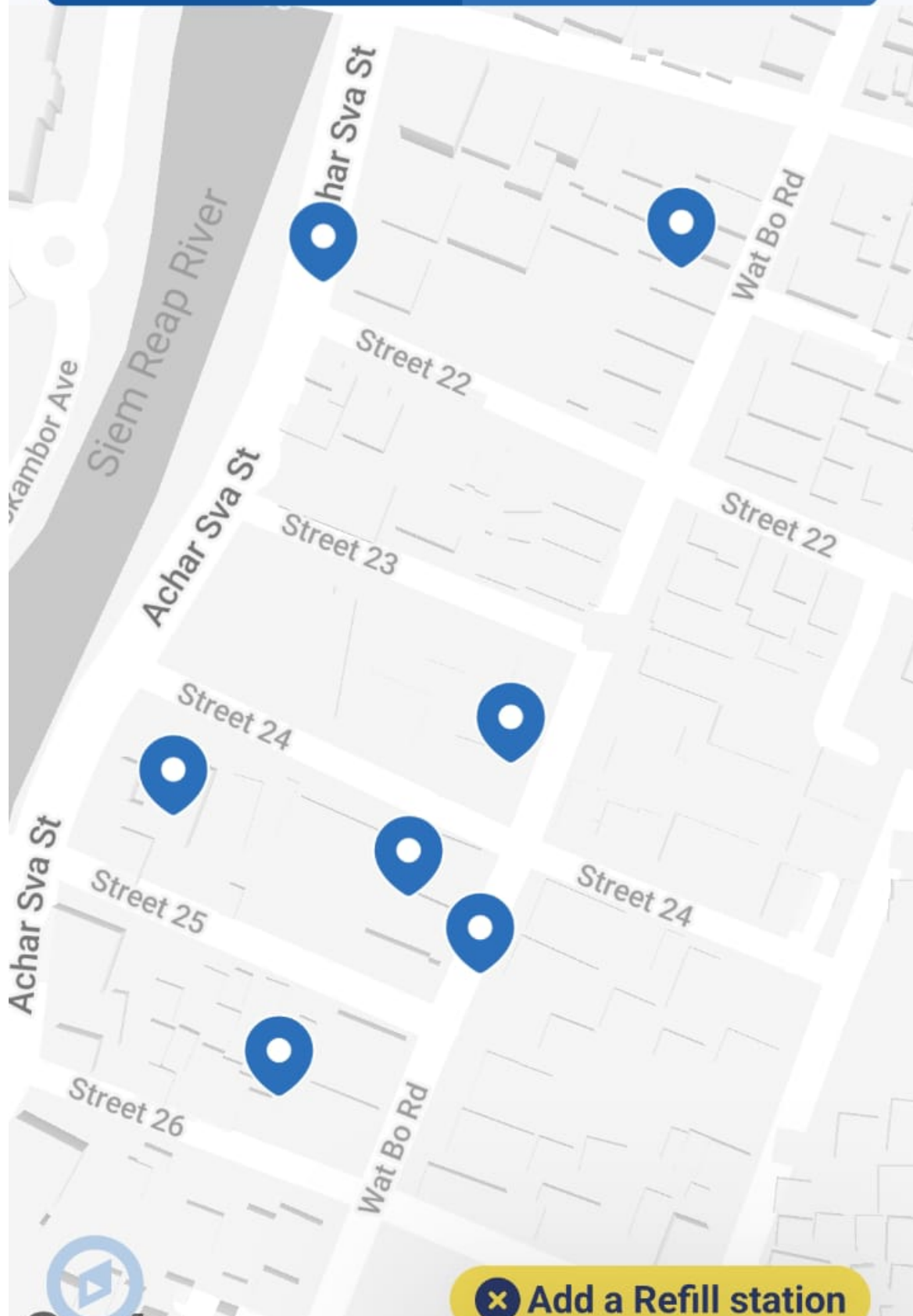
Krong Siem Reap, Cambodia



List

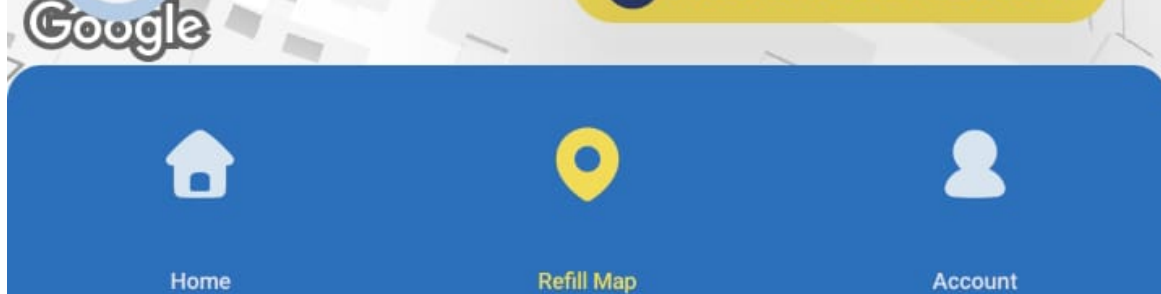


Map



Add a Refill station





Water Refill location in Siem Reap in Refill App © GIZ

## Wat Bo Village: A Model for Sustainable Tourism

Wat Bo Village 1st Community Event in 2025

On 23 February 2025, the Siem Reap Provincial Administration, in collaboration with the Reaj Bo-Made in Cambodia Market 3, Colors of Cambodia, Wat Bo Village community, and the GIZ implemented AMUSE project, organized a vibrant community event to promote Wat Bo Village. To create an engaging atmosphere, Street 26 and a section of the riverside were closed from 8:00 AM to 10:00 PM, allowing locals and tourists to enjoy the festivities.

Art workshops were offered throughout the day, attracting both children and adults.

The event showcased Cambodia's rich cultural heritage, with children's artworks and handmade crafts displayed and sold at the riverside park. Traditional Khmer music and dance performances, along with demonstrations of Cambodia's ancient martial art, Bokator, captivated the audience and added to the lively atmosphere.



Wat Bo village community event on 23 February 2025 © GIZ

Businesses along Street 26 took advantage of the event by setting up outdoor seating areas with soft lighting and live music performances, creating a warm and inviting environment. Local businesses in Wat Bo Village sold their products along the street, using plastic-free materials and packaging, reinforcing the event's commitment to promoting zero plastic waste among both locals and visitors.

The response from the community and tourists was overwhelmingly positive, with many appreciating the combination of cultural activities, local craftsmanship, and environmentally friendly practices. The event provided a great opportunity for businesses to attract more customers while supporting sustainability.

**Indonesia**

Closing the Loop: Enabling Sustainable Plastic Recycle through

# Digital Return System (DRS)

## 3RproMar concludes the DRS pilot

Return systems have the potential to significantly enhance the recycling of plastic packaging and other waste types in developing and emerging economies like Indonesia, where the current plastic recycling rate is only 10%. To be effective and cost-efficient, these systems need to be adapted to the local context, including the involvement of the informal sector in waste management.

The Circular Consortium, supported by the 3RproMar project by GIZ, is piloting the Integrated Private Sector Initiatives to Prevent Waste and Optimize Plastic Material Cycles project.

The 'Closing the Loop: Enabling Sustainable Plastic Recycle through Digital Return System (DRS)' initiative focuses on improving connections between producers, waste collectors, and recyclers; enhancing the livelihood and working conditions of local communities and informal waste sector players; and maximizing the collection and recycling rates of post-consumer recyclables (PCR).

The project is centered on the collaboration between brand owners, waste banks, junk shops, and a recycling facility, primarily located in Bandung, West Java. It involved sustainability-focused brands, particularly those in skincare and personal care, such as Botanina and YAGI Forest, which encourage customers to participate in the Digital Return System (DRS) by returning used skincare bottles. Several waste banks in Bandung, including Bandung Central Waste Bank and others, serve as collection points and raise awareness about recycling even low-value items like dark PET bottles.



The Circular Consortium presented the result of the DRS project © GIZ

To enhance digital traceability and data collection, a platform was developed, while waste processing is managed by Parongpong RAW Lab. The lab converts low-value waste into RAWchar utilizing hydrothermal technology. RAWchar is a multifunctional material, which is further processed into Prototiles for construction use. This innovation creates demand for dark PET bottles that are typically rejected by waste facilities.

By the end of the project, over 985 used bottles were collected, with more than half being dark PET bottles, which are usually discarded. These bottles were recycled into multifunctional panels, demonstrating a feasible alternative for low-value bottles. A digital traceability platform was also developed to record the type and amount of waste collected, categorize it by collection points and brand, and track customer participation. This data will help shape future program strategies. The

findings were presented to local stakeholders, including various environmental agencies and the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, all of whom showed interest in the project.

For more information about the DRS pilot and how to download the app (for Indonesian only), click [here](#).

## Collaboration Towards Clean Indonesia through Capacity Development on Waste Management Fees and Retribution

3RproMar commemorates Indonesia's National Waste Awareness Day by supporting the capacity development on the calculation for SWM handling cost in coastal cities

The German-ASEAN project 3RproMar, together with the Directorate of Waste Handling, Ministry of Environment and the Association of Indonesia Municipal Government (APEKSI), conducted a Capacity Development on Waste Management Fees and Retribution Tariffs Calculation in the Coastal Cities in Banjarmasin on 26-27 February 2025.

This event aimed to support the Indonesia's national strategy to reduce plastic waste leakage from land to sea by providing capacity development to the selected municipalities regarding the waste management especially plastic and the calculation of fees and retribution based on Ministry of Domestic Affairs Regulation No. 7/2021. This activity was very timely, as it was held to also commemorate the Indonesia's National Waste Awareness Day (Hari Peduli Sampah Nasional) on 21 February. Endorsing this year's theme of "Collaboration Towards Clean Indonesia," numerous stakeholders were joining forces, contributed to this event.



Participants of "Capacity Development on Waste Management Fees and Retribution Tariffs Calculation in the Coastal Cities" © GIZ

Anandita Laksmi Susanto from GIZ-3RproMar emphasised the importance of active role from local governments and communities in collaboration for a clean Indonesia.

Arif Sumargi from the Ministry of Environment Waste Handling Directorate emphasised that retributions are the key for sustainable financial management in waste management. Without proper retribution tariffs, effective waste management and the development of waste management technology will be difficult, and thus, this training is very important.

As the last opening remarks, Fauzi Noor, Head Division of Parks and Infrastructure from DLH Banjarmasin, stated that the local government is committed to provide better service of waste management for a better and healthier environment.



# Capacity Development for the Operation of Recycling Centers in Kudus and Palangkaraya

3RproMar provides training for the operation of recycling centers

Supporting the Ministry of Environment/Environmental Control Agency (KLH/BPLH), especially the Directorate of Waste Handling, GIZ 3RproMar provides training for the operation of recycling centres (PDU). Recycling centres in several cities/regencies have been built by the State Budget (APBN) to reduce waste entering the landfill through the management of organic waste and plastic waste to be more useful. However, some PDUs face various challenges in their operations, including lack of public awareness, lack of operator capacity including in the operation and maintenance of machines, and weak business models and access to recycling markets. Ministry of Environment sees the need to strengthen the capacity of PDU operators in Kudus Regency and PDU Palangkaraya City and provide operational assistance so that PDU can operate optimally and sustainably.



Capacity Development for the Operation of Recycling Centers © GIZ

In February, series of workshop such as public consultation, communication strategy and behaviour change workshop, and operator technical training for PDU in Palangkaraya City were held, attended by local government, community self-help groups (KSM), waste banks, the private sector as off-takers, and the business sector that pays levies to PDU. In the future operation of PDU, it is very important to also pay attention on legality of the operator's contract, the formalization of the operator's institution, and the cooperation agreement provided by the local Environmental Service, as well as levies and off-takers. It is hoped that the guidelines for PDU operations can be used in other PDUs.



Recycling centre in Palangkaraya © GIZ

## Scaling Up Local Enterprise and Go Beyond through SULE-WM Project

Official launching of the Scaling Up Local Enterprise on Waste Management in Indonesia

In commemoration of the 2025 National Waste Awareness Day, GIZ Indonesia and Unilever Indonesia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Indonesia, officially launched the Scaling Up Local Enterprise on Waste Management in Indonesia (SULE-WM) project on 13 February 2025. SULE-WM is a collaborative project involving strategic stakeholders to maximize the role of local waste management companies in implementing better and more responsible waste management systems.

In partnership with Ecoxyztem and the Greeneration Foundation, the project will support the growth of waste management companies and educate over 20,000 individuals to actively participate as future talents and support ecosystems in building a comprehensive local waste management system through the pioneer companies : Perkumpulan Arta Jaya (Medan), Persada Langgeng Makmur (DI Yogyakarta & Jawa Tengah), Bali Recycle Center (Bali), Lohjinawi Logistic (Surabaya), dan Azzahra Multi Solusindo (Jakarta Selatan).



Official launching of Scaling Up Local Enterprise on Waste Management in Indonesia © GIZ

During this session, Roy Andy Panjaitan from GIZ 3RproMar highlighted the project's support for responsible waste management and sustainable business models for MSMEs. Maya Tamimi from Unilever Indonesia also called out the importance of collaboration in waste management. Another remarkable point is from Mrs. Wistinoviani Adnin from Ministry of Environment. She emphasised the importance of multi-sectoral roles in waste management and appreciates GIZ and Unilever's initiative in circular economy-based waste management.

The SULE-WM project is expected to increase MSME capacity in creating impactful waste management solutions and foster cooperation between MSMEs, companies, and the government to build a more efficient and effective waste management value chain.

## Lao PDR

### Introducing Circular Economy in Vang Vieng District

AMUSE study: \$2.5M is required to introduce waste collection coverage and circular economy solutions in Vang Vieng

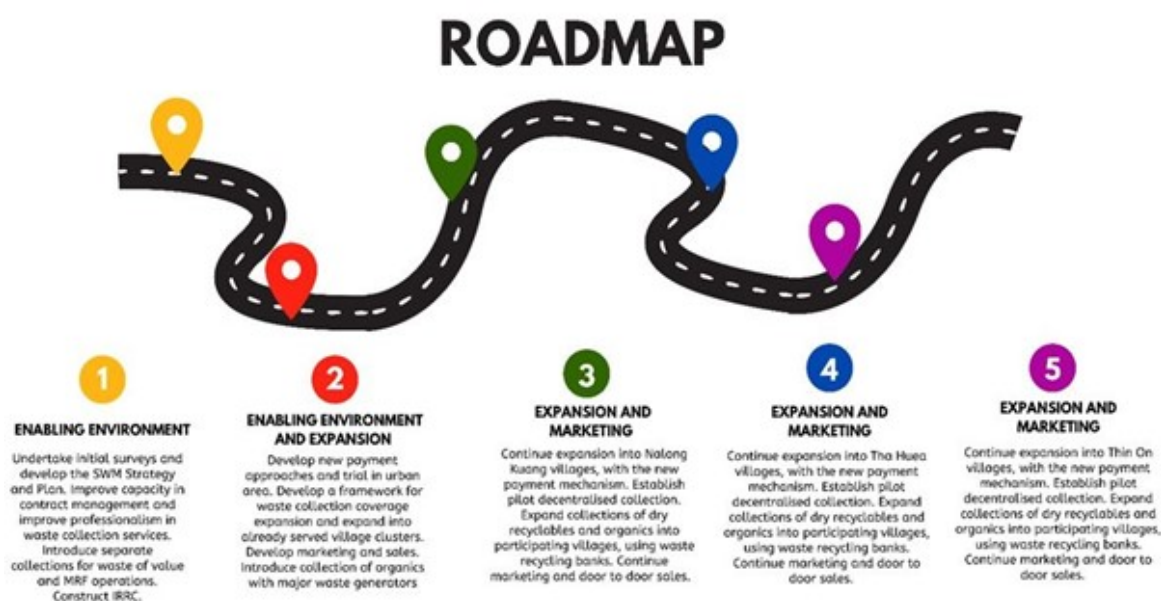
According to the recently completed prefeasibility study, Vang Vieng district requires \$2.5M to introduce city wide service waste collection coverage and to introduce circular economy solutions. The Sustainable Municipal Solid Waste Management System Assessment and Pre-Feasibility for the establishment and Management of a Circular Economy in Vang Vieng District, Vientiane Province, Lao PDR: Building a Circular Economy for a Greener Future was commissioned by GGGI and undertaken by Groupe Huit with the aim of informing the Vang Vieng district leadership and MONRE on the technical options required to establish a circular economy-based waste management system in the district.

The Vang Vieng District, which is a dual city-tourism and agriculture part in Lao PDR, has been facing an ever-widening problem of waste management associated with increasing urbanization and tourism. Daily waste generation, currently estimated at 66 tons, is expected to increase. The district suffers from an inadequate coverage of waste collection systems, poor participation, and harmful disposal practices such as open dumping and burning. Only 38% of villages are under formal waste collection; thus, 76% of daily waste goes unmanaged.



The waste collection service coverage is effective for only 45% of the population of the district with very low participation rates among the people. Waste composition is now mainly organic (50%) and plastics (21), thereby demonstrating a yardstick for composting and recycling, but infrastructures are poor, public awareness is low, and financial sustainability issues lack consideration.

To address these issues, the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) and Groupe Huit have developed a comprehensive roadmap for transitioning to a circular economy-based waste management system. The circular economy model proposed will emphasize waste reduction, recycling, and resource recovery in a more efficient way that would protect the environment and create safer economic sustainability.



Roadmap of the implementation for the establishment and management of a circular economy in Vang Vieng © GGGI

Key recommendations:

- Strengthening the enabling environment (Years 1-2, \$215,000):
- Expanding and improving waste collection for disposal waste (Years 2-5, cost: \$1,28M)
- Scale up resource recovery (Years 1-5, \$1.035M)

With a projected funding of \$2.53 million, this transition plan can result in a five-year, concentrated effort to improve the infrastructure, improve operations, and, ultimately, connect and involve the community. The improvement in waste collection percentages aims to increase from 27% to 67% by 2030, minimizing landfills and reducing pollution.

Vang Vieng has the potential to be a model for sustainable waste management in Lao PDR. By adopting a circular economy strategy, the district can provide economic possibilities, preserve its natural beauty, and secure a cleaner, greener future for both inhabitants and tourists.

The Vang Vieng district hopes to utilize its PFS report to inform the planned Solid Waste Management Strategy which is being developed by GGGI and will also use the information to engage development partners and private sector to further support the district ambitions to become a Green, Clean, Peaceful and Lighting district in Lao PDR.



Materials recovery facility and large composting plant © GGGI Rwanda

## Collaborative Efforts in Enhancing Waste Management Initiatives in Vang Vieng, Lao PDR

GIZ, GGGI Laos, and local stakeholder visit the AMUSE pilot project in Vang Vieng District

On 3 March 2025, the AMUSE team from GIZ Lao PDR, along with GGGI Lao PDR, had the pleasure of hosting Shameer Khanal, the Project Director of AMUSE, and Hana Hetty Manuela, the ASEAN Portfolio Manager, for a visit to Vang Vieng district in Laos.

The day began with a visit to Tmark Resort Vangvieng, a key partner in the AMUSE project, where waste segregation bins have been piloted in their hotel. Hotel staff have shown increased awareness of waste segregation following AMUSE's intervention, and the hotel has even begun to share the benefits of recycling by selling bottles and cans to employees who take responsibility for waste separation. In response, the hotel has requested an additional waste segregation bin to further support their efforts.



AMUSE team at Tmark Resort Vangvieng © GGGI Lao PDR

The team then visited a local waste recycling shop owned by Mr. Khen Insan. He shared that, over the past few years, there has been an increase in the amount of recyclable waste being collected, as local residents are now more aware of the economic benefits of recycling. At the shop, the team learned about the growing potential of the recycling business at the local level.



AMUSE team at waste recycling shop © GGGI Lao PDR

The delegation then travelled to the New Vang Vieng landfill, which recently received a grant from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to develop its infrastructure and waste management systems. In the near future, a private company will be awarded the tender to operate the landfill and will invest in machinery and resources to improve waste management. The Urban Development and Administration Authority (UDAA) will closely monitor operations. Additionally, the government is planning to integrate informal waste pickers into the formal waste management system.

In the afternoon, the group met with Mr. Souviengthong Vongchampa, the Vice Chief of Mayor of Vang Vieng District. He expressed his sincere gratitude to GIZ and GGGI for their continued support of waste management efforts in the district. Mr. Vongchampa noted that improvements in recycling waste bins across various areas in the district were a clear indication of the success of the AMUSE project and expressed eagerness for further collaboration.

During the meeting, the AMUSE team provided an update on the progress of the ongoing project, while GGGI introduced their upcoming initiatives, highlighting their commitment to working closely with local governments in Vang Vieng to enhance waste management and environmental sustainability.



AMUSE team at Vang Vieng district administration office © GGGI Lao PDR

This visit reaffirmed the positive impact of the AMUSE project in Vang Vieng, and both GIZ and GGGI remain committed to continuing their support to improve waste management systems in Laos.

The visit concluded with a wrap-up session and a small discussion at the UDAA office, where the team reviewed the key takeaways from the day's visits and discussed next steps for the AMUSE project. This session provided an opportunity for all stakeholders to share their insights, reflect on the progress made so far, and identify areas for continued collaboration. The discussion emphasized the importance of ongoing partnerships between GIZ, GGGI, and local authorities to ensure the sustainability of waste management efforts in Vang Vieng. As the meeting drew to a close, all participants expressed their commitment to furthering these initiatives, ensuring the project's success and long-term impact.

## Survey and Study: Tourist Satisfaction on Cleanliness of Vang Vieng and Public-Private Cooperation in Lao PDR

In early February, Lao Consulting Group (LCG) launched a survey to assess tourist satisfaction regarding the cleanliness of Vang Vieng, running from 7th to 9th February. The survey was conducted by 10 enumerators fluent in English, Chinese, and Korean, and was supported by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE), the Vientiane Province Office of Natural Resources and Environment (PONRE), and the Vang Vieng District Office of Natural Resources and Environment (DONRE). The team gathered responses from both national and international tourists, seeking their feedback on cleanliness in the region. The final findings are expected to be available in March 2025.





Field Survey team in Vang Vieng © Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Following the completion of the tourist satisfaction survey, LCG shifted focus to a study on public and private cooperation. From 10th to 19th February, interviews were conducted with stakeholders in Vientiane Capital, both in person and online. From 20-22 February, the team carried out in-person interviews in Vang Vieng district. A total of 30 stakeholders were interviewed. The study, which explores the collaboration between public and private entities in Vang Vieng, is set to be completed by the end of March.

This project has been carried out with strong support from GIZ Laos, in close cooperation with MONRE and local authorities, ensuring the smooth facilitation of the survey and interviews.



Stakeholders interview in Vang Vieng © Lao Consulting Group

## Philippines

### Strengthening Partnerships towards a Sustainable Philippines

GIZ is recognised as partner for environmental sustainability

On 7 February 2025, the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) held their Recognition of Partners in Environmental Sustainability in Quezon City wherein GIZ was one of the 33 organizations honored for their invaluable contributions in addressing environmental challenges in the Philippines.

Dr. Johannes Paul, Project Manager of 3RproMar Philippines, received the award on behalf of GIZ Philippines. With the aim to reduce plastic waste leakage into the seas, 3RproMar project team works closely together with EMB on supporting the operationalization of the National Plan of Action for the Prevention, Reduction and Management of Marine Litter (NPOA-ML) and the localization of the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Law.

During the event, EMB key officials and the awardees also signed the Pledge of Support for the continued coordination and collaboration on protecting, conserving and restoring the Philippines' natural resources and ensuring a more sustainable future for all.

Present during the ceremony were DENR Undersecretary Jonas Leones, DENR Undersecretary Analiza Rebuerta-Teh, DENR Assistant Secretary and concurrent EMB Director Jacqueline Caancan and awardees from the development sector, academe, government, private sector and civil society.



Dr. Johannes Paul accepting the award (left) and signing the Pledge of Support (right) © GIZ

## Women Waste Worker at the Forefront

Highlights from the Bacolod Plastic Waste Management Project Closing Workshop

As an additional pilot initiative of 3RproMar, the Bacolod Plastic Waste Management Project conducted by University of Kassel Germany held its Closing workshop on 8 November 2024, in Barangay Felisa, Bacolod City with the theme “Engaging Women in the Informal Waste Sector”. The event brought together 82 waste workers, along with personnel from the Bacolod Environmental and Natural Resources Office (BENRO), Barangay Felisa officials, and representatives from the La Consolacion College (LCC), Friends of Hope (HOPE), and Bioflyt Agriventures.

The project assessed the plastic waste leakage in Bacolod City wherein the results were included in the City 10-year Solid Waste Management Plan (2024-2033) and Marine Litter Management in reducing plastic waste leakages into the waterways and sea.

The workshop also featured contributions from University of Kassel, GIZ Germany, and the Hessian Ministry for the Environment, Climate Change, Agriculture and Consumer Protection. Since 2023, GIZ, in collaboration with Bacolod City, LCC and the University of Kassel, has been providing capacity-building initiatives for the Informal Waste Workers Association of Bacolod City (IWSABC) as part of the project.





Participants at the Bacolod Plastic Waste Management Closing Workshop © GIZ

A key highlight of the workshop was the sharing of personal testimonies from members of IWSABC. They reflected on their experiences working in the sanitary landfill, offering valuable insights into their daily challenges and aspirations. They reported that the members of their organization have become more cohesive, actively participating in meetings, and fostering camaraderie among waste workers. Some members have also found alternative sources of income, such as Black Soldier Fly (BSF) farming and Aling Tindera's plastic collection stations supported by HOPE. Additionally, they are accredited and recognized by the city government as partners in solid waste management.

The participants expressed a strong desire for improved health and education for their families and the urgent need for regular work at the Material Recovery Facilities at the sanitary landfill and access to safe working environment with adequate hygiene and resting facilities e.g. potable water supply. Their concerns were heeded by the City officials and BENRO and recommended a just transition for them once the Bacolod Integrated Recycling and Technology Hub (BIRTH), a 25-hectare waste management complex with Materials Recovery Facilities in Brgy. Felisa, is in operation by 2026. This underscored the importance of collaboration and support in enhancing their working conditions and overall well-being.





Members of Informal Waste Sector gave testimonies during the workshop © GIZ

## Thailand

### Enhancing Midstream and Downstream Waste Management in Nan Province

AMUSE Thailand is developing comprehensive waste management strategy for Nan province to recommend measures to local authorities to improve its operation in the long run

In Thailand, Nan Town Municipality is a role model in terms of waste management at source or upstream municipal solid waste (MSW) management. Their “Low Carbon City” initiatives encourage tourists to separate waste at source e.g., installing waste segregation station at weekend street markets. Moreover, Nan Boutique Hotel is one of the hotels that actively implements waste separation practices and minimization of single-use packaging, which is certified by ASEAN Green Hotel Standard (2024–2026).

However, there are still some challenges for the midstream (e.g., waste collection and transportation) and downstream (e.g., treatment and disposal) MSW management in the province due to the increasing amount of waste from the consumption of tourism sector as well as the lack of suitable waste management facilities.

AMUSE Thailand is working with the expert team from King Mongkut’s University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT) to analyse the gaps in the current midstream and downstream waste management in Nan in order to come up with the situation assessment and potential short-, mid- and long-term measures improve its MSW management.

With the goals to eventually come up with strategic and technical recommendations to improve midstream and downstream municipal waste management to Nan Municipality, the experts conducted site visits to Nan province and inspect several waste management facilities in the province to assess and analysed its operation.

The next step is to develop the recommendations and present the findings to executives and implementers of relevant local authorities in Nan.



Waste management facilities in Nan © Komsilp Wangyao

## Viet Nam

### Green School Initiative: Waste Segregation Training at Schools

3RproMar: from green schools to green communities

From December 2024 to January 2025, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment of Soc Trang province (DONRE), in collaboration with GIZ Vietnam, organized a training course on "Raising Awareness and Technical Guidance on Waste Management and Segregation at Source in Schools" in Soc Trang province.

The training course was divided into 12 classes, including 06 classes for primary, secondary, and high school students; and 06 classes for teachers, officials from the Division of Education, Youth Union, Women's Union and Fatherland Front in the 3 districts of Cu Lao Dung, Tran De and Vinh Chau, Soc Trang province – pilot sites of 3RproMar project. The training course attracted 330 trainees, including 194 females. In particular, the training course also welcomed the participation of representatives from the People's Committee of 3 pilot districts, DONRE Soc Trang, school administrators and project officers of GIZ Vietnam.



Teachers and youth union officials participating in the training received recycled mesh bags from GIZ © GIZ Vietnam

The training course aims to raise awareness of teachers and students about the impact of plastic pollution on the environment and health, as well as the importance of waste segregation. Through the video "Technical Instructions on Classification of Domestic Solid Waste" released by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) and interactive activities such as group discussions and Q&A session, students were able to grasp the process and standards of waste sorting at source to accurately perform the steps according to the instructions.

Once they have a clear understanding of the instructions, teachers will be able to develop specific plans to implement waste sorting activities at their schools, in accordance with the actual conditions of each school. The trained students will become active communicators, able to guide their families and friends to spread the spirit of responsibility for waste sorting, maintaining cleanliness at school and at home. At the same time, they can support teachers in implementing activities, communication campaigns, competitions and events on waste sorting at schools.





Students of Chau Van Do Secondary School actively participated in interactive activities during the training session © GIZ Vietnam

This training, which is foundational in building a waste segregation practice community, with Soc Trang as the pioneering hub, was conducted under the framework of the 3RproMar and AMUSE Projects. The training also contributes directly to the goals of the 3RproMar project, which aims to Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle to prevent plastic waste leakage from land-based sources into the Bassac River of the Mekong Delta and eventually the ocean, bringing Viet Nam closer to its net-zero target and promoting a healthier ocean.



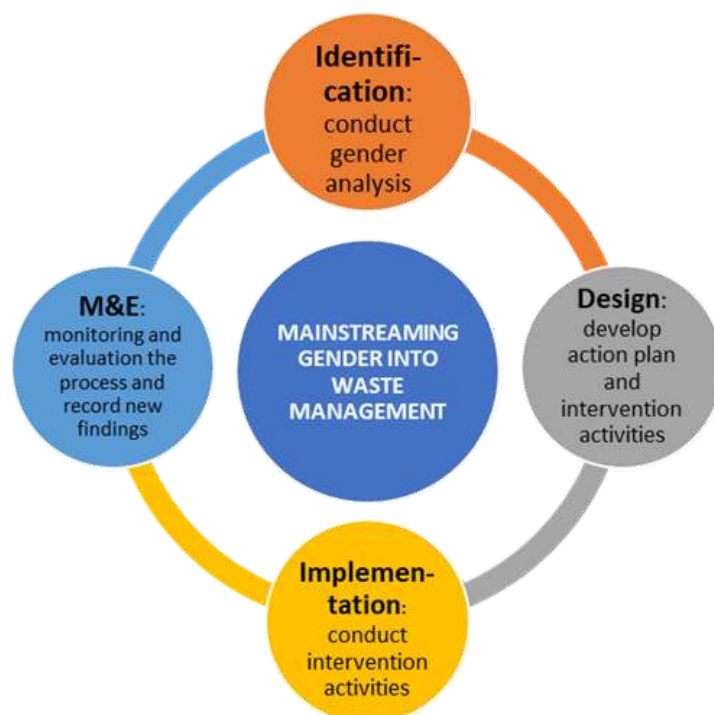
Students from Vinh Chau town primary school enthusiastically practiced waste segregation © GIZ Vietnam

## Mainstreaming Gender Initiatives

# Insights from the AMUSE Framework in Vietnam on bridging the Gender Perspective in Municipal Solid Waste Management

To ensure that all individuals benefit from development efforts regardless of background or circumstances, GIZ ensures to include gender equity and social inclusion into every project. In line with the Leave No One Behind (LNOB) guiding principle by United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the AMUSE project adopts inclusive approaches to address gender dynamics and social disparities within the waste management sector across medium-sized tourist cities in ASEAN member states.

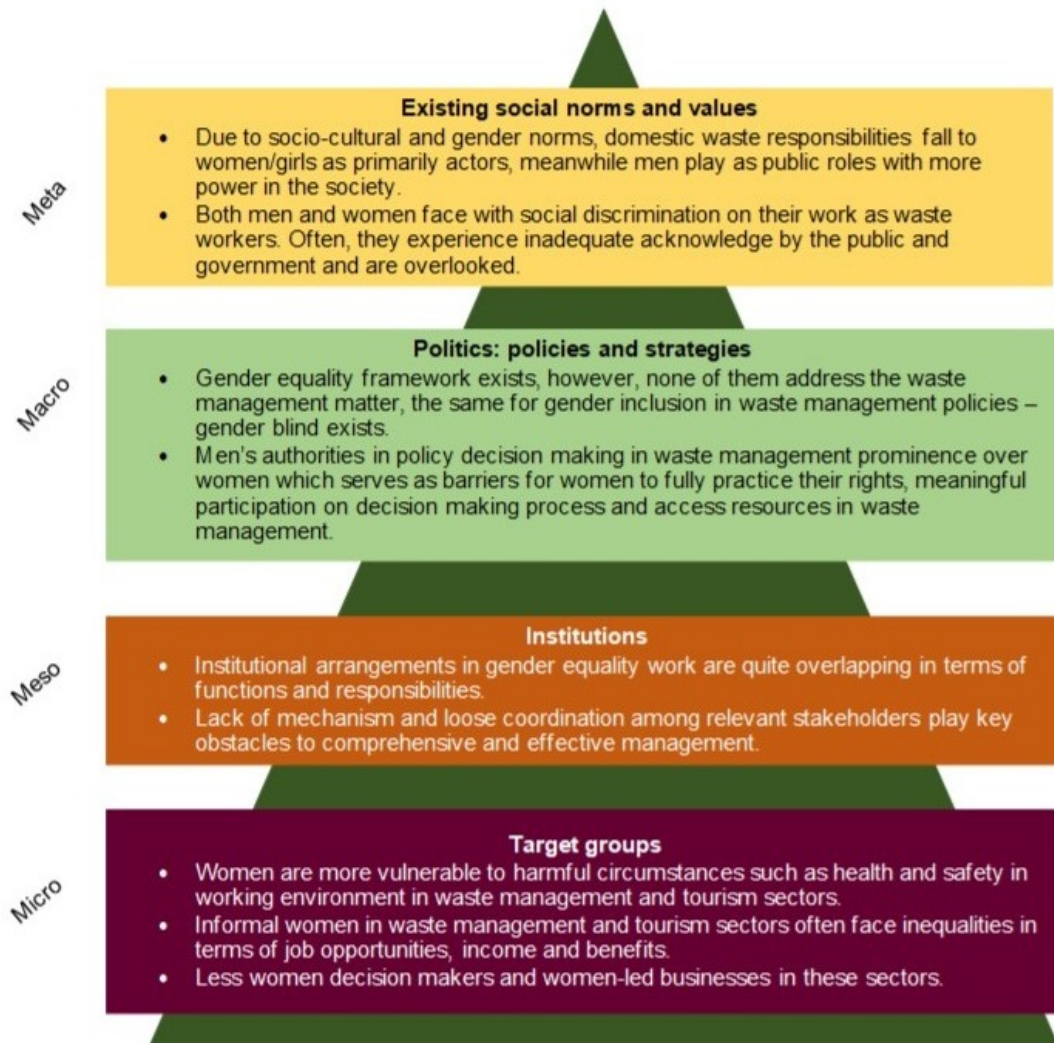
In Da Lat, Vietnam—one of AMUSE’s pilot cities—the project applies a cycle model approach, consisting of four key stages: identification, intervention design, implementation, and monitoring & evaluation.



Cycle model of gender approach © GIZ Vietnam

As a first step to ensure that gender considerations are effectively integrated into waste management and tourism policies, AMUSE Vietnam conducts gender analysis as seen in the cycle model approach. This analysis examines the landscape of gender mainstreaming and identifies challenges, opportunities, and areas for improvement in Da Lat's waste management and tourism sectors. The key findings are outlined below:





Key findings from AMUSE Vietnam gender study analysis © GIZ Vietnam

Based on the study results, three key strategies are identified as entry points for AMUSE Vietnam to further develop intervention activities with local partners' consultation as stated below:

1. **Enabling Environment:** strengthening institutional capacity and gender-responsive budgeting for SWM and sustainable tourism, which aims to create a more enabling environment for developing and implementing gender-responsive and inclusive sustainable tourism and solid waste management policies.
2. **Governance:** recognizing the roles and power/contributions of the informal sector in solid waste management and tourism to ensure better governance and equal treatment of all actors in the solid waste economy and sustainable tourism; create equal opportunities for every employee, especially disadvantaged workers, to access decent jobs.
3. **Rights:** Promote the improvement of the socio-economic rights of workers, especially informal workers and female workers, by improving the capacity and awareness of rights-holders about labour rights; strengthen the accountability of duty-bearers and the involvement of social organizations to ensure that workers' rights are adequately comprehended and practiced.





Women waste pickers on their work routine to collect recycles waste in Da Lat city © GIZ Vietnam

AMUSE Vietnam is then able to implement the intervention design above through activities that encompass gender-sensitive variable in the technical advice provided for ministerial and local waste management stakeholders. For example, currently AMUSE Vietnam is assisting in the development of national technical guidance on gender-sensitive public-private partnerships and a Training of Trainers (ToT) manual on waste sorting at source while incorporating gender perspectives.

This technical guidance is expectedly sanctioned and applied to the different governmental management level of Vietnam. In parallel, a series of capacity-building activities are being designed to strengthen the roles and leadership of women in the waste management and tourism sectors. Informal waste workers with the high rate of women are being focused to enhance their knowledge on health protection, safety and work protection.

In close collaboration with local partners, AMUSE Vietnam also supports the integration of gender and social inclusion into city-level waste management scheme and action plans on waste sorting at source. These efforts serve as a strategic roadmap and framework for relevant stakeholders to mainstream gender considerations into waste sorting policies and future sustainability initiatives. Institutionalizing gender-responsive policies is essential to achieve a comprehensive and inclusive waste management system that aligns with sustainable tourism goals.

Through collaborative efforts with local partners at multi levels, AMUSE Vietnam is working to bridge existing knowledge gaps on gender and its interconnections with waste management and tourism. Strengthening gender-sensitive policies and enhancing women's leadership in sustainability efforts will contribute to a more inclusive, resilient, and environmentally conscious future.

## Upcoming Events

### ■ March 2025

20 March: 6th PMU Meeting of AMUSE Thailand in Bangkok

### ■ April 2025

AMUSE - GGGI Pilot Project closing ceremony in Vang Vieng, Laos

### ■ May 2025

6 May: 4th Regional Workshop Series:

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle to Protect the Marine Environment and Coral Reefs (3RproMar)

### ■ June 2025

## Useful Links

### 3RproMar Project Page:

» <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/129342.html>

### AMUSE Project Page:

» <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/114732.html>

### ASEAN Environmental Hub:

» <https://environment.asean.org/>

### kNOwWaste Knowledge Platform:

» <https://knowwaste.net/>

### Regional Knowledge Centre for Marine Plastic Debris:

» <https://rkcmpd-eria.org/>

### International Knowledge Hub Against Plastic Pollution:

» <https://ikhapp.org/>

### ASEAN Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform:

» <https://ce.acsdsd.org/>

### AMUSE's Knowledge Products:

» <https://bit.ly/AMUSEKnowledgeProduct>

### AMUSE Regional Training Program Information:

» <https://www.knowwaste.net/MarineDebris/News/1057>

### AMUSE Regional Training Program Registration:

» [Webex Registration Link](#)

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