



PARTNERING WITH CITIES TO REDUCE OCEAN PLASTICS

THE MUNICIPAL WASTE RECYCLING PROGRAM | PHILIPPINES

In **Metro Manila**, Catholic Relief Services worked to improve informal waste collector operations and supported six low-income *barangays*² to develop solid waste management plans.

In **Metro Manila**, World Vision is partnering with Plastic Bank to incentivize collection and recycling.

MANILA

In **Puerto Princesa**, Candis III Marketing Cooperative is encouraging plastic waste reduction in marine protected areas.

In **Bacolod City**, the Philippine Reef & Rainforest Conservation Foundation is promoting zero waste convenience stores in coastal communities on Negros Island.

THE CHALLENGE

Each year, eight million metric tons of plastic pour into the world's ocean. This global crisis has origins in poor waste management systems of rapidly urbanizing coastal cities in developing countries. The Philippines—comprised of over 7,000 islands—is the world's third largest plastic polluter to the marine environment, contributing approximately 750,000 metric tons annually.¹

Keeping waste out of the ocean is a challenge in the Philippines because much of the country's solid waste ends up in open dumping sites, allowing leakage to waterways.¹ Although the country has passed legislation and created incentives at the national level for comprehensive solid waste management, supervision and rules enforcement are still weak at the subnational level; currently less than a quarter of Metro Manila's *barangays*² effectively implement a solid waste management system. These challenges lead to mismanaged plastics entering the ocean, threatening key livelihoods in the Philippines such as tourism and fishing.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT APPROACH

The 2018 Save our Seas Act encourages U.S. agencies to work with countries that discharge the largest amounts of solid waste into our ocean. Stopping pollution at the source is the most effective way to address this challenge while reducing the impact of plastic waste pollution on national and global economies.

A five-year (2016-2021) USAID-funded initiative, the Municipal Waste Recycling Program (MWRP), works in the Philippines, as well as Vietnam, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia, to reduce and prevent land-based sources of ocean plastic pollution. The program provides grants and technical assistance to local organizations for improving solid waste management and increasing waste recycling.

IMPACTS OF THE MUNICIPAL WASTE RECYCLING PROGRAM IN THE PHILIPPINES

With an expected investment of **\$1.4 million** from USAID, grantees are implementing innovative approaches to solid waste management in the Philippines. The first tranche of four grants are directly benefiting over **188,000 individuals** with improved solid waste management services and household-level waste management practices. A second tranche of four grants to commence mid-2019 will focus primarily on Manila Bay. These efforts are expected to create cleaner communities for approximately **1.3 million residents** in areas where MWRP works. Plastic waste diverted from the ocean through these projects further contributes to cleaner oceans worldwide. To date, impacts include:

Safeguarding Marine Protected Areas: The increasing contamination of plastic waste in marine protected areas in Puerto Princesa (Palawan) poses a serious threat to fishing and tourism livelihoods. USAID's grantee is providing technical assistance to municipal authorities and raising community awareness to mitigate this threat. MWRP has supported **more efficient waste management service provision to over 100,000 city residents** and raised awareness of household waste segregation and the impacts of marine plastics pollution **among 18,533 community members and youth**.

Addressing Root Causes of Plastic Waste Generation: Convenience stores (known as *sari-sari* stores in the Philippines) are ubiquitous in every community and have become a major source of mismanaged plastic waste nationwide, due to littering of plastic sachets used to sell consumer goods in small amounts to low-income families. In Bacolod City, USAID is reducing plastic packaging from consumer products by establishing eight **model zero-waste convenience stores** where consumers can buy household products through a dispensing system that utilizes inexpensive, reusable containers. The first model store, called *Wala Usik* "Nothing Wasted" doubles as a **hub for local entrepreneurs and companies to showcase products without plastic packaging**.

Improving Efficiency of the Recycling Sector: In Puerto Princesa, USAID supports over **100 informal waste collectors** to work more effectively with local authorities in the city's waste management system. In Metro Manila, informal waste collectors have become community recycling advocates, while raising their incomes through tools such as a mobile phone application that supports pricing stability, **resulting in higher profit margins and more reliable transactions**. In Metro Manila, another



PHOTO: USAID/PHILIPPINES

The Wala-Usik Sari-Sari Store is open for business in Negros Occidental.

"I love this idea. I want a wala usik (zero waste) sari-sari store in the center of Sipalay City."

- Maria Gina M. Lizares, Vice Mayor of Sipalay City

grantee organized informal waste collectors into **30 mini social enterprises** to improve their operations. After only four months, **members of these enterprises have increased their monthly earnings to \$229, which is above the region's minimum wage**.

Developing Effective Policies and Infrastructure: Strong, effective policies are key to the sustainability of MWRP initiatives after project conclusion. With USAID support, eight municipalities in the Southern Negros Marine Key Biodiversity Area³ now implement **strengthened Municipal Action Plans on Plastic Waste**. In Metro Manila, authorities representing **105,000 people living in six very poor barangays** have developed and are implementing localized solid waste management plans to strengthen waste collection, increase plastic recycling and divert waste from dumps and landfills. The cities of Navotas and Malabon within Metro Manila now consider these six barangays as **model solid waste management communities**. In Barangay Baseco (population **60,000**), USAID's grantee coordinated with the community and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources for the construction of two new materials recovery facilities to expand recycling with contributions from the Coca Cola Foundation.

1. Jambeck, J.R. et al. (2015). Plastic waste inputs from land into the ocean. *Science* 347(6223), 768-771. doi: 10.1126/science.1260352

2. Smallest administrative division in the Philippines, equivalent to village or neighborhood in metropolitan areas.

3. Key Biodiversity Areas are sites contributing significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity in terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems.