



Global Plastic Action Partnership Evaluation

Contribution stories and case studies from
Ecuador, Ghana, Indonesia, Mexico City,
Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Viet Nam

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Ecuador: GPAP contribution story

1. Country context

Ecuador is a lower-middle-income country with an economy based on oil, agriculture, mining, and services. Growth has been uneven due to fiscal constraints and external shocks. The country is highly biodiverse, including the Amazon, Andes, coast and Galápagos Islands, but faces environmental pressures from pollution, extractive activities, climate change, and plastic waste. Despite progress, poverty, inequality and regional disparities remain, alongside rising security and governance challenges.

Total waste generation in Ecuador has doubled over the past 20 years. In 2023, average daily waste generation reached 14,593 tonnes (GRECI and MAATE, 2024). Of the estimated 627,000 tonnes of municipal plastic waste generated in 2022, only 7.7% was recycled. A further 40.4% was mismanaged through open burning, uncontrolled dumping or environmental leakage (GPAP, 2024). Plastic pollution poses a serious threat to Ecuador's terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and, in turn, to the livelihoods of many communities. Research shows that Ecuador's Galápagos archipelago, one of the world's most important biodiversity hotspots, is affected by widespread coastal contamination from plastic waste. This pollution puts species at significant risk through entanglement and ingestion (GCT, 2024; Muñoz-Pérez et al., 2023). One study of waters surrounding the Galápagos Islands found that 100% of samples contained microplastic pollution (Alfaro-Núñez et al., 2021).

The mismanagement of plastic waste in Ecuador is linked to several systemic challenges. These include limited waste separation at source, insufficient waste management infrastructure, and constrained technical and financial capacity within municipal governments (Ochoa-Herrera et al., 2025). If these challenges persist and no additional measures are taken, national plastic waste generation could increase by 82%, reaching an estimated 1.14 million tonnes by 2040 (GPAP, 2024). Despite these challenges, Ecuador has taken important and ambitious steps to improve waste management and reduce plastic pollution. In 2021, the country adopted a circular economy law that promotes eco-design, sustainable production and consumption, waste reduction, and more inclusive waste management systems (Rodríguez-Meza et al., 2025). Earlier, in 2020, Ecuador introduced restrictions on certain single-use plastics, with stricter rules in protected and coastal areas, and banned the import of plastic waste (Lazo et al., 2024). A critical challenge at this time was the lack of coordinated, system-wide governance and unified data on plastic flows, with key ministries, municipalities and stakeholders operating in silos without a shared evidence base.

In September 2022, Ecuador joined the World Economic Forum's Global Plastic Action Partnership (GPAP) and, in April 2023, formally launched the National Plastic Action Partnership (NPAP), hosted by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Ecuador. The Ecuador roadmap, published in May 2024, identified a systems-change pathway to reduce plastic pollution by 60% by 2040 (GPAP, 2024). These findings are now informing the development of Ecuador's legally binding National Plan for Plastic Waste Reduction, which, when implemented, will embed the NPAP's work into national plastics governance, including NPAP-generated evidence, targets and initiatives.

2. Relevance

GPAP's approach in Ecuador is well aligned with the national context, as it addresses the country's main plastics governance challenges: rapidly rising plastic waste, weak coordination among actors, fragmented data, and limited capacity to deliver system-wide change. Before the NPAP existed, ministries, municipalities, private sector actors, waste picker organisations, NGOs, and researchers largely worked in silos.¹ The NPAP created a structured national platform that reflects how Ecuador's plastics system operates, including elevating the central role of informal waste pickers and the influence of private sector organisations. This inclusive design is particularly relevant in a country where poverty, informality, gender and spatial inequality shape both exposure to plastic pollution and access to solutions.

Many interviewees cited the roadmap's role in creating a credible, shared national evidence base as the starting point for coordinated action.² This helped fill major data gaps and highlighted the consequences of inaction. The roadmap's priorities, extended producer responsibility, gender and social inclusion, biodiversity, Galápagos-specific policy, and public behaviour change, closely reflect Ecuador's environmental risks and social realities. Evidence generated through the NPAP has also strengthened Ecuador's engagement in Global Plastics Treaty negotiations, giving the government greater confidence to adopt ambitious positions.³

One of the clearest areas of relevance was that the roadmap was frequently cited as a useful and credible document for government, civil society and the private sector. The roadmap and associated analysis provided Ecuador, for the first time, with a tailored and consolidated national baseline for plastic flows and a set of modelled future scenarios. This evidence was repeatedly cited by governmental and other actors as critical to strengthening internal policy discussions and international engagement.

The roadmap's integration into Ecuador's developing, legally binding National Plan for Plastic Waste Reduction further underscores the NPAP's relevance. Rather than remaining a voluntary or external strategy, the roadmap has influenced formal government planning, suggesting that the NPAP did more than convene dialogue, but also influenced national policy outcomes. It shaped decision-making processes. Additional studies on biodiversity impacts, gender and social inclusion, and extended producer responsibility expanded the scope of evidence to include ecological and social dimensions. While these studies have not yet translated into concrete programmes, they broadened the policy agenda and challenged narrow, waste-focused framings. Over the coming year, the NPAP plans to focus on aligning its growing evidence base and status as a trusted platform to design integrated actions that tackle interconnected challenges.

The role of women, marginalised and vulnerable communities is central to the Ecuador NPAP. For example, the NPAP has provided a platform for the representation of waste

¹ KII1 and NPAP Ecuador roadmap (2024).

² Particularly highlighted by KII1, KII8, and KII9.

³ Particularly highlighted by KII1, KII2, KII4, KII8, and KII9.

pickers in plastics governance across the public and private sectors, and many interviewees highlighted the NPAP's key role in elevating the status of informal waste workers.⁴ The role of women and marginalised groups is the focus of an NPAP-supported study undertaken by the PlastiCo Project.⁵ The study highlights the differential impacts of plastic pollution and identifies measures to support those most affected. It also notes that the discussion on gender and plastics has, to date, focused primarily on waste pickers. The study supports a comprehensive approach to understanding differentiated impacts across groups, including the private sector, waste pickers and other stakeholders, rather than limiting the analysis to a single segment of the chain. The study's relevance is weakened by limited financing to support implementation.

More broadly, there is a pattern in which several interventions (including the extended producer responsibility (EPR) scheme, gender analysis and biodiversity analysis⁶) remain at the research and design stage, with limited funding available for implementation, thereby reducing immediate benefits for communities most affected by plastic pollution. This financing gap was one of the most recurrent criticisms of the NPAP, particularly from actors in the informal sector and local NGOs, who perceive studies without dedicated implementation funds as a limited exercise. However, building evidence and awareness are critical first steps in driving behavioural change, strengthening capacity, and laying the foundation for coordinated action once resources become available. Overall, GPAP's work in Ecuador is highly relevant, but its long-term value depends on moving from planning to sustained delivery.

3. Efficiency

The Ecuador NPAP convened a national stakeholder workshop to identify five strategic priorities from the roadmap for immediate action. These were: (1) developing an EPR scheme for packaging; (2) scaling up reuse systems; (3) delivering a targeted behaviour-change campaign; (4) integrating gender and social inclusion considerations in the plastics value chain; and (5) strengthening plastic policies in the Galápagos. By focusing on these priorities, the NPAP avoided spreading its resources too thinly and instead focused on core actions to support the enabling conditions for long-term system change. Progress in each priority area supports the wider set of roadmap actions, which created a more manageable implementation approach.

Anchoring the NPAP within WWF Ecuador also improved delivery efficiency by leveraging existing institutional capacity, networks, and communications infrastructure. WWF's role as host enabled rapid mobilisation and visibility. Through positioning itself as a technical solution-focused secretariat, any perceptions of bias were quickly dispelled.⁷ A final efficiency benefit was the employment of a former government official as the NPAP lead, which meant personal trust was already in place.⁸

⁴ Particularly highlighted by KII1, KII3, KII4, KII5, KII7, KII8 and KII12.

⁵ Further detail about the study is presented as Intervention Summary 4 in Annex 3.

⁶ Each of these interventions is described in Annex 3.

⁷ This was discussed with KII1, KII14 and KII15.

⁸ Particularly highlighted by KII6 and KII12.

Efficiency was constrained by contextual factors largely outside the NPAP's control. Political instability, frequent changes in government personnel, and concerns over the personal safety of those conducting actions,⁹ slowed delivery and validation processes, particularly for the gender and social inclusion study. Coordination across three ministries, while critically important in generating strong long-term alignment and uptake of results within government frameworks, increased short-term transaction costs.¹⁰

4. Effectiveness

Process

The establishment of the NPAP created a neutral and trusted space for collaboration across sectors that had previously worked largely in isolation or interacted only occasionally.¹¹ The NPAP bridged between government ministries, private companies, civil society organisations, waste picker representatives and academic institutions. Instead of competing narratives, stakeholders engaged around a shared national evidence base, including data, modelling and policy analysis developed through the roadmap. This reduced information inequalities and improved collective understanding of the plastics system, which, in turn, helped identify problems in a structured, evidence-based way.¹² Interview evidence was overwhelmingly positive about the NPAP's convening role, with stakeholders highlighting improved coordination, transparency, credibility and trust.¹³ The NPAP also helped maintain continuity during periods of political change by providing institutional memory and a stable platform for engagement, even though frequent staff turnover, particularly in government agencies, required repeated orientation and relationship rebuilding.¹⁴ Alignment with government priorities, clear documentation, shared objectives, and established, stable processes and frameworks ensured that the onboarding of new representatives could be undertaken efficiently.

Change on the ground

Informal workers: The NPAP played an important role in increasing the visibility and recognition of informal waste workers within Ecuador's plastics governance system. Waste picker organisations were actively engaged in NPAP discussions and were explicitly acknowledged across studies, communications and policy processes. Interviewees highlighted that the NPAP elevated the status of informal workers by positioning them as essential actors rather than marginal stakeholders.¹⁵ Evidence from the gender and social inclusion study¹⁶ further showed how plastic pollution disproportionately affects women waste pickers, indigenous communities, and other vulnerable groups. While there is limited

⁹ For example, the gender study was delayed over concerns for the safety of researchers from the PlastiCo Project team due to political violence in some of the communities in which the study was undertaken.

¹⁰ Particularly highlighted by KII1.

¹¹ Particularly highlighted by KII1, KII8, and KII12.

¹² Particularly highlighted by KII3, KII7, and KII12

¹³ Particularly highlighted by KII2, KII3, KII4, KII6, KII7, KII8, KII8, KII9, and KII10.

¹⁴ Particularly highlighted by KII1 and KII6.

¹⁵ Particularly highlighted by KII3, KII4, KII7, KII8 and KII12.

¹⁶ This is described in further detail in Intervention Summary 4 in Annex 3.

evidence of large-scale improvements in livelihoods directly attributable to NPAP activities so far, the partnership has established a stronger evidence base to support more inclusive policy design. Practical benefits remain uneven and constrained by limited funding for implementation, but the NPAP has helped shift narratives and lay the groundwork for more equitable interventions.¹⁷

Circular economy: The NPAP supported Ecuador's transition towards a circular economy by focusing on upstream solutions rather than solely on downstream waste management. Through the roadmap and prioritisation process, stakeholders identified EPR, reuse systems, and behaviour change as key levers for system-wide change. The NPAP provided a platform for showcasing and legitimising circular economy initiatives, such as reuse models, and for advancing the design of policy instruments, such as an EPR scheme for plastic packaging. However, while planning and design work has been strong, there is limited evidence to date of measurable national-level reductions in plastic use or waste that can be directly attributed to NPAP actions.¹⁸ This, in part, reflects the early stage of implementation, but, more fundamentally, it reflects the NPAP's primary focus on catalysing system change rather than direct implementation.

Investment: A major constraint on effectiveness has been the lack of dedicated funding to scale NPAP-supported interventions. While resources were available for analysis, modelling, and convening, there has been little investment in implementation. As a result, many initiatives remain at the research or pilot design stage. Interviewees consistently noted that a dedicated fund, accessible to NPAP partners for scaling proven interventions, would significantly strengthen impact.¹⁹ Political instability and institutional turnover also reduced efficiency by slowing decision-making and increasing transaction costs, further highlighting the need for sustained financial and institutional support. Although the NPAP helped mitigate some of these risks, it could not fully overcome structural funding gaps.

Use of evidence: The NPAP made strong and effective use of evidence to inform both national policy and international engagement. The roadmap and associated modelling provided Ecuador with a credible national baseline for plastic flows and future scenarios, which many stakeholders described as transformative. This evidence strengthened internal policy discussions and gave the government greater confidence to adopt more ambitious positions in the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations. Ecuador demonstrated that higher standards were feasible by pointing to concrete national progress rather than mere rhetorical ambition. Civil society engagement through the NPAP further enhanced the legitimacy of these positions, with stakeholders consulted before and after international negotiations. Overall, the NPAP's emphasis on shared, policy-relevant evidence improved coherence between domestic action and international advocacy.

5. Impact

¹⁷ Particularly highlighted by KII13.

¹⁸ Particularly highlighted by KII4.

¹⁹ Particularly highlighted by KII2, KII5, KII6, and KII7.

Although many NPAP-supported interventions remain at an early stage, their impact extends beyond immediate reductions in plastic waste to include strengthened inter-ministerial coordination, greater political visibility, improved alignment between public and private sector actors, the development of a shared evidence base, and the integration of biodiversity and social inclusion into policy discussions. These have helped establish the enabling conditions for long-term, measurable change. Interviewees highlighted the roadmap as a credible pathway to impact, noting that under a systems-change scenario, Ecuador could reduce plastic pollution by 60% by 2040, compared with an 82% increase under business as usual.

An example of actual reduction in plastic waste is the Huella Verde reuse scheme, which resulted in 70 million single-use plastic items being avoided between September 2017 and September 2025, and 85,000 disposable items avoided per day at the scheme's current operating scale.²⁰ Although not directly supported financially by the NPAP, the NPAP has supported the public acceptability of reuse schemes through the production of a public-facing video, coordinated financial efforts with Huella Verde to operationalise the first stadium-based reusable cup model in partnership with the local football club Independiente del Valle, and has opened the possibility of supporting reuse in Galápagos.²¹

There is evidence of improved recognition of informal workers and marginalised groups, particularly waste pickers. Waste picker organisations were engaged through the NPAP, and their role was explicitly acknowledged in all studies and communications viewed as part of this evaluation. The gender and social inclusion study further highlighted differentiated impacts of plastic pollution on women, indigenous communities and vulnerable groups. While material improvements to livelihoods and working conditions have not yet been realised at scale, the evidence base to support more equitable policy design has been established and there are clear examples of improvements. For example, the Huella Verde reuse scheme employs 83 people (53% women) from vulnerable socio-economic situations, including internal migrants, and people with disabilities. Employees receive benefits beyond the minimum legal requirements, including private health insurance, interest-free emergency loans, and monthly training on financial literacy, health, and the prevention of gender-based violence.²²

The strongest impacts to date are institutional. Ecuador now has a functioning multi-stakeholder platform for plastics governance, a shared national evidence base, and greater coherence between domestic policy and international engagement.²³ The most significant impact is the integration of the roadmap into the national policy framework through the legally binding National Plan for Plastic Waste Reduction. The cross-ministry involvement in the roadmap and NPAP more generally, and associated ownership, has meant that there is little concern in using the roadmap and other NPAP outputs (such as the EPR and gender studies) as the basis for national action.²⁴ However, it is important to note that underlying

²⁰ This scheme is described in more detail in Intervention Summary 2 in Annex 3.

²¹ Particularly highlighted by KII1, KII5 and KII6.

²² Particularly highlighted by KII5.

²³ Particularly highlighted by KII9.

²⁴ Particularly highlighted by KII3, KII4, and KII12.

concerns were expressed about the lack of budgetary resources to implement the ambitious recommendations contained within these studies, which could delay tangible outcomes.²⁵

6. Sustainability

Several interviewees noted that while resources were available for the initial development of interventions (usually in the form of a study), none were available to elevate the study's results to the next level. For example, the study to develop the basis for an EPR system for plastic packaging and containers has no resources for follow-up funding to support the practical trial.²⁶ The absence of implementation funds was considered problematic by several interviewees and identified as a potential barrier to future support for the NPAP.²⁷ Some interviewees expressed scepticism about continuing to invest significant time if they do not see concrete progress beyond workshops and strategy documents.²⁸ However, it should also be recognised that the initial phase of the NPAP process was focused on evidence generation, coordination, and strategic alignment to create the enabling conditions for effective implementation.

It was clear that the sustainability of GPAP's contribution in Ecuador depends on whether the NPAP can transition from a planning and coordination platform to an implementation and delivery enabler. Several factors support sustainability, including the roadmap's integration into a legally binding national plan, cross-ministerial ownership of the plastics agenda, demonstration of incremental delivery, strong stakeholder trust in the NPAP process, and the continued relevance of the platform for international engagement. The NPAP has also built institutional memory and collaboration habits that are likely to persist beyond individual projects or personnel changes. However, risks to its sustainability include uncertain long-term funding for NPAP coordination, limited resources for implementation of roadmap priorities, dependence on a small core team, and a challenging international funding environment. Interview evidence repeatedly highlights the risk that momentum could be lost if implementation support does not follow planning.

7. Value for money

GPAP's expenditures in Ecuador have primarily funded coordination, analysis and convening actions rather than capital investments. Given this, GPAP appears to have delivered very good value for money, as it has created a highly respected and effective national platform that coordinates plastic governance across sectors and stakeholders at relatively low cost. Furthermore, incorporating aspects of the roadmap's targets, priorities, and interventions into legally binding national plastics governance systems is remarkable. The engagement of WWF Ecuador to host the NPAP appears to have been very beneficial, as the WWF team brings working practices, approaches, networks and creative communications that significantly enhance the NPAP. For example, NPAP events are organised according to the WWF stakeholder engagement guide, which provides very practical guidance to ensure that diversity and inclusion are critical considerations in event planning. Although not a priority

²⁵ Particularly highlighted by KII4 and KII13.

²⁶ For more detail see Intervention Summary 1 in Annex 3.

²⁷ Particularly highlighted by KII2, KII6, KII7, KII8, and KII10.

²⁸ Particularly highlighted by KII2 and KII5.

identified in the roadmap or the subsequent prioritisation exercise, the support provided by NPAP to Ecuadorian government and civil society actors engaged in the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations has been significant. Given that this is in addition to the NPAP workplan, it must be seen as offering additional value for money. Finally, the Ecuador NPAP has been effective at leveraging private sector funding for specific studies, such as the EPR analysis.

8. Lessons

Several lessons emerge from the Ecuador experience for GPAP:

1. **Evidence builds confidence:** Quantified modelling and clear baselines strengthened both domestic policy-making and international negotiation.
2. **Platforms matter:** A neutral convening space can unlock coordination that individual projects cannot.
3. **Inclusion must go beyond recognition:** Analytical work on equity is necessary but insufficient without implementation. This emerged as a core insight from stakeholder feedback.
4. **Sequencing is critical:** Planning and alignment must be followed by delivery funding. The current gap between strategy and resourced action is the primary threat to sustaining momentum.
5. **National–global links add value:** Domestic platforms can meaningfully shape global governance when well aligned.

Overall, GPAP's contribution in Ecuador through the WWF-hosted NPAP has been strongest as a system shaper and enabler, rather than a direct implementer. It has changed how plastics governance is understood, coordinated and negotiated. The challenge now is to convert this strong foundation into measurable environmental and social outcomes. This requires sustained investment focused on the implementation and scale-up of effective interventions.

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Appendix 1: The NPAP

Date NPAP launched	January 2023
Host organisation	WWF Ecuador
Key documents (with date)	Roadmap for action on plastics in Ecuador (May 2024)

Steering Group membership

Escuela Politécnica Nacional (EPN)	Academia
ESPOL	Academia
Universidad de San Francisco de Quito	Academia
Fondo Ambiental de Quito	Gobierno Local
Embajada Británica	Financiamiento
Clúster de Plásticos	Mixto - Privado, Gobierno
Aseplas	Privado
Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo	Organización no gubernamental
Empresa Flexiplast	Privado
Arca Continental/Coca-Cola	Privado
Nestlé	Privado
Grupo Gira	Privado
Grupo Mario Bravo	Privado
Mingas por el Mar	Sociedad Civil
RECIVECI	Sociedad Civil
ASAMTECH CIA. LTDA	Privado
MAE	Gobierno
MREMH	Gobierno
Secretaría de Ambiente de Quito	Gobierno Local
WWF	Organización no gubernamental
Huella Verde	Privado
Cámara de Industrias y Producción	Privado
Galápagos Conservation Trust	Organización no gubernamental
Pronaca	Privado
Empaqplast	Privado
Universidad Nacional de Loja	Academia
GIZ	Organización no gubernamental

Appendix 2: Intervention summaries

Intervention summary 1. Study examining the potential for an EPR scheme for plastic packaging and containers in Ecuador (Pronaca Ltd)

The following summary has been informed by interviews with Pronaca Ltd staff, government officials, and the Ecuador NPAP team, supported by a visit to Pronaca Ltd facilities in Quito on 17 November 2025.

1. Description of the intervention

A study is under way to explore the design of a new EPR system and law for plastic packaging and containers in Ecuador. The study, which will be completed in March 2026, is being led by Pronaca Ltd and has been funded by 10 private sector organisations, who together contributed USD 59,000. The study will underpin the design of a practical EPR pilot, which in turn will inform the design of the new EPR law. Ecuador already has six EPR schemes (including for wheels, lights, electronic waste, and batteries), but not plastic packaging. The study is nearing completion, with the law expected to be implemented in 3–4 years. A wide range of stakeholders is involved in the EPR scheme development, including recyclers, producers, unions, packaging suppliers, academia, government ministries and waste pickers, which offsets concerns about the private sector co-opting the process. The relevant government ministries have committed to using the results of the study and pilot as key inputs to the design of the law.

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The development of an EPR system for packaging was one of the five priorities identified by the NPAP community following the completion of the roadmap in 2023. The study is articulated under CEREP (Ecuadorian Consortium for Extended Producer Responsibility) and formally recognised by the Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition. The study is expected to fill key information gaps related to plastic packaging, such as production volumes, materials and current end-of-life fate. This will be useful information for the entire NPAP community and inform other initiatives and interventions, including in the development and implementation of the plastic pollution plan. Given the experience of six other EPR schemes already operating in Ecuador and significant global experience in EPR design and delivery, there was speculation that a pilot might be unnecessary and would delay action. However, it was asserted that, given Ecuador's economic and legal specificities, practical testing of an EPR scheme would be needed before a reliable and effective nationwide plastic packaging EPR law could be implemented. Given the global experience of EPR schemes for plastic packaging and the potential to learn from existing EPR schemes in Ecuador, this perspective is debatable, but not unreasonable.

3. Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

Pronaca have a Circular Economy Manager whose role is to manage the EPR study.

4. Results of the intervention

During the site visit, the Pronaca team indicated that the study is progressing well. At present, there is no estimate of the waste savings associated with introducing an EPR scheme for plastic packaging and containers.

5. Why was it effective or not?

The intervention is still underway. However, it was reported that there is an agreement in place that once the full trial is complete, the resultant EPR scheme and associated lessons learned will be the basis for a new EPR scheme for plastic packaging in Ecuador.

6. GPAP's role

The development of an EPR scheme for plastic packaging was one of the five priorities identified by stakeholders from the Ecuador roadmap. The NPAP team have therefore supported the development of the EPR trial led by Pronaca. It was reported from stakeholders that NPAP support added further impetus to the trial and that the NPAP focus on EPR provided the platform to progress the trial in a collaborative pre-competitive manner.²⁹ There has been no direct support from GPAP.

7. Sustainability and forward look

There was a high degree of confidence among stakeholders that the intervention will make a lasting difference. This was due to the ongoing support for the intervention from all relevant government ministries and the agreement in place that the study and trial would become the basis for a new EPR law for packaging. However, there is currently no funding to support the pilot testing of the EPR scheme. Similarly, it was highlighted by stakeholders that investment in relevant technology will be needed to support the pilot, such as a dedicated app, blockchain verification, and automatic payment. It was noted that there is also no funding to support awareness raising for consumers to be ready to participate in the trial.

²⁹ KII2 indicated that the NPAP process elevated the significance of the study and that the roadmap illustrated the potential contribution of an EPR scheme in addressing plastic pollution in Ecuador. This interpretation was confirmed during KII1 and KII12.

Intervention summary 2: Scaling up reuse (Huella Verde)

The following summary has been informed by interviews with Huella Verde staff, government officials, the Galápagos Conservation Trust, WWF Communications team and the Ecuador NPAP team.

1. Description of the intervention

This intervention is a market-based reuse system delivered by Huella Verde, a social enterprise and certified B Corp operating in Ecuador since 2017. The intervention replaces single-use plastic tableware in shopping mall food courts with a centralised reusable service model. Huella Verde provides the full service: durable reusable plates, cups, cutlery and trays; collection after use; industrial washing and professional sanitisation; and redistribution back to food outlets. The service cost is covered by shopping mall operators or shared among participating restaurants. The intervention started in September 2017 and is now fully operational and scaled, operating in 11 shopping malls with a twelfth in development (as of late 2024). The model survived a major disruption during COVID-19, when perceptions that single-use plastics were safer temporarily set back demand. Huella Verde responded by strengthening and visibly demonstrating hygiene protocols. The intervention is financially self-sustaining, generating over USD 1 million in annual revenue through service contracts. It does not rely on GPAP, NPAP, donor funding or public subsidies.

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The intervention is highly relevant because it directly addresses plastic pollution prevention, rather than downstream waste management. It demonstrates that reuse systems are operationally viable, scalable, and acceptable to consumers in a middle-income country context. It is strategically important for three reasons: (1) System change focus: the model replaces disposables entirely, avoiding plastic at source rather than relying on recycling; (2) Proof of concept: it provides real-world evidence that reuse can function at scale in high-throughput environments such as food courts; and (3) Policy relevance: the intervention offers practical insight into how reuse could be supported through policy, incentives, and procurement frameworks. The intervention also aligns with NPAP priorities on reuse and circular economy. Huella Verde is recognised within the NPAP as a “champion” reuse case, serving as a reference point for pilots (e.g. stadium reuse systems) and policy discussions. However, the interview highlights the strategic gap that current policies do not reward the prevention of plastic waste. There are no tax incentives, subsidies or regulatory advantages for reuse models, which limits their wider uptake despite their proven impact.

3. Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

The LOE is high, particularly in the early stages. Key effort drivers include convincing shopping mall operators to adopt a new service model; competing with very low-cost virgin plastic disposables; building and maintaining logistics, washing infrastructure, and quality control; ongoing behaviour change and communication with consumers and vendors; and managing a labour-intensive operation. The intervention required long-term commercial commitments to be viable. Huella Verde secured its first contract with a five-year guarantee

and a minimum number of participating restaurants, reducing financial risk and enabling investment in infrastructure. While financially sustainable at present, the model required several years of sustained effort before achieving scale.

4. Results of the intervention

The intervention has delivered quantified environmental and social results, including: 70 million single-use plastic items avoided between September 2017 and September 2025; 85,000 disposable items avoided per day at current operating scale; and 700,000 reusable items washed and recirculated per week. Social outcomes include 83 employees (53% women), employment of people in vulnerable socio-economic situations, including internal migrants, employment of three people with disabilities, and the provision of benefits beyond legal requirements, including private health insurance, interest-free emergency loans, monthly training on financial literacy, health and prevention of gender-based violence. These results demonstrate both waste avoidance and improved livelihood quality, although impacts are concentrated in urban commercial settings rather than nationwide.

5. Why was it effective or not?

The intervention is effective at reducing reliance on single-use plastics and at avoiding waste. Furthermore, the scheme is based on a clear, financially viable business model, not on grants or temporary pilots, which demonstrates its feasibility and reduces perceived risk for adopters. It invested heavily in hygiene transparency, overcoming cultural resistance to reuse. It aligned environmental goals with operational reality in commercial settings. Key barriers included strong price competition from cheap virgin plastics, cultural perceptions that disposables are safer or more convenient, a lack of government incentives for reuse, and poorly designed pilots elsewhere that undermine confidence in reuse models. It was emphasised that “teaching by example” was more effective than awareness campaigns or theoretical arguments at making the case for reuse schemes.

6. GPAP's role

GPAP's role has been indirect but enabling, through the NPAP platform. Specific contributions include providing visibility and legitimacy, notably through a professionally produced NPAP/WWF video showcasing Huella Verde. Offering a seat at the table, enabling Huella Verde to participate as a speaker and practitioner in NPAP events. Recognising Huella Verde as a reuse champion, which led to participation in high-profile pilots such as the Independiente del Valle stadium. GPAP/NPAP did not provide funding or operational support. Its value lay in convening power, networks, and credibility, particularly for engagement with government and large institutions.

7. Sustainability and forward look

The intervention is financially sustainable and not dependent on external funding. Its continuation does not rely on GPAP or NPAP support. However, scaling impact will depend on policy incentives that reward plastic waste prevention and reuse, public procurement and regulatory frameworks that favour reusable systems, better integration of reuse with recycling and waste picker livelihoods, and support for replication in new contexts (stadiums, events, islands). Huella Verde's future vision includes expanding reuse into new

sectors and geographies, supporting other entrepreneurs through a circular business incubator, and replicating reuse models in sensitive contexts, such as the Galápagos (for which there is significant support). Overall, the intervention shows that reuse is technically and economically feasible, but that policy and market conditions are not yet aligned to support rapid scale-up.

Intervention summary 3. Assessing the impact of plastic pollution on Ecuador's biodiversity

The following summary has been informed by interviews with staff from the San Francisco University of Quito (USFQ), government officials, WWF Communications team and the Ecuador NPAP team.

1. Description of the intervention

This intervention was a national scientific study led by researchers at Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ) titled “Assessment of the Impacts of Plastic Pollution on Ecuador's Biodiversity”. The study brought together existing scientific evidence, field-based information, and spatial data to map where plastic pollution poses the greatest risk to nature. It linked its findings directly to Ecuador's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), including a specific goal on plastic pollution. The research used several methods simultaneously: a review of scientific papers, workshops and interviews with communities and experts, citizen science data collected via mobile tools, and spatial mapping to identify high-risk areas. The work has now been completed.

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The study provides the first integrated national picture of how plastic pollution and biodiversity overlap in Ecuador. It shows clearly that the country's most important biodiversity hotspots are also the areas most exposed to plastic pollution. This evidence is strategically important because it helps policymakers prioritise action, links plastic pollution to biodiversity commitments, and supports the case for prevention-focused policies rather than relying mainly on clean-ups. The findings are especially relevant for sensitive and globally important areas such as the Galápagos.

3. Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

The study was delivered under tight time and resource constraints. It required significant effort from the research team, including extensive coordination, rapid evidence synthesis, multiple workshops, interviews, and data analysis. Funding was provided by the Government of Canada through the Global Plastic Action Partnership (GPAP), with additional in-kind contributions from USFQ, WWF Ecuador, and participating communities and experts.

4. Results of the intervention

The study (1) identified that Ecuador's biodiversity hotspots are also the areas at highest risk from plastic pollution, with the Galápagos being the most affected; (2) documented impacts of plastics on at least 52 species, mainly in coastal and marine ecosystems; (3) highlighted major data gaps, particularly in the Amazon region, where information and awareness are

very limited; (4) showed that most concrete action on plastics at national level is currently led by NGOs and the private sector; and (5) produced risk maps and evidence that can be used directly in national policy and planning.

5. Why was it effective or not?

The intervention was effective in identifying and mapping threats to Ecuador's biodiversity arising from plastic pollution. The study triangulated its findings through multiple research methods, thereby strengthening the credibility of the results. It was also effective because it connected scientific findings to real-world policy frameworks, especially national biodiversity targets. However, the researchers noted that limited time and resources meant they could not do as much fieldwork or as many interviews as they would have liked, particularly in remote regions such as the Amazon.

6. GPAP's role

GPAP played a critical enabling role. The GPAP and NPAP framework gave the study credibility, political backing, and convening power. When researchers invited people to take part in workshops and interviews, the association with GPAP, WWF, and USFQ helped secure participation and trust. Stakeholders recognised GPAP as the platform driving Ecuador's national plastics agenda. The researchers believe the study might eventually have happened without GPAP, but not at the same speed, scale, or level of coordination.

7. Sustainability and forward look

The researchers see strong potential to build on this work through citizen science. They recommend strengthening and institutionalising citizen reporting tools so people can continuously record cases where plastics affect wildlife. This could create a long-term, living database to support policy, raise awareness and guide action. More broadly, the study points to the need for sustained investment in waste management, stronger prevention measures to reduce plastic at source, and better coordination across sectors to turn evidence into action.

Intervention summary 4. Study examining the effects of exposure to plastic across the value chain based on gender, sexual diversity, and vulnerable groups

The following summary is informed by interviews with staff from PlastiCo (who conducted the study), government officials, informal waste groups and the Ecuador NPAP team. This was supplemented by attending the launch presentation of the study on 21 November 2025 in Quito.

1. Description of the intervention

This intervention is a research study that examines how plastic pollution affects different people across the entire plastic value chain, from oil extraction and production to consumption and waste disposal. It focuses on gender, sexual diversity (LGBTQ+), and vulnerable groups, including children, migrants and indigenous peoples. The purpose is to make visible how plastics are not a neutral environmental issue, but one that creates and

reinforces social inequalities, and to connect plastics policy with human rights, gender equality and social inclusion. The study uses a mixed and inclusive methodology, drawing on semi-structured interviews with experts and people working across the plastic value chain, focus groups, including specific groups with waste pickers; review of national laws, policies, budgets and official data sources; and inclusive outreach to women, LGBTQ+ people, and intercultural groups, using accessible, non-technical language. A strong ethical approach was applied to avoid re-victimisation. Participants were not asked to relive personal trauma, but to describe what they observe in their communities and workplaces. A key step was a validation workshop with all NPAP actors, where findings and proposed indicators are discussed, tested, and refined. The study is currently in this validation phase.

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The intervention is strategically important because it brings a GESI (gender, equity and social inclusion) lens into plastics policy, an area that has traditionally focused on materials and waste systems rather than people. The GESI analysis shows that discussions about gender and plastics are often too narrowly focused on waste pickers, while major impacts also occur in oil extraction and petrochemical production, household consumption and care roles, and waste disposal sites and contaminated territories. Using an intersectional approach, the study highlights how gender, ethnicity, poverty and place interact to shape exposure to pollution and health risks, as well as access to rights. For example, indigenous territories are often also sacrifice zones for waste and extractive activities, women, especially as caregivers, experience the impacts of contamination first and most directly, and LGBTQ+ people and women face additional barriers to safe work and leadership across the value chain. The study aligns with the NPAP roadmap and its five core areas, reframes national plastics regulations through a human rights lens, and supports Ecuador's engagement in the Global Plastics Treaty negotiations by generating evidence that reflects lived realities rather than just technical solutions.

3. Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

Although no detailed budget is available, the LOE is significant. The work requires time-intensive qualitative research (interviews, focus groups and analysis), careful facilitation to ensure inclusion and ethical engagement, synthesis of social evidence into practical indicators for policy use, and significant coordination to link findings to NPAP processes and international negotiations.

4. Results of the intervention

The study has produced strong preliminary findings:

- **Invisibility of inequality.** Many actors in the plastic value chain do not recognise gender, ethnic, or social inequalities within the system.
- **Disproportionate impacts on women.** Women waste pickers show higher rates of illness, including cancers and urinary infections. Women are more exposed to pollution through their caregiving roles (food, water, health), yet have less decision-making power.

- **Indigenous and peripheral territories as sacrifice zones.** Most open dumpsites are located near rivers and protected areas, violating environmental and human rights. Plastic pollution compounds existing inequalities linked to oil extraction and poverty.
- **Hidden impacts of consumption policies.** State programmes such as school breakfasts rely heavily on single-use plastics, generating waste that remote communities cannot manage and, in some cases, leading to plastic burning and air pollution affecting children.
- **Gendered labour gaps across the chain.** Women remain concentrated in lower-paid, higher-risk roles. Leadership, technical training, and mechanised roles are dominated by men. Care responsibilities and a lack of workplace support limit women's participation.

5. Why was it effective or not?

The intervention is effective because it uses a participatory and inclusive methodology, involving people directly affected by plastic pollution, applies an intersectional GESI framework, moving beyond a narrow focus on recycling, is directly linked to policy processes, including the NPAP roadmap and treaty negotiations, and produces indicators designed for action and monitoring, not just reporting. A key challenge is that many plastics experts are unfamiliar with gender and human rights issues. This is addressed through carefully designed workshops that use real-world examples, mapping, and small-group discussions to make complex issues understandable and relevant.

6. GPAP's role

GPAP, through its support to the NPAP, provides the platform, legitimacy and convening power that enable this work. It connects local organisations and researchers with national policy discussions, cross-sector stakeholders, and international processes, including the Global Plastics Treaty. Interviewees noted that GPAP could strengthen its impact further by opening more events to local actors, particularly women, LGBTQ+ groups and community organisations, to deepen inclusion and ownership.

7. Sustainability and forward look

The long-term value of this intervention depends on whether its findings and indicators are taken up by the NPAP and translated into real action. Key priorities going forward include securing funding for practical implementation, not just analysis or policy drafting, improving feedback loops between local experience and international negotiations, supporting peer learning between NPAPs in different countries, and using the indicators as tools to improve working conditions, reduce risks, and strengthen social and environmental justice across the plastic value chain. If adopted, this study provides a strong foundation for a more inclusive, equitable, and people-centred plastics policy in Ecuador.

Intervention summary 5: Development of a plastic pollution prevention policy for Galápagos

The following summary is informed by interviews with staff from the Galápagos Conservation Trust, private sector organisations, academic institutions, government officials, and the Ecuador NPAP team.

1. Description of the intervention

This intervention supports the design and development of a provincial ordinance to reduce single-use plastics in the Galápagos Islands. The ordinance is a local legal instrument that operates within Ecuador's national plastics framework but is adapted to the Galápagos' Special Regime, recognising its unique ecological and governance context. The work is led by the Government of Galápagos, with Galápagos Conservation Trust (GCT) and WWF, working through the NPAP, acting as technical partners and facilitators. They provide legal expertise, scientific evidence, and coordination across stakeholders. The intervention began around 18 months ago, with intensive work on the ordinance starting in the second year of NPAP implementation once joint funding was secured. The ordinance is now in an advanced drafting stage and is expected to be approved in early 2025. It includes a detailed action plan with short, medium and long-term measures. Importantly, the intervention also secured a dedicated chapter for Galápagos within Ecuador's National Plastics Reduction Plan, ensuring alignment between local and national policy and linking the ordinance to a future Marine Debris Plan for the islands.

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The intervention is strategically important because Galápagos faces a unique plastics challenge. Around 40% of plastic pollution comes from fishing activities outside the marine reserve, and more than 50% arrives from mainland Ecuador, meaning local clean-up efforts alone are not enough. Through the NPAP, the intervention shifted the focus from a narrow, downstream emphasis on beach clean-ups to a more systemic, prevention-focused approach. This includes upstream measures such as reuse systems, behavioural change, incentives and discussions around EPR, even in a remote island context. The NPAP provided GCT with a seat at the national policy table, allowing Galápagos' needs to be recognised within national planning for the first time. It also helped build bridges between national ministries and the islands, including visits by central government technical teams to Galápagos, which strengthened understanding and political commitment.

3. Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

The intervention involved a high but targeted LOE over an extended period.

Funding was co-financed, with GPAP/NPAP providing catalytic funding and GCT contributing additional resources. This enabled hiring a full-time legal expert, which was critical given the ordinance's technical complexity. Effort varied by phase, with early diagnosis and planning requiring sustained daily input, drafting and stakeholder workshops requiring regular weekly engagement over several months, while the current approval phase involves lighter but ongoing coordination and follow-up.

4. Results of the intervention

Key results include the official recognition of Galápagos as a special case within Ecuador's national plastics policy framework. This included the development of a comprehensive provincial ordinance, going beyond bans to include incentives for sustainable consumption, communication and awareness campaigns, improvements to recycling infrastructure, and elements of reuse and returnable systems. Galápagos priorities were integrated into the National Plastics Reduction Plan, strengthening policy coherence across scales and stronger coordination between local actors, national ministries and international partners.

5. Why was it effective or not?

The intervention has been effective because it combined several critical factors: (1) a strong partnership between GCT, WWF, NPAP, and government, blending local knowledge, national convening power, and legal expertise; (2) the use of robust scientific evidence, including analysis of coastal clean-up data, to inform policy design; (3) the presence of an internal government champion who understood both national policy and the Galápagos context; and (4) continuous technical support and institutional memory, which helped maintain momentum despite frequent political and staff turnover. Key barriers included political instability and weak institutional continuity, but these were largely overcome through the persistence of the technical partners and strong alignment of policies across levels.

6. GPAP's role

GPAP, through its support to the NPAP, played a critical enabling and catalytic role.

It provided a national convening platform where Galápagos actors could engage directly with ministries and other stakeholders, legitimacy and visibility for Galápagos issues within national decision-making, catalytic funding, which unlocked additional co-financing and enabled dedicated legal expertise, and ongoing technical continuity and institutional memory, helping to sustain progress despite changes in government personnel.

7. Sustainability and forward look

The approval of the ordinance and its integration into the National Plan provide a strong foundation for long-term impact. However, there is a clear risk that the ordinance could remain "on paper" without adequate resources for implementation.

Key priorities going forward include funding and technical support for implementation, including communication campaigns, reuse pilots, and recycling infrastructure improvements; positioning Ecuador and Galápagos as a global leader, using this integrated approach to attract further international support; continued GPAP/NPAP engagement to provide stability during political transitions; and stronger action to address mainland sources of plastic pollution, which account for more than half of the plastics reaching the islands. Overall, the intervention demonstrates how a national platform like the NPAP can translate global ambition into locally relevant, system-level policy change for a globally important biodiversity hotspot.

Intervention summary 6: Public communication campaign

The following summary is informed by interviews with staff from the WWF Communications team, NGOs, government officials and the Ecuador NPAP team.

1. Description of the intervention

This intervention is the communication strategy for Ecuador's NPAP, led by WWF Ecuador. Its purpose is to raise public awareness of plastic pollution, promote solutions aligned with the NPAP roadmap, and clearly position the NPAP as a multi-sector platform rather than a single organisation or WWF-led project. The strategy combines internal communication, public campaigns, storytelling and high-visibility events. Activities include regular newsletters for NPAP members, coverage of major milestones (such as the launch of the roadmap and baseline studies), and creative methods to help stakeholders understand key concepts, such as circular economy and prevention. A strong focus is placed on storytelling, using short videos to highlight real-world solutions and actors across the plastics system, including waste pickers and reuse initiatives. The NPAP acts as a "presenter", helping these actors gain visibility and support. The strategy also includes large-scale public campaigns and pilots, such as national awareness campaigns and communication interventions at football stadiums, designed to reach audiences not usually engaged in environmental debates.

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The intervention is strategically important because it helps translate complex plastics policy into understandable, engaging messages for the general public while reinforcing the NPAP roadmap as the central framework for action. It plays a key role in making plastics a visible national issue, not just a technical or environmental one. This positions NPAP as an umbrella that brings together government, civil society, business and communities, connecting public communication with real policy priorities and system change, rather than isolated awareness campaigns. By using non-traditional spaces such as football stadiums and emotionally engaging narratives, the strategy reaches new and less sensitised audiences, expanding the social base for plastics action in Ecuador.

3. Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

No detailed budget is provided, but the LOE is medium to high. The intervention requires ongoing coordination with a fast-moving, multi-actor NPAP, the production of professional communication materials (videos, campaigns, visual content), the organisation of large-scale public events and pilots, and continuous content development and dissemination across multiple channels. It also involves significant effort to manage NPAP branding alongside the identities of many partner organisations.

4. Results of the intervention

Key results reported by the WWF Communications team include:

- Wide public reach, with national campaigns reaching more than 2.3 million people through social media, cinemas, billboards and press coverage.
- Increased visibility of NPAP as a national platform rather than a WWF project.

- Greater awareness of both upstream and downstream solutions, including reuse systems and the role of waste pickers.
- Successful engagement of new audiences through football-related interventions and symbolic actions.
- Practical learning from stadium pilots, showing that waste bins alone are not enough and that systemic redesign of waste management is needed at large events.

5. Why was it effective or not?

The intervention employed effective messaging through clear storytelling and strong symbols (e.g. recycled plastic footballs, well-known athletes) to spark interest and conversation. It linked communication directly to the NPAP roadmap, thereby avoiding disconnected messages. It tested communication ideas in real-world settings, turning communication activities into learning pilots, and leveraged WWF's communication capacity while consistently reinforcing NPAP's collective identity. Challenges include managing public impatience for quick solutions, keeping up with the pace of NPAP activities, and the current lack of indicators that measure changes in understanding or behaviour rather than just reach.

6. GPAP's role

GPAP plays an indirect but important role by supporting the NPAP framework that gives legitimacy, content, and direction to the communication strategy. Through the NPAP, GPAP helps ensure that communication efforts are aligned with national priorities, multi-sector collaboration, and international plastics action, rather than standalone awareness activities.

7. Sustainability and forward look

The sustainability of the intervention depends on continuing to innovate while strengthening the measurement of impact. Key priorities going forward include developing better indicators that track changes in perception, understanding and engagement (not just audience size), deepening audience analysis (including gender-disaggregated data), expanding partnerships and formats (including links to international initiative) and continuing to clearly communicate what NPAP is and why it matters. If these steps are taken, the communication strategy can continue to support long-term, systemic change in how plastics are understood and addressed in Ecuador.

Intervention summary 7. GPAP subgrant for a Zero Waste community project in Imbabura

The following summary is based on interviews with staff from the PlastiCo Project and the Ecuador NPAP team. It was supplemented by a written report on the progress of subgrant implementation provided by the NPAP secretariat on 15 December 2025.

1. Description of the intervention

This intervention is a Zero Waste community project in Imbabura (Otavalo area) led by the PlastiCo Project, supported through a GPAP subgrant. It focuses on building skills, organisation, and safer working conditions for informal vendors and waste pickers, many of

whom are indigenous people, migrants, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. The project runs separate yet linked community workshops for informal vendors and waste pickers. It aims to reduce plastic pollution in a highly touristic area near protected ecosystems, while also improving livelihoods, dignity and inclusion. Key activities included capacity-building workshops for informal vendors in the Araque community, co-design of a community-level Zero Waste model, developed and validated by community members, training workshops for waste pickers, delivered with support from the national waste picker alliance (RANAREC), provision of childcare during training sessions to enable participation, and distribution of basic protective equipment such as gloves, masks and reusable bags. Most technical activities have been completed, although the project could not fully finish due to serious socio-political instability in the area.

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The intervention is strategically important because it addresses plastic pollution through a human rights and inclusion lens rather than an environmental one. Imbabura is a highly touristic region near protected areas, where pollution directly affects ecosystems, livelihoods and community wellbeing. Informal vendors and waste pickers play a key role in the local plastic system but are often invisible in policy and decision-making. The project is also important because many participants are indigenous people and migrants (including asylum seekers), whose living and working conditions are highly precarious; it strengthens community governance, working with indigenous authorities and local organisations; and it shows how Zero Waste approaches can support both environmental protection and social justice, especially in complex territorial settings.

3. Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

The LOE for this intervention is high, particularly for a small organisation.

The project required intensive community engagement and participatory workshop facilitation, coordination with indigenous authorities, waste picker organisations, and local governments, provision of transport, food, childcare, and materials to ensure participation by vulnerable groups, and ongoing adaptation due to political unrest and safety risks. Although most activities were completed, the fixed grant timeline did not allow flexibility to fully respond to worsening security and governance conditions.

4. Results of the intervention

Despite major challenges, the project team has reported the following results:

- 79 people directly benefited, including informal vendors and waste pickers
- Capacity-building for informal vendors was completed in full
- A Zero Waste roadmap and model were co-designed and formally validated by 38 community participants
- 75% of waste picker training was completed, covering rights, inclusion and improved working methods
- Childcare support enabled women's participation in training
- Protective equipment was partially delivered

- Formal cooperation agreements were signed with indigenous organisations and local government bodies (with one municipal agreement close to completion).

Participants gained skills, visibility, confidence and stronger organisation, alongside practical support such as food, transport, and childcare.

5. Why was it effective or not?

The intervention was effective because it was highly participatory, with communities shaping the Zero Waste model themselves, inclusive, actively supporting indigenous people, migrants, women, and people with disabilities, grounded in local realities, including tourism pressures and environmental risks, and linked to broader advocacy through RANAREC and national waste picker movements. However, effectiveness was limited by severe socio-political instability and safety risks in Otavalo, the breakdown in trust when the project could not be fully completed as promised, and limited flexibility in grant rules, which did not allow timeline extensions despite force-majeure conditions.

6. GPAP's role

GPAP provided initial subgrant funding for the project. However, several challenges in the way this support operated were reported. Key issues identified include limited flexibility to adapt timelines in complex and unstable contexts, communication mainly in English, which created barriers for small, local organisations, limited early coordination between GPAP, NPAP and the grantee, and a strong focus on reporting results, with less attention to supporting adaptive implementation. The lack of flexibility on project delivery created financial and reputational risks for PlastiCo. The project team were forced to extend the project timeline due to politically motivated violence in some of the focal communities, but the funding timeline could not be altered to reflect this challenge. This strained trust with indigenous communities, who were unaware of the project management challenges PlastiCo were dealing with.

7. Sustainability and forward look

The long-term value of this intervention depends on whether the unfinished elements can be completed and the trust of communities restored. Key lessons and recommendations include: (1) longer and more flexible grant timelines for projects working in fragile contexts; (2) earlier and closer dialogue between GPAP, NPAP and grantees, ideally in Spanish; (3) more regular check-ins to support implementation, not just reporting; and (4) greater recognition that progress in complex social settings is non-linear. The Zero Waste model developed through the project remains a strong foundation. With continued support, it could still deliver lasting environmental and social benefits for vulnerable communities in Imbabura.

Intervention summary 8. The use of ReciApp to connect informal waste workers with suppliers and markets

The following summary is based on interviews with staff from ReciVeci,³⁰ RANAREC (Federación Red Nacional de Recicladores del Ecuador), and the Ecuador NPAP team. It was supplemented by a visit to a RANAREC waste collection facility in Quito on 21 November 2025.

1. Description of the intervention

ReciVeci is a social start-up and NGO that serves as a connector across Ecuador's recycling system. ReciVeci links citizens, waste pickers, companies, and the recycling industry to improve how recyclable materials are collected, paid for, and tracked. ReciVeci addresses long-standing problems in the recycling sector, including high informality among waste pickers, limited municipal capacity, low public awareness of waste separation, and a lack of reliable, up-to-date data on recycling.

Its main tools include:

- A digital platform (app) that connects more than 2,000 mapped waste pickers with households and companies, organising collections and payments.
- A business-to-business service where ReciVeci manages recycling for companies and directly pays local waste pickers for their work.
- A strong data and monitoring system, producing information on material flows, greenhouse gas emissions avoided, and social impacts, with a clear focus on women.
- ReciVeci has been active for around 10 years and joined the NPAP two years ago. It is part of the NPAP Leadership Group and contributed as a consultant to the National Plastics Plan.

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The intervention is strategically important because it tackles one of the biggest gaps in plastics and waste policy: the lack of reliable data and visibility around the informal recycling sector. ReciVeci produces primary, traceable data on waste pickers, material flows, and economic value that the state does not currently generate, provides a practical tool for formalisation, improving efficiency and transparency while keeping waste pickers at the centre of the system, demonstrates that inclusive business models in recycling are viable, ethical, and scalable, and translates real-world experience into policy, helping ensure national plastics plans are grounded in what actually works on the ground. Its strong focus on women waste pickers also makes it highly relevant for gender equity and social inclusion objectives.

3. Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

The level of effort is high and ongoing. ReciVeci's work requires:

- Continuous operation and maintenance of a digital platform;

³⁰ More information is available about ReciVeci here: <https://www.reciveci.com/en>.

- Coordination with thousands of waste pickers, companies, and service users;
- Data collection, analysis, and reporting;
- Direct management and payment of recycling services;
- Engagement in policy processes at national and international levels.

This combination of operational delivery, technology, and advocacy represents a sustained and resource-intensive effort.

4. Results of the intervention

Key results reported by ReciVeci include:

- Thousands of waste pickers are connected to paid recycling services through the app.
- Large volumes of recyclable materials are diverted from disposal and tracked through ReciVeci's app.
- Improved income, dignity, and working conditions for waste pickers, particularly women.
- Annual public reports providing unique evidence on the informal recycling sector.
- Direct contribution to the National Plastics Plan through ReciVeci's role as a consultant.
- Greater coordination and awareness across the recycling ecosystem through NPAP engagement.

5. Why was it effective or not?

The intervention has been effective because it:

- Solves real problems with practical tools, not just policy ideas.
- Combines technology with social inclusion and fair payment.
- Makes invisible work visible through credible data.
- Aligns business incentives with environmental and social outcomes.
- Builds trust with waste pickers by recognising and paying their work.

Its main limitation is not the model itself, but the lack of funding to scale pilots and innovations, which slows wider adoption and impact.

6. GPAP's role

GPAP, through the NPAP, played a key enabling role by:

- Providing a shared roadmap and structure that connected ReciVeci with other actors.
- Offering legitimacy and a common evidence base that supported ReciVeci's policy engagement.
- Creating space for collective advocacy at national and global levels, including treaty discussions.
- Helping move actors from working in isolation to working as part of a coordinated ecosystem.

7. Sustainability and forward look

ReciVeci sees the NPAP as a strong and sustainable platform for dialogue and coordination, but stresses that dialogue must now translate into action. Key priorities going forward include:

- Creating dedicated funding for pilots and implementation, especially for start-ups and waste picker-led innovations.
- Expanding beyond plastics to include other recyclable materials such as glass and organics.
- Ensuring waste pickers are included in future reuse and return systems, not excluded by new models.
- Strengthening peer learning between NPAP countries, especially among similar actors.
- Recognising and compensating the time and expertise of waste pickers and practitioners.

Overall, ReciVeci illustrates both the success of the NPAP in building trust and coordination, and the urgent need to mobilise resources to turn shared plans into real, scalable change for waste pickers.

Ghana: GPAP contribution story

1 Country context

Ghana's plastics challenge is driven by rapid urbanisation, population growth and rising consumption of single-use plastics, particularly PET (polythene terephthalate) bottles, sachet water packaging, carrier bags and food packaging. Plastic waste leakage into drains, waterways and coastal environments has been persistent, associated with contributing to flooding events in urban centres such as Accra and highlighting the consequences of inadequate waste management.

The National Plastic Action Partnership (NPAP) analysis estimates that Ghana generated approximately 0.84 million tonnes of plastic municipal solid waste in 2020, with around 9.5% leaking into water bodies (Global Plastic Action Partnership [GPAP], 2021a; GPAP, 2023a). Under business-as-usual, plastic leakage is projected to increase by approximately 190% between 2020 and 2040, rising from roughly 78,000 tonnes to 228,000 tonnes per year (GPAP, 2023a). Over the same period, total plastic waste generation is projected to increase to approximately 2.4 million tonnes per year (GPAP, 2021a). National plastic waste collection coverage is estimated at around 49%, masking substantial spatial variation and reliance on informal recovery systems (GPAP, 2023a).

Prior to GPAP engagement, Ghana had developed a National Plastics Management Policy, approved at Cabinet level in 2019 (Government of Ghana, 2019). However, evidence from policy documents and stakeholder accounts indicates a persistent implementation gap. Responsibilities for plastics management were dispersed across ministries and agencies, coordination mechanisms were weak, and private sector and donor interventions were largely unaligned (GPAP, 2021a). Informal waste pickers played a central role in recovery, particularly for PET, yet remained largely excluded from formal policy processes and lacked recognition, stable pricing and occupational protections (GPAP, 2024).

2 Relevance

GPAP's approach was highly relevant to Ghana's context because it aligned with existing national readiness rather than introducing a parallel agenda. Ghana became the first African country to join GPAP in 2019, reflecting the existence of an articulated national plastics policy and political willingness to engage internationally on plastics governance (GPAP, 2023a).

The NPAP was established as a government-aligned, multi-stakeholder platform anchored within the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), with senior political oversight and private sector co-leadership (GPAP, 2021a). This institutional positioning was intended to ensure national ownership and alignment with government priorities rather than donor-driven delivery.

The National Action roadmap translated existing policy ambition into a sequenced set of priorities, clarified roles across the plastics value chain, and provided a shared reference point for government, industry, civil society and development partners (GPAP, 2021a). Prior

to the roadmap, no comparable cross-sector framework existed to guide plastics interventions at national scale (GPAP, 2021a).

Relevance to women and marginalised groups was embedded through the Inclusion task force. The plastics economy intersects strongly with gender, with Ghana's linear plastics system estimated to provide employment opportunities to approximately 31% of women, often in lower-value segments of the value chain (GPAP, 2023a). The integration of informal waste pickers into NPAP processes represented a substantive shift from pre-NPAP practice, although implementation of gender-focused recommendations has been uneven (GPAP, 2024).

3 Efficiency

GPAP's efficiency in Ghana must be assessed relative to its intended role as a coordination, convening and mobilisation mechanism rather than a delivery agency. GPAP resources were directed towards establishing and sustaining the NPAP Secretariat, convening stakeholders, and supporting analytical and strategic outputs, with implementation expected to be undertaken by government, the private sector and development partners (GPAP, 2021a).

Within these parameters, delivery efficiency was high. NPAP documentation records engagement with more than 300 named stakeholders over the course of NPAP activities, across government, industry, civil society, academia and the informal sector, with a Steering Board comprising approximately 24 individuals across 12 organisations providing strategic oversight (NPAP Secretariat, 2024). This breadth of engagement was achieved through a relatively small Secretariat, indicating efficient use of resources to maximise reach.

Stakeholders reported that NPAP significantly reduced transaction costs by providing a single, predictable forum for engagement with multiple ministries, regulators and value chain actors. Prior to NPAP, engagement was fragmented across bilateral meetings and ad hoc initiatives, increasing coordination burdens and slowing progress³¹ (GPAP, 2021a).

NPAP produced a suite of national-level analytical outputs, including baseline assessments, the National Action roadmap, the Financing roadmap and gender and social inclusion analyses, despite operating with a small Secretariat and limited implementation funding.³² These outputs were reported by stakeholders to have informed funding proposals, technical assistance programmes and private sector planning processes beyond the NPAP platform itself, indicating practical utility as well as timeliness³³ (GPAP, 2021a; GPAP, 2023a).

³¹ Evidence triangulated from: Outcome Harvesting Workshop; 8 KIIs (2 government, 3 private sector, 1 informal sector, 2 international organisations); and review of the NPAP roadmap and Financing roadmap.

³² Evidence triangulated from: 5 KIIs (2 government, 1 private sector, 2 international organisations) noting limited secretariat capacity and funding; and review of NPAP analytical outputs (roadmap, Financing roadmap, Gender strategy).

³³ Evidence triangulated from: 6 KIIs (government, private sector, international organisations); and document review (GPAP, 2021a; GPAP, 2023a).

Efficiency was constrained by structural factors. NPAP lacks formal legal status and does not have an executing mandate, limiting its authority to mobilise or allocate resources independently.³⁴ GPAP funding sustained coordination and analytical functions but did not extend to implementation, meaning that progress depended on the capacity and incentives of external actors³⁵ Government participation fluctuated due to political turnover and staff movement, occasionally slowing decision-making and follow-through.³⁶ Overall, GPAP resources appear to have been used efficiently for coordination and strategy development; however, structural constraints limited downstream efficiency gains in implementation.

4 Effectiveness

Process

GPAP's most consistent effectiveness in Ghana was at the process level. Across stakeholder interviews, NPAP was widely described as having created a structured and relatively trusted platform for sustained dialogue across the plastics value chain, reducing long-standing fragmentation between government agencies, private sector actors, civil society organisations, development partners and the informal sector.³⁷

The National Action roadmap was central to this process effectiveness. Stakeholders across government, private sector and development partners described it as providing a shared strategic reference point, enabling individual initiatives to be situated within a coherent national framework.³⁸ Development partners reported that the existence of a formally endorsed roadmap and structured NPAP governance arrangements provided greater clarity and confidence for engagement, reinforcing perceptions of national ownership³⁹

Trust-building emerged as a critical enabling factor. Many interviewed stakeholders described NPAP as providing a relatively neutral and structured space for sustained dialogue across actors with historically divergent interests.⁴⁰ Regular convening and facilitation were reported to have normalised collaboration across government, private sector, development partners and informal actors.

³⁴ Evidence triangulated from: 3 KIIs (government, international organisation, NPAP host) noting lack of legal mandate and executing authority; and review of NPAP governance documentation.

³⁵ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs (government, international organisations) indicating GPAP funding covered secretariat and coordination functions but not implementation.

³⁶ Evidence triangulated from: 3 KIIs (government, international organisation, NPAP host) reporting political turnover and inconsistent engagement affecting progress.

³⁷ Evidence triangulated from: 9 KIIs (government, private sector, informal sector, international organisations).

³⁸ Evidence triangulated from: Outcome Harvesting Workshop; 6 KIIs (government, private sector, international organisations); and review of the National Action roadmap.

³⁹ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs (international organisations and government); and document review (GPAP, 2023a).

⁴⁰ Evidence triangulated from: Outcome Harvesting Workshop; 8 KIIs (government, private sector, informal sector, international organisations).

However, several stakeholders also noted that limited follow-through and weak action-planning mechanisms constrained effectiveness beyond dialogue.⁴¹ Over the past two years, some task forces have met less frequently, and interviewees reported uncertainty regarding how ideas would transition into implementation. NPAP representatives clarified that, in some cases, task force mandates had been fulfilled in line with the National Action roadmap, and that recent changes in government policy direction created temporary uncertainty regarding priorities and convening schedules.⁴²

NPAP's positioning within government enhanced legitimacy and access to senior decision-makers, though stakeholders observed that this institutional anchoring also exposed the platform to bureaucratic inertia and political turnover (GPAP, 2021a).⁴³

Inclusion emerged as a defining feature of the NPAP process. Informal waste picker representatives participated directly in task forces and policy discussions, including those related to extended producer responsibility (EPR) and circular economy initiatives.⁴⁴ Stakeholders reported that this shifted participation dynamics and increased recognition of informal sector perspectives in national discussions. Mapping of waste picker organisations and support to capacity-building initiatives were documented outcomes.⁴⁵ While inclusion did not eliminate structural inequalities, it broadened representation and embedded lived experience within policy dialogue.

Process effectiveness varied across thematic areas. Interviewees most frequently referenced tangible progress within policy, inclusion and innovation activities, particularly those linked to EPR development and recycled-content standards⁴⁶ In contrast, Behaviour and metrics activities were described as more constrained, reflecting higher implementation demands, data limitations and weaker institutional follow-through.⁴⁷

Change on the ground

Informal workers: Evidence from interviews across stakeholder groups indicates positive change for informal waste pickers in urban centres, particularly in Accra.⁴⁸ Informal sector

⁴¹ Evidence triangulated from: 5 KIIs (government, private sector, international organisations) reporting constrained implementation and limited action planning.

⁴² Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs (government, private sector, international organisations) noting reduced task force activity; clarification provided by NPAP Secretariat (written communication).

⁴³ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs (government, international organisations, NPAP host); and review of GPAP documentation (GPAP, 2021a).

⁴⁴ Evidence triangulated from: 5 KIIs (informal sector, private sector, international organisations, government).

⁴⁵ Evidence triangulated from: review of informal sector social assessment; 3 KIIs (informal sector, international organisations).

⁴⁶ Evidence triangulated from: 6 KIIs (government, private sector, international organisations) referencing EPR and standards progress.

⁴⁷ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs (government, international organisations, NPAP host) noting constraints in behaviour and metrics activities; and review of GPAP documentation (GPAP, 2021a).

⁴⁸ Evidence triangulated from: 6 KIIs (informal sector, private sector, international organisations, government).

representatives and private sector actors reported improvements in collective organisation, structured engagement with buyers, and increased visibility within national policy discussions.⁴⁹ For example, one private sector stakeholder reported the establishment of three collection centres and investment in processing equipment to support recovery volumes, while another reported targeted financial and PPE (personal protective equipment) support to organised waste picker groups.⁵⁰

While these developments suggest strengthening integration of informal actors into the plastics value chain, benefits were uneven. The Intersectional and Inclusive Social Context Assessment documents persistent gendered disparities, with women disproportionately concentrated in lower-value sorting roles and experiencing greater income insecurity. Interviewees similarly noted that inclusion in dialogue has not fully translated into income stability or upward mobility within the value chain.⁵¹

Circular economy: NPAP's contribution to Ghana's circular economy has primarily operated through coordination, standard-setting and enabling conditions rather than direct implementation.⁵² Interviewees across government, private sector and development partners described the roadmap and associated task forces as helping align actors around EPR, recycled-content standards and packaging redesign.⁵³

Development of the recycled-content standard for recycled polyethylene terephthalate (rPET) was frequently cited as a tangible output influencing corporate planning. Private sector stakeholders reported that PET recycling rates increased from approximately 3% to around 10% following packaging redesign and improved collection efforts, and that recycled-content currently represents around 10% of packaging for one major multinational producer, with targets of 50% by 2025.⁵⁴ These figures are company-reported and reflect PET-specific progress rather than system-wide recycling performance.

Progress remains concentrated in PET, which benefits from established markets and clearer quality standards. Interviewees consistently noted that other polymers face infrastructure, contamination and value chain constraints that limit comparable circular economy gains.⁵⁵

Investment: GPAP's contribution to investment mobilisation appears to have been indirect but material. Stakeholders across government and development partners described NPAP

⁴⁹ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs (informal sector, private sector).

⁵⁰ Company-reported data from 2 KIIs (private sector) referencing three collection centres, processing equipment investment, and approximately USD 150,000 in support.

⁵¹ Evidence triangulated from: 3 KIIs (informal sector, international organisations) noting persistent income insecurity.

⁵² Evidence triangulated from: 6 KIIs (government, private sector, international organisations).

⁵³ Evidence triangulated from: 5 KIIs (government, private sector, international organisations); and review of National Action roadmap.

⁵⁴ Company-reported data from 2 private sector KIIs indicating PET recycling increased from ~3% to ~10%, with recycled content currently ~10% and corporate targets of 50% by 2025.

⁵⁵ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs (private sector, international organisations) noting constraints for non-PET polymers; and review of GPAP documentation (GPAP, 2023a).

as providing greater policy clarity and coordination, which supported funding proposals and corporate investment planning.⁵⁶ While interviewees did not attribute specific capital and project flows directly to NPAP, several indicated that the existence of a National Action roadmap and structured governance platform increased confidence for engagement.⁵⁷

The Ghana Financing roadmap estimates that achieving system-wide circular economy transition would require capital investment of approximately USD 3.0–3.3 billion and operating costs of USD 5.1–6.1 billion over the period 2020–2040.⁵⁸ These figures substantially exceed GPAP's financial resources and underscore that NPAP's role has been catalytic and coordinative rather than financial in scale.

Use of evidence: NPAP contributed to developing a clearer and more consolidated picture of Ghana's plastics value chain. Baseline studies, brand audits, financing analysis and social inclusion assessments synthesised previously fragmented data into a structured national reference point.⁵⁹ Several interviewees described this as the first time that actors across government, private sector and development partners were working from a shared evidence base, enabling more informed policy dialogue and funding proposals⁶⁰

However, while the roadmap and associated studies strengthened baseline understanding, progress in establishing systematic monitoring of change over time appears more limited. Interviewees did not report the existence of regularly updated national indicators for plastic generation, recycling or leakage, and Metrics task force activities were described as constrained by data and capacity limitations.⁶¹ As such, NPAP's contribution to evidence has been strongest in problem definition and strategic framing, with more modest to limited progress in longitudinal measurement of system change and monitoring.

Impact: Evidence of impact-level change remains emerging. Interviewees reported early signals of progress, particularly in PET recovery and strengthened informal sector organisation. For example, one private sector stakeholder reported that PET recycling rates increased from approximately 3% to around 10% following packaging redesign and improved collection efforts, and described support to recycling organisations including Asaase Foundation and Nelplast.⁶² Informal sector representatives also reported improved

⁵⁶ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs (government, international organisations) indicating roadmap supported funding and planning processes.

⁵⁷ Evidence triangulated from: 3 KIIs (government, international organisations, private sector) referencing increased clarity and coordination for engagement.

⁵⁸ Document review: Ghana Financing roadmap (capital requirement USD 3.0–3.3bn; operating costs USD 5.1–6.1bn, 2020–2040).

⁵⁹ Evidence triangulated from: document review (National Action roadmap, Financing roadmap, Social Context Assessment); and 5 KIIs (government, private sector, international organisations).

⁶⁰ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs (government, private sector, international organisations) reporting use of roadmap in policy and planning.

⁶¹ Evidence triangulated from: 3 KIIs (government, international organisations, NPAP host) noting limited progress on monitoring systems; and review of GPAP documentation (GPAP, 2021a).

⁶² Company-reported data from private sector KII indicating PET recovery increase (~3% to ~10%) and support to recycling organisations.

recognition and engagement with local municipalities following union formalisation and participation in NPAP processes.⁶³

These examples suggest localised and sector-specific improvements linked to partnership and coordination activities. However, robust attribution of national-level reductions in plastic pollution, overall consumption, or leakage to GPAP-supported activities is not currently possible.⁶⁴ No updated national time-series indicators were identified during the evaluation period that would allow measurement of system-wide environmental impact.

This reflects time lags between coordination and measurable environmental outcomes, limitations in national monitoring systems, and the indirect nature of GPAP's role as a convening and enabling platform rather than an implementing body.⁶⁵

Available evidence suggests that changes are most visible where system readiness and market demand already existed, particularly within the PET value chain and in major urban centres such as Accra.⁶⁶ Improved coordination, standards development and private sector engagement have contributed to increased recovery and recycling activity in these contexts.⁶⁷ While interviewees described stronger collection networks and greater market value for PET in urban areas, no updated city-level or national indicators were identified that would allow confirmation of measurable reductions in plastic leakage.⁶⁸

It is important to note that all key informant interviews (KII) for this evaluation were conducted in Accra, with the exception of one stakeholder who was temporarily based outside the capital at the time of interview. As such, reported changes may reflect experiences concentrated in the capital and major urban markets.

While meaningful improvements may therefore be occurring at sub-national scale, particularly in Accra, these remain geographically concentrated and insufficient to demonstrate influence on national leakage trends at this stage.

Quality-of-life impacts are most evident among informal waste pickers engaged through NPAP-coordinated processes and related GPAP-supported or grant-linked activities.⁶⁹ These include improved recognition within national and municipal policy discussions, access

⁶³ Evidence triangulated from: 3 KIIs (informal sector, private sector) referencing union formalisation and municipal engagement.

⁶⁴ Evidence triangulated from: document review and KIIs indicating absence of updated national indicators on plastic waste generation, recycling or leakage.

⁶⁵ Analytical synthesis informed by KIIs (government, international organisations) and review of GPAP documentation (GPAP, 2023a).

⁶⁶ Evidence triangulated from: 5 KIIs (private sector, informal sector, international organisations) indicating concentration of PET market activity and system readiness in Accra.

⁶⁷ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs (private sector, government) referencing increased PET recovery, standards development and packaging redesign.

⁶⁸ Evidence triangulated from: document review and KIIs indicating absence of updated city-level or national indicators for plastic leakage or recycling trends.

⁶⁹ Evidence triangulated from: 6 KIIs (informal sector, private sector, international organisations, government) referencing participation through NPAP and related initiatives.

to basic protections such as personal protective equipment in some contexts, and strengthened organisational capacity through cooperative formation and union formalisation.⁷⁰ In several cases, stakeholders also referenced direct financial or equipment support provided through grant-linked initiatives or partnership arrangements facilitated within the NPAP network.⁷¹

Such changes contribute to greater dignity, visibility and in some cases improved working conditions for participating workers, although reported income gains and employment security remain non-evidenced beyond the interviews.⁷² Importantly, these impacts are localised and cannot yet be considered systemic, reflecting both the scale of Ghana's informal sector and the limited reach of NPAP- and GPAP-linked interventions to date.

Broader population-level impacts, such as reduced flooding, improved urban cleanliness, or measurable improvements in environmental conditions linked to plastic waste, were not identified at national scale during this evaluation.⁷³ This reflects both the relatively short implementation time frame of NPAP activities and the absence of comprehensive, longitudinal national data on plastic generation, recycling, and leakage.⁷⁴ Where impacts were reported, they were typically project specific or based on stakeholder accounts rather than nationally representative indicators, highlighting the need for stronger monitoring and evaluation systems if impact-level change is to be tracked over time (GPAP, 2023a).

Equity outcomes are mixed. Procedural inclusion improved through NPAP processes, with marginalised groups, including informal waste picker representatives, participating in national-level dialogue and policy discussions.⁷⁵ However, material benefits remain uneven and geographically concentrated, with stakeholders noting that impacts are strongest in Accra and other major urban centres.⁷⁶ Gender disparities also persist, with women continuing to be over-represented in lower-value sorting roles within the plastics value chain (interviews, GPAP, 2024). Without deliberate efforts to extend interventions beyond early-adopter regions and sectors, emerging benefits may remain unevenly distributed.

Overall, the Ghana experience suggests that GPAP's contribution to impact is best understood as foundational rather than transformative at this stage. Interviewees across

⁷⁰ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs (informal sector, international organisations) referencing union formalisation, cooperative organisation and policy participation; and review of Social Context Assessment.

⁷¹ Company- and stakeholder-reported data from 3 KIIs referencing grant-linked support, equipment acquisition and PPE provision.

⁷² Evidence triangulated from: 3 KIIs (informal sector, international organisations) noting variability in income and working conditions.

⁷³ Evidence triangulated from: KIIs (government, private sector, informal sector, international organisations) and document review indicating no reported national indicators linking NPAP activities to flooding reduction, urban cleanliness improvements or environmental outcomes.

⁷⁴ Evidence triangulated from: KIIs and document review indicating absence of updated national time-series indicators on plastic waste generation, recycling or leakage.

⁷⁵ KIIs (government, informal sector, international organisations); GPAP, 2024.

⁷⁶ KIIs noting urban concentration of activities and outcomes.

stakeholder groups described NPAP as strengthening coordination, policy alignment and stakeholder engagement, but noted that measurable environmental and livelihood outcomes will depend on sustained implementation, investment and institutionalisation beyond the coordination phase.⁷⁷

5 Sustainability

NPAP has demonstrated procedural resilience, maintaining stakeholder engagement through political transitions and changes in government personnel. Interviewees across government, private sector and development partners reported continued reference to the National Action roadmap as a strategic framework guiding plastics-related activities and dialogue.⁷⁸

However, sustainability risks remain significant. NPAP does not have independent legal status or an executing mandate, limiting its authority to mobilise resources or enforce implementation. Continued reliance on GPAP support to sustain Secretariat functions also raises questions regarding long-term financial sustainability.⁷⁹ While stakeholder buy-in remains broad, interviewees noted that enforcement capacity and sustained resourcing across the plastics value chain remain limited.⁸⁰

Looking ahead, the long-term durability of NPAP will likely depend on whether the platform evolves beyond a convening role. Institutionalisation within government structures or the development of stable financing mechanisms would strengthen sustainability. Without such evolution, coordination gains may prove difficult to sustain once external support diminishes.⁸¹

6 Value for money

GPAP support in Ghana appears to represent good value for money relative to its intended role as a coordination and enabling platform rather than a delivery programme. NPAP Secretariat information indicates that GPAP core support was used to establish and maintain the platform, including Secretariat functions, stakeholder convening and development of analytical outputs.⁸²

Interviewees across stakeholder groups reported that the greatest value derived from GPAP support was the development of the National Action roadmap, improved cross-sector

⁷⁷ Evidence triangulated from: 8 KIIs (government, private sector, informal sector, international organisations) and document review.

⁷⁸ Evidence triangulated from: 5 KIIs (government, private sector, international organisations) and document review referencing continued use of the roadmap.

⁷⁹ Document review (NPAP governance structure; GPAP support to Secretariat functions).

⁸⁰ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs noting resource and enforcement constraints.

⁸¹ Evaluation synthesis informed by KIIs and document review.

⁸² NPAP Secretariat financial information provided to the evaluation team (approximately USD 500,000 GPAP support).

coordination and the integration of informal sector perspectives into national dialogue.⁸³ These activities required relatively modest financial inputs but enabled engagement across government, private sector and development partners.

Activities requiring sustained implementation were perceived as less cost-effective within the NPAP framework because implementation responsibility sits with external actors rather than the platform itself.⁸⁴ This reflects structural design choices rather than inefficiencies in the use of GPAP resources.

Lessons: The Ghana experience highlights several lessons for GPAP's approach.

First, national readiness appears to be an important enabling condition. Interviewees noted that GPAP engagement in Ghana coincided with existing political commitment, a national plastics policy framework and active private sector engagement. In this context, GPAP's primary contribution was described as translating policy intent into coordinated action rather than setting the agenda itself.⁸⁵

Second, coordination platforms require visible pathways to delivery. While NPAP was widely viewed as effective in convening stakeholders and aligning priorities, several interviewees noted that prolonged reliance on voluntary action can generate frustration when discussions are not followed by implementation.⁸⁶ This suggests the importance of clearer links between coordination mechanisms, financing pathways and delivery structures.

Third, government anchoring can provide both legitimacy and constraints. Locating NPAP within government structures strengthened policy access and credibility, but stakeholders also observed that it exposed the platform to political turnover and bureaucratic delays.⁸⁷ Balancing institutional authority with operational flexibility therefore appears important for maintaining effectiveness.

Finally, inclusion may require sustained support beyond participation. Interviewees reported that integrating informal workers into national platforms improved representation and visibility, but noted that participation alone does not guarantee improved livelihoods without continued support for organisation, market access and working conditions.

Appendices: The following summaries are informed by the wider interviews conducted as part of the evaluation supported by literature reviews.

⁸³ Evidence triangulated from: 6 KIIs (government, private sector, informal sector, international organisations).

⁸⁴ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs noting implementation constraints beyond NPAP mandate.

⁸⁵ Evidence triangulated from: 5 KIIs (government, private sector, international organisations).

⁸⁶ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs noting implementation and delivery challenges.

⁸⁷ Evidence triangulated from: 4 KIIs discussing government anchoring and political turnover.

Appendix 1: Intervention summaries

Intervention summary 1. Extended producer responsibility

1 Description of the intervention

Extended producer responsibility (EPR) has been a central policy instrument discussed within Ghana's National Plastic Action Partnership (NPAP) since its establishment. Across interviews, EPR was widely described as a mechanism intended to shift responsibility for plastic waste management upstream to producers and importers, while creating a sustainable financing base for downstream collection, recycling and inclusion of informal workers.

Interview evidence confirms that NPAP does not design, legislate or enforce EPR. Instead, NPAP operates as a convening and coordination platform, providing structured spaces for discussion on EPR design options, governance arrangements and implementation challenges.

Based on interviews, focus group discussions and document review, NPAP-linked EPR activity includes:

- Convening multi-stakeholder dialogue on EPR principles, scope and institutional arrangements
- Supporting dialogue between producers, regulators and development partners on EPR readiness and policy coherence
- Embedding inclusion and gender considerations into EPR discussions through the Inclusion task force and analytical products⁸⁸
- Supporting learning on international EPR models through task force discussions and technical exchanges

Stakeholders were consistent that while EPR is a prominent and sustained discussion within NPAP, implementation authority and accountability lie with government institutions, and NPAP's role remains indirect and enabling.

2 Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

EPR was widely identified as one of the most strategically important interventions within Ghana's plastics system. Interviewees described EPR as the primary mechanism expected to generate predictable financing for waste management while incentivising upstream changes in packaging design, material choice and producer behaviour.

Government and private sector stakeholders linked EPR directly to Ghana's structural challenges: underfunded municipal waste services, heavy reliance on informal collection systems, and limited domestic recycling capacity. Without EPR, interviewees argued that progress in collection or recycling would remain fragmented and dependent on short-term donor or corporate initiatives.

Inclusion considerations were repeatedly emphasised. Informal sector representatives, civil society actors and international agencies stressed that EPR design must explicitly recognise and seek to compensate informal workers, particularly women, who underpin plastic recovery. These perspectives align closely with findings from the *Intersectional and Inclusive Social Context Assessment of Ghana's Informal Plastics and Plastics Waste Sector* and the *NPAP Ghana Intersectional Gender Equality Strategy*.

Several interviewees also highlighted that trust and transparency are critical for EPR legitimacy, shaped by past experiences with existing fiscal instruments and uncertainty around how funds are managed.

3 Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

Interviewees described EPR as institutionally complex rather than financially demanding at the NPAP level. The NPAP Secretariat operates with a limited annual budget and does not finance EPR implementation, focusing instead on convening, coordination and evidence generation.

At the system level, NPAP and GPAP reports estimate that plastics system transformation requires investment in the order of USD 3–3.3 billion by 2040, with EPR expected to play a central role in mobilising and directing resources.

The LOE associated with EPR was described as high due to:

- Sustained inter-ministerial coordination requirements
- Ongoing engagement with producers and importers to secure buy-in
- Technical and political work to move from policy design to implementation.

4 Results of the intervention

Interview evidence indicates that EPR-related outcomes to date are primarily enabling and preparatory, rather than reflecting full implementation.

5 Policy design and alignment

Interviewees confirmed that EPR has progressed through policy and design discussions, with broad agreement on its importance and core principles. NPAP was consistently cited as the main national forum supporting coordination of these discussions.

However, interviewees did not provide consistent evidence that a fully operational and enforced EPR scheme is yet in place at national scale or ready for deployment. Perspectives

varied, with some describing EPR as “getting there” and others emphasising ongoing institutional and political delays.

6 Inclusion and safeguards

Interview and documentary evidence indicates that inclusion considerations are more explicitly embedded in EPR discussions than in earlier waste policy efforts. Informal sector representatives highlighted the importance of being directly involved in EPR decision-making and financing mechanisms. Targeted training and awareness activities linked to EPR and informal worker inclusion were also reported.

7 Trust and transparency challenges

Some interviewees raised concerns about transparency and accountability in existing fiscal mechanisms, noting limited visibility over how revenues are used. These experiences were reported to shape expectations and caution around EPR design.

Overall, EPR progress was characterised as strong at the level of dialogue and design, but limited in terms of observable system-level change.

8 Why was it effective or not?

Enabling factors

NPAP’s convening role was consistently identified as a key enabling factor. Stakeholders described NPAP as one of the few platforms capable of bringing together government, multinational companies, local industry, civil society and informal sector representatives around a shared policy agenda.

International technical inputs and peer learning were also cited as valuable in shaping understanding of EPR models and design options.

Constraining factors

The most frequently cited constraint was limited government implementation capacity, particularly for enforcement, monitoring and coordination. Political economy factors, including leadership turnover and competing priorities, were also reported to slow progress.

Interviewees further cautioned that without transparent governance and clear benefit-sharing mechanisms, EPR risks losing legitimacy among producers and informal workers.

9 GPAP’s role

Across interviews, focus groups and documentary sources, GPAP’s role in relation to EPR in Ghana is characterised as enabling and supportive, rather than country-level policy design or implementation.

GPAP’s primary contribution is through establishing, resourcing and technically supporting the NPAP platform, within which EPR discussions are convened and sustained. This includes

financial and technical support to the NPAP Secretariat, enabling multi-stakeholder dialogue, task force activity and the development of analytical products that inform EPR discussions.

Interviewees did not describe GPAP as directly designing, legislating or enforcing EPR. Instead, GPAP was described as:

- **Platform enabler**, supporting NPAP as a neutral convening space
- **Technical supporter**, providing access to global expertise and international learning on EPR models
- **Evidence supporter**, enabling roadmap, financing, gender and social context analyses that shape inclusive EPR discourse

Several interviewees noted that GPAP's international credibility helps legitimise EPR discussions domestically, particularly in early policy design stages. However, GPAP does not direct national policy choices or control EPR implementation.

10 Sustainability and forward look

Interviewees agreed that the sustainability of EPR depends on several conditions:

- Transition from policy design to implementation, with clear governance and enforcement arrangements
- Transparent management of future EPR revenues, informed by experiences with existing fiscal mechanisms to build trust
- Formal integration of informal workers into EPR systems, with safeguards for livelihoods
- Continued resourcing and institutionalisation of NPAP's convening function

If these conditions are met, stakeholders consider EPR to have high potential to catalyse system-wide change. Without them, EPR risks remaining a well-developed policy ambition with limited practical impact.

Intervention summary 2. rPET recycling targets

1 Description of the intervention

This intervention focuses on increasing the use of recycled polyethylene terephthalate (rPET) in beverage packaging through the development of enabling standards and voluntary recycled-content ambitions within the private sector. A national food-grade rPET standard was developed between 2022 and 2024 by the Ghana Recycling Initiative by Private Enterprises (GRIPLE), in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) and the Ghana Standards Authority (Boachie, 2024). Interviewees described this standard as a critical demand-side enabler intended to stimulate investment

in PET collection, sorting and recycling by providing regulatory clarity for bottle-to-bottle recycling and food-grade applications. While several multinational beverage companies have articulated recycled-content ambitions, these currently operate as voluntary commitments rather than mandatory national targets.

Interviewees noted that recycled-content targets discussed within the NPAP context reflect voluntary corporate commitments and policy-aligned ambitions that emerged during the development of the national plastics roadmap, rather than legally mandated targets with fixed timelines or nationally enforced reporting requirements.

Interview evidence confirms that Ghana's domestic rPET supply is currently constrained by limited collection volumes, contamination from mixed waste, and insufficient food-grade processing capacity. As a result, private sector interviewees reported that companies operating in Ghana import rPET from other countries to meet recycled-content commitments when domestic supply is unavailable or uncompetitive.

Within the NPAP context, the intervention does not involve NPAP setting binding recycled-content targets or operating recycling infrastructure. Instead, NPAP provides a platform for dialogue between producers, regulators and standards bodies on rPET quality requirements, system readiness and market constraints.

2 Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

Interviewees consistently identified rPET targets as strategically important: PET was widely described by interviewees as one of the highest-value and most recyclable plastic streams in Ghana, and recycled-content requirements create a direct market signal for recycling. Stakeholders emphasised that credible rPET demand is essential for improving the economics of collection and recycling, particularly for informal collectors who supply the majority of PET feedstock.

The national plastics roadmap identifies recycling scale-up, supported by standards and market development, as a core pathway in both realistic and ambitious system-change scenarios (Ghana Plastics Action Partnership, 2021). Interviewees linked rPET targets to these ambitions but stressed that demand-side commitments alone are insufficient without parallel investment in domestic supply capacity.

Trade and standards considerations were also highlighted. Interviewees noted that food-grade rPET must meet stringent quality and safety requirements, and that international markets often offer more consistent quality at competitive prices, reinforcing reliance on imports in the short term.

3 Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

At the NPAP platform level, interviewees described the financial cost as relatively low, focused on coordination, convening and technical dialogue rather than capital investment. The GPAP Evaluation similarly characterises NPAP as a lean coordination platform without responsibility for financing infrastructure.

At the system level, however, the LOE required to make rPET targets viable was described as high. Scaling domestic rPET supply requires investment across collection, sorting, washing, processing and quality control. The Financing roadmap estimates that system-wide plastics transformation will require capital expenditure of approximately USD 3.0–3.3 billion and operating expenditure of USD 5.1–6.1 billion to 2040, including recycling infrastructure.

4 Results of the intervention

Interview evidence indicates that results associated with rPET targets are currently enabling rather than transformative.

Standards and readiness: Interviewees consistently cited progress toward a national food-grade rPET standard as the most tangible outcome to date, providing clearer technical requirements for recycled PET in food-contact applications.

Corporate uptake and imports: Private sector interviewees confirmed that recycled-content commitments are being pursued, but that domestic rPET supply remains insufficient, necessitating imports to meet targets. This reliance on imported rPET was described as shaped by both domestic supply constraints and international price and quality dynamics.

Limited domestic system impact: Interviewees cautioned that, at the time of data collection, voluntary recycled-content ambitions and the development of the national food-grade rPET standard had not yet translated into large-scale domestic production of food-grade rPET. Respondents cited persistent feedstock shortages, quality constraints and limited processing capacity, with some beverage companies reporting continued reliance on imported rPET due to insufficient local supply.

In February 2025, the Mohinani Group launched a 15,000-tonne-per-year bottle-to-bottle recycling facility in Ghana, supported by financing from the International Finance Corporation (IFC, 2025). The facility is designed to produce high-purity food-grade rPET for beverage packaging, which represents an increase in domestic processing capacity. While this investment was not implemented through NPAP, it may indicate emerging growth in the recycling sector and an upward shift in domestic capacity consistent with broader sector developments.

5 Why was it effective or not?

Enabling factors: NPAP's convening role was described as effective in maintaining dialogue between producers, regulators and standards bodies, particularly on technical requirements that individual actors struggle to resolve alone. Interviewees also noted that clarity provided by emerging standards reduces uncertainty for investment and procurement decisions.

Constraining factors: The primary constraint identified by interviewees was insufficient domestic processing capacity, including contamination from mixed waste streams and limited food-grade recycling capability. Several respondents also noted that corporate recycled-content ambitions can be met through imported rPET, potentially limiting

immediate incentives to strengthen domestic recycling systems unless complementary measures are introduced.

Additional structural constraints are documented in sector studies. The Ghana Climate Innovation Centre (GCIC, 2024) highlights the presence of competing and potentially lower-value uses of PET and PVC, including their use in plastic-sand composite construction materials by firms such as Ohemaa Green Housing. This may create trade-offs in feedstock allocation between bottle-to-bottle recycling and alternative recycling pathways.

Capital constraints have also been reported as a limiting factor. GCIC (2024) documents that Nelplast, a company producing pavement blocks from sand-plastic composites, operates below capacity due to lack of capital, resulting in the turning away of plastic waste received from aggregators. This suggests that financial constraints may restrict scaling across segments of the recycling value chain, including both food-grade and non-food-grade applications.

6 GPAP's role

Across interviews and reports, GPAP's role in relation to rPET targets is characterised as enabling and indirect. GPAP supports the NPAP platform through financial and technical assistance, allowing sustained convening, coordination and analytical work on standards, recycling readiness and inclusion.

Interviewees did not describe GPAP as setting recycled-content targets, funding recycling plants, or influencing corporate sourcing decisions, including rPET imports. Its contribution lies in strengthening the conditions for coordinated dialogue and system planning rather than implementation.

7 Sustainability and forward look

Interviewees agreed that the sustainability of rPET targets depends on whether Ghana can transition from reliance on imports to reliable domestic rPET supply. Key conditions include improved segregation and collection, expanded food-grade processing capacity, and alignment of rPET targets with EPR and financing mechanisms that support domestic feedstock development.

Without these changes, interviewees expect recycled-content targets to continue being met partly through imports, limiting domestic value capture and system-wide impact. If addressed, rPET targets could become a durable driver of recycling, livelihoods and circularity.

Intervention summary 3. Informal sector inclusion

1 Description of the intervention

This intervention focuses on improving the recognition, organisation and integration of informal sector actors, particularly waste pickers, collectors and sorters, within Ghana's plastics and waste management system. Across interviews with civil society organisations,

international agencies, private sector actors and government representatives, informal workers were consistently described as central to plastics recovery in Ghana, supplying a substantial share of recyclable material, especially PET, despite limited protection, equipment and formal recognition.

Within the NPAP context, this intervention does not take the form of a single delivery programme. Instead, it comprises a set of inclusion-oriented actions and enabling conditions intended to ensure that informal workers are recognised within policy, financing and implementation pathways, including EPR design, recycling market development and collection system strengthening. Interviewees characterised NPAP's contribution as primarily convening and legitimising inclusion discussions, rather than directly delivering services to informal workers.

Examples described by interviewees include engagement with waste picker organisations on EPR-related inclusion issues, including targeted training and awareness activities, efforts to improve transparency and fairness in recyclable pricing to reduce exploitation by intermediaries, and increased visibility of informal workers in national policy dialogue through task forces and NPAP-linked convenings.

Documentary evidence strongly supports the rationale for this intervention. The *Intersectional and Inclusive Social Context Assessment of Ghana's Informal Plastics and Plastics Waste Sector* and the *NPAP Ghana Intersectional Gender Equality Strategy* document the structural marginalisation of informal workers, particularly women, alongside their central role in system functioning. These reports frame inclusion as a necessary condition for system change rather than a supplementary activity.

2 Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

Interviewees consistently described informal sector inclusion as strategically important for both system performance and social equity. From a system perspective, informal workers were described as playing a central role in preventing plastic leakage into drains, waterways and coastal environments, particularly in low-income and peri urban areas. Without safeguarding livelihoods and improving working conditions, interviewees argued that ambitions to increase collection coverage, improve recycling yields and supply higher quality feedstock for rPET would be difficult to achieve.

From an equity perspective, documentary evidence shows that women and other marginalised groups are over-represented in lower paid and riskier roles within plastics recovery and under-represented in decision-making processes. Interviewees reinforced this, emphasising that inclusion must extend beyond consultation to address tangible issues such as occupational safety, access to equipment, fair pricing and representation within EPR and financing mechanisms.

Interviewees also linked the relevance of this intervention to trust and legitimacy. If EPR and related fiscal instruments do not deliver visible benefits to informal workers,

interviewees suggested that buy-in, compliance and long-term system stability could be undermined.

3 Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

At the NPAP platform level, interviewees described informal sector inclusion as relatively low cost in terms of direct expenditure, with activity focused on convening, coordination, analytical work and capacity-building dialogue. However, they emphasised that the level of effort required is high, as effective inclusion depends on sustained relationship building, trust and repeated engagement with groups facing economic and time constraints. The GPAP evaluation similarly characterises NPAP as a lean coordination platform with limited delivery capacity.

At the system level, inclusion has cost implications. Documentary evidence indicates that meaningful inclusion requires investment in formal recognition mechanisms, training, occupational safety measures and potentially compensation or payment structures linked to EPR and other financing flows. These costs are framed as necessary to avoid reinforcing existing inequalities during system transformation. The Financing roadmap further highlights that inclusion and capacity building are integral to the effectiveness of broader capital and operational investments in the plastics system.

4 Results of the intervention

Interview evidence suggests that outcomes related to informal sector inclusion are currently most visible at the level of awareness, dialogue and targeted support, with limited evidence of full institutionalisation at national scale.

Interviewees noted that practical inclusion efforts, including training and equipment support delivered through partner initiatives, reinforced the credibility of policy discussions on EPR and collection, even where interventions remained small-scale.

Interviewees reported improved visibility and legitimacy of informal sector concerns within national plastics governance discussions, noting that NPAP has created a space where these issues can be raised alongside government and private sector actors. This includes discussion of informal worker roles and safeguards within EPR design and financing debates.

International agency interviewees described targeted training and awareness activities linked to EPR and inclusion, delivered in partnership with organisations such as WIEGO. Documentary products reinforce these efforts by setting out inclusion-oriented principles, indicators and recommended actions for policy and financing instruments.

Interviewees also reported localised improvements in pricing transparency and bargaining power for informal collectors, particularly in PET markets. However, they emphasised that these gains remain uneven and vulnerable to market volatility.

Interviewees also noted that NPAP-linked inclusion work has supported the visibility of Ghana's informal sector perspectives beyond the national level, including through

engagement with international partners and global policy discussions related to plastics governance. While participation at international events was limited and mediated, interviewees described these pathways as important for ensuring that informal sector realities informed global conversations, including those linked to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee process.

Overall, the evidence base indicates that inclusion-related outcomes are emerging and meaningful in specific contexts, but remain fragmented and dependent on continued coordination and partner action.

5 Why was it effective or not?

Several enabling factors were identified. Interviewees repeatedly cited NPAP's neutral convening role as important for legitimising inclusion concerns and enabling dialogue across the value chain. The availability of robust analytical evidence through the Social Context Assessment and Gender Equality Strategy was also described as influential in grounding discussions and moving them beyond anecdote. Interviewees further noted the importance of capable intermediary organisations, including civil society and informal sector associations, in sustaining engagement and supporting collective organisation.

Constraints were also consistently identified. Interviewees stressed that dialogue alone is insufficient to secure recognition and protection for informal workers, and that progress depends on formal policy mechanisms, enforcement and sustainable financing. Market volatility, particularly fluctuations in PET prices, was described as a persistent risk to livelihood stability. Capacity and time constraints among informal workers and their organisations were also noted as barriers to sustained participation.

6 GPAP's role

Across interviews and reports, GPAP's contribution to informal sector inclusion is characterised as enabling and supportive rather than directly implementing services. GPAP support to NPAP underpins the operation of the coordination platform, task forces and analytical work that place inclusion at the centre of system-change planning.

GPAP aligned support also enables the development of key evidence products, notably the Social Context Assessment and the Gender Equality Strategy, which interviewees described as important in legitimising inclusion priorities and shaping how EPR and financing discussions are framed.

Interviewees did not describe GPAP as directing government policy choices or controlling fiscal flows. Its role was instead described as strengthening the conditions for sustained dialogue, learning and evidence informed approaches to inclusion.

7 Sustainability and forward look

Interview and documentary evidence indicates that inclusion gains will only be sustained if they are embedded within policy and financing mechanisms that deliver material improvements in working conditions and livelihood security. Interviewees identified key

conditions as the integration of informal workers into EPR and related financing mechanisms, formal recognition and protection, sustained capacity building and organisational support, and continued coordination capacity at platform level.

The GPAP Evaluation highlights risks associated with reliance on external funding and emphasises the importance of stable coordination capacity to maintain momentum and accountability. Without these conditions, interviewees expect inclusion progress to remain localised and dependent on short-term projects. If addressed, inclusion has potential to strengthen both plastics system performance and social outcomes, particularly for women and other marginalised groups concentrated in informal recovery roles.

Intervention summary 4. Collection strengthening

1 Description of the intervention

This intervention focuses on strengthening plastic waste collection systems in Ghana, with particular attention to the interface between informal and formal collection. Across interviews with government representatives, private sector actors, civil society organisations, international agencies and informal sector representatives, collection was consistently described as the operational backbone of the plastics system and the primary barrier to reducing leakage.

Interviewees emphasised that collection in Ghana is heavily dependent on informal labour, including waste pickers and informal collectors, who recover a substantial share of recyclable plastics in urban and peri urban areas. Formal municipal collection was described as uneven, with significant gaps in coverage, especially in low-income communities.

Within the NPAP context, collection system strengthening does not involve NPAP delivering collection services or owning infrastructure. Instead, the intervention comprises enabling actions that support coordination, inclusion, evidence generation and alignment of partner-led initiatives aimed at improving collection capacity, efficiency and safety.

Examples described by interviewees include increased recognition and organisation of waste picker groups within national plastics discussions, facilitation of dialogue between waste pickers and private sector actors, and the use of NPAP platforms to raise the visibility of collection challenges in governance processes. Several respondents referred to partner-led support initiatives, including the provision of equipment such as tricycles and PPE; however, available evidence suggests that such support was delivered through individual private sector contributions rather than directly financed or implemented by NPAP. For example, media reporting indicates that Nestlé Ghana made a one-off donation of equipment to the Plastic Collectors Association. Interviewees nonetheless described NPAP as providing a convening space through which waste picker concerns, pricing dynamics and aggregation challenges could be raised with policymakers and industry actors.

2 Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

Interviewees across all stakeholder groups identified collection as strategically central to Ghana's plastics challenge. Without improved collection coverage and efficiency, interviewees argued that plastics will continue to leak into drains, rivers and coastal environments regardless of progress in redesign, recycling or disposal.

Documentary evidence supports this framing. The national plastics roadmap identifies inadequate collection as a key driver of leakage and a binding constraint on downstream recycling and treatment capacity. Interviewees reinforced that collection performance directly affects the feasibility of rPET targets and EPR ambitions by determining the quantity and quality of feedstock entering the system.

Collection was also described as a critical inclusion issue. Interviews and analytical reports highlight that women, youth and migrants are over-represented in informal collection roles and face heightened risks related to safety, income instability and harassment. Strengthening collection without addressing these dimensions was described as likely to reinforce existing inequalities.

3 Estimated cost or LOE (level of effort) of the intervention

Interviewees consistently described collection systems as resource intensive at the system level. Expanding coverage and improving performance requires investment in vehicles, transfer points, equipment, data systems and workforce support. The Financing roadmap estimates that collection, transport and transfer infrastructure represent a substantial share of the capital and operating expenditure required for system-wide change to 2040.

At the NPAP platform level, interviewees confirmed that direct financial expenditure on collection is limited. NPAP operates with a small Secretariat budget and does not fund or manage collection services. Its contribution lies in coordination, convening and evidence support.

Despite low direct spend, the level of effort associated with NPAP-linked collection work was described as high. Interviewees noted that organising informal workers, sustaining cooperatives, distributing equipment and improving market access require ongoing engagement, trust-building and coordination across multiple actors.

4 Results of the intervention

Interview evidence indicates that outcomes related to collection system strengthening are localised and incremental, rather than system wide.

Increased local collection capacity: Interviewees from informal sector organisations and partner delivery actors described localised provision of basic collection equipment, including tricycles and personal protective equipment, alongside targeted training activities. These interventions were characterised as pilot or partner-led initiatives rather than nationally coordinated programmes, and were intended to improve collection efficiency, safety and income stability in specific locations.

Improved safety and visibility: Interviewees reported that access to PPE improved basic safety and visibility for informal collectors, particularly women and younger workers. However, they stressed that PPE alone does not resolve broader occupational risks associated with informal work.

Improved organisation and bargaining power: Waste picker organisations described benefits from cooperative formation and collective engagement with buyers, including more stable prices and reduced exploitation by intermediaries in some locations. These outcomes were described as dependent on sustained organisational support.

Evidence and awareness: Interviewees noted that NPAP-supported analytical work and dialogue have helped strengthen understanding of collection gaps, workforce characteristics and system bottlenecks, helping frame discussions on EPR, financing and recycling readiness.

Overall, interviewees characterised collection related outcomes as positive but uneven, with limited evidence of national-level change in collection coverage or performance.

5 Why was it effective or not?

Several enabling factors were identified. Interviewees consistently highlighted NPAP's convening role as important in bringing informal actors, private companies and government representatives together to discuss collection challenges that are often overlooked. Alignment with inclusion focused analysis, particularly the Social Context Assessment and Gender Equality Strategy, was described as improving the targeting and legitimacy of collection related actions.

Constraints were also prominent. Interviewees identified structural limitations, including weak municipal services, lack of formal recognition for informal collectors and insufficient investment in collection infrastructure, as major barriers to scaling local successes. Market volatility, particularly fluctuating PET prices, was also cited as undermining income stability and participation even where collection capacity improves.

Interviewees further noted that NPAP's limited resources constrain its ability to sustain or scale collection initiatives beyond pilot or partner-led projects.

6 GPAP's role

Across interviews and reports, GPAP's contribution to collection system strengthening is characterised as enabling and indirect. GPAP support to NPAP underpins the coordination platform that allows collection challenges, inclusion risks and system bottlenecks to be discussed alongside EPR, recycling and financing interventions.

GPAP aligned support also enables the production of analytical products, including the roadmap, Financing roadmap and inclusion-focused assessments, which interviewees described as important for framing collection within a system-change narrative rather than as a standalone service gap.

Interviewees did not describe GPAP as delivering collection services, financing vehicles or managing municipal systems. Its role was instead described as strengthening coordination, learning and evidence use across actors.

7 Sustainability and forward look

Interviewees agreed that the sustainability of collection system improvements depends on several conditions. These include sustained investment in collection and transfer infrastructure, formal recognition and integration of informal collectors into EPR and financing mechanisms, continued organisational support for cooperatives, and price stability for recyclables.

Documentary evidence emphasises that without these conditions, gains in collection capacity are likely to remain localised and vulnerable to reversal. Interviewees also highlighted the importance of stable coordination capacity to maintain momentum and accountability, noting risks associated with reliance on external funding.

If these conditions are met, interviewees consider that strengthened collection systems could significantly reduce leakage, improve recycling performance and support livelihoods. Without them, collection is likely to remain the weakest link in the plastics system.

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Indonesia: GPAP contribution story

1. Country context

Indonesia, like many other low and middle-income countries, faces significant challenges in solid waste management, especially with plastic waste. Indonesia's plastic consumption is currently estimated at approximately 26.5kg per capita per year, generating around 5.5 million tonnes of plastic waste annually (Sustainable Waste Indonesia, 2025). Plastic waste constitutes the second-largest component of the country's municipal solid waste stream, with around one-third mismanaged and more than half left uncollected (World Bank, 2021). A recent study identifies Indonesia as having the eighth-highest total volume of mismanaged plastic waste globally (Earth Action, 2024). An estimated 346.5 kilotonnes of plastic waste are discharged into the marine environment each year, while limited collection services and inadequate access to disposal infrastructure continue to hinder improvements in waste-handling behaviours (World Bank, 2021).

In recent years, Indonesia has shown increasing commitment to addressing plastic pollution, reflected in the development of various policies and regulations. Indonesia's National Plan of Action on Marine Plastic Debris 2017–2025 sets a national target to reduce marine plastic debris by 70% by 2025 (Ministry of Environment and Forestry, 2020; Switch-Asia, 2025). The Indonesia National Plastic Action Partnership (NPAP) was established in early 2019 as a multi-stakeholder platform to support national efforts (WEF, 2020). The Multi-stakeholder Action Plan (hereafter the NPAP roadmap) prepared by NPAP in 2020 projected a 30% increase in plastic waste flows into Indonesia's water bodies between 2017 and 2025 under a business-as-usual scenario (WEF, 2020). However, the system change scenario proposed in the NPAP roadmap suggested that coordinated actions could reduce ocean plastic leakage by 70% by 2025, in line with the national reduction target (WEF, 2020). A recent report published by a local research institute in Indonesia indicates that approximately 22% of plastic waste is currently collected for recycling annually (Sustainable Waste Indonesia, 2025). This figure is more than double the recycling rate of 10% estimated in the NPAP roadmap's baseline data (WEF, 2020).

2. Relevance

As a country facing significant plastic pollution challenges and an increasing policy focus by the government on addressing plastic pollution, the establishment of the NPAP as a multi-stakeholder platform to coordinate previously fragmented actions is highly relevant in Indonesia. GPAP's approach has been particularly well aligned with the Indonesian context, as it builds on existing national readiness and national goals for plastic pollution reduction. Rather than introducing a parallel agenda, the NPAP was designed to support Indonesia's national plans and policy priorities on plastic pollution, as reflected in the NPAP roadmap, in which recommendations are framed to complement and reinforce existing national strategies.

With respect to relevance for women and marginalised groups, the NPAP roadmap emphasises the importance of adopting a gender equality and social inclusion perspective to better understand plastic pollution challenges in Indonesia and to design effective solutions (WEF, 2020). However, this evaluation found limited evidence to suggest that these

perspectives are currently being meaningfully integrated into NPAP's core priorities and actions.⁸⁹

Interviews conducted for this evaluation highlighted two major areas in which the NPAP remains relevant in the Indonesian context. First, it serves as a platform for convening diverse stakeholders with often conflicting perspectives, providing a neutral and credible space to discuss and debate strategies and approaches to address plastic pollution, and to agree on collective actions. Second, the NPAP plays a role in catalysing national and international policy discussions related to plastic pollution. Interviewees noted the unique relevance of the NPAP in the Indonesian context, as no comparable multi-stakeholder platform previously existed and no other institution is currently able to provide such a space.⁹⁰ However, several gaps were also identified. These include a reduced focus on knowledge production and the organisation of large-scale events; concerns about inclusivity; limited engagement with the informal waste sector; the inactivity of task forces; and the limited use of roadmaps to inform strategic actions. These gaps are discussed in more detail in the Efficiency and Effectiveness sections below.

3. Efficiency

In terms of convening power, initiating discussions, building networks, informing policy processes, establishing coordination structures, and producing strategic outputs as required under the GPAP guidelines, the Indonesian NPAP has demonstrated efficiency despite its limited human and financial resources. Interviewees generally spoke highly about NPAP's role in providing a neutral and unbiased platform and its ability to bring together stakeholders who might not otherwise interact.

However, some of these efforts were perceived as tick-box exercises merely to fulfil GPAP requirements rather than driving meaningful change.⁹¹ For instance, although the NPAP has developed six roadmaps (the overall NPAP roadmap and roadmaps prepared under five task forces) in line with GPAP guidance, they are not currently used to shape strategies or inform decision-making.⁹² Some NPAP members even appeared to be unaware of the content of these roadmaps, suggesting that they currently play a limited role in guiding the activities and direction of the NPAP.⁹³ The limited significance currently attached to these roadmaps may not reflect an efficient use of the time, effort and financial resources invested in their development. Similarly, while a Steering Board and five task forces were established in accordance with GPAP guidelines, these structures have gradually become inactive and have not provided sustained strategic direction to NPAP activities.⁹⁴ As a result, coordination and guidance of NPAP activities largely fall to the NPAP Secretariat, which is already

⁸⁹ Few gender-focused interventions or discussions to incorporate gender considerations into NPAP activities are observed. Limited attention to informal waste pickers is also noted, as discussed later in this document.

⁹⁰ KII4, KII6, KII7, KII9, KII10, KII14, KII15

⁹¹ KII1, KII12

⁹² KII2, KII5, KII8, KII10, KII14, KII15, KII16, KII17, KII18

⁹³ KII7, KII9, KII13

⁹⁴ KII1, KII4, KII5, KII7, KII8, KII9, KII12, KII14, KII15, KII16

operating under significant pressure, with the organisation of Steering Board and task force meetings further adding to the administrative burden without generating proportionate strategic value.⁹⁵ In this context, continuing to allocate scarce resources to maintaining these structures in their current form, without clear outputs or outcomes, may be inefficient. The experience of the Indonesian NPAP also suggests that the existence of multiple task forces without timely relevance or tangible outcomes can make the governance structure difficult to manage and, over time, render some elements redundant or limited value. Recognising these challenges, the NPAP has decided to discontinue the task force model and instead establish more flexible working groups (e.g. Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Working Group – see Appendix 2.1) focused on specific themes and time-bound priorities, rather than functioning as permanent structures.

The Indonesian experience highlights the importance of clearly defining the structural identity and ownership of NPAPs at the outset, including the relationships between GPAP and NPAP, between the government and NPAP, and between the NPAP and the host organisation. Clarifying the concept of a “platform” in ways that are appropriate to the local context is critical for ensuring efficient and effective functioning. In Indonesia, ambiguities around these issues were common in the early stages of NPAP, as the concept of a multi-stakeholder platform was relatively unfamiliar and not well understood.⁹⁶ As a result, a significant amount of time and effort by the NPAP Secretariat in the initial phase was devoted to clarifying roles, expectations and governance arrangements and to convincing diverse stakeholders of the platform’s value, which limited its ability to focus on core priorities.

A gradual decline in the NPAP’s earlier focus on knowledge production and the organisation of high-profile events was also mentioned during the interviews, which had previously played a key role in raising the visibility of plastic pollution issues.⁹⁷ Uncertainty regarding future GPAP funding may be one factor contributing to this shift, as it has required the NPAP Secretariat to devote increasing time and effort to fundraising to sustain the platform, thereby reducing its capacity to focus on these activities. This reflects a broader trend in which reduced funding leads to a narrowing of activities, which in turn contributes to declining engagement from members. While some respondents stated that World Resources Institute’s (WRI’s) role as the host organisation enhanced NPAP’s credibility,⁹⁸ some others reported that perceived or actual conflicts of interest involving WRI at times affected the willingness of some stakeholders, particularly government ministries, to participate in NPAP activities.⁹⁹ However, the NPAP Secretariat clarified that this issue arose primarily

⁹⁵ For example, it is culturally expected that Steering Board meetings be held in five-star hotels, as Board members include senior government officials and CEOs of large companies, and it is generally considered inappropriate to invite them to the NPAP office or to informal venues such as restaurants (KII2). However, organising meetings in such settings places a substantial financial burden on the NPAP, and when these meetings do not generate commensurate value or concrete outcomes, they may not represent an efficient use of the NPAP’s limited resources.

⁹⁶ KII2, KII12, KII13

⁹⁷ KII12, KII15

⁹⁸ KII4, KII14

⁹⁹ KII14, KII15, KII16.

from a former minister in the Ministry of Environment acting in an individual capacity, rather than from the government or any particular ministry, due to a disagreement over a previous project undertaken by WRI. It is reported that, following the change in minister, the NPAP now maintains a very cordial relationship with the Ministry of Environment, with the current representative from the ministry serving as a co-chair of the NPAP.¹⁰⁰

4. Effectiveness

Process

NPAP's most consistent effectiveness in Indonesia has been at the process level. The NPAP has created a trusted platform for sustained dialogue by bringing together more than 120 diverse stakeholders and addressing long-standing fragmentation among actors, particularly between the public and private sectors. It is widely perceived as a platform that belongs to everyone and is recognised as an effective space for knowledge sharing, network building, and forging collaborations.¹⁰¹ However, the absence of mechanisms within the NPAP to monitor the progress or outcomes of collaborations initiated through the platform, primarily due to the NPAP's limited resources, makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness of such collaborations. The involvement of representatives from the Coordinating Ministry of Food Affairs and the Ministry of Environment in the NPAP leadership, together with the branding of the WEF, has helped strengthen the platform's credibility.¹⁰² At the same time, the need to involve additional ministries was highlighted, recognising that addressing plastic pollution requires coordinated, cross-ministerial action.¹⁰³

Certain concerns were raised regarding inclusivity within the NPAP, particularly in relation to the EPR Working Group (see Appendix 2.1 for a detailed account).¹⁰⁴ The strong concentration of NPAP activities and membership in Jakarta, driven in part by Indonesia's geography as an archipelagic country and by the NPAP's limited resources, often affects the platform's ability to capture perspectives and challenges from other regions.¹⁰⁵ In addition, some private sector respondents noted limited communication from the NPAP leadership regarding future work plans, which made it difficult for them to align with NPAP activities or contribute meaningfully to its initiatives.¹⁰⁶

While the governance structures, including the Steering Board, task forces, and roadmaps, are intended to play a central role in guiding NPAP's work, they currently function largely as procedural requirements rather than as drivers of strategic action, as mentioned earlier. It is noted that in Indonesia, roadmaps that are not linked to specific regulations are difficult to implement. The lack of legal grounding of the NPAP roadmap, together with the existence of a government roadmap that is given greater priority, were cited as key reasons for the

¹⁰⁰ Alongside the Secretariat, another interviewee (KII15) also mentioned that convincing the Ministry of Environment to become a co-chair of the NPAP is one of its recent achievements.

¹⁰¹ KII4, KII6, KII7, KII9, KII14, KII15, KII17, KII18

¹⁰² KII2, KII6, KII8, KII9, KII12, KII13, KII14, KII15, KII18

¹⁰³ KII4, KII9, KII12, KII14

¹⁰⁴ KII6, KII7, KII8, KII15, KII16

¹⁰⁵ KII2, KII5, KII12, KII17, KII18

¹⁰⁶ KII3, KII8, KII17

limited use of NPAP roadmaps in shaping strategies.¹⁰⁷ Some concerns were raised about the high-level nature of the roadmap, highlighting the absence of a concrete action plan and challenges related to the document's continued relevance in a changing context.¹⁰⁸ It was suggested that while roadmaps can provide broad strategic direction, effective implementation would require translating these documents to suit different local contexts, reflecting Indonesia's geographic, social, and cultural diversity.¹⁰⁹ Despite the generally limited use of the roadmaps, the NPAP's current focus on strengthening the EPR framework aligns with the strategic priorities outlined across several roadmaps, such as the Policy roadmap, the Financing roadmap, and the Behaviour Change roadmap.

Change on the ground

Support to innovators: The NPAP has supported innovation through a range of activities, including conferences, innovation showcases, and other networking events. While these events reportedly enabled start-ups to connect with relevant stakeholders, increase the visibility of their ideas, and access business-relevant information, there is limited evidence that they resulted in concrete partnerships or investment outcomes.¹¹⁰ One exception cited was an NPAP-facilitated innovation showcase (see Appendix 2.2) event that enabled the delivery of a Canadian grant to entrepreneurs (NPAP Quarterly Outcomes Update, October to December 2022). Start-ups viewed the NPAP Secretariat as responsive and supportive in facilitating connections and responding to requests.¹¹¹ In the view of the NPAP Secretariat, the direct delivery of GPAP grants to innovators, without engaging NPAP, may have undermined the platform's credibility as a national coordination mechanism and resulted in missed opportunities to leverage local knowledge and reinforce NPAP's added value in the Indonesian context.

Use of evidence to inform decisions: Interviewees noted that the data provided by NPAP are useful for their own work and interventions.¹¹² However, the NPAP's emphasis on knowledge generation has diminished in recent years.¹¹³ While the Metrics roadmap underscores the importance of regular data collection to track progress in implementing the roadmap, there remains limited capacity and few established mechanisms to systematically and regularly

¹⁰⁷ Kick-off workshop, KII15, Validation workshop

¹⁰⁸ KII1, KII5, KII8, KII10, KII14, KII16

¹⁰⁹ KII18. During the validation workshop, the NPAP Secretariat noted that this suggestion may not be practical given the country's size and diversity. In the Secretariat's view, it would be more feasible if NPAP is not tasked with developing additional roadmaps alongside existing government roadmaps. Instead, NPAP could serve as a platform to support and implement specific existing government roadmaps.

¹¹⁰ KII6, KII7, KII8, KII10, KII17, KII18. The NPAP Secretariat clarified that, given the nature of NPAP as an engagement platform, it is difficult to claim a direct impact of NPAP on partnerships or collaborations between members. If a start-up meets a private sector representative at an NPAP event or is directly connected through NPAP, any resulting partnership may only materialise a year later after a series of meetings, discussions, and proposal development. In such cases, the parties involved may not remember to inform NPAP, and consequently, NPAP would also be unable to claim credit for the partnership.

¹¹¹ KII7, KII8, KII17

¹¹² KII6, KII10, KII15, KII17

¹¹³ KII10, KII12, KII15

carry out such monitoring. Nevertheless, the NPAP Secretariat recognises the importance of addressing this gap and has made some efforts in this regard. For example, in 2024, NPAP conducted monitoring of roadmap implementation, based on which the Secretariat proposed the formation of a working group model. Consultations organised by the NPAP to inform policy formulation and revision (e.g. EPR for packaging, Indonesia's position for INC 5.2) are effective examples of how evidence and stakeholder inputs have been used to inform decision-making. However, it was mentioned that the limited engagement of NPAP in regional and subnational policy processes, constrains the incorporation of local evidence into decision-making.¹¹⁴

Investments: The NPAP has organised two major financing pledge events (2023 and 2025) during which non-state stakeholders were encouraged to pledge their resources to support plastic pollution programmes, either through initiatives they implement directly or by providing financial support to organisations active in the sector. The pledge sessions were reportedly successful in securing significant commitments.¹¹⁵ However, these resources do not flow through the NPAP and the platform has no direct control over their use. The NPAP Secretariat noted that interpreting and publicly reporting these pledges as finance mobilised by the NPAP is problematic. In their opinion, such reporting can create the impression that the NPAP has access to substantial financial resources, leading member organisations to expect financial support from the platform. The NPAP Secretariat also reported that in 2024 it monitored the implementation of the 2023 pledges and observed that 74% of the committed amount had been utilised by stakeholders as pledged.

Circular economy: The NPAP roadmap gives equal priority to both upstream and downstream strategies and the Policy roadmap specifically focuses on upstream plastic policies. However, some interviewees felt that, in practice, recycling receives far more prominence than reuse and refill in NPAP discussions, including within the EPR Working Group.¹¹⁶ This imbalance was attributed to several factors, such as the national-level policy focus on recycling, limited data or awareness on reuse systems compared with recycling, greater industry readiness for recycling, a better-developed recycling ecosystem in the country, and the influence of key NPAP members, some of whom are plastic producers or businesses engaged in recycling or waste management.¹¹⁷ Although the NPAP Secretariat reported that they are actively trying to balance discussions and have indicated plans to establish a new working group focused specifically on reuse and refill, the formation of this group will only be possible if additional financial resources can be mobilised.

Informal waste workers: Although Indonesian NPAP has not yet formed a GESI task force, the NPAP roadmap, Financing roadmap, and the Social Context Assessment Report recognise the important role of the informal waste workers in Indonesia's plastic value chain and highlight the need to ensure safe and dignified working conditions for them. However, field observations indicate that, apart from some isolated efforts such as organising a GESI

¹¹⁴ KII3, KII5

¹¹⁵ Kick-off workshop, KII12. According to data provided by the NPAP Secretariat, the 2024 pledge event resulted in commitments of more than GBP 1 billion.

¹¹⁶ KII2, KII10, KII15, KII16

¹¹⁷ KII10, KII15, KII16

training event for members or integrating the issue of informal workers in broader discussions, NPAP's direct focus on informal workers remains limited at present. While several member organisations work closely with informal waste workers, there is no evidence that they have been able to bring these voices meaningfully into NPAP discussions. Given NPAP's limited financial resources and its mandate as a convening platform, the NPAP leadership recognised that direct interventions to support informal waste workers fall beyond its scope and capacity.

5. Impact

Given that NPAP in Indonesia functions primarily as a convening platform, not as a ground-level implementor, it is not possible to assess its direct impact on plastic pollution reduction. Since the NPAP roadmap in Indonesia is largely designed to align with and support the government's Action Plans and regulations, rather than to function as an independent strategy, NPAP's role is mainly to complement government efforts rather than to deliver direct interventions. Nevertheless, NPAP is recognised as an important enabling mechanism and accelerator in achieving national plastic waste reduction targets.¹¹⁸ Interviewees, including government representatives, noted that the establishment of NPAP has helped elevate discussions on plastic pollution to a broader platform and has encouraged more collaborative and coordinated efforts toward national reduction goals.

6. Sustainability

The limited ability of the Steering Board to provide strategic guidance has resulted in a heavy reliance on the NPAP Secretariat for the continuation of NPAP activities. Given the Secretariat's limited staffing capacity (currently comprising two full-time and two part-time staff) and constrained financial resources, this dependence affects how active and responsive the NPAP can be as the platform's effectiveness depends more on the vision, enthusiasm, and capacity of individual Secretariat staff than on NPAP as an institution. This could affect the platform's long-term stability, particularly in the event of staff turnover or changes at the individual level. Because the Secretariat has become central to NPAP's functioning, securing adequate financial resources to cover core operational costs, including staff salaries, is critical. However, while members and potential donors are often willing to co-sponsor high-visibility events or provide project or programme-based funding, they are generally reluctant to finance the Secretariat's core operational costs, as these do not directly generate benefits for their individual organisations. With GPAP funding expected to end in the coming years, the financial sustainability of the NPAP is therefore uncertain. Although the Secretariat has begun mobilising additional resources, to date the NPAP has secured only short-term funding from the Danish Government to support the Secretariat costs. Reliance on short-term funding, however, creates uncertainty regarding staff job security and continuity, which may in turn affect the overall functioning of the platform and its long-term sustainability.

Commonly suggested funding options, such as membership fees or financial contributions from member organisations, also present challenges. NPAP members indicated that they

¹¹⁸ KII3, KII6, KII7, KII9, KII14 KII15

would require clearer and more tangible benefits before agreeing to pay membership fees.¹¹⁹ Given the diversity of NPAP's membership, expectations regarding benefits vary widely and, in some cases, may be contradictory, that are difficult for a single platform to reconcile. Concerns were also raised about the neutrality of NPAP if its operational costs were covered through donations from large companies.¹²⁰ Mobilising external grant funding has proven challenging as well, as NPAP, GPAP, and even some NPAP members often compete for the same funding sources, at times creating undesirable competition.¹²¹ The Indonesian NPAP has developed Sustain Strategy in 2025 and identified four priority areas for fundraising: multi-donor funding, joint fundraising with NPAP members, collaboration on events or programmes with NPAP members and large-scale projects (NPAP Indonesia, 2025). Efforts to attract support from multiple international development agencies through a multi-donor funding mechanism are currently ongoing, with some success from the Danish Government, as noted earlier. However, the incentives offered, such as representation on the Steering Board, involvement in government consultations, and visibility of donor logos on NPAP social media, may raise new concerns about inclusivity and neutrality. Therefore, at the current stage, without continued financial support from GPAP, the NPAP may face difficulties in sustaining the Secretariat or meeting mandatory requirements under GPAP guidelines, such as maintaining required governance structures. The lack of clarity regarding the future relationship between GPAP and NPAP once GPAP funding ends was also highlighted in discussions.¹²² For instance, doubts were raised about how GPAP could claim ownership of NPAP once funding is sourced from other channels, why NPAP should continue reporting to GPAP and the extent of GPAP's role in NPAP activities going forward. It was also noted that GPAP could communicate more clearly from the outset about the "sustain" phase, including what it entails in terms of funding, ownership, the continuation of NPAP in its current format and the expected timeline.¹²³ Clearer direction from GPAP regarding the future of NPAP was highlighted as a need.¹²⁴

The sustainability of the NPAP under the current Steering Board structure and the largely inactive task force model is also a concern. The recent shift from task forces to more flexible working groups reflects an effort to address these challenges. In parallel, the NPAP is considering restructuring the Steering Board, including exploring the possibility of involving industry associations rather than individual organisations. This approach was seen as a way to reduce perceptions of NPAP's bias towards specific companies, while potentially strengthening the Steering Board's collective influence as a policy actor or pressure group.¹²⁵

Overall, while interviewees generally agreed that NPAPs should ultimately function independently in their national contexts and not remain dependent on GPAP, they felt that

¹¹⁹ KII5, KII8, KII9, KII10, KII13, KII16, KII17, KII18

¹²⁰ KII4, KII10

¹²¹ NPAP Secretariat

¹²² KII1, KII2

¹²³ Validation workshop

¹²⁴ Validation workshop

¹²⁵ NPAP Secretariat

NPAP Indonesia has not yet reached that stage. In their view, the NPAP continues to require support from GPAP, particularly in terms of financial assistance, capacity building for Secretariat and Steering Board members, and facilitation of knowledge sharing and learning across different NPAPs.

7. Value for money

GPAP support in Indonesia represents moderately good value for money. With a relatively modest level of investment, the platform has successfully convened diverse stakeholders, coordinated collective efforts to reduce plastic pollution, and elevated the issue within public discourse. Key functions such as convening, policy facilitation, encouragement of innovation, and mobilisation of stakeholder commitments have generally been delivered efficiently. However, there remains scope to enhance value by improving inclusiveness, strengthening engagement with informal waste workers, more systematically integrating gender perspectives into NPAP activities, reinvigorating the focus on knowledge production, monitoring and data collection, and revitalising the organisation of high-profile events.

All interviewees except one noted that they consider the NPAP to be a relevant platform, and the majority felt that the time they spend on NPAP activities is worthwhile. At the same time, some respondents involved in the EPR consultations mentioned that while they are comfortable with the current frequency of meetings and consultations, any increase in meeting frequency would need to be justified by stronger strategic direction and more concrete outcomes, particularly through clearer translation of discussions into tangible policy influence.

8. Lessons

The Indonesian experience highlights several transferable lessons for GPAP's approach.

First, the concept of a "multi-stakeholder platform" needs to be clearly articulated in ways tailored to the local context. Clearly defining the structural identity and ownership of NPAPs at the outset can streamline the NPAP set-up phase. The NPAP governance structures can also be tailored to each country context rather than applied uniformly across NPAPs. This includes carefully determining the number, scope and thematic focus of task forces to avoid overlap and redundancy.

Second, NPAP roadmaps can be developed with a strong emphasis on contextual feasibility and practical relevance and can aim to provide strategic guidance for NPAP activities rather than replicate existing national policy frameworks. To be effective, roadmaps can include clearly defined roles and responsibilities, along with actionable delivery plans and specific milestones. Where appropriate, roadmaps can be periodically updated to maintain relevance in changing contexts. Similarly, the development of task force roadmaps may be undertaken only where they are relevant and likely to inform action, to prevent inefficient use of limited resources without tangible outcomes.

Third, to ensure the effective functioning of the NPAP and reduce the burden on the NPAP Secretariat, the capacity of the Steering Board may be strengthened so that it can provide meaningful strategic direction to NPAP activities.

Fourth, while NPAP is effective in initiating discussions, prolonged reliance on voluntary engagement risked frustration when dialogue was not followed by implementation. This highlights the importance of linking coordination functions more explicitly to financing mechanisms and delivery arrangements.

Fifth, careful selection of the host organisation is critical for efficient and smooth functioning of the platform. Alignment between the host organisation's mandate, processes, and procedures and GPAP's objectives, and the WEF's requirements, can be assessed in advance to NPAP set-up, alongside the host organisation's acceptance within the national context. While international development agencies can add credibility, their prior relationships with government and other key stakeholders can be carefully considered to ensure broad participation and trust.

Sixth, GPAP can communicate clearly at the outset about the sustain phase of NPAP and what it means. At the same time, GPAP can focus on building the capacity of the NPAP Steering Board and Secretariat to independently sustain the platform during this phase.

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Appendix 1: The NPAP

Year	Action	Contributors
2019	National Plastic Action Partnership set-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Economic Forum Indonesia Government <p>NPAP Steering Board Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinating Ministry for Food Affairs Ministry of Environment Ministry of Industry Ministry of National Development Planning/Bappenas UK Embassy to Indonesia and Timor Leste Canada Embassy to Indonesia and Timor Leste Japan Embassy ADB CCEP Chandra Asri Petrochemical Dow Indonesia Fiscal Policy Agency Go To Indofood Indonesia Diet Kantong Plastik LPBI NU MAP METI Nestle SecondMuse Unilever United in Diversity World Bank
2020	Task forces established	Taskforces for Financing, Policy, Innovation, Metrics and Behavioural Change established
2020	Multi-stakeholder Action Plan, roadmap published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Economic Forum Indonesian Government NPAP Indonesia Expert Panel NPAP Indonesia Steering Board Systemiq <p>NPAP Indonesia Expert Panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> André Rodrigues de Aquino, Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist, World Bank Bangkit Oetomo, ADM Capital Christine Halim and Justin Wiganda, Chair and Vice-Chair of ADUPI (recycling industry) David Christian, Chief Executive Officer, Evoware Dini Trisyanti, Co-founder, Sustainable Waste Indonesia

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dodi Krispratmadi, Director of Sanitation Development, Ministry of Public Works and Housing • Edi Riva'i, Chair, INAPLAS (plastics industry) • Enri Damanhuri, Professor, Institute of Technology Bandung • Jane Fisher, Expert, Indonesia Waste Platform • Júlia Reisser, independent expert • M. Ali Yusuf, Chairman of the Disaster Management and Climate Change Institute, Nahdlatul Ulama • Marta Muslin, Expert, Indonesia Waste Platform • Morten Holm van Donk, Head of Environmental Sector, Royal Danish Embassy • Muhammad Reza Cordova, Researcher, LIPI (national research institute) • Nani Hendiarti, Assistant Deputy IV, Coordinating Ministry for Maritime Affairs and Investment • Pris Polly, Chair, IPI (informal sector) • Sinta Kaniawati, Chair, PRAISE (consumer goods and packaging industry) • Sri Bebassari, Chair, InSWA (waste management sector) • Tiza Mafira, Executive Director, Aliansi Zero Waste Indonesia • Ujang Solihin Sidik, Subdirector Head, Ministry of the Environment and Forestry • Zainal Abidin, Professor, Institute of Technology Bandung
2020	Financing roadmap published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPAP Indonesia • Financing task force • Global Plastic Action Partnership, World Economic Forum <p>Financing task force members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-chair: Fiscal Policy Agency (Ministry of Finance) • Co-chair: Asian Development Bank • Embassy of Canada in Indonesia and Timor Leste • ADUPI • AEPW • AFD • Amartha • Circulate Capital • Climate works Australia • Embassy of Denmark in Indonesia • Enviu • Fiscal Policy Agency (Ministry of Finance), co-chair • KFW • McKinsey

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minderoo • P4G • PACE (Platform for Accelerating Circular Economy) • SMI • Systemiq • UK Embassy in Indonesia
2021	Behaviour change roadmap, published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPAP Indonesia • Behaviour Change task force • Global Plastic Action Partnership, World Economic Forum <p>Behaviour change task force members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-chair: Ministry of Education • Co-chair: LPBI NU • Co-chair: Zero Waste Alliance Indonesia • Bakti Barito • Bye-bye plastic bag • Chandra asri • Coca-Cola • Danone • Dietkantong Plastik • Divers Clean Action • Duitin • Econusa • Enviu • Evoware • GIZ • Go To • Indofood • Indonesian Waste Platform (IWP) • IPRO • Jacobs • KC-Softex • Kopernik • L'oreal Indonesia • Nestle • Octopus • Plastic Pay • PPLH Bali (Environment Education Center Bali) • Suntory Garuda • Systemiq • The Circulate Initiative • Unilever • Youthopia

2021	Innovation roadmap, published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPAP Indonesia • Innovation task force • Global Plastic Action Partnership, World Economic Forum <p>Innovation task force members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-chair: Ministry of Research, Technology, and Higher Education • Co-chair: SecondMuse • AEPW • BPPT • Chandra Asri Petrochemical • CLOMA (Clean Ocean Material Alliance) • Coca-Cola Indonesia • CSIRO • Danone • Dow Indonesia • Enviu • GoTo • Greenhope • Inaplas (Indonesia Olefin Aromatic and Plastic Industry Association) • Indonesia Waste Platform (IWP) • LIPI (Indonesia Institut of Sciences) • Mckinsey • Netherland Embassy in Indonesia • Padjajaran Univerity (UNPAD) • PRAISE • SAP • SCF • Softex Indonesia • Systemiq • UK Embassy in Indonesia • Unilever • Waste4Change
2022	Indonesian Plastics sector social context assessment report, published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPAP Indonesia • Global Plastic Action Partnership, World Economic Forum • World Resource Institute Indonesia
2022	Metrics roadmap, published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPAP Indonesia • Metrics task force • Global Plastic Action Partnership, World Economic Forum <p>Metrics task force members:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-chair: LIPI (Indonesia Institute of Science) • Co-chair: CSIRO • ADB • Association of Polymer Indonesia • Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) • Danish Embassy • Divers Clean Action (DCA) • Greenaration • Inaplas (Indonesia Olefin Aromatic and Plastic Industry Association) • Minderoo • Padjajaran University (Unpad) • Reciki • SAP • Surabaya Institute of Technology (ITS) • Systemiq • The Ocean Clean Up • Umrah • World Bank
2022	Policy roadmap, published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPAP Indonesia • Policy task force • Francesca Montevicchi and Mihail Asenov, The Environment Agency Austria • Mohamad Bijaksana Junerosano and Anissa Ratna Putri, Waste4Change • Henry Bastaman, Environmental Expert • World Bank • World Resource Institute Indonesia • Indonesian Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries • Indonesian Ministry of Environment and Forestry • Indonesian Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Investment <p>Policy task force members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-chair: Coordinating Ministry for Maritime and Investment Affairs • Co-chair: World Bank • ADB • ADUPI • AFD • ASWO • Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) • Chandra Asri Pacific • Climate Works Centre • Danish Embassy in Indonesia • Dow Indonesia • GIZ

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go To • Inaplas • Indonesia Business Council for Sustainable Development (IBCSD) • Indonesia Waste Picker Association • Japan CLOMA (Clean Ocean Material Alliance) • KfW • L'Oreal • Minderoo • Nestle • Netherland Embassy • Pisces • Platform for Accelerating Circular Economy (PACE) • PRAISE/IPRO • Systemiq • Wageningen University • Waste4Change
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Appendix 2: Intervention summaries

2.1: EPR Working Group

1. Description of the intervention

The Indonesian NPAP established an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Working Group in July 2025 under the Policy task force to support Indonesia's ongoing revision of its EPR regulation, which is being elevated to a Presidential Decree to make compliance mandatory.

The primary objectives of the EPR Working Group are to:

1. Consolidate studies, discussion inputs and recommendations for establishing mandatory EPR for packaging and strengthening the implementation of Ministry of Environment and Forestry Regulation No. 75/2019.
2. Function as a multi-stakeholder consultative platform to consolidate and streamline mechanisms and governance structures for EPR for packaging.
3. Build the capacity of stakeholders involved in EPR for packaging.

The Working Group organises multiple consultations (so far five consultations in total including three big consultations) with both government and industry stakeholders to provide inputs into the regulatory revision process. The group consists of 23 member organisations, excluding the NPAP Secretariat. Its membership primarily comprises international development agencies and industry associations representing different sectors of industry. Six members were selected to form a Formatur team, which, together with the NPAP Secretariat acting as facilitator, serves as the core team responsible for shaping the agenda and substantive content of discussions within the EPR Working Group.

The list of the members of the EPR Working Group is provided in Table 2.1.1:

Table 2.1.1: EPR Working Group members

<p>Formatur team members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ADUPI: Association of Plastic Recycling Indonesia• AGUNI: Association of Reuse Refill Indonesia• ICEL: Indonesia Centre for Environmental Law• IPRO: Indonesia Packaging Recovery Organization• SWI: Sustainable Waste Indonesia (Think tank)• Kibumi (Think Tank / Consultancy Services)
<p>Other EPR Working Group members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Danish Embassy• GIZ• WWF• FIA• Association of Producers in Indonesia• GAPMMI (Indonesian Food and Beverage Producers Association)• IPF (Indonesia Packaging Federation)

- ASPADIN (Indonesian Bottled Drinking Water Association)
- ASPARMINAS (National Association of Packaged Drinking Water Companies)
- APINDO (Indonesian Employers Association)
- PERKOSMI (Indonesian Cosmetics Companies Association)
- PEKERTI (Indonesian Household Health Supplies Association)
- PASTI (Indonesian Plastic for Sustainability Initiative)
- IPR (Indonesia Plastic Recycler Association)
- ASRIM (Indonesian Soft Drink Industry Association)
- APSI (Indonesian Waste Management Association)
- FIA (Food Industry Asia)

The Working Group is expected to operate until the government completes the regulatory revision and issues the final decree. The NPAP is currently funding the EPR Working Group and is seeking additional support from international development agencies through a multi-donor partnership model to enhance its effectiveness. To date, it has secured one year of funding from the Danish Government to operationalise the Working Group, part of which also supports Secretariat operations.

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The formation of the EPR Working Group aligns with the strategic priorities outlined in the NPAP roadmap, which emphasises that system change can be enabled through a combination of policy reform, financial investment, industry leadership and public engagement, all of which constitute key elements of an effective EPR framework. Underscoring the strategic relevance of the Working Group's mandate, the NPAP roadmap also highlights the critical role of the NPAP in influencing policy processes. Further reinforcing its relevance, the objectives of the EPR Working Group align with the priorities set out in the Policy roadmap (where EPR is a major focus) as well as the Financing and Behaviour Change roadmaps.

Highlighting the contextual relevance of the intervention, the formation of the EPR Working Group is also informed by lessons learned from the task force model, where engagement tended to decline over time and participation proved highly time and topic sensitive. This experience suggests that forming targeted thematic working groups composed only of organisations with a clear interest in a specific issue may be more effective than broader task forces with diverse and diffuse mandates. In the view of NPAP Secretariat, such working groups can draw on cross-cutting expertise from across multiple task forces while maintaining a strong thematic focus. For example, the EPR Working Group integrates financial, innovation, behavioural change, and policy dimensions within a single, issue-focused structure. As a result, the working group model in general is expected to enhance focus, streamline discussions, reduce inactivity and loss of interest, accelerate decision-making, and strengthen stakeholder capacity in areas aligned with their core interests.

3. Estimated cost or LoE (level of effort) of the intervention

In financial terms, the NPAP Secretariat estimates approximately USD 80,000 per year to operationalise and maintain the EPR Working Group. This budget covers costs related to personnel or facilitator engagement, organising meetings, and expert or honorarium fees.

However, the LoE required to ensure the effectiveness of the Working Group extends well beyond these direct costs. The process involves engaging a wide range of stakeholders with diverse and often conflicting interests and views on EPR regulation and its scope; organising multiple consultations to facilitate discussion and debate on complex issues; managing differing expectations and demands; and ultimately building consensus and consolidating reconciled inputs into common, coherent policy recommendations submitted by the Working Group to the Ministry of Environment (MoE). In addition, substantial effort is required to engage multiple ministries, including the MoE and the Ministry of Industry, to bring them on board and to establish the EPR Working Group as a credible and trusted platform whose inputs are taken seriously in EPR policy deliberations.

4. Results of the intervention

It is not possible to objectively assess the final results of the intervention at this stage, as the activities and processes of the EPR Working Group are still ongoing. The extent to which the Working Group will be able to influence the final policy document will only become clear once the process is completed. As an indication of the potential effectiveness of this intervention, MoE is reportedly considering designating the NPAP as the official consultation and consolidation platform for the technical substance of EPR for packaging.¹²⁶

Interviewees generally welcomed the formation of the EPR Working Group and noted that it has been valuable in keeping the EPR agenda visible and providing a neutral space for dialogue among government, business, and civil society.¹²⁷ The activities of the Working Group reportedly helped build a shared language around EPR and clarify technical concepts that had previously been fragmented across different actors.¹²⁸ At the same time, some concerns were raised regarding the extent of the Working Group's influence and its effectiveness in generating concrete outcomes, particularly in translating discussions into clear, time-bound, and actionable recommendations for policy and implementation.¹²⁹ Some felt that government agencies are not taking the Working Group's outputs seriously, as they were not clearly reflected in draft policy documents.¹³⁰ This has led some Working Group members to question the extent to which NPAP, in its current form, can function as an influential policy actor or pressure group.¹³¹

Some interviewees, especially smaller start-ups and NGOs raised concerns about inclusivity within the EPR Working Group. In their view, large companies and multinational corporations have disproportionate influence in these discussions.¹³² For example, some interviewees mentioned that although they had expressed interest in being involved and contributing to the EPR law development discussions, they were never informed or invited

¹²⁶ NPAP Secretariat, KII13, KII15

¹²⁷ Multi-donor partnership event, KII4, KII5, KII6, KII9, KII13, KII15

¹²⁸ KII10

¹²⁹ KII9, KII10, KII13, KII15

¹³⁰ KII4, KII13

¹³¹ KII3, KII4, KII9, KII13, KII15, KII16

¹³² KII6, KII7, KII8, KII10, KII15, KII16

to join the Working Group.¹³³ Also, some members of the Formatur team were reportedly not invited to government meetings, whereas larger companies routinely were.¹³⁴ The absence of representation from the informal waste sector was also noted, despite this group being among those most likely to be affected by EPR policies. More broadly, the voices of small and medium enterprises, start-ups and innovators working on reuse and refill models, community-based organisations, and local academia and researchers working at the subnational level are said to be underreported in Working Group discussions, with their perspectives remaining less visible or less influential.¹³⁵

5. Why was it effective or not?

The convening power of the NPAP, along with the trust and credibility it has established over these years, is a key factor contributing the effectiveness of the EPR Working Group. This enabled the mobilisation of multiple industry associations into the platform and encouraged government counterparts to view the Working Group as a credible forum for consultations and for submitting inputs. The inclusion of industry associations, rather than individual companies, has strengthened neutrality, as it reflects consensus positions across sectors rather than the interests of specific organisations.

At the same time, the absence of a clear strategic plan for the Working Group was highlighted as a major constraint on its effectiveness. The lack of defined strategies and milestones has often resulted in discussions remaining at a conceptual level for extended periods, with limited clarity on concrete next steps, intermediate milestones, or implementations pathways.¹³⁶

In addition, some participants consider that the link between the Working Group's outputs and formal policy decision-making processes is relatively weak currently, which they viewed as a key factor limiting the overall effectiveness and policy influence of the Working Group.¹³⁷ One contributing factor is that although government representatives participate in the consultations, they are often junior officials.¹³⁸ This was perceived as indicating a limited level of seriousness or commitment from the ministry towards the consultation process. The non-formal status of the Working Group was also highlighted as one of the contributing factors to this weak linkage.¹³⁹ While the MoE is reportedly considering endorsing the Working Group through an official decree and recognising it as a formal platform to lead EPR consultations, this has not yet materialised.

Regarding inclusivity, some interviewees noted that the more prominent presence of multinational corporations and larger companies in discussions may not reflect any deliberate bias on the part of the NPAP, but rather a natural outcome of comparatively

¹³³ KII7, KII8

¹³⁴ KII15, KII16

¹³⁵ KII3, KII5, KII6, KII7, KII8, KII9, KII10, KII15, KII16

¹³⁶ KII5, KII9, KII10, KII13, KII15, KII16

¹³⁷ KII3, KII4, KII9, KII10, KII13, KII15

¹³⁸ KII4

¹³⁹ KII15

greater resources, staff capacity, and technical expertise of these companies.¹⁴⁰ These factors enable them to engage more consistently, proactively and in greater depth over time, making them more visible and influential in sustained technical and policy-oriented discussions.

6. GPAP's role

As elaborated in earlier sections, the EPR Working Group was formed and facilitated by the NPAP, which contributed to the group's credibility.

7. Sustainability and forward look

The working group model was established based on lessons learned from the task force model, which demonstrated that, given the wide range of policy issues involved, it is not feasible for a single group to focus effectively on all areas. From a sustainability perspective, dividing responsibilities across separate teams that focus on specific thematic aspects is therefore considered more sustainable over time.

Based on interviews with diverse stakeholders and observations of the strong engagement and enthusiasm of Working Group members (particularly driven by industries' interest in influencing the EPR policy revision and the time-sensitive nature of the process), it is expected that this model will remain viable as long as the topic remains relevant in policy discussions. Discussions held during the multi-donor partnership event organised by the NPAP, which brought together several international development agencies, also indicated potential interest among these agencies in providing financial support to the EPR Working Group.

Given that there are only very few established models for setting up similar working groups under NPAPs, this represents a new area of practice from which lessons can be drawn and shared across countries, with potential implications for the overall structure of NPAPs. With the Indonesian NPAP planning to establish additional working groups, these lessons will be particularly important for the future functioning of the NPAP in Indonesia as well. However, to ensure the effectiveness of the EPR Working Group and sustain member enthusiasm, the NPAP is likely to require additional financial and human resources to better coordinate activities, accelerate progress, translate discussions into concrete outcomes, and strengthen confidence that government authorities are taking the Working Group's recommendations seriously. Developing a clear roadmap for the Working Group, with short, medium and long-term milestones, could help shift the process from discussion to decision and, ultimately, to implementation.

¹⁴⁰ KII7, KII10, KII15

2.2: Project showcase

The following summary is informed by interviews with the NPAP Secretariat and two NPAP members, as well as quarterly reports submitted by NPAP to GPAP, reports submitted by GPAP to Defra.

1. Description of the intervention

The Project Showcase was launched in 2021 as a collaborative initiative between the Innovation and Finance task forces of the NPAP. The intervention aims to connect selected promising projects and innovators with potential funders, by providing visibility and networking opportunities. It seeks to provide a platform for innovators to engage with industry actors, financial institutions, government bodies and development partners to support the scaling up of solutions addressing plastic pollution (GPAP Programme Update, July–September 2022; NPAP Quarterly Update, January–March 2024).

To date, two Project Showcase sessions have been held, in 2021 and 2024. As part of the initiative, the NPAP invites submissions from innovators proposing solutions to reduce plastic pollution. Selected initiatives are given the opportunity to present their ideas to potential investors, and other relevant stakeholders. The Project Showcase is not designed as a competition and does not involve prize awards. In the first session, which was held online, five organisations were selected to present their initiatives; and the 2024 session, conducted as an in-person event, featured six organisations selected from a total of 36 applications received.

The first session was facilitated solely by the NPAP, while the second session was supported by the Government of Canada and the Ministry of Planning and Investment (GPAP Programme Update, October–December 2023).

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The intervention is strategically relevant as it seeks to operationalise or practically implement the financing and innovation roadmaps developed under the Indonesian NPAP (NPAP Quarterly Updates October–December 2023; NPAP Quarterly Updates, January–March 2024). Such events are viewed as a bottom-up approach to fostering innovation, creating opportunities to identify and potentially scale promising initiatives to address plastic pollution (GPAP Annual Programme Update, April 2023–March 2024). More importantly, enabling innovation is a key priority within the NPAP roadmap itself for achieving plastic pollution reduction targets. In addition, the ideas presented through the Project Showcase cover a range of topics aligned with the interventions and recommendations outlined in the NPAP roadmap and are relevant to diverse actors across the plastic value chain. These include waste management, waste traceability systems, capacity building at the local community level, and engagement with the informal waste sector.

3. Estimated cost or LoE (level of effort) of the intervention

There is limited information available on the LoE, particularly regarding the financial costs associated with implementing the intervention. However, the overall LoE required to

organise this event appears to be relatively low compared to infrastructure-heavy or policy-oriented interventions, which are more complex and resource intensive. As the intervention does not involve a competition or prizes but instead focuses on providing a platform to showcase ideas, the coordination burden is also relatively modest. That said, the intervention does require a rigorous selection process to shortlist initiatives that are eligible to be presented, including the selection and coordination of experts to review submissions and provide inputs. This entails a degree of time, effort and coordination. Nevertheless, these demands are considered manageable, particularly as the event has completed its second edition and has become more streamlined over time.

4. Results of the intervention

The main results of the intervention are observed at the immediate outcome level, primarily through increased visibility for innovative ideas and the provision of a platform for innovators to network and engage with potential investors. More than 80 stakeholders, including innovators, attended the event in 2024 (NPAP Quarterly Update, January–March 2024). However, the extent to which the event succeeds in establishing concrete connections between innovators and investors remains unclear. While NPAP quarterly outcome updates to GPAP report that the Canadian Embassy provided a total of IDR 567 million in funding to three innovators from the 2021 NPAP Project Showcase (see NPAP Quarterly Outcomes Update, October–December 2022; NPAP Quarterly Outcome Updates October–December 2023), an organisation that received this funding were unable to clearly recall the role played by the NPAP. They expressed a lack of clarity or confusion as to whether this funding was a direct outcome of the Project Showcase event. Although collaboration with the Canadian Embassy was much clearer for the 2024 edition, there remains limited clarity regarding the nature of this partnership during the 2021 edition. Moreover, there is currently no conclusive evidence of investment deals resulting from the 2024 Project Showcase. The interview with an organisation selected for the final round of the 2024 event indicated that participation helped increase the visibility of their initiative and expand professional networks, although it did not result in engagement with potential funders. While the scaling up of innovative ideas presented through the Project Showcase, with support from funders, could potentially lead to longer term outcomes or impacts in reducing plastic pollution, such impacts are not yet evident.

5. Why was it effective or not?

The primary factor contributing to the effectiveness of the intervention is the convening power of the NPAP, which enables the mobilisation of diverse stakeholders and potential funders, and provides a meaningful platform for innovators to present their ideas, gain visibility, and engage in networking. The limited effectiveness of the intervention emerges from the absence of assured partnerships or investment outcomes linked to the event. The NPAP Secretariat emphasised that the Project Showcase was never envisaged as a large-scale or competitive event offering guaranteed prizes or investment. Rather, it was designed as an informal platform where start-ups could connect and interact with potential investors. The Secretariat noted that no promises of investment are made to participating start-ups, and this is communicated clearly at the outset of the programme. In their view, neither start-

ups nor investors should perceive the Project Showcase as a one-off event; instead, relationships and interactions initiated through the platform are expected to continue beyond the event, with the possibility that successful partnerships may eventually emerge.

6. GPAP's role

NPAP initiated and implements this intervention and bears the major financial costs associated with organising the events.

7. Sustainability and forward look

Given that the intervention has been successfully implemented twice, with processes becoming more streamlined and a partnership established with the Canadian Embassy, it appears to be institutionally sustainable. However, due to other time-sensitive priorities faced by the NPAP, it may not be feasible to organise the event on an annual basis as originally envisaged, as evidenced by the gaps between editions. In particular, the informal nature of the intervention provides operational flexibility to the NPAP, which may have contributed to these irregular intervals. In this context, developing the Project Showcase into a larger, more formally structured competition with assured prizes or investment support could help strengthen its effectiveness going forward. Such an approach could enhance the seriousness of the initiative, encourage greater participation from innovators and investors, and create clearer obligations for more regular implementation. As the programme is already established and benefits from the NPAP's credibility and networks, it may also be easier to mobilise sponsors to support a larger scale event. Taking into account the practical demands of organising a larger initiative, revisiting the frequency of the event, for example shifting from an annual to a biennial format, could also be a viable option.

Mexico City: PAP contribution story

1. Country context

Mexico City is one of the most densely populated urban areas in the world, with around 9.2 million residents plus 2.2 million floating population. In 2022, the city generated approximately 895,000 tonnes of plastic waste, which represents more than 20% of total waste at the municipal level.¹⁴¹ Collection rates were about 97%, and plastics mismanaged that ended up in open dumps or water bodies amounted to 6% of plastic waste generated. It is estimated that there are around 10–15,000 informal waste workers in the city, and they collect most of the plastic recovered (for example, 70% of PET bottles), most of which goes into recycling. Informal workers are exposed to health risks and low quality of life, without visibility nor recognition. Women informal waste workers are particularly vulnerable given their reduced access to resources, equipment or leadership.¹⁴²

According to the business-as usual scenario analysis to 2040 developed as part of the PAP-CDMX's Action roadmap, without additional interventions, plastic generation is projected to increase 16% and reach over 1 million tonnes, with similar increases in mismanaged plastic waste and carbon emissions, and reductions in recycling rates and circularity.

In the last few years, Mexico City has taken important steps to address plastic pollution through the adoption of regulatory and policy instruments. This includes bans on certain single-use plastics, mandatory waste separation at source (NADF-024-AMBT-2013), a 2023 Circular Economy Law and programmes like Zero Waste towards a Circular Economy (“Basura Cero”) and the Integrated Waste Management Programme (“PGIR”, 2021–2025).

While these measures represent meaningful progress towards circularity, implementation and enforcement remain ongoing challenges. In particular, high levels of economic informality, representing over 30% of employment in Mexico City,¹⁴³ can limit regulatory compliance and the effective waste management obligations.

Beyond the PAP-CDMX, the government has actively advanced complementary initiatives to reduce plastic pollution and accelerate the transition to a circular economy. In 2023, Mexico City joined the Global Commitment for a New Economy of Plastics led by United Nations Education Programme and the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, reinforcing its alignment with international best practices. At the local level, there are programmes like Red ECOs, which is Mexico City's Circular Economy Network, and Mercado del Trueque that promote citizen engagement by encouraging proper waste separation in exchange for essential goods. The private sector has also played a role: ECOCE operates a waste management scheme, while Ecolana provides a digital platform designed to connect citizens with recycling centres.

2. Relevance

¹⁴¹ The study analyses municipal solid waste from households and selected commercial sources, excluding industrial and medical waste streams.

¹⁴² KII x 1

¹⁴³ According to INEGI (2025). The National Survey of Occupation and Employment (ENOE).

In July 2023, the PAP-CDMX was officially launched.¹⁴⁴ It is led by SEDEMA (the Secretary of Environment of Mexico City) in partnership with GPAP/WEF (Global Plastic Action Partnership/World Economic Forum) and coordinated by the host organisation WWF-Mexico. It was the first GPAP platform established in Latin America and the only one across GPAP at the city level.¹⁴⁵ It was conceived as a piloting initiative, where progress made at city level – a city with regulations and an innovative circular economy environment more advanced than the rest of the country – could encourage its escalation to national level. However, this has created some challenges, particularly when engaging with the private sector as many companies take a national approach or are affected by technical or competition barriers across states.¹⁴⁶

The PAP model adds value to the existing landscape in Mexico City as a convening platform and interactive space where representatives from government, private sector, and civil society participate, exchange ideas and collaborate towards specific interventions. Before the PAP, other circular economy initiatives existed, although they tended to work in siloes and without representation of all actors across the plastic value chain.

Joining up efforts with other initiatives taking place in Mexico City could help the private sector engage and prioritise their efforts.¹⁴⁷ Stakeholders have sometimes rejected to participate in the PAP because they are already participating in other national or city level initiatives and have trouble seeing their differences and added value.¹⁴⁸ This is reinforced by the fact that is generally the same people who are involved in plastic waste management groups and events.¹⁴⁹

In June 2025, PAP published the Action roadmap (“Hoja de ruta de acción para reducir la contaminación plástica en la Ciudad de México”). It includes a baseline and scenario analysis of the plastic value chain in the city. The Action roadmap proposes 10 enabling actions and several specific sub-interventions under each of these actions, covering both pre- and post-consumption aspects. They target plastic reductions at source alongside improved collection, separation and recycling. It is considered appropriate in scope, with no major gaps.¹⁵⁰

The relevance and value of the Action roadmap also stem from being based on evidence and designed to allow for adapting and learning over time.¹⁵¹ However, some interviewees reported a lack of clarity about the data and assumptions behind the baseline and scenario

¹⁴⁴ The GPAP’s partnership in Mexico City will be referred in this document as PAP or PAP-CDMX or Platform.

¹⁴⁵ The rest of the NPAPs are at national level, with another exception, Maharashtra State (India), established at state level.

¹⁴⁶ KII x 2; It was suggested that the PAP, if scaled up to national level, could function as a coordinating hub for all environmental departments across Mexico, where different regulations occur (KII x 2).

¹⁴⁷ KII x 1

¹⁴⁸ PAP to GPAP report (Q1 2024)

¹⁴⁹ KII x 1

¹⁵⁰ KII x 7

¹⁵¹ KII x 2

analysis, based on international formulations; casting doubts over the relevance and applicability of such an analysis to the Mexico City context.¹⁵²

The Action roadmap includes gender and social inclusion among the identified action areas, although no GESI (gender equality and social inclusion) study has been carried out. The PAP has also developed a financial roadmap, led by the Inter-American Development Bank and the consultancy Deuman, the first among the NPAPs in Latin America and the Caribbean. It is expected to be published in March 2026. The relevance of such a document is unclear, as an interviewee mentioned that not all the right stakeholders were part of the advisory group discussions, particularly not those with expertise on finances and economic instruments.¹⁵³

A key concern is the absence of informal waste workers, who are not included as members of the PAP and do not participate in the activities of the working groups. They are considered via the directly funded GPAP's Informal Initiative grants or through organisations such as Ecolana, a non-profit organisation engaged with the PAP that works with waste workers.

In summary, the PAP-CDMX addresses the pertinent and timely challenge of plastic waste management, in a collaborative and participatory way, bringing together stakeholders from all sectors across the plastic value chain, apart from informal waste workers. It provides an agreed strategy to 2040 and identifies priority actions. It also contributes to filling the knowledge gap on plastics (via baseline and scenario analysis, as well as other technical reports) and promotes collaboration across sectors, beyond the Platform's activities.

3. Efficiency

As a multi-stakeholder platform, the PAP has effectively brought actors together to validate a shared strategy, produce technical outputs, and discuss solutions and specific actions. Progress has been generally slow and the main milestones (roadmaps, working groups, establishing a leadership group) have been delayed in comparison to initial planning.¹⁵⁴ Given the novelty of its approach (convening and participatory), it is said to have taken a trial-and-error approach, particularly at the beginning, when implementing a strategy to engage with stakeholders or planning a piece of work.¹⁵⁵

Particularly in the initial stages of the PAP, the role of GPAP/WEF to communicate the Platform model to the host organisation was very important and challenging at times, especially given the anti-plastics agenda of the host organisation, which might in occasion not align with GPAP's shared messaging of neutrality and impartiality that seeks to avoid threatening or compromising their relationship with the private sector.¹⁵⁶

GPAP and WEF's reputation and support has been valuable in terms of high-level stakeholder engagement, for example with the government, at city and even at national

¹⁵² KII x 2

¹⁵³ KII x 1

¹⁵⁴ KII x 1

¹⁵⁵ KII x 2

¹⁵⁶ KII x 1

level, and with the private sector.¹⁵⁷ The active participation of the government in the PAP, despite its challenges, has helped give the Platform credibility.¹⁵⁸

The PAP has delivered on the Action roadmap, the Financial roadmap (pending publication), and other technical documents such as the Compostable Plastics Guide, following from the work of the different taskforces. For example, a Metrics taskforce was created to provide feedback of the Action roadmap analysis and recommendations. Later, a series of thematic working groups were created to reflect the roadmap priorities identified by stakeholders: Policy, Behaviour Change, and Innovation and Technology. Another dedicated working group focused on the development of the Financial roadmap. All these working groups included representatives from the government, private sector, academia, and civil society.

The Action roadmap, an interviewee pointed out, can help with decision-making and strengthening public policy.¹⁵⁹ It is said to be an important support as it covers aspects that the government cannot do because of their lack of time and financial resources, such as dissemination or educational awareness.¹⁶⁰ Also, it is said to have been useful to raise awareness on different aspects of the plastic value chain, such as compostable plastics, making these products better known to the industry.¹⁶¹ More flexibility by GPAP in the implementation of the NPAP model to the country (city) context – particularly around specific milestones – would be valuable, as not all of them may be relevant everywhere or even feasible considering the costs.¹⁶² For example, while the roadmaps may be good technical documents, it diverted resources from other initiatives or activities that could have had greater short-term impact.¹⁶³

The elaboration of the Action roadmap was seen as a technically complex process that was inefficient and took longer than initially expected.¹⁶⁴ Supervised by GPAP/WEF, a consultancy company (Dalberg) was contracted to lead the elaboration of this document, particularly the baseline and scenario analysis. WWF-Mexico, the PAP host organisation, only joined the PAP once the document was finalised, which made it difficult to understand and operationalise the technical complex analysis, slowing down further the subsequent work.¹⁶⁵ Besides, the elaboration of the Action roadmap was not participative. Several workshops gave diverse stakeholders the opportunity to provide feedback on the document once finalised, but most of their contributions were added as an annex to the main document.¹⁶⁶ A participatory process would have been more efficient and led to an increased sense of ownership from stakeholders.¹⁶⁷

¹⁵⁷ KII x 3

¹⁵⁸ KII x 1

¹⁵⁹ KII x 1

¹⁶⁰ KII x 1

¹⁶¹ KII x 1

¹⁶² KII x 1

¹⁶³ KII x 1

¹⁶⁴ KII x 1

¹⁶⁵ KII x 2

¹⁶⁶ KII x 1

¹⁶⁷ KII x 1

A change in the city government administration in November 2024 following elections, significantly slowed down the work of the PAP-CDMX.¹⁶⁸ They had to restart their engagement with the government, explain the importance of the PAP and the Action roadmap to the new cabinet, and convince them to adopt this work as one of their priorities.¹⁶⁹ Slow appointments and changing focal points disrupted the work of the Platform and its taskforces. Now that the new government is more established, their engagement with the PAP is said¹⁷⁰ to have improved, although there are doubts about PAP's alignment with the objectives of the new administration.¹⁷¹ The single-use plastic ban review and the study on reuse models are two of the pieces of work that have been more impacted by this government change. Currently, a transition to a new way of organising waste management responsibilities within the local government is again slowing down the work of the PAP. A new government agency dedicated to waste management is currently being created, which has generated uncertainty among government officials about the continuity of their positions.¹⁷²

The changes in government also delayed the elaboration of the Financial roadmap. Consideration was given to cancel it entirely,¹⁷³ although it finally went ahead. It is now close to publication, after being reviewed by all parties.¹⁷⁴ A permanent group of advisors is expected to provide stability and visibility moving forward.¹⁷⁵ The lead consultancy is said to have been very active and responsive throughout the process.¹⁷⁶ The Financial roadmap and its elaboration seem to not have been communicated to some PAP members, who affirmed were not aware of its existence.¹⁷⁷

It was mentioned the length of the process (e.g. to elaborate the roadmaps) created fatigue among stakeholders and reduce their motivation to engage with the PAP, as they are said to be more interested in participating in smaller initiatives, with shorter-term impacts.¹⁷⁸ In addition, while the groundwork has progressed, there's a gap in terms of communication and shared messaging across sectors leaving members uncertain of what is to happen next; carrying the risk that members will disengage from the process.¹⁷⁹

4. Effectiveness

¹⁶⁸ KII x 5

¹⁶⁹ KII x 1

¹⁷⁰ KII x 1

¹⁷¹ KII x 1

¹⁷² KII x 1

¹⁷³ KII x 1

¹⁷⁴ KII x 1

¹⁷⁵ KII x 1

¹⁷⁶ KII x 2

¹⁷⁷ KII x 1

¹⁷⁸ KII x 1

¹⁷⁹ KII x 3

Process

The PAP-CDMX has convened to date a diverse range of stakeholders, including government, private sector, civil society and academia. Waste pickers associations, however, are not involved in the PAP as the government rejects the idea.¹⁸⁰ It was noted by an interviewee that some key private sector stakeholders had not been invited to participate in the PAP, namely small and medium industry producers and entrepreneurs.¹⁸¹

The PAP leadership group is yet to be established. An interviewee mentioned that there has been a challenge to select the leadership group members and particularly the organisation to hold the vice-presidency of the group (the presidency would be held by SEDEMA).¹⁸² Some of the private sector organisations that the PAP would like to have in that position do not have a good relationship with the government, or the government is not keen on having them join this group. Their concern seems to be that they may lobby against regulation and become an obstacle to the PAP work.

The PAP host organisation has cultivated good relationships with stakeholders and are said to have been responsive and approachable.¹⁸³ They are said to be committed and working hard trying to increase the level of engagement and coordination with all actors and other initiatives happening in the city.¹⁸⁴ Some interviewees reported that the PAP helped them strengthen their relationship with the government, industry and civil society, acting as a communication channel and a way of disseminating their own initiatives and invite collaborations.¹⁸⁵ For example, one interviewee said that now others in the industry look for their expertise and invite them to participate in events and workshops.¹⁸⁶ However, the change in government seems to have put a strain in this communication, and work has since slowed down.¹⁸⁷ Other interviewees said that they would like the PAP to help them collaborate and build up working relationships with other organisations and/or sectors, although it hasn't happened yet.¹⁸⁸

The PAP (and Action roadmap) is generally perceived to be useful and valuable for addressing the issue of plastic waste.¹⁸⁹ The importance of the PAP is said to be linked to the institutional support and guidance it provides, in addition to technical evidence and funding for activities and events.¹⁹⁰ The PAP is supporting the government with better tools in the technological transition to more sustainable plastic alternatives (such as compostable

¹⁸⁰ KII x 1

¹⁸¹ KII x 1

¹⁸² KII x 1

¹⁸³ KII x 1

¹⁸⁴ KII x 1

¹⁸⁵ KII x 3; According to GPAP's Community survey in 2024, 8 out of 18 respondents from Mexico City stated that the PAP had had an influence on change or new actions within their role, the main reasons being increased exposure of their work and the opportunity to learn from other experiences (anecdotal evidence, as low number of respondents).

¹⁸⁶ KII x 1

¹⁸⁷ KII x 1

¹⁸⁸ KII x 2

¹⁸⁹ KII x 2

¹⁹⁰ KII x 2

plastics).¹⁹¹ It was highlighted that the PAP has been a great support and driven important changes by inspiring action among stakeholders, including government, and among the general public.¹⁹² The PAP has acted as a communication channel between different actors and with the government,¹⁹³ as before the PAP, there was no advisory group or interactive space when they could all participate, exchange opinions and make proposals.¹⁹⁴ The fact that the PAP is a long-term effort with expected long-lasting results, helps to give it credibility.¹⁹⁵ In comparison to other initiatives, the PAP has managed to make progress and produce technical outputs and other applicable results, which is said to have been particularly positive as many times discussions in other spaces do not translate into anything concrete.¹⁹⁶

According to a review of the Action roadmap published in 2023,¹⁹⁷ the recommendations of this document are very high level and fail to specify concrete measures. Also, while it expresses alignment with current city regulations and programmes, it lacks explanation on how existing interventions may intertwine with the proposed actions. There is uncertainty about how the roadmaps and the technical work in the working groups is going to be implemented.¹⁹⁸ There are also concerns around traceability or monitoring of progress, given the lack of a reliable scientific baseline for waste generation.¹⁹⁹

An interviewee said that the cost of transition to a circular model, particularly for small and medium companies, is not sufficiently considered, nor is other cross-cutting regulations that may affect the applicability of the proposed measures, nor is the complex reality of Mexico City from a social and cultural perspective.²⁰⁰ There were some concerns regarding authority and regulatory competencies, as some of the interventions proposed in the Action roadmap around regulation of manufacturing and plastic production are said to be beyond the remit of the local government.²⁰¹ In terms of the Financial roadmap, it is said to be a good instrument with no missing elements, although its impact will depend on how it is implemented and the political will of the government.²⁰²

Engagement with the private sector seem to be particularly challenging, partly due to WWF-Mexico's anti-plastic tag.²⁰³ It has also been difficult to engage with corporations that support GPAP at international level, as they might not be as actively engaged at local level.²⁰⁴ An in-person visit by GPAP at the Action roadmap launch is said to have improved the engagement with the government and other stakeholders and raise awareness on what

¹⁹¹ KII x 1

¹⁹² KII x 1

¹⁹³ KII x 4

¹⁹⁴ KII x 1

¹⁹⁵ KII x 1

¹⁹⁶ KII x 1

¹⁹⁷ March and Fletcher (2023). Insights Report: WEF Roadmap Review. Global Plastics Policy Centre

¹⁹⁸ KII x 2

¹⁹⁹ KII x 2

²⁰⁰ KII x 1

²⁰¹ KII x 2

²⁰² KII x 1

²⁰³ KII x 1

²⁰⁴ KII x 2

the PAP is about and what it is not.²⁰⁵ However, the lack of active involvement from PAP members has meant that the PAP host is required to coordinate and drive the work forward alone, taking substantial effort and resources, which are already limited.²⁰⁶

Engagement with civil society seems to be easier as the host organisation has good relationships with other civil society organisations.²⁰⁷ However, that is not the case with recyclers associations. It is reported that the government does not have a good relationship with these associations, and when signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to join GPAP, explicitly rejected the idea of involving them in the PAP.²⁰⁸ That's why no GESI assessment has been carried out in this Platform. In relation to participation from civil society organisations, it was mentioned that they sometimes compete against each other (in terms of funding, but also visibility) and some may not be that open to engage with the PAP on occasion.²⁰⁹ Engaging with academia is said to be complex, as there is often a saturation of activities and academics do not have time to participate.²¹⁰ Engaging with high-level government positions inside SEDEMA, has been challenging as they do not participate actively. The Secretary usually delegates to the directors, showcasing the lack of government ownership of the Platform.²¹¹ It is said to have also been a result of limited resources and staff in the Secretary.²¹²

Engaging with other government departments apart from SEDEMA, such as SECTEI, Economy and Finance, are identified as a key factor in driving forward the various interventions prioritised in the roadmaps. However, for example, for the most recent Financial roadmap, it is said to have been a challenge to involve them in the working group, particularly the Economy and Finance departments, even though their understanding and endorsement of the Financial roadmap was seen as fundamental.²¹³ The high workload of these departments is suggested as one of their reasons for their slow communication.²¹⁴ More leadership from SEDEMA to engage with these other departments could have improved their involvement.²¹⁵ The response of the private sector (and participating financial entities), on the other hand, was positive and participated actively in this taskforce,²¹⁶ particularly concerning the extended producer responsibility (EPR) (its definition and scope) and as a way of potentially influencing public policies (the private sector is said to participate mainly in those activities that could help them lessen the impact of a certain policy or

²⁰⁵ KII x 1

²⁰⁶ KII x 1

²⁰⁷ KII x 1

²⁰⁸ KII x 1

²⁰⁹ KII x 1

²¹⁰ KII x 1

²¹¹ KII x 1

²¹² KII x 1

²¹³ KII x 3; PAP report to GPAP (Q2 2025)

²¹⁴ KII x 1

²¹⁵ KII x 2

²¹⁶ KII x 2

strengthen their position, in a reactive way).²¹⁷ Civil society organisations also participated.²¹⁸

Several working groups or taskforces are currently active as part of the PAP. The participation and interactions in the working groups have been perceived as positive by participants, and a diversity of opinions have been encouraged.²¹⁹

The Policy taskforce was launched in 2023 with 19 participants and a majority presence of the private sector.²²⁰ In 2024, it conducted a review of Mexico City's single-use plastic ban that included visits to six waste management facilities and 22 interviews with key stakeholders. It released a final report ready for publication highlighting that the quantification of impact was not possible given the lack of baseline data and offering several recommendations for the government to improve the implementation of the policy.²²¹ However, the new administration that took office at the end of 2024 rejected its publication.²²² According to reports, they were particularly concerned about the study highlighting structural and operational gaps within the government.²²³ Some interviewees mentioned that it was an exercise of caution about the messaging that could be portrayed externally, giving the opposition from some industry sectors to this policy in the first place.²²⁴ Since then, this taskforce has been a bit dormant and the stakeholders that participated in this group were reportedly frustrated, after investing time and effort and see no results.²²⁵ The PAP has been working with the government to convince them of the importance of publishing these actions – as they are the result of the work of many stakeholders in the taskforce.²²⁶ Currently, the document is pending publication and will present the study results but with an emphasis on SEDEMA's current efforts.²²⁷

The Behaviour Change taskforce, one of the first ones created by the PAP, focused initially on reuse models. It convened 15 members, mainly from private sector and civil society at the time of its constitution in 2023.²²⁸ However, there was limited interest from stakeholders to implement any pilot or actions to promote reuse, return and refill models.²²⁹ This was said to be partially due to it being a priority identified in the Action roadmap but not necessarily a priority for the industry.²³⁰ Consequently, the PAP instead decided to conduct a study to understand the barriers faced by the private sector and how regulation could incentivise the uptake of these models. The study didn't go forward, due to challenges related to the new government and the consultant who was tasked with the study, wasting time and

²¹⁷ KII x 1

²¹⁸ KII x 1

²¹⁹ KII x 6

²²⁰ GPAP report to Defra (Q3 Quarterly Oct-Dec 2023)

²²¹ GPAP report to Defra (Q1 Quarterly Apr-Jun 2024)

²²² KII x 2

²²³ PAP report to GPAP (Q1 2025)

²²⁴ KII x 2

²²⁵ KII x 1

²²⁶ KII x 1

²²⁷ As reported by PAP (PAP report to GPAP (Q3 2025)

²²⁸ GPAP report to Defra (Q3 Quarterly Oct-Dec 2023)

²²⁹ KII x 2; PAP report to GPAP (Q2 2024)

²³⁰ KII x 1

resources.²³¹ Finally, it was agreed to redirect these funds toward a study to assess the behaviour of local residents, service providers and visitors across four piers in Xochimilco, alongside the design of an educational and cultural intervention aimed at reducing plastic waste, as part of the project led by SEDEMA in this area of wetlands.²³²

The Innovation and Technology taskforce, who led the development of the Compostables Plastic Guide, has been highly participative with representatives from government, private sector, and academia.²³³ This guide provides information on compostable plastics, addressing challenges and offering recommendations for the industry, with the goals to inform regulations on single-use plastic, provide guidance to companies in adopting compostable plastics, and improve the communication efforts related to these plastics.²³⁴ Over 30 organisations from across the plastics value chain (including government, academia, private sector) participated in this exercise. The guide was officially launched in May 2025, at an event attended by 20 in-person participants and reaching more than 2,000 views online.²³⁵ Since then, the work of this taskforce has continued with the goals to communicate and disseminate the guide and influence changes in regulation.

In April 2024, the PAP-CDMX and its Behaviour Change taskforce launched the “Ojo al Plástico” campaign. It was focused on preventive actions to avoid plastic waste generation. While recycling is said to be well understood by the public, reuse or return is not.²³⁶ They created many communications materials for social media, which were designed to be usable year-round and are still available to share,²³⁷ joint publications with PAP members, media interviews, paid advertising, or engagement with influencers.²³⁸ As part of the campaign, the Ojo al Plástico challenge encouraged the public to create short videos that showcase the problem. This campaign is said to have been very impactful to raise awareness among the public, and many people participated,²³⁹ particularly younger generations.²⁴⁰ It was reported that as a result of this campaign, approximately 400,000 impressions were generated, and the PAP gained around 300 followers on Facebook, 2,000 on Instagram, and 200 on LinkedIn.²⁴¹ This campaign is said to have contributed significantly to enhancing public understanding of plastic-related issues and encouraged community engagement in sustainability efforts. The PAP also hosted in 2024 a workshop to engage with journalists to help them communicate topics such as circular economy and plastic waste. The government and academia were involved and shared information on these topics.²⁴² It was reported that

²³¹ KII x 3

²³² KII x 1

²³³ KII x 2

²³⁴ GPAP report to Defra (Q2 Quarterly Jul-Sep 2024)

²³⁵ PAP report to GPAP (Q2 2025)

²³⁶ KII x 1

²³⁷ KII x 1; some of these campaign materials can be found at GPAP report to Defra (Q4 Annual Apr 2023 – Mar 2024)

²³⁸ PAP report to GPAP (Q2 2024)

²³⁹ KII x 1

²⁴⁰ KII x 1

²⁴¹ GPAP report to Defra (Q2 Quarterly Jul-Sep 2024)

²⁴² KII x 1

one participant, an experienced journalist, noted that the landscape was changing; and previously taboo topics were now at the forefront of the public discourse.²⁴³

Together with academia and local government, the PAP also organised in 2024 several workshops for the general public (in-person and virtually) to educate and raise awareness on plastic waste and solutions to improve its circularity.²⁴⁴ Participation was limited in the in-person workshops (10–20 people attended each of the three), but the online 2-hour workshop attracted around 90 people.²⁴⁵ The PAP has participated in other events to raise public awareness: in November 2024, they partnered with PloggingMX to organise a public event to promote physical activity and city cleaning efforts and educating on single-use plastics or plastic waste management,²⁴⁶ and in July 2025, the PAP participated in the Flextival organised by Ecolana, a PAP member, to raise awareness about flexible plastics and promote responsible waste management and circular practices among the general public.²⁴⁷ Public events to raise awareness among the public about the impact of single-use plastics (which included information on what the plastics are, composition, problems, alternatives, and ongoing actions from government and other actors), organised by SECTEI, are said to have been possible thanks to the support and knowledge brought about by the PAP work, in particular in their working groups such as the Innovation and Technology taskforce.²⁴⁸ The PAP has also recently participated in the “100 en un día” event in Mexico City, a citizen initiative, where they talked about the plastic waste problem and the importance of taking action.²⁴⁹

The PAP-CDMX, in partnership with UNEP, organised in August 2024 an event on Circular Economy called “Collaboration for Action: the Circular Economy in the Plastics Sector” to facilitate regional and multisectoral dialogue on plastic circularity, with the goal of sharing experiences, knowledge and best practices in the plastic value chain sector.²⁵⁰ The event had participation from government, academia, civil society, and the private sector. It was streamed online and reached over 3,200 reproductions across all social media platforms.²⁵¹ Other events the PAP has recently participated in are the Zero Waste Consultation Forum (in particular, a roundtable on “Better Use of Organic Waste”), the Residues Expo 2025, via a SEDEMA representative; and the Compostables Plastics Forum, where the Compostables Plastic Guide was presented.²⁵²

The fact that is part of an international network – to address a global problem – gives the PAP and GPAP value as they can catalyse learning and knowledge exchanges across

²⁴³ GPAP report to Defra (Q4 Annual Apr 2023 – Mar 2024)

²⁴⁴ Video of the workshop is supposed to have been uploaded to the PAP website, but couldn't find it

²⁴⁵ KII x 1

²⁴⁶ PAP to GPAP report (Q4 2024)

²⁴⁷ PAP to GPAP report (Q3 2025)

²⁴⁸ KII x 1

²⁴⁹ KII x 2

²⁵⁰ There is a YouTube video of the event: [Foro. Colaboración para la acción: La economía circular en el sector de los plásticos](#)

²⁵¹ PAP to GPAP report (Q3 2024)

²⁵² PAP report to GPAP (Q1 2025)

countries.²⁵³ Utilising the GPAP international network to learn from other platforms' experiences has been highlighted as potentially of value to strengthen the local capacity and enrich the technical materials.²⁵⁴ This could take the shape of a learning community or community of practice at international and/or regional level, made of NPAPs around the world, that would meet annually and would allow them to share their experiences and build up their relationship.²⁵⁵ Some bilateral contact has already happened between the PAP-CDMX and other NPAPs. For example, it was reported that there has been communication between the PAP and the NPAP Ghana, who share information on the functioning of their leadership group. Also, the NPAP Ecuador provided insights to the PAP on the NPAP model and stakeholder engagement.²⁵⁶

An interviewee suggested that a good idea to improve collaboration across sectors would be to create a directory, available to PAP members, with contact information so they could reach out to each other and work together, outside the working groups organised by the PAP.²⁵⁷ Another one suggested that besides creating a directory, the PAP could act as an information hub for the industry, academia and the public, where scientific information or guidance on plastic waste and management could be found to facilitate the transition to a more circular economy. Then, the PAP could be a connecting link between society, academia and the industry.²⁵⁸

Change on the ground

Informal workers

The PAP has not formally engaged with waste pickers associations, given the poor relationship between them and the government. The government hasn't allowed for their inclusion in the Action roadmap or in PAP activities.²⁵⁹ There are, however, some examples of work that is being done that considers them.

The Xochimilco initiative, led by SEDEMA, involves some GESI work with local communities and recyclers, and while PAP is not leading this initiative, participates and provides some funding (see section below on investment).

Direct funding from the GPAP's Informal Initiative grants was granted to several associations to benefit informal waste workers: Ecolana (2024), Sikanda (2023 and 2025), and Entreamigos (2023). GPAP reports that through these grants, until March 2025 (which would not include Sikanda's 2025 funding), 128 informal waste workers (72 women, 56 men) have been supported.²⁶⁰ The funding awarded to Sikanda in 2023 has been directed to improve the working conditions of informal waste workers by providing them with

²⁵³ KII x 1

²⁵⁴ KII x 4

²⁵⁵ KII x 1

²⁵⁶ PAP to GPAP report (Q1 2024)

²⁵⁷ KII x 1

²⁵⁸ KII x 1

²⁵⁹ PAP report to GPAP (Q3 2024). Besides some references to gender and social inclusion in the AR, text on informal waste workers is said to have been toned down.

²⁶⁰ GPAP logframe UDMarch2025

professional training, coaching and mentoring on entrepreneurial competences. The project also tried to advance the recognition of informal recyclers' rights and voices in relation to local authorities, citizens, and stakeholders. According to GPAP reports, the project improved the self-awareness of participants and position them as providers of essential environmental services. It is said to have also inspired other communities to potentially replicate it in their municipalities.²⁶¹ They targeted approx. 70 informal workers, among which 60% were women, in the Oaxaca region of Mexico.²⁶² Entreamigos, another recipient of a GPAP grant in 2023, also targeted informal waste workers, in this case in the community of San Francisco and nearby areas. This project provided them with skills in machinery handling for plastic recycling and waste regeneration to establish a plastic upcycling programme and thus improve their economic opportunities. It was reported that 42 people (29 women, 13 men) participated in the 10 workshops organised by this project. They were said to have improved their technical skills, confidence and leadership skills.²⁶³ Ecolana, another 2024 grantee, also targeted informal recyclers and consumers who wanted to dispose of materials with the objective of improving their relationship, via an app and a rewards scheme. 10 informal workers participated (seven men and three women).

An interviewee mentioned that there is a specific challenge related to the dumping and recycling sites in Mexico City, controlled by mafia-like organised groups who do not allow free access to informal waste workers nor organisations working to support them.²⁶⁴

Circular economy

According to an interviewee, the work developed by the Policy and Behaviour Change taskforces of the PAP (the single-use plastic ban review; and the study on reuse models) could lead to significant impact in the plastics value chain sector towards greater circularity, if the existing challenges are overcome.²⁶⁵

Investment

There is limited evidence of increased investments towards circular economy initiatives that have been made in the city district because of the PAP. A project launched and financed by SEDEMA in Xochimilco, an area of wetlands close to Mexico City, to reduce plastic pollution and protect biodiversity by raising awareness on plastic waste management among businesses and the public, in the context of the upcoming World Cup – for which Mexico City is one of the host cities. PAP's convening, technical and financial support to this project is said to be fundamental.²⁶⁶ SEDEMA has begun by hiring a consultancy to carry out a research study on waste characterisation and on behavioural dynamics, to design and evaluate potential actions. The focus of the project will be varied, including reuse models, plastic waste prevention and educational awareness and engaging with local communities and

²⁶¹ GPAP report to Defra (Q3 Quarterly Oct-Dec 2023)

²⁶² Sikanda final report

²⁶³ GPAP report to Defra (Q3 Quarterly Oct-Dec 2023); Entreamigos final report

²⁶⁴ KII x 1

²⁶⁵ KII x 1

²⁶⁶ KII x 2; PAP report to GPAP (Q3 2025)

recyclers.²⁶⁷ That SEDEMA decided to invest funding into this initiative is said to have been a result of all the work that the PAP has done.²⁶⁸

Use of evidence

One of the challenges to assess impact when it comes to plastic waste management is lack of data.²⁶⁹ For example, one of the recommendations from the review on the single-use plastic ban was that baseline or panel data – over an extended period – was required to be able to assess the impact of that ban; but it was not available. An interviewee said that this lack of data made comparison impossible and condemned the study to produce inconclusive results.²⁷⁰ Some stakeholders, interviewed as part of that study, affirmed that the ban led to a substitution of materials, although that information is said to be purely anecdotal.²⁷¹

The Action roadmap and technical studies like the Compostables Guide is said to have improved the awareness of this issue, among industry, government and the public²⁷² and has been considered and used by government.²⁷³ For example, SEDEMA has organised a working group to modify the environmental standard related to plastic bags, so an exemption to compostable plastics could be introduced. This activity is ongoing and planned to be completed by March 2026, when their proposal will be submitted to the Parliament for approval. The PAP and PAP members were invited to participate and have actively joined this working group, which consists of 32 representatives across the plastics value chain. Seven of these are PAP members.²⁷⁴

Some interviewees said that the PAP had allow them to strengthen their capabilities and skills as a team, as a result of the information shared in workshops and events and their participation in working groups.²⁷⁵ Also, the PAP has shared via email information on courses on circular economy or plastics management organised by its members. An interviewee was frustrated with the fact that the cost of these courses was high and couldn't afford it, even though accessing information and being able to disseminate is an important part of their job.²⁷⁶

5. Impact

At this stage, there is no evidence to affirm that PAP-CDMX has had any impact regarding reductions in plastic waste or improving the quality of life of informal waste workers. The Informal Initiative grantees claimed that their funded initiatives somehow impacted the working conditions and quality of life of the informal workers that participated. While there

²⁶⁷ KII x 2; PAP report to GPAP (Q3 2025)

²⁶⁸ KII x 1

²⁶⁹ KII x 1

²⁷⁰ KII x 1

²⁷¹ KII x 1

²⁷² KII x 2

²⁷³ KII x 2

²⁷⁴ KII x 1; PAP report to GPAP (Q3 2025)

²⁷⁵ KII x 1

²⁷⁶ KII x 1

is evidence of their participation, the evidence of any impact is limited to grantee reporting and it was beyond the evaluation scope to verify.

The impact of instruments such as the Action roadmap and Financial roadmap is said to depend on the political will of the local government, but also the influence of political and social groups that control the waste management system, including informal workers.²⁷⁷ Behaviour change and public awareness are said to be other challenges to achieve tangible change.²⁷⁸

6. Sustainability

The power of the PAP to generate resources that support its sustainability is still limited, as private companies are reticent to invest in the Platform and allocate resources to the Action roadmap and Financial roadmap implementation.²⁷⁹ In terms of the financing of PAP activities, all resources have so far come from GPAP, and it's suggested that additional funding, particularly from the private sector, could generate much more impact.²⁸⁰ This need for financing was also mentioned by another interviewee, who would like to see more financial supports for projects or events, especially because the local government has limited resources.²⁸¹ The Xochimilco initiative is seen as an opportunity to cross that bridge and encourage private sector to bring in funding.²⁸²

The PAP is exploring additional funding opportunities to sustain the work going forward. For example, they applied to a Basilea Convention grant with SEDEMA to conduct a study to characterise waste generation within the service sector that could help build a robust baseline, critical to monitor progress and guide future policy improvements.²⁸³

It was pointed out by some interviewees that the roadmaps risk remaining as mere reference documents, unless the government and industry understand and adopts them.²⁸⁴ Also, it was suggested that piloting (for example, the Financial roadmap approach) in partnership with private sector or financial institutions would give the instrument a better chance of being implemented.²⁸⁵ It was also suggested that the PAP work needs to be aligned with government priorities, to ensure their engagement going forward.²⁸⁶

7. Value for money

In relation to its objectives, the GPAP support to PAP-CDMX can be considered as good value for money. With limited resources, the PAP has succeeded at convening a good number of diverse stakeholders across the plastic value chain. It has coordinated and

²⁷⁷ KII x 1

²⁷⁸ KII x 1

²⁷⁹ KII x 2

²⁸⁰ KII x 1

²⁸¹ KII x 1

²⁸² KII x 2

²⁸³ KII x 1; results were expected in Nov/Dec 2025; PAP report to GPAP (Q2 2025)

²⁸⁴ KII x 2

²⁸⁵ KII x 1

²⁸⁶ KII x 1

produced technical documents and increased the public awareness of the plastic pollution problem and solutions. The value offered by the PAP could be improved with better planning (including scope and relevance of activities), monitoring systems to measure progress and impact, integrating informal waste workers, and increasing its capacity to mobilise private sector funding.

According to the PAP members interviewed, the PAP is considered a relevant, useful and valuable platform that provides them with visibility, learning and opportunities for collaboration, despite the challenges.

8. Lessons

The evidence collected suggests the following transferable lessons for GPAP based on the PAP-CDMX experience:

- GPAP's early engagement and support is crucial to position the PAP, secure government and private sector participation, and clarify the platform model and messaging.
- Changes in government cause delays, risk losing momentum, and require rebuilding relationships. Election cycles can often be anticipated and managed.
- Processes led by external consultants can introduce complexity and reduce understanding and sense of ownership in the Platform.
- Lack of data limits baseline and scenario analysis and the possibility of assessing the impact of policies and interventions.
- It's important to manage members' expectations and maintain a constant and transparent communication. Periods of low communication from the NPAP or lack of clarity on next steps can lead to uncertainty and disengagement.
- Private sector investment and funding is hard to attract, unless there are incentives driven by regulation or piloting that reduces risk.
- Wider dissemination and outreach of the Action roadmap and other PAP's outputs, particularly regarding benefits, can help attract participation from stakeholders to the Platform.

Appendix 1: The PAP

Item	Details
Launch date	July 2023 (MoU signed in January 2022)
Lead institution	Secretaría del Medio Ambiente de la Ciudad de México (SEDEMA)
Technical secretariat	WWF México
Working groups	Metrics working group; Policy taskforce; Behaviour Change taskforce; Innovation and Technology taskforce; Financing working group
Governance structure	SEDEMA leadership with multi-stakeholder partners across government, private sector, civil society, academia
Key stakeholders	Government, private sector, civil society organisations, academia, international organisations

Nigeria: GPAP contribution story

1. Country context

In 2020, Nigeria generated an estimated 12,900 kilotons of plastic waste. Alarming, 76% of this waste went uncollected, and even among the collected portion, mismanagement was prevalent. Only about 10% of the total plastic waste generated was recycled, while the remaining 90% was either openly burned or dumped in legal and illegal dumpsites.

The 'business-as-usual scenario' indicates a 78% increase in waste leakage into the environment by 2040 and 90% of waste mismanaged. The system change scenario expects to reduce mismanaged waste to 30% by 2040 saving an estimated USD 3.8bn. The roadmap prioritises reduce, substitute, collection and recycling, and safe disposal.²⁸⁷

The Nigeria NPAP was one of the first to be established. The roadmap builds on existing commitments in Nigeria. For example, a circularity action plan for Nigeria has already been developed that looks at all waste, not just plastic and regulations like Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) have already been introduced.

2. Relevance

GPAP has convened stakeholders across the plastics value chain and facilitated a process that has culminated in delivery of the roadmap and three working groups focused on inclusion, innovation and advocacy.²⁸⁸

At the start of the process, there was some scepticism of the National Plastic Action Partnership (NPAP) as other organisations were delivering similar initiatives.²⁸⁹ However, there were characteristics of the NPAP process that made it unique: the focus on the government (previously much of the drive on plastic waste management had come from the private sector), the convening of stakeholders from the whole value chain, and a focus on a single document that the whole value chain consented to and could be used as a common reference point.²⁹⁰ Of particular relevance to the Nigeria context has been the close engagement of the Ministry of Environment and regulators like National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA), as getting policy changes and government engagement is notoriously difficult.²⁹¹ One aspect where the NPAP has begun to shift its focus is to work more closely with state governments, in particular Lagos and Abuja. State government officials from Anambra, Kano and Bayelsa have also attending recent meetings.

²⁸⁷ NPAP Nigeria (2024) *Towards a System Change in Plastic Pollution: A Roadmap for the Sustainable Use of Plastics in Nigeria*.

²⁸⁸ Nigeria NPAP roadmap.

²⁸⁹ KII1, KII10

²⁹⁰ KII8, KII9, KII10, KII11, KII3, KII6

²⁹¹ Several respondents noted that the government in Nigeria, in comparison to other West African countries, was particularly hard to influence. However, it is beyond the scope of the evaluation to verify this comparison.

There is strong evidence that the roadmap itself was considered a sound document with the right balance of interventions,²⁹² although some respondents lacked confidence in the baseline data.²⁹³ There was also a particular relevance for the smaller players (e.g. the informal sector, small to medium-sized companies, civil society) who, through the NPAP platform, have access to the government and big corporations that they did not have before.²⁹⁴

However, for the NPAP to really set itself apart from what has already been delivered in Nigeria, it must shift from a document to implementation – without this its relevance is minimal and may even be damaging for efforts to curb plastic pollution (see section on Sustainability). The establishment of working groups (WG) is a step in the right direction, but these have largely become inactive, with the exception of an EPR WG.

3. Efficiency

GPAP was able to mobilise an initial foundation of members for the NPAP, using the convening power of the World Economic Forum (WEF) and reaching out first to those that had already engaged in GPAP elsewhere – Nestlé, Coca-Cola, Dow Chemicals and Unilever.²⁹⁵ This gave a basis for further recruitment of NPAP members and a good momentum was created during the roadmap phase.

However, a major issue for the NPAP in Nigeria has been the gap in host organisation.²⁹⁶ After an initial period of the NPAP being led by the Lagos Business School (LBS), LBS was replaced by the Policy Innovation Centre (PIC). During the transition period, the NPAP effectively ceased functioning and there was a six month pause in activity from the start of 2025 until July 2025.²⁹⁷ This meant the initial momentum generated was lost. To put this in perspective, during the roadmap process, the NPAP was seen by some to be the main plastic waste intervention in Nigeria at that time, with over 100 stakeholders attending some sessions prior to the pause. When the NPAP reconvened under the PIC only 20–30 stakeholders attended.²⁹⁸ This is not to say that PIC cannot rejuvenate the momentum – indeed, there are strong signs that it is doing that – and many consider PIC to be a sound choice for host but damage has been done to the reputation, enthusiasm and credibility of the NPAP process that has implications for efficiency.

The grant-making process, led by GPAP centrally, has also had its challenges with grants being delivered late and little scrutiny over how the grants were delivered (see below on Value for money).

²⁹² No respondents felt that the roadmaps were missing any interventions or had any particular gaps across the value chain.

²⁹³ KII1, KII6

²⁹⁴ KII1, KII6, KII11

²⁹⁵ KII3, KII10

²⁹⁶ A majority of respondents highlighted the gap in proceedings as a major issue.

²⁹⁷ LBS was removed and replaced by PIC. During this 6 month window, no NPAP activity took place.

²⁹⁸ KII1, KII8, KII9, KII10, KII11

Issues of efficiency also arose when developing the baseline data for the roadmap, with the desk-based approach of the initial consultancy firm deemed to be inappropriate.²⁹⁹ KPMG, which had offices in Nigeria, was recruited into that role instead. This increased the confidence NPAP members had in the process although there are still doubts about the reliability of the data.³⁰⁰

Despite these challenges, the process of developing the roadmap and bringing a wide range of stakeholders into one room was considered to have significant efficiency gains.³⁰¹ For example, before the roadmap process, engaging the government could be very drawn out, taking months to seek answers or clarifications. By having all stakeholders in one place, discussions and decisions could be concluded there and then.³⁰² Stakeholders were also able to quickly understand each other's positions (see section on Effectiveness).

Overall, when considering that Nigeria was one of the first countries GPAP engaged, sustainable progress to date has been limited. While there is evidence of the immediate and longer-term outcomes outlined in the GPAP theory of change being met (see section on Effectiveness below), significant scepticism remains as to whether the government will deliver what is needed to achieve meaningful change on the ground. This is compounded by a sense from most respondents that, should funding stop, the NPAP will not continue. In this instance, any costs invested in the NPAP process to date would largely be lost and the roadmap would not be used.³⁰³

It should also be noted that WEF limitations do not allow GPAP funds to be spent on travel costs of government officials. This means that, at times, PIC has had to use funding from non-GPAP sources to cover travel of government officials when their presence was considered essential.³⁰⁴

4. Effectiveness

Process

The initial process to establish the NPAP and develop the roadmap were well regarded by the majority of respondents, recognising that the opportunity to have representatives from the whole plastics value chain and the government was unique and an important step to remove the silos that existed across the plastics industry. Given the size and complexity of the NPAP membership, the NPAP did well to find consensus and get the roadmap across the line.³⁰⁵

There were a number of characteristics of the process that were highlighted as significant for its effectiveness:

²⁹⁹ KII6

³⁰⁰ KII7, KII8, KII2, KII3, KII12

³⁰¹ KII3, KII4, KII5, KII6, KII11

³⁰² KII10

³⁰³ KII4, KII9, KII10, KII11

³⁰⁴ KII5

³⁰⁵ KII1, KII3, KII9

1. The presence of the whole value chain in one room which allowed people to understand each other's potential, limitations and concerns which, in turn, helped to find common ground, raise awareness of the issues and move forward.³⁰⁶ In particular, the raised visibility of the informal sector that represents vulnerable men and women was notable.
2. It built on what already existed, bringing all the existing policies and activities into one place which was important as it provided one common reference point for all stakeholders and it shone a light on what had already been agreed but (often) not actually delivered (e.g. where a policy was in place but not delivered by the government).³⁰⁷
3. The presence of the government added credibility and encouragement that the issues were being taken seriously and provided an opportunity to add pressure on the government to act (see Sustainability below).³⁰⁸
4. A common understanding of the problem and baseline data – even if still contested – moved everyone to a more realistic common position on the scale of the problem (for example, the government used to claim that there were 2 million tonnes/yr of plastic waste when actually it is more like 18 million tonnes/yr).³⁰⁹

However, the process became a lot less effective once the roadmap had been delivered.³¹⁰ Some of the challenges that affected the post-roadmap effectiveness are as follows:

1. The involvement of high-level government officials does not account for all the officials lower down the chain that need to be engaged and bought-in for change to happen.³¹¹
2. There was no implementation plan to accompany the roadmap and no means to monitor progress.
3. The task forces expected to operationalise the roadmap do not have a clear mandate, roles and responsibilities and no means to hold others to account.
4. There was fatigue following the involved process of the roadmap development and a gap in host organisation to keep moving things along.
5. One respondent felt that there was nothing really new in the roadmap and the targets were unrealistic which led to some people to disengage.³¹²

Nevertheless, the NPAP is regaining its momentum, with PIC as a new host bringing in new energy and pushing key areas forward. For example, the EPR WG is working with the government and other stakeholders to improve how it is designed, delivered and complied with. The work of the EPR WG included a joint study by the Food and Beverage Association and the NESRA to understand better plastic use. PIC is also actively engaging a strategic

³⁰⁶ A majority of KIIs mentioned this as a benefit.

³⁰⁷ KII10

³⁰⁸ A majority of KIIs mentioned this as a benefit.

³⁰⁹ KII3

³¹⁰ KII10

³¹¹ KII8

³¹² KII1

group of state-level authorities as a key step to operationalising the roadmap and is deepening its collaboration with the Plastic Reboot programme (see Sustainability).³¹³

Change on the ground

Informal workers: The NPAP process has elevated the visibility, awareness and importance of informal workers within the plastics value chain and gives their representatives direct access to plastic producers and government officials that they did not have before.³¹⁴ There is strong evidence that NPAP members regarded their contributions as valuable and valued; their engagement in the NPAPs meant they had meaningfully influenced the roadmap and subsequent committee discussions on key issues like EPR.³¹⁵ They have also been able to make the case to other stakeholders in the value chain for better conditions, fairer wages and practical guidance for producers to improve the efficiency of recycling.³¹⁶ Nevertheless, there are policies introduced in Nigeria that are damaging for informal workers, e.g. closure of dumpsites and banning waste pickers in certain neighbourhoods of Abuja on grounds that they are thieves.³¹⁷ This is against a backdrop of fluctuating prices for collected plastic and increased competition (in part due to closure of dumpsites increasing the number of waste pickers collecting from the streets).³¹⁸

Nigeria received more grants from GPAP's small grants mechanism than any other country. The reporting and data collected for these projects is weak and overstated in some reports and the logic of some project designs are better than others. Nevertheless, training provided to waste pickers (by GPAP and others) has helped to improve their credibility and shift attitudes more positively towards them.³¹⁹

Circular economy: There is confidence that the plastics circular economy has reached a tipping point and is here to stay, through a combination of raised awareness of the plastic pollution, public pressure, government policy and economic potential. While all of these factors were in motion already, the NPAP process has helped to reaffirm an industry-wide commitment to the circular economy, building on other initiatives such as the Nigeria Circular Economy Roadmap led by the Federal Ministry of Environment and supported by the EU.³²⁰ The NPAP has provided the space to advance collaboration and co-ordination within the circular economy, for example, giving the opportunity for informal pickers to feedback directly to producers that labels, bottle caps and colouring can all undermine

³¹³ KII5

³¹⁴ KII2

³¹⁵ KII2

³¹⁶ KII2, KII11; typical pricing sees PET plastic selling at 80–100 naira (\$0.06–0.07) per kilogram (source: <https://chuzেকে.com/recycling-business-in-nigeria-profitability-guide/>)

³¹⁷ KII3, KII7

³¹⁸ KII2, KII12

³¹⁹ KII2

³²⁰ Nigeria launches a circular economy roadmap for a sustainable future: <https://www.switchtogreen.eu/nigeria-is-set-to-launch-a-circular-economy-roadmap-for-a-sustainable-future/>

recycling. Similarly, recyclers, producers and government officials were able to explore solutions to the problem that most rPET feedstock is exported to Europe.³²¹

A further example of circular economy progress is the roll-out of reverse vending machines in some states by Eco Barter which used to be on the NPAP Steering Board, representing recyclers. The vending machines mean that consumers are able to drop off their waste to the nearest machine and get cash incentives. While NPAP cannot be credited with this link, there is a possibility that the roadmap gave Eco Barter the confidence to invest.³²²

Investments: The NPAP is working closely with Project Reboot, funded by the Global Environment Facility and delivered in collaboration between the UN Environment Programme and NESRA. NPAP are part of the Project Reboot Steering Board.³²³ Beyond this example there is little available evidence of investments being generated as a result of the NPAP or GPAP's support. However, one interviewee commented that the roadmap helps the government to articulate its position and needs which will in turn benefit how well it can engage donors and investors.³²⁴

Evidence-informed decision-making: A lack of data and common understanding of the scale of the plastic waste management problem was a key limitation for progress being made. The baseline data provided as part of the roadmap development – while imperfect – has been helpful, although continued doubt over the reliability of the data is off-putting for some. Post-roadmap, the NPAP has tried to move things forward to tackle plastic pollution prioritising a “metrics” task force.

³²¹ One respondent described conversations between producers and recyclers that paying upfront or guaranteeing purchase of 20% of their materials could guarantee more rPET feedstock remains in Nigeria (KII11).

³²² KII5

³²³ KII5

³²⁴ KII9

5. Impact

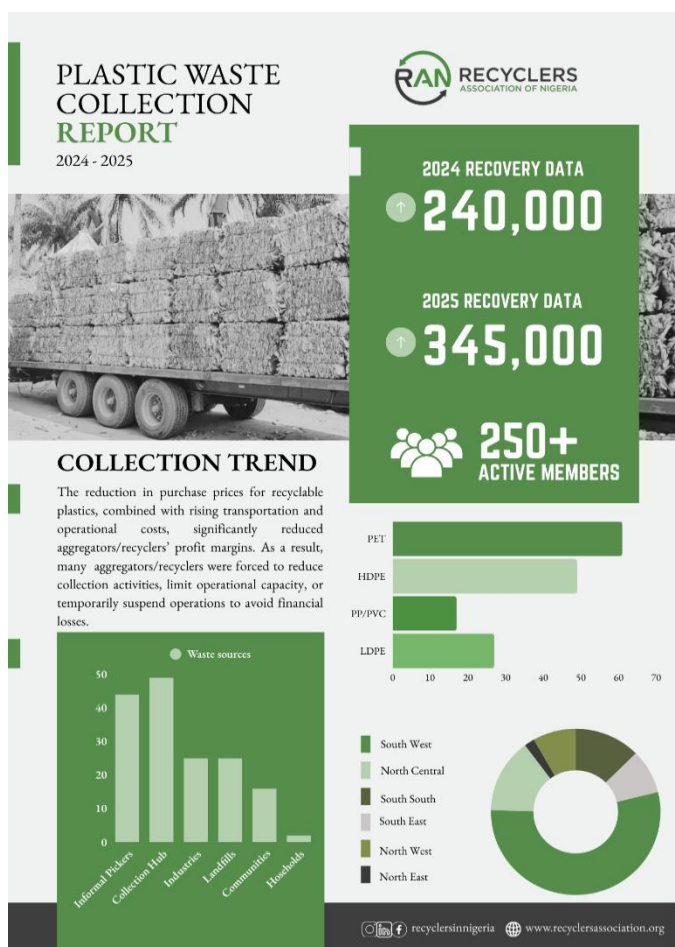
There is little impact-level data available in Nigeria, there is no monitoring and evaluation system for the roadmap, and the GPAP grant reporting is not robust enough to rely upon.

However, the absence of data does not mean the absence of impact and there is anecdotal evidence that suggested improvements are being made – one respondent commented that it is rare to see PET lying in the street these days and there is more inclusion of women in the recycling process³²⁵ – but these are not necessarily linked back to the NPAP.

Figures provided by Nigerian recycler associations indicate that recycling is increasing, at least in terms of volume, but challenges remain, as illustrated in the 2024–2025 report in figure 1.

Similarly, the Food and Beverage Recycling Alliance in Nigeria reported increased recycling collection with 14,759mt in 2024 and 21,531mt in 2025.

Fig. 1: 2024-2025 Summary report from RAN Recycling Association



6. Sustainability

Elements of the circular economy such as recycling have gained a momentum that means they have the potential to grow further in the future.³²⁶ The importance of plastic pollution is also unlikely to recede given that business-as-usual predictions indicate a significant increase in plastic pollution which is already a political issue in Nigeria. International attention and years of advocacy and work to drive forward change – much of which precedes GPAP – has also raised the issue up the agenda and promote the economic, social and environmental benefits of change.

The NPAP builds on all of this and the process to date has helped to strengthen commitment and collaboration to address these issues. There is also commitment from the government, including the Minister of Environment who publicly launched the NPAP roadmap and regular engagement of NESRA.

³²⁵ KII2

³²⁶ KII12

However, there is significant scepticism that the federal government will deliver key policies and actions outlines in the roadmap and the absence of state governments from the NPAP process to date is seen as a gap in delivery – albeit a gap that PIC is starting to address. Without further funding, the majority of those interviewed believe the NPAP will cease to exist, the roadmap will be shelved and the progress to date will not only be lost but may create a wariness amongst key stakeholders that could be damaging for future interventions.

Despite these uncertainties, the NPAP continues to drive change and in the latter part of 2025 PIC facilitated a number of meetings and task force events.³²⁷ Below are some highlights:

- Dialogue held in Abuja state to promote a national system designed to collect and track data across the plastics value chain leading to agencies to commit to better sharing data and collaborating, and improve communication strategies to disseminate policy awareness across government, private sector and public.
- An informal sector dialogue was held also in Abuja to discuss challenges and opportunities with the private sector and government and to strengthen collaboration between informal workers and formal waste management facilities. A review of the first iteration of the biodiversity impact assessment was also shared.
- A public-private sector dialogue was held in Lagos to strengthen commitments to data harmonisation and support NESREA's plastic registry database, better communicate impact stories and agree to develop a common position ahead of COP31 in 2026.

7. Value for money

Nigeria was one of the first countries to receive GPAP support and has received direct grants to the NPAP host and additional support through external consultancies to develop the baselining and scenario modelling and roadmaps.

Efficiency: As one of the first countries, lessons have been learnt from Nigeria and it is expected that there may be some teething problems. The replacement of the data modelling consultancy and the replacement of the host will have affected the efficiency of operations in Nigeria.

Cost effectiveness: The momentum that was generated by the NPAP initially was effective but this was lost when the host changed. The new host is well positioned to rejuvenate the energy and to mobilise key stakeholders and drive policy forward.

Where the informal worker grants are concerned, there is little data to credibly support that these have been effective investments overall and in some cases the tangible benefits seem to be poor value for money. Due diligence and oversight of the grants also seems to be weak

³²⁷ Nigeria NPAP Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Report (2025)

and with very small windows for delivery (around seven months) and there is no opportunity for long-term support which would normally be needed to effect change.

8. Lessons

- Use political economy analysis to understand who needs to be included in the NPAP process to get the most strategic buy-in and consider bringing in sub-national government representatives.
- Changes in the process – such as the step change from roadmap delivery to operationalising the roadmap – are moments where momentum can be lost and need to be well communicated with a clear plan for what comes next.
- Task forces need to have a clear mandate and authority to move the roadmap from document to delivery.
- WEF's convening power and the presence of multi-national corporations on the GPAP board can help GPAP's convening power and the WEF's branding can be strategically leveraged to support diplomatic engagement with government and enhance the legitimacy and credibility of NPAPs.
- Monitoring systems are needed to track progress against the roadmaps that can indicate tangible change and the contributions the NPAP/GPAP has made.

Appendix 1: The NPAP

NPAP Steering Board members
United Bank of Africa Plc
Kano State Ministry of Environment
Small and Medium Enterprise Development Agency of Nigeria
Rida National Plastics Ltd
Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Abuja
E-waste Producers Responsibility Organisation
Food & Beverage Recycling Alliance (FBRA)
Nigerian Maritime Administration & Safety Agency (NIMASA)
Lagos State Environmental Protection Agency (LASEPA)
Canada Government
African Women Power Network (AWP)
ECOWAS & Nigeria Representative Office
Dow
Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN)
Africa Circular Economy Network (ACEN)
National Inland Waterways Authority (NIWA)
Recyclers Association of Nigeria (RAN)
World Bank
Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB)
National Environmental Standards Regulatory & Enforcement Agency (NESREA)
Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF)
UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (Nigeria)
African Development Bank (AfDB)
Coca-Cola Nigeria Limited
Nestlé Nigeria Plc
Indorama Ventures Ltd
Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget & National Planning
Federal Ministry of Industry, Trade & Investment

Appendix 2: Intervention summaries

The informal grants have been a key part of GPAP support in Nigeria with grants going to (1) African Women Power Network (AWP); (2) Circular Economy Innovation Partnership (CEIP); (3) EcoGreen Africa; (4) Recycle Points; (5) Susty Marshalls; (6) Young Advocates for a Sustainable and Inclusive Future (YASIF). The initial project began in 2021 and grants continued to be awarded in 2025. No repeat grants were issued, i.e. each organisation received only one grant.

2.1 Relevance and strategic importance

All of the grants provided support for informal workers across varying states in Nigeria. There were four key activities delivered across the grants:

1. Provision of personal protective equipment (PPE).
2. Training in financial management, business training, health & safety, etc.
3. Access to tools or recycling hubs that may increase efficiency of waste collection.
4. Access to free or subsidised health insurance.

Given the vulnerability of informal workers in Nigeria, the number of informal workers that exist and the growing recognition of their importance to the circular economy, these projects are relevant and in line with GPAP's objectives.³²⁸

2.2 Estimated costs of the interventions

It is worth noting that although the projects deliver similar activities the unit costs and overall costs vary. This may be expected as the projects took different approaches, operated in different locations and were delivered by different partners. However, some of the core costs seem to vary substantially and some of the project expenses do not always align clearly to the activities delivered. This is not a judgement on whether one project was better or worse than the other (the quality of the grantee reporting and data collection is insufficient to do that) but it illustrates the potential variance between projects that could influence value for money.³²⁹

2.3 Results of the intervention

There is anecdotal evidence that these grants achieved valuable results. For example, EcoGreen Africa reported that as a result of their training one group of informal workers had been able to increase the price they received for their plastic by 25% through a combination of better collection, sorting and negotiating.

The Susty Marshalls project, reaching 500 informal workers, conducted baseline and endline surveys that demonstrated good results and also a transparent reflection of where results were more challenging. Some examples include:

- 81% of respondents said the health and safety training had prevented accidents
- 16% said harassments from officials and fellow waste pickers was on the decline
- 60% struggled to access good quality healthcare despite the project's support for health insurance, although 40% said that their health care costs had reduced
- 56% respondents had opened bank accounts since the project began
- 65% reported a direct increase in income from the project

However, much of the reporting across GPAP's grants is weak, with indicators unhelpfully vague meaning it is hard to get a sense of significance. For example, "informal waste workers who transitioned from selling raw plastics to value-added upcycled products are having increase in income, reducing daily income volatility". The lack of detail here makes it hard to

³²⁸ Review of GPAP reports

³²⁹ Review of GPAP reports; KIs with grantees

ascertain the added value of the project: How many people benefited? How much did their income increase by? Was this sustained? What impact did this have on the quality of their lives?

A further example comes from the AWP project which reported it had increased the business confidence of 2,000 informal workers but, when the programme manager was interviewed, the only tangible benefit appeared to be the business registration of less than 50 informal workers with no supporting evidence that this actually led to an improvement of their lives. This is not a criticism of the AWP project necessarily but a criticism of poor reporting which provides little insight of what the GPAP grants have actually achieved.³³⁰

2.4 Why was it effective or not?

It is hard to judge how effective the grants have been as reporting and the evidence base is weak. The rationale of the grants may be assumed to meet the needs of informal workers who require support such as business and finance training, protective equipment, access to recycling hubs and access to health insurance. However, without proper baseline surveys and needs assessments as Susty Marshalls did, it is not certain that the projects prioritise the right things.

2.5 GPAPs role

GPAP provided funding centrally with initial calls to help set up the grants. These calls were appreciated and GPAP was felt to be responsive when grantees needed help and clarifications. However, there were at times funding delays and respondents felt that more end-of-project debriefs would have been helpful to complement the reporting templates which could be a little limiting.³³¹

2.6 Sustainability and forward look

The sustainability of the project's design also varied with Recycle Points linking recycling hubs and "dori-bins" to their own private recycling centre. This potentially created a mutually-beneficial link between the project beneficiaries and the private sector, combined with digital data management systems which – in theory – can monitor the amount of plastic waste collected from the dori-bins that GPAP funded.³³²

The combination in other cases of business training, access to health care and equipment can provide long-term benefits and the results reported by Susty Marshalls suggest that these kinds of interventions can be of benefit into the future. Plans to support recycle hubs have also been developed but it is too early to know if this will successfully lead to any kind of investment. In the case of EcoGreen, organising groups that can better support each other and negotiate market prices can provide sustainable results.

³³⁰ Review of GPAP reports; KIs with grantees

³³¹ KIs with grantees

³³² Recycle Points was asked by the evaluation to provide data associated with collection from the dori-bins but this was not provided.

Peru: GPAP contribution story

1. Country context

Peru has experienced significant economic growth and urbanisation over the past two decades, driving increased plastic consumption.³³³ In 2022, the country generated 1.02 million tonnes of plastic waste (30.6kg per capita per year), with almost 49% of that waste being mismanaged and ending up in informal dumps, water bodies or open fires.³³⁴ According to the National Plastic Action Partnership (NPAP) Peru (2025),³³⁵ vulnerable groups, including rural communities, women and Indigenous populations, are impacted disproportionately by plastic pollution. Informal recyclers play a critical role as they make up most of the waste collection sector, although they face precarious conditions that affect their health and quality of life. Many families subsist on this income, and many of the informal waste workers are women.

According to the business-as-usual (BAU) scenario analysis to 2040 developed as part of the NPAP roadmap, without intervention, plastic waste generation per year will double by 2040 to 2.13 million tonnes, mismanaged waste will exceed 1 million tonnes, circularity will drop to 6%, and carbon emissions will rise by 110%, in comparison to the baseline.

Before the establishment of the NPAP, other initiatives had already been implemented, such as the single-use plastics regulation Law No. 30884 in 2018 or the Law No. 29419 in 2017 that recognised waste pickers as key actors in the waste management chain.³³⁶ Voluntary agreements of the government with the private sector to improve plastic circularity and waste management were also in place.³³⁷ There were several circular economy platforms that overlapped, without a clear shared strategy. The move towards a circular economy, of which reduction and/or management of plastic pollution is a part of, has increasingly become one of the government priorities, as exemplified by the National Circular Economy Roadmap to 2030 published in 2025, as well as the government support to the NPAP Peru.

2. Relevance

The NPAP Peru was kick started in September 2023 to accelerate action against plastic pollution, with the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Environment (MoE) and the World Economic Forum (WEF). The launch of the Platform took place in June 2024.

³³³ NPAP Peru (2025). Hoja de Ruta de Acción para Reducir la Contaminación por Plásticos en el Perú al 2040.

³³⁴ NPAP Peru (2025). Hoja de Ruta de Acción para Reducir la Contaminación por Plásticos en el Perú al 2040.

³³⁵ NPAP Peru (2025). Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Analysis of the Plastics Value Chain in Peru.

³³⁶ Congreso de la República del Perú (2017). Ley no. 29419, Ley que regula la actividad de los recicladores.

³³⁷ For example, the Pacto Peruano por una Economía Circular (PPEC, 2023), a multisectoral initiative between MINAM and private sector, academia and others, characterised by voluntary commitments towards a circular economy.

The NPAP Peru intends to consolidate all the initiatives happening in the country around plastics and provide a long-term vision and strategy through its roadmap.³³⁸ This roadmap aligns with the National Circular Economy Roadmap to 2030, published in February 2025 by the Ministry of Environment and that provides an overall strategic framework across sectoral policies and initiatives relevant to the circular economy, beyond plastics.

The NPAP roadmap (“Hoja de Ruta de Acción para Reducir la Contaminación por Plásticos en el Perú al 2040”), published in October 2025, adds value by focusing on plastic waste reduction and management. It includes a baseline analysis, considered a realistic diagnosis of the plastic pollution problem in the country.³³⁹ It also models a scenario analysis to 2,040 under BAU and under the alternative scenario of systemic change. It proposes 12 interventions to achieve the roadmap objectives, four in the pre-consumption phase and eight in the post consumption stage. The roadmap also integrates a GESI (gender and social inclusion) study, filling a knowledge gap on existing inequalities in the plastic management sector and the vulnerabilities and challenges faced by marginalised groups, such as women and informal waste workers. It also provides recommendations to integrate these insights into policies and strategies to ensure an inclusive and sustainable transition to a circular plastics economy. Technical outputs such as the baseline and scenario analysis included in the roadmap, the GESI report, or a study on flexible plastics also developed within the NPAP, are pioneers in the country and among the first studies covering these topics that have ever been published.

No major gaps in the content and priorities reflected in the roadmap were identified by interviewees, and stakeholders were mostly satisfied with its coverage.³⁴⁰ Recyclers, both formal and informal workers, are included in the roadmap.³⁴¹ However, the fact that some industries are not present in the NPAP and have not taken part in the elaboration of the roadmap (such as agriculture or fishing), sheds doubt on whether the proposed measures cover all relevant aspects for meaningful change.³⁴²

The technical approach based on data taken by the NPAP is seen as a positive step to address the problem of plastics and has encouraged the participation of the private sector in the platform.³⁴³ Its perceived neutrality, not ascribed to any political agenda but designed as a convening space for a variety of views and perspectives (from big corporations to recyclers associations), has also facilitated gaining trust from stakeholders, which reinforces the NPAP’s value and convening power.³⁴⁴

The NPAP as a space for dialogue among stakeholders has been enriching, allowing companies to better assess how they would be affected by a particular initiative or in which

³³⁸ KII x 1

³³⁹ KII x 1

³⁴⁰ KII x 2

³⁴¹ KII x 1

³⁴² KII x 1; although some of these industries, such as fishing, have participated in the elaboration of technical outputs, such as the study on the impact of plastics on biodiversity hotspots (pending publication).

³⁴³ KII x 2

³⁴⁴ KII x 2

ways they could contribute to improve the impact or implementation of another.³⁴⁵ In terms of visibility, the NPAP has made the work the private sector had already been doing more visible, allowing those active companies to become reference points for others and improving their reputation, besides externally validating their actions as they coincide with the ones proposed by the roadmap.³⁴⁶ This visibility aspect has also been mentioned by other interviewees in relation to government actions and recyclers' voices and experiences.³⁴⁷ Given the NPAP convening power, the Platform could be valuable as a space for informal discussions regarding regulatory changes to run in parallel to the more formal Congress-led process. The NPAP could act as a coordinating and convening space for the government to interact and gather feedback from a wide range of stakeholders.³⁴⁸

One interviewee³⁴⁹ stated that a potential risk for the NPAP is to become catastrophist or demonising plastic, for example when depicting images (such as the roadmap launch event) of sea animals trapped by a plastic bag. For them, plastic is not the problem per se but rather people's behaviour. It was also mentioned that the language around gender (i.e., using gender ideology language rather than simply mentioning gender differences) may be confusing for some stakeholders and discourage their participation.³⁵⁰

3. Efficiency

The establishment of the NPAP in Peru and the work it has carried out to date is highlighted as a success, not free from challenges.³⁵¹ At the beginning, the NPAP model and role within the country's circular economy environment was seemingly hard to understand by some stakeholders and it was challenging to position the platform and make it relevant, due to the number of other platforms and initiatives already in place.³⁵²

The NPAP host organisation, together with the MoE as platform lead, worked in engaging with stakeholders and sharing with them the potential benefits of such a platform. A lot of engagement was required, and Global Plastic Action Partnership (GPAP) support to engage with government and private sector was particularly valued.³⁵³ The fact that GPAP is an international initiative with a model that is already working in other countries facilitated buy-in.³⁵⁴ In June 2024, GPAP held in-person meetings with World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Peru, the host organisation, as well as the private sector, the UK embassy, and the MoE of Peru. This in-person engagement is said to have reinforced the collaboration between GPAP and the Peruvian government regarding the NPAP.³⁵⁵

³⁴⁵ KII x 2

³⁴⁶ KII x 1

³⁴⁷ KII x 2

³⁴⁸ KII x 1

³⁴⁹ KII x 1

³⁵⁰ KII x 1

³⁵¹ KII x 3

³⁵² KII x 1

³⁵³ KII x 1

³⁵⁴ KII x 1

³⁵⁵ GPAP reports to Defra: Q1 Quarterly Apr-Jun 2024

Particularly in the initial stages of the NPAP, GPAP and WEF helped position the platform and obtain institutional endorsement of the roadmap, given their name and reputation.³⁵⁶ The fact that the GPAP team speaks Spanish has helped building relationships with the government, and with vulnerable populations such as recyclers. Being able to communicate in their own language has contributed to an atmosphere of closeness and trust.³⁵⁷ Face-to-face opportunities for engagement within the NPAP have been valuable to encourage that interaction,³⁵⁸ while providing virtual spaces has allowed for greater participation.³⁵⁹

The NPAP has delivered to date on the roadmap, the GESI study, a study on flexible plastics, and a study on the impacts of plastic pollution on biodiversity hotspots (pending publication). Specific multistakeholder taskforces or working groups were created to support the development of these technical outputs by setting up the scope and goals, providing data, and reviewing and validating the findings. For example, the Technical Metrics group was created to support the consultancy in the development of the baseline and scenario analysis that was included in the roadmap; a GESI working group was created to support the GESI study; and a Biodiversity working group was created to support the study on the impacts of plastics on biodiversity, including more than 50 people from academia, government, civil society and private sector.³⁶⁰

In relation to the roadmap, the technical methodology employed in the baseline analysis was perceived as good and made stakeholders confident about the next steps of the roadmap.³⁶¹ It is believed to be the only trusted national study on plastics that includes all types of plastics and have been validated by all actors.³⁶² Another interviewee said that the roadmap as a strategic document per se is a very useful tool for their work, as it reflects the priority actions of consensus for the industry.³⁶³ The implementation of the roadmap – which is just starting – is said to be what will make the difference, or not, to the plastic value chain sectors.³⁶⁴

The GESI study, on the other hand, included interviews with vulnerable groups such as informal waste workers, across three different areas in the country. Since its publication in March 2025, the report has been presented at many different events, which have been seen as opportunities to further engage with stakeholders and promote the wider NPAP work.³⁶⁵

In December 2025, six working groups were formed to lead the implementation of the roadmap. They reflect the main priorities identified in the roadmap (regulation, financing,

³⁵⁶ KII x 1

³⁵⁷ KII x 1

³⁵⁸ KII x 1

³⁵⁹ KII x 1

³⁶⁰ KII x 1

³⁶¹ KII x 2; However, as the NPAP focuses only on plastic, an interviewee pointed out that it ignores the multi-material nature of waste management. Any future waste management system would also require the involvement of sectors such as glass or paper to gain efficiency and economies of scale.

³⁶² KII x 1

³⁶³ KII x 1

³⁶⁴ KII x 1

³⁶⁵ KII x 1

coordination, social inclusion, education, innovation) and therefore, they are said to be appropriate.³⁶⁶

Among the challenges that the NPAP has encountered so far, is the high turnover of staff within the government. Every time the governmental ministerial cabinet and focal points changed, the NPAP has been faced with having to defend and present the platform to new teams, which puts a constraint on resources and may delay implementation.³⁶⁷ In this context, the robustness of the roadmap as a document that can withstand political changes and maintain the consensus and engagement from a wide range of stakeholders is seen as a useful tool that could lead to higher predictability in public policies.³⁶⁸

One of the challenges faced by the NPAP in Peru highlights the sensitivity of the political environment, the risks involved in the choice of host organisation, and the GPAP support to the NPAP when faced with difficulties. Early in 2025, there was a clash between the Peruvian government and the NPAP host organisation, WWF Peru. A person involved with WWF International (who did not work for WWF Peru or was involved in the NPAP) had publicly criticised the government. Consequently, the government requested to GPAP a change in the host organisation. With support from GPAP and after two months of talks, during which the contract renewal with the host organisation remained pending, the situation was resolved and the agreement to extend the contract between WWF Peru and GPAP was signed. Despite the challenging situation, there were no delays in the workplan, which showcased the commitment to the NPAP from the host organisation.³⁶⁹

Another challenge happened around the launch of the roadmap. Initially it was planned to be launched at the beginning of 2025. However, it was delayed because the government launched their National Circular Economy Roadmap at that time, and it was expected that the NPAP roadmap would align to this new strategy, a process that took several months. According to an interviewee,³⁷⁰ this delay allowed for further stakeholder engagement, e.g. with the European Union, as they had supported this roadmap. As a result, the NPAP was offered the opportunity to present the roadmap at the Circular Economy Forum (FIEC), an event organised by the European Union in November 2025.

Finally, the launch roadmap event was planned for October 2025 as part of a large international forum on the circular economy that was taking place in Lima, Peru. Six days before the event, however, there was a change in the country's president and the event was cancelled.³⁷¹ In close communication with GPAP, NPAP Peru decided to organise an alternative event despite the sensitive political and social climate at that moment. It proved logistically challenging given the short timeline, but according to interviews and video

³⁶⁶ KII x 1

³⁶⁷ KII x 2

³⁶⁸ KII x 1

³⁶⁹ KII x 1

³⁷⁰ KII x 1

³⁷¹ It was mentioned that this event has been rescheduled and will be taking place soon, where the NPAP will have the chance to present again the roadmap.

evidence,³⁷² attendance from all stakeholders, including the highest authority from the government at that time (the deputy minister), was high. This showcased the GPAP/NPAP's capacity to adapt to changing circumstances and was proved to be the more efficient solution, as avoided cancelling the event altogether and further delaying the roadmap launch. GPAP support to the NPAP under these challenging circumstances was valued, particularly around problem solving and evaluation of alternatives, stakeholder engagement, and shared messaging.³⁷³

4. Effectiveness

Process

Overall, the NPAP process to date and delivery of the roadmap has been considered effective. The NPAP has convened a good representation of the plastics value chain, created the space for all voices to be heard and delivered a roadmap that has consensus, leading to the creation of enthusiastic working groups focused on implementation.

The NPAP is considered a useful instrument and a valuable space and initiative.³⁷⁴ For some interviewees,³⁷⁵ it has allowed them to expand their knowledge on solutions, benefiting from learning from the experiences in other sectors or even other countries (via the GPAP network), and could also potentially help them establish links and relationships with other actors within the plastic value chain. For another interviewee, the resources brought by NPAP have been important in supporting the government work on plastics, particularly enabling the generation of information and evidence.³⁷⁶ The NPAP also has provided the government with a structure for interacting and coordinating with different stakeholders across the plastic value chain. Before the NPAP, the government did not have the capacity to organise and coordinate as many working group meetings as the NPAP has been able to.³⁷⁷

The NPAP leadership group was established in August 2024 with 16 institutions, representing the government, private sector, international organisations and civil society, including two associations of recyclers. This group has had high participation from members and took active part in reviewing the roadmap and other technical studies.³⁷⁸

The elaboration of the roadmap was highly participatory and involved stakeholders across the plastics value chain.³⁷⁹ All sectors participated, including government, private sector, civil society (including recyclers) and academia. The participation in this working group (and similarly in other working groups related to the technical studies) was encouraged by the

³⁷² KII x 1; a video shared by NPAP (14/10/2025) shows images of the roadmap launch event, with high attendance from diverse stakeholders, a speech from the vice minister and other attendees, and their endorsement via signatures.

³⁷³ KII x 1

³⁷⁴ KII x 4

³⁷⁵ KII x 3

³⁷⁶ KII x 1

³⁷⁷ KII x 1

³⁷⁸ KII x 2

³⁷⁹ KII x 6

NPAP hosts and stakeholders felt listened to and considered along the process.³⁸⁰ The NPAP hosts and consultancy in charge provided details on how the feedback from stakeholders had been collected and incorporated into the roadmap document.³⁸¹ The private sector was more active in those roadmap discussions that involved policy or regulatory changes, as that's where they could be more impacted.³⁸² Recyclers also participated and their views and opinions were considered.³⁸³ Their transportation costs were covered by NPAP to encourage their attendance,³⁸⁴ although their work schedules sometimes constrained their level of engagement.³⁸⁵ The roadmap has been validated and endorsed by private sector actors such as Nestlé or ABRESA and public institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, agreeing to a shared strategy and path to 2040.³⁸⁶

The government, via the MoE, is recognised as the owner and chair of the NPAP.³⁸⁷ The government is committed and engage and coordinate regularly with the NPAP, for example with the roadmap launch (see section 3), as they still attended and supported the roadmap despite the political challenges at the time.³⁸⁸ Political changes and high turnover within the government have had an impact on the work developed by the NPAP and particularly in stakeholder engagement, also with industries that are not yet an active part of the platform. The call for participation from the NPAP, as led by the MoE, may have been affected by institutional mistrust as a result of high turnover within the ministries.³⁸⁹

GPAP and WEF have helped the NPAP approach the private sector and promote a sense of belonging across stakeholders. For example, the GPAP team travelled to Peru and organised a visit to the Coca-Cola factory. At the end of the visit, a roundtable discussion was held with representatives from big corporations, national industry associations and other organisations that do not generally work together, but this time, they were encouraged to talk as equal members of the NPAP.³⁹⁰ The NPAP also organised a visit to Sinba's recycling plant (an NPAP member) to encourage the relationship between its members and facilitate learning exchanges.³⁹¹

NPAP Peru has organised, together with other stakeholders, several events directed to increasing awareness and knowledge around plastics management in general and about the NPAP work in this space in particular. For example, NPAP organised the Circular Plastic Festival in March 2025, which convened around 2,000 people.³⁹² The NPAP had stands for

³⁸⁰ KII x 3

³⁸¹ KII x 1

³⁸² KII x 1

³⁸³ KII x 2

³⁸⁴ KII x 1

³⁸⁵ KII x 1

³⁸⁶ KII x 1

³⁸⁷ KII x 1

³⁸⁸ KII x 2

³⁸⁹ KII x 1

³⁹⁰ KII x 1

³⁹¹ KII x 1

³⁹² A video shared by the NPAP show images of the festival, stands, and the participation from NPAP members from the government, industry and civil society, including recyclers associations [WWF NPAP Resumen subs ENG c2]

different stakeholders, including ministries such as Foreign Affairs. This event encouraged the exchange of knowledge and especially, building up relationships among stakeholders, which led to increased support for NPAP.³⁹³ Other events, linked to the launch of the different technical studies, have been also educational opportunities for stakeholders.³⁹⁴ The NPAP has done a good job in communicating the technical work to the general public, in a simple way, for example using interactive displays.³⁹⁵

The GPAP has helped strengthen the national agenda of Peru. For instance, in January 2025, the Peru president had the opportunity to talk in Davos on plastics and the national ambition regarding plastic pollution management.³⁹⁶ GPAP has also helped national efforts by facilitating regional dialogues among NPAPs. Through virtual meetings and an in-person meeting in Panama, NPAP Peru had the opportunity to discuss and develop a regional vision and establish working groups (e.g. on communications, fundraising, inclusion) together with other NPAPs.³⁹⁷ In Panama, GPAP also organised a high-level lunch to strengthen regional coordination around international plastic negotiations. GPAP could bring additional value by further facilitating this collaboration between NPAPs and the exchange of knowledge and experiences.³⁹⁸ Regarding international processes such as the Plastics Treaty negotiations, further support from GPAP – both financial and technical – could help the government engage with the upcoming meetings, as their capacity is otherwise limited.³⁹⁹

Regarding the working groups related to the technical studies that have already taken place, wide stakeholder participation has been highlighted, from industry and trade associations to recyclers' associations and other civil society organisations. Each working group was developed according to the study topic, so composition varied, but there is a sense that participation was broad and active.⁴⁰⁰ Recyclers also participated in the roadmap and technical studies' working groups and their opinions and perspectives are said to have been considered, including women recyclers, despite their obstacles for participation (e.g. work schedules).⁴⁰¹

The recently formed working groups focused on roadmap implementation are said to have attracted enthusiasm from stakeholders to take part in these groups and coordinate their work with other organisations.⁴⁰² There were some concerns about the constitution of these groups and lack of clear rules, particularly regarding the voting process: when the same organization is elected to lead different groups, it takes away from the more preferred option of having a diverse leadership.⁴⁰³ However, these concerns seem to have been

³⁹³ KII x 1

³⁹⁴ KII x 1

³⁹⁵ KII x 2

³⁹⁶ KII x 1

³⁹⁷ KII x 1

³⁹⁸ KII x 1

³⁹⁹ KII x 1

⁴⁰⁰ KII x 2

⁴⁰¹ KII x 1

⁴⁰² KII x 3

⁴⁰³ KII x 3

recently addressed by the NPAP by making public a set of agreed internal rules for the working groups and clearly defined roles and responsibilities.⁴⁰⁴

Among the challenges regarding effectiveness, there are a limited range of stakeholders participating in the platform from the private sector, meaning there are key industries that use plastic in their operations that are not involved (for example, the agriculture and fishing, construction, or food industries).⁴⁰⁵ This can be a disincentive for industries such as beverages to participate in the platform, as it puts them in the spotlight as the main problem for plastics (even if their plastic circularity figures are above average); while others, who may fear regulation, are not participating.⁴⁰⁶ In addition, an interviewee mentioned that there's a need for the NPAP to take a wider national approach, for example, holding working groups with recyclers in regions beyond Lima and the surrounding area, as they have different challenges – regarding recyclers' income and working conditions, but also public awareness of plastic pollution or environmental education. Those based in Lima, an interviewee said, have already access to other programmes or support schemes, while those from more remote regions do not.⁴⁰⁷

Time constraints and limited consideration of organisational approval processes have been a challenge for some stakeholders to actively participate in the NPAP work.⁴⁰⁸ For example, reviewing a long document such as the roadmap to provide feedback would require (especially for companies such as trade unions, constituted by several enterprises) a longer consolidation and approval process to emit their feedback. The roadmap stakeholder consultation period is said to have been extended to accommodate stakeholders that required additional time to provide feedback.⁴⁰⁹

Change on the ground

Informal workers

The visibility of informal waste workers is said to have improved since the establishment of the NPAP, due to the development and launch of the GESI study, the inclusion and participation of informal workers in the leadership group and other working groups, as well as other events and study launches organised by the platform. For example, an event to showcase the findings of the GESI study to the general public became an opportunity to engage with the recyclers in the area, raising their awareness and incentivising their participation in the NPAP but also in the activities of NPAP members.⁴¹⁰ Working with waste pickers (particularly, informal workers) is said to be one of the main priorities of the platform going forward.⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁴ KII x 1

⁴⁰⁵ KII x 2

⁴⁰⁶ KII x 1

⁴⁰⁷ KII x 1; in some cases, like the GESI study, a wider national approach was taken and included participation from regions outside the capital Lima.

⁴⁰⁸ KII x 2

⁴⁰⁹ KII x 1

⁴¹⁰ KII x 1

⁴¹¹ KII x 1

Direct funding from GPAP (via the Informal Initiative grants) has targeted informal waste workers. In 2024, Sinba was awarded funding to implement several initiatives in the country. According to GPAP reports,⁴¹² this funding benefited 51 people working on the frontline of the informal waste sector: 20 women and 31 men. The project is said to have driven substantial improvements in the everyday conditions, capabilities, and recognition of the informal recyclers in South Lima that participated in these initiatives.⁴¹³ As part of this grant, Sinba funded a women recyclers' circle, where different types of support are offered to these workers. An incentive programme for recyclers was also implemented, where recyclers could obtain points in exchange for selling plastic materials to Sinba. They later redeemed these points and chose from a list of goods or services that may be relevant to them, such as personal protective equipment (PPE) items, digital scales, or supermarket vouchers. As part of this programme, they were also provided with accounting advice, counselling and other benefits.

Circular economy

In Peru, before the establishment of the NPAP, several private and public-private initiatives regarding plastic production had already been developed, e.g. voluntary commitments such as clean production agreements; and voluntary practices regarding eco-design, packaging or recycling.⁴¹⁴ At these early stages of the NPAP, the private sector is bringing those commitments and initiatives to the platform for discussion and as a way of sharing experiences with other actors, helping to drive the implementation of the roadmap that is expected to happen in the coming months.⁴¹⁵

The NPAP has had a role in generating knowledge and technical evidence and has shed light on the actions the participating organisations are working on, allowing others to learn from these experiences and explore potential collaboration or synergies.⁴¹⁶ However, no circular economy initiatives have been implemented yet that reflect the enhanced collaboration between NPAP members.

Investment

There is no evidence of any investment towards circular economy initiatives that have been made in the country as a result of the NPAP. However, NPAP members have provided some funding towards NPAP activities.⁴¹⁷ For example, ABRESA contributed with USD 5,000 to fund a consultancy for the implementation of NPAP working groups; the EU delegation in Peru funded with USD 10,000 a consultancy focused on establishing the working group on regulation, specifically to review and propose updates to the single-use plastic regulation. Also, the UK Embassy in Peru provided USD 200 to showcase the GESI report during a UK Week event.

⁴¹² GPAP logframe UDMarch2025 (at WEF shared folder).

⁴¹³ As reported by Sinba. Included in the IE 2024-Reach per project doc.

⁴¹⁴ KII x 1

⁴¹⁵ KII x 1

⁴¹⁶ KII x 2

⁴¹⁷ This information was provided by KII x 1

Use of evidence

At this early stage of the NPAP, one of the aspects that have been highlighted in stakeholder interviews regarding GPAP value added has been about data and evidence. Technical studies such as the baseline and scenario analysis, the GESI report, or the study on flexible plastics are pioneers in the country, as they are among the first studies covering these topics that have been published. The development and publication of these technical documents is activating conversations and encouraging conversations with and among stakeholders; although it's early to be able to measure tangible impact, for example, regarding regulatory changes.⁴¹⁸ The scope of these studies has been constrained by time and resources, a limited budget, as well as the availability of experts in those specific areas.⁴¹⁹

The NPAP Peru, in collaboration with the MoE, has led a study on flexible plastics (the main type of plastic in Peru) to improve their circularity. Currently, the national regulation does not allow recycled flexible plastics to be included in materials that come into contact with food, which is an obstacle to their circularity. As a result of the study, conversations are taking place on updating the regulation and the report is helping different organisations to substantiate the problem and support the proposed solutions, acting as evidence base.⁴²⁰

Notably, Sinba and MoE has used the GESI study and its recommendations to inform the development of the national strategy to integrate formal and informal recyclers in the waste value chain for the period 2025–2030 (updating the existing 2021–2025 strategy), which has no direct involvement of the NPAP.⁴²¹

Also, in the international Plastics Treaty negotiations, the baseline analysis and scientific evidence included in the roadmap is considered a helpful tool to support the work of the government.⁴²²

5. Impact

At this stage, there is no evidence to affirm that NPAP Peru has had any impact regarding reductions in plastic waste or improving the quality of life of informal waste workers.⁴²³ This is to be expected given how new the NPAP and roadmap is. There is limited evidence from Sinba that the direct grant from GPAP has improved the conditions of 51 informal workers – relatively, a very small number (see section on Informal workers above) – but, as Peru is a remote case study within this evaluation, it has been beyond the scope of the evaluation to verify these reports.

6. Sustainability

⁴¹⁸ KII x 1

⁴¹⁹ KII x 1

⁴²⁰ KII x 1

⁴²¹ KII x 1

⁴²² KII x 1

⁴²³ Several interviewees explicitly mentioned that the NPAP had not brought about any impact yet.

Across the plastics value chain, there is interest in the work NPAP Peru is doing with high expectations on what can be delivered going forward and how the private sector can provide financial resources and leadership to support NPAP and the roadmap implementation.⁴²⁴

There seems to be uncertainty regarding the continuation of the platform in the future, both in terms of financing and actual roadmap implementation. As government resources are limited, an interviewee⁴²⁵ expressed concern about whether NPAP will continue beyond September 2026, when the current GPAP collaboration contract expires. The private sector's need for additional financial resources to drive the roadmap implementation was highlighted as a critical factor for success.⁴²⁶ It was suggested that NPAP could play a key role in facilitating those actors access to financing by providing information on funding opportunities (e.g. via international funds or existing public-private partnerships).

In addition, an interviewee pointed out that there's also uncertainty among NPAP members about what will happen next, regarding who is going to be involved in what and with which specific role in the implementation of the roadmap. They said that a more detailed strategy on what steps must be taken to achieve the roadmap objectives is needed to avoid losing momentum with stakeholders.⁴²⁷ The recently constituted working groups are currently developing specific working plans that include implementation actions, which can help bring more certainty regarding next steps.⁴²⁸

To bring additional resources to the NPAP and support its continuity, there is a search for funding sources and new opportunities. A GEF-funded project, Plastic Reboot, is a multi-country initiative focused on upstream solutions to plastic pollution. The NPAP host organisation, WWF, is part of the project team. While a collaboration between this project and GPAP could provide funding to support the implementation of some activities, it would not fund any operational costs, including NPAP's staff costs. The extent of this collaboration is pending confirmation.⁴²⁹

7. Value for money

In relation to its objectives, the GPAP support to NPAP Peru can be considered as cost-efficient. With limited resources, the NPAP has succeeded at convening a good number of diverse stakeholders across the plastic value chain. It has coordinated and produced technical documents and increased public awareness of the plastic pollution problem and solutions. The value offered by the NPAP could be improved by increasing its geographic inclusivity (beyond the capital, Lima), establishing monitoring systems to measure progress and impact and increasing its capacity to mobilise private sector funding.

⁴²⁴ KII x 2

⁴²⁵ KII x 1

⁴²⁶ KII x 2

⁴²⁷ KII x 1

⁴²⁸ KII x 1

⁴²⁹ KII x 2

According to the NPAP members interviewed, the NPAP is considered a relevant, useful and valuable platform that provides them with visibility, learning, and opportunities for collaboration, despite the challenges.

8. Lessons

The evidence collected suggests the following transferable lessons for GPAP based on the NPAP Peru experience:

- Early GPAP support is essential to build up the platform's credibility and engagement, particularly with the government and private sector; as well as to help navigate political-related challenges.
- The NPAP's value as a neutral, non-politicised space strengthens trust and participation from stakeholders, including from private sector and informal recyclers.
- Broad stakeholder participation in the platform, for example via working groups, can improve the strategic alignment across sectors and encourage discussions and collaboration, especially among sectors that do not generally work together.
- Convening higher level people from government, private sector and civil society organisations than the NPAP has done so far could help catalyse change from the top down at their organisations, as they have more decision-making power.
- Change takes time, and NPAP Peru is still in its early implementation phase. There has been progress in coordination, visibility, and learning exchanges, but no measurable impact yet on plastic waste reduction or improved livelihoods and quality of life for informal workers.
- Political instability and/or frequent changes in government staff can pose a challenge and impact the continuity of the NPAP's work and the implementation of activities.
- It's important to engage with local governments as they are in charge of the implementation of plastic waste management initiatives at local level and have convening power and communication channels with recyclers. Otherwise, the lack of local engagement can be a major bottleneck when implementing initiatives to reduce plastic pollution.
- The involvement of and coordination with other ministries (such as education, health, or interior) is also a key factor in implementing actions to raise public awareness and change behaviour regarding plastic waste.
- Focusing on wider dissemination and outreach could facilitate that more actors in the public and private sectors learn about the initiative and join the platform. For example, engaging with informal waste workers has been particularly challenging, especially those who live in remote areas, far from the capital Lima. Highlighting the way in which the NPAP and the roadmap can be beneficial for them – which is not always clear – is key to ensure their engagement.

Appendix 1: The NPAP

Item	Details
Launch date	June 2024 (MoU signed in Sep 2023)
Lead institution	Ministry of Environment (MINAM)
Technical secretariat	WWF Peru
Governance structure	Presidency: MINAM; Technical Secretariat: WWF Peru; Leaders Group: 14 multi-sectoral representatives
Planned working groups	Six task forces aligned with enabling conditions: Regulatory Framework, Financing, Multi-sector Coordination, Behavioural Change, Social Inclusion & Just Transition, Research & Innovation
Key stakeholders	Government ministries, private sector (including Nestlé, AJE, APIPLAST), civil society, academia, informal recyclers

Philippines: GPAP contribution story

1. Country context

The Philippines produced ~1.8 m tonnes of plastic waste in 2020, with around 75% leaking into the environment. The country's geography adds specific challenges to the management of municipal solid waste, such as widely dispersed communities, many islands and long coastlines. There is also heavy use of flexible single use plastics like sachets that makes recycling at scale difficult.

If there are only minimal improvements in collection, recycling and disposal, the business-as-usual scenario would lead to an 80% increase in plastic waste and pollution to nearly double by 2040, costing the government USD 1.6 billion in 2020 and rising to almost USD 3 billion in 2040. Associated human health, economic opportunities and environmental health would also decline.⁴³⁰

The Philippines joined GPAP in March 2024, establishing a National Plastic Action Partnership (NPAP), led by the Department for Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as host organisation and serving as the secretariat. By this time, the government had already started to consider the issue of plastic pollution and waste management; notably extended producer responsibility (EPR) regulations that require 40% diversion of plastic to recycling and a Marine Litter Action Plan.⁴³¹ There are also private-sector-led initiatives preceding the NPAP, such as commitments by food and beverage companies to integrate recycled plastic (rPET) into bottles.

2. Relevance

The NPAP platform provides a space that did not exist before whereby a fragmented sector can work together to find solutions to improve plastic waste management.⁴³² Indeed, the DENR wanted a central platform and roadmap that consolidated the variety of initiatives and interventions regarding plastics and the Ministry of the Environment (MoE) wanted the NPAP Roadmap to become policy. The representation of the whole plastics value chain is significant and, in particular, has given a voice to informal workers who have only recently started to organise themselves.⁴³³

Given that other policies and action plans already exist, the NPAP Roadmap builds on what has come before it. While this may appear duplicative, the NPAP process is pushing forward awareness, harmonisation, consensus and collaboration for a co-ordinated approach across the plastics value chain.⁴³⁴ The consultative process was appreciated by those involved and it was an important opportunity to bring down barriers that had often kept key stakeholders

⁴³⁰ NPAP Philippines (2026) Draft NPAP Roadmap

⁴³¹ DENR (2021) [National Plan of Action for the Prevention, Reduction and Management of Marine Litter](#)

⁴³² The majority of KII's cited this as a benefit.

⁴³³ KII7

⁴³⁴ Email correspondence with KII6

apart. For example, civil society and the private sector found themselves working closely together in contrast to previous civil society interventions that tended to point the finger at industry. However, some private sector and civil society stakeholders chose to stay away, uncertain whether the NPAP really offered anything new.⁴³⁵

In parallel to the roadmap, three working groups (WGs) were created to focus on operationalising elements of the roadmap with a WG on metrics, on flexible plastics and on upstream. The flexible plastics focus reflects the extensive use of sachets in the Philippines to purchase products in small quantities which leak into the environment and/or are difficult to recycle due to multi-polymers used. The focus on upstream is relevant in a country where producers are still to fully embrace and engage with the existing EPR regulations.

The mix of stakeholders seems appropriate although some people interviewed for the evaluation were concerned that industry lobbyists and producers dominated but the process and transparency meant this was balanced out in the end.⁴³⁶

3. Efficiency

As mentioned above, relevant roadmaps and plans preceded the NPAP and there is a sense from a number of respondents that the NPAP Roadmap, while having good potential, is not detailed enough to really add value beyond what already existed. The consultations were not deep enough to really engage the members. Furthermore, additional public consultations were added to the process at the request of the DENR as this is key to getting policies ready for government. However, the lack of roadmap detail means that it may not be sufficient for policy adoption. Clearly there was a lot of interest in the NPAP approach with over 100 people attending the first roadmap consultation⁴³⁷ but ultimately, some believe, the process was too influenced by the GPAP template and not tailored enough to the context.⁴³⁸

The relatively quick establishment of the WGs focused on delivery even before the roadmap had been drafted suggests that the NPAP is moving more quickly to operationalising the roadmap than might be expected. As outlined by the Flexible WG, what has held back the pace of post-consumer recycling is its non-priority status and the absence of a unified convening body responsible for integrating the key stakeholders,⁴³⁹

The integration of key stakeholders and providing a common space for them to convene has led to efficient discussions across multiple parts of the value chain that would otherwise have been slow and cumbersome, if they took place at all.

The grant making process, while well intended, delivers within time frames that are simply too short to be efficient or effective mechanisms. By the time activities have been lined up

⁴³⁵ KII1

⁴³⁶ KII7, KII4

⁴³⁷ KII2

⁴³⁸ KII10

⁴³⁹ Flex Plastics WG Draft Synthesis Report

and approved, the grant is practically over and the absence of follow-up means that meaningful change is hard to deliver.

4. Effectiveness

Process

The GPAP consultants used to develop the Roadmap were seen as adept at including all perspectives and finding consensus, using research and evidence from other contexts to reassure stakeholders that solutions could be found. The process was considered to be very transparent which kept in check any vested interests, despite some industry groups dominating in terms of number of participants. However, the consultations were deemed too light-touch to be really valuable.⁴⁴⁰

The transparency was also important for generating commitments and willingness across the value chain: individual stakeholders can see that they are not the only ones being asked to make changes, which gives a sense of fairness, removes concerns about being made less competitive than peers and shows that their efforts need not be futile – collectively, meaningful change can be achieved.⁴⁴¹

The complementarity of the WGs alongside the roadmap has also worked well, channelling enthusiasm into immediate forums for operationalising key elements of the roadmap. However, it remains to be seen if the WGs do deliver and there was a feeling amongst some that the roadmap was too generic.⁴⁴²

The gender, equality and social inclusion (GESI) study was well received and considered an important intervention to raise awareness and ensure inclusion considerations of the most vulnerable was included in the roadmap.

Change on the ground

The NPAP Roadmap had not been finalised at the time of this case study and is expected to be signed-off in the first quarter of 2026. However, there have been some benefits of the process so far which are summarised below.

Informal workers: The direct grant from GPAP can be expected to have limited influence on the lives of the informal workers involved due to the very short time frame of the grants and may even damage relations between the participants and the delivery partner. However, the informal worker association interviewed for this case study was very positive about their involvement in the NPAP process, appreciative of having the space and access to convey key messages to stakeholders (in particular the DENR) and to provide feedback on the roadmap. The wider networking opportunity has also been valuable, leading to a number of invitations to join consultations and engage in research.⁴⁴³

⁴⁴⁰ KII10

⁴⁴¹ KII1

⁴⁴² KII6

⁴⁴³ KII7

Circular economy: Although participants felt that no particular group had dominated proceedings, some respondents did feel that there was an over-emphasis on recycling, in part due to the number of recycling representatives. Related to this, the targets for recycling were perhaps unrealistic and there is a risk that puts off municipalities from engaging further down the line. Nevertheless, the process provided opportunities for knowledge exchange and collaborations that have further the circular economy: two recycling companies with different polymer recycling capabilities agreeing to collaborate; formulating a refill pilot between PCX Solutions, a medium-sized enterprise, and large corporations (see below), and Greenpeace, Unilever and local authorities exploring joint projects.⁴⁴⁴

Investments: There is little tangible evidence of increased investments as a result of the NPAP but the platform does facilitate connections that could in the future. One recycler noted that they were sat in group discussions with funders and bankers who offered to expand the recycler's operations with grants and loans – the recycler is still navigating this, unsure whether such investments are appropriate at this stage.⁴⁴⁵ The most tangible investment came out of the Upstream WG where a pilot project involving PCX Solutions, Nutri-Asia (a leading producer of cooking oil, soy sauce and vinegar) and a local government unit (Taguig City), aimed at reducing sachet use has trialled selling of cooking oil, soy sauce and vinegar through refills rather than single use plastics. Funding for this came from the private sector, a social enterprise, GEF (via Plastic Reboot) and co-financing from local government.⁴⁴⁶ The DENR hopes that by adopting the roadmap as policy it would then be able to monitor how other government agencies are delivering those policies and be able to access central funds. It can also use the Roadmap to generate new investments and interest.

Use of evidence to inform decisions: Recognising the importance of being able to measure and monitor change, one of the first WGs established focused on metrics. This is important as a common understanding of the problem and means to measure change are key to tracking whether progress is being made. Metrics and evidence-informed objectives also reassure the industry that what is being asked of them is feasible where in the past fear of the unknown has limited commitments to change.⁴⁴⁷ The government appears to be getting onboard with this too and asked the NPAP to help assess progress to date against the EPR.⁴⁴⁸

5. Impact

There is not enough evidence to comment on impacts.

6. Sustainability

NPAP is credited for having increased the pace of change and provided a trusted party to gain consensus which would have been difficult for any other group to achieve due to (at

⁴⁴⁴ KII5

⁴⁴⁵ KII4, KII5

⁴⁴⁶ KII5

⁴⁴⁷ KII1

⁴⁴⁸ KII2

times) animosity between civil society and industry, and a lack of trust in the government.⁴⁴⁹ However, there is scepticism about the likelihood that politicians will drive this forward and pass legislation, with some respondents encouraging the government not to bring in new legislation that can be very time consuming but to adapt the policies and regulations that are already in place – some of which are good but not enforced. There also needs to be more engagement with municipalities who historically have been able to ignore national legislation.⁴⁵⁰

There does seem to be a good level of buy-in from the government and previous commitment to EPR is a good sign. Within NPAP, the MoE is hosting many webinars, steering what topics should be discussed and the MoE and DENR are attending all meetings. The MoE has also asked for public consultations of the roadmap which are a pre-requisite for policy adoption and hence an indicator that the government is considering using the Roadmap to inform policy.⁴⁵¹ The 72-month plan of the Flexible Plastics WG chaired by Nestlé and the MoE is also a good sign, showing long-term thinking.

Furthermore, it is felt that the consultative and open process of the NPAP dialogues adds pressure to the government as it cannot hide behind others or procrastinate when so much discussion and agreement has already been made. However, the NPAP is needed to keep things going as government bandwidth and capacity is stretched, which is why it struggles to deliver the EPR. It is also unclear how committed and engaged the Ministry of Finance is in these issues, although they have attended NPAP meetings.⁴⁵²

Nevertheless, the NPAP has survived changes in government and the MoE which shows resilience.⁴⁵³ The key now is to show how this really benefits the government, for example the EPR is not accompanied with any fines and hence there is a missed opportunity for the government to raise revenues.

Without more funding the NPAP will stop and the momentum gained to date is likely to be lost. With a further 2–3 years then potentially the WGs will be well-enough established so that outside funding may be less critical.⁴⁵⁴

7. Value for money

The host organisation is providing the NPAP Secretariat services and is a relatively small team of two people, offering efficiencies compared to a more layered and populated NPAP structure.

Systemiq was contracted to deliver the Philippines baselining and the delivery of the roadmap, so taking on responsibilities that may have been expected of the host. The Systemiq consultants were based in Indonesia which on the one hand may be lower cost as most events were online and not in person (the budget only allowed for one in-person visits)

⁴⁴⁹ KII1, KII4, KII5

⁴⁵⁰ KII6

⁴⁵¹ KII9, KII2, KII3,

⁴⁵² KII12

⁴⁵³ KII9

⁴⁵⁴ KII4, KII5

but on the other hand this may have limited the quality of the roadmap, relevance and consensus – with implications for effectiveness.

Furthermore, an additional contractor, KindMind, was used to facilitate the public consultations. This process has been valuable for feedback but it is unclear the extent to which this has then informed the final roadmap. The KindMind report also highlights that the NPAP Roadmap is not a roadmap as such and that further work is needed to move things forward to delivery.

8. Lessons

- Relying on an external consultancy that is not based in-country with a limited budget for travel reduces the potential for participatory engagement with consequences for the relevance of the roadmap.
- Making the roadmap process as useful as possible to the government's own policy making processes helps the roadmap add value and increase buy-in.
- Expectations of what the roadmap needs to deliver should be agreed with key stakeholders from the outset to ensure what is finally delivered adds sufficient value.
- Mobilising WGs focused on key contextual issues early on in the process can help show the NPAP adds value and move more quickly to delivery, even before the roadmap is complete.

Appendix 1: The NPAP Steering Board Membership

Sector	Category	Entity/agency/organisation	Designation
Government	NGA	Department of Environment and Natural Resources	Secretary
Government	NGA	Department of Interior and Local Government	Secretary
Government	NGA	Department of Trade and Industry	Secretary
Government	NGA	Department of Science and Technology	Secretary
National government		Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (ULAP)	President
Private sector	Multinational corporation	Coca-Cola Philippines	President
Private sector	Multinational corporation	Nestlé Philippines	CEO
Private sector	Multinational corporation	Universal Robina Corporation	CEO
Civil society	NGO	Plastic Credit Exchange/PCX Solutions	Founder and Executive Chairperson
Civil society	NGO	WWF	Executive Director
Development partner	IFI	World Bank	Country Director
Development partner	Supra-national organisation	EU	Ambassador
Development partner	Embassy	Canadian Embassy	Counsellor (Development) and Head of Cooperation
Development partner	Embassy	UK Embassy	Ambassador

Viet Nam: GPAP contribution story

1. Country context

Viet Nam is one of many low and middle-income countries facing significant challenges in solid waste management, including plastic waste, driven by population growth, rapid urbanisation, and economic development (World Bank, 2018). In less than 30 years, annual per capita plastic consumption increased from 3.8kg in 1990 to 81kg in 2019 (World Bank, 2022a). Imports of plastic waste to Viet Nam also rose following China's ban on plastic waste imports in 2018 (Greenpeace, 2019). It is estimated that Viet Nam generates approximately 3.7 million tonnes of post-consumer plastic waste annually, a figure growing at an estimated rate of 6.2% per year (GPAP, 2022).

Plastic waste accounts for approximately 94% of suspended waste collected in waterways in Viet Nam, with the majority originating from single-use plastics (World Bank, 2022b). As a result, Viet Nam has been identified as one of the global hotspots for plastic waste discharge into the ocean (Nguyen et al., 2023). The Viet Nam Plastic Action Assessment and Roadmap Considerations, prepared by the National Plastic Action Partnership (NPAP) in 2022 (hereafter the NPAP roadmap), projected a 106% increase in plastic waste flows into the country's water bodies between 2018 and 2030 under a business-as-usual scenario (Viet Nam NPAP, 2022). In response to the escalating threat posed by plastic waste, the Government of Viet Nam has taken significant steps in recent years to address plastic pollution through the introduction of various policies and regulations. For example, Viet Nam's National Action Plan for Management of Marine Plastic Litter sets a target of reducing marine plastic litter by 75% by 2030 (Government of Viet Nam, 2020). The Viet Nam National Plastic Action Partnership (NPAP) was established in 2020 to support these national efforts (Viet Nam NPAP, 2022). The NPAP roadmap presents a system change scenario that could practically reduce plastic entering waterways by 43% by 2030, alongside the national ambition of achieving a 75% reduction (Viet Nam NPAP, 2022).

2. Relevance

As a country facing significant plastic pollution challenges and a growing policy focus on addressing them, the establishment of the NPAP as a multi-stakeholder platform is highly relevant in Viet Nam. Reflecting this context, the NPAP roadmap explicitly positions the NPAP as a mechanism to support government targets to reduce marine plastic leakage by 50% by 2025 and 75% by 2030. In terms of relevance to women and marginalised groups, the NPAP roadmap is informed by a gender analysis to ensure that recommended actions address diverse needs and the disproportionate impacts of plastic pollution on women and affected communities (Viet Nam NPAP, 2022).

As a country with a strong government, the Viet Nam NPAP has adapted the Global Plastic Action Partnership (GPAP) governance framework to its national context. For instance, the NPAP in Viet Nam refers to its Steering Board as the "Leadership Board", in line with national regulatory terminology. Interviewees generally identified three main areas of relevance of the NPAP in Viet Nam; providing a neutral and credible space to discuss strategies and approaches to reduce plastic pollution; accelerating policy discussions; and facilitating

knowledge sharing. Interviewees highlighted the unique relevance of the NPAP in Viet Nam, noting that no comparable multi-stakeholder platform previously existed within the plastics landscape that could mobilise both private and public actors with diverse characteristics.⁴⁵⁵ Prior to the NPAP, initiatives were fragmented, with stakeholders often unaware of each other's activities. The NPAP provides a common space to bring these fragmented stakeholders together, enabling connections, building a community, and coordinating efforts.⁴⁵⁶ It is generally acknowledged that no single international agency or civil society organisation could alone provide such a space. Given the structure of the NPAP, supported by the branding of the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the endorsement of the government, the platform brings together both global and national perspectives, establishing itself as a credible space that is perceived as belonging to all stakeholders and thereby encouraging diverse actors to participate.⁴⁵⁷ However, several gaps were identified, including limited geographical inclusivity, the topic and time-sensitive nature of task forces, the limited ability of the roadmap to guide long-term strategic actions and the absence of mechanisms to monitor outcomes. These gaps are discussed in more detail later in the report.

3. Efficiency

In terms of convening power, initiating discussions, building networks and informing policy processes, the Viet Nam NPAP has demonstrated efficiency despite its limited human and financial resources. With its limited time and resources, the NPAP has succeeded in bringing together stakeholders with diverse interests, and promoting the understanding that addressing plastic pollution requires collective action.⁴⁵⁸

While the roadmap presents data on the plastic issue in Viet Nam and outlines possible interventions to achieve the reduction targets, thereby providing broad directions for NPAP, the absence of concrete action plans or clearly defined priorities may limit its ability to function as a long-term strategic guide for specific actions.⁴⁵⁹ Given that the resources

⁴⁵⁵ Kick-off workshop, KII8, KII10, KII14, KII15, KII16

⁴⁵⁶ Kick-off workshop, KII9, KII14, KII16

⁴⁵⁷ Kick-off workshop, KII11, KII13, KII16

⁴⁵⁸ Kick-off workshop, KII10, KII11, KII14

⁴⁵⁹ While the NPAP roadmap presents data on the existing plastic pollution landscape and outlines a system change scenario to support the government's reduction targets, it largely provides high-level recommendations. It does not clearly articulate practical and concrete areas of focus for NPAP as an institution, nor does it identify priority actions or specific milestones. It was acknowledged during the kick-off workshop that, because the government already had a legally grounded roadmap and national agenda in place prior to the establishment of NPAP, the NPAP roadmap had a limited role in the country as a guiding document. Its role was further constrained by the fact that, although the government recognises the value of the roadmap, it has not formally taken ownership of the document. In a context where government leadership is strong, this lack of formal ownership may have reduced the roadmap's influence as a strategic guide. Overall, NPAP appears to support the government's plastic reduction efforts primarily through dialogue-based activities, which may address some of the topics outlined in the roadmap. For example, support for EPR policy development was a key focus of NPAP and was also emphasised in the roadmap. However, the workshops and interviews conducted for this study did not indicate that NPAP's priorities or activities were systematically informed by the roadmap. Instead, these activities appeared to be driven more by timely relevance or practicality than by long-term strategic planning. For instance, NPAP's support

required to develop such a document are not insignificant, its efficiency and overall usefulness could have been enhanced by including concrete action plans with defined milestones, offering clearer strategic direction to the NPAP.

In Viet Nam, a 32-member Leadership Board is in place, which has mobilised stakeholders including representatives from multiple ministries (see Annex 1). However, even with the Leadership Board in place, the coordination and guidance of NPAP activities largely fall to the NPAP Secretariat, placing additional pressure on its already limited capacity. There are three task forces currently operating under the Viet Nam NPAP (Annex 1). While there is insufficient evidence to comprehensively assess the effectiveness or level of engagement of each task force, it is noted that not all task force members are active, and that some NPAP members are unaware of the existence, membership or mandates of task forces. Even among task force members, there was reported uncertainty and confusion regarding task force structure, ongoing activities and individual roles, pointing to a perceived lack of seriousness attached to the task force model.⁴⁶⁰ The level of engagement within each task force was reported to be highly dependent on the relevance and timing of the topics addressed. For example, the Policy task force, established in July 2025, is currently relatively active due to the ongoing revision of the Law on Environmental Protection. This time and topic-sensitive nature of engagement raises questions about the efficiency of task forces as permanent structures, particularly given resource constraints.

It was suggested that holding more in-person task force meetings, rather than relying purely on hybrid formats, would improve the quality of discussions and sustain engagement,⁴⁶¹ however, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that greater investment to organise in-person meetings would necessarily constitute an efficient use of resources. Given the voluntary nature of participation, members appear to engage in task force meetings primarily when the agenda aligns closely with their organisational interests. As such, higher levels of effort and expenditure to organise in-person meetings may not necessarily lead to broader or more consistent engagement. One interviewee expressed dissatisfaction regarding the decision to engage international consultants to develop the task force roadmaps, noting that the resulting drafts lack sufficient contextual understanding and,

for organising dialogues related to the global plastics treaty negotiations was highly appreciated, yet this area was not highlighted in the roadmap, as it was not a major priority at the time of its publication in 2022. In this context, KII16 raised concerns about the continuing relevance of the roadmap in a changing environment, noting that it appears more like an ambitious plan that may require revision and updating. Further highlighting the limited reference to the roadmap in current planning processes, two task force members who joined NPAP after its publication reported that they were not familiar with the document. Despite these constraints, the NPAP Secretariat reported making efforts to disseminate the roadmap to a range of stakeholders, including government counterparts and to develop an annual workplan for NPAP that draws from or broadly aligns with the major interventions identified in the roadmap. While the Secretariat was not able to objectively assess the extent to which stakeholders were influenced to act in line with the roadmap or implement its recommendations, they noted that the document has been used by various stakeholders, including government agencies, as a reference in their planning processes.

⁴⁶⁰ KII8, KII11, KII12, KII15

⁴⁶¹ KII5

therefore, may not represent an efficient use of the financial resources invested in their development.⁴⁶²

The Viet Nam experience highlights the importance of clearly defining the structural identity and ownership of NPAPs at the outset. This includes clarifying the relationships between GPAP and NPAP, the government and NPAP, and NPAP and its host organisation, as well as specifying the role of the NPAP Secretariat. In the early stages of the Viet Nam NPAP, a significant share of its already limited human and financial resources was devoted to addressing these structural and governance questions, reducing the platform's ability to focus meaningfully on its core mandate.⁴⁶³ These challenges were eventually addressed through repeated meetings and consultations and the joint development of strategies with government agencies to adapt the NPAP model to Viet Nam's institutional, policy and legal frameworks.⁴⁶⁴ During this period, support from GPAP was reported to be particularly important. The Viet Nam experience also underscores the importance of sustained diplomatic engagement between GPAP and government counterparts, particularly in contexts with strong state oversight. For example, during the development of the NPAP roadmap, government stakeholders expressed concerns about an international platform publishing data and analytical outputs, especially in light of previous studies that had portrayed Viet Nam as a major contributor to marine plastic leakage without, in their view, sufficient evidence. Addressing these concerns required considerable time and sustained consultation to explain the objectivity of the methodology and findings, which slowed the roadmap development process. Ultimately, although the government did not formally own the roadmap, it reportedly recognised the value of the analysis, highlighting the importance of investing time and effort early on to establish legitimacy and trust in the NPAP.⁴⁶⁵

The role of GPAP in managing expectations among its members and diverse stakeholders, whose interests often diverge or conflict, was highlighted as critical to establishing NPAP as an impartial, multi-stakeholder platform. One incident cited occurred during Viet Nam's revision of the Law on Environmental Protection, when some global GPAP members expected the NPAP to take a strong position on extended producer responsibility (EPR) and act as a lobbying platform to advance their interests. To maintain its neutrality, the NPAP chose not to promote a specific agenda and instead focused on facilitating dialogues. This approach reportedly led to pressure from these multinational companies, which were both partners and funders of GPAP, placing additional strain on the NPAP Secretariat.⁴⁶⁶ It was noted that cross-NPAP learning sessions organised by GPAP were helpful in supporting the Secretariat to navigate such challenges.⁴⁶⁷

Some instances perceived as micromanagement during the initial phase of the NPAP were also cited, which may also reflect broader debates about the appropriate role and focus of the NPAP and its relationship with GPAP. For instance, GPAP was reported to have taken

⁴⁶² KII8

⁴⁶³ KII11

⁴⁶⁴ KII11

⁴⁶⁵ KII11

⁴⁶⁶ KII11

⁴⁶⁷ KII11

considerable time to review NPAP meeting agendas, which delayed some activities and, in some cases, affected perceptions of NPAP's independence as a national platform.⁴⁶⁸ However, such instances and ambiguities have reportedly diminished over time as the platform has matured and greater clarity has been established regarding its structure.⁴⁶⁹

An ongoing efficiency challenge, which could be relatively straightforward to address, is the misalignment between the financial, procurement, and legal systems of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the WEF. This misalignment could potentially create bureaucratic hurdles in the recognition of NPAP expenditures, which may in turn lead to cash-flow constraints, including delays in the payment of Secretariat salaries, and affect the continuity and effective functioning of NPAP activities.⁴⁷⁰

To address its current inability to directly engage in ground-level interventions, which is largely due to limited human and financial resources, NPAP occasionally collaborates with larger projects led by UNDP (host organisation), such as the Quy Nhon City Club Project and the Ending Plastic Pollution Innovation Challenge (EPPIC) project. While these collaborations provide opportunities for NPAP to participate in on-the-ground activities, its relatively minor role in these projects limits the NPAP's ability to monitor outcomes, assess impact, or exert control over implementation.

4. Effectiveness

Process

At the process level, the NPAP has established a trusted platform for sustained dialogue by bringing together more than 200 diverse organisations and addressing long-standing fragmentation among actors, particularly between the public and private sectors. In a context such as Viet Nam, where the government plays a strong central role, the NPAP has been effective in securing the participation of government actors (for instance, the Leadership Board includes representatives from different ministries – see Annex 1), thereby strengthening the platform's credibility.⁴⁷¹ The NPAP is widely perceived as an effective space for knowledge sharing, network building, and collaboration.

The Viet Nam NPAP has not yet fully established its governance structures in line with GPAP guidelines. So far, only three task forces have been formed: the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) task force, the Financing & Innovation task force, and the Policy task force, with the development of the roadmap for the Policy task force still pending. The NPAP Secretariat notes that there are currently no plans to form additional task forces. In their view, the role of task forces appears somewhat outdated and could benefit from updated framing to better reflect their current function and added value. Interviewees generally

⁴⁶⁸ KII11

⁴⁶⁹ KII11

⁴⁷⁰ KII2, KII4

⁴⁷¹ During the validation workshop with the NPAP Secretariat, it was mentioned that the Viet Nam NPAP is the only, or among the very few, NPAPs whose Leadership Board (Steering Board) has been formally institutionalised through a ministerial decision. However, the veracity of this statement could not be independently verified, as no government representatives could be interviewed as part of this evaluation despite multiple attempts.

considered the data and recommendations in the NPAP roadmap to be relevant in the Viet Nam context. However, there is currently no systematic mechanism in place to monitor progress in implementing the roadmap, representing an area for potential improvement.

While interviewees valued the benefits of NPAP's extensive network and the support provided by the Secretariat, concerns were raised regarding geographical inclusiveness and regional diversity.⁴⁷² Given resource constraints, most NPAP activities and membership are concentrated in Hanoi, with the majority of the Leadership Board members also based there. This has limited participation by stakeholders from other regions. Although the NPAP has attempted to address this through hybrid event formats, some interviewees noted that online participation offers fewer opportunities for networking and collaboration compared to in-person engagement.⁴⁷³

Change on the ground

Circular economy: While the NPAP roadmap emphasises both upstream and downstream interventions, reuse and refill systems remain a relatively limited focus in Viet Nam, particularly as the existing EPR framework prioritises recycling. At the national level, discussions and investments are largely concentrated on increasing recycling rates, with significantly fewer resources directed toward reuse systems.⁴⁷⁴ The NPAP Secretariat recognises this imbalance as a key challenge in advancing reuse initiatives. To address this, NPAP seeks to encourage and support the efforts of NPAP members, primarily start-ups, focused on upstream solutions and to facilitate dialogue on reuse, reduction and redesign.⁴⁷⁵ More broadly, the formation of NPAP has helped bring plastic pollution into public discourse, raising awareness of plastic reduction and alternative solutions. To strengthen its contribution to a circular economy, one interviewee suggested that the NPAP can systematically examine unsuccessful or stalled models to better understand implementation barriers and to bridge the gap between ambition and practice.⁴⁷⁶ In addition, the recently published financing roadmap is expected to address the current imbalance in investment between upstream and downstream interventions.

Support to innovators: NPAP members that are start-ups recognised the platform's role in providing visibility and recognition for their ideas, offering opportunities to showcase innovations and increase exposure, even though they did not receive direct financial support from the NPAP.⁴⁷⁷ The NPAP Secretariat also regularly shares information on grants and awards, encourages innovators to apply, and supports the application process by reviewing proposals and providing feedback.⁴⁷⁸ One respondent highlighted the Secretariat's proactive outreach in identifying and engaging start-ups, including organisations based outside Hanoi.⁴⁷⁹ The NPAP is also collaborating with the Viet Nam E-commerce Association

⁴⁷² Kick-off workshop, KII8

⁴⁷³ KII5, KII8, KII13

⁴⁷⁴ Kick-off workshop, KII14

⁴⁷⁵ Kick-off workshop

⁴⁷⁶ KII14

⁴⁷⁷ KII5, KII8

⁴⁷⁸ KII9, KII15

⁴⁷⁹ KII8

(VECOM) on a digital business student competition (DBC) that engages university students in developing innovative solutions (see Annex 3.1).

Use of evidence to inform decisions: Interviewees noted that the data presented in NPAP reports remain useful for their work.⁴⁸⁰ The NPAP has also initiated efforts to map private sector initiatives aimed at reducing plastic pollution and compile them into a database, helping members understand existing technologies and identify gaps in technological and geographical coverage. However, irregular updates have led to outdated information, reducing the database's accuracy and usefulness over time.⁴⁸¹ Knowledge-sharing platforms, along with regular NPAP updates, were cited as effective mechanisms for members to stay informed about current trends, solutions, and emerging challenges and to adjust their strategies accordingly. Interviewees highlighted NPAP's strong emphasis on a data-to-policy approach in consultations, events and task force meetings, where members are invited to share evidence from their respective fields.⁴⁸² Consultations organised and supporting documents prepared to inform national policy processes, as well as Viet Nam's engagement in global plastic treaty negotiations, were viewed as effective examples of evidence-based decision-making.⁴⁸³ In July 2025, a dedicated Policy task force was established with six thematic groups initially (Annex 1); but in 2026 the focus moved to EPR and waste sorting at source. However, the extent to which this structure will influence final policy outcomes remains uncertain. Based on past experience, one interviewee expressed doubt about the extent to which the NPAP, given its current format and limited financial and technical resources, can effectively function as an influential policy actor or sustained pressure group.⁴⁸⁴

Informal waste workers: While the NPAP's direct interventions with informal waste workers in Viet Nam remain limited, it has contributed to a more supportive ecosystem by increasing visibility and public attention to the challenges faced by this group through consultations and studies. Both the NPAP roadmap and the Gender Context Assessment Report recognise the critical role of informal waste workers in Viet Nam's plastic value chain and highlight the need to ensure safe and dignified working conditions. The NPAP has also initiated a study (not yet published at the time of writing) proposing the use of the term "independent waste workers" instead of "informal waste workers" to improve recognition and dignity. Through its Plastic Talks Series (Annex 3.2), the NPAP organised a session focused on informal waste workers and ensured the participation of women waste workers in the event. An interviewee noted that this helped increase the exposure of these women, as such groups rarely have opportunities to engage in multi-stakeholder forums.⁴⁸⁵ The NPAP also has provided some support to projects implemented by its host organisation, UNDP, that focus on informal waste workers. However, the overlapping role and the limited contribution of NPAP make it difficult to clearly delineate the effectiveness of the NPAP-supported components. In addition, GPAP small grants supported two pilot interventions targeting informal waste

⁴⁸⁰ Kick-off workshop, KII15

⁴⁸¹ KII5, KII8

⁴⁸² Kick-off workshop, KII5, KII13, KII16

⁴⁸³ KII5, KII9, KII11, KII16

⁴⁸⁴ KII10

⁴⁸⁵ KII15

workers, with NPAP providing assistance during proposal development and implementation. Given their pilot nature and small scale, assessing long-term sustainability and effectiveness remains challenging. GPAP also produced a film on informal waste workers in Viet Nam, developed with NPAP support. It was suggested that, as a national platform with a broad network, the NPAP could play a stronger role in facilitating a national network of informal waste workers.⁴⁸⁶ Such a network could amplify their collective voice, strengthen representation in policy processes, and support peer learning across regions.

Investments: There is no clear evidence to assess the effectiveness of the NPAP in mobilising investments. Although GPAP reports to Defra cite annual financial commitments by NPAP members toward plastic pollution reduction initiatives, the accuracy of these figures could not be verified, and inconsistencies were observed in one report.⁴⁸⁷ Moreover, the specific role of the NPAP in securing or influencing these commitments remains unclear.⁴⁸⁸ The recently published financing roadmap (December 2025) recognises that the financial landscape for plastic pollution reduction in Viet Nam remains fragmented and that existing incentives to meet reduction targets are insufficient to attract capital at the scale required. The document was therefore developed to define a clear pathway for mobilising and deploying the investments needed to deliver transformational outcomes across Viet Nam's plastic value chain. However, it is still too early to assess whether the roadmap has progressed as intended or whether the proposed financing pathways are being implemented as expected. Interviewees, including the NPAP Secretariat, reported that the NPAP has facilitated some financial or in-kind contributions from member organisations, international agencies, and, in some cases government sources, primarily to support NPAP events and activities. However, there is no evidence of systematic fundraising efforts or reliable data on the amounts mobilised. Consequently, the extent to which the NPAP has successfully mobilised financial resources from different sources cannot be robustly assessed.

5. Impact

Given that the NPAP in Viet Nam functions primarily as a convening platform that brings together diverse stakeholders and encourages discussions and dialogue, it is not possible to assess its direct impact on reducing plastic pollution. Even prior to the development of the NPAP roadmap, the Viet Nam government had established national targets and strategies to address plastic pollution, as outlined in relevant policy documents. The NPAP roadmap in Viet Nam was therefore largely designed to align with and support these existing targets and policies, rather than to function as an independent strategy. Nevertheless, the NPAP is recognised as an important enabling mechanism and accelerator in efforts to achieve national plastic reduction targets.⁴⁸⁹ Interviewees noted that the establishment of

⁴⁸⁶ KII15

⁴⁸⁷ Inconsistencies were observed between the figures presented on pages 14 and 16 of the Annual Report (April 2024–March 2025) submitted by GPAP to Defra regarding the amount committed by NPAP members in Viet Nam to initiatives aimed at reducing plastic pollution.

⁴⁸⁸ During the validation meeting, the NPAP Secretariat clarified that the amounts committed by NPAP members reflect investments made through their own activities, as mapped by the NPAP. The Secretariat noted that NPAP does not claim a direct role in these investments but rather serves as a platform to convene members and consolidate information on their activities into a central database.

⁴⁸⁹ Kick-off workshop, KII10, KII14

the NPAP has helped elevate discussions on plastic pollution to a broader set of stakeholders and has encouraged more collaborative and coordinated efforts towards national reduction goals.⁴⁹⁰ However, it is difficult to disaggregate the NPAP's specific contribution to national plastic pollution reduction, as observed outcomes are the result of the combined efforts of multiple actors working in parallel and in partnership. Moreover, due to constraints in human and financial resources, the NPAP has not monitored or documented the outcomes or impacts of its initiatives or those of its members. It was suggested in the kick-off workshop that GPAP could develop a set of consistent indicators and methods, while still accounting for local context, to systematically measure the impact of an NPAP or to better delineate the NPAP's contributions from broader collective efforts. Such an approach would help provide a clearer understanding of whether an NPAP is achieving its objectives and would strengthen the overall functioning of the NPAP.

6. Sustainability

The Viet Nam NPAP has demonstrated considerable resilience, having navigated multiple challenges, including a change in host organisation in 2022 and a major government restructuring in early 2025, while operating with a very small Secretariat team.⁴⁹¹ However, given the limited involvement of the Leadership Board in providing strategic guidance, the platform's effectiveness currently appears to rely more on the vision, motivation and capacity of individual Secretariat members than on institutional mechanisms. This heavy reliance on Secretariat could affect NPAP's long-term stability, particularly in the event of staff turnover.

Given the central role of the Secretariat, securing adequate funding to cover core operational costs, including staff salaries, is critical. However, limited efforts were observed or reported by the Viet Nam NPAP to mobilise additional resources to support these costs,⁴⁹² and the platform currently remains fully dependent on GPAP funding for Secretariat operations, with approximately 44% of the GPAP grant allocated to staff salaries, office expenses and administrative costs. The NPAP Secretariat noted that while member organisations are generally willing to support event-based or project-specific activities that provide visibility, they are less inclined to fund core operational costs. This view was also reflected in interviews with two NPAP members. This creates uncertainty about NPAP's sustainability should GPAP funding end. Alternative funding options, including philanthropic contributions from multinational member companies or the introduction of membership fees, were discussed, but both raise concerns. Reliance on a small number of corporate donors could undermine perceptions of neutrality, while willingness to pay membership fees depends on the level of fees and the tangible benefits offered. Considering these factors, the sustainability of NPAP rely on continued funding from GPAP, at least to cover its operational expenses, for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, GPAP can focus on

⁴⁹⁰ KII10, KII13, KII14, KII15, KII16

⁴⁹¹ Currently NPAP secretariat consists of two full time members from UNDP, one officer from ICD of MAE, some overseeing roles from Climate Change, Energy and Environment Unit of UNDP and one GESI advisor supporting in voluntary capacity.

⁴⁹² This observation was initially raised by KII1. The evaluator did not find evidence that contradicted this observation.

strengthening NPAP's capacity to mobilise resources to independently sustain its operational costs.

There were mixed views regarding the role of the host organisation and the overlap between UNDP's Plastics Circularity Portfolio and the NPAP. One interviewee opined that this overlap creates confusion around roles and responsibilities and blurs the distinction between NPAP-led and UNDP-led initiatives. In contrast, two other interviewees considered the overlap as a strength, noting that alignment with UNDP enables NPAP's access to additional resources, networks and programmes. They added that UNDP's credibility, extensive networks and long-standing relationships with the Viet Nam government enhance NPAP's visibility, legitimacy and convening power.

Interviewees, including the NPAP Secretariat, generally valued GPAP's support in developing the NPAP into a more mature multi-stakeholder platform, and therefore, recommended continued financial and technical support to ensure the platform's sustainability. They highlighted the role of the GPAP in providing opportunities for the Viet Nam NPAP and the Viet Nam Government to showcase their initiatives and achievements globally, thereby helping to attract international private investment to address plastic pollution. Leveraging GPAP's global network to strengthen NPAP activities, facilitating regional exchanges among NPAPs, supporting capacity building for NPAP secretariats and local organisations and providing guidance on financial sustainability and technical assistance were also identified as areas where GPAP could add further value.

7. Value for money

GPAP support in Viet Nam represents a moderately good value for money relative to its objectives. With a relatively modest level of investment, the platform has successfully convened more than 200 diverse stakeholders, coordinated collective efforts to reduce plastic pollution, and elevated the issue within public discourse. Core functions such as convening, policy facilitation, knowledge sharing and the encouragement of innovation have generally been delivered efficiently. However, there remains scope to enhance value by improving geographical inclusiveness, strengthening investment mobilisation, integrating gender perspectives into NPAP activities, and establishing mechanisms to monitor progress and results.

All interviewees considered the NPAP to be a relevant platform despite its shortcomings and felt that the time invested in NPAP activities was worthwhile. This perceived value emerges from the strong national influence of the NPAP, the international reach of GPAP, and the access to policymakers enabled through these networks, which gives participants confidence that their perspectives are heard, and their initiatives gain visibility. At the same time, interviewees acknowledged that they were unable to precisely quantify the time spent on NPAP activities and did not express full satisfaction with all processes or outcomes.

8. Lessons

The Viet Nam experience highlights several transferable lessons for GPAP's approach.

First, it is important to clearly define governance arrangements at the outset, including clarifying the nature and role of the NPAP, effectively contextualising the platform to the national setting, and ensuring that governance structures are legally compliant with

national requirements. Although the time and human resources required for these processes may appear excessive in the short term, they are critical for ensuring the platform's effective and smooth functioning over the long term.

Second, task forces can be streamlined and maintained with careful consideration of their thematic relevance, timing and the resources required to sustain them. Improved communication and coordination among task forces can help clarify roles and responsibilities, avoid duplication, and reduce unnecessary demands on members' time arising from overlapping mandates.

Third, NPAP roadmaps can be developed with an emphasis on contextual feasibility and practical relevance and can aim to provide strategic guidance for NPAP activities rather than replicate existing national policy frameworks. To be effective, roadmaps need clearly defined roles and responsibilities, along with actionable delivery plans. Where appropriate, they can be periodically updated to maintain relevance in changing contexts.

Fourth, GPAP's convening role and the WEF's branding can be strategically leveraged to support diplomatic engagement with government counterparts, enhance the legitimacy and credibility of NPAPs, and bring government agencies on board, particularly in countries with strong state oversight. Managing the expectations of diverse stakeholders from the outset is also important to avoid unnecessary pressure and strain on the platform over time.

Fifth, GPAP's extensive global network and its role in providing international platforms for NPAPs can be valuable in attracting private investment at the national level. Besides, regional exchanges among NPAPs facilitated by GPAP can help platforms learn from one another and better navigate shared challenges.

Sixth, alignment between the host organisation's processes, procedures, and systems and the WEF's requirements may be assessed in advance to prevent bureaucratic bottlenecks that can undermine the efficiency and effectiveness of the platform.

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Appendix 1: The NPAP

Year	Action	Contributors
2020	National Plastic Action Partnership set up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Plastic Action Partnership, WEF • Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam • WWF-Viet Nam <p>NPAP Leadership Board Members (as of July 2025)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Vice Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment • 8 other representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment representing different departments • One representative from the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism • One representative from the Ministry of Industry and Trade • One representative from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs • One representative from the Ministry of Science and Technology • One representative from the Ministry of Education and Training • One representative from the Ministry of Finance • British Embassy in Viet Nam • Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Viet Nam • Royal Norwegian Embassy in Viet Nam • Embassy of Canada in Viet Nam • Alliance to End Plastic Waste • Centre for Environmental and Community Research (CECR) • Coca Cola Viet Nam • Dow Chemical Viet Nam • IUCN Viet Nam • Nestlé Viet Nam • Pepsico Foods Viet Nam • UNDP Viet Nam • Unilever Viet Nam • Viet Nam Packaging Recycling Organization (PRO Viet Nam) • Viet Nam Plastics Association • World Bank • WWF-Viet Nam

2022	Viet Nam Plastic Action Assessment and Roadmap Considerations, published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Plastic Action Partnership, WEF • NPAP Viet Nam • NPAP Viet Nam Leadership Board • NPAP Experts Group (a coalition of over 70 leading experts from across sectors)
2023	GESI task force established	<p>NPAP GESI task force members (as of January 2026)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: First Secretary of Embassy of Canada to Viet Nam • Co-chair: Director of GreenU • Center for Environment and Community Research (CECR) • ENDA Viet Nam • For Viet Nam Stature Foundation (VSF) • Federation of Canadian Municipalities • GIZ Project "Reuse, Reduce, Recycle to Protect the Marine Environment and Coral Reefs" (3RProMar) & "ASEAN Municipal Solid Waste Management Enhancement (AMUSE)" • Institute of Strategy and Policy on Agriculture and Environment (ISPAE) • International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) • MGreen Company • Pacific Environment • Phenikaa University (Faculty of Biotechnology, Chemical and Environmental Engineering) • Plastic and Health Action Partnership (PHA) • VietCycle Company • Viet Nam Women's Union • Yunus Environment Hub
2023	Intersectional Gender Context Assessment of the Plastic Value Chain in Viet Nam report, published	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Plastic Action Partnership, WEF • NPAP Viet Nam • UNDP Viet Nam • GESI task force
2023	Innovation and Financing task force created	<p>NPAP Innovation and Financing task force members (as of January 2026)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Deputy Director General, Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment • Co-chair: Unilever Viet Nam • Alliance to End Plastic Waste • An Phat Holdings • Buyo

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEL Consulting • CSIRO • Dow Chemicals • DUYTAN Recycling • GreenHub • Innovation Norway, Norwegian Embassy • National Innovation Center, Ministry of Finance • Startup Viet Nam Foundation (SVF) • UNDP Viet Nam • Verra • World Bank
2025	Policy task force created	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair: Deputy Director General, Viet Nam Environment Agency (VEA), Ministry of Agriculture and Environment • Co-chair: Packaging Recycling Organization (PRO) Viet Nam • Center for Environment and Community Research (CECR) • Coca Cola Viet Nam • Department of Disease Prevention, Ministry of Health • Department of Fisheries and Surveillance, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment • Department of Legal Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment • Federation of Canadian Municipalities • GRAC • Hanoi University of Civil Engineering • Hanoi University of Natural Resources and Environment • Nestlé Viet Nam • Norwegian Embassy • Suntory Pepsico Viet Nam Beverage • TOMRA • Unilever Viet Nam • EPR Office, VEA, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment • Viet Nam Agency of Seas and Islands, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment • Viet Nam Environmental and Marine Science Institute, Ministry of Agriculture and Environment • Viet Nam Plastics Association • WWF-Viet Nam

		<p>Six thematic groups were created under Policy task force:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Solid Waste Management • EPR Policy • Domestication of International Commitments Related to Plastic and Plastic Waste Management • Plastic Product Design and Consumption • Policies in Plastics Circularity and Technological Innovation • Synthesis and Development of Policy Recommendations
2025	Financing Roadmap for Plastic Action in Viet Nam to 2030 launched	

Appendix 2: Intervention summaries

2.1 Digital Business Contest (DBC)

The following summary is informed by interviews with the NPAP Secretariat, a representative of the Viet Nam E-commerce Association (VECOM), and a participant in the NPAP-supported pillar of the 2024 competition, as well as a review of relevant documents made available to us.⁴⁹³

1. Description of the intervention

The DBC is organised and implemented by the VECOM. It is a nationwide annual competition started in 2022 targeting university students, with the aim of providing a practical platform for participants to gain hands-on experience on the real e-commerce market. Participating teams, consisting of 2 to 5 members, are given accounts on e-commerce platforms to conduct actual sales, either using products they select themselves or items assigned by the organisers. The contest structure involves multiple rounds of screening and evaluation, mentoring sessions, and a final public showcase and award ceremony.

When the competition began in 2022, it comprised three pillars: Online Selling, Digital Marketing, and Digital Business Ideas. In 2023, a new pillar, Green E-commerce, was introduced. The NPAP supported this new pillar through financial and technical contributions, including assistance in developing competition content, connecting experts to serve on the jury, and organising training for contestants, as the theme aligns with the NPAP's focus areas. Under this pillar, participants complete knowledge tests on green e-commerce, the circular economy, and sustainability, and propose solutions to reduce excessive packaging waste, promote recycling, or develop innovative packaging materials to minimise environmental impacts. However, for the 2025 competition, it has been decided to integrate green e-commerce elements across the other three pillars rather than maintain it as a separate component. As a result, in the 2025 competition, the NPAP is primarily engaged with the Digital Business Ideas pillar, where teams receive bonus points for business ideas related to green e-commerce and plastic waste reduction. In addition to the NPAP, a number of partners and sponsors are involved in supporting the contest.

The year-wise data on the DBC is provided in Table 2.1.1:

⁴⁹³ Quarterly reports submitted by the Viet Nam NPAP to GPAP; the donor proposal introduction for DBC 2025; year-wise data on DBC participants; website of VECOM; and the presentation that won a prize in the NPAP-supported pillar of the 2024 DBC contest.

Table 2.1.1: DBC participants data

	2022	2023	2024	2025
No. of university joining Digital Business Contest	40	70	80	85
Total no. of contestant teams registering	280	400	450	546
No. of contestant teams participating in the pillar supported by NPAP	NA	84	92	92

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The DBC aligns with several system interventions outlined in the Viet Nam Plastic Action Roadmap, particularly those related to plastic reduction and substitution, behaviour change, and innovation. Within the NPAP context, this alignment positions the DBC as a mechanism for shaping sustainability awareness and competencies among future market actors. Strategically, the DBC contributes to the plastics action ecosystem by focusing on human capital development rather than immediate environmental outcomes. It engages individuals at an early stage in their careers, before professional norms and practices are fully formed, and introduces them to an ecosystem focused on sustainability and plastic reduction and substitution by linking them with experts who provide mentoring, technical support and jury oversight. By framing plastic pollution and excessive packaging as business and innovation challenges within a competitive student environment, the intervention helps to integrate sustainability considerations into mainstream education content.

The strategic value of the intervention is therefore indirect and catalytic. While it does not lead to immediate reductions in plastic leakage, it contributes to building environmental awareness and strengthening competencies and solution-oriented thinking related to reducing plastic use and consumption among future entrepreneurs, employees or managers. It also helps to connect different stakeholders in the plastics value chain, such as academia, innovators and businesses. All these are consistent with the NPAP's mandate as a facilitative platform that enables system change through coordination, knowledge sharing, and agenda setting rather than direct implementation.

3. Estimated cost or LoE (level of effort) of the intervention

While the financial resources required and the organisational complexity involved in running such a large annual event are substantial (which includes coordinating a large number of teams from universities across the country, managing multiple competition stages, integrating content, ensuring transparent and credible assessment processes, and providing continuous mentoring), the overall LoE is moderate when compared with infrastructure heavy or policy reform interventions. This is largely because the competition does not require cross-ministerial approvals or regulatory change, even though it involves sustained engagement over time and multiple operational challenges. As a regular annual event, the LoE is also expected to decrease over time as the competition becomes more established and processes are refined. However, the effectiveness of the intervention remains closely linked to the LoE invested, particularly in maintaining strong engagement from universities,

ensuring the quality of mentoring and judging, and reinforcing the legitimacy of sustainability criteria within a business focused competition.

Given that the NPAP's role is limited to supporting one pillar of the competition rather than bearing responsibility for organising or coordinating the entire event, the LoE required from the NPAP is relatively moderate. At the same time, this LoE has the potential to generate significant results in relation to NPAP's objectives, especially following the integration of green e-commerce elements as an overarching theme across the competition.

4. Results of the intervention

Given that the NPAP began collaborating with the competition one year after its launch and primarily within a single pillar, it is difficult to assess the results specifically attributable to NPAP support. Nevertheless, the competition is generally reported to be effective as evidenced by the increase in the number of participating teams and universities over the years (see Table 2.1.1). The organisers also reported year-on-year improvements in the quality of submissions, particularly in terms of feasibility, the presentation of tangible products, and clearer plans for product sourcing and procurement. This improvement is reportedly reflected in stronger sales performance, with teams achieving higher revenues from the sales.

Reported results from the DBC are mainly at the immediate outcome level. These include large scale student participation across multiple universities, increased exposure of green e-commerce and plastic reduction concepts among young people, greater visibility to innovative business ideas focused on sustainability, and strengthened linkages between academia, businesses and sustainability stakeholders. Evidence of longer-term outcomes or impacts, such as the scaling of student ideas into operational businesses, sustained behavioural change, or measurable reductions in plastic waste, remains limited. While the organisers noted that some teams have already launched their business ideas in practice and used the competition to promote their projects and increase visibility, this could not be conclusively verified. Overall, most projects remain at the conceptual or pilot stage, reflecting the primarily educational and competitive nature of the intervention.

The decision to integrate green e-commerce elements into the other three pillars highlights the success of introducing Green E-commerce as a standalone pillar in earlier years with the NPAP support, and its role in embedding environmental considerations within the competition. Reflecting the effectiveness of this integration, results from this year's preliminary round reportedly show strong environmental relevance within the Digital Business Ideas pillar, where 70% of the submissions proposed ideas related to environmental protection.

An interview with a competition participant indicated that the competition encourages university students to think innovatively about environmental protection, including the development of alternative packaging solutions, influencing consumer behaviour, and promoting more eco-friendly consumption and packaging practices. The respondent noted that participants generally value the support and exposure gained through the competition, particularly mentoring, practical knowledge, and hands-on experience in project implementation and resource mobilisation. He highlighted the importance of learning how to translate ideas into practical and feasible solutions, especially in relation to generating

sustainable revenue and identifying viable income streams. Overall, participation was reported to strengthen both the theoretical understanding and practical skills of participants, as well as to increase their confidence in implementing solutions in real-world contexts.

5. Why was it effective or not?

The effectiveness of the DBC emerges from the credibility of VECOM as an association of e-commerce businesses in Viet Nam and its strong convening role within the e-commerce education ecosystem, built through previously established relationships with universities, as well as its strengths in the business and commercial performance domains. NPAP's involvement has added thematic credibility on plastics and sustainability, helping to legitimise environmental considerations within a business-oriented contest and to fill VECOM's relative gap in environmental expertise. Highlighting the value of the partnership with NPAP, the organisers described NPAP's support as critical and identified NPAP as one of the key partners, referring to it as a co-organiser of the Green E-commerce pillar. They noted that collaboration with the NPAP helped enhance both the quality and the depth of the event.

The organisers identified two main challenges when the Green E-commerce pillar was first introduced. First, there were difficulties in clearly conveying the organisers' ideas to participants and building their confidence to join the competition, as green e-commerce was still an evolving area in Viet Nam. Second, it was challenging to secure the cooperation of e-commerce platforms, as many had not yet given significant attention to environmental protection in commercial activities. Both challenges were gradually addressed through sustained communication and targeted messaging, and over time the implementation became smoother.

Key constraints limiting the longer-term effectiveness of the intervention include the absence of structured post-contest pathways, such as incubation support, policy piloting or dedicated financing, to help promising ideas progress beyond the competition. Without clearer mechanisms to link student innovations to implementation opportunities, many solutions risk remaining educational exercises rather than translating into real-world applications.

6. GPAP's role

As elaborated in earlier sections, the NPAP was considered a key partner for this intervention, providing financial and technical support and adding to the event's credibility.

7. Sustainability and forward look

The sustainability of the DBC is strong in institutional and organisational terms, given the credibility and networks established by VECOM as the main organiser. The competition has gained recognition from universities and businesses across the country and has become increasingly streamlined through annual implementation over the past four years. Its growing ability to mobilise sufficient sponsorship has helped ensure the smooth functioning of the competition. However, its long-term contribution to plastic pollution reduction will depend on whether sustainability-oriented learning outcomes translate into professional

practice or real-world business initiatives as participants enter the workforce or entrepreneurship.

Follow-on mechanisms such as start-up incubation, follow-up workshops, and the mobilisation of corporate support to translate ideas into operational businesses could significantly enhance the intervention’s longer-term impact. In the absence of such linkages, the DBC’s primary contribution is likely to remain focused on capacity building and agenda setting rather than delivering direct transformative outcomes.

2.2 Plastic Talks

The following summary is informed by the kick-off workshop, interviews with the NPAP Secretariat and four NPAP members, as well as quarterly reports submitted by NPAP to GPAP, reports submitted by GPAP to Defra.

1. Description of the intervention

The Plastic Talks Series is a recurring convening and knowledge-sharing initiative launched by the Viet Nam NPAP in 2023. The stated aim of the series is to connect the general public with experts and policymakers through panel discussions on topics related to plastic reduction and alternative solutions, and to bring together stakeholders with diverse perspectives on these issues. The NPAP aims to organise talks approximately once every two to three months, although this schedule is not always achieved due to competing priorities. Events are organised in a hybrid format, with in-person sessions typically held at the UN House in Hanoi, where the NPAP Secretariat is based. Information about the events is disseminated through social media and email invitations. The rationale for initiating the Plastic Talks Series was the recognition that many people have limited awareness of plastic-related issues and the everyday challenges associated with plastic use. The NPAP aimed to leverage its knowledge resources to share information and raise public awareness on these topics.

The NPAP collaborates with the Circular Economy Hub, another multi-stakeholder platform hosted by UNDP, and other partners in organising the series. When there is alignment between the topics, the events are co-branded. However, the financial costs of the Plastic Talks Series are primarily covered by the NPAP Secretariat.

The list of topics covered under the Plastic Talks Series is presented in Table 2.2.1.

Table 2.2.1 Plastic talks (2023-2025)

No.	Topic	Location	Date
1	Material Recovery Facility model to promote plastic circularity	Hanoi	3 April 2023
2	How can businesses contribute to a Global Plastics Treaty?	Hanoi	28 August 2023
3	Digital innovations to ease the work of informal waste workers and support responsible sourcing	Hanoi	25 October 2023
4	Bio plastics	Hanoi	23 May 2024

5	Enabling refill system in Viet Nam	Hanoi	21 October 2024
6	Promoting reuse practices towards a circular economy in Viet Nam's tourism sector/opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation in circular economy and reuse	Hoi An, Quang Nam Province	4 December 2024
7	Rethinking single-use plastics culture among Youth, Plastics Innovation Programme kick-off	Hanoi	26 February 2025
8	Closing the loop for low-value plastics	Hanoi	23 May 2025
9	Closing the loop on PCR plastics x launch of DRS scoping study suitable for Viet Nam	Hanoi	16 June 2025
10	Design for recycling	Hanoi	11 November 2025

2. Relevance and strategic importance of the intervention

The Plastic Talks Series is strategically relevant in positioning the NPAP as a multi-stakeholder platform that facilitates dialogue and knowledge sharing. The topics covered under the series are closely aligned with the system-level interventions outlined in the NPAP roadmap, encompassing both upstream and downstream approaches, policy influence and behaviour change. The series also promotes innovation and the circular economy, and highlights issues affecting informal waste workers, all of which are prioritised under the NPAP roadmap. Emphasising the contextual relevance of the intervention, prior to the establishment of the NPAP, dialogue on plastic pollution in Viet Nam was often fragmented across different ministries, sectoral associations, and donor led projects. In this context, the Plastic Talks Series has contributed to consolidating these discussions within a single platform, enabling greater continuity and cumulative learning over time.

3. Estimated cost or LoE (level of effort) of the intervention

The LoE associated with the Plastic Talks Series is assessed as moderate relative to implementation focused interventions. The required inputs include topic selection, agenda development, stakeholder coordination, speaker preparation, facilitation, communications and documentation. These activities require sustained staff time and institutional capacity, but comparatively limited financial resources when compared with pilots, infrastructure investments or financing instruments (as the series is mostly organised at the NPAP office in Hanoi, the financial costs are relatively low, as there is no need to arrange external venues). The time and effort required are also relatively lower, and the complexity reduced, compared with policy-focused interventions that may require cross-ministerial coordination or regulatory change.

However, the cumulative effort over multiple years is not insignificant. Maintaining the consistency, frequency, and breadth of the Plastic Talks requires ongoing coordination by the NPAP Secretariat with a diverse range of stakeholders, including government representatives. At the same time, the nature of the intervention provides operational flexibility, as it is not pressure driven, time sensitive, or deadline oriented, which is reflected

in the gaps between some sessions shown in Table 2.2.1. This suggests that the overall LoE is relatively manageable. Moreover, as a recurring initiative, the LoE is expected to decrease over time as the series becomes more streamlined, and processes are refined. Nevertheless, maintaining the perceived neutrality, credibility and inclusivity of the series depends on careful curation of speakers and topics, representing a qualitative effort that is not easily captured through quantitative measures of LoE.

4. Results of the intervention

The talk series is effective in terms of participation, with reported attendance typically ranging from 40 to 60 offline participants per session, alongside 70 to 80 online participants. The selection of topics also reflects a degree of diversity, as sessions seek to address the interests of different actors across the plastic value chain, thereby contributing to thematic inclusivity. Overall, interviewees identified the talk series as beneficial in enhancing their understanding of plastic-related issues and emerging solutions, exposing them to diverse perspectives, and providing opportunities for networking.

However, there are questions as to whether the series is achieving its stated objective of bridging the gap between the general public, plastics experts and policymakers. Stakeholder interviews indicate that attendance is often limited to the same group of participants, largely consisting of NPAP members. There is no clear evidence that the programme is reaching the wider public as originally envisaged. Several factors were pointed out as limiting broader outreach. These include the limited capacity of the NPAP office to host larger audiences and the challenges faced by members of the general public in accessing the venue. The regular venue, which is located within the UN House and therefore subject to security protocols, may be unfamiliar or intimidating for non-regular visitors. Limited financial resources restrict the NPAP's ability to organise events in more accessible venues. In addition, information about the talks is primarily disseminated through NPAP social media channels and email communications, with mailing lists largely consisting of NPAP members, further constraining outreach to the general public who may be interested.

The concentration of events in Hanoi reportedly limits participation by NPAP members from other regions of the country, affecting their ability to fully benefit from the events. Interviewees noted that online participation is generally less effective than in-person attendance, particularly in terms of networking and informal exchanges that support collaboration and learning. Moreover, for reasons of convenience and resource constraints, speakers are often selected from Hanoi or nearby areas, which restricts the inclusion of perspectives from other regions. Collectively, these factors may limit the geographical inclusivity of the intervention.

Additional concerns were raised regarding the quality and depth of discussions. One interviewee commented that topic selection is sometimes driven by convenience rather than relevance and suitability to the Vietnamese context. Others noted that discussions can remain superficial, with insufficient time for panellists to explore issues in depth, particularly when divergent viewpoints are presented, which can result in limited clarity for participants. The lack of follow-up to the discussions, and the absence of efforts to translate insights and recommendations emerging from these dialogues into concrete outcomes or

actions, such as policy interventions or the submission of formal recommendations, were also highlighted as weaknesses affecting the effectiveness of the intervention.

5. Why was it effective or not?

The main factor contributing to the effectiveness of the Plastic Talks Series is the convening power of the NPAP, together with the credibility and perceived neutrality it has established within the plastics community. Its wide network and trusted position make it easier to engage experts and policymakers, identify suitable speakers, and ensure the participation of interested stakeholders, although participation is largely limited to NPAP members. However, as noted earlier, limited resources constrain the programme's ability to reach a wider public, ensure geographical inclusivity, and follow-up on outputs and recommendations. Competing and time-sensitive priorities also reportedly affect the regularity of the talks as originally envisaged.

6. GPAP's role

NPAP initiated and implements this intervention and bears the financial costs associated with organising the events.

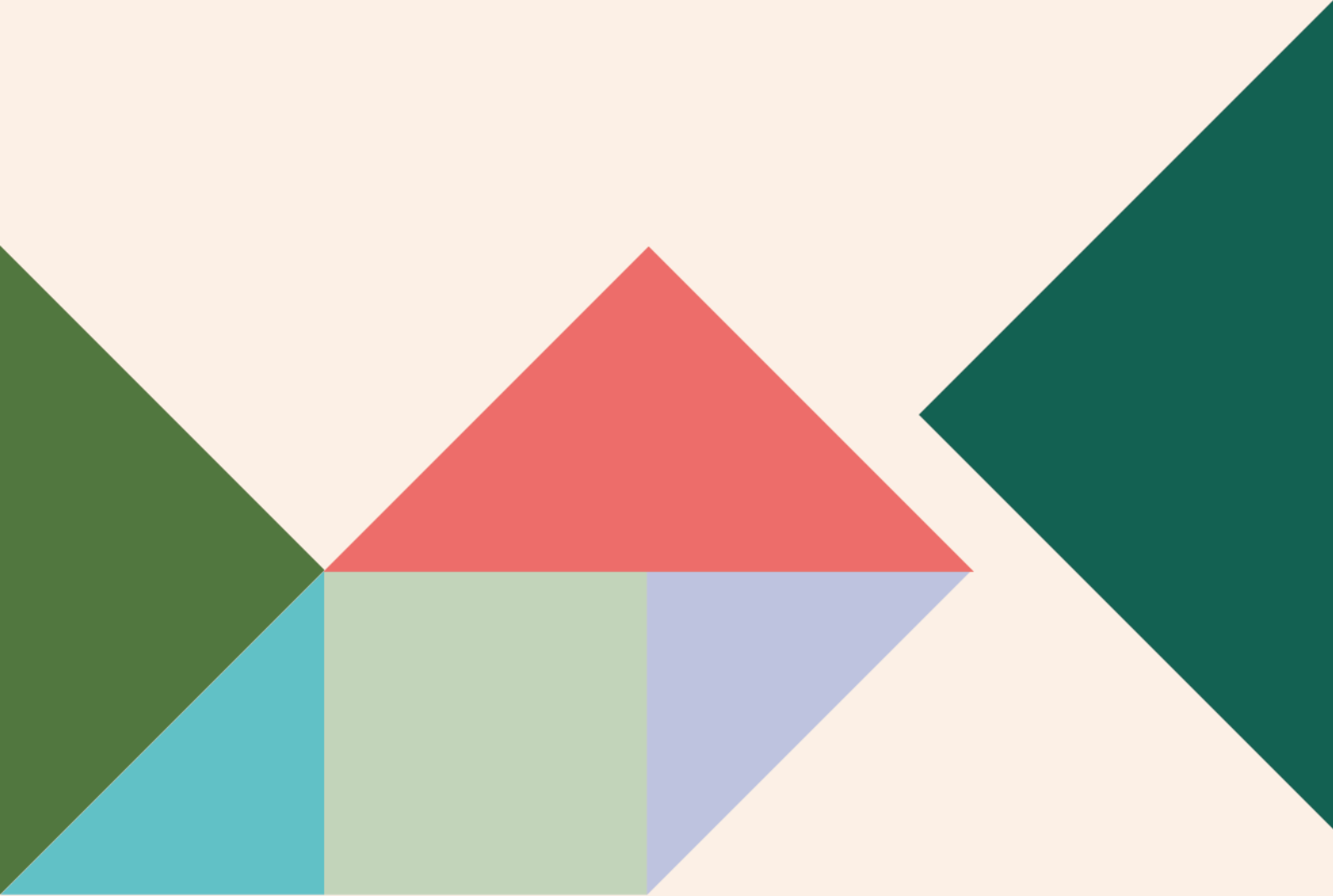
7. Sustainability and forward look

Given the flexible nature of the Plastic Talks Series, the relative ease of organisation, the modest level of effort required, and the limited financial resources involved, as well as the fact that the series has become streamlined as a recurring initiative, the intervention is likely to continue. The need for such multi-stakeholder dialogue is expected to persist as long as plastic pollution remains a pressing issue, and efforts to identify solutions continue, particularly in light of the evolving regulatory landscape and international commitments.

Looking ahead, the strategic contribution of the Plastic Talks could be strengthened by translating discussions into concrete policy recommendations, using insights from the events to inform future NPAP activities, task force agendas and policy consultations, or by identifying investment pipelines to help translate innovative ideas into real-world interventions.



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