

## WasteAid's Circular Economy Network Programme



The Circular Economy Network is an initiative developed by WasteAid and supported by Huhtamaki, a key global provider of sustainable packaging solutions. The network brings a fresh and inclusive approach, aiming to support locally appropriate innovation that keeps materials in the loop, prevents pollution, and provides green employment opportunities. WasteAid has launched the network in three hub cities: Johannesburg in South Africa, Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam, and Guwahati in India. The network will:

- Provide a platform for all stakeholders in each hub to connect, share knowledge and identify mutually beneficial opportunities
- Identify gaps and obstacles to a circular economy approach and work with stakeholders to find and support solutions
- Provide business incubation and seed funding to selected enterprises

WasteAid already knows that there are fantastic initiatives happening around the world and that the circular economy concept is gaining momentum. The Circular Economy Network's role is to support this work in each of the hubs, as well as to identify challenges and opportunities in moving towards a circular economy. With an initial focus on India, South Africa and Vietnam, the network is for anyone who plays a part in or is interested in developing the circular economy in these locations.



## About WasteAid

WasteAid is an independent UK-based international non-governmental organisation. At WasteAid, we work with communities and policy-makers in lower- and middle-income countries to implement waste management and recycling programmes.



Partnering with public, private and community-based organisations in countries where poor waste management is harming the environment, economy and society.



Building the capacity of international non-governmental organisations with our bespoke approach to sustainable waste management, not least through our award winning toolkit.



Cooperating with businesses and governments to help address the global waste crisis.

## Countries with programmes

Our approach is entirely aligned with the development agenda and contributes to at least 8 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.



## Launched in 2020, WasteAid's Circular Economy Network has grown rapidly:

- Over 1,000 stakeholders are following the Circular Economy Network via social media.
- Some 500 companies, innovators and entrepreneurs from across the globe have joined the network via the online hub: [www.circulareconomynetwork.co](http://www.circulareconomynetwork.co).
- Over 1,000 people have heard from experts in India, South Africa and Vietnam, exploring how to drive the circular economy in their own regions. Discussions have included: reducing dependence on imported plastic by strengthening domestic markets in Vietnam; the increasing role of digital solutions in traceability of rPET in India; and the huge potential for job creation through circular economy initiatives in South Africa.
- A new approach to online networking with regular 'coffee sessions', bringing together entrepreneurs and innovators to share their challenges and explore ways of working together.

### A number of local events organised with our funding partner Huhtamaki have driven employee engagement and raised awareness of the circular economy in Johannesburg, Guwahati and Ho Chi Minh City.

In India, teams from Huhtamaki and WasteAid literally got their hands dirty in a beach clean-up event along the littered banks of the Assam River, promoted by local and national media to highlight the need to adopt a circular economy. Collected materials re-entered the value chain in the nearby city of Guwahati, keeping them in the loop and reducing the need for raw materials.

In Vietnam, over 90 Huhtamaki staff joined WasteAid and local partners on a beach clean-up where materials were recovered back into the economy via a local NGO PlasticPeople, converting low-value plastic into high-end furniture for homes and offices. The event was attended by local and national media, generating positive coverage and encouraging a circular economy approach.

“What we have seen today clearly shows that we have to discard waste to the right bins in order not for them to be swept to the ocean.”

Mr. Ho Quyen Loi – General Director of Huhtamaki Vietnam

“WasteAid's Circular Economy Network has a sense of complete inclusiveness, where we can easily share common challenges with other green players across the globe. It's so fulfilling to know this.”

CEO of BoombaDotMobi – Sbusiso Shongwe

### WasteAid Zero Waste Cities Challenge

At the centre of the project is the opportunity for six entrepreneurs to win free business support and €10,000 to invest in their circular economy initiative. The Challenge attracted 100 entries from across the three cities, and 36 were selected for tailored business incubation services to become pitch-ready. The Grand Final will take place in front of industry experts in late 2021.



**WasteAid is seeking additional corporate partners to continue to grow the Circular Economy Network. Please get in touch if you think your company could benefit from being part of the drive for a circular economy.**

[www.circulareconomynetwork.co](http://www.circulareconomynetwork.co)

[in](#) WasteAid Circular Economy Network

[@CircEconNetwork](#)

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All of our events and initiatives in each hub will be published on these channels.

We look forward to welcoming you as a member of the Circular Economy Network.

