



THE CIRCLE ALLIANCE

Catalyzing Inclusive, Resilient, and Circular Local Economies

The CIRCLE Alliance is a new \$21 million public-private collaboration to scale solutions that reduce plastic use and tackle plastic waste. Founded by Unilever, USAID, and EY, the CIRCLE Alliance will support entrepreneurs and small businesses across the plastics value chain. Its goal is to support women's economic empowerment, improve livelihoods, and protect the environment by accelerating the development of circular economies.

The new Alliance responds to the urgent need for collective action to address plastic pollution as well as the importance of generating jobs that respect waste workers' human rights.

Building on the successful approaches developed by the impact enterprise accelerator [TRANSFORM](#) and by USAID's [Save Our Seas Initiative](#), CIRCLE will work to:

- Develop social enterprises, offering a mix of grant funding and business consulting to organizations bringing plastics into circular economies;
- Advance gender equality and women's empowerment, providing tailored support for women-led businesses in the sector; and
- Support effective and transparent mandatory Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policies and implementation that contribute to circular economies.

It is anticipated that CIRCLE will help enterprises across the local plastic value chain to scale their collection and recycling capabilities, avoiding landfill and incineration, and develop and scale reuse-refill models to reduce plastic use.

CIRCLE will initially focus on India, Indonesia, Vietnam, and the Philippines. It will provide country-specific grant funding and tailored technical assistance from 2024 through 2029.

In addition to their combined funding and convening power, each of the lead organizations brings specific knowledge and business skills to support entrepreneurs and small businesses:

- USAID has technical expertise in plastic waste reduction in Southeast Asia, experience in empowering women in plastic waste value chains, and long-standing local relationships with national and local governments, civil society, and multilateral bodies.
- Unilever brings knowledge and supply chain access through its growth and sustainability strategy.
- EY is experienced in providing professional support and specialized technical assistance to businesses of all sizes, helping them grow, transform and operate.
- Resonance, which will implement CIRCLE, brings strong experience leading and managing multi-stakeholder partnerships to drive inclusive market-based solutions to critical climate, social, and sustainability challenges.

CIRCLE plans to scale and expand to additional markets and materials by bringing in new organizations with additional funds to invest.

CIRCLE is a [USAID Global Development Alliance](#) and it will be managed with a governance structure involving representatives from each of the leading organizations—USAID, Unilever, and EY. Resonance, an implementing partner with a successful track record of managing large-scale multi-stakeholder partnerships, will manage and coordinate delivery. Initial contributors to CIRCLE are Unilever, USAID, and EY.

CIRCLE is also a key activity under the U.S. government-led [Women in the Sustainable Economy \(WISE\) Initiative](#). With more than US\$1.4 billion in public and private sector investments, WISE aims to bolster women's economic empowerment globally by expanding access to employment, training, leadership roles, and financial resources in the industries critical to the future of our planet.

For more information, visit: usaid.gov/circle-alliance