

Empowering Women in the Kepulauan Seribu Community: A Focus on Gender Inclusivity and Collaboration

- **Promoting Gender Equality**

In our representation of the **GIZ-supported 3RproMar (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle to Protect Marine Environment and Coral Reefs)** project, an ASEAN-German initiative funded by BMZ, we aim to spotlight the collaboration between the project and **Divers Clean Action (DCA)**, an Indonesian non-governmental organisation (NGO). DCA, a foundation actively engaged in waste reduction and management since 2017, has partnered with local and national government entities, as well as the private sector, particularly in the Kepulauan Seribu (Seribu Islands) district of Jakarta, Indonesia. Their focus has been on fostering the zero waste islands movement in conjunction with grassroots communities. This submission for the GIZ Gender Competition 2024 will highlight the pivotal role played by female community influencers involved in waste-bank activities and female entrepreneurs managing small-scale reuse and refill stores across various islands in Kepulauan Seribu.

Between 2020 – 2021, DCA initiated small-scale stores with a reuse-refill system titled Cura Refill Store in 5 islands within Kepulauan Seribu, such as Harapan Island, Pramuka Island, Panggang Island, Untung Jawa Island, and Kelapa Island. Cura Refill Store works with waste banks in their respective regions and is run with 2 schemes, namely consignment with stalls and store by own. The Waste Bank female groups act as refill shop operators with a refill system at home and refill on-the-go, and are tasked with coordinating stalls and marketing refill products. However, this scheme turned out to have challenges related to the operational system of refill stores and products that were less popular with the island community.

To delve deeper into this collaboration, the GIZ-supported 3RproMar project and DCA have initiated a pilot project titled 'Circulating Island.' This project is designed to advance the Extended Producers' Responsibility (EPR) ecosystem in Kepulauan Seribu through a partnership with public and private entities. The primary objectives include: 1) Implementing the EPR ecosystem by innovating "reuse and refill" stores in Kepulauan Seribu; 2) Integrating segregated waste transportation to streamline the process between waste collectors and producers; and 3) Launching a public campaign to promote the EPR ecosystem in Kepulauan Seribu. The scheme is slightly different from the previous Cura Refill Store, where there are several important components, namely a separate educational role and a separate business role.

In this collaboration, reuse and refill stores will focus on small-scale stores or stalls that are already available in the community, selling products that the community needs. The waste bank groups, as environmental influencers, will act as educators who promote refillable and reusable products sold in certain stalls. This scheme will encourage people to shop at stores selected to sell environmentally friendly products. The advantage of a stall that provides refill and reuse products is that they get promotions from educators to shop at the stall. Then, the benefits obtained by Waste Bank women include getting a profit margin for buying and selling products and receiving incentives for points obtained from offering refill and reuse products to

the public. Apart from that, the Waste Bank also gets incentives from collecting empty containers, which are collected at these stalls and sent back to available refill and reuse operators.

This scheme of collaboration will not only involves female environmental influencers and small-scale entrepreneurs in Kepulauan Seribu as community actors contributing to the entire process from inception, but also crucially acknowledge and increase their capacities as female community actors pursuing environmental change. Commencing in October 2023, the pilot project has initiated a baseline survey to measure various components, including the roles of female community influencers and entrepreneurs in achieving the project's objectives. One noteworthy insight from the survey emphasizes the importance of role division between environmental influencers and entrepreneurs. While one group influences the community to patronize refill stores, the other takes practical steps to operate these stores for the benefit of the community.

- **Gender Equality as a Quality Feature of Our Work**



Figure 1. representative of refill store entrepreneurs, Ibu Soleha from Cura Refill Store of Harapan Island. Photo credit: DCA



Figure 2. representative of environmental influencers, Ibu Asmawiyah from Kresek Indah Waste bank of Kelapa Island. Photo credit: DCA

The active work by the environmental influencers and entrepreneurs has been widely recognised by the local government of Kepulauan Seribu. During the pilot kick-off event in October 2023, their contribution for this pilot has also been acknowledged by the National Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF), the Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta and the Provincial Environmental Agency, as seen in the two pictures above. The German Embassy of Indonesia, ASEAN and Timor-Leste had also recently paid a visit in early November 2023 to one of the participating waste banks and reuse-refill stores to acknowledge their efforts in waste prevention and management, as seen in the picture on the right.



Figure 3. Site visit to Waste Bank in Kelapa Island. Photo credit: GIZ/ 3RproMar

• Implementing Feminist Core Principles

While the GIZ-supported 3RproMar project currently lacks the specific gender mainstreaming indicators, its commitment to fortifying the three Rs (rights, resources, representation) within the project's framework, coupled with a focus on the SDG principle of "Leave No One Behind," underscores its dedication to providing a platform for enhancing the capacities of female community champions in the realm of waste reduction and management. By broadening the scope beyond an exclusive and technical focus, the project aims to encompass themes of gender empowerment.

The women's groups involved in this initiative, comprising environmental influencers and entrepreneurs, have been instrumental in spearheading community-led efforts to instigate behavioural change, particularly in reducing packaging waste and devising solutions for effective plastic waste management through their refill stores and waste banks. The pilot project not only seeks to enhance the capacities of these women but also endeavours to recognize and amplify their contributions by affording them visibility on both local and national stages. On the other hand,

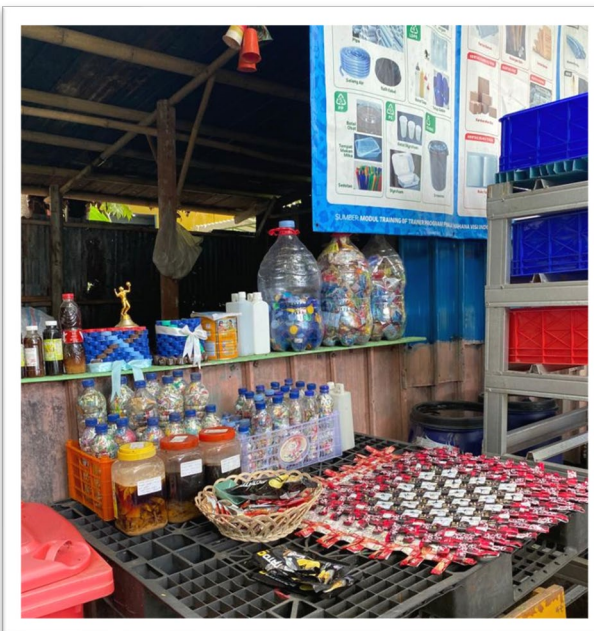


Figure 4. Examples of recycled products sold by the waste bank groups. Photo credit: GIZ/ 3RproMar

these efforts will impact on the increased welfare for the women and their family from additional income received by operating the waste bank's activities through selling recycled products (i.e. bags for women, etc), thus highlighting the feminist core principle on gender transformative approach.

Looking ahead, as the project operates within the ASEAN-German cooperation scheme, there is an aspiration to disseminate the valuable lessons gleaned from the pilot project during ASEAN Working Groups' meetings, thereby contributing to the wider regional discourse on sustainable waste management practices.

- **Cooperation**

In this pilot initiative, the key collaborator is the national NGO, Divers Clean Action, which plays a pivotal role in partnering with various governmental bodies, including the local government of Kepulauan Seribu, National Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF), Provincial Government of DKI Jakarta, Provincial Environmental Agency, and existing refill-reuse product operators in the broader Jakarta area. This comprehensive collaboration with government entities at different levels is crucial for the successful integration of the gender equality dimension into waste reduction and management initiatives. It encompasses not only the formulation of supportive policy frameworks but also effective resource allocation.

Despite the concerted efforts, several potential risks have been identified in the implementation of this pilot initiative. Firstly, there is a recognized time limitation faced by women's groups participating in the activities, as their primary responsibilities lie in household tasks. This necessitates a careful and considerate approach to involving them in all aspects of the initiative. Additionally, limited access to information and communication channels related to activities in the mainland of Jakarta's greater area poses a challenge that needs to be addressed for effective coordination.

Furthermore, there is a notable concern about potential jealousy towards the small-scale stores targeted for intervention in the current refill and reuse piloting project. These selected stores will receive incentives in the form of refill products and sales promotions, which may lead to tensions within the community. Additionally, the inherent instability in product prices, attributed to quantity distribution, creates uncertainties in people's purchasing power and poses a risk to the sustainability of the initiative.

To mitigate these challenges, a thoughtful and strategic approach is required. This includes considering the time limitations faced by women's groups in participating in pilot activities, addressing the distribution of roles within the communities involved (such as influencers, small-scale stores, and waste banks), and ensuring community education is adequately supported. Moreover, involving women's groups in baseline surveys becomes crucial for making informed decisions regarding the pilot interventions. The success of this collaborative initiative hinges on navigating and addressing these identified risks while fostering a sustainable and inclusive waste reduction and management ecosystem in the Kepulauan Seribu region.