

# BETTER FUTURE

## UK'S AMBITIOUS TARGETS FOR WASTE REDUCTION

### Problems encountered

In the face of a growing global waste crisis, the UK has set ambitious targets to reduce waste by 2030. "The plan introduces a range of targets, regulations, and initiatives to promote recycling and utilize strategies to tackle climate change through improved waste management" (Grant Brown, 2023). Following the publication of GOV.UK.(2023) 'Streamlining recycling collection and strengthening regulation to reform the waste system', the UK Government is currently streamlining the recycling process, a move that is being realised through the implementation of reforms to household and commercial waste collection. They are also cracking down on illegal waste shipments, increasing recycling rates, and protecting the environment. In addition, over 2.2 million businesses are required to separate their waste for recycling. Meanwhile, a ban on polluting single-use plastic products was announced to take effect from October 2023. Environment Secretary Thérèse Coffey stated, "So far, our single-use plastic shopping bag charge has successfully reduced sales in major supermarkets by more than 97 percent." By more than 97 percent. (GOV.UK, 2023). However, it is easy to see that these waste reduction policies and initiatives are primarily targeted at organizations and companies, with very limited opportunities for the general public to participate in waste reduction efforts.

However, the involvement of organizations and companies is not sufficient. Increasing public participation is crucial. In order to raise public awareness of environmental issues, promote recycling, and prevent littering.

In response to this, Coca-Cola UK has ensured sustainability by introducing new, more sustainable caps on their plastic bottles. (Dennis, 2022). This measure not only improves the waste recycling rate but also indirectly involves the public in waste reduction actions.



source : 'Coca-Cola introduces built-in bottle caps in bid to boost recycling and help prevent litter'

However, in order to better achieve the waste reduction target by 2030, it is important for the public to take the initiative to participate in waste reduction. As early as 2008, Indonesia established a "waste bank" to incentivize residents to deposit their recyclable waste, either their own or found, in exchange for money or other rewards. (Aviaska Wienda Saraswati, 2023). The entire process effectively reduces waste, raises public awareness about waste management and resource recycling, and fundamentally stimulates public enthusiasm for waste reduction.

### Can Waste Bank work in the UK?

Indonesia's "waste bank" system operates in six ways: through education, weighing, recording, segregating, and selling waste. It has stimulated the public's interest in waste recycling and has contributed to the development of the economy.

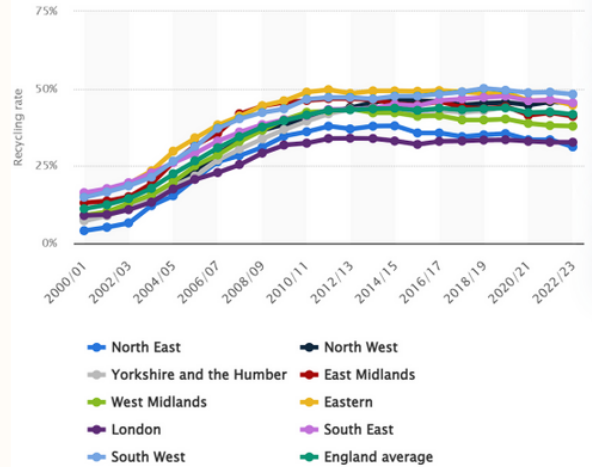
For example, the Garbage Bank in Gunung Samarinda collects more than 2 to 3 tonnes of non-organic solid waste per month. Each family saves about Rp 50,000 (approximately US\$5) per month, which significantly contributes to covering household and educational expenses. (Randy Salim, 2013). Currently, there are more than 25,540 waste banks in Indonesia (Aviaska Wienda Saraswati, 2023).



source : 'Waste Bank A Solution to Pollution'

It is evident that the effectiveness of money as an incentive to promote social activities has been widely recognized and supported. For the UK, which needs to reduce waste, Indonesia's rubbish bank provides a worthy case study. Ackerman (2018) has pointed out that the concept of 'Instant Gratification' suggests that people tend to seek immediate rewards for their behavioral patterns. It is said that people have a natural inclination to seek benefits. Encouraging waste reduction through economic incentives can promote waste recycling in both Indonesia and the UK.

Wienda Saraswati, (2023). On the contrary, the UK has a more sophisticated waste collection and recycling system and modern waste treatment technology. And the Indonesian population may be more accustomed to direct waste disposal, while the UK population is



source : 'Recycling rate of household waste collected by local authorities in England from financial year 2001 to 2023, by region'

accustomed to strict sorting and regular recycling services. As well as Indonesia may be relatively simple to create waste collection points compared to the UK, where bins are usually more modern, equipped with a sorting system and emptied more frequently on a regular basis. Therefore the UK needs to create its own programme.

## Cannot be copied!

Therefore, the UK can learn from the idea of waste banks, but directly replicating the Indonesian model may not be suitable for the UK's national conditions. It is necessary to design a customized program that meets local needs, taking into account the UK's national conditions, the existing waste recycling system, the habits of the population, and socio-cultural characteristics.



source : '2023 UK Waste Reduction Policy'

## How to change?

The UK government has already made some changes to better implement the ambitious waste reduction targets set for the UK by 2030, but these improvements that have been put in place are not enough to completely meet the objectives of the programme. The UK government needs to learn from the core idea of the Waste Bank, by capturing the public's Instant Gratification mentality and modelling the system on Indonesia's 'Waste Bank', which is a machine that allows the public to put in recyclables at any time and receive a monetary reward for doing so. This will stimulate public participation in the UK and promote waste separation and recycling at the same time. Communities also need to set up community waste banks, so that residents can participate in their management and operation. Communities can set up rubbish collection points and encourage residents to deposit their segregated rubbish and assess its monetary value according to weight or type. Meanwhile, in terms of publicity and education, activities should be held to raise public awareness of waste separation and recycling. This is something that the United Kingdom can learn from Indonesia's practice of encouraging residents to actively participate in environmental protection actions.

## What's the difference?

It is unrealistic and difficult for the UK and Indonesia, as two different countries in terms of geographical location, cultural practices, and economic level, to implement a policy that is exactly the same. In Indonesia, waste disposal often relies on landfill and incineration due to inadequate facilities (Aviaska

In conclusion, the United Kingdom can learn from the experience of Indonesia's rubbish banks and design a rubbish disposal system that suits the local needs in the light of the actual situation in the country. This will not only reduce waste but also promote environmental awareness and community participation.