

3rd Technical Working Group meeting on e-waste reduction in displacement settings: 30th September 2021

Main topic: Greening humanitarian response through recovery, repair and recycling of solar products in displacement settings – the E-waste Project in Uganda (presented by IOM)

1. Introduction round

Everyone is introducing her-/himself

Participants from GIZ, IOM, UNHCR, GPA/Unitar, WFP, EnDev and Sofies

2. Input presentation by IOM

E-waste project to respond to the problem of ill-managed disposal of solar products in DS by finding a cost-effective solution for RRR of these products or components through circular economy.

Phase 1: Field research, market dialogue and partners selection

Phase 2: Implementation

Phase 3: Advocacy

Future: Scale up

Phase 1:

- Waste mapping across 5 camps in Kenya and Uganda, market dialogue
- Key findings:
 - Solar products do not meet the need of users
 - Batteries seen as weakest part of solar system
 - Much of what recyclers receive as waste could be used as spare parts
 - Repair activity currently undertaken by repairmen with limited formal training, tools or adequate spare parts
 - Recycling currently not encouraged as low value for money when not at scale
- Key barrier for private sector is access to camps and funding's

Three partners:

1. TotalEnergies Offgrid Soar Solutions – the batlab (like a kiosk to repair and maintain batteries in Uganda (BidiBidi Settlement))
2. Bright (repair technician training and provision of spare parts/tools)
3. Solvoz (online open-access procurement platform) → promotes sustainable procurement through the development of sustainable procurement documentation for the use by organisations in the humanitarian sector, and to contribute to open-access knowledge

Lessons learnt so far:

- Different priorities between private and humanitarian sector
- Partnership agreements versus implementing partner/procurement contract
- Private sector is willing to work together

Next steps:

- Procurement of on-ground local implementing partner
- Collecting results through M&R framework

3. Q+A, Discussion with a focus on what can be done to reduce e-waste immediately and practically on the ground

Will the catalogue be available?

Yes, open-access including local organisations not only UN agencies

How many companies (energy) are represented in catalogue?

Not that many, mainly from humanitarian sector

How do you work with the local informal repairers etc.?

They are engaging the local operators by selecting partners which are already known by the badlab implementing people in the field (BidiBid camp)

How can big organisations engage/work with the local informal sector/actors in the e-waste sector and their hazards? Can their standard be raised up since putting down organisations standards is not likely to be feasible?

Comment: Include the informal sector as much as possible under the given circumstances. But recycling is a critical topic (safety question: Big organisations need high standard that the informal sector cannot provide). Trainings could work. And the supply of proper equipment is crucial

What do we do with e-waste that is not repairable and cannot be used as spare parts and therefore just can be disposed (end of life stage)?

Approach to provide products that are likely to be repairable and less harmful.

How the catalogue would differ from the 'repairability catalogue' produced by University of Edinburgh, and what procurement support document is actually being produced?

Hard to answer by Gemma. UN guidelines for procurement are crucially used. UNGM.

How do you want to apply (extended) producer responsibility?

Important point but not easy to realise. Maybe put the responsibility on the price but that's tricky in regards of the lack of recycling facilities in especially remote areas. Organisations might support (finance or subsidise) this process to make sure prices are not increasing too much (consumer cannot pay for that). Difficulty as well where to bring recycling equipment's based on the lack of facilities. Maybe a mix of humanitarian aid organisation's and companies who are bringing products in the area can push the solution forward. Local recycling solution is important to avoid difficult transportations. And use warranties to provide products that are more likely to live longer than products without warranty. EPR is limited to policies, though. In Europe hard to realise, too and hence especially in remote African areas. Maybe the whole value chain could be used as a solution approach. Note: UNHCR can have a huge leverage as big buyer of solar lanterns (biggest in world) and many customers within their sphere of influence.

4. Moving forward

Possible next topic: Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR): PRO (producer responsible organisation) could be an interesting party to talk to, as well as private companies who practice EPR.

Establish a presence on energypedia to upload minutes and present discussion results.