

The UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Zero Waste

United Wardrobe Project



Zero waste good practice

Economist Club at Bangkok Patana School

Bangkok Thailand

Disclaimer

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any county, territory, city or area or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries regarding its economic system or degree of development. Excerpts may be reproduced without authorization, on condition that the source is indicated. Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations and its member states.

Copyright © United Nations Secretary-General’s Advisory Board on Zero Waste
All rights reserved

This good practice is based on the information submitted by the owning organization.
The language is based on the submission and only minor edits have been made.

Citation: UN SG’s Advisory Board on Zero Waste. (2025). United Wardrobe Project. Bangkok Patana School.

Table of Contents

Synopsis	01
Stakeholders and Partners	01
Zero Waste	02
Sustainable Development Goals	02
Background, Challenges, Objectives	03
Actions and Implementations	04
Outcomes and Impact	05
Replicability and Scaleability	07
Inclusion and Innovation	08
Accountability and Sustainability	09
Financial Data	09

About

Synopsis

Reducing textile waste by installing permanent donation boxes in schools, promoting circular fashion, and supporting communities.



Source: United Wardrobe Project

Implementation
period

2023 - now

Country

Thailand

Location

Bangkok

Stakeholders and Partners: Initiative: Led by BPS Economist Club at Bangkok Patana School, installing clothing donation boxes to promote a circular economy. International Schools: ICS Bangkok, Wells International, KIS Rp Bangkok, Huahin International, plus new expansions in India, Malaysia, and Myanmar.

mar.
1

Connection Zero Waste

United Wardrobe follows a zero-waste approach by reducing textile waste through a circular donation system, ensuring clothes are reused, repurposed, or upcycled instead of being discarded.

- Impact: Collected & donated 9,100+ clothing items, saving 98,000 kg of CO₂ and 33 million liters of water.
- Expansion: Now in three Bangkok schools(Wells International, ICS, KIS RP) & one in Hua Hin, two in India, others from Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Myanmar shows interest to join.
- Sustainability: Encourages long-term behavior change, making it scalable & replicable in the fight against fashion waste.
- Zero-Waste Model: Extends garment lifecycles, minimizes landfill waste, and promotes sustainable consumption globally.
- This initiative directly contributes to zero-waste goals in fashion by engaging schools & communities worldwide.

Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals

Goal 1: Provides clothing donations to underprivileged communities.

Goal 8: Promotes circular economy and reduces reliance on fast fashion.

Goal 10 :Ensures equal access to clothing for disadvantaged communities.

Goal 11 : Implements donation systems to reduce textile waste in urban areas.

Goal 12 : Encourages reuse, upcycling, and waste reduction in fashion.

Goal 13 : Saves CO₂ emissions and conserves water by reducing the demand for new clothing production.

Goal 14 : Prevents textile waste from contributing to ocean pollution and microplastics.

United Wardrobe was specifically designed to tackle textile waste and promote a circular economy, aligning directly with multiple SDGs.

Background, Challenges and Objectives

Textile waste & low recycling awareness in Thailand lead to high waste accumulation. Limited public engagement in sustainable fashion, with minimal government policy support. Severe air pollution in Bangkok highlights the urgent need for environmental action.

This initiative prevents landfill waste by reusing, redistributing, and upcycling clothing. It encourages responsible consumption to reduce textile waste at the source.

Bangkok struggles with severe air pollution and urban poverty, highlighting the urgent need for environmental action and social support. Many communities still lack access to basic necessities, while textile waste continues to grow. This initiative provides a simple yet impactful solution, reducing waste and supporting those in need through clothing donations.

The key challenges are expanding to more schools, partnering with government agencies, and managing daily sorting. However, rising pollution awareness drives interest in sustainable fashion, making the project scalable and impactful, simple, scalable, and community-driven.

An accessible donation system encourages participation & long-term impact. Anyone can start today—everyone has unused clothes at home. No barriers, just action.

Key Objectives

- Reduce textile waste through reuse & upcycling.
- Raise awareness of fashion waste & pollution.
- Support underprivileged communities with donated clothing. Encourage policy action for sustainable solutions.

“Bangkok struggles with severe air pollution and urban poverty, highlighting the urgent need for environmental action and social support. Many communities still lack access to basic necessities, while textile waste continues to grow.”

Actions and Implementation

In our actions and implementation chapter, we methodically outline the steps taken to set up our project:

Installed permanent clothing donation boxes in schools to promote textile reuse, expanding to three schools in Bangkok, one in Hua Hin, and two schools in India. Discussions are ongoing with schools in Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Myanmar to join the project.

United Wardrobe Store (Thrift Shop Initiative): Launched a school thrift shop, enabling students, teachers, parents, and staffs to buy secondhand clothes and engage in the circular economy, reinforcing reuse and sustainable consumption.

United Wardrobe Education (Sustainability Program): Developed and delivered sustainability-focused education, including presentations for 300+ primary students on fast fashion’s environmental impact and sustainable solutions.

Community Engagement & Planning: Worked with students, teachers, and volunteers to run donation drives. Integrated donation systems into school life with sustainability clubs.

Monitoring & Evaluation

1. Donated 9,100+ clothing items to underprivileged communities.
2. Measured impact: Saved 98,000 kg CO₂ & 33M liters of water.
3. Tracked expansion: Monitored the growth of donation box installations.
4. Collected community feedback from beneficiaries, schools, and volunteers to improve logistics and awareness.

This initiative builds a circular economy in schools, ensuring a scalable and impactful zero-waste fashion model.





Outcomes and Impact

Beneficiaries include underprivileged communities, schools, and students learning about sustainability. Schools in Bangkok, Hua Hin, and India actively participate, with interest from Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Myanmar.

- Over 300 primary students educated on sustainability.
- Expanded donation box system and thrift shop initiative across multiple schools.
- Direct clothing donations to low-income families, orphanages, and marginalized communities.
- Encourages sustainable consumption by making second-hand clothing more accessible.
- Textile waste reduction: Thousands of clothing items diverted from landfills.
- Upcycling partnerships ensure damaged clothing is repurposed instead of discarded.
- United Wardrobe Store (Thrift Shop) promotes reuse and strengthens the circular economy in schools.
- United Wardrobe Education fosters early engagement with sustainability concepts.
- Encouraging second-hand purchases reduces consumer spending on fast fashion.
- Promotes mindful shopping habits, reducing unnecessary textile waste.
- Reduces CO₂ emissions and water consumption by extending clothing lifecycles.
- Strengthens social responsibility, fostering a culture of giving and sustainability.

This initiative makes sustainable fashion accessible and impactful, driving long-term change. Over 9,100 clothing items donated, resulting in a 98,000 kg CO₂ reduction by decreasing demand for new clothing production. United Wardrobe is reducing waste, educating future generations, and providing essential clothing to communities in need. With strong community engagement and a scalable circular model, the initiative has the potential to drive long-term systemic change in the fashion industry.

9,100+

pieces of clothing collected and donated.

98,000 kg

of CO₂ saved.

33 million liters

of water saved.

Source: United Wardrobe Project



Replicability and Scaleability

United Wardrobe's model is highly replicable. The donation box system, thrift shop initiative, and sustainability education program can be adapted to various schools, universities, and community centers worldwide.

Expansion is already in progress, with schools in India, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Myanmar expressing interest. The initiative can be integrated into school sustainability programs globally, reaching thousands of students and communities. Partnerships with NGOs, businesses, and policymakers can increase impact and policy influence.

Cities with high textile waste and fast fashion consumption. Urban schools and universities with active student communities interested in sustainability. Developing regions where access to affordable clothing is limited, making donations highly impactful.

Key Takeaways for Parties Interested in Replication:

- Simple, scalable model – Requires minimal infrastructure (donation boxes, thrift shop, education program).
- Community-driven – Engaging students, teachers, and NGOs ensures long-term sustainability.
- Partnerships are crucial – Working with local governments, businesses, and schools enhances reach.
- Government involvement is challenging but essential – Policy support would accelerate impact and increase participation.

Outreach and Communication Methods Used:

School Presentations – Educated 300+ students on sustainability.

Social Media & website – Raised awareness and encouraged participation.

Events & Collaborations – Operated a thrift shop to promote secondhand fashion. Partnered with upcycling companies and NGOs for greater impact. Presented at multiple conferences, raising awareness of the project and leading to increased school participation. Visited UNESCAP to gain insights and strengthen sustainability efforts.

Outreach & Communication Methods – Utilized a website and Instagram to engage a wider audience. Delivered speeches at major conferences to raise awareness and expand participation.

United Wardrobe is a scalable, adaptable model that can be replicated across schools, cities, and countries. By engaging communities, forming partnerships, and leveraging education, the initiative can drive long-term systemic change in textile waste management and circular fashion.

Inclusion and Innovation

United Wardrobe actively collaborates with international schools in Bangkok (Wells International, ICS, KIS RP Internatinoal school), Hua Hin international schhol, and two in India, with expansion interest from Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Myanmar.

Partnerships with such as Mercy Centre and Baan Nokkamin Foundation, Bangkok Community Help, Gift of Happiness Foundaiton, Mirror Foundation, Second chance Bangkok, K9, A21 to help to ensure clothing redistribution to underprivileged communities, refugees, and flood victims Businesses and sustainability experts, including Reviv (upcycling company), Reform-U, environmental specialists support the initiative's circular economy approach.

Sustainability clubs, and student volunteers are actively involved in organizing, promoting, and maintaining the project. United Wardrobe Store (Thrift Shop Model) was created within schools, allowing students, parents, teachers and staffsto purchase second-hand clothing, actively participating in circular fashion. United Wardrobe Education delivers sustainability-focused workshops and presentations to over 300 primary school students, raising awareness about textile waste.

Permanent clothing donation boxes provide an accessible, ongoing system for students to contribute whenever they choose, rather than relying on one-time donation drives. A fully student-led team manages the collection, sorting, and redistribution of donated clothes on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis, ensuring continuous impact. Impact measurement and tracking systems monitor CO₂ and water savings, reinforcing the initiative's real-world benefits.

While donation boxes are not new, United Wardrobe has made them an active, daily habit by creating a structured system that allows students to donate clothing anytime. The initiative integrates reuse, redistribution, and upcycling, forming a structured, scalable circular economy model within schools. The project is expanding internationally and has the potential to influence national textile recycling policies by engaging stakeholders at multiple levels.

The key challenge in addressing climate change is not knowing what to do, but ensuring consistent action. United Wardrobe's innovation lies in its fully operational, student-led system, making sustainability an everyday habit rather than an occasional event.

Accountability and Sustainability

United Wardrobe addresses low awareness of textile waste through education programs and donation systems, ensuring continuous engagement. While policy support remains a challenge, the initiative is expanding its reach through school and NGO partnerships.

A student-led tracking system ensures donations are sorted, monitored, and redistributed regularly. Impact measurement tools track CO₂ and water savings, while the thrift shop model and education programs sustain long-term engagement.

The initiative reduces waste management costs, minimizes textile production demand, and generates revenue through thrift sales. By saving 98,000 kg of CO₂ and 33 million liters of water, United Wardrobe effectively lowers environmental costs while creating new opportunities in circular fashion.

Financial Data

United Wardrobe operates on a low-cost, high-impact model, leveraging community engagement, student leadership, and self-generated funding rather than large external financial investments.

Budget and Cost Efficiency

The initiative's primary costs include donation box installation, thrift shop maintenance, and awareness programs, but student volunteers manage collection, sorting, and redistribution, eliminating labor costs. The first donation box made of upcycled iron was donated by a company, while all additional boxes were funded through student-led fundraising efforts, including bake sales (cookies, popcorn, donuts) and revenue from the thrift shop, ensuring financial independence.

Financial Impact and Business Opportunities

The thrift shop model generates sustainable revenue that directly funds the expansion of donation boxes and awareness campaigns. By diverting 9,100+ clothing items from waste, United Wardrobe has saved 98,000 kg of CO₂ and 33 million liters of water, reducing environmental responsibility costs while promoting a circular economy model that can inspire new sustainable business initiatives.

External and Internal Resources

The initiative is entirely student-led, with volunteers overseeing logistics, fundraising, education programs, and outreach efforts. Internal Resources Allocated – Our dedicated team handles collection, sorting, and packing of donations, ensuring seamless operations. This consistent effort and commitment are the key drivers behind our project's success.

Technology and Data Utilization

United Wardrobe uses impact measurement tools to track waste diversion, CO₂ reduction, and water savings, reinforcing data-driven decision-making and proving measurable environmental benefits.

Through self-sustained funding, student-led operations, and a strong circular economy model, United Wardrobe ensures long-term financial sustainability and scalability without relying on continuous external funding.

Contact

UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Zero:
advisoryboardzerowaste@un.org

Email: yohw3096@gmail.com

Website: www.bpseconomist.com

Instagram: [@bpseconomistsclub](https://www.instagram.com/bpseconomistsclub)