



UNITED NATIONS  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

# SSTIC Impact Stories

## Latin America E-waste Management

### SUMMARY

E-waste management is an issue of growing concern for governments in Latin America and the Caribbean due to its complex composition, including the presence of hazardous chemicals, a general lack of specific infrastructure and supporting legislation, the increasing volume of electrical and electronic equipment (EEE) and related waste (WEEE), and low levels of environmental awareness among many of the stakeholders involved and society at large.

Therefore, all of the participating countries are in the process of developing and implementing national regulations and municipal e-waste management strategies and action plans; however, financial and technical assistance is needed to involve the private and informal sectors to help advance environmentally sound management systems, practices and technologies that could minimize the negative environmental impacts of inadequate e-waste disposal. This project aims to strengthen national

initiatives and enhance regional cooperation on the environmentally sound management of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Waste of Electronic or Electrical Equipment (WEEE) in Latin-American Countries. Under Outcome 3.3., it promotes South-South and Triangular Industrial Cooperation (SSTIC) through enhanced knowledge sharing and the development of new regional post-project initiatives and action plans, to ensure empowerment and sustainability.



Annual Expert Group Meeting, Costa Rica, 2019

### WORKING TOWARDS THE SDGs



### SOUTH SOUTH COUNTRIES:

13 Latin American Countries

### IDENTIFIED COUNTRIES:



### SOUTH SOUTH PARTNERS:

- The Argentine Republic, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Republic of Chile, the Republic of Costa Rica, the Republic of Ecuador, the Republic of El Salvador, the Republic of Guatemala, the Republic of Honduras, the Republic of Nicaragua, the Republic of Panama, the Republic of Peru, the Eastern Republic of Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

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# SSTIC Highlights

## CAPACITY BUILDING INITIATIVES

- ① 43 PREAL Tuesdays (weekly meetings) were held in 2022, to bring together Ministries representatives and national teams from the 13 participating countries and beyond to share experiences.
- ② A YouTube channel with more than 200 subscribers and 6,000 visits which features videos of the meetings and audiovisual materials to promote the dissemination of knowledge and the transparency of information.
- ③ An Intranet site internal communication system where project participants can share documents, guides and other materials developed by the 13 countries.
- ④ A website (<https://residuoselectronicosal.org/>) containing information produced by participating countries on regulations and documents.



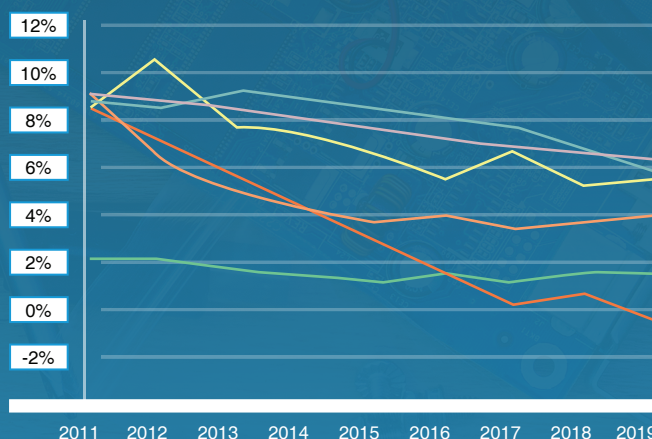
### WHAT IS SSTIC?

#### South-South and Triangular Industrial Cooperation (SSTIC)

Is a process whereby two or more developing countries pursue their individual and/or shared national capacity development objectives through exchanges of knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how, and through regional and interregional collective actions. UNIDO's SSTIC services are following the guiding principles for South-South cooperation set out in the Buenos Aires outcome document:

- ① respect for national sovereignty
- ② mutual benefit
- ③ national ownership and independence
- ④ equality
- ⑤ non-conditionality
- ⑥ non-interference in domestic affairs

### E-WASTE GENERATED IN 2019 (%) for 13 Latin American Countries



#### SIX CATEGORIES:

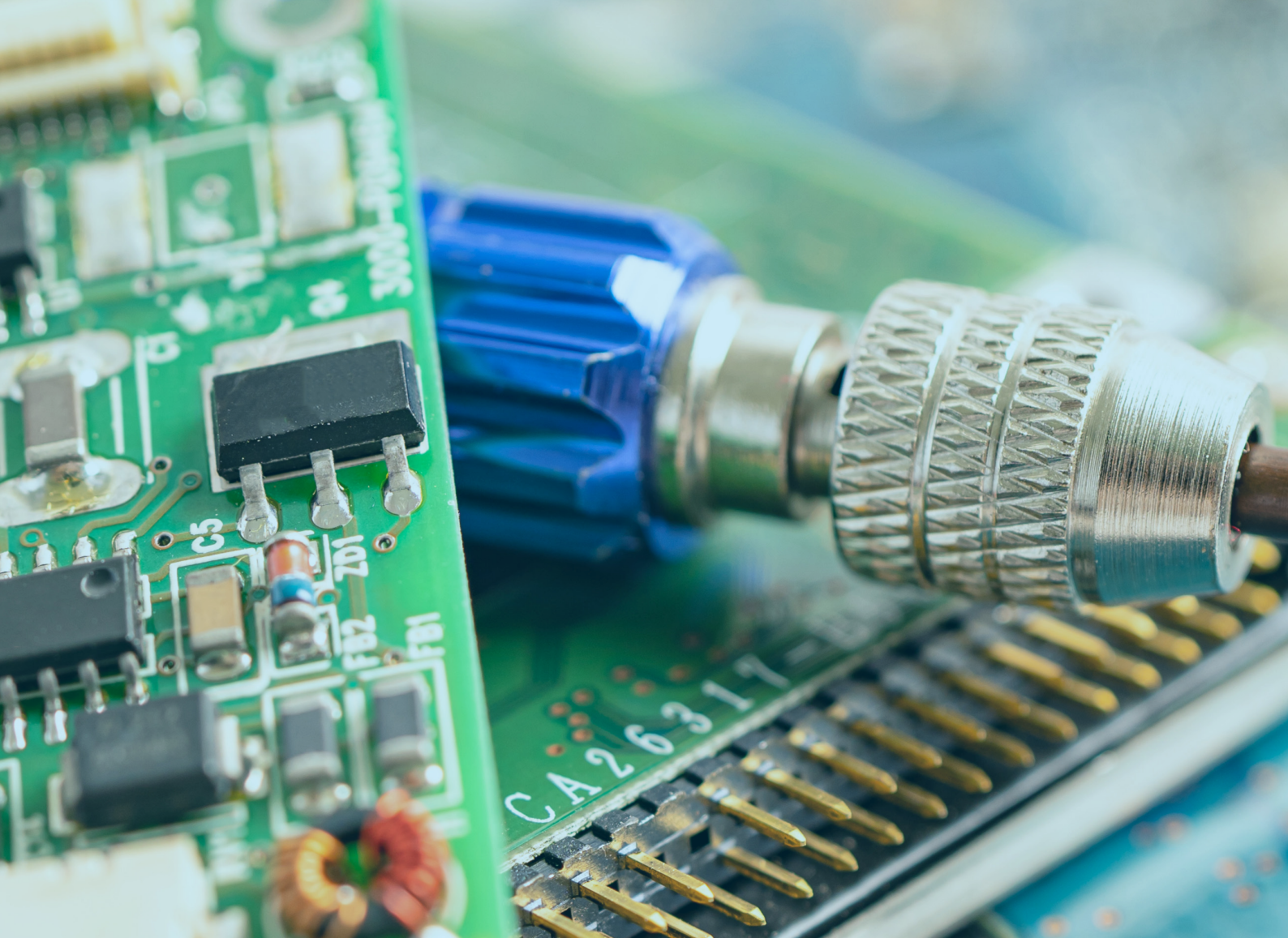
- Screens & Monitors
- Small Equipment
- Temperature Exchange Equipment
- Small IT
- Lamps
- Large Equipment

Source: Regional E-Waste Monitor for Latin-America, results for the 13 countries participating in project UNIDO-GEF 5554. 2021

## UNIDO AS A PARTNER



The Secretariat of Environment and Sustainable Development in the Argentine Republic, the Ministry of Environment and Water of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Chile, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Costa Rica, the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Ecuador, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of the Republic of El Salvador, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of the Republic of Guatemala, the Secretariat of Natural Resources and Environment (SERNA) of the Republic of Honduras, the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (MARENA) of the Republic of Nicaragua, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Panamá, the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Peru; the Ministry of Housing, Land Planning and Environment of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, and the Ministry of People's Power for Ecosocialism and Water of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and others



53.6 million metric tons (Mt) of e-waste were generated in 2019

21%  
Increase

Since 2014

49%  
Increase

In 13 project countries since 2010



Of this total, just 9.3 million metric tons (17%), was documented to be collected and properly recycled.

This means that 83 per cent of e-waste was not documented, meaning it most likely ended up dumped, traded, burned or recycled in a non-environmentally sound manner. In the 13 project countries this figure is estimated at 97 per cent.

The Global E-waste Monitor/Regional E-waste Monitor for Latin America

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## THE CHALLENGE

What the project aims to achieve.

As technology advances, the problem of e-waste management becomes increasingly pressing. Electronic devices, from smartphones to laptops, have become a staple in our daily lives, but as these devices reach the end of their useful lives, their disposal becomes a major concern both for the hazardous substances they contain and for the valuable materials that must be recovered. One of the major issues facing the proper management of e-waste is the lack of comprehensive and enforceable national policies promoting the environmentally sound management (ESM) of e-waste. Without such policies in place, it becomes difficult to ensure proper compliance and address issues related to hazardous substances, such as persistent organic pollutants (POPs).

Another significant challenge is the lack of long-term strategies and guidelines for the ESM of e-waste. To meet project goals and improve local standards, it is essential to comply with existing international standards. However, achieving these objectives is difficult without proper systems and guidance.

Additionally, the ESM of e-waste is plagued by insufficient financial support. Investment in the proper handling and disposal of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) is scarce in most participating countries. This makes it difficult to find facilities that have both high environmental standards and sustainable business models for e-waste disposal at the local level.

Beyond these logistical challenges, there is a low level of knowledge and information available about the ESM of e-waste and environmental and health risks related to its improper handling. Therefore, it is essential to increase targeted information sharing and awareness-raising campaigns.

Furthermore, promoting e-waste facilities operating in accordance with ESM principles and with adequate business models, still requires interventions by the Global Environment Facility and other donors to support the feasibility of such operations.

Finally, the absence of regionally harmonized e-waste policies, lack of a regional knowledge management and information sharing system and insufficient South-South and triangular industrial cooperation adds to the complexity of the problem. Reinforcing national and regional platforms enhances information sharing, knowledge management, and capacity building, which, in turn, is likely to enhance overall regional capacity to demonstrate and consolidate ESM of e-waste.

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## THE SOLUTION

The methodology used that led to successful outcomes.

The issue of e-waste management is becoming increasingly pressing, especially in developing countries. This Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded project aims to address this issue by strengthening national initiatives and enhancing regional cooperation on the environmentally sound management of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in waste electronic and electrical equipment (WEEE) in thirteen Latin American countries. The goal is to protect human health and the environment, particularly by reducing POPs released into the environment.

The project has four components, including: (1) strengthening of national e-waste management initiatives; (2) enhancing national capacities on e-waste dismantling and recycling facilities and infrastructure; (3) enhancing regional cooperation on e-waste management; and, (4) project monitoring and evaluation. At the regional level, the project focuses on aligning e-waste policies with relevant multilateral environmental agreements, harmonizing e-waste policies, and aligning existing national knowledge and information systems with relevant regional ones.



Hands-on e-waste management training at the first E-waste Academy for Managers (EWAM), Costa Rica, 2019



View our Video



View our Publication

## 3

**SOUTH-SOUTH IMPACT****How were South-South and Triangular cooperation utilized to achieve results?**

An essential aspect of the project is the enhancement of South-South cooperation, as coordination and cooperation among countries within the sub-regions and the whole region will result in a more environmentally sound and effective way of collecting, recycling, and processing WEEE. The project has designed various mechanisms and strategies to promote cooperation between the participating countries and has involved public, private and civil society actors, as well as the five Basel Convention Regional Centers present in the region as major players in this project.

Among the tools designed by the project to achieve the proposed objective are PREAL Tuesdays and periodic training events, which have become essential strategies to promote knowledge management. PREAL Tuesdays are weekly meetings in which technical representatives of the Ministries in charge of implementation, national coordinators and technical teams from the 13 participating countries participate. Depending on the topic to be addressed, international experts are sometimes invited. Just in 2022, 43 weekly meetings were held where various topics were discussed, such as the organization of training events, general guidelines to be considered for a EPR regulation, financing

mechanisms for WEEE management, progress and experiences in the implementation of regulations in more developed countries, and the separation and recovery of WEEE plastics, among many other issues. To further facilitate the exchange of information between the countries, an intranet system and a YouTube channel have also been created that feature all the videos of the meetings and audiovisual materials to promote the dissemination of knowledge and the transparency of information.

The YouTube channel has more than 200 subscribers and 6,000 visits, with information generated on PREAL Tuesdays and presentations of international meetings that countries use as support material for the implementation of the activities. On the other hand, the Intranet site is at the service of the internal communication of the project participants and contains documents, guides and other materials developed by the countries, presented for each output of the project. Additionally, international organizations like SECO, UNDP, UNEP and GIZ have also supported e-waste initiatives in the Latin American region in recent years.



## 4

**SUSTAINABILITY AND REPLICABILITY****How is it sustainable and replicable?**

The proposed strategy for addressing e-waste management in this context includes several initiatives that aim to create harmonized technical and legal standards and regulations, regional level playing field conditions and the commitment to incorporate extended producer responsibility as a regional principle. Additionally, the strategy includes cooperation on the development of common criteria for prevention and detection of illicit trafficking, promoting cooperation among state parties, and the interchange of good practices, information, and knowledge about the implementation of extended producer responsibility in accordance with the socio-economic conditions of participating Member States. Furthermore, the strategy also includes cooperation on the definition and implementation of national information systems on e-waste generation, collection, and final disposal that can communicate with one another efficiently, and have the potential to generate indicators and knowledge. A guide on communicating about WEEE was also produced under the project and 1,836 journalists (52% women) were trained on this.



# SSTIC Executive Summary

E-waste management is an issue of growing concern for governments in Latin America and the Caribbean due to its complex composition. Therefore, all of the participating countries are in the process of developing and implementing national regulations and municipal e-waste management strategies and action plans.

This project aims to strengthen national initiatives and enhance regional cooperation on the environmentally sound management of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Waste of Electronic or Electrical Equipment (WEEE) in Latin-American Countries. An essential aspect of the project is the enhancement of South-South cooperation, as coordination and cooperation among countries

within the sub-regions and the whole region will result in a more environmentally sound and effective way of collecting, recycling, and processing WEEE.

The project contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 9, 12, 13. The proposed strategy for addressing e-waste management in this context includes several initiatives that aim to create harmonized technical and legal standards and regulations, regional level playing field conditions and the commitment to incorporate extended producer responsibility as a regional principle.

**CLICK THE LINK BELOW FOR MORE INFORMATION**




**View project in UNIDO  
OpenData Platform**



## WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SSTIC?

Scan the QR code to access more information about SSTIC. You will be directed to a website or a resource that provides detailed information about the concept, principles, benefits, and examples of SSTIC in action.

 [www.unido.org/south-south-cooperation](http://www.unido.org/south-south-cooperation)  [SSTIC@unido.org](mailto:SSTIC@unido.org)



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