

1. Building partnerships

Successful waste-to-resource initiatives are built on the bedrock of effective partnerships. Partnership development particularly underpins the success of such critical components as community outreach, financial sustainability and policy support. This section outlines the role of different stakeholders and the resources they can bring into a partnership and highlights models of partnership in practice in five cities: Kushtia (Bangladesh), Kampot (Cambodia), Islamabad (Pakistan), Matale (Sri Lanka) and Quy Nhon (Viet Nam). It also presents a range of good practices and recommendations for strengthening partnerships.

1.1 The importance of partnership

Partnerships with stakeholders are essential for sustainable initiatives.

Waste-to-resource initiatives tend to be multisectoral and multifaceted, involving action from government bodies, community groups, households, businesses and individuals. For successful outcomes, waste-to-resource managers must engage with all stakeholders through both formal and informal partnerships.

In low- and middle-income cities, stable partnerships can maintain positive momentum even as political, economic and social conditions change. Instability can be detrimental to waste-to-resource initiatives, which require ongoing commitments from many stakeholders. If one stakeholder fails to deliver, other stakeholders are often adversely affected. Strong partnerships also help partners to confront and overcome the risk of change.

Partnerships need to be based on trust and shared vision. Strong partnerships evolve around a core of mutual interests and shared vision. This requires partners to identify a common need and understand how the waste-to-resource initiative will return shared benefits. Articulating mutual interests allows partners to subscribe to a vision for change and improvement, which they can then work towards realizing. In Quy Nhon, for example, the tourism industry is growing, and local government and industry leaders recognize that a clean and tidy Quy Nhon is more attractive to tourists.

For solid waste management to be effective, partners need to build trust, operate with transparency and be accountable to each other. Partners must also be committed to the idea and practice of partnership. When partners recognize that they are ‘in this together’, progress can be made. Such an attitude tends to

engender enduring partnerships. Partners also need to recognize that partnership means the sharing of risks and benefits generated through the project. This is an extremely important dimension of partnership, and risks and benefits should be clearly understood by all partners before the partnership agreement is forged.

Partnerships with different levels of government are needed. Of the many partnerships that waste-to-resource initiatives rely upon, those with local, provincial and national governments are the most critical. This is because without government commitment, initiatives often fail (see Part I section 4.1 on government commitment).

Different levels of government provide different forms of support, depending on the regulatory, policy, funding and technical resources a government agency can draw upon. In Viet Nam, for example, waste collection fees are set by the provincial government, but the municipal government is mandated to manage solid waste within towns and cities. Thus, dealing with regulatory constraints requires engagement and collaboration of higher levels of government. As a result, waste-to-resource managers and government agencies at different levels must work together.

1.2 Developing new models for partnerships

Partnership arrangements should align with local conditions and specific needs.

Local conditions greatly affect the capacity, characteristics and performance of waste-to-resource initiatives. Each city has a unique profile of actors, challenges, drivers of change and institutional and policy set-up. Decisions around partnership arrangements must consider the local context carefully to ensure appropriateness.

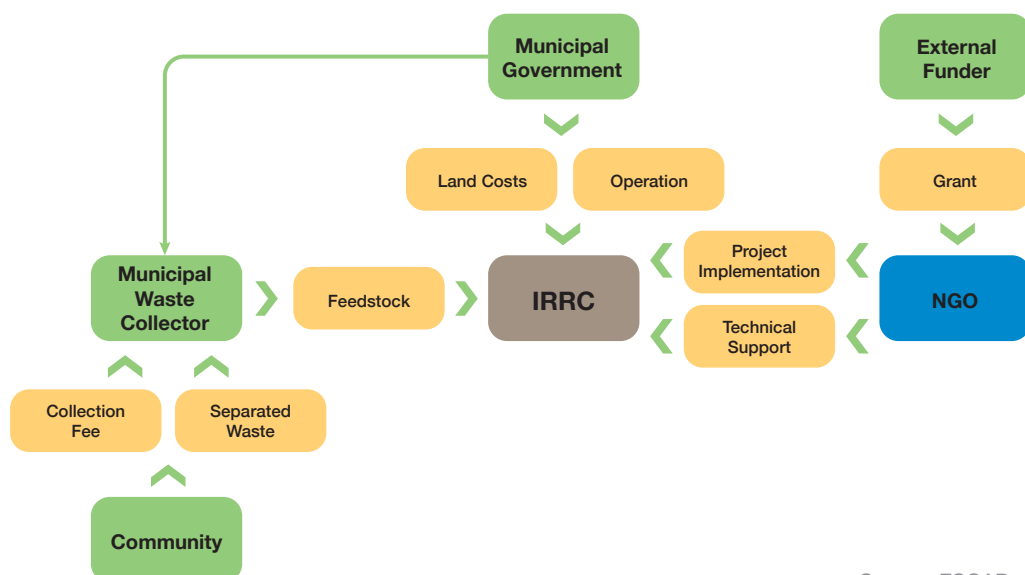
Arranging partners so that synergies are maximized is a critical component of the early work required to establish a waste-to-resource initiative in a new city. Such partnership arrangements should derive from the institutional landscape already in place. At the same time, partnership arrangements should be regularly reviewed to ensure continued relevancy.

Based on the experiences in establishing partnerships in the various beneficiary cities of the ESCAP programme, the following highlights five partnership arrangements. Each arrangement reflects different realities in a city and the relative strengths of different types of actors and partners. While each city presents its own specific conditions, the five models are broadly representative of five 'types' of partnership arrangements.

Kushtia model

In Bangladesh, the Kushtia model is led by the **municipal government**, which owns and operates the IRRC and collects and delivers waste to the facility (Figure 6). When the Kushtia IRRC was established in 2008, it only produced compost. Due to ongoing sanitation issues, the IRRC facility was converted in 2012 to accommodate the co-composting of organic and human waste (faecal sludge)—the first in Bangladesh. Under this model, the waste-to-resource initiative is integrated into the existing municipal solid waste management system. Because it is led by the municipality, lower transportation and disposal costs can be achieved. However, the model may suffer from financial constraints due to the low priority often accorded by local governments to solid waste management. Similarly, operating efficiency and marketing potential may not be fully optimized.

Figure 6. The Kushtia model



Source: ESCAP.

In Kushtia, several partners have made essential contributions. The Local Government Engineering Department, a central government body, covered the construction cost of modifying the existing facility in 2012, including the addition of drying beds for the faecal sludge and the purchasing of equipment for clearing septic tanks and pit latrines. ESCAP provided funds for the construction of a cocopeat filter, essential for the processing of waste water. The Kushtia municipal authority provided the land on which the facility was built and have operated the facility since it opened, with technical support from Waste Concern. The Kushtia municipal authority also runs a waste collection and sanitation service in the city.

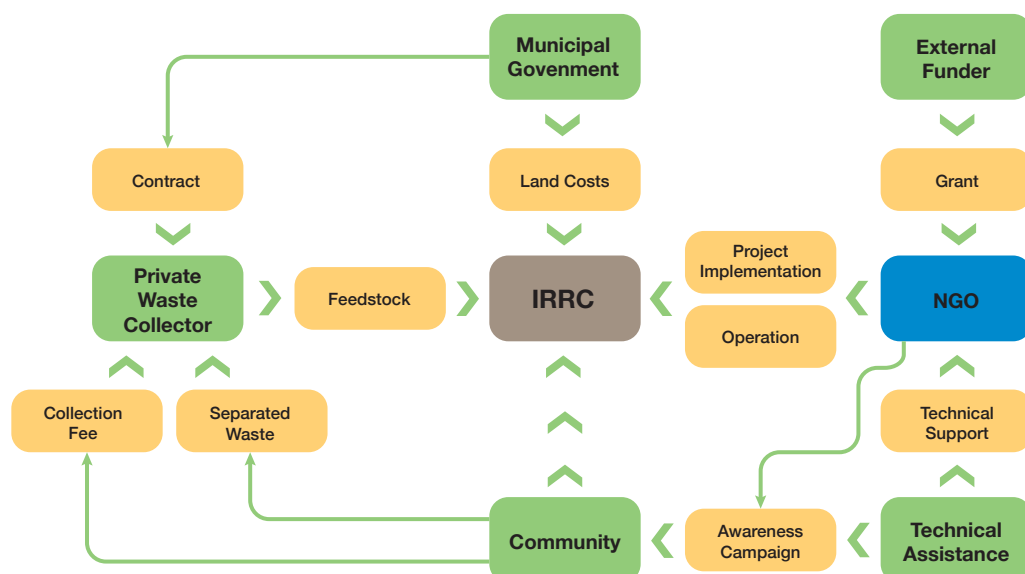
Households wanting to have their pit latrine or septic tank serviced pay the municipality around BDT350 (\$4.50). Under new regulation, the municipality is permitted to charge households 12 per cent of the land value for the provision of basic services. This enables the financial sustainability of waste collection and delivery to the IRRC.

Kampot model

In Cambodia, the Kampot model is an **NGO-led** approach (Figure 7). The Community Sanitation and Recycling Organization (CSARO), a local NGO that also operates in Phnom Penh, established the IRRC in Kampot in 2012. The facility transforms organic waste into compost and on-sells recyclable materials. It also hosts a small demonstration garden that uses compost produced in the facility as fertilizer. This model has the benefit of high-levels of community engagement because the NGO can typically generate community trust. It also facilitates the introduction of additional funds and know-how from the NGO.

ESCAP provided the funds for the construction of the facility, and the Kampot municipality authority provided the land on which it was built. CSARO operates the facility. Workers are mainly drawn from urban poor communities and organized as a self-help group. The facility continues to experience difficulties in obtaining sufficient amounts of separated organic waste, which poses a challenge to the financial stability of operations. CSARO has initiated a range of community outreach activities aimed at supporting waste separation at source.

Figure 7. The Kampot model



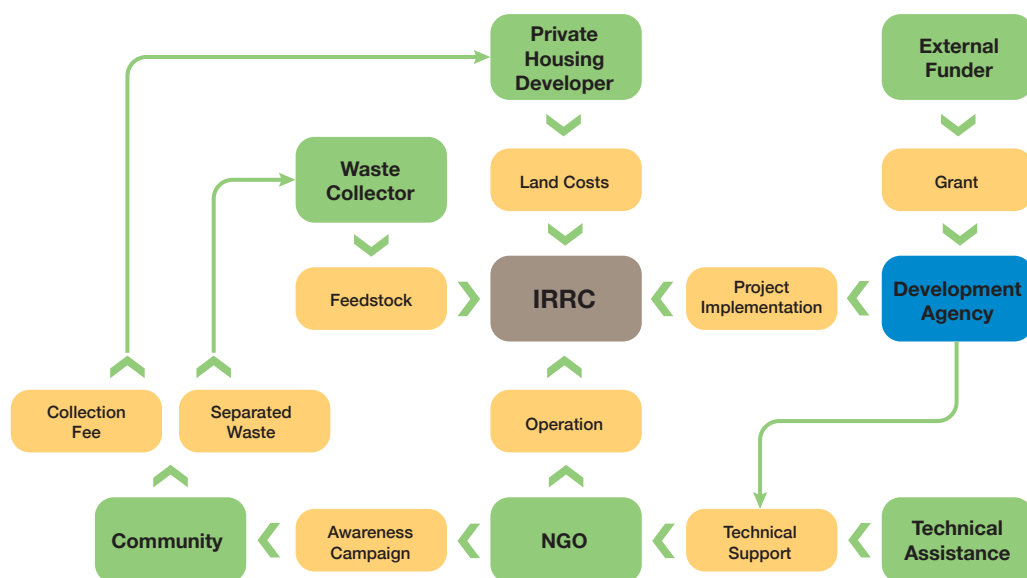
Source: ESCAP.

For waste collection, the municipal authority has contracted a private operator, Global Action for Environmental Awareness (GAEA), which collects waste from the main market in the city and delivers it to the IRRC. This waste, however, is often mixed and of poor quality due to poor coordination between the market authority and GAEA. Efforts are ongoing to improve this. In addition, in an attempt to acquire greater quantities of separated waste, CSARO has started pilot activities for primary waste collection in some areas of the city that are underserved in this regard. For example, CSARO uses waste picker groups to collect organic waste along with recyclables.

Islamabad model

In Pakistan, the **private sector** leads the Islamabad model (Figure 8). The Islamabad IRRC was established in 2015 in a high-growth area called Sector G15, the development of which has been assigned by the Capital Development Authority of Islamabad to a not-for-profit private land and housing developer, the Jammu and Kashmir Cooperative Housing Society. There is no direct municipal or national government involvement. Under this model, the municipal burden of solid waste management is offset through private sector participation. Clear contracts are required to ensure reliability. The model relies upon an entrepreneurial approach and is likely to generate employment and business within the community.

Figure 8. The Islamabad model



Source: ESCAP.

The Islamabad model involves activity and contribution from all partners. Through UN-Habitat, ESCAP provided funds for the construction of the facility, and the Jammu and Kashmir Cooperative Housing Society provided the land on which the facility was built. A local social enterprise, Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan Memorial Trust, operates the facility and undertakes community outreach education on waste separation. The Jammu and Kashmir Cooperative Housing Society pays the Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan Memorial Trust a collection fee for every household served, which is levied to each household monthly as part of a common services fee. The Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan Memorial Trust undertakes collection of recyclable and separated organic waste within the area (Sector G15) and processes this waste in the facility. The Jammu and Kashmir Cooperative Housing Society in return pays the Trust a collection fee of PKR250 (\$2.40) per house.

Box 8. Developing the Islamabad model



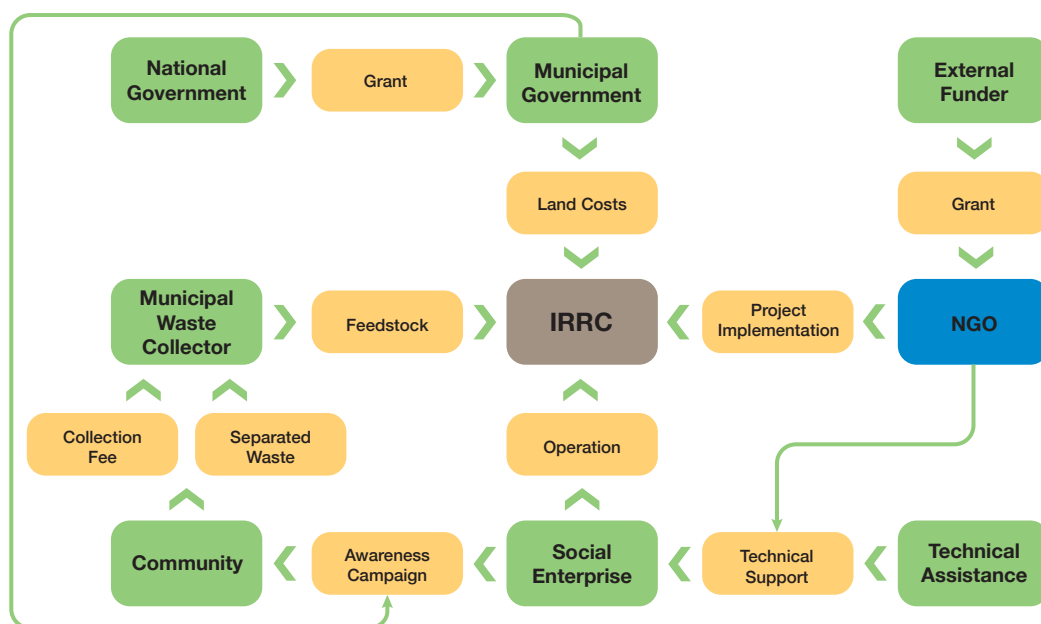
SUMAIRA GUL is Programme Manager at the Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan Memorial Trust, the social enterprise that operates the waste-to-resource facility in Islamabad.

“We developed this model because the private sector is strongly engaged in the development of Islamabad,” says Mrs Gul. “We have taken a strong business focus as part of our role as a social enterprise, and we liaise closely with private developer Jammu and Kashmir Cooperative Housing Society.”

Matale model

In Sri Lanka, the Matale model is based on a **public-private partnership** in which the municipality and a social enterprise closely engage (Figure 9). The first IRRC in Matale was built in 2007. Two other facilities were built in 2009 and 2011, respectively. Further expansion is planned in 2015. This model was also adapted to local conditions in Ratnapura, Sri Lanka. The Matale model requires that full cost recovery is obtained at least. Ideally, a profit is made. This demands a reliable and skilled partner with a good sense of entrepreneurship.

Figure 9. The Matale model



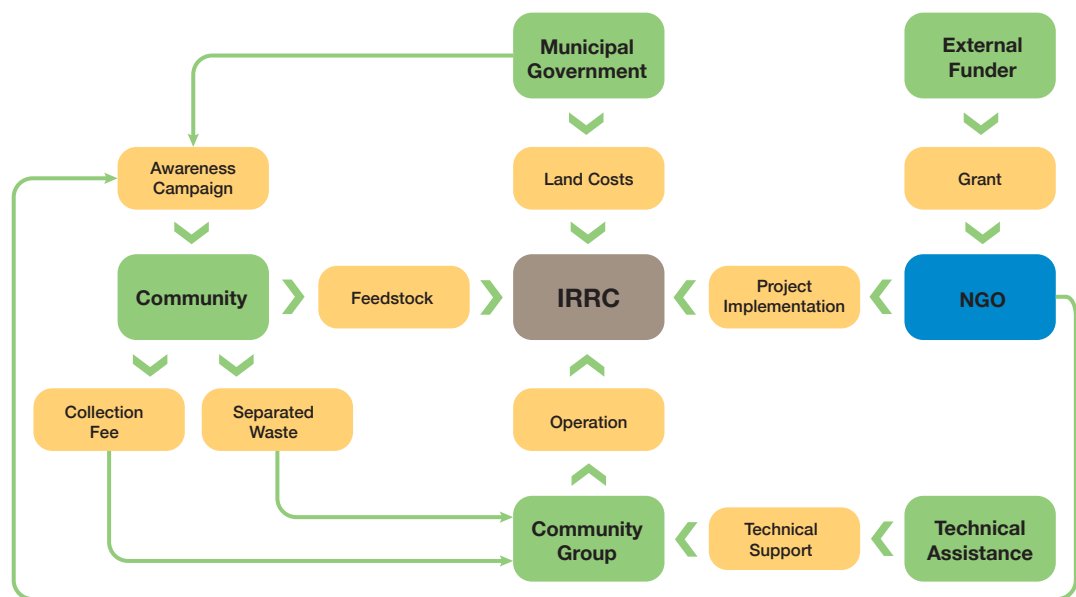
Source: ESCAP.

In Matale, ESCAP and the Government's Central Environment Authority provided funds for the construction of the three facilities. The Matale Municipal Council provided the land. A local social enterprise, Micro Enriched Compost, operates the facilities, and the municipal authority provides some of the workers. The municipality, in partnership with Sevanatha Urban Resource Centre, an NGO, conducts community outreach education on waste separation. Waste collection is managed by the municipality government, which delivers separated organic waste to the IRRC.

Quy Nhon model

In Viet Nam, **community groups** lead the Quy Nhon model, with strong support from the municipal authority. The Quy Nhon IRRC was established in 2007 and expanded in 2011. It is located in Nhon Phu, a peri-urban ward to the north of the city. This model benefits from the direct involvement of the community in the management of waste collection, recycling and composting. It is not a profit-seeking model. The model tends to generate jobs among the immediate community and alleviate the solid waste management burden on local government through community input.

Figure 10. The Quy Nhon model



Source: ESCAP.

In Quy Nhon, ESCAP provided the funds for the construction of the original facility in 2007 and for its expansion in 2011. The People's Committee of Quy Nhon, which manages the city, provided the land on which the facility was built. A group of community members in Nhon Phu, where the facility is located, manages its operations. The community group also conducts public outreach activities to stimulate the practise of separation of waste at source and promote the sale of compost. The Environment and Development Action, an NGO, provides technical support to the community group and to the local government and provides

training on waste separation. The community group owns a waste collection vehicle that it uses to collect source-separated waste in Nhon Phu ward, which generates waste collection fees ranging between VND6,000 and VND19,000 (\$.30 and \$.90) per household per month and which enables IRRC to achieve cost recovery.

Box 9. Developing the Quy Nhon model



NGUYỄN THỊ HOÀI LINH is Program Manager with Environment and Development Action and deeply involved with the establishment of the Quy Nhon model. “We have worked with community groups, commune leaders and local residents to develop partnerships around the waste-to-resource initiative,” she explains. Community groups now run the facility and the project almost completely by themselves. “It’s about empowering the community to take charge of managing waste, and it’s about facilitating their capacity for change and development,” she says.

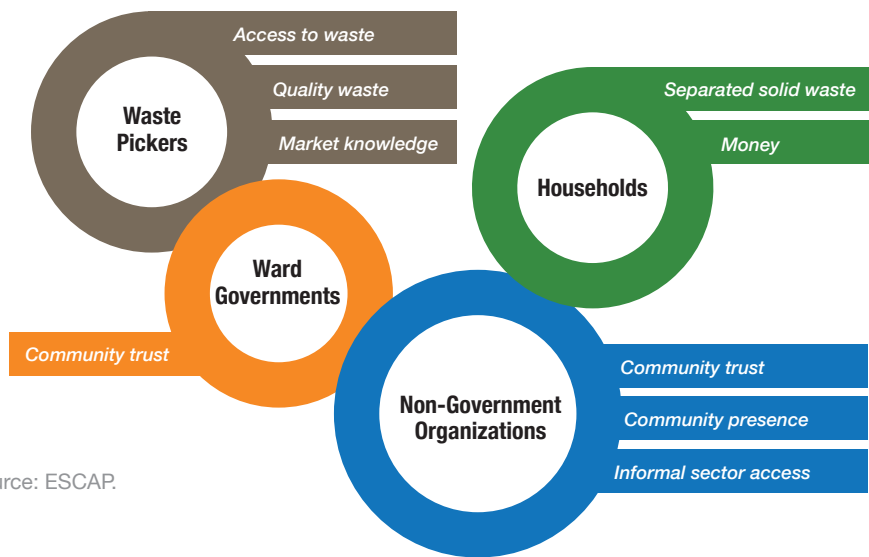
1.3 Understanding partner contributions and resources

Different partners can contribute different resources to the initiative. Because different stakeholders can access, control and deploy different types of resources, complementarity needs to be considered early in the decision-making process. Deploying complementary resources helps to build strong partnerships. Thus, early analysis of various stakeholders and their resources is beneficial and facilitates constructive partnerships in which each partner recognizes the others as contributing equally.

At the same time, it is important to assess and allocate risk according to the ability of partners to best handle them. For example, the operator of the plant should be responsible for efficient operations, but the responsibility for delivering source-separated waste to the facility should be with the partners who transport the waste and who can set up and enforce a waste separation system (such as the municipal authority).

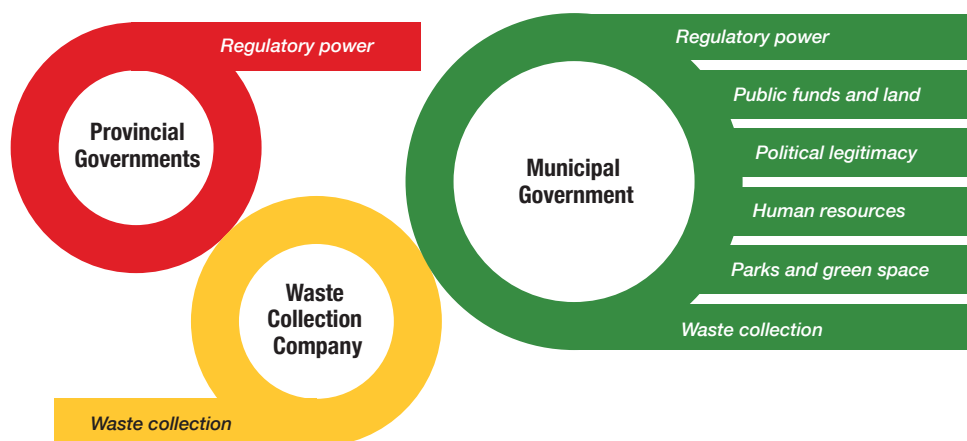
A ‘resource’ can be both tangible and intangible. Land is a resource, as is the trust of a community. A municipal government can contribute land, regulatory power, technical knowledge and public funds to a waste-to-resource initiative. NGOs can mobilize community trust and deploy informal sector experience. Households and markets generate and sort essential organic waste and are often willing to pay to have this waste removed from their premises. All of these resources are valuable, and many are essential to a sustainable initiative.

Figure 11. Community partners and their resources



Source: ESCAP.

Figure 12. Municipal and provincial partners and their resources



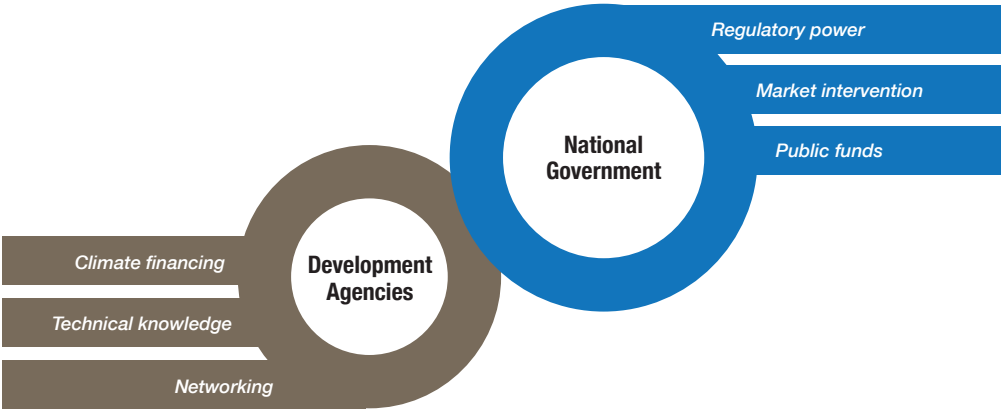
Source: ESCAP.

Box 10. Meet the mayor of Matale, Sri Lanka



HILMY MOHAMMAD has been mayor of Matale, Sri Lanka for several years. “From the beginning, we have contributed a lot to the IRRC project. We wanted it to be a success!” says Mayor Hilmy. “We found and gave free land for the IRRC to be built. We also contributed workers from our own payroll to work in the IRRC and worked with partners for community awareness.” This involvement has greatly helped to support the IRRC operations. “This was a priority for us. Of course, our budget, resources and time were limited, but we wanted to make it a success. We wanted Matale to become a model for Sri Lanka, and it has,” adds Mayor Hilmy.

Figure 13. National and international partners and their resources



Source: ESCAP.

Box 11. Meet international technical experts in Dhaka, Bangladesh



IFTEKHAR ENAYETULLAH and **ABU HASNAT MD. MAQSOOD SINHA** are the co-founders of Waste Concern, an NGO based in Dhaka that specializes in waste-to-resource initiatives. “We have been working across Asia to support local operations,” says Mr Enayetullah. “Many organizations and governments do not have the right technical knowledge to implement waste-to-resource initiatives. We can contribute that,” adds Mr Sinha.

1.4 Lessons learned for building partnerships

To build partnerships for waste-to-resource initiatives, national and local governments have achieved successful outcomes through the following activities, which contributed to improving political backing to local initiatives and stabilizing local partnerships.

- ***Building off the existing local context.*** Successful waste-to-resource initiatives first explore local conditions and, actors, as well as waste-related behaviours and mechanisms present within the local community, and seek to make the most of possible opportunities. The activities of the informal sector, for example, should be considered in any strategy. Waste-to-resource initiatives need to be designed to optimize the local context.
- ***Establishing the correct partnership structure.*** Local government needs to support the construction of a partnership for the waste-to-resource initiative that is aligned with local conditions and requirements. Many waste-to-resource facilities operate as concessions from the local government, involving a build–operate–transfer agreement, wherein a third party operates the facility for a set period before transferring operations to the local government.
- ***Guiding partners and strengthening partnerships.*** Successful waste-to-resource initiatives are supported by a proactive and visionary local government. This is dependent upon leadership from local government and willingness to guide partners, establish a shared vision for change and encourage compliance and stakeholder engagement.
- ***Supporting IRRC operations by advocating for required policy change at the national and provincial levels.*** To support waste-to-resource initiatives, municipal governments have advocated for higher-level policy change. In some cases, such policy has been managed by a provincial or national government. Municipalities need to engage with relevant government entities, local stakeholders, technical experts and waste-to-resource managers for appropriate policy change.
- ***Supporting a regular platform for interaction between partners and stakeholders.*** It has often been useful for local governments to establish a platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue at the local level. This allows partners to engage in the monitoring of a project's progress and address issues as they arise. This mechanism, which may be as simple as a monthly or quarterly meeting, needs to be flexible enough to respond to changing circumstances and needs.

