



Bending Toward Circular: Using Extended Producer Responsibility Schemes to Transition to Appliance Circular Economy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2 SEPTEMBER 2022

Executive Summary

This work investigates how circularity can be applied to the end-of-life (EOL) management of electrical and electronic waste (e-waste).

In this report, EOL is defined as *“the point in time when the product reaches its end of life for one user.”* This research reviews EOL options with strategies to increase circularity through Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes. EPR schemes are policy approaches where *“the producer’s responsibility for a product is extended to the post-consumer stage of a product’s life cycle.”*^{*}

EPR schemes are an opportunity to support the transition to circularity within linear economic models and are being implemented in various contexts. In particular, this research uses EPR schemes as a policy approach to address challenges that CLASP can be applicable to various developing contexts.[†] These include:

- **Lack of a national CE policy framework and the integration of e-waste management within CE framework:** Policymakers are starting to develop policy frameworks[‡] to embrace circular economy and e-waste management, but more needs to be done.
- **Lack of awareness by local stakeholders:** Participants in the local economy lack enough understanding of the circular economy concept as well as its implementation for it to gain traction in the current linear economic system.
- **Lack of a stakeholder network:** Different stakeholders across the whole life cycle of appliances are involved, but they often operate in silos.
- **Lack of infrastructure and technical capacity:** In Thailand, as in many developing countries, limited capacity exists for treating hazardous waste. This is often coupled with a lack of infrastructure that allows e-waste to be treated appropriately.

Through the review of various reports, policies, and papers, this work identifies in a simple and succinct manner key implementation options and components that should be taken into account when developing an EPR scheme for appliances.

While this research offers an overview of options for EPR implementation, it can also serve as a foundation for other work, such as investigating if and how EPR schemes could be used a means to integrate the informal sector’s capacity and stakeholder network into a successful circular EOL model.

^{*} OECD EPR schemes’ definition available at <https://www.oecd.org/env/tools-evaluation/extendedproducerresponsibility.htm>

[†] For example, CLASP conducted research in Thailand and interviewed stakeholders about challenges to transition to appliance circularity