

Etisalat's recycling venture: Uplifts rural livelihoods and preserves the environment.

Today's world is rampant with environmental destruction resulting in dire consequences not only for nature but also for human kind. In this light, Etisalat Lanka embraces its recycling project as one small step in a large battlefield for conservation. However, it is not mere environmental conservation that the project aims at, but more so, a move towards empowering rural Sri Lankan women with self-sufficient livelihoods. In employing rural housewives at the recycling factories, Etisalat believes that a project of this nature can act as a powerful tool in lifting the rural economy and enhancing incomes.

Therefore, as part of Etisalat's CSR, the recycling Project aims at reusing discarded hoarding flexes, while at the same time engaging in the empowerment of rural women. As part of the programme, Etisalat will recycle all hoarding flexes which are often dumped following the relevant advertising campaign. These once before thrown away material, will now serve yet another purpose on conversion to grocery bags; an innovative and useful way of dealing with the matter. These bags will be produced by rural village housewives, in turn giving them a source of income to uplift their quality of living. The bags are sold at a nominal price and part of the income is reimbursed to the housewives.

This new initiative was launched in partnership with the Consortium of Humanitarian Agency (CHA) and the first manufacturing plant was opened in Lunama Ambalantota, last week. The company hopes to roll out similar projects in other districts, in the near future. Sanjeeva Samarasinghe CSO Etisalat Lanka said at the Opening Ceremony of the plant, "In today's world the importance of recycling is a greater concern both for the general public and the economy. The earth's natural resources are consumed at a rate that reinforces the idea that we are living for today and the future generations will be paying for the consequences. In this light, recycling along with reducing consumption is our best means to counter the damage we have inflicted for centuries. This is why, Etisalat Lanka has initiated this project, in an effort to curb the damage and contract something positive." He added, "We strongly believe that this project will uplift the livelihoods of rural women, giving them the opportunity to be independent and have their own source of income. It is a mechanism which enables them employability and ability to bring home an income for their families, which in turn enhances their lifestyle"

