UNILEVER
CreaSolv® Process

BUSINESS MODEL: **RESOURCE RECOVERY**

SITUATION

- Today, only 14% of all plastic packaging is recycled globally.
- Billions of single-use sachets (small, disposable plastics bags) are sold every year, particularly in developing and emerging markets.
- Sachets are extremely resource efficient and allow low-income consumers to buy small amounts of products that would otherwise be unaffordable to them.
- Without a viable recycling solution, sachet packaging ends up in landfill or as litter.

CHALLENGE

- As part of its Sustainable Living Plan, Unilever has long been committed to finding an alternative to throwing sachets away.
- Unilever has pledged to make 100% of packaging recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025.

SOLUTION

- In 2017, Unilever unveiled its ground-breaking new technology to recycle sachet waste. This technology, called CreaSolv® Process, has been developed with the Fraunhofer Institute for Process Engineering and Packaging IVV in Germany and is inspired by an innovation used to recycle TV sets.
- The CreaSolv® Process technology has been adapted from a method used to separate brominated flame retardants from waste electrical and electronic equipment polymers. During the process, the plastic is recovered from the sachet, and the plastic then used to create new sachets for Unilever products - creating a full circular economy approach.
- Unilever will open a pilot plant in Indonesia later this year to test the long-term commercial viability of the technology. Indonesia is a critical country in which to tackle waste, producing 64m tons every year, with 1.3m tons ending up in the ocean.
- To tackle the industry-wide sachet waste issue, Unilever is looking to create a sustainable system-change by setting up waste collection structures to channel sachets to be recycled. Unilever is testing this approach by working with local waste banks, governments and retailers and will look to empower waste pickers, integrate them into the mainstream economy and to provide a potential long-term income, generating wider growth in the economy.

KEY BENEFITS

- This announcement is part of Unilever's pledge to ensure all its plastic packaging is fully reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2025. Unilever has also committed to reducing the weight of its packaging by one-third by 2020 and increasing the use of recycled plastic content in its packaging to at least 25% by 2025.
- This pilot allows, for the first time, the recycling of high-value polymers from dirty post-consumer multilayer sachets to extract the economic profitability and environmental benefits of CreaSolv® Process.
- Estimates show Unilever recovering six kilograms of pure polymers with the same energy used to produce one kilogram of virgin polymer.

Link: https://www.unilever.com/news/Press-releases/2017/Unilever-develops-new-technology-to-tackle-the-global-issue-of-plastic-sachet-waste.html