

**“Let’s separate together” : Selective Waste Collection
Program in the city of Salta, Argentina.
*A local model for a global problem in developing
countries.***

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Source separation of Urban Solid Waste is an unresolved matter in developing countries. Argentina is taking the first steps towards implementing waste separation practices in different locations throughout the country. Due to the jurisdictional nature of waste management in Argentina, waste separation initiatives are limited to each municipality within the provinces.

The Waste Separation Program implemented as from the year 2011 in the city of Salta, in the northwest region of Argentina, through Agrotécnica Fueguina SACIF, firm in charge of the Urban Hygiene Service, is one of the main referents in the matter, as it is a Municipality with more than 500,000 inhabitants, and it has had positive results to date. 650 tons are disposed of daily in the city’s sanitary landfill, and 50% of that waste is organic.

The Program aims at solving a double issue, environmental and social. By reducing the amount of waste disposed of in the landfill, the efficiency in the use of the soil is maximized and the useful life of the landfill is extended. On the other hand, there are three cooperatives of informal waste pickers in the city, who manually separate the waste inside the landfill’s operating modules, without the minimum necessary health and safety conditions. Through source separation of recoverable waste, we are trying to keep the pickers away from the landfills, so that they perform their tasks in a specially assigned area, thus minimizing health risks and improving their working conditions.

To that end, the Municipality of the city of Salta, through the Secretariat of Local Development, is carrying out a joint work with the cooperatives of waste pickers, which will bring about an improvement in their working conditions and quality of life.

In order to achieve a greater efficiency in the recovery of the waste that is disposed of in the landfills, Agrotécnica Fueguina is using a clean development mechanism (CDM) approved by the Secretariat of Environment and Sustainable Development (SAyDS), so that the biogas produced through the decomposition of the waste is recovered.

This integrated model for the Management of Urban Solid Waste appears to be a model to be followed in the Municipalities throughout the country.

Keyword: waste, separation, developing countries, energy, recovery, social issues.