

# UGM Students Develop Waste Management Project for School Children


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Piyungan landfill in Bantul regency that measures 12.5 hectares is the central landfill for Yogyakarta. It can take up a volume of 2.7 juta m<sup>2</sup>, which is actually not equivalent with the regular 400-500 tonnes of waste that is compiled every day. It comes as no surprise that as a result, many illegal landfills have emerged in empty lots or river banks, which degenerate environmental quality due to waste pollution.

Concerned with this condition, five Environmental Geography students from UGM were inspired to give education to children around the Piyungan landfill on the waste management. The students are Cahyadi Ramadhan, Yolla Yulianda, Dinda Al Anshori, Rahma Aulia Zahra, and Firna Agustin, all guided by Prof. Dr. Suratman Worosuprojo, M.Sc.

The UGM students aimed at showing the children that waste can be reused into economic value goods. They chose SDN Ngablak elementary school which is located not far from the landfill. To the children, they give socialisation, training, and establishment of cadres to raise waste awareness. The children are asked to make products from plastic waste according to their creativity.



“We teach the children creativities in making plastic waste as planting pots, hence it reduces the amount of plastic waste,” said Yolla.

Furthermore, said Yolla, the students also established Waste Bank that is run by the school children under the supervision of the teachers. The children will get points depending on the amount of waste they have collected. The points can be redeemed with school supplies such as pencils, books, or school bags. “The Waste Bank is expected to motivate the children to take care of waste, particularly plastic waste, in their neighbourhood,” she said.

In addition, the student team prepared an education module that consists of information on waste and its potential, hazard, and environmentally friendly management.

Yolla said the programme was responded positively by the students, teachers, and parents, even the surrounding community. The school will further make this programme as their extracurricular activity. “They aimed at sustaining the environmental awareness among the school children,” she added.

Environment observer, Puji Heru Sulistyono, pledged to give his commitment for being the partner of the group and expanding this programme wider to the community.

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