

UNTANGLING THE PLASTIC WASTE CHALLENGE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Growth Constraints in the Middle East's Plastics Ecosystem

Structural Gaps in Waste Segregation



- Most buildings lack separate disposal systems for recyclables
- Single garbage chutes and mixed bins lead to contaminated waste streams
- Cross-contamination raises collection costs and hinders recycling efficiency
- Unauthorized dumping at non-designated sites remains common

Quality Control & Regulatory Gaps



- Plastic waste reaching landfills is often too contaminated for recovery
- Quality and volume of recyclable plastics remain unpredictable
- Lack of standardized labeling and sorting processes for plastic scrap and bales

Data Deficiency: A Roadblock to Strategic Waste Management



- Waste data is fragmented, outdated, and lacks transparency
- Absence of centralized tracking systems across municipalities
- Inconsistent reporting makes it hard to design effective interventions

Infrastructure Deficit: Hindering Scalable Circular Solutions



- Waste collection is inefficient, often affected by littering and scavenging
- Limited number of Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) to process waste
- Landfilling remains the dominant method of plastic disposal
- Plastics form the second-largest portion of municipal solid waste after food

KEY GROWTH INITIATIVES ACCELERATING Waste Management Transformation

- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) frameworks are actively under regulatory review to drive accountability across the plastics value chain
- Government-led targets are catalyzing upgrades to waste management systems and operational mechanisms
- Modernized regulatory frameworks are being developed to align with sustainability and circular economy goals
- Strategic investments in infrastructure—including Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs), advanced waste treatment, and recycling plants—are advancing national circularity ambitions

“The Middle East is witnessing country level strategies on plastic waste management including instruction of EPR policies and frameworks. This is expected to create transformative shift over the next decade in improved policies, technologies, infrastructure.”

Aparajith Balan

Associate Partner and Global Leader
Chemicals & Materials Growth Advisory
Frost & Sullivan



Ending plastic pollution starts with action.

This #WorldEnvironmentDay, explore how businesses can drive real change.

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