

Objective

Bridge the gap between the waste pickers and a place where they can redeem recycled glass for profit in an attempt to raise their standard of living.

Abstract

Waste pickers in Asunción, Paraguay collect both cardboards and plastics for compensation, but they leave glass untouched since the city lacks a system that allows people to return glass to be recycled in exchange for money.

To address this, we have written a letter of intent outlining a possible system for collection, which could serve as an early step to get funding for the program. This would provide important long term benefits for the waste pickers including an increased family income, the opportunity to work collaboratively towards a common goal, and a way to take account of the often undocumented waste pickers and their families.

Background

In Asunción, Paraguay, impoverished waste pickers spend hours each day gathering recyclables from people's trash and redeeming what they find for a small profit. This is their only source of income and keeps them living below the poverty line.



Methods

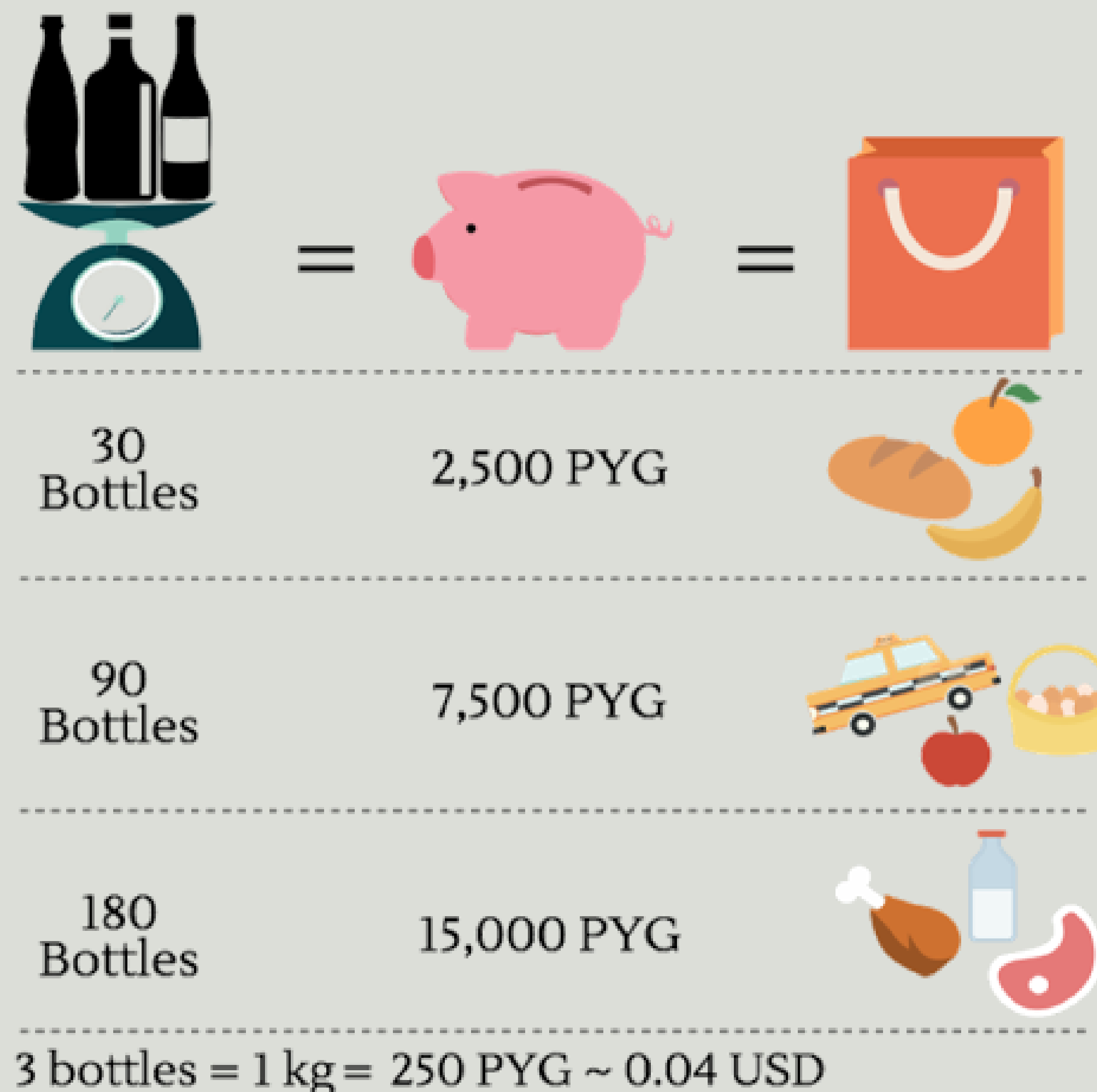
- Explored comparable solutions in countries with similar situations
- Cost/Benefit analysis of recycling glass in relation to standard of living in Paraguay
- Analysis of municipal programs that previously received funding



Paraguayan Waste Pickers

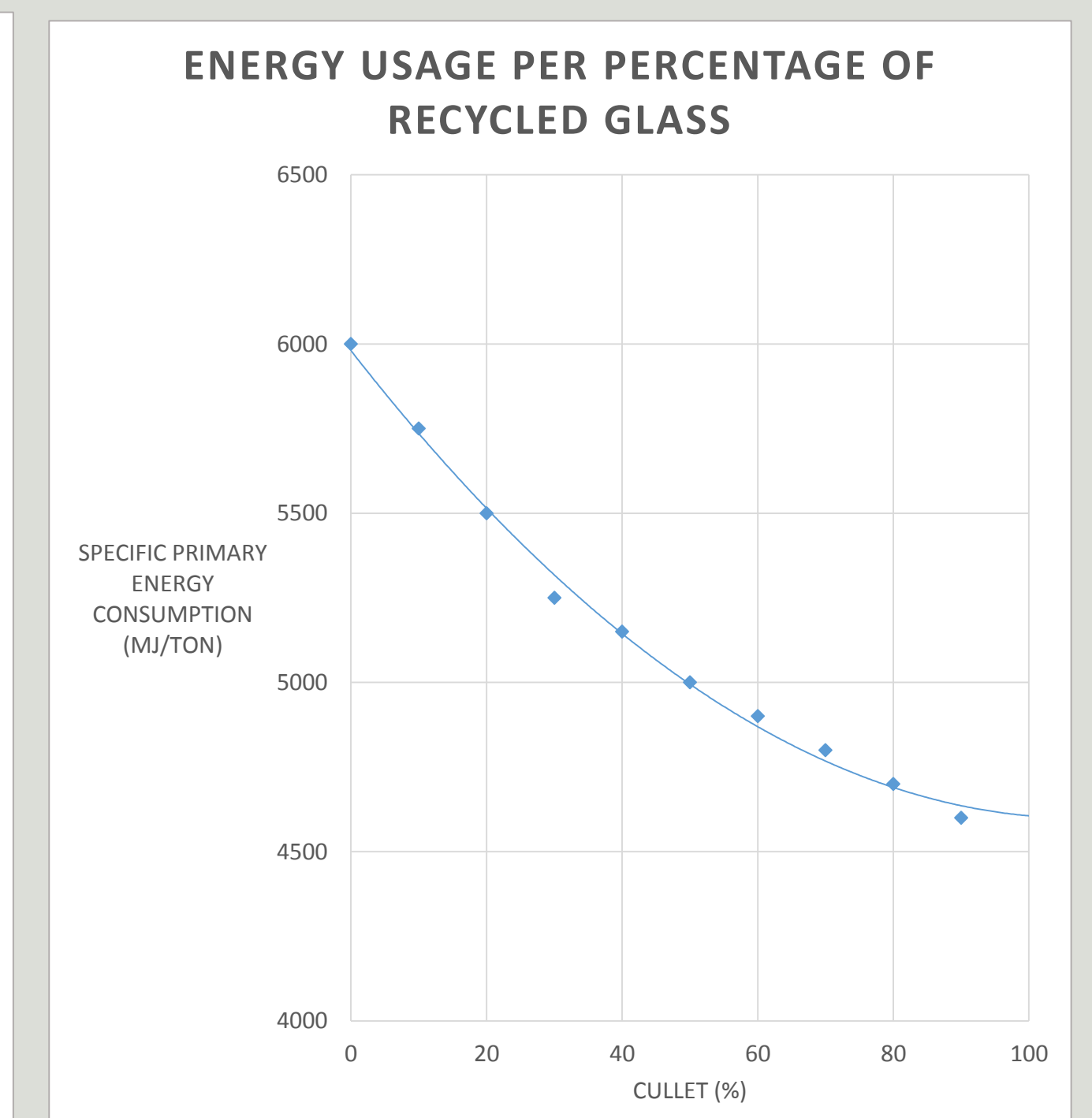
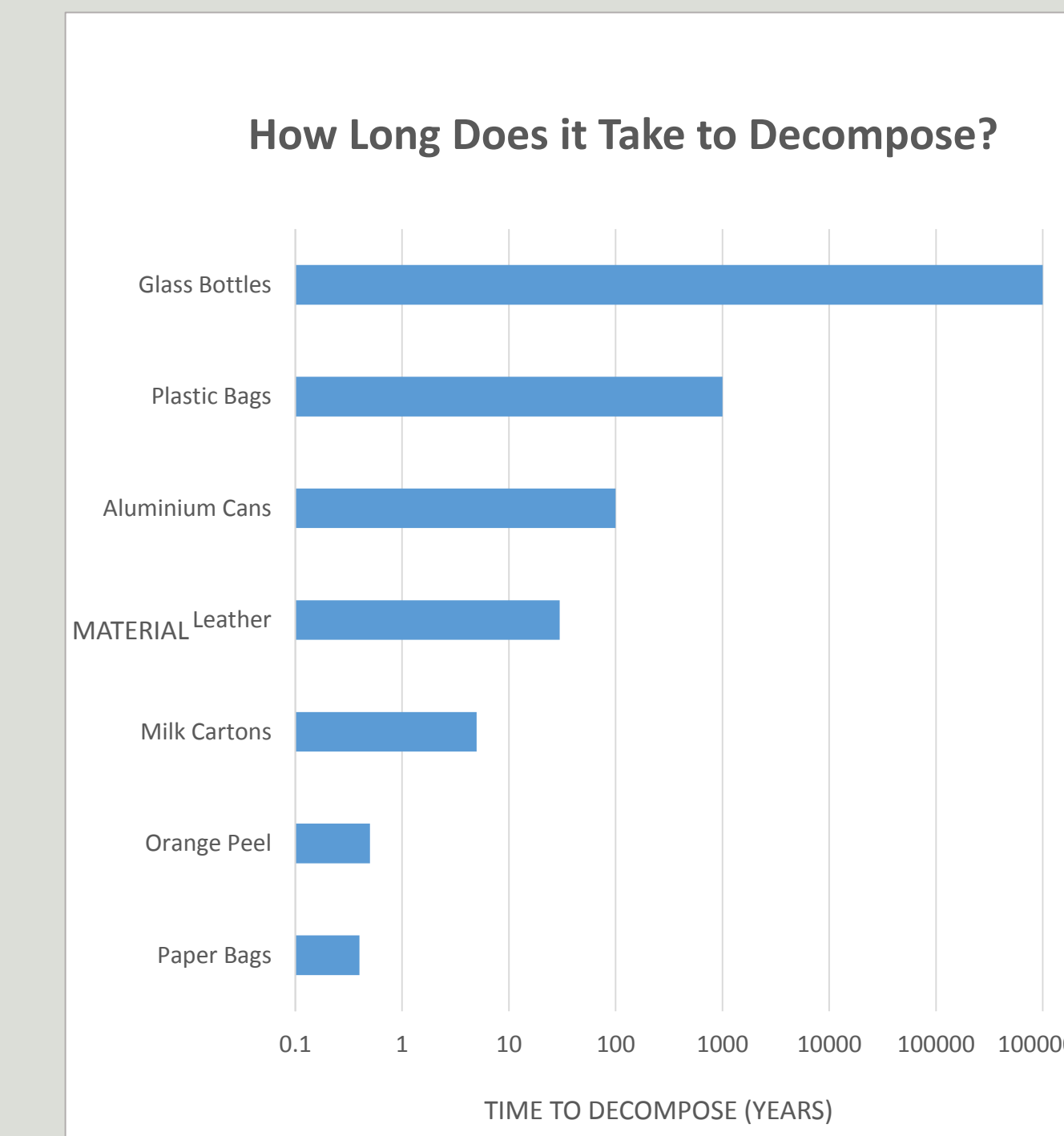
Social Results

- Give waste pickers another source of income, bringing them closer to the poverty line
- Opportunity for collaboration and networking
- Helps develop accountability of often undocumented people and families



Environmental Results

- Decreases glass material going into landfills and increases glass material going out of landfills
- Creates cradle-to-cradle life cycle
- Reduces energy spending for the production of new glass
- Helps encourage recycling culture



Conclusion

These types of living conditions are not at all exclusive to Paraguay. Programs such as this could serve as a model to other developing countries looking to solve their own issues with recycling glass.

Acknowledgements

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