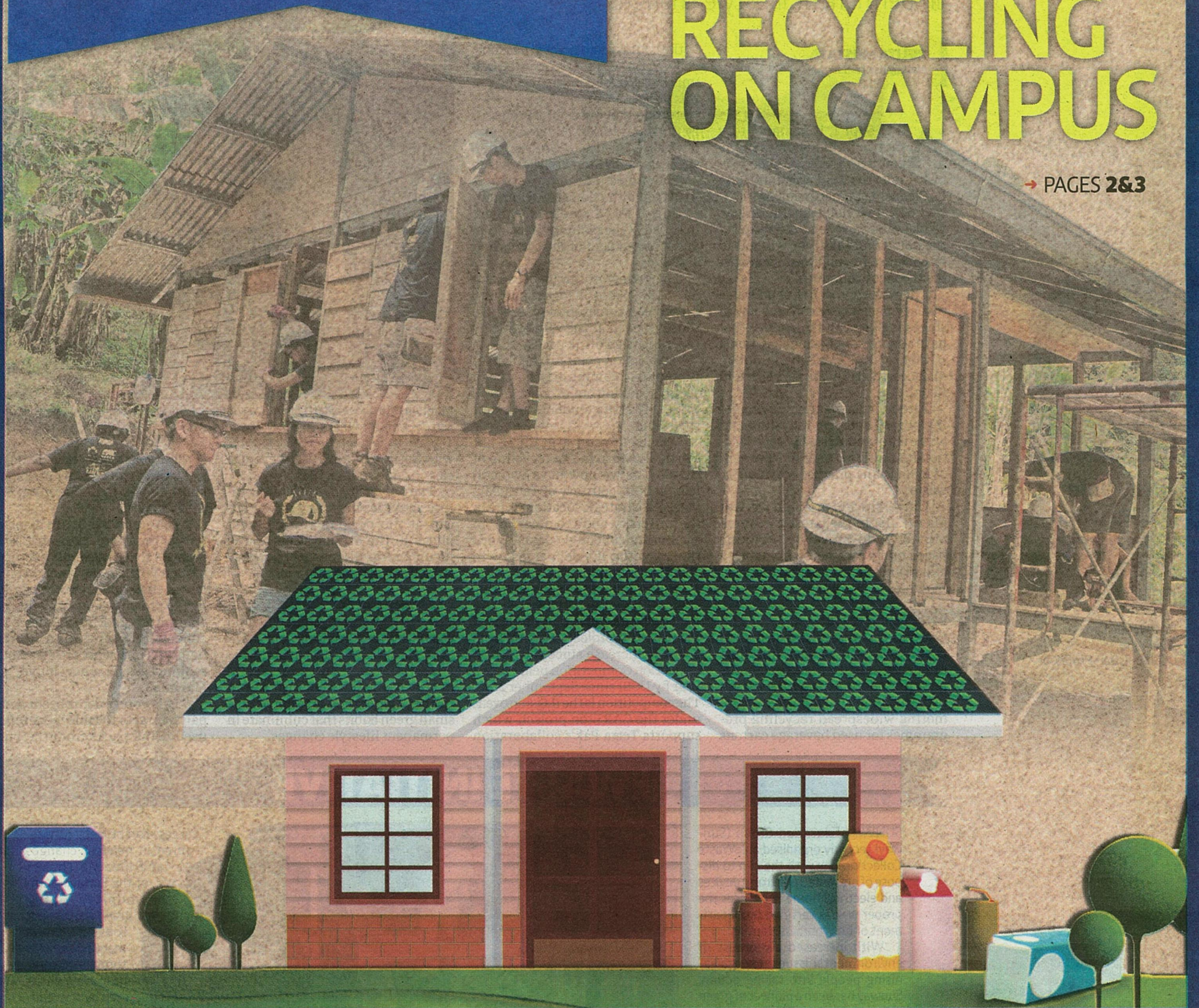


# LEARNING CURVE

## COMMUNAL RECYCLING ON CAMPUS

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# GREEN IS THE FUTURE

**TAKE A STEP:** Small green habits culminate in permanent lifestyle changes

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AS of Sept 1, it is mandatory for two million homes in the country to separate their rubbish. Under the Solid Waste and Public Cleansing Management Act 2007 (Act 672), recyclable and non-recyclable waste have to be separated at the point of origin if the waste is to be collected by solid waste management concessionaires.

The new approach to solid waste management will be implemented in stages in States and territories that have adopted the Act, namely Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, Pahang, Johor, Malacca, Negri Sembilan, Perlis and Kedah.

Although there are many ongoing programmes on recycling and waste management at higher education institutions, only 10.5 per cent of Malaysians practise recycling of waste.

Universiti Putra Malaysia was placed 41st in the latest UI-GreenMetric World University Ranking based on its campus sustainability efforts and environmental management.

## RECYCLING EFFORTS

One successful recycling initiative is the CAREton Project, an effort under Tetra Pak which champions recycling efforts and partners youth in the process. It is committed to promoting widespread recycling programmes for used beverage cartons

in the country and across the globe. UCSI University (UCSI) is the first university in the country involved in this project.

Initiated by Assistant Professor Dr Crystale Lim Siew Ying, a Faculty of Applied Sciences (FOAS) lecturer, she is also CAREton Project adviser.

The project at the university is managed by a dedicated team consisting of FOAS students who are involved in the planning, execution and management of the events and activities.

The project is unique because it provides a platform for the public to preserve the environment and help those in need at the same time by recycling used drink packs.

A collection point for the Taman Connaught community has been set up, reaching out to some 10,000 UCSI University students and staff since 2013.

"We have seen a gradual but steady increase in the recycling of cartons, as we now have two collection bins, courtesy of Tetra Pak, placed at strategic locations within the university, and a commercial bin for storing collected cartons until the collector, iCycle, comes by to collect as required," said Lim.

From January to September this year, 200kg of used beverage and food packages have been collected through the project. This reflects a steady increase since the Carton Collection Competition held twice a year by UCSI since September 2013. The competition is the flagship event under the CAREton project, which supports Tetra Pak's collaboration



Manjula Murugesan (left) holding a sample of the sturdy roof tile made from drink cartons similar to the one held by Crystale Lim.

with Nestle to recycle used beverage cartons into roofing tiles.

The university has several signature activities including fun activities at the periodical awareness booth in the Student Centre and membership drives to encourage student involvement in events.

## CARETON PROJECT

Tetra Pak Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines environment manager Manjula Murugesan said the best way for green campuses to nurture a sustainable mindset in the next generation is to encourage small green habits that culminate in permanent lifestyle changes.

This year's project is dedicated to helping the victims of the east coast floods in cooperation with EPIC Homes.

"The east coast floods displaced tens of thousands of people. While many evacuees have since returned to their villages, they remain homeless as their houses were destroyed by the prolonged flooding. We have committed CAREton Project 2015 collection to rebuilding efforts to help victims who are in need of roofing tiles for a new home," said Manjula.

"This consumer recycling campaign targets to collect 8.5 million used drink packs from the public



"Recycling is easy when it becomes second nature."

Dr Crystale Lim Siew Ying,  
UCSI Assistant Professor



LEARNING CURVE



The CAREton Project 2015

INFOGRAPHIC NST

In 2014, ten of thousands were displaced due to the east coast flood

HOW CAN RECYCLING YOUR USED DRINK PACKS HELP?

Recycle used drink cartons → Target of 8.5 million used drink packs → Recycling facility → 1,150 roofing tiles → 25 homes

WHAT WILL WE DO?

25 homes + THE CARETON PROJECT 25 homes = 50

We will match roofing tiles for additional 25 homes

WHO WILL BUILD THE HOMES?

Our beneficiary, EPIC Homes, will build the homes

WHERE CAN YOU DROP OFF YOUR USED DRINK PACKS?

Over 470 collection points nationwide

Visit: [www.recycle-easy.com.my](http://www.recycle-easy.com.my)

Source: The CAREton project

and recycle them into 1,150 roofing tiles to build 25 homes for the flood victims.

“Tetra Pak, with the support of MILO UHT, will then match the targeted number of roofing tiles raised by the public, thus increasing the number to 50 homes.

“EPIC Homes, the beneficiary of the CAREton Project for the past two years, will build the houses as well as manage the distribution of roofing tiles to other villages in need. The project runs all year long.”

The recycling rate of used beverage cartons in the country is on the rise, with a steady increase from zero per cent in 2005 to 17.9 per cent by end 2013.

“That’s over 350 million recycled Tetra Pak cartons in 2013, amounting to 3,898 tonnes of materials

which were turned into new products.

“Education is key to the increase in recycling rates, which is why we work in partnership with customers, retailers and non-government organisations to run various consumer awareness programmes.”

**CULTIVATING THE GREEN CAMPUS MINDSET**

“We would not have been able to proceed this far without partners such as UCSI. It is really impressive how innovative university partners can get to reach the target,” added Manjula.

“By partnering with green campuses, we can empower students with the opportunity to lead and be involved in the development, management and maintenance of

sustainable projects, with guidance from dedicated university staff. Trust students to find effective ideas to connect with their friends, as peer influence can be very powerful.

“We believe that support from university management will also go a long way in providing the avenues and easily accessible facilities for self-sustaining green initiatives on campus. Green is the future, or else we won’t have a future.”

Manjula added education for sustainability calls for a balanced approach which avoids undue emphasis on changes in individual lifestyles and it has to be recognised that many of the environmental problems are related to one’s way of living, and that solutions are rooted in changes in individual lifestyles.

Lim added: “Recycling is easy when lifestyle changes are made to

inculcate recycling habits, so that it becomes second nature.

“University students will be the next generation of leaders and decision-makers when they join society upon graduation. The young and yet socially influential group can make a positive impact on communal recycling by influencing not only their friends and family but also society at large when they practise their on-campus recycling habits at home and vice versa.” The CAREton Project at UCSI University is now a Student Enrichment Programme (SEP). As a SEP, UCSI University Trust Scholarship students can choose to volunteer for it as part of their community engagement work. This ensures the project has a steady stream of volunteers to ensure its continuity.

For details, visit [www.recycle-easy.com.my](http://www.recycle-easy.com.my)