

UPF International: United Nations International Day of Zero Waste

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As the United Nations marks the International Day of Zero Waste on March 30, this observance closes March, dedicated to partnerships, and opens April as UPF's month of service within its 100 Days of Serving Community campaign from February 20 to June 1, 2026.

The [International Day of Zero Waste](#) is a reminder that waste is not only a technical issue but a human one. In 2026 the day focuses on food waste, placing it squarely within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 12, with reference to targets on municipal waste management and reducing food waste and food loss across supply chains.

According to the [UNEP Food Waste Index Report 2024 Key Messages](#), around 60 percent of food waste comes from households, while food loss and waste account for an estimated 8 to 10 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. UNEP also notes that in 2022, the world wasted an estimated 1.05 billion tons of food, nearly one-fifth of all food available to consumers. The [United Nations Environment Programme](#) and [UN-Habitat](#) jointly facilitate this day, giving it clear international weight.

For UPF, zero waste begins with habits. When food, water, materials, and public spaces are treated carelessly, relationships also suffer. A culture of peace values resources as gifts, rejects waste, and

restores damaged places. Environmental responsibility depends on cooperation, but it is proven in action.

This understanding reflects the vision of Dr. Hak Ja Han and the late Rev. Sun Myung Moon. They taught that peace grows through responsibility, care, and living for the sake of others. The family is the first school of gratitude, moderation, and stewardship. When those habits enter public life, they strengthen communities and help people see the Earth as a shared home. In that sense, care for resources is one practical expression of One Family under God.

UPF chapters have expressed this ethic in clear ways. In Slovakia, UPF-Slovakia used [World Water Day](#) to examine [ocean plastic pollution and microplastics](#), linking local responsibility to global harm. In Kenya, a [Nairobi River cleanup](#) brought together more than 1,000 participants to clear waste, plant trees, and take ongoing responsibility for sections of the river. In Mali, [UPF and youth partners](#) combined canal cleanups with tree planting in Bamako. In Argentina, UPF-Argentina's ["Peace With Creation" meeting](#) connected responsible consumption, waste separation, eco-bricks, and reforestation. In Seychelles, UPF-Seychelles marked [World Cleanup Day](#) through service at a children's home. In Russia, UPF-Russia's [EcoGeneration project](#) in Voronezh taught children and adults how to sort waste and build better daily habits.

These efforts show that environmental care is peacebuilding in action. They also resonate with [UN-Habitat's Waste Wise Cities](#) framework and with [UNEP's work to protect rivers and freshwater systems from pollution](#).

The 2026 focus on food waste is especially timely. It is no longer a marginal issue. It stands at the intersection of climate responsibility, resource stewardship, and social ethics. Food waste grows from excess, neglect, and indifference in homes, schools, restaurants, farms, and public events, yet it can be reduced through ordinary choices.

UPF also recognizes the contribution of organizations working seriously in this field, including the [United Nations Environment Programme](#), [UN-Habitat](#), the [Zero Waste International Alliance](#), [Zero Waste Europe](#), and [WRAP](#). Their standards, research, and practical guidance have helped communities move from awareness to action. As April unfolds within UPF's 2026 [100 Days of Serving Community](#) campaign, zero waste can become not only an environmental goal but also a practical discipline of community service, carrying the spirit of March partnerships into the campaign's month of service.