



One Bag Less! Say No To Plastic Bags -Project

Plastic pollution is a global issue and although in many parts of the world people have developed ways to prevent or to recycle it the fight against it is not over!



In Turkey, people use plastic in all forms everywhere. Shops provide as many plastic bags as consumers want for free. Plastic is used for food packaging, plastic cups, cutlery, straws and most schools and businesses use them. Picnic areas, beaches, forests, and even the road verges are often littered with plastic items.

Major aims:

To raise awareness of the dangers of using plastic in general and particularly using plastic bags, how the irresponsible use of plastic bags given free in shops-affects negatively our environment.

- To influence the behavioural pattern of people in our community against the use of plastic bags.
- To connect, collaborate and gain support from as many groups as possible- in our school (administration, students and parents), other schools, local shops and small businesses, local councilor, regional councilor and the community at large.
- To organize and participate in “cleaning days” in the community-picnic areas, parks, beaches.
- To establish an ongoing programme whereby people are encouraged to use an alternative to plastic.

We have been concentrating on developing solutions based on the involvement of the community by starting a campaign against the use of plastic bags:



We gave informative sessions to our school friends and dramatized the impact of plastic on sea animals.

We had a community walk and handed out information flyers about the dangers of using plastic bags.

We offered reliable solutions and alternatives to people, local shops and local authorities such as biodegradable bags and plastic bags should only be offered with a surcharge. Helped by our 4th and 5th grades friends we made bags using old t-shirts and sold them to raise money to support our campaign costs and to encourage people to use them instead of plastic bags.



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We promoted and developed ways to warn the authorities and consumers about the dangers of plastic by adding messages on plastic bags or plastic packages." For example- on the plastic bags we want to see strong messages like “Plastic Kills Animals”, “Plastic can cause illnesses” in the same way we see them on the cigarette packages. Since there are so many different qualities of plastic we consider that information related to the seriousness of the dangers should be provided to the consumers.

We got approval and support from the local councilor to place posters around the area. As a part of our awareness campaign we took part in a beach clean-up. We collected a lot of plastic items and we collaborated with Şile Women’s Association.

We met Mr. Ali Nihat Gokyigit, the founder of TEMA Organisation (The Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion, for Reforestation) and the protection of Natural Habitats) and planted the seeds for a future collaboration.

In the near future, our programme will continue by involving the Syrian Refugee Community and families from Eastern Turkey living in Istanbul, in making biodegradable bags and sell them-having as goals reducing the use of plastic bags- **Goal12-Responsible Consumption and Production**, helping the Syrian Community to integrate and improve their economic status-**Goal 1-No Poverty**.

Our team: Leontina Arkin- Project Coordinator

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- In our school we gave up using plastic cutlery, cups and bags.
- Raising awareness in our school and in the community helped us build up confidence and develop communication and language skills
- We researched and learned a lot about plastic and its negative effects
- Our passion about nature, perseverance and determination helped us build a strong network that can help us take further steps and it helped us develop strong team work skills. It was well noted while organizing our campaign.
- We have received very positive feedback and we have been supported by our school representatives and friends, community at large and local authorities and via our social media pages

Funds and donations:

We raised awareness of our project at school and raised 400 TL.

Our project was sponsored by our school board and covered all the costs of the trips, t-shirts, flyers and beach clean up.

Our school friends volunteered to help us and joined in our project.

