

Less waste, more environment – banning the plastic bag in Georgia

The Caucasus Green Area Youth project aim was to raise public awareness of the dangers of plastic bag pollution. The end goal was to convince the President of Georgia and relevant governmental authorities to initiate regulations banning the use of thin ‘throw-away’ plastic bags in Georgia.

A group of enthusiastic youngsters have decided to start the journey. Journey started at schools of Black Sea Coastal area - Batumi, Kobuleti, Poti and Ureki and involved further the schoolchildren of the second large city of the country – Kutaisi.



During training sessions, educators discussed about the problem of the solid waste management, waste management at the national and local levels, recounted about good practices of other countries worldwide. Effective communication methods and practices were explained so that pupils improve their communication skills, know how to transfer enthusiasm to the audience they target and achieve greater support in their work. The roles of teachers and of parents are essential for the overall success of the initiative. A group of teachers from the selected schools

were invited to the specialized training, which mainly focused on the awareness rising and information sharing activities.

In order to better attract the like-minded people, young leaders of the project have organized public events – presented idea of the campaign and collected signatures for the appeal on banning the use of 'throw-away' plastic bag in Georgia addressed to the President of the country. Stickers and T-shirts with slogans and logo of the campaign have been distributed among schoolchildren. A video-camera was awarded to the most active school.

The awareness raising component of the project lead by the young activists, envisaged presentation and brainstorming meetings involving governmental institutions, international organizations and the NGO sector.

The project innovation is to create an electronic journal, containing short stories describing the project phases and collection of the visual material. Environmental Journal will start up with the topic on wastes and continue with various environmental themes. A user-friendly and interesting journal, with the visitors' counter, will hopefully gain interest of different age people in Georgia and outside the country and help in better understanding of environmental problems.

Georgian TV channels and other media have been actively involved in conveying information on project related activities, putting on air social events and publishing media advisories released within the project.

Action and enthusiasm of youngsters brought together by the project has been realized in increased attention and support of the society to the problem of waste management in the country, expressed in numerous signatures collected throughout the initiative in support to banning usage of plastic bags. After completion of the project the project team will hand in the appeal to the President of Georgia signed by thousands of children, requesting adoption of regulations banning the use of 'throw-away' plastic bags in Georgia.

This is an example of a good practice in establishing working relationships between the government and the citizens.