



RECYCLING CHAMPIONSHIP IN SHKODRA



**SHKODRA
RICIKLON**
Kush riciklon, vetëm fiton!

Case: Recycling championship in Shkodra

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Shkodra municipality, one of the biggest in Albania, has been supported by dldp in organizing the waste collection system and extending it also in the suburbs of the city. After a long period of **hesitations, financial and administrative burdens**, this year (2014), municipality of Shkodra has started to dispose the waste in the regional landfill of Bushat. Since the beginning, municipality has seen recycling as a way of reducing quantities of waste disposed in the landfill, as well as a profit potential for local people.

Based on the expressed interest of municipal leadership to start promoting recycling and adapting a new system for collecting recyclables waste, we (dldp) proposed to the municipality a simple system without additional cost to the budget of the collection system. dldp proposal was: establishing two collection centres in the city where service provider contracted by municipality would buy recyclable waste from citizens, schools and businesses with a reasonable price, and resell it to the recycling industry. This initiative was based on the assumption that if we can link environmental education and public awareness also with the concept of waste and money, people would be very keen to react and be part of the initiative. We promoted the initiative "Shkodra recycles! - Waste is money, don't through it away!"

Company and municipality agreed and published the prices of recyclable waste. Target groups of this initiative were mainly businesses and schools. Both these groups have proved skills of dissemination in a capillary way the proper messages to the third parties (businesses to their workers and clients, students to the parents, friends and community...).

Waste management and recycling is not a challenge that is unique only to Albania; however, EU countries have been dealing with it for a few decades now. Government of Albania has adopted strategies and laws which aim to approximate national legal framework with EU directives and regulations. Among different objectives is also the recycling of 25% of quantities of waste generated within 2017. As these objectives are considered highly ambitious and almost unreachable in the given period of time, through these small initiatives dldp aim to continue supporting further increases in the rates of recycling, recognizing the value of GoA targets in promoting improved recycling rates and the importance of renewing the ambition of these targets into the longer term.

Through this support the project is creating the right conditions that the municipality and citizens realize that less waste in the landfill means reduced costs for the city, additional money for marginalized groups dealing with recycling industry, improve the quality of the recyclables supply chain and at the same time increase confidence in the market for recycled goods. The project established the connections between citizens, private sector and recycling industry, empowered municipality with additional knowledge on the topic and political leadership with new options for improving public services in the city on one hand, and on the other meeting objectives set by national strategy on waste.

In order to create a sustainable scheme and the right motivating tools, a monetary value was attached to the recycled waste since it is a commodity. And, of the main activities that we developed to achieve our goals, was the Recycling Championship organized between the schools within the Shkodra Municipality. The base of such championship was not only sport in itself, but also the collection of a quantity (quota) as bases for participation in such championship.

This activity was planned as a chain reaction: championship among classes within school, then the best team of the school will represent it in the championship among schools of the city. Leading all this process was municipality with Directorate of Education. With dldp support a MoU was signed among parties defining roles and responsibilities (municipality provided infrastructure (bins) and media coverage and promotion, schools collected the recyclable waste (paper, plastic and aluminium cans); private company withdrew amounts of accumulated waste and paid back the value of recyclable waste collected). One of biggest challenge in this initiative was to convince the private company that this initiative is feasible. The project provided a business plan where were analyzed the waste generation, potentials of local markets and incomes generated by processing the quantities of waste collected by schools, businesses and citizens. We tried to extend this scheme also in the public institutions and small businesses, but due to the low quantities of recyclable waste (paper) produced their interest and company's interests were not there.

While some fears were evident before the organizing started, schools achieved all the minimum levels of participation in championship with recyclable materials, students organized to collect paper especially from local businesses to drive the volumes up, as well as bring plastic materials from home to schools. The results were pleasing and produced unexpected outcome. In this initiative were engaged 33 schools of the city (22 public and 11 private schools) with almost 9000 pupils and students. Recycling championship was organized during the period May-June 2014, collecting 6062 kg of recyclable waste. Response from the citizens and big businesses was also positive, collecting during this period in total a quantity of 74895 kg of waste with an amount of money paid back to the citizens and schools of 6700 Euro and net profit for the company of 3000 euro. Municipality saved from the transport and disposal fee in the landfill, meanwhile recycling industry recuperated a quantity of almost 80 ton. What is more important, after the reopening of the schools after

summer holidays, all the net with schools and private company, was revitalized and fully operational collecting for the period mid September – mid October, a quantity of 2069 kg. Schools now in the absence of a championship are collecting by themselves the recyclable waste, calling the company and handing over the waste. Municipality is monitoring the process and drawing lessons for the next campaign.

Objective of this support during 2015 is to further improve and consolidate the collection scheme of recyclable waste in the city of Shkodra, highlighting the feasibility of continuing the Recycling Championship in Shkodra Municipality. We are assessing the feasibility of extending it in regional level through developing this scheme in a wider covered territory, expanding the impact, involving the schools in the almost 12 municipalities of 5 Qarks where dldp is acting. Ministry of Environment fully supported this idea and is lobbying to extend it also in a kind of National Recycling League involving the main municipalities throughout the country.

This practice was visually also presented (capitalized) in:

<http://www.facebook.com/l.php?u=http%3A%2F%2Fyoutu.be%2FBITG48taYp4&h=xAQF3xCx8>

or presented in a spot during awareness campaign “Shkodra Recycles!”:

<https://www.facebook.com/video.php?v=249257705271704&set=vb.207427362788072&type=2&theater>