

Criterion A - Inquiring and Analyzing

A1 - Need for a solution

Exploration of opportunities

While exploring what the purpose of my social enterprise might be, I considered problems and solutions related to the following SDGs:

	<i>Specific problems</i>	Production, use and discarding of plastic causes land and ocean pollution.	<i>Affected local communities</i>	Plastic pollution especially affects people who rely on fisheries to make a living, as plastic kills fish and marine animals, there will be fewer fish to catch and sell to make a living. Plastic pollution in urban areas is also a major concern when people buy and use single-used plastic objects like cups, straws, lids, spoons, etc. and throw them out on the streets, thus polluting the area with trash.	<i>Possible actions</i>	Recycling is an encouraged action to battle against plastic, but prevention is better than cure, so not using plastic objects such as straws, cups, lids, etc. could help prevent them from going out into the environment. Also, it is important to clean plastic from areas such as coastal lines, rivers and urban areas as those areas contain the densest concentrations of plastic waste.
	<i>Specific problems</i>	Plastic pollution majorly affects the ocean, since people throw rubbish either into the sea, or people dump garbage into the river, taking them into the sea.	<i>Affected local communities</i>	As mentioned above, plastic pollution in the waters could pose a huge threat to endangered marine creatures, such as sea turtles, whales, etc. For example, a turtle will misunderstand plastic bags as tasty jellyfish and eat the plastic bags, killing it from the inside.	<i>Possible actions</i>	Nowadays, people across the globe are trying to tackle plastic pollution in the oceans by organising plastic cleaning campaigns, and the results always come out positive.
	<i>Specific problems</i>	Land pollution is caused by tiny bits of plastics that we call "microplastics". Microplastic comes from partially broken down plastic items such as bottles, and the wind brings them to the sea, causing air and water pollution.	<i>Affected local communities</i>	Land pollution caused by microplastic and other waste is one of the major concerns of pollution besides air and water pollution, as polluted land cannot be cultivated or inhabited, rendering it useless.	<i>Possible actions</i>	Some actions people have taken recently to tackle land pollution are to reduce and remove completely the use of pesticides, prevent littering on the land and encourage the use of organic composts such as manure.

My focus

The initial focus of my project is explained and justified below. Further research is needed and might change my direction.

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION TARGET 12-5 SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE WASTE GENERATION	<i>Specific problem</i>	Production of single-use plastic articles causing pollution to air, water and land	
	<i>Affected local community</i>	People who rely on fisheries as the main source of living and people who rely on agriculture to make a living	
	<i>The problem with numbers</i>	• Total amount of plastic produced from the 1950s worldwide: ~390 million tonnes • Amount of plastic bottles purchased every minute worldwide: About 1 million • Amount of plastic bags used yearly worldwide: 5 trillion (crazy eh?) • Amount of plastic entering the oceans yearly: ~ 1-2 million tonnes • Amount of plastic entering soil yearly: About 1/3 of the total amount of plastic produced worldwide	
	<i>"It is the worst of times but it's the best of times because we still have a chance." - Sylvia Earle (marine biologist)</i>		
	<i>Related news article(s)</i>	• Visual Feature Beat Plastic Pollution • Vietnam's plastic waste problem has gone from bad to worse	
	<i>Proposed action</i>	Creating reusable shopping bags out of recycled plastic bags and selling them near populated areas such as	

		markets to spread awareness so that more people can join the fight against plastic waste.	
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A2 - Research Plan

Research prioritization key: ★ = Source might be useful ★★ = Likely to be useful ★★★ = Probably directly practical use ★★★★★ = Vital research

Initial idea	My basic initial plan at the moment is to ...	
A source that could help	Initial questions this source might help us with	Priority
Basic information	- How to make it? (Knitting or crochet) - Different types? (Tote bag) - What kind of plastic(s)? (HPDE, LDPE, LLDPE)	★★★★☆
Target of business	- Who am I going to sell for? (Initially students, then to parents) - For how much? (100.000 VND) - What size? (35 x 42 x 8cm) - When and where will I sell? ([NAME REDACTED])	★★★★☆
Source of obtainment	- At home - Via donations from households that have lots of plastic bags - Via collection of used plastic bags	★★★★★

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A3 - Existing solutions

PLASTICPeople		
Website	https://weareplasticpeople.com/en/#1_Home	
Benefactors	Pizza 4P's Phnom Penh (Cambodia), Marou (Vietnamese chocolate manufacturer)	
Beneficiaries	Sea creatures, animals, people who do fisheries and agriculture to make a living, and all humans in this big, wide world are being affected by plastic waste.	
	Technical analysis	PLASTICPeople recycle plastic products by melting them into blocks of safe and durable material that could be used to make furniture and flooring.
	Marketing analysis	PLASTICPeople connects with their stakeholders and the outside world via advertising their products and drawing attention to them, thus gaining interest in investment and expanding the company size even more.
	Strategical analysis	By collaborating with various celebrities in the battle against plastic waste, PLASTICPeople greatly influences the recycling and upcycling industry.
	Innovation analysis	Since PLASTICPeople uniquely recycles their plastic products, their products are new and therefore unique to their brand (as there are almost no other companies that have the machinery to do that), therefore I think this could be an effective unique selling proposition.

Trashy Bags Africa		
Website	https://www.trashybagsafrica.com/	
Benefactors	Local turtle sanctuaries in Ghana and West Africa	
Beneficiaries	School In A Bag (UK-based charity organisation)	
	Technical analysis	Trashy Bags Africa upcycles their plastic sachets found locally in Ghana and West African countries by simply sewing them together into backpacks, shopping bags and more.
	Marketing analysis	Trashy Bags Africa connects with local turtle sanctuaries in Ghana and West Africa to increase the turtle population and to further remove trash from the coasts of West Africa.
	Strategical analysis	By recognising the potential risks of plastic waste in Africa, Trashy Bags was founded locally by African people to tackle the problem and improve their environment.
	Innovation analysis	The organisation was created to tackle the plastic problem in Ghana because that time in Ghana there were no recycling facilities or effective waste management policies, so I could say Trashy Bags was the first-ever recycling facility in Ghana.

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A4 - Design Brief

Executive Summary

<i>Project Working Title</i>	Upcycled shopping bags
<i>Mission Statement</i>	It is the worst of times but it's the best of times because we still have a chance.
<i>Key Activities</i>	To produce shopping bags by upcycling plastic bags
<i>Project Beneficiaries</i>	School, local markets, etc
<i>We need</i>	Single-use plastic bags of any kind, sewing machines and PEOPLE!!!!!! (Yes, I need people to help me in the production process.)
<i>Marketing</i>	Advertise, of course. But not fancy posters, instead I will have someone try out the product, have them introduce the product to their friends, and more customers will come and buy my product. If they don't work, then I could advertise my product on the school's Instagram.
<i>Revenue Model</i>	I would use two revenue models. One, I will give away my product(s) to a customer (it's like free tasting of a food product in the store) and see if they're satisfied. If they're satisfied, I could sell them my products for money. Two, I would sell my bags to make more bags, similar to an infinite loop of sale and produce.
<i>Unique Selling Proposition</i>	Since my idea is inspired by Trashy Bags (which was founded 15 years older than mine), my products may not get as much fame as Trashy Bags do, but since the product is locally produced by local materials, the need to import materials is significantly reduced, thus reducing the amount of greenhouse gas emitted.

Research Summary

<i>Source consulted</i>	<i>Takeaways / Outcomes</i>
<i>Interview with experts about plastic recycling</i>	• I will interview my coach (Mr Taggart), Ms Dore or Mr Bien Thuy about plastic recycling and the process and difficulties of recycling and to distinguish recycling and upcycling. • However, there will be some difficulties in this project. An example could be the durability of the product and its quality in general. • Catastrophic failures could also happen, for example, the failure of the sewing machine(s) to properly function. Therefore, a plan B is highly recommended. What is my plan B? So, in case the sewing machine(s) malfunctions, hand-sewing the bags could be another choice.
<i>Survey on grade 8 students about their use of tote bags</i>	• The process is simple. I just need a Google Form about the use of tote bags to be sent to the entire grade 8. Easy! • The true reason why I surveyed the entire grade 8 is to see how frequently they use tote bags (you don't want to sell your bags to the people who don't need them, do you?) so that I could know who to sell my products to.
<i>Website of Trashy Bags Africa</i>	• I extracted some highly useful pieces of information from this website, ranging from how to upcycle the product, to how to get the resources and tools needed to produce them.
<i>Ask family members how much they use plastic bags (This includes my own family and my neighbourhood.)</i>	• Well, I will ask my mother how frequently she uses plastic bags, then to my neighbours, then to my coach's house (he lives near my house). • Then, I will gather plastic bags from them to start production. • After completing the production run, I will start selling the first batch to evaluate the sale rate and eventually the customers' satisfaction.

Sources

1. <https://www.trashybagsafrica.com/>
2. https://www.plasticpeople.vn/#1_Home