

# HAND IN HAND (TURKEY)- WRITTEN REPORT

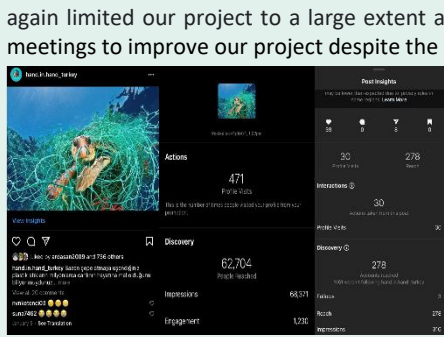
For a better world, hand in hand!



Our team's main objectives are to raise awareness on the climate crisis the world has been facing and to develop projects to provide educational support to the socio-economically disadvantaged students, whose education has been severely disrupted due to the pandemic. Our original aim was to address environmental issues and problems only however due to the worsening of Covid-19 pandemic conditions, we felt that our actions would be limited and we revised our project and worked together to address unequal education opportunities in our country. We believe these two global issues are the world's biggest and critical problems, that's why we chose to address Climate Action and Education Quality along with the 4 related SDGs.

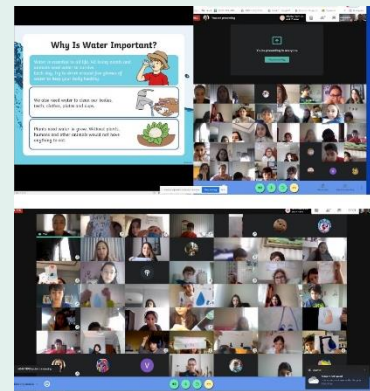
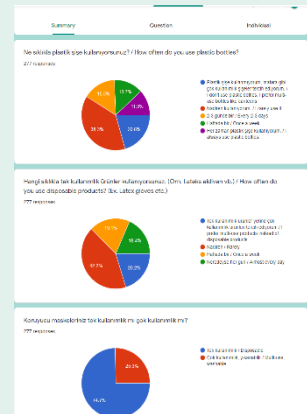


Before we go into the details of our project, we want to highlight the situations that affected the course of our actions and plans. There have been many restrictions and lockdowns preventing us from putting our plans into action. We have never been to school physically, we have never had a chance to meet face to face and go out to work with/for other people. We had our school lessons between 8 am to 3.30, so we had to plan everything according to that which again limited our project to a large extent as we also have other responsibilities regarding our academic studies. However, we never gave up and had regular meetings to improve our project despite the difficulties of the global pandemic.

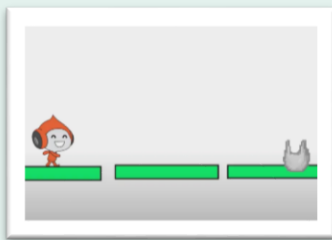


- ❖ We spent at least 1 hour every week discussing our next steps while spending more on the planning process and actions we have taken. We set up a website and social media account for which we had to work actively to create posts and content. Although social media is powerful, we realized that entertainment contents, influencer trends etc. are more popular and it was very difficult to draw people's attention to real life problems such as climate issues. However, our posts got a reasonable amount of people's attention, especially one of them reached more than 60,000 people.
- ❖ We used our social media account actively, created posters, contents and designs to raise awareness on different issues related to the Global Goals we have been working on. We started Recycling Challenge and shared some of the posts we received on our account, we created quiz questions to test people's knowledge and to motivate them to learn more.

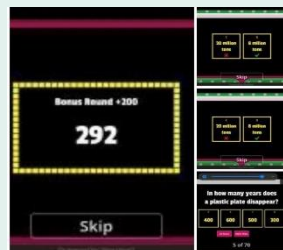
- ❖ We conducted surveys in the first phase of our project to gather reliable data so that we can shape our next steps effectively. This survey aimed to have a general idea of the plastic waste that a person produces in a single day. 277 students completed it.
- ❖ We designed the «Plastic Collector» game on Scratch to raise awareness on pollution. It was pretty challenging to create this game as we had to learn and improve our coding skills. We spent a lot of hours but we managed to finish the game as we supported each other as a team and even put different levels in it. We finished the simple version but we are planning to improve it by adding multiple characters and scenes.
- ❖ We also created an Android app called «Who Wants to Be an Earth Saver?» which can be downloaded to any Android device. Our goal was to test people's knowledge on climate issues including global warming and pollution and make learning more fun and competitive.
- ❖ We organized a sustainability workshop for the primary students to raise awareness about the importance of water on March 22, World Water Day. The workshop aimed to help students understand what water means to them, its true value, and how we can protect this virtual resource. Students created their posters and bookmarks and enjoyed sharing them with their friends. 80 students attended.



Water Day Workshop



Plastic Collector

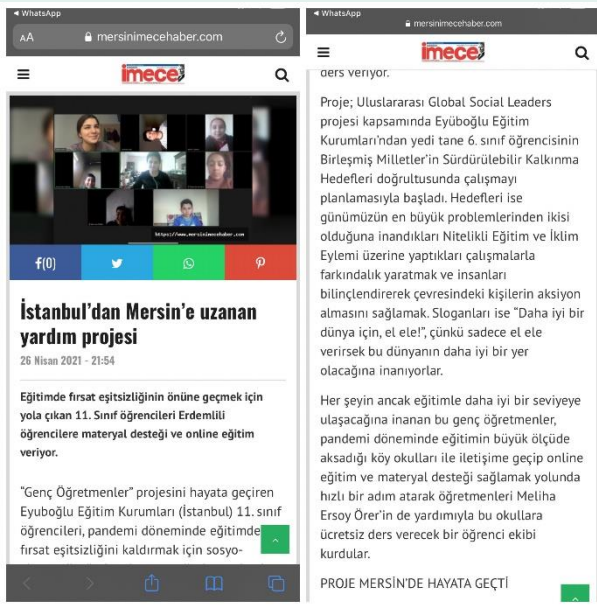


Who Wants to Be an Earth Saver?



Climate Magazine

- ❖ We started to work on Climate Action Guide magazine, however we haven't been able to finish it yet. We are planning to finalise it until June.
- ❖ We also wanted to draw attention to the education inequality our country has faced especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. We found a school with 200 students in a village in the southern part of Turkey and started to help students in this rural school who are unable to receive quality education because of the disadvantages they have gone through during the pandemic. When the pandemic started in 2019, they didn't have any lessons because they had neither the internet connection nor the computer/tablet to join online lessons. The situation didn't get better when the new academic year started, but with the help of local people, the village managed to have internet connection. These students' education was severely disrupted. Our team collaborated with the IB students studying at our school to form a team of teachers to give free online lessons to them. With the help of our advisor teacher, we contacted the school in Mersin and had meetings with the management, students, teachers and parents. We established an education programme to take action quickly. We started with grade 7 and 8 students, but more students volunteered to teach so we involved grade 6 students as well. Our team has been teaching Mathematics and English to prepare these students for the central examinations and to catch up with the curriculum. The education programme will end in June, we are hoping to have a big impact on these students and parent's lives. Because for some of them, the only way to continue their education is to get into a good school, otherwise they have to continue to live in the rural area to help their parents, usually for farming or raising cattle. We spent many hours to get this project



going. We had meetings with the teaching team so that we could organize a weekly schedule, also we had meetings with the school to fit our schedule into their timetable and learn the students' needs. Our team prepared materials and a solid plan and we managed to start in December. This project has been a huge success, we are so proud of ourselves and our teaching team who are also students. We gave 16 hours of Maths and English lessons to these students each week, which means we have given 368 hours of free lessons so far and we are going to give 128 hours more until June. Our project has been published in local newspaper and the newspaper news has also been shared with the whole school community which is more 1000 people.



**Skills/Learning:** While trying to educate people around us, we also learned a lot of new things ourselves. We shared our experiences in our class and asked their suggestions on our activities to improve the impact of the project. It has been a challenging period for us as we had to work online all the time. But we learned how to plan, take action and work effectively as a team. We improved our communication, time management and research skills throughout the project as we had to use these skills constantly. We learned a lot of new things on environmental issues and started the change with ourselves before we inspire others. The more we research, the more we realized that there are many problems that human beings need to address and take action immediately, that also led us to understand the importance of every one of SDGs. Throughout this project, we also gained a lot of digital skills as we had to design posters/video content/website, we learned coding skills, presentation skills and many more such as leadership, cooperation and self-confidence.

**Funding:** As we learnt that we had to manage everything online, we haven't based our project on any funding, however we were hoping to find at least some sponsors to support our education project, but we couldn't get any response. Our aim was to provide tablets as bonus but it didn't work out well for us. We also couldn't raise any money out of bake sales, because we could never go to school physically. That was actually pretty upsetting, but we still believe we did a great job without any funding. Our teacher helped us find a tablet which needs to be fixed, we are planning to get it fixed and give as a present to one student studying at Karayakup Middle School to reward academic success and participation.

#### Involvement and Impact:

- Education Project: 10 teachers+approximately 200 students and parents impacted directly (Karayakup Middle School).
- Together with the planning,implementation and teaching, we spent more than 400 hrs to run our education project and around 350 hours for the environmental issues, games, designs etc.
- The newspaper article that mentioned our education project reached around 1600 people. (<https://www.mersinimecehaber.com/mersin/istanbuldan-mersine-uzanan-yardim-projesi-h38266.html>) We also sent newspaper content to national newspapers, we hope to have more in near future.
- We gave a training session to primary students on World Water Day- 10 teachers + 80 students impacted directly. The article on this event was shared with all the teachers and students in our school- more than 1000 people.
- We have an Instagram account with 190 active followers, each of our posts reach approximately 250 people, one of them got 750 likes and reached aroundf 60.000 people.
- Our project was presented to all the teachers and middle school students in our campus- around 150 in total.
- Our teacher attended a 13 weeks seminar about Climate Change to be able to help and guide us better.
- We had meetings with YGA Academy to learn more about the operation of community projects in Turkey.
- We also worked with other GSL teams to support our projects on social media.
- We involved some parents to contribute to the course of our project.
- We involved students, friends and relatives to join our Recycling Challenge.
- The more people download and play our games, the more impact we believe to have. These games will be part of our curriculum at school.

This journey has taught us a lot. We started to learn how to have a sustainable life. We started to realize the importance of the small actions that we used to ignore. We learned that first we need to change ourselves to change others and we constantly worked for it as a team. We also learned that these problems are very big, sometimes bigger than our capacity and power, but we are all in this all together, this is our future and we shouldn't wait for others to step up for us. We need to work hand in hand to create a better future for everyone. Keeping this in mind, we have decided to work towards these goals all the time not just for a project. We want to continue working on this project to finish our Climate Magazine and improve our games and website.

Email: hand.in.hand.tr@gmail.com

Instagram: hand.in.hand\_turkey

