

Zero Waste Campaign

by sustainovators

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Activity

I carried two waste bags with me the whole day to keep track of my daily waste.

One bag was for plastic waste and the other bag was for paper waste.

Here are pictures of the two bags.



Journal:

Today was unlike any other day I have had this year. I can't say the same for last year though because I did this same activity during the 2024 PGC. After breakfast when I picked up our bottles and tissues into my bags, my parents were like "Oh so you are back at it again". I smiled and told them that "Yes, It's not like the environment is getting any better so yeahh I am back at it again"

In Ghana, it is common for people to dispose off waste wherever they want, be it in the streets or even in the gutters. I knew that yet again this challenge was not going to be easy, since most Ghanaians have grown indifferent to the waste in our community.

After breakfast, I had to get a new toothpaste and brush so I have the toothpaste wrapper in my paper waste bag and the toothbrush wrap in my plastic waste bag. By lunch I had not made much rubbish since my parents and siblings had left for work and I was the only one at home. I ate lunch in my own bowl so there was no food packing rubbish, however I added one more bottle of water to my plastic waste bag.

After eating I decided to clean my bedroom. I found two paper wastes, excess cardboard from a project I did some weeks ago and a purchase receipt. I placed these in my paper waste bag and moved on.

I was asked by my dad to buy a power supply unit before he left so I went out to get it after cleaning my room. Walking outside holding two waste bags drew a lot of attention to me, most of them very judgmental looks.

On my way to make the purchase, I met three of my friends and they funnily asked me if everything was okay with me and why I was walking around holding two bags of waste. I explained to them that I was challenging myself to take a conscious look at my daily waste and my environmental impact.

I, in turn, asked them some questions myself. I asked them **what they had been doing since morning**. They told me that after their respective breakfast, they had met to go and play a football game and they were in fact just returning from their game. I asked them **if they had made any waste the whole day** and they gave me

a sarcastic “yeah, duhh!” look. I then asked **whatever happened to their waste.** They all explained that after breakfast they kept their waste in a dustbin at home. I asked what about the football match. **“You must have drank water, a drink and even a gum, whatever happened to the waste from there?”** This was the point they looked at each other with conviction. I knew what had happened. They had just dumped it on the grass beside the pitch. This was all too common among the young boys in my community and the grass beside the community football park was slowly growing to become a waste site.

I, however, explained to them that this wasn’t the end and they could still make a change if they genuinely want to. They assured me that they would do their best to make conscious changes to their waste disposal methods. I then went on my way to make the purchase. At the shop, the sellers also looked at me quizzically.

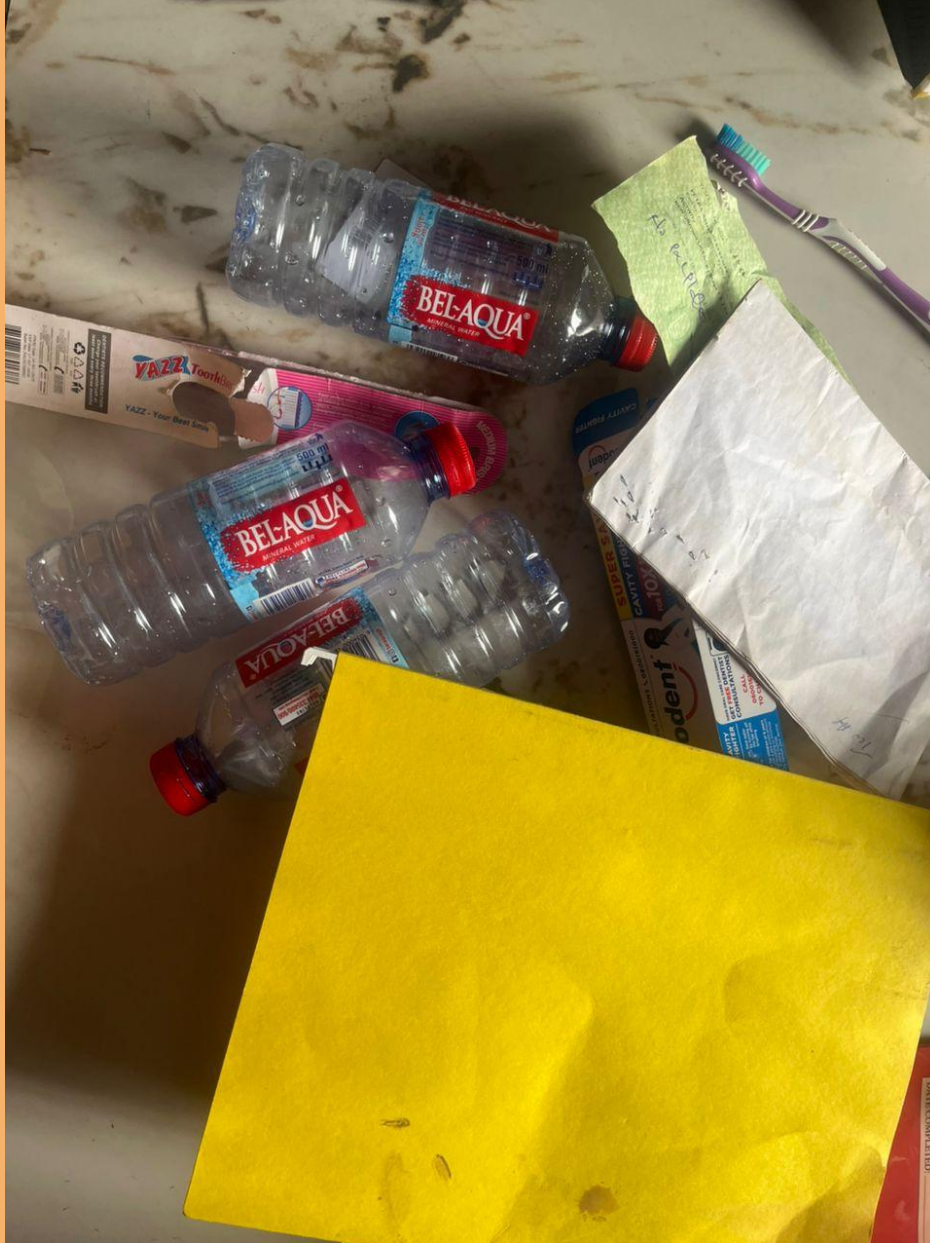
I had a similar conversation with them but since they are an actual company, they have a proper waste bin for their disposal so there was no indiscriminate disposal. I then asked **“What happens when the waste collectors come for it?”** They honestly did not have an answer for me and it looked like they didn’t really care because to them, they had done their part by not littering the environment.

However, I had done research earlier and found out that most of the waste collectors in the community take the waste to a landfill site. I explained to them that this was very detrimental to our environment and politely asked if they could make changes and have ZoomLion Ghana rather collect their waste. ZoomLion is the official waste collection and recycling agency in the country, and while their services were costier than the local waste collectors, their methods are environmentally friendly. They assured me that they would have a chat with their boss so I made my purchase and went on my way.

By evening, my parents and siblings came and to my surprise, they all had their own waste bags for the day. I was very excited to see that at least I was making noticeable change to the lifestyle of my family.

Sorting My Waste:

Here is an image of my sorted waste. The good news is that **THEY ARE ALL RECYCLABLE!!!**



Reusable Alternatives For:

Bottled Water: I have decided to purchase a reusable water bottle so as to reduce the plastic waste from all these bottles.

Tissue Paper: I have told my parents to buy more reusable handkerchiefs and napkins so that we will reduce the amount of tissues we use when dining.

Reflection:

Today's activity was a real reminder of how much waste we produce without even noticing. Carrying my two waste bags around drew a lot of attention, but it opened meaningful conversations about how careless disposal has become so normal in my community. Talking to my friends and the shop workers made me realize that awareness is the first step toward change — many people simply don't think about where their waste ends up. Seeing my family join me by sorting their own waste at the end of the day was the highlight; it showed that small actions can truly inspire others. This experience has strengthened my commitment to live more consciously and promote sustainable habits wherever I can.

Instagram Post:

