

KAY BLADA RECYCLING
Progress Report: Work Trip to Haiti
December 2018

Dear Kay Blada Supporters,

As you know, Kay Blada Recycling is now 3 years old. With help from our generous donors and our very courageous street plastic collectors, we have accomplished many major things in three years!

The Hinche Marathon

The first event of my trip was a marathon hosted by Kay Blada and Hinche Marathon Organisation (HMO), to raise awareness about the issues the community of Center Plateau is confronting. I spent the first 4 days of my 18 day trip working with the HMO team, and the event was a true success.

There were about 150 runners, from 15 different local schools. The first 3 girls and boys to cross the finish line win. Each one of the 6 winners gets a laptop. We had a big crowd of people witnessing the event. We danced, clapped, laughed, and cheered the winners. **There will be another marathon next year, and we hope to continue doing this event every year.**

Meeting with the Hospital Leaders

This meeting went very well. Everyone agreed that this project is for the benefit of the whole community and we need to put our efforts together to make it work. At the same time, the hospital needs to be responsible for making sure the waste is separated, keeping the medical waste apart from the plastic waste. That will reduce the risk of our workers getting infected from the medical waste, and will also make recycling easier. This agreement will help the hospital reduce the cost of managing their waste.

A few days after the meeting, we started to see a difference in both quality and quantity of the material coming from those institutions. We are all realising that this will take a lot of time, and constant motivation and training to have a well structured process that is convenient for both Kay Blada and the medical institutions.

Some of the hospital leaders expressed that they have a shortage of staff, and asked Kay Blada to consider paying/employing the person that is responsible for collecting the recycling in the hospitals. Although Kay Blada Recycling is not capable of paying a government employee to take care of their own waste, we will be designing laminated signs to put next to the bins explaining what is recyclable and what is not. Hopefully, that will help keeping the recycling clean.

Kay Blada School Teacher Meeting

As the teachers educate school children on how to protect the environment and recycle, they are also helping Kay Blada to improve the teaching material. The board of directors has been working on new ideas to implement more hands on activities. As of now, we are developing a new education plan for the upcoming 5 years.

At the teachers' meeting, I presented the drafts of the new ideas, and we talked about the benefits. We also gathered suggestions on how we are going to combine these new activities with what we are already doing. **The school teachers are very motivated. They want to see this social change we are bringing in the communities and they express their strong interest in helping to make this mission successful!** The program officially has 25 teachers. About 40 teachers from many different schools in the area attended our meeting.

Meeting with the Recycling Center Staff

Two days before I went to Haiti, an accident happened at the recycling center. Our recycling center had caught on fire. The fire started late in the evening, in the absence of the workers. Before the fire was able to spread, the neighbors intervened and put the fire out for us. We did not lose much, and most importantly no one was hurt.

In addition to talking about the problems that they are facing with the current location and with the difficult landlord, the workers explained that it is difficult to motivate the street plastic collectors. The collectors are feeling discouraged because the price of plastic is too low. The recycling center staff are concerned that some of our collectors will stop collecting if they can't make enough money selling the plastic they put so much work into collecting. Kay Blada Recycling is always working to find the company that offers the best price for our plastic, to be able to pay our street collectors more.

There are two main reasons that we do not always get good prices. To get the best price for our plastics, we need to have our own vehicle. **Right now, Kay Blada Recycling is limited in who we can sell to, due to the fact that we do not have our own truck.** The companies Kay Blada sells to must come pick up our merchandise. Therefore, we must sell to whomever can come, at whatever price.

The other solution is having a space that's big enough to store the plastic until we find the right buyer who can purchase our material at the best price.

The two events (collectors complaints and the fire) signaled us to put greater effort into finding a new space, which we did. **With a team effort, we have found a place that we love.** [Click here to see the land](#). The location is great, the space is big, and it came at a great price.

For only \$20,000, we will buy this half-acre of land, enable Kay Blada Recycling to have a permanent location, and most importantly have a large space for its operations.

Meeting with GIZ Haiti and Hinche's Local Government

While in Haiti, I also met with GIZ Haiti (a German development organization) to talk about possible ways to implement recycling and a new waste management system in Hinche. The plan is, the residents will pay a certain amount of money for their trash to be collected by the city waste management. Then they will sell the recyclable materials to Kay Blada Recycling. The start date is not set yet, but the planning process is ongoing and it seems GIZ is very serious about the project.

When Kay Blada begins to handle this plastic, we will need to be capable of handling large amount of material. We will need to increase our staff, processing equipment and tools, and vehicles to collect the material. We will also need a truck to transport our material to purchasing companies in Port-au-Prince.

Please get involved and engage in [this win-win mission](#). We're looking for support in any way you can. [Please donate to our cause](#), [consider volunteering with us](#), and help us spread the word about our work in Haiti.

Thank you so much for your continuous support, and happy new year!

Blada

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