



TRASHY BAGS AFRICA

Trashy Bags Africa is a UK-led social enterprise company that converts plastic waste into saleable, eco-friendly useable items and in so doing creates local enterprise, employment and empowerment. In Ghana, the ubiquitous discarded drinking water sachet bag finds a new lease of life in a wide range of products from school bags to picnic blankets.

Our collecting team currently gathers over 200,000 pieces of plastic waste and 2,000 yards of waste fabric monthly from the streets and beaches of Accra, and delivers them to our factory. On arrival, they are sorted, cleaned, and upcycled by our Trashy Bags team into practical, durable and iconic products.

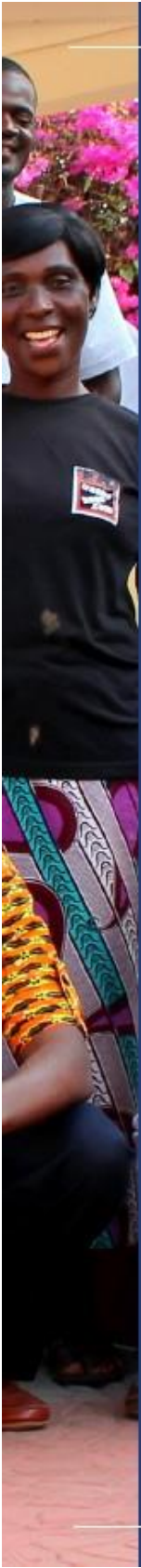
From our inception in 2007 to the end of 2022, we have collected and upcycled over 30 million pieces of plastic waste in Ghana alone.

By giving plastic waste a value, Trashy Bags Africa endorses and promotes a "Trade Not Aid" approach. Job creation within the local economy is a key factor, our venture now employs over 80 local Ghanaians, both directly and indirectly.

This number will continue to grow as we broaden our reach, inspire awareness of the plight of plastic waste and encourage greater local participation, developing new factories and supporting a greater network of waste collectors.

Trashy Bags Africa is accredited by the Government of Ghana's flagship "National Plastic Action Partnership" as a leader in "Reduction and Innovation". Our initiative plays a crucial role in the wider drive towards alternative recycling practices and innovative environmental and sustainability solutions in the African continent.

In recognition of this, Trashy Bags Africa was a finalist for the UK Gift of the Year award (2023) for our upcycled school bag.



Our Story

Behind the scenes



By transforming waste into a useful commodity with positive community impact, Trashy Bags Africa is leading the way with a green business model that delivers value through a long-term sustainable approach, whilst successfully tackling environmental challenges.

Trashy Bags was formed in 2007 as a not-for-profit social enterprise. Following a number of financially challenging years, resulting in chronic under-investment in machinery, staff and marketing, there was a significant drop in international orders causing working capital to become extremely tight.

To rescue this essential social enterprise, preserving 30 local jobs and continuing the essential environmental work, a UK-owned business provided essential working capital while undertaking detailed due diligence, eventually offering to take over the venture through a newly-formed UK limited company, Trashy Bags Africa.

Having delivered on the commitments made, and re-established stability and morale, the company is now forging confidently forward. Further improvements mean Trashy Bags Africa now practices a genuine circular economy model. Even the off-cuts left over from the production process are converted into plastic pellets for onward sale to local manufacturing companies, reducing the ecological and environmental impact even further.



Scan the code to watch our introductory video



Our Impact

Sustainability, Social & Governance



1

Demonstrating that plastic can still be useful long after it has outlived its original purpose. Reducing the need for new single-use plastic shopping bags to be manufactured and given away or sold.



2

Creating employment and entrepreneurship opportunities by outsourcing sachet collection, in addition to investing in the skills and personal development of our factory team.



3

Helping to keep beaches, streets and residential areas cleaner, thereby making the environment more attractive and safer for all.



4

Educating communities around the dangers of land pollution, and showcasing a more responsible approach to rubbish disposal.



5

Emphasising the environment's position at the heart of each of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals; keeping climate impact at the centre of Trashy Bags Africa's narrative.