



### **Dear Max Mustermann,**

Markets, bus stations, train stations and fields all over Burkina Faso are strewn with thin, black plastic bags. Goats, cows and birds eat them and die. These plastic bags are not of course biodegradable, resulting in microplastic everywhere. Some of it ends up in the groundwater, contaminating the soil. More recently, traces of microplastics have even been found in blood samples.



A talk given by Katrin Rohde provided the impetus for the "Zéro sachets au Burkina Faso" campaign - no plastic in Burkina Faso. Students, campaigners and the entire AMPO family invested so much energy in this project:

*"We planned television appearances, radio interviews, awareness meetings in schools and at the university. Suddenly so much help was available. We set off every Sunday wearing yellow headbands saying "Zéro sachet". There were hundreds of us wearing face-masks and gloves to clean up markets and bus stations. At first everyone laughed at us, but then when the media also reported on the amount of damage even one plastic bag can cause, more people came to help. We persuaded the Minister for the Environment to join us one Sunday morning at a market – much to everyone's astonishment! We constructed a variety of bins for plastic waste and donated them to schools and universities. We gave away thousands of cotton bags sewn from old bed linen in our three tailoring workshops. It took about 18 months for the new legislation to be passed. No more black plastic bags are allowed to be*



*produced in Burkina Faso. There were huge posters saying “Zéro sachets” – no more plastic.*



We have often reported about protests, terrorist attacks or the coup against the President early this year. Sadly the various government departments were in repeated lockdown and the country came to a standstill, which is the reason that “Zéro sachets” was not implemented and the markets, fields and bus stops are once more strewn with thin black plastic bags. But you know Katrin Rohde and AMPO: Managré nooma – the good is never lost! Last week we started the clean-up again. More than 150 staff, children and young adults from the AMPO projects set out to clean the streets of Ouagadougou once more. Plastic bags, old batteries, discarded parts of PCs, clothing and lots more were collected. The waste was then separated to recycle as much as possible. The black plastic bags we collected are taken to an official site from where they are sent to a weaving mill.



There the plastic bags are processed into threads to make other products. In our AMPO workshops these threads are made into bracelets which are sold in our central office or can be ordered online via our website.



The plan is to stage the "Zéro sachets" campaign twice a month in cooperation with the AMPO facilities. But it shouldn't be restricted to the AMPO family circle. We want to motivate anyone who is interested and committed to lend a hand. We are distributing pamphlets in the neighbourhood and spreading the news of the campaign to many people in Ouagadougou. It is astounding how many have come together and we hope for many more!





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