

Online Event on Solutions to Plastic Pollution

World Environment Day 2023

(EPTDO-EVN, Kabul Afghanistan)

June 5, 2023: The Environmental Protection Trainings and Development Organization (EPTDO-EVN) conducted an online event called "Solutions to Plastic Pollution" in honor of World Environment Day. The event was registered with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and aimed to promote practical solutions and bring together experts, policymakers, and civil society representatives to discuss the challenges and opportunities related to plastic waste management in Afghanistan and around the world.

EPTDO-EVN is an accredited organization with UNEP and is actively working towards environmental protection and livelihood improvement in Afghanistan. The organization has been conducting public awareness campaigns and training sessions to educate students and community members about environmental issues.

The EPTDO-EVN conducted this online event on "Solutions to Plastic Pollution" on June 5, 2023, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The event brought together a diverse group of participants, including experts, policymakers, and civil society representatives, to discuss the challenges and opportunities related to plastic waste management.

The event was opened with a welcome speech by Mr. Abdulhadi Achakzai, the Founder and CEO of EPTDO, who highlighted the importance of addressing plastic pollution and the need for collaboration and practical solutions. The event was then followed by a series of presentations by four speakers and experts in the field, including Engineer Hussnimubarak Pamir, Engineer Rahimullah Badri and Ms. Samira Perzada. The presentations covered a wide range of topics related to plastic pollution and its impacts on environment and economic implications, sustainable development, impacts of climate change on health and recognition of ecocide as the mass damage of planet.

The presentations provided insight into the various challenges faced by Afghanistan in managing plastic waste, including the lack of infrastructure for waste management, limited public awareness about the negative impacts of plastic on the environment, and weak policies and regulations for plastic production and consumption.

During the session, the speakers shared practical solutions and initiatives that can be implemented to address plastic pollution in Afghanistan and around the world. These solutions included promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns, improving waste management infrastructure, promoting the use of biodegradable and compostable materials, and increasing public awareness about the impact of plastic on the environment.

The panel discussion provided an opportunity for the participants to share their perspectives and experiences on the topic. The discussion was moderated by Mr. Abdulhadi Achakzai, he ensured that the dialogue was constructive and informative.

The event also included a Q&A session, where participants had the opportunity to ask questions and share their views and experiences related to plastic pollution. The discussion highlighted the need for collaborative efforts between various stakeholders, including policymakers, businesses, civil society organizations, and individuals, to address plastic pollution.

During the session several best practices were shared to address the challenges posed by plastic pollution. Here are some of the best practices that were highlighted during the event:

1. **Promoting the use of biodegradable and compostable plastics:** Biodegradable and compostable plastics are alternatives to traditional plastics that can decompose naturally without harming the environment. Promoting the use of these plastics can help reduce the amount of plastic waste that ends up in landfills or the environment.
2. **Implementing plastic bag bans or levies:** Several countries have successfully implemented plastic bag bans or levies, which have resulted in reduced plastic bag usage and littering. Such policies encourage the use of reusable bags and promote sustainable practices.
3. **Encouraging community participation:** Community participation is crucial for effective plastic waste management. Several successful initiatives have involved engaging communities in plastic waste management through awareness campaigns, waste segregation, and recycling programs.
4. **Promoting innovation and technology:** Innovative technologies, such as plastic-to-fuel conversion systems and chemical recycling, can help convert plastic waste into valuable resources. Promoting such technologies can contribute to a circular economy and reduce the amount of plastic waste that ends up in the environment.

These best practices are just a few examples of the practical solutions shared during the event, and their successful implementation can contribute significantly to addressing the challenges posed by plastic pollution.

Afghanistan faces several challenges in managing plastic waste, some of which include:

1. **Lack of infrastructure:** Afghanistan has limited waste management infrastructure, which makes it difficult to collect, sort, and dispose of plastic waste in an environmentally friendly manner.
2. **Limited public awareness:** There is limited public awareness about the negative impact of plastic on the environment, and many people in Afghanistan are not aware of how to properly dispose of plastic waste.
3. **Weak policies and regulations:** Afghanistan has weak policies and regulations related to plastic production, consumption, and waste management, which makes it difficult to control the amount of plastic waste generated and properly manage it.
4. **High levels of poverty:** Many people in Afghanistan are living in poverty, which makes it challenging for them to afford sustainable alternatives to plastic or invest in waste management infrastructure.
5. **People use plastics in states:** If you look around the Kabul and other big cities of Afghanistan you will notice thousands of small children in the streets that they are

collecting plastics to use for cooking purposes. The children are also collecting the plastics to use in the winter and heat their houses. This has become the main reason and sources of air pollution in Kabul and other big cities of Afghanistan.

6. **Conflict and insecurity:** Afghanistan is facing ongoing conflict and insecurity, which makes it difficult to prioritize environmental issues and invest in waste management infrastructure.
7. **Limited resources:** Afghanistan has limited financial and human resources to invest in waste management infrastructure and programs, which makes it difficult to effectively manage plastic waste.

Participants addressed their recommendations for sustainable alternatives to plastic that can be used in Afghanistan, some of which include:

1. **Jute bags:** Jute bags are a sustainable alternative to plastic bags. They are made from natural fibers and can be reused multiple times. Jute bags are also biodegradable and can be composted after use.
2. **Cloth bags:** Cloth bags are another sustainable alternative to plastic bags. They are reusable, durable, and can be made from natural fibers such as cotton or hemp.
3. **Metal or glass containers:** Metal or glass containers can be used as an alternative to plastic containers for storing food and beverages. They are durable, reusable, and can be recycled after use.
4. **Biodegradable plastics:** Biodegradable plastics are made from plant-based materials and can be composted after use. They are a sustainable alternative to traditional plastic, which is not biodegradable.
5. **Natural fiber packaging:** Natural fiber packaging, such as paper or cardboard, can be used as an alternative to plastic packaging for food, beverages, and other consumer goods. These materials are biodegradable and can be recycled after use.

By promoting the use of these sustainable alternatives to plastic, we need financial support from the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) to give an urgent end to the plastic pollution in Afghanistan and reduce its reliance on plastic and minimize its impact on the environment.

Conclusion:

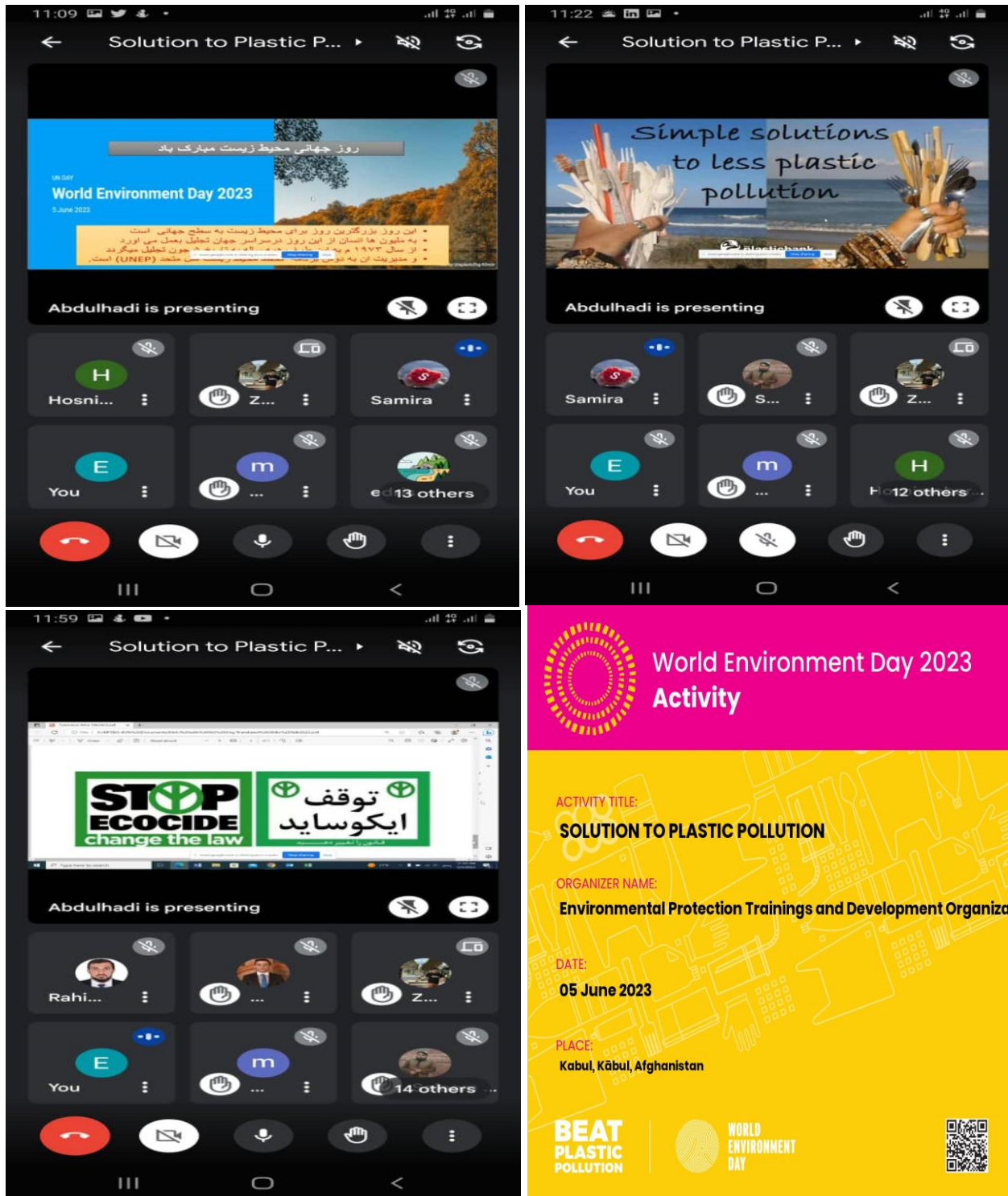
The online event, "Solutions to Plastic Pollution," conducted by EPTDO-EVN in coordination with UNEP, was a successful platform for engagement and collaboration among stakeholders in the field of environmental protection. The event highlighted the importance of addressing plastic pollution and provided valuable insights and practical solutions for addressing this urgent issue.

The efforts of EPTDO-EVN in promoting environmental protection and livelihood improvement in Afghanistan are commendable, and this event is an excellent example of their commitment towards achieving their goals. The event has contributed to the development of practical solutions and has provided a valuable platform for engagement and collaboration among stakeholders.

Certainly! This event was a timely and important initiative to create awareness about the challenges posed by plastic pollution and to promote practical solutions for its management. The event was

conducted online to facilitate participation from a wider audience and to comply with the COVID-19 safety protocols.

Photos during the session



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