

# Neighborhood engagement on Circular Economy

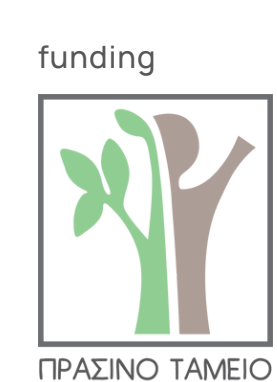
The pursuit of economic growth under the linear take-make-consume-dispose model has led to resource depletion, overproduction of waste, and severe environmental crisis. This pressing issue is particularly evident in urban areas. The project "Turning to the Neighborhood" implemented by incommon in collaboration with the Municipality of Papagos-Cholargos and funded by the Green Fund, seeks to address these challenges by accelerating the transition towards a circular model of life, as a case study.

## Authors

Angelidou Mara, Christopoulou Clio, Intzidi Eleni, Koumoutsakou Marina, Tsolka Iliana, Zourna Valia  
 mara@incommon.gr, clio@incommon.gr, eleni@incommon.gr, marina@incommon.gr, iliana@incommon.gr, valia@incommon.gr

## Affiliations

**incommon**, 33 Dorieon Str. 11852, Ano Petralona, Athens, info@incommon.gr  
**Green Fund**, 241 Kifissias Av., 14561, Athens, info@prasinotameio.gr  
**Municipality of Papagos-Cholargos**, 55 Perikleous Str., 15561 Cholargos, info@dpapxol.gov.gr



## Related literature

[https://catalogue.unccd.int/1679\\_FoodWaste.pdf](https://catalogue.unccd.int/1679_FoodWaste.pdf)/<https://www.nomotelia.gr/photos/File/129a-21-neo.pdf>/<https://ypen.gov.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Eθνική-Στρατηγική-Για-την-Κυκλική-Οικονομία.pdf>/[https://energy.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-03/el\\_final\\_necp\\_main\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://energy.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-03/el_final_necp_main_en_0.pdf)/[https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/circular-economy-action-plan\\_en](https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/circular-economy-action-plan_en)/[https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en)

## INTRODUCTION

The societal mindset regarding zero waste is marked by a general lack of awareness, engagement and trust in waste management and recycling systems. The sorting and utilization of organic residues, especially food, are still in early stages, underscoring both the lack of citizen engagement and available data. Additionally, the project aims to measure its own carbon footprint. Therefore, as part of each action, we collect data to translate our activities, both qualitative and quantitative, into environmental impact, expressed in the CO2 eq unit. The data collection effort concerns actions from installing composting bins to holding workshops on the circular economy.

## OBJECTIVE

We seek to address these challenges by accelerating the transition towards a circular model of life in a neighborhood of Papagos-Cholargos. Neighborhoods are the cells of cities, which is why we are starting from this small scale. In a more circular city, people are mindful of optimizing resource utilization of resources, extending the life cycle of products, recycling, repairing, using secondary materials and waste as productive resources, using alternative fuels, seeing nothing go to waste while adopting the sharing of services, ideas, and products.

## METHODOLOGY

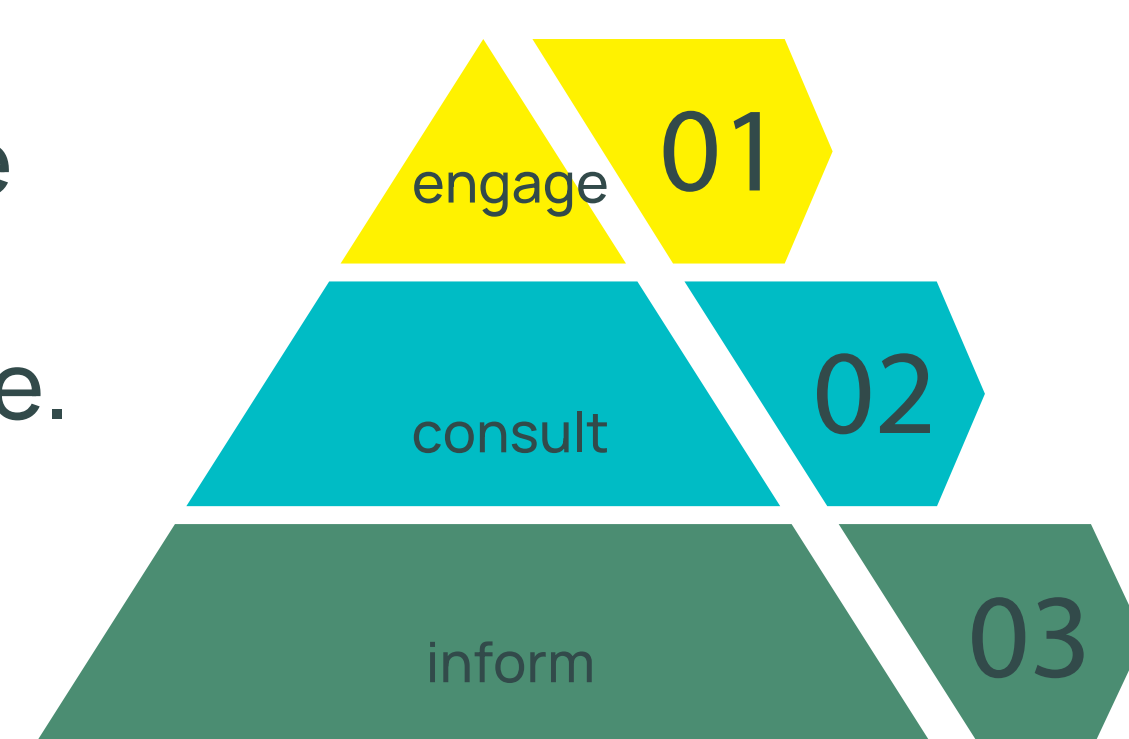
At incommon, we recognise that achieving circularity goes beyond mere concept, it necessitates the activation of the community, which is informed, trained, actively involved and adopts new daily habits and behaviors by identifying and implementing solutions that ensure the improvement of life in cities, for a sustainable future on a healthy planet. One such solution is the project "Turning to the Neighborhood". The orientation of the project "Turning to the Neighborhood" is geared towards fostering responsible and sustainable consumption, minimizing waste, reducing the carbon footprint of organic waste treatment and actively engaging citizens in a seamless transition to the circular economy, with a primary focus on enhancing organic waste management practices.

## RESULTS

"Turning to the Neighborhood" paves the way for a sustainable and circular future. With its replicable model, there is the potential to extend the project to other neighborhoods, fostering a nationwide shift towards circular living. This initiative is a testament to the transformative power of community engagement and grassroots initiatives in achieving circularity in urban settings.

## ANALYSIS

the actions of the entire project were developed based on a community engagement system, which is divided into three levels: inform, consult, and engage. These 3 categories are shaped by various factors such as the objective of each action, the number of people we want to reach, the tools available, and the degree of impact we aim to achieve.



**CITIZENS** Circular economy workshops including:  
 How to compost at home with your own "worm farm", The useless-useful materials of our daily life, reused, Mapping of your neighborhood resources - food episode, Plus, interactive Game for people of all ages, developed in collaboration with the Technical University of Crete. Designed and produced with an emphasis on the proper management of organic waste which can be played both by individuals and by groups of citizens and students



### BUSINESSES

2 neighborhood restaurants close the food circle incommon team visits the restaurant facilities for hands-on staff training, develops the tailored tools and processes for the stores. Then we visit once per week for 3 months, for trouble shooting, monitoring & evaluating the process and collecting original data



### SCHOOLS

Two (2) schools participate in the program while more are being informed. Experiential education activities around organic waste are carried out through four (4) school visits, all necessary tools for engaging staff, students and their families are provided. Our game is played inside the classroom.



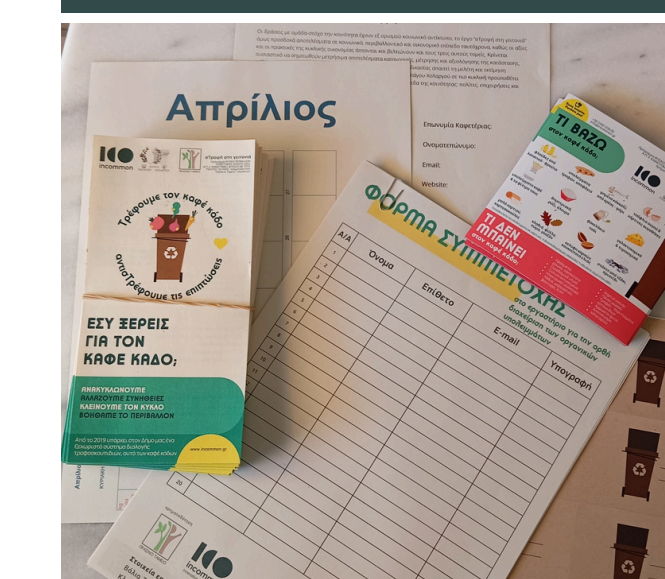
### OPENING CEREMONY

An event, that took place in the Cholargos mall, where we presented the project to the public, had an open discussion with participants and held a compost workshop for kids while we informed their parents of the brown bins and gave them the tools to use it.



### FOOD-WASTE FREE FESTIVAL

For the closure of the project, a two-day Food Waste free festival is carried out. It includes gastronomic walks in restaurants that prepare zero waste meals. The meal is followed by the game!



### DISSEMINATION

All project outcomes, knowledge, and innovations are shared with diverse stakeholders through local and nation-wide channels such as conferences, publications, and digital platforms to ensure broad accessibility. We aim to enhance visibility but also foster collaboration, and facilitate impact on policymaking and societal challenges starting from the neighborhood and municipality levels.

## CONCLUSION

Food waste is a problem that -without the participation of citizens- has no solution. Through actions and initiatives that empower and mobilize the community, we bring effective change in food waste management, in one Greek municipality.