

The UN global goals campaign was announced in November 2018 and our school decided to participate. A team of seven 6th graders of Rustomjee Cambridge international school, Dahisar was selected for it. Ms Aanchal Cheruvari Pottiyan one of the faculty members was selected as the team mentor.

There was a lot of enthusiastic brain storming about the appropriate project to be selected to match one of the UN goal for sustainable living. After lot of deliberation with regard to **ease of implementation, practicality (cover the entire community)** and it's **capacity** to have a **large impact**, our project of making and distributing seed balls was selected for implementation. During the process Principal Ms Tanya Valecha was also consulted to validate the feasibility and support needed. This gave birth to the project **HAPPY SEEDS**. This also gave birth to our **MOTTO- TAKE SOME SEEDS AND WATCH LOVE GROW (greener today to create a healthy tomorrow)**.

Why did we choose this project?

1. It is easier to implement as compared to planting saplings
2. It can have an impact over a larger area since seeds can be carried easily to far off places
3. Easy for any age group to implement and contribute personally for the environment
4. By sowing seeds we try to sow the idea into people's minds that they need to work together to make our earth a better place and motivate them to make positive changes in that direction.

At the end of November 2018 – planning template of the UN global goals committee was filled out and submitted. Subsequently role assignment to each member of the group was done.

In December 2018, In order to create awareness among the community, tools like – Team Banner, Logo and pamphlets were made. To start the process , during a 2 day school carnival by means of game stall – the idea of Happy seeds and seed balls was propagated to the students of the school and their parents. We pre booked orders for the seed balls, thereby starting the first corpus of funds to get this initiative rolling. We received approximately over 200 orders for seed balls. This also gave the team some belief in their concept and there morale was boosted to pursue this to next level.

In the Process, the UN committee took feedback about difficulties that we were facing and asked us to think of ways of overcoming them. So some of our goals were re- worked and help was sought from the school authorities as well. The school was more than keen to help us in achieving our goals.

In Jan 2019, with the success of the carnival, we approached our Principal Ms Tanya to discuss further strategies. She was very supportive and a 5 days event was conceptualized.

Before the event could be started seeds, manure and soil had been procured. Seeds were of different large tropical trees found in our state- Maharashtra. It was important to get the right seeds that would work within the current geo environment. Considerable time and effort was spend in learning how to make the seeds balls and also to ensure that they germinate in the right manner. This also helped in order to put relevant instructions with the pamphlet.

During the 5 days event Skits where organized by the eco warriors to spread awareness among the pre primary students. Additionally the students where engaged in activity of making seed balls. During this period approximately over 400 seed balls where also distributed. During primary section open house, the team also put up a stall and spoke to visiting parents about the Happy Seeds. the visiting parents really appreciated the concept, efforts being put in and encouraged the team by placing orders. During this process the team had hand made eco friendly, recyclable news paper made bags. This was used to distribute the seed balls.

In order to socialize the concept a blog and a face-book page was created for Happy Seeds.

We also collaborated with a local NGO Jeevan Bema Nagar ladies wing for spreading the concept with more people

February-March 2019 , this is where the rubber hits the road. The team tirelessly worked during and after school hours to make the seed balls required for the pre booked orders. By this time the team had also designed a cloth bag with the logo and motto of happy seeds. The remaining orders where supplied in the new bags. The concept was to socialize the Happy seeds more. There was an open house during this period. The team volunteered to set up a stall during this period to create awareness regarding the Seed balls.

With the success of the events that were organized, this raised the team spirit and the volunteers were keen to do more and reach out further in the community. Mid March 2019 to April 2019 was also exams time, this did not deter us from continuing on thinking of ideas where we can reach out more to the community and take it further.

Once the Exams were over – during Mid April 2019 the team re-grouped and the idea of reaching out to the wider community was taken up. Sanjay Gandhi National Park where many people go for Morning walks sounded as a wonderful idea. With the Help of one of the parent of the volunteers this was organized. The Authorities had initially agreed to only allow a stall at the entrance of the gate. Once the team reached and the awareness campaign started, the authorities realized the importance and in their support they allowed the team to go inside the park. This increased the team's avenue to further interact with many people of all ages and spend time in explaining the concept. This proved to be a mega success. This proved to be quite a learning experience. The team was interacting with students all the time, here they had to interact with a diversified range of people. Understanding the person and then altering the pitch so that they understand what the team is doing is for the entire community and not just a sales gimmick was most important. This was a learning experience for the volunteers to go and directly interact with the people from the community. During this period there was a grand parent day for the secondary students. This was another fun-filled event and an opportunity for the eco warriors. Grand parents really loved making seed balls with the children and carried home the happy seeds in goodie bags from school. During the period we also received feedbacks from the people who had taken seed balls. They send positive feedback and also photos of the germinating seeds. This was really a great boost to all the hard work that the team had spent.

During Dec 2018 to April 2019 the team spent about 1120 hours to conceptualize, promote, materialize and get this into the current shape where it can be continued. The process helped the team to learn

- 1) Team spirit
- 2) Marketing skills
- 3) Time and priority management
- 4) Resource and fund management
- 5) Communication and persuasive skills.
- 6) Appreciate and preserve nature

It helped the eco warriors understand their surrounding and the negative impact of pollution. We are living in a urban area, with a lot of over crowding and vehicular pollution. Our community needed to do something set right the eco balance. We needed to start somewhere. One of the ways was to increase the greenery, area that the volunteers choose to address.

After submitting our project our journey of environmental awareness is not going to stop here. We still have some raw material left so as and when there will be demand for these seed balls, those will be made by us and will be sent to the respective persons. In the month of May and June we are planning to have few campaigns through which this awareness can be spread to more and more people and for this we are targeting few of our residential societies and few of other places. In short this work is not going to be stopped in near future until our goal is met. Having campaign in public places will definitely boost this drive and will achieve the recognition among people.

So far we have demonstrated in front of many people (over 1000+) and people who had ordered these balls have already shown faith in the task we have taken up. These seed balls are sprouted and with word of mouth many people of different age group have already been made aware of the goal to be achieved.

This initiative was taken by seven students of Rustomjee Cambridge school who all have shared the equal responsibility of making this project successful. They have ordered the raw materials and with help of experts they have made these balls in their school hours and have also given the training to different grades students. As I have already mentioned funds were raised by keeping the stalls at school fun fairs and by explaining the importance of growing trees to reduce the global warming impact on the earth. Raised funds were utilized for buying the material like soil, seeds and cloth bags and also for making pamphlets.

Let me conclude by saying that this project has witnessed a lot of hard work of these students and has created a positive impact on different layers of societies and will continue to touch many hearts to be part of this social awareness. Thank you.