

Hua Hin Helping Hands - GSL Project Report

Project Aim: To help the Karen refugees of Pala-U Noi better manage waste within their community

The Team

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Explanation

Our project aim was to help refugees that live in the Pala-U community with recycling and hygiene. 9 out of 10 people would recycle if it were simply “easier”. The greatest threat of disease and long term health issues is trash and sanitation is a logical cure. More than 100,000 marine life animals die each year because of plastic digestion. Therefore waste management is so important. Waste management reduces the risk of disease and helps the world in the process. Our group, Hua Hin Helping Hands, wanted to educate the Pala-U Noi community about waste management and the environment. We worked together with the charity Jungle Aid, who help refugee communities in rural areas, and realised something needed to change. We realised that the trash in the Pala-U Noi community, a Karen village in a rural part of Prachuap Khiri Khan, was everywhere and that nobody in the village was recycling or even throwing away their rubbish correctly. People in the village were burning the

rubbish, causing pollution. We realised how much it has improved our lives and wanted to show the people of the Pala-U Noi community, so that they could decide whether such a lifestyle would benefit them and their environment. Therefore, we went with Jungle Aid and asked the locals what they believe their community needs to improve upon. First we asked if water sanitation could be improved but they believed it wasn't a problem, instead they believed that the rubbish management was the problem. Coincidentally, they had the same point as one of ours so we pushed forward with the project. Our group agreed that to make an impact on the community, we should invest in the children and have them create the habit of recycling.

Funding

We considered the local perspective because their opinion and commitment to use the bins was important for the success of the project. We raised money (approximately 10,500 THB), by holding a non uniform day and a cupcake sale on Valentines Day within our school community in order to purchase trash bins. We were extremely pleased with the cupcake sale because we sold out all the cupcakes. We advertised by displaying posters around the school. By doing this we learnt about the importance of advertising. Additionally, we sent out a questionnaire to students about their preferences of flavours and toppings.



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Our cupcake sale was very successful. We went over the expected money and we had extra money left after buying the bins. So, we spent the rest of the money on paint and other supplies to make the activity more fun for the children. This led us back to the idea of hand sanitation. We planned to reward children with fruit after the completion of the recycling activities, but they would need to wash their hands following any painting. Consequently, we bought soap and made hand-washing posters to teach the children (who were all non-English speakers) the importance of washing their hands before eating.

Our group's development

The project taught us a lot about the organisational aspect of everything, which we very much enjoyed. We were pleased with the outcome of the project. Our team was able to help the Pala-U community and each individual was able to grow their skills. We personally think that our contributions to the team were helpful. We have learnt so much about the community and their perspectives, as well as the importance of waste management. Overall, we believe that our team worked well together. It wasn't challenging to make decisions, however it was difficult to think about how we would implement them and if they were realistic or not. For instance, we had to figure out how we would transfer the bins to the Pala U community and whether or not the cupcakes would work out. A challenge we faced was time management, we were last minute in purchasing the bins and making the educational posters. Additionally, there was a bit of stress involved meeting GSL deadlines. If we kept to the schedule and progress bar I think we would've been better at managing time.

The impact on others and the community

At first we were focusing on recycling (responsible consumption and production) to the community. But then as we were painting the bins with the children, we had to teach them about hand washing (clean

water and sanitation) which also helps them staying healthy (good health and well-being). We believe that the project was mostly successful because during the games the children were very motivated in learning about and collecting the rubbish. Additionally, we think the games we held with the children will we remembered, especially painting of the bins. The posters that we made were fun, bright and easy to read as there were many pictures and little writing which made it enjoyable for the children of the community to learn about. Although the children might've been a bit scared to learn about the consequences of their actions, we're sure that they were happy to know how they could make a change by the smiles on their faces. We shall see within the next visit how effective our project will truly be, as Jungle Aid visits the community every month and they will continue to implement the project. Overall, we helped over 60 community members learn about the goals, as well as approximately 15 Jungle Aid volunteers, our school of 250 students, 30 teachers and the parents that came to our assembly where we were talking about this project. We also spread the word on social media, meaning we helped raise awareness of the sustainable development goals to over 350 people.



Lasting Memory

"For this project we taught kids several skills they need in life, we made a difference and it was fun. This project was all about caring about our world and environment and thinking globally with many perspective."

