
Poverty or Environment? Why not BOTH? (The Quintuple)

Aim:

Through this project, we aim to raise awareness about poverty and climate change in developing countries using Tuvalu as an example. Climate change is a pressing global issue which is deep rooted in the uneco-friendly practices of people in the past. However, many developing countries are suffering from the consequences. To add fuel to the fire, these countries often are susceptible to problems of poverty. We wish to highlight the plight of citizens living in these regions under the compounded effect of both serious global issues.



Goals to be Addressed:

1. Help people in our school understand about the situation in developing countries and the challenges that those residents are facing
2. Map out a detailed version of Tuvalu's current situation and elaborate on the plight that its citizens face
3. Take a comparative approach in contrasting the situation in Hong Kong and Tuvalu through a video to raise awareness amongst netizens

Outcomes and Impacts:

Our online quiz elicited over 100 responses from our fellow schoolmates (around 75% of F.5 students). We believe that Our online quiz elicited over 100 responses from our fellow schoolmates (around 75% of F.5 students), with the mean score of 19.86 / 30 (66%). We believe that all participants have gained a deeper understanding of the situation Tuvalu is facing from and of the relationship between our daily consumption and the changing climate through the data collection process when finishing the quiz.

One major limitation of our project is that we couldn't include many interactive activities due to the ongoing pandemic. We believe that if we could include activities that allow for more involvement of the participants, we would be able to give them a deeper impression as well as ensure that all participants would be able to receive our message. We had also planned to make a mini-documentary video contrasting the situations in Tuvalu and Hong Kong. However, due to the current pandemic, we chose to

Throughout our project, we have successfully brought the two Global Goals, No Poverty and Climate Action, to the immediate attention of all the student participants. In our online quiz, the participants were required to search for information regarding Tuvalu and in particular, how climate change is interrelated to its issues of poverty. Many of the responses, we received demonstrated participants' deepened understanding of the issue, and their determination in preventing similar climate-related tragedies.

In our project, we have spent more than 10 hours completing tasks such as data collection, quiz preparation, poster design, reading the responses received and giving comprehensive feedback. The cooperation between our teammates and sound advice given by our teacher adviser enabled us to finish all the tasks with great efficiency and high standards.

Skills Gained Throughout the Project:

We were able to exercise our creativity when coming up with interesting and engaging topics for the photo challenge. We wanted to select subject matter that was both educational as well as attractive to our target group (senior form students). Most importantly, we realised the importance of adaptability when it comes to implementing projects that we had planned beforehand. Although we originally wanted to shoot a mini-documentary video contrasting the situations in Tuvalu and Hong Kong, the outbreak of the novel coronavirus and the subsequent suspension of school rendered this impossible. Therefore, we had to quickly come up with a suitable alternative which would at the very least meet some of our pre-set targets. Thankfully, we were able to replace the original idea with both the online quiz and the photo challenge.

Furthermore, in setting the questions for the online quiz, we obtained a lot of information from reading a wide range of sources. After reading the source materials, we had to select the points which would be most relevant and most useful to students. Therefore, we developed a stronger ability to concentrate and summarise large amounts of information and identify the points most useful to us. Such skills are actually very important when we have to write up essays or conduct research studies, as well as being much conducive to efficiency in the workplace.

Highlights from Our Experiences So Far:

A key highlight of the “FunFactQuiz” was that we could see a high participation rate. The students’ great efforts were evident from their diverse and detailed answers, showing that they did do research and read the sources we provided cautiously. It delighted all of us that our time and effort spent in devising the quiz was worthwhile and achieved our aim of bringing the plight of Tuvaluan citizens living in poverty and under the threat of climate change to the attention of the more fortunate people living in Hong Kong.

A highlight of the “PhotoChallenge” would be discovering the significance of two-way learning. After we launched our poster regarding the Challenge on various social media platforms, replies started coming in swiftly from students. As our challenge required them to submit one photo each and give a brief explanation on how the contents of the photo are related to the effects of climate change, a wide range of responses were received from our fellow students. In the process of checking their answers, we learnt more about how existing technologies impact climate change both positively and negatively while our classmates were able to assimilate more information about the two Global Goals after their research; demonstrating our success in implementing two-way learning.

Knowledge Gained:

In the process of working on the project, we have gained a lot of knowledge on how climate change affects the world through the example of Tuvalu itself. Tuvalu is not an isolated case, but a symptom. Tuvalu is an entire country, and yet it faces the threat of sinking under the ocean, something that has not been faced by any country for hundreds of years. The implications of this are horrific — it means that if this trend continues, other coastal cities could be at risk, and at that point it would be too late to reverse the situation.

Another thing that we learnt is how climate change can impact a society. Tuvalu is a relatively poor country which relies heavily on foreign aid, and its two main industries are fishing and tourism. Climate change has decreased the amount of fish that can be caught, disrupting the Tuvaluans’ main food source and jobs (42% of the population works in the fishing industry). The increasing salinity of soil due to the rising levels of saltwater causes the coconut trees (a tourist attraction) to wither, and damages their coconut tree-based exports. The ramifications of global warming, seen through Tuvalu, can reach past the environmental level and affect the socio-economic condition of cities as well.

Impacts on Students:

The Internet can serve as a powerful catalyst to speed up the spreading of knowledge. Even though we are in an arduous period, we hope that the message of sustainable development can be brought to our schoolmates in Hong Kong. In total, over 280 students participated in our activities and we received great responses. In the #StayAwareChallenge, students from Year 10 expressed their ideas on how to climate change and how they are going to commit to helping the Earth become a better place. For example, one of the replies was, “Using both sides of each sheet of paper can almost cut the gross paper consumption rate in half. It can also prevent paper wastage and reduce the cutting of trees so that more carbon dioxide can be absorbed by the trees, which alleviates the effects of climate change and global warming.” As for the Fun Quiz, due to the limitations of social distancing, the quizzes were conducted through the online medium of Google Forms. Over 100 students attempted the quiz and the mean score was 19.86 / 30 (66%). Although the mean was lower than what we had initially anticipated (80%), it allowed us to evaluate the difficulty of the questions and recognise which areas students were the least familiar with.

