

COLORS IN THE DARKNESS



When the mind is blind, the eyes are useless." In an attempt to tackle Goal #10 'Reduced Inequalities', we focused on a minority of visually impaired children who made best of their circumstance and did not let their issue stop them from being the artists they are. We displayed artworks on T-shirts and notebooks spotlighting their aptitude to society.

Aim 1

Give recognition to the blind children and their artwork. We will initially work with 4-5 children.

Aim 2

Donate the profits to the children themselves.

Aim 3

Reduce inequalities visually impaired children face (especially in the art industry). This is planned to be achieved through printing their art on hoodies, mugs and stickers, also giving them the recognition, they deserve.

Aim 4

Educate the art community as well as the general public on blind artists and the techniques they use to demonstrate their disability is not an obstacle.

For this project, we have collaborated with Mr. Suheil Baqaean and his local business formally known as "Reading colors" in which he has helped us meet and interact with the visually impaired artists. We visited them and organized a workshop in which they drew custom paintings, this introduced us to their unique backgrounds and helped us get to know them as a whole; we then featured their incredible artworks on our products (notebook and t-shirts). Our main sponsor was The Outfit (a clothing company), they helped us with manufacturing and even selling the products, as they dedicated an entire section in their store for our notebooks and t-shirts. After careful consideration, as a group, we have collectively decided to give all our profit to "Reading colors" so that its potential can be maximized. By giving our profits to Mr. Suheil Baqaean, they can be spent on anything from hospital expenses to art supplies. Adding to that, our project will automatically become more sustainable due to the profits going back to the children. As that way, they will have lasting effects on both them and their art (eg. they might want to buy new art supplies with the money which will result in them creating better art and improving their skills).

When discussing the effect this project had, we must begin with how it affected us as a team first. This project enabled us to form close bonds with one another and get to know each other on a greater level. As well as getting to know the artists we worked with throughout the project, we were able to expand our knowledge on visually impaired artists and the techniques they use, not only that, but we got to know them personally as well. Besides the knowledge we gained as a team, we were also able to educate our followers on this matter, as of now, we have about 100 followers who see all of our posts in which we inform them about visually impaired artists and whatnot, we were able to present them with these artists' work which must have been quite baffling considering the fact that they are visually impaired. Finally, the artists themselves have benefited from this project as well, they have gained in increasing amount of recognition, people are now purchasing notebooks as well as t-shirts featuring their own paintings, the artists might have also gained more confidence in themselves and their abilities due to the increasing recognition this project brought them and the fact so many people are interested in their work. Adding to that, the profits are all going to them directly. Our 100 followers aren't the only people being influenced by this project, there are more people who have access to our products via The Outfit. We have worked personally with 5 girls and paintings from other artist were also featured in the products, and of course we worked with Mr. Suheil Baqaean who was the main reason we had access to the artists in the first place.

Despite the success of our project, we did face some difficulties and even failures along the way. To begin with, it was quite difficult for us to grow a following on our main Instagram account, and that is because this is a brand-new project and we had a short frame of time to gain the attention and interest of people. However, we were able to overcome this obstacle by posting frequently, making our account aesthetically pleasing and also talking to the marketing manager at The Outfit. Timing also proved to be a challenge, as we had a little less than a year to complete this project successfully while simultaneously keeping up with school, as most of us are 10th graders and we are already under a lot of pressure, however good time management and teamwork (splitting roles evenly) helped us greatly.

Throughout this project, we all collectively gained knowledge of the limitless talents that the visually impaired children possess and the struggles they go through on a daily basis. As we met with these very special children, we recognized their talents right from the bat and applied our social skills to get to know them personally a little more so that everyone would feel comfortable and safe whilst in the process of painting. When we were communicating with them we felt very humbled as we learned about their stories because it seemed as though they were still grateful for so many things in their lives even though they lacked the basic privilege of sight which made us reflect on ourselves and appreciate our privileges. By observing them paint, we learned a lot about their painting techniques, and it was very interesting to discover that the children use specific smells and textures to detect specific colors, for example, yellow paint had a strong lemon scent and green paint had a strong apple scent ad that way they were able to differentiate between colors.

As mentioned earlier, we targeted goal number 10 from the SDG goals which is reduced inequalities. And we can confidently say that this goal was successfully tackled. We were able to show a good number of people that the art community is way more diverse than they expected. We tried our best to give visually impaired artists the same recognition given to any other artist in an attempt to achieve a sense of equality and fairness in the art community. So now, people will hopefully have a new perspective on visually impaired people, and appreciate them for who they are and for the talents and abilities they hold.

We learned many skills thanks to this journey, and they included: communication skills, we learned how to interact with people vastly different from us. We empathized with them when they expressed their feelings and told us their stories. We also developed collaboration skills, in terms of working together in a group, splitting roles and sharing information. Time management was also a skill we learned, as we were

able alter and adapt our schedules to fit this project's tasks and requirements. Not only that but we had to learn to manage our time in order to work properly people we partnered up with as well as our sponsors. Finally, we learned how to be more balanced individuals, as we were able to manage our social and school life despite having a whole other project to work on. We divided our time and energy equally in order to put our all in every aspect of our lives.

TIMELINE

1 Decide on a topic for our GSL project	2 Assign long term roles for each member
3 Get in contact with sponsors and Mr. Suheil	4 Create social media account and start advertising our project
5 Workshop in order to meet the artists in person and get the artworks	6 Work on product designs
7 Start producing and selling	8 Collect profits and give them back to the artists

These highlights are from the workshop we had with the artists, we were also interviewed by a news station and had the opportunity to talk about our project on television.



Members names: Reem Slim, Nour Asad, Zaina Haddad, Lara Tawileh, Alia Abu Omar, Masa Irshaidat, Abdul Majeed Asad