



INTRODUCTION

Trees are vital. They give us oxygen, store carbon, stabilize the soil and give life to the world's wildlife. They also provide us with materials for tools and shelter. The canopies of trees act as physical filters trapping dust and absorbing pollutants from the air. Each individual tree removes up to 1.7 kilos of pollutants every year. They also provide shades from solo radiation and most of the trees have medicinal properties. Researches show that within minutes of being surrounded by trees and green space, your blood pressure drops, your heart rate slows and your stress level come down. But at present deforestation and forest degradation is high with the forest being used to meet growing demand of biomass energy and unplanned expansion of agricultural and settlement area due to increasing population and weak governance. As a result, deforestation has become one of the most serious environmental issues in Sri Lanka. The country loses an average of 26,800 ha of forest per year. This amounts to an average annual deforestation rate of 1.14%. This has caused many environmental implications. Aside from the environmental implications, deforestation in Sri Lanka has caused flooding, landslides and soil erosion from exposure of the deforested areas. It is also the primary threat to the survival of Sri Lanka's bio-diversity. Sri Lanka has 751 known species of amphibians, birds, mammals and reptiles of which 21.7% are endemic, and over 3314 species of vascular plants, of which 26.9% are endemic. Although laws and regulations have been enacted in recent times to address most of these issues, the views of the relevant implementing agencies are not always adequately consulted during major development initiatives. Having understood that deforestation affects the sustainability of the environment on a global scale with more detrimental effects on developing countries, we, Lyceum International School Kurunegala, Sri Lanka, initiated our project, Dream To Save the World, based on "Life on land sustainable development goal. Our team with the dream to save the green, launch a huge project to plant 100,000 trees around the world. We started this project in October, 2020 and it was the peak time of Covid-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka. Launching a global project was a real challenge for us. We managed to use the virtual platform to overcome the challenge. We launched a virtual project which was a huge success. Planning and sketching the project while adhering to all the safety measures was a great experience we gained through our hard work as Global Social Leaders.

OUR AIMS

Aims are the tools which lead us to achieve our dreams. It shows someone's determination. As a team 'Dream to save the Green' introduced few aims. Our aims mainly based on educating local and international communities on the importance of sustainable living and the true vision of life on land.

- To provide proper guidance of growing ecologically friendly plants which can provide multi access to have a healthy life on land.
- To encourage younger generation to reduce using non disposable products which cause harmful impacts on environment.
- To disseminate the awareness on protecting the environment among the school students in order to establish sustainable life on earth.
- To regulate the habit of planting endemic trees among the school students.
- To inform the local community about the importance of trees.
- To raise awareness about harmful effects of clearing forests for development projects.
- To identify the socioeconomic effects of deforestation.



This project was a great opportunity for us to open up our hidden talents as well as to identify our true potentials. We the "Dream to save the Green" would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our teachers for keeping trust on us. Gathering local and International community was a new experience for us and also launching a virtual project was really a new experience and learned to use technology effectively. We as a team, experienced many collaborative work and learned how to deal with different individuals. Panel Discussion was a magnificent event we took part and improved ourselves in different ways such as logical thinking, confidence building and effective communication. It was an eye opener for many nations and large number of students of different countries did their researches on how deforestation influence climate changes. It was an opportunity for the younger generation of many countries to put forward their ideas and valuable suggestions towards forest conservation. The project made us learn about the importance of team work. We experienced that teamwork helps to solve problems and increase efficiency. When a team is able to work well together, they accomplish more than individuals can do together. We realized that unity is strength.

Gathering community via social media was our first step. The majority of the community joined us in this project was school students. We wanted to inspire younger generation of the world and to make them understand the importance of planting trees.

We, the team "Dream to save the Green" always worked collaboratively to reach sustainable goals. We made people aware of all the sustainable goals we covered through our project. Most of the communities were unaware of sustainable goals. Through our project we could make them realized that a simple act of kindness can make a huge change in the society which ultimately leads towards sustainable development of the world. "Dream to save the Green" did not focus on one goal. We, as a team had multiple goals such as **no poverty, good health and well-being, clean water and sanitation, decent work and economic growth, sustainable cities and communities, climate action and life on land.**





The impact we made on the society was endless. All the local and Global communities gave their helping hand with a nice smile. They understood the importance of this project and that they are the beneficiaries of it, as this project makes their lives comfortable and enlighten their future. Being a school network with 9 branches and over 20,000 students, each student of the network was requested to plant 5 trees. . So, each planted 5 trees and sent us the records. It helped us achieving our primary goal of planting 100,000 trees within a day. The 100,000 trees we planted included Pongamia Pinnata, Mangifera indica, Azaclirachta indica, Terminalia arjuna and Madhuca longifolia. Now we have planted **more than 123,423** trees throughout the world. Each student maintained a record book to show the growth of each plant. Not only the students of Lyceum International School took part in this event. Number of International schools actively participated in this project upon our request Through that we could make both local and international community involved in the project. **Children’s International School, Northern Virginia, USA ,St. Augustine Day School, Shyamnagar ,West Bengal,India.SMAN3 School, Padang, Panjang,Indonesia, DAV Public School, Faridabad, India, Girls Higher Secondary School Sialkot, Pakistan, Wockhardt Global School,India.**



Releasing the dream to save the green cover song was another great achievement we experienced. . It was an international collaborative work. This was organised to welcome the New Year 2021. Teams from India, Pakistan, Indonesia and also Ms. Linky from South Africa, the head of Miss Linky channel and the original singer of the **‘Let’s see what we can do’** song joined us enthusiastically. Through this cover song we could further enhance the awareness of people towards forest conservation and sustainable development goals. Mr. Jon Harper, the CEO of Global Social Leaders project appreciated our efforts on this live programme and it made our team very excited. Through this cover song we guided all the communities to save the mother earth. Being a school who was highly inspired by our project,

SMAN3 Padang Panjang, Indonesia launched a project of planting 5,000 trees to initiate a city sustainability development program with the help and the blessings of the Mayor of Padang Panjang, the parliament of West Sumatera, the head of Education Department branch district I of West Sumatera, the head of Information and Communication of Padang Panjang, the supervisor of West Sumatera, the head of Principals’ association of Padang Panjang. Apart from them, the other foreign schools who were asked to plant 1,000 trees supported us achieving our goal.

To commemorate 73rd Sri Lankan Independence Day, SMAN3. School, Pandan Panjan, Indonesia, Girls Higher Secondary School Sialkot, Pakistan, DAV Public School, Faridabad, India also launched a huge tree planting project with us. **This is the first time in the history that a foreign country launched a tree planting project to commemorate the Independence Day of Sri Lanka.**



On the 8th of April we participated in an an internationally collaborative panel discussion based on the theme, **"Is it time we shift emphasis from technological solutions to climate change & focus on the ‘ Human Dimension’ with Global Knot which was organised by St. Augustine Day School,Shyamnagar, India.** At this panel discussion, two team members of our GSL team, Arindi Jayasinghe and Gavesha Dharmarathna were recognised as Best Panelist and Best Question Shooter and it was a remarkable turning point on our global journey.

Through our virtual promotions of this global journey 148,065 people joined us via facebook, not only that we communicated via Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter and Vimeo platforms to spread our message and to achieve our goal and it was a huge success. We reached over 35,000 post reaches via other social media platforms. As the future leaders of the global community, we are glad to introduce the Global Social Leaders concept to new teams in Sri Lanka, Indonesia, USA, Pakistan, India, South Africa, Ecuador and Nepal, via our social media platforms.

The number of hours we spent on this project was 1420 hours. Each student was asked to spend only an hour per day. Apart from the above-mentioned programs, our students engaged in balcony gardening, kitchen gardening and home composting.

We were able to grab the attention of many groups in the society. Through our GSL project ‘Dream to Save the Green’, we could kindle new hopes in the minds of the people who are deeply frustrated due to the pandemic situation.

The president of Sri Lanka, his. Excellency Gotabhaya Rajapaksha was informed about the project. Then the Secretary of Ministry of Environment, Minister of Education and Minister of Foreign Affairs were informed. Some leading newspapers like “Daily Mirror “ , “Sunday Times “ , “Daily News” reported our project and one of the prominent television channels in SriLanka “Derana TV” revealed about us. Through all the social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Twitter and Lyceum Village we webcast our programs and received recognition.

Not only in our country, foreign media also revealed about us. Padang Panjang TV and the Times newspaper, Times of India newspaper reported about us introduced our project as an international collaboration project.

Sustainability was our dream. We could achieve what we wanted. Our aim was to cover seven sustainable goals as mentioned above. We worked collaboratively and peacefully with others. In this project, we did not want to raise lot of funds. But we managed to raise funds to buy some endemic plants and seeds. We raised 110GBP by selling scrap metal, plants and compost to public. Through the panel discussion, we ensured quality education among different nations.

We have planned some future events to re-create some forests with the help of Mayors in SriLanka. As the first step, of the project we have already selected the best municipal council in Sr Lanka, which is situated in Kuliypitiya and we have submitted the project plan to the Mayor.

FUTURE PLANS



CONCLUSION

In this journey we did not mind any obstacle or barrier we faced. Those were real experiences in our lives. We accepted all the challenges positively. Physical gatherings were restricted due to the pandemic situation. It was a huge challenge for us but we could overcome this challenge by organising virtual gatherings. we met online and worked with a strong team spirit. We faced some difficulties in finding some endemic plants which we planned to donate. In that case, the Agricultural Officers of the area also had helped us.

"Dream to save the Green or custodians of earth"We have launched a massive project to make people aware and also to guided both local and international communities to achieve sustainable goals. We could make a huge attitudinal change through our project. We ensure that this project will be a life long project and we are happy and proud we fulfilled our duty towards mother nature. We know for sure that the future generation of the world will be benefited and gifted by our genuine effort.