



# Make Meals Matter

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## MAKE MEALS MATTER

We, the Hunger Helpers, 7<sup>th</sup> Grade students from D Y Patil International School, Mumbai, India. We aim to tackle zero hunger (United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal #2) by providing healthy cooked meals and food supplies to underprivileged families.

## TWO PILLARS OF SUSTAINABLE WORKS

We identified **100** underprivileged families within a 2 kms radius of our school. We made MMM Food Packages of **22kgs** containing a month's supply of rice, whole wheat, pulses, lentils, sugar, salt and oil. We then undertook distributing them on monthly basis to the families (in spite of COVID pandemic and lockdowns) and have raised funds to ensure a year's supply.

We have also adopted an orphanage in Titwala village, on the outskirts of Mumbai. Every month we have been providing MMM Food Packages. More importantly, we have visited and interacted with the children, taught them activities like urban gardening (from last year's GSL project, **Grow Fresh Eat Fresh**), pebble art, organized a football match.

## PLANNING

We started our project by organizing a Diwali Bazaar, wherein we sold products like, chocolates, Diwali lights and gift envelopes. All the products were made by us for the festival. This helped us raise the seed money **£120** for the team's needs like transportation, t-shirts and labels. To raise funds we also reached out to and calling friends, relatives and parent's associates around the world—got us a very encouraging response and our donation drive raised over **£6800** and still counting.

All of this has been meticulously planned by our team during our weekly meetings virtually. We have had **30 virtual meetings** along with 5 in person meetings. Totaling **700+ hours** spent on project. We amplified our project through social media to spread the word about the importance of zero hunger. Our next step was a conscious effort to make wholesome vegetarian meals. We used only recycled material for containers, and personally went about to provide these meals the underprivileged children.

## WORK IN SCHOOL

- To spread awareness in our school, we virtually spoke about our project to students from classes 5-12 and conveyed the importance of zero hunger.
- Inspired by us, a group of Grade 5 students started their own zero hunger project and reached out to us for support and inspiration.
- Our blogs featured in our school newsletter twice and on the school website which is available to parents.

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS & COLLABORATIONS

SDG #17 was achieved with strong tie ups for Community Partners and high profile Celebrity Endorsements. We collaborated with **RASHMI SMILE TRUST** to help us with our fundraising with correct financial implications for donations via the Trust. We also got support from the **ROBIN HOOD FOOD ARMY** to send volunteers to regularly help us distribute the Food Packages. Virtually, we collaborated with other GSL Teams like HotDogs, We Together, Manta from the Wave, Gender Equality, Dreamcatchers (Peru). We supported each other by sharing posts and commenting continuously, to amplify each others' project's. Eg: To contribute to HotDogs SDG # 15 (Life on Land) we fed 450 cows in a cow shelter and host of other animals and birds – in reciprocation HotDogs fed 700 meals to the homeless in their area.

## POWERFUL SUPPORT

**MR SANJEEV KAPOOR** - Celebrity Chef, launched our Make Meals Matter Food Package. He encouraged us by appreciating our efforts at contributing to Zero Hunger, with an official video.

**MR CHAHAL SINGH** - Mumbai City's Municipal Commissioner, gave us an audience and applauded our efforts. He also encouraged us by giving full support for distribution during COVID.

**MR ARZAN KHAMBATTA** - Celebrity Artist famous for Scrap Metal Sculptures, teamed with us to help us paint the 75 feet wall mural with Zero Hunger messages.

**MAHARASHTRA TIMES**, Mumbai's Leading Marathi Daily of The Times Group (with circulation of over 1 million readership), covered our initiative twice and encouraged by giving the effort lot of credibility and awareness – This immensely helped in fund raising.



35%

Children in India are malnourished

2000

Cooked Meals provided

600

MMM Food Packages distributed

12000

Kgs of food provisions supplied

704

Hours of total work

£6800

Raised

2

Powerful Community Partners

3

Celebrity Endorsements

∞

JOY achieved countless





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## CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED ( Due to COVID & Lockdown )

- The entire project was launched during the COVID pandemic and global lockdowns, so we had to be innovative at same time cautious of factoring many aspects, to ensure sustainable work.
- Due to social distancing, most meetings were over video conferences.
- Spreading awareness without mass meetings etc was a task, so we had to optimally use Social Media with innovative ways.
- Again, due to lockdowns, Fundraising efforts will be a challenge was evident. We let our work speak for us and followed up with whatsapp messages and personally telemarketing.
- The most daunting was the challenge to physically go out on the streets, with a pandemic raging globally, and distribute food to the underprivileged. Micro detailed precautions of safety were meticulously put into an SOP, and followed to the T, thus ensured outreaches happened successfully. Fortunately, our keen not to let down the under privileged children, who saw hope and friends in us, ensured we worked harder with social media and sanitized out reach programs.

## LEARNING

**Firstly, studying about zero hunger extensively, sensitized us to the enormity of the problem. When we visited the underprivileged for first few times to deliver cooked meals and provisions, the happiness and gratefulness on their faces, gave us realization of the importance of Zero Hunger & GSL Goals.**

- Anandita and Kiara had taken part in last year's GSL competition and their experience helped the team eliminate any elementary mistakes.
- Fundraising was a completely new skill for us. We had to make correct outreach proposition, take finance consultants help to ensure funds are received in legitimate manner with correct tax certificates for donors (our community partner trust was great help in same) and importantly, budget expenses accordingly.
- We assigned social media work amongst team members, thus learnt different marketing platforms in the bargain – something would be useful in near future:
  - Anandita- Instagram Handle- Got an internship to handle an organizations' social media.
  - Maahika- Blog Handle- Was featured in the school blog page.
  - Kiara- Podcast Handle- Helped with speaking during virtual presentations.
  - Aarsh- YouTube Handle- Worked on the school MUN design and tech committee.
- We learnt the true importance of teamwork, not only whilst planning but mainly when we distributed the food and interacted with the orphans. This resulted in strong bonding within our team.
- Daily, we are blessed to eat 3 times a day but millions aren't. Thanks to this project, we realized that everyone deserves to be fed and properly nourished.

**We cannot eat, unless we have shared – A life learning.**

This project is something we will cherish forever – long after the competition too.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

With or without the pandemic, having social media accounts was the first thing that came to our mind. Along with familiar platforms like Instagram and YouTube, we decided to try new modes of communication. – Such as Wordpress and Podcasts on spotify.

- We launched the challenge of #cleanmyplate on Social Media for goal#12 – responsible consumption and production with Zero wastage given vital importance.
- WhatsApp groups played large role in information, fund collections, team building and branding.

Our Social Media coverage's were also often appreciated by GSL mentors, and same was encouraging.

## SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability for this year's project was in micro and macro nature. For Macro sustainability aspects:

**MMM Club:** An ideal way to continue Make Meals Matter would be to have an MMM Club in all the D Y Patil Institutions. Each of the sister schools will have MMM clubs with members and leaders- with a prime focus to create a sustainable work. As the academic year in India starts in July, the clubs start in our next academic year, i.e. July 2021 we have already brainstormed with the principals of the sister schools and have sent enrolment forms for students to join us.

**MMM Wall Mural:** To create awareness in our city, we got permission from The Municipal Commissioner of Mumbai for painting a wall (75 feet x 6 feet) on a prominent road in the city. Top professional artists, students from 6 neighboring schools, and a host of sponsors will paint the message of zero hunger along with us. For safety measures, this has been put on hold due to lockdown, but will resume right after.

**Zero Waste Schools & Societies:** We have planned to make zero waste societies by teaching the community simple ways to reduce food wastage. In each of our buildings and societies, leftovers will be collected and distributed by our Community Partners, Robin Hood Food Army, amongst the needy.

