

PROJECT GREEN ORIGIN BY TEAM TERRA

Aim: To propound global change by addressing as many Sustainable Development Goals as possible

The SDGs we addressed:

- 2: Zero Hunger
- 3: Good Health and Wellbeing
- 4: Quality Education
- 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
- 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- 17: Partnerships for The Goals



(A picture of our team)

Introduction:

Our team comprises of a group of enthusiastic high-schoolers from Chennai who strive for a more sustainable, cleaner and judiciously equitable world. Project Green Origin is our first initiative as Team Terra.



(A picture of students using our guides)

Our team:

- Ansh Pincha
- Dheeraj Aaditya
- Dhruv Gadgil
- Yash Pincha

Our initiatives:

- Study guides
- The Network
- Community vehicle
- Interact Club

Study guides

Our first initiative was the careful curation of study guides from external resources for destitute students of the Tamil Nadu State Board. These students, who otherwise did not have access to such resources, can use our guides as a means for efficient and thorough revision in preparation for their Board Examinations. We chose to specifically focus on the 10th grade as their examinations were relatively the most important.

Our team decided to focus on four subjects: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology. Each member curated the guide for one subject. We delegated tasks in accordance to each of our abilities. The guides took a total of about 150 man-hours to make. We believe that we can specifically address sustainable education through our study guides. We contacted six schools and created a system where knowledge can be propounded without our continuous involvement. We initially intended on working with Sevalaya, a home for the destitute, but as we progressed in our guides, we sought to maximise our reach. Our project is founded on the principle of universality and we aim to uphold the inherent right to education. To ensure the prevention of misinformation, we got the guides checked by the faculty at our school.

Making the guides definitely helped us bolster our understanding of each of the subjects as we had to thoroughly understand the concepts before we could simplify them. As a team, all of us definitely improved our time management. Each of the four of us were finding it difficult to meet deadlines at first, but after some scheduling, we were able to meet the final deadline and send the guides out on time. Working as a team on the guides also significantly improved our teamwork and taught us how to delegate work in an efficient manner.

The Network

All four of us are studying under the IB curriculum. The rigour and the difficulty of the curriculum led us to the idea of an open community where IB students from all over the world help each other. So, we decided to scrupulously create a Discord server solely for facilitating the IB experience and making education easier. IB in itself is considered one of the most difficult curriculums in the world, so we thought we could help fellow students by providing a medium through which IB becomes relatively easier.

The server took about 40 man-hours to make. As of now, there are about 550 members from 5 continents. The server is extremely active with multiple people conversing each day. We wanted to tackle the SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure) as we thought it was not given much significance. Therefore, we decided to help in combating this goal by creating a server to foster innovation. This initiative relates to both, Quality Education and Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure. The server also served as a medium through which members could discuss several community initiatives, and extract viable resources and learn from different experiences, which ultimately aided our goal for climate action and sustainability in all aspects.

In making the server, we were given a new perspective on the IB curriculum. We learned how to look at things from all angles and gained different perspectives on education. Again, due to time constraints, we were made to delegate the work and efficiently coordinate as a team. This, most certainly, enhanced our collaboration skills. We initially faced some difficulty in structuring the server and in promoting it. However, after brainstorming and improvising, we were successfully able to create an effective network that addressed our aims.

Community Vehicle

The community vehicle is a novel approach to addressing communal hunger. In principle, this initiative is built on self-reliance and reusability. Through our initiative, we ensure equality amongst the unfortunate. The vehicle, manned by No Food Waste (an NGO we collaborated with), allows for a far more convenient distribution of excess food. Everyday, it travels across communities receiving excess food from donors. This food is then distributed within slums in Valasaravakkam, Alandur, Adyar, Perungudi and Sholinganallur. There are 272 slums in south Chennai in those areas alone.

In order to procure the vehicle, we needed funds. Initially, we thought of online fundraising campaigns, but realised soon that the amount of money needed (about 1000 GBP) was far greater than what the fundraiser could provide, considering the amount of time we had. Therefore, we decided on contacting firms as a way to raise money and help with the firms' corporate social responsibility. We were able to obtain the money required (1040 GBP) and successfully bought the community vehicle.

Needless to say, this initiative is our attempt at tackling sustainability and hunger. Our impact goes beyond just meals and food. At the very communal level, the vehicle reaches about 100 people every day. We measure our impact through the invaluable alleviation of hunger we aid in. Throughout this process, we have been met with a completely new perspective. A perspective that is not confined by our own experiences but one that allows us to understand the severity of world hunger. In a lot of senses, it has been a humbling journey. We've learnt a great deal over these past few months. The initial failure of the fundraiser taught us not only to improvise but also to adapt.

Interact Club

Founded by our team, Interact has gone on to be a major club in our school. An extension of Rotary International local to our school, we as a club act as an organisation for community and societal welfare, consolidated effectively into a body where a singularity of all our efforts empowers us all in our endeavours of positive environmental and societal change. The leading committee/dias comprises our team members. It is a student body organisation sought to establish, local to our school and the students whom it will profit, exclusively aligned to towards the cause of contribution in the favour of community and environmental welfare. Rotary itself, the parent institution, is a massive inter-continental network of around 1.4 million citizens of the world, dedicated and resolute in their mission of actively furthering the cause of the security of society and biosphere for over a century. This is what makes the club different; it isn't merely a discrete body, individual in its initiatives and undertakings, but rather one that will accompany thousands of others within a self-supporting system. Interact bolsters essential values, and plays a key component in building friendships with engaging interactions, promoting personal growth and development, business evolution, mastering vocational skills, fostering community awareness and most importantly, sustaining a continuity in education by training us to be better citizens. It aids us students by facilitating credible reciprocity with our fellow students, our community, and ultimately, our environment.

As of the present, we have a project titled 'WASH' underway in its earlier stages: a project centred around the facilitation of availability of reliable and safe sanitation facilities to the less privileged of society by means such as construction, etc. This is by the Interact Club of MCTM in partnership with the Rotary Club of Madras; the Club will, too, as of this year see through about two more large scale projects just this year. Within the context of GSL, this was a foot taken forward in leaving behind a vessel for the future students of our school who are more inclined to bring about gradually a world that favours us all sustainably. This club immediately impacts over 200 students from our school, along with immeasurable impact towards the people this club aims to help in the following years.

Failed Endeavours

As the pandemic hindered our project's progress, one of our initial ideas was to create a website that would compliment our initiatives and act as a medium to raise awareness. Our intention was to include articles on our projects and articles that raised awareness of global issues on the website. As we began to work on it, we were met with the difficulties of coding a website and the time constraint did not help. Unfortunately, due to lack of time, we had to scrap this idea. Although, we did write numerous articles that we intend on publishing in the future as a blog.

Another one of our ideas was a plantation drive. Due to lack of time and the pandemic, we had to put it on pause. However, our team has collected the plants and has obtained permission to conduct the drive. We are planning to hold the drive some time in June. With about 100 volunteers and a 1000 plants, we feel this could make a significant contribution to SDG 13 (Climate Action). Lastly, one of our intentions was to volunteer at a community kitchen and help make the food that is distributed to the underprivileged. Unfortunately, right after we landed on this idea, COVID cases started to rise and we were forced to dismiss this project. However, we do intend on volunteering once the pandemic dies down.

These projects, together, taught us about making decisions and prioritising our work. We were aware of the fact that all our initiatives would not have been possible within such a short span of time and that we would have to compromise. Although we were not able to complete these projects, they are midway and will be completed in the following months.

Our Impact Quantified:

- Study Guides: Impacted over 2100 people all over the city
- The Network: Successfully brought together over 550 people, from 5 continents, that are part of the IB programme in order to facilitate the IB experience.
- Interact Club: Established a rotary club in our school that is managed by the school itself and will continue to exist sustainably even after we're no longer at the school. The impact of this club grows every year as there are new students enrolling into the school. Immediately, this club impacts the 200 students of our school.
- Community Vehicle: Directly feeds about 100 stomachs each day and is managed by the NGO.

Thank you for providing us with the opportunity to propound significant change!