



SHIFT TO THRIFT

An initiative started by UAQ GO GREEN to fight against Fast Fashion and reduce carbon footprint.

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OUR AIM

Our aim with this project is not only to combat fast fashion and its environmental consequences but to also encourage and motivate the local community in the UAE to make a shift to thrifting for all its benefits and adopt more eco-friendly and responsible consumption habits. This also included the goal of reducing our carbon footprint through upcycling and donating clothes. We wanted to offer a service whereby students and local citizens can donate unwanted clothes or exchange reused clothes rather than purchase from fast fashion brands and therefore increase their carbon footprint.

UN SDGS



AISHA ALI
MARWA ABDULLA
FATMA NASER
HESSA AMRO

GROUP MEMBERS



SMART OBJECTIVES

- 1 Conduct sessions with students at our school to build awareness on Fast Fashion.
- 2 Collect over 50 pieces of clothing as donations from students.
- 3 Establish a thrift store in school by the end of March.

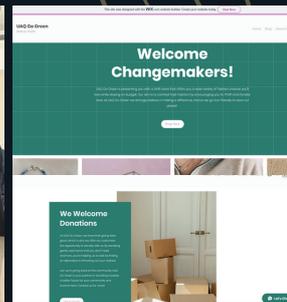
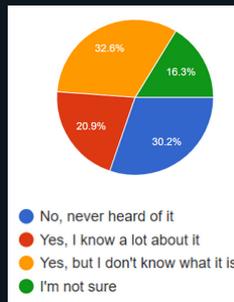
COURSE OF ACTION

We first started by researching our topic to fully understand it. Then, we wanted to know how much our target audience knew about Fast Fashion and what their spending habits were so a baseline survey was conducted. We got over 40 responses and the data showed that the students had little to no awareness of this issue. Approximately 80% of the respondents were either unaware or unsure of what fast fashion is. This inspired us even more to spread awareness about it. We then outlined our activities and started preparing for our thrift store. (Chart shows the response to the question "Have you heard of Fast Fashion?")

At this stage, we wanted to create an appealing brand image for our project. This was where our team members utilized their design and creativity skills to develop our own logo, and website, we opened social media accounts on different platforms like Instagram and TikTok. These logos were also printed onto cardboard tags for our store. We also received a donation from one of the member's relatives who gave us a gorgeous clothes rack to display our items. Now was the time to start collecting donations and conducting sessions with students. However, we were still unsure of methods to get our products from but Girl Up UAE club had a similar project to ours based in Dubai. Our team leader was part of the club so we asked for advice from the club leader, who gave us really helpful ideas on how to get started and what methods are the best. This discussion also showed a chance for a collaboration to happen in the future.

THE PROBLEM

One of the arising issues that harm our environment right now is Fast Fashion. It is "fast" in several senses: the changes in fashion are fast, the rate of production is fast; the customer's decision to purchase is fast; delivery is fast, and garments are worn fast – usually only a few times before being discarded. The rise of fast fashion has had devastating consequences, such as its reliance on plastic fabrics and its enormous carbon footprint to its erosion of workers' rights. According to Business Insider "The fashion industry is the second most polluting industry globally, contributing to 10% of humankind's carbon emissions." After learning more about this issue and realizing its prominence globally, we also looked at Fast Fashion in our community, in the UAE, where there is little to no awareness about Fast Fashion or its harmful impact. This particularly has then inspired our passion to start our own project "Shift to Thrift".

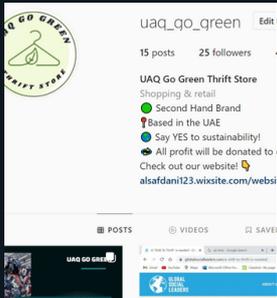


WHAT WE GAINED

- Business and Marketing skills
- Designing and creating
- Developed our creativity skills
- Consumption Responsibility
- Problem Solving
- Research skills
- Utilizing our skills
- Leadership and Teamwork
- More interesting knowledge on fast Fashion
- More understanding of the SDGs related to our project, especially SDG 11.

COURSE OF ACTION (CONT)

- To introduce our idea to our audience, we chose different methods like creating posters about Fast Fashion or conducting our workshop where we spread knowledge on what Fast Fashion is, its impact and what eco-friendly alternatives we suggest. These sessions were hosted multiple times at our school at different times to get more visitors. As for "fundraising", a bake sale at our school was hosted, in which students brought gently used items like clothes and accessories and donated them in exchange for delicious baked goods we made ourselves. This event was really fun and many people at our school participated. Over 70 students visited our bake sale and we had 60 pieces of clothing donated. All of which went into our display rack and the little spot we created for our store.
- During this time, we also wanted to grow our social media following and keep marketing our idea, our social media manager Fatma had created multiple posts that talk about Fast Fashion and donating, but also showcase our progress. Objective (1) was something we really focused on because of the challenges we faced during the pandemic and exam season, which limited our activities to an extent. Therefore, we found different opportunities to discuss our project, like the Expo "Education for SDGs" Circle and hosting a Ted Talk at our school.
- Finally, as the submission date grew closer, we conducted another survey to measure the impact of our project. In this survey, we received over 60 responses. The respondents were asked about their opinion on Fast Fashion again and what alternative are they most interested in. 76.8% chose to donate used clothes as their preferred alternative to Fast Fashion. Over 57% also said that their opinion on Fast Fashion has changed from before and 31% said maybe. Although the margin of these numbers isn't huge, we still felt proud of our efforts and grateful to those who participated.



CHALLENGES FACED

Due to Covid-19, we had to be online more than once which was a big setback as we couldn't meet enough to establish our thrift store as originally planned. We also had our exams and homework most of the time, so it was hard balancing that at times. Furthermore, the biggest challenge concerning our project is how we can encourage people in the UAE to switch to thrifting. As there is a stigma and somewhat of a reluctance towards buying used clothing items here, even though it's more common in other parts of the world. All of these challenges we faced did limit us at moments but they were also a learning experience on how we can overcome them as a team, whether it was through delegating roles or making our activities virtual.

IMPACT AND INVOLVMENT

- 60+ survey respondents.
- 70+ people visited our bake sale and took part in it.
- Collected over 60 different items of clothing.
- 30+ people involved in our workshop sessions and marketing on social media.
- 100+ people involved in the overall project.
- 100+ hours spent in total.
- Established the thrift and conducted awareness sessions for students.



FUTURE PLANS

We don't plan on stopping our activities here, of course, we still have other goals and plans for the future like:

- Growing our social media platforms and increasing our following.
- Hosting other events that encourage people to thrift more like a fashion show to showcase our products and an ECA craft session in upcycling old clothes.
- Collect more donations from our local community to reach 120+ items.
- Collaborate with different organizations and charities as well.

TESTIMONIALS

"I wasn't fully aware about fast fashion prior to the girls project. The girls have been dedicated in spreading awareness around the campus and held various events. I am excited to see how they progress."

Mr.
Faisal,
Physics
Teacher

Ms.
Kylie,
Sports
teacher

"The fast fashion project helped us understand how detrimental it is to buy mass-produced clothes at low costs. This project allowed us to see the impact we can make from donating gently used clothes."

"I was impressed with the work the team has made as their efforts could be easily witnessed from their wide range of clothing. The idea is fresh yet very appealing it sums up exactly what we need in this day and time."

Muna
Ahmed,
G11
student