



Urban Agenda Platform

The global platform for sharing progress, action and knowledge on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve sustainable urban development.

GREEN SPACE NEW LIFE - PLANT FOR THE PLANET

Region	Middle East and North Africa
Award Scheme	Dubai International Award
Start Year	2017
Sustainable Development Goals	Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Summary

Environmental Education cannot be imparted by just books and being in the classrooms. We need to experience it. Landfills are an evil necessity, but finding ways to reduce waste and move towards Zero Landfill is quintessential. By planting more green trees, using treated wastewater for watering the plants and trees as the world faces the threats of water scarcity.

Background and Objective

The research conducted as the Founder SynergY youth Group and a high school student in UAE indicated that UAE is spending billions for waste management and recycling projects and still more than 20% of all waste sent to the landfills was identified to be recyclable. The demand for energy is growing day-by-day, global warming rising at an alarming rate. Dubai is running out of landfill space to dump its rubbish. We need to keep an EYE on Environmental Education and explore ways and means to engage Youth to be the keepers of the precious natural resources. The contamination of environment today with chemicals and excessive dumping is causing irreversible & irrecoverable damage to life and it is extremely alarming that millions of tonnes of trash generated every day, consisting of paper products, yard clippings, industrial & hazardous waste, plastics and food waste is filling landfills. UAE running out of landfills.

Actions and Implementation

THIS INITIATIVE IS THE CHOSEN FINALIST FOR THE UNITED NATIONS 'UN-Habitat Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Awards' Nov 2016 (result awaited) for its enormous potential of youth innovation and entrepreneurship to contribute to sustainable development. Youth innovation and entrepreneurship have proven to be an essential component of the international community's efforts to reach development goals, development of green economy and promotion of environmental protection. The United Nations 2030 Agenda presents a historic opportunity to ensure that youth innovation and entrepreneurship are fully integrated as meaningful and efficient tools to promote awareness and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and harmonious society supportive of youth innovation and economic and social initiatives. With the overarching inspiration of stimulating transformative progress for people, prosperity and our planet and to leave no one behind, the 2030 Agenda aims to mobilize global action for sustainable development worldwide, including through the field of youth innovation and entrepreneurship. Youth initiatives in technology, economy, social inclusion and environmental protection hence become vital for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and promotion of national development goals and global citizenship based on shared values of inclusion, non-discrimination, sustainability, mutual understanding and culture of respect and solidarity. In today's globalized world, youth constitute a major segment of the total world population. It is imperative that youth become the voice, as they are not only vibrant but can well act as the 'agents of change' to advocate about Environmental Issues. As Founder of SynergY, I believe that 'Youth are the Future Champions! Youth have both special concerns and responsibilities in relation to the environment. A number of environmental risks and hazards disproportionately affect young people, who have to live for an extended period with the deteriorating environment bequeathed to them by earlier generations. Young people will be compelled to engage in new forms of action and activism to generate effective responses to ecological challenges. Environmental education has an important role to play in the promotion of environmental awareness. Following best practices for the change youth can bring by addressing environmental issues, through the specific climate action undertaken and then sharing to mobilize youth and raise awareness to reduce the need of landfills and plant native trees near the landfills to green the area. The environmental issue this campaign focused aimed for 'Zero Landfill' and drastic reduction needed in this direction. It is an important global issue because the rate at which we are generating waste and dumping them, there will be no space left and the toxins that the landfills generate will make life difficult on this beautiful planet. From every perspective the causes of the problem are inevitable as the recycling practices are not so effective and developed and not everything is biodegradable making 'Landfills an evil necessity' Investing on - How we can reduce the carbon footprint of Dubai, combat global warming with the reduction of greenhouse gases, and create sustainability. This affects our future generations' and us more and hence it should matter to us more than ever before. Raising Awareness, taking people to think about Landfills and how much we are filling them by the waste we create, especially in UAE; this is a big concern. Our project brought together many Emiratis' and non Emiratis' (expats) to work and address this environmental issue as youth for the first time. Landfills areas Reduction and Greening the Space by



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planting trees Most common waste that fills the landfills is food waste and the most dangerous are the hazardous industrial and medical waste. Food waste is a massive global problem that has negative humanitarian, environmental and financial implications. As individuals, all participants in the campaign stepped up and further encouraged everyone to broaden their understanding about the Foodprint and Waterprint and learn how they can be calculated and reduced - which impact the planet. This was a small shift in our habit to choose the right food, could help a long way to reduce the food print. Just by knowing how many miles the food ingredients travelled to and cost in production can help us understand and cultivate changes in habit to lessen the food print. Sharing the practice helped us –'Shopping the Best Way' too. It also encouraged kids to eat more vegetarian food as veggies have lower food print. Eating Local was also found to be a very good practice, which meant eating foods grown closer to where you live. The food was not only fresh-picked but also higher in nutrients and richer in vitamins, minerals and proteins. Above all eliminating food wastage and reducing the landfills, hence, became most crucial. We all understood the need to be thankful and become the shields for the Food Bounty.

Outcomes and Impacts

Youth have both special concerns and responsibilities in relation to the environment. A number of environmental risks and hazards disproportionately affect young people, who have to live for an extended period with the deteriorating environment bequeathed to them by earlier generations. Young people will be compelled to engage in new forms of action and activism to generate effective responses to ecological challenges. Environmental education has an important role to play in the promotion of environmental awareness. As a responsible global youth the founder of SynergY presented by investigating and implementing the change youth can bring by addressing environmental issues, through the specific climate action undertaken and then shared to mobilize youth and raise awareness to reduce the need of landfills and plant native trees near the landfills to green the area. The environmental issue this project focused aimed for 'Zero Landfill' and drastic reduction needed in this direction. It is an important global issue because the rate at which we are generating waste and dumping them, there will be no space left and the toxins that the landfills generate will make life difficult on this beautiful planet. From every perspective the causes of the problem are inevitable as the recycling practices are not so effective and developed and not everything is biodegradable making 'Landfills an evil necessity'. The investigation questioned and found answer to – How the carbon footprint of Dubai can be reduced to combat global warming with the reduction of greenhouse gases, and create sustainability as this affects our future generations' and so it should matter to us more than ever before. "The world needs promising youth leaders and inspiring youth leadership aspiring for global healing and sustainable peace. It's prime to tap into the passion, creativity, and ingenuity of all young people, and find ways to transform the community to be responsible by allowing inspiring young people to serve."

Gender and Social Inclusivity

United Arab Emirates and anywhere to follow- Clarifying how the project will limit emissions. Landfills contain materials that can decompose such as food waste. Due to this, methane is emitted that cause global warming. The project research based on facts and data collected from reliable sources including interviews and media reports in United Arab Emirates served to spark the idea and define the goals that facilitated finding proper direction for preparing the required action plan for the Project. <https://youtu.be/R2IyXSJIT2s?t=5m31s>

Innovative Initiative

Curriculum in schools and universities are following and promoting environmental education and the need to reduce food wastage, re-cycling and waste management. • Getting people to think about Landfills and how much we are filling them by the waste we create, especially as in UAE this is a big concern • Engaging Youth and children in a fun way to visit the landfills, learn more about them and to plant trees there • Youth raising awareness to reduce landfills "In the end, we will conserve only what we love, we will love only what we understand, we will understand only what we are taught or what we experience"

Resources devoted to delivery

No. Title Source Author Publication Title Volume Number Date Page Number 1 Ten Surprising Climate and renewable energy activists Climate reality Blog Climate Reality <http://bit.ly/2hwtsPL> NA JULY 17, 2017 NA Edit 2 Dubai's green teen makes it to iconic Times Square screen Gulf News Anjana Kumar <http://bit.ly/129Ab2u> NA August 14, 2013 NA Edit 3 Dubai teen bags NRI of the Year Award Khaleej Times Angel Tesorero <http://bit.ly/2uwum4H> NA July 12, 2017 NA Edit 4 Dubai Municipality & Accor Hotels engage SynergY youth in the biggest National tree planting effort Pr Log NA <http://bit.ly/1L3aQsQ> NA Nov. 7, 2015 NA Edit 5 Youngest UAE Olympic torch-bearer starts youth foundation Gulf News Shveta Pathak <http://bit.ly/2cbETYY> NA July 29, 2012 NA Edit 6 Sit-down iftar for hundreds of landfill workers Gulf News Sajila Saseendran, Senior Reporter <http://bit.ly/2x71ZY6> NA June 19, 2016 NA Edit 7 Children plant a Ghaf and go back home with a smile Khaleej Times Mansi Paithankar <http://bit.ly/2vScJdI> NA October 30, 2013 NA Edit 8 Youngsters 'synergise' to make Dubai greener Khaleej Times NA <http://bit.ly/1aF9Nxx> NA October 24, 2013 NA Edit 9 Emirates Women of the year 2015 Young Achiever Simran Vedvyas Motivate Publishing Olivia Philips <http://bit.ly/1PHxZZW> NA



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November 25, 2015 NA Edit 10 SynergY's efforts worth the praise and recognition Gulf News Community <http://bit.ly/14FutGa> NA June 16, 2013 NA

Conclusion

Yes the practice is fully supported by Dubai Municipality and it would not have been possible to achieve the success without the support. The National media and press and leading newspaper of UAE Gulf News, Khaleej Times, The National, Gulf Today, 7 Days and National Television crew City 7, Emirates News etc all offered unwavering support. Dubai Municipality's core vision is "Creating an excellent city that provides the essence of success and comfort of sustainable living". Initiatives such as Dubai Municipality's Ambassador of Sustainability played an important role in driving awareness and building a culture of sustainability, in line with the directives of the leadership of Dubai on the adoption of environmentally friendly policies and strategies. Dubai Municipality is dedicated to fostering positive change in public attitudes towards environmental issues. Their vision to start with the youth, to carry within the potential to continue the nation's strides towards becoming a healthy, happy and sustainable green economy appointed the Founder of SynergY and applicant Simran Vedvyas as 'Sustainability Ambassador of Sustainability' A Sustainable Dubai, The Dubai Municipality Report 2016 details this on Page 58, 59 and Page 127 (Internet Link: <http://bit.ly/2xe3x2U>) Policy and Legislation of Dubai Municipality Waste Minimization, published in December 2014 (Internet Link: <http://bit.ly/2vN2Krx>)