

AGS Hajinar – Student initiatives from learning to doing to transforming a remote village

Summary:

AGS Hajinar, A school that is situated in a very remote location in Kashmir, a place that remains cut off from the rest of the valley & the world for 3 months each year, a place with limited amenities, facilities and services, alongside international border and amid on and of ceasefire violations. Nothing could dampen the spirits of the students and they know how to hold their own fort to any challenge that is being thrown at them.

2022 Bharti Foundation with Indian Army introduced an online course designed by UNESCO for all students of Army goodwill schools across UT of Jammu, Kashmir & Ladakh. These were highly interactive certification programs on that enabled learners to acquire critical perspectives on biodiversity and human wellbeing as well as gain the social and emotional competencies that could facilitate biodiversity conservation efforts.

The challenges were huge for these students who came from basic economical background, smart phones are not something that everybody could afford, the internet was limited and even the electricity in the whole area was merely available however a thing which looked improbable at first became a village changing experience, as 100% students of this school not only participated and successfully completed the course but also used the knowledge acquired in changing their own village.

Aims & Objectives:

Provide platform to students with action oriented insights enabling them to contribute to a sustainable lifestyle.

Equip students with enough knowledge and experience for them to become agents of positive viable change in the society

Transform learnings into actions.

What did you do?

Taking forward the vision of our Project head to initiate this project, when this opportunity presented itself to me, I undertook the whole certification program only to realize how apt is the information, and how huge is the potential of actually making these students engines of change towards helping a cause to a sustainable biodiverse climate.

I made a group of 1 teacher and 4 students in the school, with whom I did the program extensively, after the program was completed by the set of students and teachers we did a series of focused group discussions in order to make sure how every student could do it, imbibe it and get impacted the way the course intends to. But we did not let the things end when the course got completed, the whole bunch of students have taken the responsibility of being socially responsible, they have started with the cleanliness drive of the area and taken out huge wastes with the help of local authorities in the area. The students

formed a socially responsible club wherein they are proactively contributing towards making their surroundings, water bodies cleaner. Each student took it upon themselves to educate their families about it and there is a visible change in the whole area.

What was the context & background?

UNESCO has certification programs for climate change, biodiversity and global citizenship in order to inculcate the sense of responsibility in the students and make them responsible towards such critical things so that these important things be addressed in the future.

Has it been evaluated? How successful has it been?

Yes, the same has been evaluated, 240 students completed the 10 hour program over 5 weeks successfully, 4 leader students and 1 teacher has been invited and awarded in New Delhi in the International conference. The students have post the conference undertaken two projects

Project A

A team of students, had a visit to a nearby village, where the students trained and aware the housewives about the burning of fuel, and LPG gas, because, due to the unawareness many families lost their loved ones, by gas cylinder blasts.

Project B

Another team of students, aware the populace of most backward village of valley, about environmental pollution, deforestation, use of polythene, water pollution etc.

Both the projects were done under the supervision of authorities and experts.

How did it draw on or contribute to a healthy school atmosphere

The school is now a clean and green school, 240 students and teachers are not only certified socially responsible but are forming a chain that extends to nearby villages too with prompt actions.

Special thanks to Mr. Tahir Ghaffar – Teacher coordinator, our main force on ground who guided then students at every step & the student leaders – Fazdah Mushtaq, Mehreen Mushtaq, Shoaib Shafeeq. These students not only helped other students in doing the course but also have led these group of students who have become change makers of the future.

The story resonated across region and soon AGS Potha too with the help of their Academic Mentor, Mr. Sourab Sharma who made sure that real teachings of such courses are imbibed in the students.

Story in Pictures



Students at MGIEP International conference



Brainstorming at the conference



Cleanliness drive organized by students in the area



Students undergoing the course during extra classes.

Our Student Leaders, leading by example



