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INTERNSHIP REPORT

Centre for Environment Education
Eco-Schools Programme
Ahmedabad, India

CEE

Centre for Environment Education



SAYEN
South Asia Youth Environment Network



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Firstly, I would like to thank **Shri Kartikeya Sarabhai**, who is the director of **CEE**, for giving me the opportunity, space and facilities to be part of the organization, expanding my knowledge about environmental awareness and growing as a person.

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I thank **Mansi Shah**, who was a supervisor figure to me and helped me to answer all my questions before arrival as well as guided me through the projects and gave me structure during my stay.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my coworkers in the office and my friends for their patience and openness, creating an enjoyable working environment. I am thankful for the belief in my skills and patience I received from all the team members of my department. It was a fruitful and enlightening experience overall and I am grateful for the opportunity.

I have truly benefited in knowledge and experience by volunteering in this organization and am grateful for this opportunity.

PREFACE

The Centre for Environment Education in Ahmedabad is a national institution focussing on promoting environmental awareness and sustainability development nationwide. It was established in August 1984 as a Center of Excellence supported by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. CEE works with local, state, national and international organizations and different governments in India as well as in various other countries to be part in developing a sustainable future. CEE has collaborated on Educational Sustainable Development (ESD) with the majority of the nations in South and South East Asia and serves as the regional coordinator for numerous regional initiatives like the South Asia Youth Environment Network (SAYEN).

One of the programmes implemented in CEE is the Eco-Schools Programme, the largest global sustainable schools programme that runs through the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), a non-profit organization established in 1981 in Leiden, Netherlands and with the headquarter currently based in Denmark. Its mission is to educate young people and actively engage in the environment, leaving a sense of achievement and giving them the possibility to spread their learning to the local community.

Eco-Schools Programme

The Eco-Schools programme globally engages 59,000 schools in 74 countries. India is one of the big players in the programme, with over 150 and counting participating Schools across the subcontinent. More than 45,000 students in India are part of the programme and the programme collaborates with 10 national and 5 international partners.

The Eco-Schools programme focuses mainly on students from grade 1-5, as it is believed that the greatest change starts with the children. Schools who participate in the programme follow a certain guideline that is implemented through a Seven-step methodology. This framework provides a productive structure that ensures the active involvement of young people, parents, teachers and even extends to the local community. The Eco-Schools programme also includes

themes that have direct links to the ‘Sustainable development Goals’ (SDG) set up by the United Nations. These themes include Healthy-living, Energy, Biodiversity, Waste and Water.

Objectives

The main objectives of the programme include 1) democratic and participatory students, 2) to assist them to cultivate responsible behavior towards the environment and 3) to facilitate hands-on learning. By incorporating sustainable issues with active learning, Eco-Schools provide schools with a flexible strategy for adopting environmental management systems and environmental learning. It is also important to provide students with the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values to equip the children for the future. By increasing public environmental knowledge and understanding, the preservation and sustainable use of natural resources will be encouraged, which will improve both the environment and people’s quality of life. Focusing on the younger generations ensures environmentally aware and sustainable people, with every new generation, starting in the classroom and spreading towards the community around.

Profile of work

The YEN department I was working in, focuses on three different projects, the *Eco-Schools Programme*, *Young Reporters for the environment* and *Tide Turners Plastic Challenge*. I was mainly operating under the ESP, learning about the programme and working in the media sphere. I got a deep inside in the national orientation session, and helped to keep the programme interactive. I mostly worked on creating videos for social media platforms, which helped me to understand the time intensity of projects and find a sense of time management. In the last week of my internship, I had the honor to participate in the Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) in Nadiad. Over 120 people from all over India and with different backgrounds joined to learn and discuss global climate policy processes and decision-making. The policy recommendations, outcomes and suggestions of LCOY would later be presented in the United Nations Climate Change Conference of Youth (COY). This conference also prepares young

people to engage in the Conference of the parties (COP) in future. The topic focussed on “Youth for Adaptation and Loss and Damage” and towards the end, policy suggestions were discussed and presented, to be used for the COY.

Following tasks I was assigned to in my programme:

1. Working on Healthy Lifestyle Commitment Challenge, where in a one-day commitment children from class 1-5 had to send video materials showing their day of eating healthy, nutritious food, living sustainably, engaging in physical activity, and maintaining cleanliness. Task consisted of watching and filtering over 150 videos from children sending their videos of a healthy lifestyle. After announcing the winner, I created a small introduction video of the children to honor their participation and posted it on social media.
2. Creating an instagram post for a teacher challenge for the national teacher’s day in India, where teachers should send a report about their experiences in this program.
3. Recording and creating a video for my project coordinator Khushbu Ma’am, introducing the CEE and Eco-Schools program that was supposed to be displayed at the ICSE - 2022 conference (International Conference for Sustainable Education 4th Edition) in Delhi (9th - 10th September).
4. Taking part and moderating the online national orientation session for the Eco-Schools Programme and coming up with ideas to make sessions more interactive
5. After completion of the orientation session, I created a video about the session for the social media channels.
6. Teachers day challenge success stories to be recorded and uploaded on the website.
7. Participation in the LCOY “Youth for Adaptation and Loss and Damage”.

Outcomes

Although my internship lasted only one month, I have learned and grown a lot in this time, both in the personal and professional sphere. Living in a different country with different routines and rules, first of all, has been a challenge in itself. Working in a private environmental organization in India, I have developed skills for understanding and working with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures and learned how to work effectively within a different environment. Furthermore, I noticed an increase in skill of how to work effectively within formal and informal networks and work cultures. The LCOY in specific enabled me to get involved in a larger network of highly enthusiastic and motivated people from different backgrounds and organizations, eager to change the future in a better sense. I have also profited in observation and interpretation competence and soft skills like time management and punctuality as well as learning how to work efficiently with (video-)editing softwares like Premiere Pro CC, Adobe Audition and Canva. While learning a lot about environmental issues, education and sustainable development, I expanded my communication and writing skills.

The internship at CEE also helped me in personal development. I acquired a sense of self-awareness, confidence and clarified my own values and ethical perspectives.



1. Two examples of created posts for the national Teachers' Day on 5th September. Photos and Videos can be seen on the official @ecoschoolsindia Instagram page.

Key learnings

As stated above, I acquired a high familiarity with editing software platforms, an attention to detail and learned how to translate different ideas from my colleagues and abstraction into the project. Communication is key in every project and being able to understand and state a clear point is compulsory in a smooth workflow. At first, it was unfamiliar to work independently on a project, but doing so has improved my critical thinking and helped me in becoming resourceful. Another important lesson I have learnt is to ask and acknowledge criticism, as there is always to learn something from fellow coworkers. Punctuality has been proved to be another important factor to demonstrate and ensure high quality outcomes. Coming from a highly structured and punctual country, the internship confirmed to me the impact 'showing up on time and being present' has, especially for an intern. Although meeting that requirement may not always be achievable, being present on time for the vast majority of time demonstrates a sense of responsibility, care, passion and commitment towards the job.

There are several things I would probably do differently the next time after reflecting on my internship. One of those would be to request additional tasks. As it was my first internship outside my own country, I had initially struggled with cultural differences, like behaviors, etiquettes, language and of course becoming familiar with a whole new environment. Being now able to adapt and understand easier, I would from next time, prefer to acquire more tasks to get a deeper understanding of the projects, their policies and how to professionally handle tasks and ideas. I chose to focus primarily on social networking and video editing, both of which I actively benefited from; However looking back, I would like to broaden my area of interest and gain experience with a variety of activities and programmes. I was able to expand my knowledge and skills in Graphic design and Videography thanks to the internship, but I didn't actively pursue other areas of the programme. Undoubtedly, the one-month deadline contributed to that.

If the time allows, I would also like to explore different departments of the organization to get a better understanding of the work and impact it has.

Nonetheless, I have unquestionably benefitted from the whole experience the internship has given me and am immensely grateful for all the understanding and support I received from my coworkers, fellow employees and friends. With all its ups and downs, this internship has been a fruitful benefit to my personal and professional development.