

PROJECT REPORT

Title

“Agents of Climate Change”- Achieving climate justice by examining judicious use of Chemical Fertilizers in agriculture.

Purpose of the project

My project was for the purpose of spreading awareness among the farmers about the negative and harmful effects of chemical fertilizers on agriculture and environment. The particular reason for this was that agriculture can affect the *fundamental rights to clean air, land, water, food and healthy ecosystems*. These are one of the main components to achieve climate justice. Because Principle 17 of the Bali principles states that it is important to safeguard the abovementioned rights to achieve Climate justice.

My main intended audience to spread awareness were the farmers. It was very urgent to spread awareness through the farmers because farmers are the most affected one among all. They do not get to know about this problem because its effect is only visible after a long time. Till the time they get to know about it, it's too late for them. I came to know about this by talking to the elderly people and the one who were once farmers.

The idea was to connect to the farmers and show how the chemical fertilizers impact their land in addition to the environment. Being honest, farmers are more concerned about their lands than the environment because their livelihood is dependent on it. So it was very important to show them how they can protect their land and also the environment without walking extra miles. So it became important to show them that their own activities carried out by them were harmful for their land and for the environment. To showcase this problem, visual representation was chosen. If the farmers can see by themselves that what their actions will lead to, then they will consider changing things for the good. It might not have been the same case with audio representation. Visual representation remains in the mind. So, live examples were shown in the video and also the cause and effect was also shown. It was done so that the farmers can relate to it, and also to connect to them, the video was made in Haryanvi dialect.

The video also points out the steps that can be carried out by the farmers. The video shows cause and effect relationship and also the suggestions such as: judicious use of chemical fertilizers, giving priorities to the traditional seeds over HVY seeds (as HYV seeds require more fertilizers and water), using manure with fertilizers to increase efficiency, learning and adopting organic farming. The sarpanch of the nearby 10 villages were also reached out to share the videos with the farmers of that village. The farmers are also more likely to listen to sarpanch than any other person. The video was also shared on the YouTube to spread the awareness to as many as people possible.

Phases of project

1. The *first* phase was determining the research area to work upon. So I took the one for which my state is known for i.e. agriculture.
2. *Second* phase included the brainstorming part, narrowing down the topic and looking for factors in agriculture resulting in climate change.
3. *Third* phase focused more on providing climate justice. There were questions like, how will it amount in achieving climate justice and what part of the project will amount to climate justice.
4. *Fourth* phase was to determine solutions to the question and the means by which the project will be a transformational project.
5. *Fifth* phase was finding ways to reach out to masses and to reach out to the people who are mostly affected.
6. *Sixth* phase included reaching out to people for help and also for spreading awareness and finalising the medium of project to reach out to people i.e. by video.
7. *Seventh* phase included shooting the video and highlighting the main problems faced by farmers which also leads to climate justice and without which climate justice can't be achieved.
8. *Eighth* part was about sharing the video with the sarpanch and on online people to spread awareness.
9. *Ninth* part will be inviting Agriculture and Organic Farming Group India to teach the farmers more about the harmful effects of fertilizers and also informing them about the ways of organic farming.

Actual implementation

The video was shared with the sarpanch of the respective villages. Due to COVID-19 the gram panchayat meeting will take some time. But the sarpanch of the village “Gangwa” shared the video through WhatsApp to the farmers. The response received was very positive and also encouraging. The sarpanch told me that the farmers were relating to the videos as they were also experiencing the same problems over the time and they didn’t have any solution. Instead they were using more and more fertilizers when they were faced by this problem. Now they are interested in trying the solutions for the problems which are given in the video. The Sarpanch assured that once the gram panchayat meeting is held, the video will be shown to the entire village, so that it also reaches out to those families who don’t have access to the internet. The video shared on YouTube is also getting good response. I urged people to share the video to make people aware. Some of the Sarpanch are also showing interest in screening the video and communications with them are still under way. In coming days, the video will reach to more than 15 villages (through sarpanch) which will consist of more than 6000 farmers. As of now the video has reached around 400-500 farmers.

Future actions

The video has been shared with the village sarpanch. They assured that they will screen the video in next village assembly. Further, they are asked to send the feedback specially whether the farmers are interested in learning more about organic farming or adopting organic farming. If the farmers response is affirmative and they are interested in learning more about the organic farming then I will try to seek the assistance of Agriculture and Organic Farming Group India to teach the farmers about organic farming and to conduct a workshop for the same if possible. I have already contacted Agriculture and Organic Farming Group India (awaiting for their response). The video shared is also getting positive feedback specially by the sarpanch. They said that it will be very helpful and informative for the farmers. The rest of the sarpanch of the nearby villages of Hisar Tehsil are also being contacted so that they can also share the video with the villagers.

I am also planning to share the video with P. Sainath after getting some feedback from the farmers and sarpanch.

Learning from the project

1. Helped me in cultivating character

This project helped me in cultivating my character. I was able to look into problems from other person point of view also. I was able to understand the problem from different perspective. It helped me in realizing that how things are interconnected and small changes can bring a big change. Because of this project I was able to understand that each person should contribute, even a little and that can bring change for real. I also came to know about justice, what is the meaning of justice, how to uphold justice and what is the meaning of justice in the sense of climate. I came to know about different aspects of justice

2. Helped me in develop abilities

This project helped me in developing abilities. I was able to communicate better because of the activities carried out during this project, be it during the class or outside the class. I was able to work in a team and also to put faith in my teammates. It helped me in understanding situations from different perspectives and meaning of justice according to different people. I was able to connect to my roots once again, by talking to the farmers and the elderly. It helped me in being brave, by speaking up and also asking random people and organizations for help. This project helped me in becoming more self-confident. It also taught me that it is sometimes good to rely on others to bring change for greater good and by never losing own stand.

3. Developing insight into climate justice

Before, I only knew about the environment and climate change. Honestly, I had no idea about climate justice. Understanding situations and finding out problems can only result in defining climate change and not actually climate justice. One needs to carry out actions to bring solutions to the problem. If the actions bring out the solutions and the solutions are implemented then it will lead us to climate justice. Only determining the problem is not enough. Because of this project I am able to look into problems from more solution-based approach. I try to look that how can a problem be solved and how can it bring change in masses. My mindset is such that whether the action I am taking can really be helpful or is it futile. Whether the effect of my action is beneficial in short term or long term. I also consider that how will my action affect the nature and

environment. My approach before was anthropocentric but now it is shifting more and more toward ecocentric.

Learning from the course

The course helped me in developing understanding about the climate justice. The course was very engaging. Despite being of 4 hours, it was always engaging. It showed us the true value of team work. It was like being on a fun journey of climate justice. It helped me in improving my communication skills. In starting I was not very confident about speaking up. I had fear of public speaking. Due to this course, I had no other choice but to speak which helped me in gaining confidence in public speaking. The course also introduced us to practical factors such as negotiation. There were always takeaways from every exercise. The course also focused on mental health of the students as well. Each student concern was taken into considerations. The course was best example of overall growth and learning by doing things. The course was designed in such a way that all the activities conducted during the class and also the project, one had to step in the shoes of the other one, be it the affected party or the affecting one. This also enhanced our thinking capabilities. It was not like regular class where you memorize stuff and vomit on the paper, this paper emphasized more on the understanding factor. Because one can not achieve justice without having a good understanding. Summing it up, it was a fun, engaging, informative and a very useful course.

Project Video

The video can be accessed from <https://youtu.be/pGtXyL82vjk>. This video is just an attempt to spread awareness among the people about the harmful effects of chemical fertilizers on agriculture and climate. English subtitles are also provided for the reference. I request you to share the video so that it can reach among the masses.