



2023-1148 ECOLEARNING TOGETHER (Report)

Due Date: 08/31/2024

Report

What was your projects focus area?

Select all that apply

- Education
- Community Beautification
- Hunger/Nutrition
- Housing/Homelessness
- Art/Music/Dance/Performance
- Environment
- Older Adults
- Reading/Literacy
- Health/Wellness
- Animal Welfare
- Other

What inspired you to start this project?

When my cofounder and I were younger, we took an environmental class that opened our eyes to the crisis unfolding right before us. Feeling a mixture of emotions, we were angry, hopeless, but also unsure how to help. Trying to join every opportunity we could, we were often shut out of places that advocated for change. That's when we wanted to make one ourselves.

We were inspired by a deep concern for the environment and a desire to make a tangible impact in our community. Witnessing the increasing effects of climate change and environmental degradation motivated us to take action. As youth, we felt that we had a responsibility to positively impact the world for the next generations. We realized that raising awareness and educating the younger generation about these pressing issues was crucial for fostering a sustainable future.

Another key inspiration came from seeing the potential for change through community involvement. We believed that by engaging students in hands-on activities, such as tree planting and environmental research, we could instill a sense of responsibility and empowerment in them. We wanted to show that even small, local efforts can contribute significantly to the global environmental movement.

While working on your project, what surprised you?

During the course of our project, we were surprised by the enthusiasm and engagement of both students and volunteers. We initially anticipated that many students would be reluctant or disinterested to participate, especially when asked to do activities like planting trees or studying environmental literature. We expected a lot of eye-rolling and minimal effort, assuming that the majority would see it as an obligatory school activity. However, a significant number of students showed genuine interest and enthusiasm for the project. They not only participated actively but also brought creative ideas and worked excitedly on the restoration projects.

Additionally, the dedication and willingness of our volunteers far exceeded our expectations. Many of them went above and beyond, offering extra hours and resources to ensure the success of our initiatives. Their commitment and passion for environmental restoration played a crucial role in motivating the students and creating a positive, collaborative atmosphere. The collective effort of both students and volunteers demonstrated the power of community and the impact of grassroots environmentalism. This unexpected level of support was what helped grow the project the most.

What do you feel you learned from this experience?

The biggest thing we learned from this experience was positive collaboration. As youth, we are often taught our differences and what divides us, but this project, which united us on a common effort, taught us how to use our diverse perspectives to create solutions. Young children and youth (including us) learned various teaching styles and work ethics, leadership, and how to harness our unique strengths for a common goal.

Secondly, we learned how to teach other youth with what we already knew and receiving feedback from others our age - a process both difficult and inspirational. By mentoring and guiding our peers, we developed skills in empathy, patience, and effective communication. This not only fostered a sense of community but also empowered us to become role models and leaders within our circles.

Organizing large projects, including those that are international, was another significant aspect of our experience (especially for those working in the US or other countries not in Africa). We gained insights into project management, logistics, and the importance of clear communication across different time zones and regions. In addition, working with people of different cultures was incredibly enriching. We learned to appreciate and respect cultural differences, which broadened our perspectives and enhanced our ability to work in diverse teams, and of course got to embrace our own cultural heritage! This experience taught us the importance of cultural sensitivity and how to build inclusive environments where everyone feels valued.



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How did Karma for Cara impact your project?

Karma for Cara had a profound impact on our project, making our dream of bringing community members together come true. The support allowed us to unite people from different perspectives, including those who were new to environmentalism, and those who were experts in the field. It further strengthened existing relationships and fostered a sense of unity. This collective effort was instrumental in achieving our goals and creating a stronger, more connected community.

One of the most important impacts Karma4Care had was allowing rural or underfunded schools to be involved in environmental activism. Often, these schools are left out of such initiatives - schools that are less funded because of the inequality of wealth distribution forces such schools to have a smaller science program, and thus, less environmental experiences. Karma for Cara's support ensured that these schools were not only included but central to our project, giving them a platform to 'EcoLearn', partake in hands-on activities like our Climate Quiz Change competition in Nigeria, our tree planting in Kenya, or our Nigeria tree planting. This inclusion was crucial in promoting intersectional environmental activism. Many of these kids had never gotten to partake in real restoration before, and it was heartwarming to see them have fun. Karma4Care gave a hobby, fostered passion, and sparked curiosity to many young children who may have not had that opportunity otherwise. Without the support from Karma4Care, we never would have seen the potential for changemaking these rural schools had, but just never had the opportunities for implementation.



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How will your project continue to impact others?

EcoLearning Together's project has left a lasting legacy of education and involvement in environmentalism that will continue to impact others for years to come. By embedding the principles of environmental stewardship into the community's fabric, we've created a culture that values and prioritizes sustainable practices.

The trees we've planted will be a central part of this legacy. These trees will require ongoing monitoring and care, providing students and youth with continuous opportunities to engage with and learn from nature. This hands-on involvement will include fertilizing, taking weekly measurements that can also be used educationally for science experiments, mulching, and watering. It will also teach students the life cycle of trees, the nitrogen cycle, the carbon cycle, and other ways that our natural world provides us with ecosystem resources.

Additionally, the fruit trees we planted in Nigeria will bear fruit, providing a source of further engagement and an educational tool for understanding agricultural cycles and food production. The *Maesopsis eminii* trees planted in Kenya, will have significant ecological benefits including soil enrichment, water filtration, and erosion prevention. These trees, planted in a more urban area, will also contribute to reducing the urban heat island effect.

Moreover, we've shown that restoration and environmentalism can be fun. Through interactive and engaging activities, we've demonstrated that taking care of the planet is not just necessary but enjoyable. This approach has inspired a new generation to view environmental activism as something that brings people together, and to keep doing it in the future.

How many hours did you spend on your project?

When specifying how many hours in the space below, please write your answer as: 23 hours for example

85

How many youth volunteers or students (age 18 or under) were involved in your project?

When specifying how many hours in the space below, please write your answer as: 23 hours for example

221



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How many total hours did other youth volunteers or students (age 18 or under) spend on your project?

When specifying how many hours in the space below, please write your answer as: 23 hours for example

60

Would you be interested in mentoring student leaders with similar projects?

Yes

No

List any items or supplies purchased with microgrant funds

Please provide a detailed list the Item/Expense and the Amount Spent	
Item/Expense	Amount Spent
60 SDG books (Nigeria)	\$80.00
144 book covers (Nigeria)	\$9.57
144 small art mats (Nigeria)	\$1.91
Furnishing (Nigeria event)	\$0.66
Big trophy (nigeria)	\$26.58
Medium Trophy (Nigeria)	\$20.27
Small Trophy (Nigeria)	\$13.29
9 Reflective Vests for Nigeria Volunteers to be known	\$53.92
Reflective Sign for people to see when tree planting	\$11.63
4 glove pairs for planting (Nigeria)	\$18.60
Fire Extinguisher for safety (Nigeria)	\$11.96
55 various fruit trees from small nursery (including guava, mango, fig - view additional info section to see record of trees planted)	\$56.90
500 Maesopsis eminii seedlings for Kenya planting	\$38.41
Natural fertilizer for Kenya chapter trees	\$56.30
	\$400.00



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Additional Expenses, Receipts, or Invoices

drive-download-20240615T183614Z-001.zip
9.9 MB - 06/15/2024 2:37 PM

drive-download-20240615T183706Z-001.zip
278.9 KB - 06/15/2024 2:37 PM

Total Files: 2

Do you have unspent funds from your Microgrant?

- Yes
 No

Upload photos, video, and other media

Karma4Care_Additional_Information.pdf
38.8 KB - 06/15/2024 2:48 PM

KenyaAprilKarma4CareTrees_(1).csv
183.8 KB - 06/15/2024 2:35 PM

NigeriaKarma4CarePlants_(1).csv
20.5 KB - 06/15/2024 2:35 PM

drive-download-20240615T184012Z-001.zip
2.2 MB - 06/15/2024 2:40 PM

drive-download-20240615T184108Z-001.zip
60 MB - 06/15/2024 2:42 PM

Total Files: 5

Links to online photo/video albums

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1cbvaEBgsTT5q-3HCF_aeYLDw2Z8aY4zy?usp=sharing

Links to social media accounts, websites, YouTube videos, etc.

@eco.learners on insta, website is ecolearners.org, can view facebook accounts for our chapter leaders:
Nigeria: <https://www.facebook.com/nattymolang> Kenya: <https://www.facebook.com/eliud.omutanyi88>



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Rate your overall experience

Application Process

Very Satisfied

Communication with K4C staff

Very Satisfied

Interview Process

Very Satisfied

Receiving Grant Checks/Payments

Very Satisfied

Quality of K4C Website

Very Satisfied

Any other comments or feedback to share

Thank you so much for this opportunity! We always have more pictures and info if you would also like to see our ongoing projects as well :)