



>>> Global witnesses of climate change

#IHES project

From the Office of Social Commitment – Environment and Sustainability Area of the URV, it is proposed to incoming international mobility students to act as international witnesses of the reality of Climate Change, making presentations through posters and/or videos. These testimonies are based on the student's information in collaboration with their older relatives who, sharing their experiences, give us real first-hand information. The plan was that publishing real and local climate breakdowns explained by the direct affected people and build a closeness bridge between communities. In fact, the activity could give visibility about how climate change is impacting all the territories and developing a global-neerness environmental consciousness.

1 WHAT IS THE GOAL OR REASON FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT?

The main objective is spreading the idea that global change has effects of different sizes in different places. This project can be directly addressing to the following SDG's:

- SDG11; Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- SDG13; Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- SDG14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
- SDG15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss
- SDG16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
- SDG17; Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

2 WHO ARE THE BENEFICIARIES?

In this first phase the target group is open to all URV university community and to society at large by web dissemination. In a second phase the target group would be easily opened to society through an itinerary exposition around URV antennas where would be visited by people from further rural areas from the main URV campuses. In addition, this initiative could be publicized to local environmental NGO's (and that's it would be a big resonance) presenting this initiative in an environmental and/or regional round table. Global witnesses of climate change would like to plant a seed of international environmental awareness beyond the local.



3 WHO ARE THE PARTNERS IN YOUR UNIVERSITY?

The IHES actor groups are young people from several countries with the collaboration with other generation (elder acquaintances or relatives from their country). In fact, the main stakeholder is the URV' international community, especially incoming international mobility students, but they are required to consult with their elders to reflect the climate change that is occurring in their area. These students are selected and supported by the responsible of the URV' Environmental area from Social Responsibility Office and with the International Center because it was the way to find and recruit the main actors; the students.

4 HOW DID YOU REALISE THIS PROJECT?

At the latest sessions in the URV's IHES training sessions, in July 2021, all the attendants were encouraged to share with the others new ideas to implement at the URV the new concept of internationalization of society through their university work place.

It was in this scenario that the responsible of the URV environmental area, Antonio de la Torre, launched this action proposal where the concept of IHES converge with SDG13; Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. For us it was a great match and a big challenge!

The first step was to decide to set up a pilot and after that, to inform about it to direct institutional responsible (Vice rectors).

The second one, was to involve the URV' incoming mobility students and we decided to launch Global witnesses of climate change during the URV' International incoming students Welcome Sessions and also as an open call in the URV international social media. After that, Antonio received several answers showing interest and he organized several meetings with the students. Finally, the result achieved was two posters which are available at the Environmental URV website. It was interesting but unfortunately, we did not have enough resources to drive this development forward.



5

WHAT ARE THE MOST RELEVANT ENABLERS OF THIS PROJECT AND HOW DID YOU CONVINC THEM TO PARTICIPATE?

The enablers are two; on one hand, two university services and on the other hand the URV' international students. All of them are important but the students are the key actors because they contribute with the idea, they are the conductors of the search, the link with the local elders and of course, they are the relators of the local situation and its corresponding environmental crisis.

URV' Global witnesses of climate change call was launched by the Environmental Unit and the International Centre in a join action during the welcome sessions and also as another open call by the URV international social media.

In any case, it was the URV's environmental unit the most involved unit because they worked directly with the students, it had the know-how about the subject to develop and also carry out the activity: organising meetings, doing the follow up and support of the students and it was in charge to disseminate the results of the action and sharing them with the community by website.

6

WHAT WERE THE MAIN OBSTACLES YOU ENCOUNTERED AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME THEM?

We have had the problem that there have been a lot of good ideas, but we needed help to begin and to develop them because we have a very low budget and a lack of enough human resources to launch, to undertake and to follow up the activity. New activities need additional efforts in training and on the reinforcement and strengthening of the administrative structures.

The other obstacle was the Academic recognition. It doesn't exist. Although from the services we tried to implement it, after consulting Academic Services at the URV we learned that it is not easy to implement for this edition. However, we are convinced that academic recognition (ECTS) would be the best tool to engage students in the project.

Alternatively, we offered a certification as collaborator in the IHEs project signed by vice rector of Social Engagement and Sustainability and vice rector of Internationalization.

In any case up to now we have only a few posters but the experiences it has been disseminated throughout the environmental URV website in order to arrive to the society at large.

Taking a retrospective view, we can say that URV' Global witnesses of climate change might be more relevant in the future if the activity had more resources.



7

WHAT WERE THE KEY "DO'S AND DON'T'S" THAT YOU LEARNED WHILE SETTING UP AND RUNNING THIS PROJECT?

Do's:

- Establish the everyone role
- Try to following the plan
- Be realistic with timelines and agenda
- Trust in your colleagues
- Do not ignore different situations
- Track progress I share information

Don't's:

- Ignore cultural and social differences
- Take your eye off the scope
- Forget recognise the efforts
- Make assumptions and not to ask
- Forget to listen
- Ignore bad news
- Do not burn bridges
- Underestimate anything during the activity development