

Director's Note

As we start off a new year of work and we look forward to growth and learning, it seems apt to dedicate the first edition of the Slice 2020 design to a new project —Educate to Cultivate Organic (ECO) clubs. These clubs represent a fresh approach to the education we provide our children, by going back to the land to learn what it has to teach through observation, theory and practice. In the process, we hope to cultivate among the children and adults, a renewed sense of belonging to the Earth, and a strong resolve to adopt sustainable lifestyles to protect our collective well-being. Looking forward to a year of joyful learning and living off the land!



With best wishes,

*Fr. Joy Nedumparambil SDB
Executive Director
BREADS Bangalore*

Learning from the Land



We love to give children the best. We try to give them the best education so that they aspire to become doctors, engineers, advocates, nurses, scientists and so on. But have we ever imagined that some of them could become farmers? If children were taught to have love for soil, respect for agriculture and the skills of farming, the existing crisis in agriculture and climate changes could have been mitigated. Above all, children must realise the value of their environment, the need to combat climate issues globally and the conservation of natural resources—as well as they understand their curriculum in school. While a part of the world is very vocal about climate change, rising emissions and the resulting environmental crisis, BREADS is taking the lead in actively combatting these issues through promoting environment-friendly actions and programmes.

'The School Garden Project-building a new generation of farmers', initiated by BREADS, was launched in November 2019 in ten districts of Karnataka- Bengaluru, Ballari, Bidar, Chitradurga, Davangere, Kalaburagi, Mysuru, Raichur, Ramanagara and Yadgir. In a green signal from the government as well, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) recently released guidelines for developing and maintaining kitchen gardens in all schools, both in urban and rural areas. The project involves the formation of 'Educate to Cultivate Organic' (ECO) Clubs in 5 selected schools in a district, which becomes a platform for training, awareness, and campaigns for environmental protection, sustainable agriculture and organic farming. Each ECO club will enroll 50 student members who have the interest, aptitude, attitude and the readiness to participate in the activities.

BREADS Calendar

January 2020

- Completion of internship by students from St. Joseph's College of Law, Bengaluru
- Inauguration of the new Don Bosco school building in Kalaburagi
- National meet of Salesian PDOs in Mumbai
- Project visit by Ms. Ursula Fischer from Don Bosco Mission Bonn, Germany
- Fr. Provincial's annual official visit to BREADS
- St. John Bosco feast celebrations in all Don Bosco houses

February 2020

- Arrival of volunteer from Malta
- Internship of students from NMIMS, Mumbai
- Formation of ECO Clubs
- Batch inauguration and certification ceremony at DB BEST Academy, Bangalore
- Visit from representatives of St. Boniface Parish, Wirges, Germany
- External evaluation of CREAM II by Catalyst Management Services (CMS)
- Visit from Dr. Andreas B.W. Wesselmann from Africrops to Hassan Moringa Farm

What are the activities/steps taken to educate children on organic farming?

Schools from villages that have the required space for cultivation are chosen. Children are guided by the school staff and the SDMC for the successful implementation and progress of the programme. The ECO Club members will cultivate vegetables and crops organically to provide for the mid-day meal in their school. The school SDMCs will provide necessary support for making vermicompost pits in the school premises for the club members to prepare their own compost.

Trainings, awareness and environmental campaigns for school students and the children in the neighbourhood areas will be organised. Awareness classes are conducted through informal learning environments, integrated with activities, practical workshops and interactive sessions. Following are the actions and programmes to be organised for awareness campaigns in each school/district:



- Classroom sessions/ seminars by teachers and environment experts
- PPT/flipcharts on different environmental themes (vanishing forests, green earth, types of pollution, biodiversity, environmental issues etc.).
- Observation of World Environment Day on 5 June.
- Tree-planting campaigns in schools and villages in collaboration with the Horticulture department, which provides free saplings. The club members are responsible for nurturing the saplings.
- Guided campus walks to identify trees, native medicinal plants, endangered fauna and flora, and to detect how waste is generated and its recycling possibilities.
- Informal quizzes to gauge club members' understanding and get feedback about the environmental education programme.
- Competitions (essay writing, drawing, etc.) to develop practical solutions for environmental conservation, organic farming and prevention of plastic usage etc.
- Encourage students with the help of their parents/teachers, to prepare short videos on environmental themes using mobiles. Other themes could be child heroes for the environment.
- Poster exhibitions and multimedia presentations in the schools on special occasions/observances including Child Rights Day, Christmas, School Annual days, World Environment Day etc.
- Clean-up drives in the school premises and public areas.
- Demonstrations in the school vegetable garden.
- Promoting clean classrooms--free from litter, plastics and food wastage.
- Organising school-, district-, state-level competitions for ECO club members and facilitating interactions with students from other schools to share their ideas and plans.
- Creating and using banners and posters on environment conservation in every school to create awareness among other students, staff, parents and stakeholders.
- Providing leadership trainings for students to encourage and capacitate them as practitioners and facilitators of sustainable agriculture.



How do children benefit from the ECO Club?

Now, you may wonder how these activities impact children, benefit them and contribute to Sustainable Development Goal 13—urgent action to combat climate change and its impact. Let's explain!

The school vegetable garden helps children understand where food comes from and the hard work involved in nurturing and cultivating plants, while giving them an outdoor experience too. The vegetable garden programme helps in strengthening ties among children, the parents and teachers, and within the community. Through this programme, children gradually develop a positive and nurturing attitude towards environmental conservation and develop good habits and behaviours towards creating a greener planet and a safe environment. Cultivation and consumption of organic vegetables, crops and food products will influence children's choices and healthy food habits in life. The farming processes and observation of the plants' growth cycles enrich the children's learning and life experience even without their realisation. Thus children learn to appreciate, protect, conserve and value nature and its natural resources from an early, impressionable age. They are then enabled to sustain and promote sustainable agriculture in their villages. BREADS' training inputs on the environment, natural resources and conservation will strengthen and capacitate them as practitioners and facilitators. The addition of organically-grown, nutrient-rich vegetables and fruits to their midday meals would enhance the children's nourishment.

The programme proposes the selection of 5 schools in each district but partners are free to spread the concept wherever they find it feasible.



The table below shows the proposed outreach within the project period November 2019 to October 2020.

Sl No.	District	Taluku	Clubs	Children
1	Bangalore	1	5	250
2	Ballari	5	25	1250
3	Bidar	2	5	250
4	Chitradurga	5	25	1250
5	Davangere	2	7	350
6	Kalaburagi	2	5	250
7	Mysuru	2	6	300
8	Raichur	1	5	250
9	Ramanagara	1	15	750
10	Yadgir	4	20	1000
Total		25	118	5900

Teach India- A Spoken English Programme at DB BEST

With the motive to encourage and empower youth through improved skills in communicative English, Ananya Education and Empowerment Trust (AEET) with Teach India (a CSR initiative of the Times of India) have begun collaboration with DB BEST Academy, Lingarajapuram, Bengaluru, to provide spoken English classes to the skill training students at the centre. The British Council is the content and knowledge partner for the Teach India programme. The new venture will provide 80 hours of spoken English classes for the Retail, BPO... [more](#)



Training Youth on Gender Equality

Don Bosco Veedu Society organised a training for youth at HHMSPB NSS College for Women, Neeramankara, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala on 24 January 2020. The training was conducted to mark National Girl Child Day 2020 with the theme 'Violence against Women and the need for Gender Equality in Education', under the project Women Empowerment and Gender Equality (WEDGE), a BREADS' project to reduce the violence and discrimination against women through awareness and advocacy. The objective of the training... [more](#)



Playing with Mud

A new Educate to Cultivate Organic (ECO) club was formed by CHITHRA Don Bosco, Chitradurga on 25 January 2020 in Rural High School, Kondlahalli, Molkalmuru taluk. The club formation was led by Mr. Arun Kumar from CHITHRA, with the support of the enthusiastic teachers, students and community. The formation process was a mixture of theory and interesting practical activities in the form of land preparation and planting of seeds and seedlings on a specially-prepared plot. As an initial step, the students and teachers were oriented... [more](#)



'The last child, the first priority'

Seventy-five child parliamentarians from across the country met at the annual National Inclusive Children's Parliament (NICP) to be sworn in as ministers by Ms. Meira Kumar, the former Speaker of the Lok Sabha (lower house of the Indian parliament). Ms. Tanisha Sharma, representing Karnataka, was one of the 75 children committed to creating an inclusive India with 'the last child as their first priority'. BREADS as a rights-based organisation has been actively contributing to child rights protection and promotion through.... [more](#)



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