

# Dubai children plant 100 trees for sustainable future

Mohammed N Al Khan

DUBAI // Almost 100 students and teachers from more than 10 schools helped plant 100 trees throughout Dubai Festival City yesterday.

Green Hope UAE conducted its third Environmental Justice Academy yesterday at Deira International School. The participants planted 25 neem saplings in the school and another 75 trees of various species throughout Dubai Festival City.

Students then watched a video highlighting environmental struggles around the world. The group also put on a play to show students the importance of being environmentally conscious.

Green Hope UAE is a youth organisation working for sustainable development. Run entirely by children, its objective is to spread awareness among children and youth about the environment and to provide a networking platform to share their ideas for a sustainable future.

“This is our future. We must act now to preserve it,” said Kehkashan Basu, president and founder of the organisation.

“Though we have great support from parents and many adults, many people still see us as just children and don’t take us very seriously. It shouldn’t matter where the message is coming from if it’s an important message.”

Kehkashan, who turned 13 a few days ago, was the first child to be appointed to the position of global coordinator for the United Nations Environment Programme’s Major Groups for Children and Youth in February.

The Environment Justice Academy promotes interactive participation, from making posters to creating art from waste. This time the project was to make an advertisement about environmental issues.

“I’ve personally planted more than 100 trees. My personal goal is to one day plant a million trees in the UAE,” said Komal Muthyalu, 14, who joined Green Hope UAE last August. Komal and Kehkashan are family friends, so it was natural for her to join the group.

“I’ve always been aware of environmental issues but I never took any initiative to do anything until I joined this group. Being home-schooled allows me to do more than most children,” said Komal.

[malkhan@thenational.ae](mailto:malkhan@thenational.ae)

## One-page article

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