

REDUCE THAT F T P R I N T

A carbon footprint literacy drive.

<https://reducethatfootprint.org>

Having grown up in the Philippines, India, and now in the United States, I've witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of climate change, environmental pollution, diminishing marine life, accelerating wildlife extinctions, and drastic weather phenomena. From wildfires and floods to famine and melting glaciers, I could easily understand the Earth's distress signals. The rising carbon levels are threatening human health, ecosystems, and the stability of our planet. I was motivated to act.

My fascination with technology became a means to this end. I discovered how it can use, measure, predict, and transform data into decisions that could protect the environment. To me the future lies in technology and sustainability working hand in hand: innovation driving cleaner energy, smarter mobility, circular economies, and data-driven solutions that minimise waste and emissions. And I strongly believe that the change must begin at the grassroots level, with us-the youth, who are the future custodians of this planet.

This inspired me to launch *Reduce That Footprint*, a carbon footprint literacy drive to teach young children about the impact of daily choices on the planet.

I, along with my team, have collaborated with *Sewa USA, AmeriCorps Texas, TBMSG Pune, local elementary & middle schools, and communities* to conduct workshops introducing children to the concept of carbon footprint, why it matters, and how we can reduce, reuse, and recycle. Through interactive activities, quizzes, and pledge cards, we connect classroom concepts like the carbon cycle and climate change and discuss issues of melting glaciers, wildfires, and biodiversity loss. We share stories of young people worldwide who are proving that technology when combined with sustainable practices can reshape our future. By the end of the program, students are proud to become *Carbon Literate Changemakers*, equipped to make mindful decisions for lasting impact.

Till now, we have reached around 300 young children who have together reduced approx. 150 kg of CO₂ so far through reduce, reuse and recycling initiatives !!!

The reactions of young children are very inspiring. Their eyes light up with every discovery on how they have reduced their carbon footprint with small actions like not wasting water, putting plastic bottle in recycling bin and so on. For me, the most satisfying part is watching their confidence and sense of responsibility grow. These sessions have taught me as much as they teach the children. I've learnt patience, adaptability, and how to present complex ideas in ways that are engaging and accessible.