Lesson: Innovation skills

Activity : Challenges and their solutions

Template: Challenges Solutions

Find solutions for the challenges given below:

We share stories of individuals around the world that felt the desire and need to create a solution for a problem that was affecting their communities.

The stories are taken from the *Social Innovation Curriculum* of Unicef. Read them and try to guess the solutions these people came up with!

EXAMPLE 1

THE SOCIAL INNOVATOR

At the age of 13, Richard Turere devised an innovative solution that's helping the survival of lions and protecting the livelihoods of families by keeping lions away from livestock. Richard was living in Kitengela on the edge of Nairobi National Park in Kenya, and his father made him responsible for herding and safeguarding his family's cattle when he was just nine. But often, the valuable livestock would be attacked, particularly at night by the lions roaming the grasslands, which was a significant financial and cultural loss for his family and the community.

THE CHALLENGE

This was prompting some communities such as Richard's to attack lions to protect their livelihoods. In some cases, a whole pride of lions that a community thought was threatening has been killed. One way that communities have done this is to use a pesticide such as Furadan to kill the lion -- a tablespoon of which costs less than a dollar and is enough to kill a lion. Ten years ago, there were 15,000 lions living in Kenya but there are now less than 2,000 lions in Kenya. This is largely due to this type of conflict between humans and lions, which is increasing as urban areas spread quickly into rural areas.

THE SOLUTION

When he was only 11, Richard wanted to find a way of protecting his family's cows, goats and sheep from hungry lions. His "light bulb moment" came with one small observation. "One day, when I was walking around, I discovered that the lions were scared of the moving light." Richard realised that lions would not approach the farm's stockade when someone was walking around with a flashlight. He held on to this thought and as he thought about this, a few weeks later he had come up with an initial design of a innovative, simple and low-cost system to scare the lions away. He fitted a series of flashing LED bulbs onto poles around the livestock enclosure, facing outward. The lights were wired to a box with switches and to an old car battery powered by a solar panel. They were designed to flicker on and off intermittently. This tricked the lions into believing that someone was moving around carrying a torch. It worked! Since Richard installed his "Lion Lights," his family has not lost any livestock to the lions, to the great delight of his father and astonishment of his neighbours. Richard devised and installed the whole system by himself, without ever receiving any training in electronics or engineering!

EXAMPLE 2

THE SOCIAL INNOVATOR

Jason Yeates wanted to address the issue of "cyber bullying", which was a rising social issue for young people who were being bullied on social media.

THE CHALLENGE

His goal was to educate others about the issue and the effects of cyber bullying. Jason and his team held many talks to promote his project as well as to create innovative ideas as to how to stamp out bullying in his community.

THE SOLUTION

Jason and his team researched how the issue was affecting people at his school before launching his idea. During the research process they discovered that bullying was something affecting many young people. He decided to take action and he started implementing some ideas at his school. Some of the first things that they tried were "friendship weeks". During those weeks they created a buddy system, where first and fourth year pupils met at break time to have a chat and exchange opinions. They also organised "cultural days" and an "anti-bullying week". These events allowed students from the school to express their views and ways of life. Finally, they convinced their school to design an anti-bullying petition, which everyone signed.

EXAMPLE 3

THE SOCIAL INNOVATOR

Mórris funded Maturijobs in 2015. The idea was inspired in his grandmother Keila's story. At 80 years old, she was in good health and doing very well. She worked as a secretary at a company, volunteered and also helped the family a lot. She loved cooking, and on weekends she delighted her children and grandchildren. One day, on her way to work, she fainted and felt down. She was not able to work after that episode and spent most of her time at home. Morris saw how her grandmother's physical and mental health declined rapidly thereafter. His grandmother died in 2012. After that, he decided to volunteer in a long-term institution for the elderly. However, he thought that was not enough. He felt frustrated because he was only addressing a symptom, instead of solving the root cause of the problem.

THE CHALLENGE

Motivated by his grandmother and his volunteer work, Mórris embraced the cause of longevity and went headlong into this world in 2014, when he developed a project to connect young people with elderly people who were living in institutions through the internet. As he began to understand the whole situation of the rapid aging of the population in Brazil and the world, and the direct impacts that this has on society, Mórris decided that he needed to do something different. He studied this subject deeply and spent a lot of time talking with people to understand really what their lives were like.

THE SOLUTION

Mórris founded Maturijobs in 2015 as a social business to help mature people have the opportunity to stay active and share their experiences for as long as they want. Today Maturijobs is a platform that connects people over 50 with work opportunities, from formal work to volunteering. The site is free of charge to those looking for a vacancy, and there are more than 5000 people and 200 companies taking part in the platform.