

A BOOKLET FOR EVERY CAMPUS

Why every campus needs

The Great Green-Campus Wall



Transforming Campuses into Living Laboratories for
Generations to Come.

green-campus.in/wall
Student-Managed Assisted Natural Regeneration

ONE CAMPUS · ONE PATCH · ONE WALL

FOREWORD

A forest that students raise, not an event they attend

Every campus can hold a living forest. The strongest way to grow it is to give ownership to students for the full life of the trees, not for a single morning.

The Great Green-Campus Wall is a student-led movement in which each campus raises one native forest patch and joins it to the patches of other campuses, until together they form a wall of green across the country.

This booklet makes the case in plain terms. It explains why a one-day tree-planting drive is not enough, what ownership by students looks like in practice, and how caring for a living patch builds the four skills every 21st-century learner needs: **Critical thinking, Communication, Collaboration and Creativity**, the 4Cs. It is written for principals, teachers, student leaders, parents and partners who want a campus that teaches by doing.

A tree planted by a crowd is soon forgotten. A tree raised by a student is remembered for life.

Inside this booklet

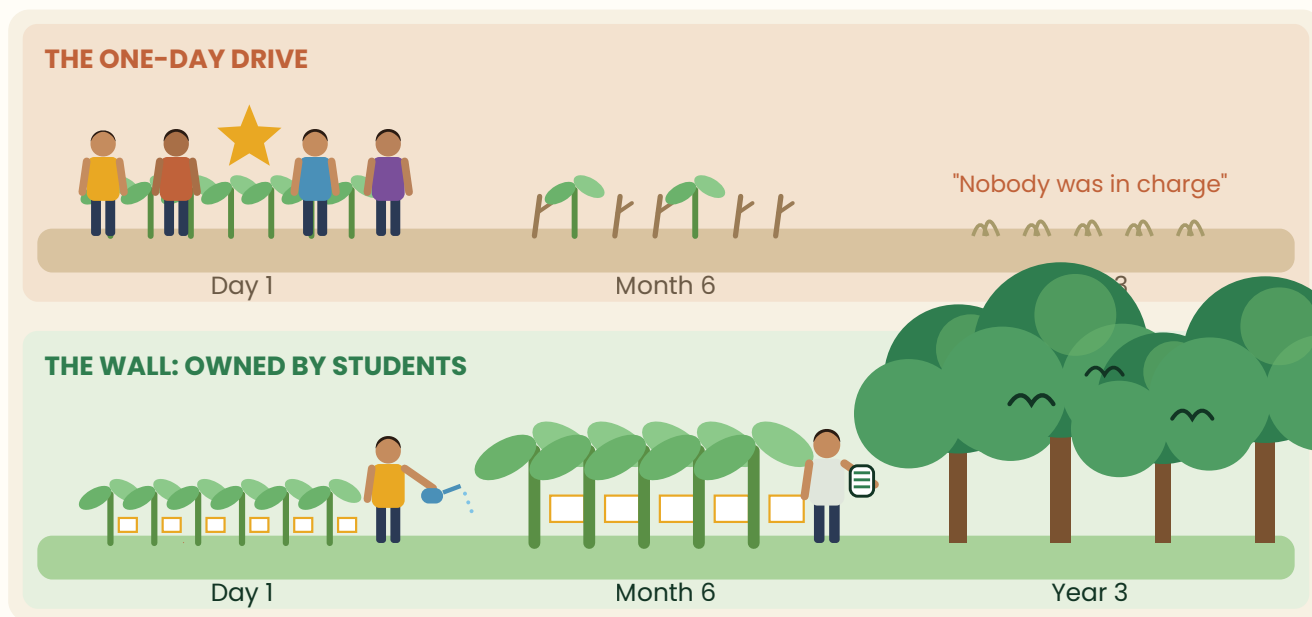
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1 THE PROBLEM

Why a one-day planting drive is not enough

A tree is a commitment of years. A planting drive is an event of hours. That mismatch is the root of the problem.

Saplings need watering, protection from grazing and weeds, replacement of those that fail, and regular observation through the first dry seasons. When nobody is named to do this, the photograph is taken on day one and the sapling is left to chance.



Same land, same saplings, two different outcomes: the difference is who is responsible afterwards.

Five weaknesses of the usual drive

1 No owner

Everyone plants, so no one is responsible afterwards. Care falls to a caretaker who already has a full workload.

2 A mood, not a method

Pits are dug quickly, species are chosen by availability and the site is not prepared. Easy-to-obtain exotic species are often chosen.

3 No record

Without a tag, a register and a monthly check, no one can say how many saplings are alive, or why others fail.

4 A passive role for students

Learners carry saplings and pose for pictures. They do not decide, measure, solve problems or present results.

5 A missed lesson

The most valuable teaching, how a living system responds to care over time, is never reached because the activity ends before the story begins.

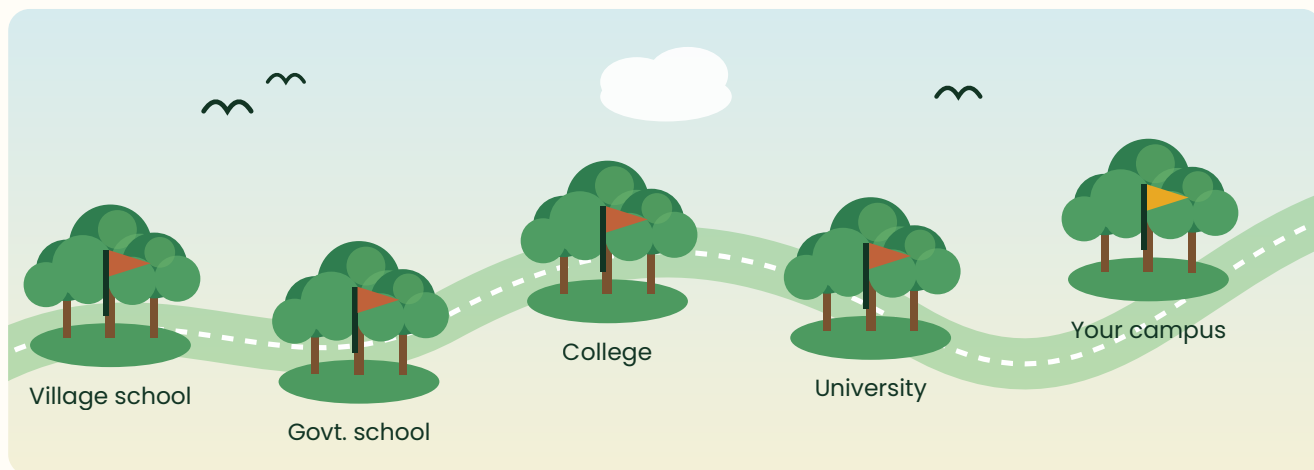
None of this is a criticism of planting drives. They create goodwill and awareness. The Wall keeps that energy and builds a lasting structure beneath it, so that the first day becomes the first chapter and not the whole book.

2 THE IDEA

One campus, one patch, one wall

The Great Green-Campus Wall is a national, student-led movement to restore native forest on educational campuses.

It is inspired by the global Great Green Wall idea: many separate efforts joining into one continuous belt of life. Here, the building block is a single campus patch.



Every campus owns its patch. Together, the campuses own a story far larger than any one of them.

Four principles

1

Native first

Patches are restored with species that belong to the local landscape, such as Vengai, Iluppai, Pungai, Naval, Neem, Kadamba and Magizham in Tamil Nadu. Invasive cover such as Seemai Karuvelam (*Prosopis juliflora*) is removed with care.

2

Regenerate, then assist

Student-Managed Assisted Natural Regeneration (SMANR) protects what already wants to grow and adds saplings where needed. It uses less water and money than dense intensive planting.

3

Students manage

Every patch has a student team with named roles, a register and a schedule. Teachers guide, but students carry the responsibility.

4

Every patch is counted

Each patch is recorded and tagged, so the campus, its community and the wider movement can see the wall growing.

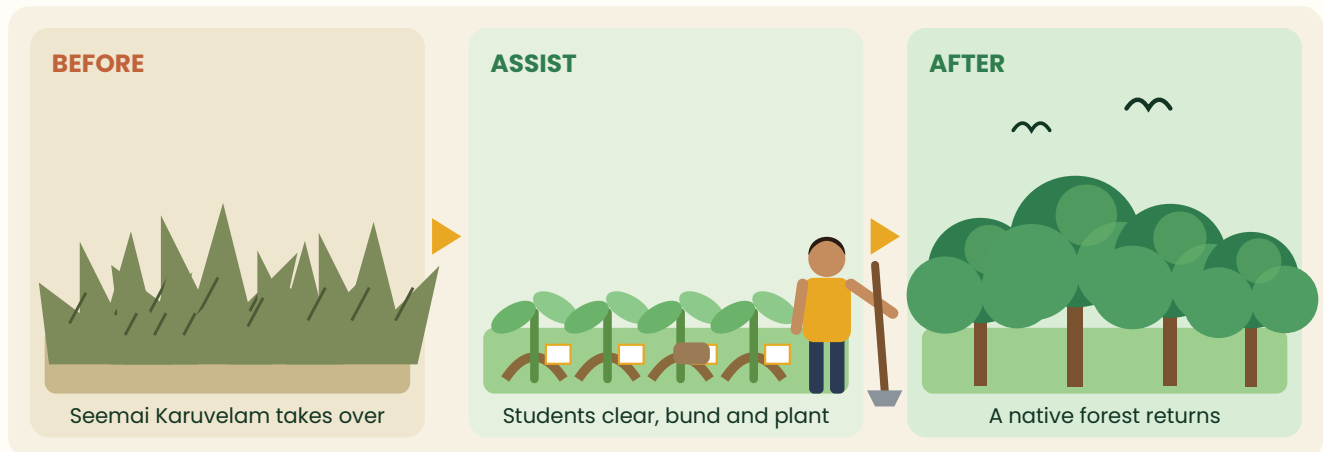
The wall is therefore both an **ecological network** and a **learning network**.

3 THE METHOD

How a patch comes back

Student-Managed Assisted Natural Regeneration (SMANR) protects what already wants to grow and adds saplings where they are needed.

It is a low-water, low-cost way to restore native forest, and it teaches students to read the land before they change it.



SMANR in three steps: clear the invasive cover, give the land bunds and tagged native saplings, and let native forest return.

1

Clear with care

Seemai Karuvelam (*Prosopis juliflora*) is removed following a fixed stump protocol, by trained adults and older students with protective gear. Existing native seedlings are kept and tagged.

2

Hold water and soil

The water and soil team builds half-moon bunds and mulch rings, so rain is held where the saplings are. Watering is planned for the dry season, when it matters most.

3

Plant native, tag, protect

Native saplings are planted with the rains, adopted by a student, tagged and registered, and guarded against grazing.

4

Observe and adjust

Monthly measurements, a habitat log and honest records show what works. Failures are replaced and studied.

Native species suited to Tamil Nadu patches

Vengai

Iluppai

Pungai

Naval

Neem

Kadamba

Magizham

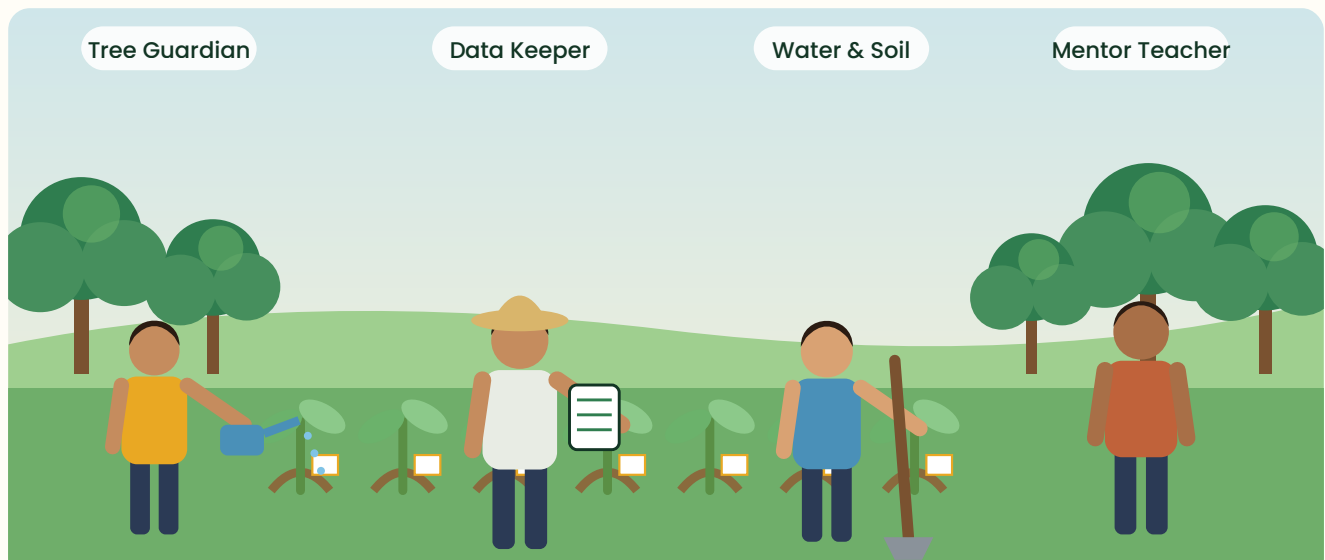
Species are chosen with advice from a forester or local botanist, to suit local rainfall and soil. Exotic ornamentals are not used.

4 STUDENT OWNERSHIP

From event to ownership: how students run the patch

In the Wall model, no sapling is anonymous. Each one belongs to a student or a small team, who look after it for the whole period it needs care.

The patch is run like a small organisation, with roles that rotate so that many learners experience leadership.



A patch team at work: guardians water, data keepers record, the water and soil team builds bunds, and a mentor teacher guides.

Role	What the student team is responsible for	Team size
Patch Lead	Keeps the plan, runs the monthly review, reports to the principal and the Wall dashboard	2
Tree Guardians	Each guardian adopts a few saplings: waters, weeds, checks for pests, replaces failures	1 per 3 to 5 saplings
Data Keepers	Tag and register every tree, measure height and survival, enter results in the field sheet	3 to 4
Water and Soil Team	Builds half-moon bunds and mulch rings, schedules watering, tests soil moisture	3 to 4
Habitat Watchers	Record birds, insects, butterflies and other life that arrives, using simple counts	3 to 4
Story and Outreach	Photographs, writes, presents to assembly, parents and local media, invites neighbours	3 to 4
Mentor Teacher	Guides, signs off safety, connects the work to subjects and assessment	1 to 2 per patch

Team sizes are a starting suggestion and can be adjusted to class strength and patch size.

4 STUDENT OWNERSHIP

Ownership in practice

Responsibility is built into the way the patch is run, so that it does not depend on a single enthusiastic teacher or batch.



Adoption, not assignment

A student adopts a sapling, gives it an identity and is accountable for its survival and growth.



Rotation every term

Roles change each term so every student can try leading, recording, building and communicating.



Monthly patch review

The team presents the register: what failed, what worked and what changes next. The principal or a guest attends.



Handover between batches

Senior students train juniors, so the patch outlives any single class. Graduating students leave a short guide for their successors.

Recognition

Responsibility is acknowledged in assembly, in the school report and in the student's portfolio, so that care of a living thing is valued as much as any other achievement.

What changes when students own the patch

Question	One-day drive	The Wall
Who is responsible?	Everyone on the day, then no one	A named student or team for every sapling
How long does it last?	Hours	Years, with handover between batches
What is recorded?	A photograph	Tag, register, monthly measurements, habitat log
What do students do?	Carry and plant	Decide, measure, solve, present, mentor
What is learned?	Awareness	The 4Cs, ecology, responsibility, patience

5 THE 4CS

Skills a classroom alone cannot train

Critical thinking, Communication, Collaboration and Creativity are named in education frameworks around the world as essential for 21st-century learners.

The aims of NEP 2020 point the same way: experiential, inquiry-based and skill-focused learning. A textbook can describe these skills. A living patch makes students *use* them, because real trees do not follow a script. Weather changes, saplings fail, teams disagree, and decisions must be made with incomplete information.



Critical thinking

Observe, ask why, test an idea, and change the plan when results differ. **Example:** three of ten Neem saplings die in the same corner. Is it water, soil, grazing or shade? The team investigates and tests a fix.



Communication

Explain findings clearly to different audiences, in Tamil and English, in writing and speech. **Example:** present the monthly review to the principal, write a note for parents, brief a visiting official.



Collaboration

Share work, divide tasks fairly, resolve disagreement, hand over to the next batch. **Example:** watering is rostered across the dry weeks; juniors are trained by seniors before they graduate.



Creativity

Design solutions with limited resources and make the patch inspiring. **Example:** build a low-cost drip bottle, design signage for each species, plan a bird-friendly corner.

Skill	Evidence a teacher can see
Critical thinking	Field sheet with a stated cause, a trial and a result
Communication	Presentations, posters, reports, short videos
Collaboration	Duty roster kept, handover guide written, peer feedback
Creativity	Prototypes, designs, stories, models

Three further habits grow alongside the 4Cs: **responsibility** (a living thing depends on me), **patience** (results take seasons, not days) and **service** (the benefit reaches beyond my own class).

Why a traditional classroom cannot do this

The stakes are real. A missed week of watering has a visible result.

The audience is real. Parents, neighbours and officials see the outcome.

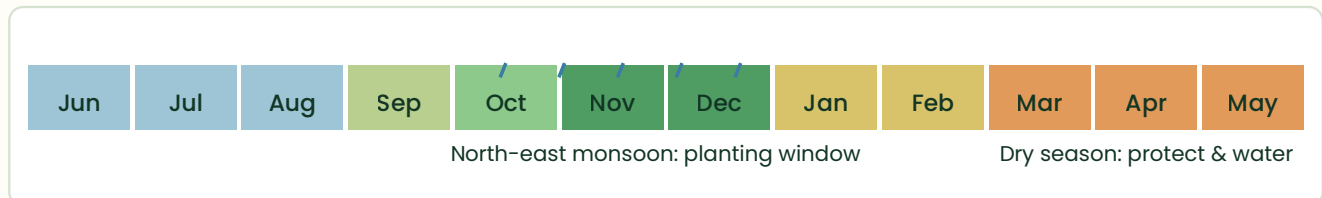
The answer is not in the book. Students form a hypothesis, collect data and revise it.

Time is long. Following one sapling for years teaches sustained effort.

6 A YEAR IN THE LIFE OF A PATCH

The school year follows the seasons

The patch has a natural rhythm. The calendar below suits a typical Tamil Nadu academic year, with planting timed to the north-east monsoon, and can be adjusted for local rain and exam schedules.



	JUNE TO SEPTEMBER Survey and plan Choose the site, mark the boundary, record what already grows, map invasive cover, form the team, set roles Skills: Critical thinking, Collaboration
	SEPTEMBER TO OCTOBER Prepare the ground Remove Seemai Karuvelam following the stump protocol, build half-moon bunds, mulch, tag existing native seedlings Skills: Creativity, Collaboration
	OCTOBER TO DECEMBER Plant and protect Plant native saplings with the rains, adopt and tag each one, guard against grazing, record the baseline Skills: Communication, Critical thinking
	JANUARY TO FEBRUARY Observe and repair Monthly measurements, replace failures, begin a habitat log, present the first review to the principal Skills: Communication, Critical thinking
	MARCH TO MAY Summer care Rostered watering, mulch top-up, shade and heat checks, survival count at the end of the dry season Skills: Collaboration, Creativity
	END OF YEAR Celebrate and hand over Public open day, annual Wall report, recognition in assembly, seniors train juniors, new roles assigned Skills: Communication, Collaboration

In the following years the focus moves from planting to stewardship: more native species are introduced as the canopy forms, student research projects grow richer, and the patch becomes a standing outdoor classroom for science, geography, language, art and mathematics.

7 THE BENEFITS

What every campus gains

A campus that joins the Wall gains in four ways at once, which is why the idea suits every institution, from a village school to a large university.



For students

- Practised skills in the 4Cs, with evidence for a portfolio, application or interview
- A sense of purpose and pride from caring for something that will outlive them
- Hands-on science: ecology, soil, water, data and observation
- Leadership roles open to every learner, not only the usual few



For the institution

- A living outdoor classroom that serves many subjects, every day
- Documentable evidence of experiential learning aligned with NEP 2020
- Material for NAAC Criterion 7 and for sustainability and green-campus reporting
- A positive public identity and a story to share
- Cooler, greener grounds with shade and birds



For the community

- Parents and neighbours invited to open days and tree adoptions
- Greener surroundings, shade and a healthier microclimate near the school
- A model nearby schools can copy, with senior students mentoring younger campuses



For the land and climate

- Native forest cover restored on land that is often bare, dry or overrun by invasive growth
- Habitat and food for birds, pollinators and other wildlife
- Soil improved and water held better through bunds, mulch and root cover
- Many small patches forming a connected green network: the Wall itself

Many small patches.
One connected wall of green.



8 MEASURING GROWTH

The student portfolio and a simple rubric

Ownership works best when progress is visible. Each student keeps a short **Wall Portfolio**, and the patch keeps one shared register.

What goes into the portfolio

- Photographs and notes on the adopted sapling, with dates
- Measurements: height, leaf count, survival, soil or moisture notes
- One problem faced, what was tried, and what happened
- One piece of communication: a poster, talk, video or letter
- A reflection written at the end of each term

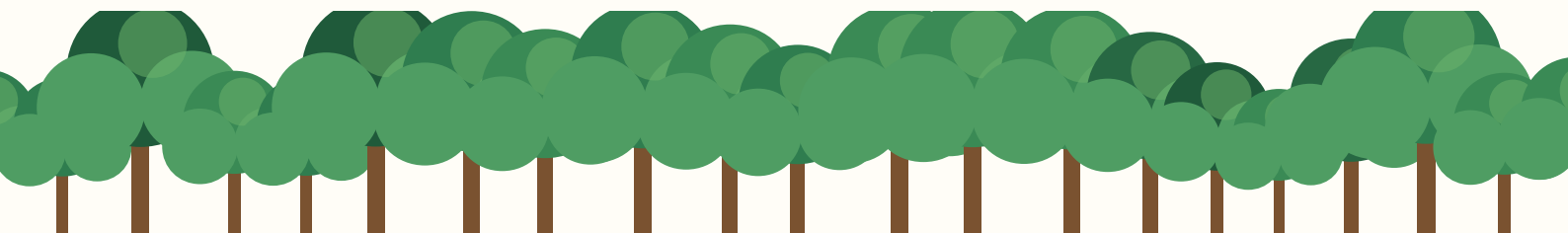
Patch health indicators

- Saplings alive compared with saplings planted
- Species present and their average height
- Area cleared of invasive cover and area under protection
- Student guardians and the hours given to care
- Sightings in the habitat log

A four-level rubric for the 4Cs

Skill	Beginning	Developing	Confident	Leading
Critical thinking	Notes what happened	Asks why it happened	Tests a possible cause and records the result	Designs and compares several tests, shares the lesson
Communication	Answers when asked	Explains the work clearly to classmates	Presents to adults and answers questions	Adapts the message to audiences and teaches others to present
Collaboration	Completes an assigned task	Cooperates with the team	Shares tasks fairly, helps resolve disagreement	Coordinates several teams and mentors juniors
Creativity	Follows a given method	Suggests a change	Builds a new low-cost solution	Creates ideas that other patches adopt

Figures are the team's own field records, kept on the standard field sheet and shared on the Wall dashboard for the campus. Failures are reported as they are.



9 SAFEGUARDS

Safe for students, good for the land

Student ownership is only worth promoting if students are safe and the ecology is respected. Every patch follows these protocols.

-  **Land first.** Patches are made on land the institution manages, with the management's written approval. Land outside the campus is touched only under a formal arrangement with the authority responsible for it.
-  **Child safety.** A teacher is present for all field sessions. Younger students do not use cutting tools. Heavy work such as digging and stump removal is done by older students under supervision or by trained helpers. Hats, water, closed footwear and gloves are standard; a first-aid kit stays at the site.
-  **Seemai Karuvelam.** *Prosopis juliflora* re-sprouts aggressively from cut stumps, so removal follows a fixed protocol: cut low, treat or remove the stump as guided, and watch for new shoots monthly. Thorns are dangerous, so this task is for trained adults and older students with protective gear.
-  **Right species, right place.** Native species suited to the local rainfall and soil are chosen with advice from a forester or local botanist. Exotic ornamentals are not used.
-  **Water wisely and keep honest records.** Bunds, mulch and rostered watering reduce water use. Counts are recorded on the standard field sheet and checked by a second student or the mentor teacher.

9 GETTING STARTED

The first 30 days

Week 1 Commit

- ☐ Principal or management approves a patch site and names a mentor teacher
- ☐ An assembly announcement invites students to a Wall team
- ☐ The campus registers on the Wall platform so its patch is counted

Week 2 Form the team

- ☐ Roles are explained; students apply or are nominated
- ☐ Eco Club, NSS and NCC units are invited to take part
- ☐ A parent and community invitation goes out through school WhatsApp groups

Week 3 Survey

- ☐ The boundary is marked and the area is measured
- ☐ Existing trees, native seedlings and invasive growth are mapped and photographed
- ☐ Students draw a plan: what is kept, removed and added

Week 4 Launch

- ☐ The patch is named and a signboard is put up
- ☐ Register and field sheet are set up; the first baseline record is made
- ☐ A small launch event introduces the student guardians; the first monthly review is booked

10 QUESTIONS

Questions principals, teachers and parents ask

Will this take time away from studies?

The patch is a learning space, not an extra burden. Field sessions can be tied to science, geography, mathematics, languages and art, and monthly reviews take little time. Time given to care is recognised in the student's portfolio.

What if our campus is small, or has no open land?

A patch can be small. A single corner, a strip along a boundary or a school-yard border can start the Wall.

Does it cost a lot?

The SMANR approach is built to be low-cost and low-water, and institutions are not charged to take part. Costs are mainly saplings, guards, tags and basic tools, often met through the eco club, alumni or local partners.

Is it safe for children?

Yes, when the safeguards are followed. Younger students take on observation, watering and recording; heavy or hazardous work is done by older students with protection or by trained adults.

What if some saplings die?

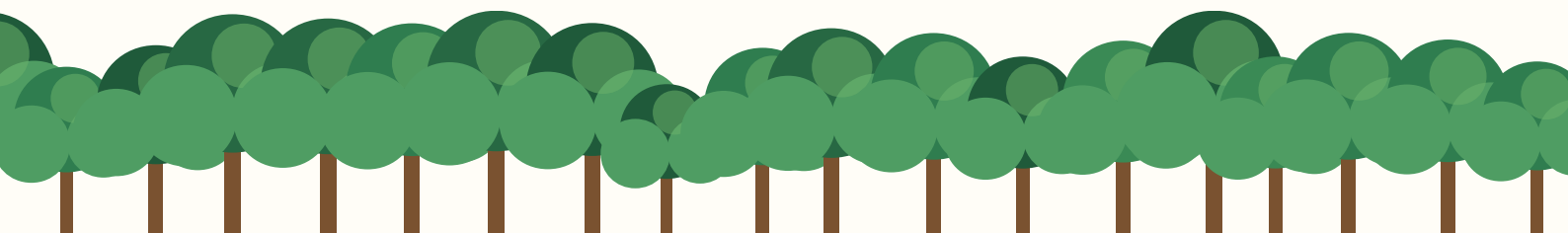
Some will, and that is part of the learning. The team records what happened, investigates why, and replaces them. A failed sapling studied well teaches more than a perfect row planted without thought.

What happens when students leave or exams come?

Roles rotate each term and seniors train juniors, so the patch continues. Workload is lighter in exam periods, and the care roster takes account of the school calendar.

How is this different from a normal eco club?

The Wall gives the eco club a clear structure, a shared method, a register, a public record and a network of campuses. It turns good intentions into a continuing programme.



JOIN THE WALL

From a day of planting to years of **caring**.

The Great Green-Campus Wall asks every campus to make that shift: from an event for students to a responsibility held by students.

The next step is small. Choose a corner of the campus, name a mentor teacher, and invite a first team of students. The rest follows season by season, and every patch that joins makes the wall longer.

Principals and managements

Approve a patch and name a mentor.

Teachers

Link the patch to your subject and guide the team.

Students

Step forward for a role and adopt your first sapling.

Parents and alumni

Support the patch and come to the open day.

Prepare your campus: green-campus.in/wall

