
**EVERY SINGLE BAG CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE CASE ON SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
NOYYAL GOGREEN, COIMBATORE**

Article Particulars

Received: 25.03.2018

Accepted: 07.04.2018

Published: 28.04.2018

Dr. R. JAYANTHI*Faculty, Karunya School of Management, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India*

India generates over 5.6 million metric tons of plastic waste annually. And the consequences of it are far from a mystery. Landfills and water bodies continue to choke on plastic waste. While plastic bottles take anywhere around 70-450 years to decompose, a plastic bag takes a whopping 500-1000 years. Even though plastic bags below 50 microns were banned across the country, several parts of different states continue to use it. One of the prime reasons for this is the lack of availability of a viable alternative for plastic bags.

Starting an eco-friendly business is one of the hottest trends now with lots of new opportunities and this trend still has a lot of growth potential because people are just becoming aware of the need to be eco-conscious and friendly. All this is borne out of the need to protect our planet from pollution and global warming. While technological advancement has been good to us and made life easier, it also has its negative effects just like everything else in the world.

On top of that there is growing public awareness of purchases are affecting the planet and its beings and consumers are increasingly voting for green and eco-friendly products and services.

About Menaka Sudhakar

Menaha Sudhakar is an Entrepreneur but not just for profit. She has chosen the path of Social Entrepreneurship where there is profit but it also solves a particular social problem.

She has lived and worked abroad with her husband. She has experienced and seen how people in the west are lured towards organic and eco-friendly products and natural way of living. The couple made a decision to come back to India as they wanted to live and raise their children closer to their roots. They live in Coimbatore but visit their native village in Pollachi often to stay closer to their roots.

Why Noyyal Go Green

When Menaha and her husband came to Coimbatore she wanted to take up Entrepreneurship and had a short stint with a franchise opportunity. On her visits to her husband's village near Pollachi, Menaha came across young women who often asked her for work. The small village called Sedimuthur has not more than 50 houses and there is little employment opportunity for these young women. She was volunteering at Siruthuli, an NGO based out of Coimbatore that has been untiring in its efforts to revive river Noyyal. She wanted to do something for the cause. After brainstorming ways to bring these two causes together, She made up her mind to make cloth bags. A twofold desire to help provide employment to young women and prevent use of plastic bags saw Menaha Sudhakar embark on a simple business plan.

Product Description

Plastic litter is huge toxic problem on land and in our rivers, lakes and oceans. Be proud to carry our Reusable Produce Bags that can be used to refrigerate or store fruits, vegetables etc. These muslin breathable bags help keep your veggies and fruits fresh for days. These bags can also be used to store toys, toiletries, jewellery, gift bags etc. Every week each family brings on an average 10-12 plastic bags home. As these bags are very compact, please carry these with you while going grocery shopping to avoid taking your fruits and veggies in small plastic pouches to put it on weighing scale at the store. Also this saves your segregation time after reaching home as fruits and veggies are already segregated. Taking our bags with you during grocery shopping saves this earth from lots of plastic bags. These bags can be of great gift pouches too. These bags are made by women who has lost their self respect and looking for a light in their life. Light up a woman's life by buying these bags. Noyyal symbolises recovery of severely polluted river in the city of coimbatore. These bags are named after the endangered species in India. Save them.

- Noyyal Go Green (Tiger) Reusable Cotton Produce Bags / Fruit Vegetable Bags / Fridge Bags / General Use Bags , Combo Pack, Set of 6 (2Large [14x12], 2Medium [12x10], 2Small [10x8] Inches) Price:385
- Noyyal Go Green (Baya Weaver) Reusable Cotton Produce Bags / Fruit Vegetable Bags / Fridge Bags / General Use Bags, Set of 5 (5Large [14x12 Inches]) Price:300
- Noyyal Go Green (The Nilgiri Tahr) Reusable Cotton Produce Bags / Fruit Vegetable Bags / Fridge Bags / General Use Bags Set of 5 (5Medium [12x10 Inches]) Price:360
- Noyyal Go Green (Lion Tailed Macaque) Reusable Cotton Produce Bags / Fruit Vegetable Bags / Fridge Bags / General Use Bags , Set of 5 (5Small [10x8 Inches]) Price:340
- Noyyal Go Green (Elephant) Reusable Cotton Silk Saree Covers , Set of 10 (10 Bags [16x16 Inches]) Price :870.00.

- Noyyal Go Green (Rhinoceros) Reusable Cotton Silk Saree Covers , Set of 5 (5 Bags [16x16 Inches]) Price:540
- Recycled newspaper pencil/ Pencils that are made out of recycled newspapers

The Social Business Model

Menaha has started Noyyal Go Green, which produces bags out of cotton cloth which serves two purposes. They generate employment for young girls in the village and they provide people in the city an alternative to plastic bags.

'Produce bags' as an alternative to plastic bags for daily use – is Menaha's mission. The Noyyal Go Green Produce Bags are a result of much labour of much thought and hard work. The idea is to keep costs as low as possible. These bags are not perfect. These girls who make them are not professional tailors but if the company use professional tailors to make them, the cost would double and these women would be out of work.

Menaha helped these 20 plus women stitch and design. They now use sewing machines and work from home. The endeavor has built self confidence and self esteem in them and Menaha wants to create more employment. She has placed the bags on sale on Amazon and she hopes this will create more demand. The more the sales, she says, the more these women will benefit. And she says she is quite satisfied with the orders she has got from Amazon. She wants to expand the workforce of employed women in Sedimuthur by getting more orders for bags.

Impact of the Business

The women in Menaha's apartment complex have agreed to stop using plastic bags and use these green bags instead. Menaha does not believe in hiring a fancy office space at a commercial area as she feels all that would lead to escalation of cost of the final product.

She operates the business in her apartment at Sowripalayam, Coimbatore. She does not employ anyone full-time for marketing rather she does the marketing and if there is a need she employs students on part-time basis. Apart from working for her organization she also visits colleges and schools to speak about the ill effects caused by plastic bags and encourages them to find alternative for plastic bags.

Road Ahead

Menaha understands that it is easy to decry the use of plastic bags, but one has to provide an alternative to them. She has conducted a small survey among friends, neighbours and family about where they all use plastic on a daily basis. Then she tries to find alternatives for those. Now she plans to start on jholas and water-proof bags that she hopes will do away completely with the need to use plastic bags. The bags are durable and multi-purpose. They can be used to keep crayons and toys of kids,

cosmetics and of course vegetables in the fridge. They come in various sizes, can easily be folded and kept anywhere, and "last for as long as a normal tee shirt would," she says.

Menaha hopes big stores such as Pazhamudir will consider using these bags. She has plans to visit all the department stores and tell them the need to adopt these cloth bags. She has now orders for the bags from organic shops in Pondicherry as well as export enquiries. She is very passionate about her venture and feels happy that she runs a business which is sustainable and livelihood creation for village women.

References

1. Interview with Mrs. Menaka Sudhakar, Founder & Proprietor, Noyal GOGreen
2. <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-features/tp-metroplus/Where-bags-can-make-a-difference/article17065656.ece>
3. <https://www.cutm.ac.in/pdf/Social%20Entrepreneurship%20Case%20study%2026%20March%202015%20-%20final.pdf>