

Kehkashan's Story



Kehkashan Basu, a girl of 16 years, was born and raised in the United Arab Emirates. She fights to safeguard the future of our planet. Environmental degradation is a real threat to children and their rights. All over the world children are suffering from the harmful effects of man-made environmental disasters, such as toxics and pollution, and climate change. Yearly more than 3 million children under the age of five die from environment-related causes and conditions. The consequences of climate changes, like floods, droughts and hurricanes, destroy infrastructures, food, water supplies and houses and make it sometimes necessary for families to flee from their homes. Heavy rainfalls and temperature changes have an impact on water and sanitation and therefore they can increase water-borne diseases. Young children are the first to get sick and every day, 6.000 children die of waterborne and sanitation-related illnesses, including diarrhea and malaria. A healthy environment is a precondition for the enjoyment of other children's rights.

Kehkashan became an environmental activist at the age of eight, raising awareness in her neighborhood about the need to recycle waste. In 2012, she founded her own organization, Green Hope, which runs all kinds of activities with children such as recycling, cleanups on beaches, tree planting and awareness campaigns. She has reached over 3,000 school and university students with awareness-raising workshops and conferences about the environment and sustainability. Green Hope also does relief work, both nationally and internationally, for people in poverty or despair. Green hope is active in ten countries and has over 1,000 members worldwide. Kehkashan has also spoken at numerous national and international conferences, such as the Rio+20 Earth Summit in Brazil and the COP 20 UN Climate Change Summit in Peru, on the vital future of our planet. She has written a children's book called "The Tree of Hope" to even educate the smallest children on the protection of our planet.

"Children are the future of the planet and we have the fundamental right to a life of dignity. Do not underestimate our potential. Give us respect and equal opportunities so that each of us can blossom"

Kehkashan was nominated by her father.