**Prompt #7 - What have you done to make your school or your community a better place? (350 words)**

The walls are stained with a brown line marking the height of water the week prior.

Recent news prompted my visit to a neighborhood in Jakarta’s eastern region which had been impacted by flood. Nearby residents informed us regarding adjustments to their living situations. Thankfully, enough funds were gathered through a garage sale. With the money, I purchased mature plants, fertilizer, gardening tools, and food to provide for guests.

In a densely populated city, pollution paired with extreme rainfall makes flooding almost inevitable. Trees are proven to reduce the effects of flood by acting as an interception that slows down and re-evaporate rain, as well as increasing soil capacity and permeability to store water through roots.

The people gathered with us for a gardening activity—planting in an empty lot while simultaneously discussing the expected outcomes. However, the interactiveness of the workshop meant we observed the positive reactions, yet skepticism for our action.

I established “Plan(t) for Tomorrow” with several of my peers in hopes to promote reforestation; rebuilding greener communities in Jakarta. I not only aim to tackle flooding, but to increase overall environmental awareness through simple initiatives such as planting.

Though the people were always immensely welcoming, it was their questions, critical in nature. *“Why plant trees when they will die as water accumulates?”*. Though initially stumped and blanked out, I remembered my teacher’s lectures in plant biology: that trees have a mechanism when soil becomes saturated. Due to this blockage, they will carry out anaerobic respiration in the absence of oxygen. Consequently, most trees are able to withstand up to a week of flooding. In addition, the pros also weigh the cons when the hygiene, safety, and finances of the people are compromised.

Through my work in the organization, and encounters with members of a community impacted by climate change, I figured how teaching simple facts about planting significantly changes their perception of the environment.

I hope to resume my involvement despite being in a nation whose conditions are directly opposite. Interestingly, trees may still be the answer to the cries of a drought-prone land.