

The young woman recycling paper to make books with plantable pages!



When Ximena Hernández learned that children at an elementary school in her native Guatemala did not have **enough notebooks**, she came up with a sustainable solution: **making notebooks** out of **recycled paper**.

But her idea didn't end there. To make it even more environmentally friendly, the young woman **added seeds** to the pages to make them plantable. That's how the **Two Lives** project began.

As a result of this initiative that she developed in her home country, Ximena obtained the [Leaders of Tomorrow](#) scholarship, which grants 100% of the tuition to study at **Tecnológico de Monterrey**.



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*“The idea came about because my mother is a teacher at a public school in Jutiapa, and she told me about the children’s need for **school supplies**.*

*“I shared this way to positively impact the environment, which **benefits everyone**. The name came about because we can give the material a second life,” she said.*

Hernández also gave talks to a group of **30 children** about the importance of the impact of **paper** on the **environment** as part of the **Two Lives** project.

Ximena Hernández is studying for a degree in **Civil Engineering** at the Monterrey campus.

“You don’t realize how a single decision can affect your life.”

‘Planting’ environmental awareness

To develop **Two Lives**, the Atescatempa native conducted **research** on how to attach seeds to pages in order to make them plantable, and **taught children** how to do so too.

*“I came across the term ‘plantable page’, which is a plantable paper page made from **coconut fibers**. This helps the **seeds** that are embedded in it to germinate. Although they were **radish seeds** in the pilot phase, they can be any type of plant.*

*“The page (where the seed is located) contains **instructions** on how to plant it. I gave a workshop to the students so they could learn how to complete the whole process,” she said.*

As a result, Ximena was able to **raise awareness** about recycling among students at the **Mixed Urban Rural School** in Guatemala.

She shared that the process for making notebooks consists of obtaining **used paper**, shredding it, diluting it in water, **extracting the pulp**, and straining it according to the dimensions of the sheet of paper you want to create.



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Seeking to promote entrepreneurship

The welcome talks given to the Leaders of Tomorrow cohort inspired Ximena to turn her project into a **socially conscious start-up**.

*“I just knew what I needed to do when they talked about it. It’s amazing because you just don’t realize how a single decision can affect your life. **Creating change** and sharing this information is such a great thing,”* she said.

Ximena Hernández is part of the **11th Leaders of Tomorrow cohort**, which is made up of 212 students enrolled at Tecnológico de Monterrey.

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