

“ INSPIRING PRACTICES FROM AROUND THE WORLD – THE COMPENDIUM ”

10 Good Practices on Environmental
Sustainability Education from Global South

November 2017

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~ Inspiration comes from surprising places. ~

Sometimes it seems our world and the global challenges we are currently facing are indeed overwhelming and daunting. Many might feel that we cannot change the course we are on and that little can be done on the global scale. However, these fascinating and inspiring practices from around the world, from Mexico to Bangladesh, from South Africa to Armenia, show us that even a small group of people, in a small local community, can move mountains. We can see how changing local realities from little and unpretentious grassroots projects can contribute to steps in the right direction towards changes on the larger scale: be it cultivating a school garden in harsh climates thus providing a source of nutritious meals for school children or raising our voices for the protection of endangered species and learning how to coexist on our one and only planet.

SAME WORLD partners have search east and west, north and south, to identify these inspiring practices from Global South, taking into account their innovation, replicability and sustainability. We could have selected many more than 50 (10 in this compendium), but we had to round up somewhere.

Reading them, you just know Margaret Mead was absolutely right: never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has! And just imagine, if each and every one of us would get up tomorrow and undertake something similar to these practices we are introducing here, if he or she would change something very little in his or her neighbourhood, local community or region, the radiating effect of these actions would surely circle the globe in an instant.

Therefore, read them, get inspired and go change your world too!

Your SAME WORLD team

Inspiring practice #1

SOLUTIONS, CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE AND PROGRESS ARE CARRIED ON WOODEN BOATS IN BANGLADESH



Natore District in
Bangladesh



*"Instead of the students going to school,
the school reaches them."*

*~ Mohammed Rezwan,
founder of
Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha ~*

1. About

Bangladesh, one of the world's most low-lying and densely populated countries, is widely known as the "ground zero of climate change". While one fifth of the country floods every year during the monsoon season, extreme weather phenomena attributed to climate change, such as winds and rainfall, sometimes cause its hundreds of rivers to swell and cover about two thirds of its land. Among the dozens of environmental, social and economic impacts caused by the floods, thousands of schools are forced to close.

Mohammed Rezwan is an architect born and brought up in the Natore district. Thanks to his family boat he managed to finish school, unlike many of his friends. While at university, he conceived the idea that if children could not make it to school, their classroom should go to them. In 1998 he founded "Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha" a non-profit organization that introduced the country's first floating school system in 2002.

The organization runs a fleet of boats that serve as school buses, each able to accommodate 30 students, collecting children from



Solar powered school boats offers education to kids in
Bangladesh

different riverside stops. Once they have docked, class begins. The floating schools offer primary and secondary level education to local children who might otherwise have stayed away from school.

Nazma Khatun, a teacher at the Natore boat school, where the nearest government primary school, located some 2 km away, could not be reached by students from her area during seasonal flooding said: "The floating school has brought many benefits. The students can easily go to school and stay close to their parents. The literacy rate is growing here." Her daughter also attended the floating school and is now studying at secondary level nearby. It has changed Khatun's life for the better, too. "After I got married, I stayed at home as a housewife," she said. "Now I am teaching in this school alongside pursuing my graduate studies."

The boats also act as libraries, adult education centers and solar workshops. They are outfitted with solar panels that power computers, lights and other equipment. But the boats bring more than services to these cut-off areas – they bring electricity.

"Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha" also runs floating clinics that provide doctors and paramedics. It also trains adult villagers on children's and women's rights, nutrition, health and hygiene, and in addition to growing vegetables in "floating gardens", teaches them how to farm ducks and fish, thus helping them adapt to the impacts of climate change.

In 2003, The Global Fund for Children became the first institutional investor in Shidhulai's single boat school. Today, the organization boasts a fleet of more than 50 floating schools, libraries, health clinics, and training centers, serving nearly 100,000 people in flood-prone areas of Bangladesh.

"Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha" has won numerous awards, including the \$1 million Access to Learning Award from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Their work is featured in the documentary "Easy Like Water" (2010) by Glenn Baker, part of the Sundance Institute's Stories of Change initiative.

Some other flood-prone countries, including Cambodia, Nigeria, the Philippines, Vietnam and Zambia, have introduced floating schools, following Rezwan's model.

2. Why is this a good practice?

The practice shows how local solutions can be provided by local people, proving that it is possible to become more resilient to extreme weather and worsening climate impacts, to tackle pollution, and at the same time, to raise the literacy rate, better nutritional and health conditions and lift people out of poverty.

3. Further links:

- <http://www.easylikewater.com/>
- <http://sowc2015.unicef.org/stories/its-a-boat-its-a-school-its-a-livelihood-booster/>
- http://www.equatorinitiative.org/images/stories/winners/138/casestudy/case_1348165558.pdf

4. References

- Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha (n.d.). Retrieved from: <http://www.shidhulai.org/ourwork.html>
- Islam, S. (2015). Boat schools bring classroom to Bangladesh's flood-hit children. Thomson Reuters Foundation. Retrieved from: <http://news.trust.org//item/20150309101250-4lmwe/>
- The Global Fund for Children (2014). Bangladesh's "Boat Schools" Tackle Education and Climate Change. Retrieved from: <http://www.globalfundforchildren.org/bangladeshs-boat-schools-tackle-education-and-climate-change/>

Inspiring practice #2

REPAPEL: ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION BASED ON PAPER COLLECTION AND RE- CYCLING



"In Repapel waste paper is useful because it is transformed into school supplies and materials for the poorest children. And we learn how to take care of the environment."

- Student involved in Repapel

1. About:

REPAPEL is a project developed by CEADU (Centro de Estudios, Análisis y Documentos del Uruguay), an Uruguayan non-profit civil association composed by a multi-disciplinary group of technicians and professionals specialised in environmental issues. In 1999, the pilot project "Repapel: Environmental Educational based on paper collection and re-cycling" started, mainly in the area of Montevideo.

In 2002, CIES (Centro Informazione e Educazione allo Sviluppo), with the help of EU funding, supported the start of the Recycling Programme involving 5 schools and 20 companies.

The project is based on the collection of paper, diaries, carton and derivatives carried out by students in their schools, homes, neighbours' houses and local businesses. Also sponsoring organizations (public and private) donate their waste paper. The collected paper is the input for the production of useful school supplies, thanks to the collaboration of some recycling centers that recycle paper and give the school materials back to the participating schools. This activity is combined with the workshops for teachers, who are trained for teaching about the recycling process.

Repapel was implemented in around 100 schools and it is currently still operating in 50 schools in and outside Montevideo – also in the cities of Trinidad, Melo, Colonia, Salto y Paysandú – with the collaboration of more than 60 organizations and companies that offer their waste paper.

In 2006, Repapel set out as a civil association recognised by the Ministry of Education and Culture. In 2011, it obtained the recognition of a Cultural and Educational Institution by the same Ministry.

2. Why is this a good practice?

This innovative initiative developed new and creative solutions for addressing environmental issues using the tool of paper recycling and focusing on economic and ecological interdependency and its relation with the environment and development. It is an innovative educational proposal, as before the project was implemented, schools used to offer little opportunity for pupils to participate in environmental projects. Moreover, there were no facilities nor the habit to collect and recycle paper. The majority of the companies did not even take the benefits of the recycling process into consideration.

Children learn about the positive effects recycling has on the environment and put it into practice, involving also other key partners like teachers, families, local businesses and companies, and society at large. Working with children, teachers and companies achieve to collect 500.000 kilos of paper to recycle per year, as well as promoting responsible paper use and discarding by 20.000 children, 8.000 adults and 100 teachers, who turn into change multipliers and operators.

The Repapel project is an exemplary practice because its objectives, methodology and activities can be replicated in different contexts. In fact, until now it has been replicated in Mexico, Costa Rica and Chile.

3. Awards

- "Best Practice to Improve the living Environment", Dubai International Award and UN-Habitat (2002).
- Winner of the regional contest concerning innovative ideas for resources mobilization, granted by Ashoka (2003).
- "Declaration of Ministerial Interest" by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Housing, Territorial Regulation and Environment, and the Ministry of Social Development.
- "Ciudadano de Oro" (2009).

4. Further links:

- [Photo source: http://www.repapel.org/multimedia/fotos/](http://www.repapel.org/multimedia/fotos/)
- <http://www.repapel.org/noticias/>
- <http://www.ceadu.org.uy/>
- <http://www.repapel.org/multimedia/videos/>

Inspiring practice #3



LANDFILL HARMONIC – THE RECYCLED ORCHESTRA

Initiated by Favio Chavez and Luis Szaran at Cateura de Asuncion in 2006. In 2011, the orchestra began training children and teenagers how to build their own instruments.



"I think that a lot of kids in my country haven't found the meaning of life. They get into drugs and alcohol because they don't know what to do with their lives. Music is something that helps avoid all these things."

~ A child member of the orchestra ~

1. About

Chávez got to know these kids and their families over 8 years ago while working on a waste recycling project at the landfill of Cateura. In this area, more than 40% of children do not finish school because their parents need them to work. Being an environmental engineer with a musical background, one day he decided to help the children by teaching them music. The idea was simply to keep the kids from playing in the landfill.

"At first it was very difficult because we had no place to rehearse and we had to teach in the same place where the parents were working in the trash," said Chávez. "The children knew nothing about music and it was very difficult to contact parents because many of them do not live with their children."

Eventually, parents began to see that playing music was keeping their kids out of trouble, some even reclaiming children they had previously abandoned. Soon there were more children wanting lessons than there were instruments, so Chávez and Nicolas "Cola" one of the garbage pickers experimented by making some out of recycled materials from the landfill. String and wind instruments are made with oil t in cans, forks, bottle caps, and whatever else happens to be lying around.

The recycled instruments serve another, more practical purpose: The kids can safely carry them. "For many children, it was impossible to give them a violin to take home because they had nowhere to keep it and their parents were afraid they would be robbed or the instrument would be sold to buy drugs."

The Orchestra had remained unheard of for many years. The launching of the Landfill harmonic short teaser on the Internet triggered social media events that changed this. The Orchestra has grown from just a few musicians to over 35. The music school of Cateura does not have their own building yet, but is still able to teach music and how to build recycled instruments to more than 200 kids of the landfill.

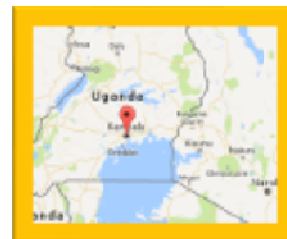
*(parts of text copied from <http://www.landfillharmonicmovie.com/>).

2. Why is this a good practice?

The practice shows how dreams can be made out of waste, how this good practice saves children from bad practices and how it works on a social level (connection to music, importance of relationships), environmental (reusing and recycling, importance of environment) and economic level (change of perspective, children realizing the importance of work, taking care of their families etc.).

3. Further links:

- <http://www.recycledorchestracateura.com/the-band>
- <http://www.landfillharmonicmovie.com/>



Inspiring practice #4

SCREAM: ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT FOR THE YOUTH

Somero Uganda is a community-based, grassroots NGO founded in 2009. Its aims are to improve girls' education in the Bwaise Slum in Kampala and empower young women between 13-25 years of age living in the Bwaise Slum area of Kampala to achieve meaningful education and training for a self-determined, self-sufficient life as well as to act as change agents within their community.



"I would like to encourage all girls to never give up on their dreams but to persevere and make the most of the chances that come their way. Despite severe obstacles, I am living a good life, able to support my child and family.

~ An alumni of the teenage mothers program ~

1. About

Somero advocates and raises awareness about children and youth related issues. It focuses on programmes that promote education, children's rights, reproductive health and early childhood development. Most importantly, it uses SCREAM (Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media) methodology to sensitize the community on matters concerning children and campaign against drug abuse, child exploitation and gender-based violence.

Somero Uganda also runs a community center in the slums of Kawempe division of Kampala with a youth corner that provides a safer space for the youth to plan and run own programmes according to their own needs and desires. Among programmes are projects on Global Learning. Since 2011, projects on global learning, sexual reproductive health, drug abuse prevention, counseling and employment opportunities have been implemented.

The programme mainly targets vulnerable youth desirous of contributing to the development of their communities. Participants are involved in all phases of the activity; they conduct surveys to identify pertinent topics of particular concern to their communities, plan and implement projects.

Through the use of SCREAM methodology the beneficiaries reach out to their communities through art, theater and dance activities. Such activities include developing community/schools art murals, community/school drama shows and community/school film and photo exhibitions.

They do this to raise awareness as well as advocate for and sensitize communities on different issues affecting the youth in the slums such as early marriages, cross-generational sex, among others. Implemented projects include management of the first drop (menstruation) among primary school pupils, interactive prevention of drug abuse, global learning, among others.

Additionally, educational campaigns are conducted aimed at influencing change among students. Top on the agenda include career guidance, children's rights, information towards drug abuse prevention and health care.

Somero Uganda works with schools, religious and cultural institutions as well with local authorities. Parents and teachers affiliated to the schools, religious or community institutions create a supportive environment for the work of Somero Uganda.

2. Why is this a good practice?

The use of SCREAM modules in this practice is worthy of commendation because it recognizes that young people are the driving force for change. The SCREAM module's generally aim is to promote awareness among young people about children's rights, so that they in turn can speak out and mobilize their communities to act. Ultimately, SCREAM seeks to change social attitudes to promote a culture of respect for children's rights and to strengthen the worldwide movement against child labor.

Through the arts – drama, creative writing, music and the visual arts – and on social media, young people are empowered to convey their message to the wider community. SCREAM thus seeks to channel the creative energies of children and youth in positive and constructive ways and encourages "peer-to-peer" education, with young people reaching out to other young people. Peer-to-peer education is a very good way for reaching out to pupils with different topics. Environmental protection is not a very popular topic among kids and young people. Raising awareness has to start at a very young age. The project creates a confident learning atmosphere and is oriented towards children's needs. With the methodology of workshops and peer-to-peer education, environmental issues can be addressed in an appropriate way.

3. Further links:

- <http://somero-uganda.org/advocacy-and-community-involvement/>
- <http://somero-uganda.org/global-learning/>
- <http://www.learn2change-network.org/userfiles/downloads/GLOBAL%20LEARNING%20AT%20SOMERO%20UGANDA.pdf>
- <https://theglobalfriends.wordpress.com/about/ugandan-friends-2/>

Inspiring practice #5

SCHOOL GREEN LAND PROJECT IN KYRGYZSTAN

Understanding the value of biodiversity and raising awareness of the importance of its protection



Location of Kyrgyzstan
(green)



1. About

The Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyzstan) is a landlocked and mountainous country in Central Asia. It is home to nearly 6 million people, and has the richest biodiversity of all the Central Asian countries. 22 classes of ecosystems and 1% of all known species on Earth can be found in its territory, although the country occupies only 0.13% of the Earth's land area.

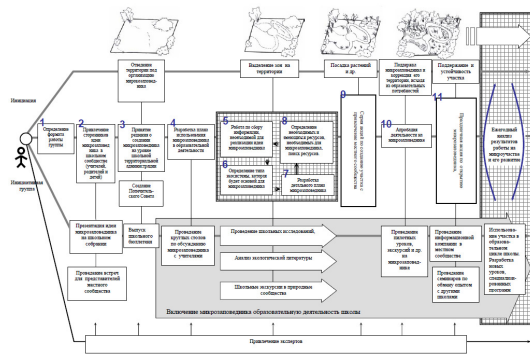
But like many countries, the biodiversity of Kyrgyzstan is under huge threat from social and economic pressures, especially in rural areas through over grazing, over use of pesticides and fertilizers and the pollution of water sources. The need to raise awareness of rural and urban communities of the country's unique biodiversity heritage and to begin to establish different patterns of behaviour was identified and schools were recognized as the appropriate centers to take on the challenge.

The project "School Green Land" was supported by the ecological movement "BIOM", a national-level NGO, unifying young specialists, scientists and leaders that participates in addressing environmental problems of the Kyrgyz Republic and Central-Asian region, Field Studies Council, a UK based environmental education charity providing informative and enjoyable opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to discover, explore, and understand the environment, The Darwin Initiative Foundation, a UK government grants scheme that helps to protect biodiversity and the natural environment through locally based projects worldwide, and the Kyrgyz Government (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Environment).

It involved the creation of a network of school micro reserves of wild nature of different regions of Kyrgyzstan in 25 different schools throughout the country. The establishment of plant micro-reserves (PMRs) is an internationally accepted approach for the conservation of endemic,

rare and threatened species. PMRs constitute areas of small extent (less than 20ha) that have been selected because they are hosts of rare and threatened plants.

The concept of "Micro-Reserve" was developed around 1990, in the region of Valencia, Spain, and was applied for the first time in 1994. Such a network of small, protected areas constitutes a management tool that is complementary to the widely accepted strategy of "large areas" which has been adopted and implemented through the network NATURA 2000. The protection of the selected plant species within the PMR is undertaken with the implementation of mild managerial measures (fencing, wardening, informative signs etc.) and long-term monitoring, in order to determine the factors that affect their conservation (climate, soil, other plants, animals, human activities, etc.).



A micro-reserve in a school in Kyrgyzstan and the management plan in the School Green Land Manual for students.

Teachers and students were enthusiastic in implementing activities within the initiative as they were involved in development of the initial idea and process of creation plans of biodiversity micro reserves as a teaching and conservation areas. The network of 25 PMRs does not only protect the environment directly but also will continue to be used for teaching purposes and for community activities.

2. Why is this a good practice?

The practice shows how effective biodiversity education can be combined with the realizations of sustainable development principles and the preservation of natural ecosystems. It also demonstrates a positive and tangible impact on the living conditions, quality of life of the individuals, groups or communities concerned. It has a very strong sustainable post-project effect and good potential for replication.

3. Further links:

- <http://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/project/11024/>
- <http://www.biom.kg/en/informatory/publications/5812cb34a6016dcc8ae57acf>

4. References

The Darwin Initiative. Final Report – School Green Land Project Kyrgyzstan. Retrieved from:
<http://www.darwininitiative.org.uk/documents/11024/4051/11-024 FR - edited.pdf>

CRETAPLANT: A Pilot Network of Plant Micro-Reserves in Western Crete. Plant Micro –
Reserves: Knowledge, Protection, Preservation. Retrieved from:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/project/Projects/index.cfm?fuseaction=home.showFile&rep=file&fil=CRETAPLANT_brochure.pdf



Inspiring practice #6

"KIDS FOR TIGERS" – RAISING CHILDREN'S VOICES TO SAVE THE TIGER



We have a target of a million kids and we wanted them to fall in love with nature and the tiger. We gave children one rational goal: by saving the tiger, you end up saving yourself, because no one can save the tiger, if you do not save its forest, its habitat. Naturally, if you save the forest, you save every single species living in that forest, from small to large.

- Bittu Sahgal (Founder 'Kids for Tigers')

1. About

The project 'Kids for Tigers' was initiated by Sanctuary Asia magazine in 2000 as a wildlife conservation initiative and environmental educational programme for schools throughout India. In 1999-2000, Sanctuary visited schools across the country to show a documentary about tigers and to collect signatures in support of the tiger. It has collected over one million signatures. A school contact programme was planned in 2002 where children would learn why the tiger needs to be saved. Nowadays, the 'Kids for Tigers' programme includes children from over 300 schools in 15 towns (Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore, Delhi, Chennai, etc). It helps to realize the vital connection between the survival of the tiger and the country's future ecological health. Furthermore, 'Kids for Tigers' has been considered as a project exercising a significant impact on public opinion and support for nature and wildlife conservation in India.

Through entertaining activities, like workshops, tiger feasts, nature walks, film shows and tiger information kits, 'Kids for Tigers' seeks to enable children to 'fall in love' with nature and increase their awareness about India's biodiversity.

The programme attracts over one million young Indians for the activities targeted to save wild tigers. 'Kids for Tigers' also work with teachers, parents, and students to explain how the survival of wild tigers is connected with the survival of nature and every species within it – humans included. The justification for this is: "We cannot save the tiger without saving its forest. If we do this, we are saving India's purest water sources. And by saving fresh water, we save ourselves."

In the year 2002, the Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee granted a private audience to 100 'Kids for Tigers', who handed over petition sheets, strengthening friendship bands, read poems and conveyed their concern for the tiger and steps that need to be taken by the

government to ensure its survival. Political leaders and well-known personalities were contacted for the support for 'Kids for Tigers'. In 2001, the Prime Minister wrote a letter of congratulations to the children and stated: "The tiger is an indication of the environmental health of India... Protecting India's tiger forests will not only save this animal, it will also ensure the country's economic stability."

2. Why is this a good practice?

This practice shows that children must not necessarily wait to become adults before taking charge of their destinies. The programme uses many creative strategies to spread the message among the population of India and abroad, with the aim to plant a seed of understanding in young minds and to empower them with the knowledge that their voices are the most important for the future. Children are encouraged to make their voices heard, to write to powerful decision-makers and influence their own families and communities. These kids have lobbied for the tiger at a national level, asked for the protection of local wildlife sanctuaries, and met with the Prime Minister, Chief Ministers, Governors, officials in the Ministry of Environment and Forests, editors of newspapers and magazines and public figures of all kinds.



They have directly contributed – to the fullest extent they can – to tiger conservation in India, a fact recognized and admired by environmental groups in India and abroad. Moreover, the programme has already produced many effective young defenders of wild nature.

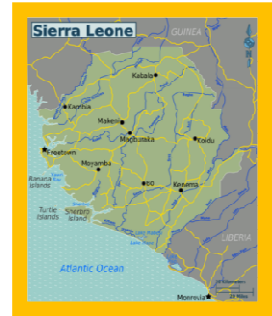
3. Further links

- [Save Our Tigers: http://www.saveourtigers.com](http://www.saveourtigers.com)
- [Sanctuary Asia: http://www.sanctuaryasia.com](http://www.sanctuaryasia.com)
- [Kids in India Come Together to Save Tigers \(video\): http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2014/02/21/kids-in-india-come-together-to-save-tigers](http://voices.nationalgeographic.com/2014/02/21/kids-in-india-come-together-to-save-tigers)

Inspiring practice #7

SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS: COOPERATIVE LEARNING AND PRACTICAL PROBLEM-SOLVING

School partnerships were initiated by NGOs from the Global North (Europe) and the Global South (Africa) in 2013/2014. The results: global dimension in learning, connection between students from the North and the South and practical projects on environmental issues.



"The partnership lessons differ from my other regular lessons. In partnership lessons I could sink into this. I have learnt about another culture. In other lessons not so much. The first most important thing I learnt about Sierra Leone is the toughness. People, children never give up their dream. They are learning despite the circumstances."

– from the testimony of a Hungarian student

1. About

One of the most exciting methods to bring a global dimension into the school is to establish school partnerships, to link schools from different continents so that connections are created between the Global North and South. The core of the method is to connect schools and have teachers and students work together on shared themes. In the project called „North-South Connections“ European and African school were linked: the 4 Hungarian high schools worked with 4 schools from Sierra Leone, under the coordination of Artemisszió Foundation (Hungary) and One Family People (Sierra Leone). The project was funded by the EuropeAid programme.

Students learnt about global processes and topics through interactive, experiential learning, and the joint work shed light on the similarities and differences between the global North and South. The teams worked on globally significant and locally relevant challenges. They included pollution and waste, nutrition and water, or the situation of disabled people and poverty.

Each school tandem worked on two global issues, and realized two small school projects during the school year of 2013-14.

The most important steps were the following:

1. Preparation → 2. First contact between students → 3. Offline teaching/ Introduction to the theme → 4. Independent work → 5. Sharing → 6. Action → 7. Evaluation

Conducting independent work, researching, exploring their personal stands were all important parts of the project. Students created essays, short movies, presentations, diaries, survey, digital posters and collages and shared these with their partner school. Student actions were of outmost importance: other educational processes paved the way to making a change in their immediate environment. Creativity manifested itself in the multifaceted nature of actions. For example, as there is no potable running water in Freetown, thus, the students also looked for ways to reuse plastic water bags. Upcycling in this case, took the form of establishing a school garden. Plastic bags were used as containers in the plant nursery.

One of the most successful elements of these actions was the involvement of the local community. One school in Sierra Leone prepared a play, and visited schools in their neighbourhood to direct their attention to proper waste management. In the other case, students raised awareness among grassroots leaders (tribal leaders, elders), who are important actors in the decision-making process besides the more formal, municipality functionaries. In both settings, recycling and upcycling were the main focus, and student actions focused on the local conditions and problems.

2. Why is this a good practice?

The partnership was based on real exchange, shared responsibilities and knowledge – students and teachers from the global North and South learnt from each other, they established contacts despite the technical problems, and the Ebola outbreak in 2014. The practical project work showed how two continents can work together, while mapping different local problems and find solutions for them together. The solutions are then shared in different ways in a locally suitable form so further community members can use the results and improve their environment.

3. Further links

- http://artemisszio.blog.hu/tags/Észak-Dél_Kapcsolat
- [The World in the Classroom – guidebook to establish school partnerships, 2014:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5TgEhR6R1MbOFIId1c0aV8zWUk/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B5TgEhR6R1MbOFIId1c0aV8zWUk/view)
- [The guidebook in Hungarian, 2014:](#)
- http://globalschoolsconnect.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/2014-World-Classroom-HU-FINAL_big.pdf



Inspiring practice #8

SEKEM* INITIATIVE (*life force): EGYPT'S MODEL OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

In 1977, Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish started the SEKEM Initiative on an untouched part of the Egyptian desert (70 hectares) 60 km northeast of Cairo. Using Biodynamic agricultural methods, desert land was revitalized and a striving agricultural business developed. Over the years, SEKEM became the umbrella of a multifaceted agro-industrial group of companies and NGOs. In 1989, the SEKEM School started with primary and secondary stages and now enrolls 300 pupils, from kindergarten to secondary classes.



"SEKEM aspires to be not only a model for, but also a contribution to the development of the entire world"

~ From Sekem's website ~

1. About

SEKEM was founded with the idea of sustainable development and cultural diversity, as well as giving back to the community. The vision that brought Dr. Ibrahim Abouleish to dig the first well in the vast desert land still resounds in SEKEM's approach of conducting business. Sustainable development towards a future where every human being can unfold their individual potential; where humanity is living together in social forms reflecting human dignity; and where all economic activity is conducted in accordance with ecological and ethical principles, is what drives this school and its activities.

Education is the foundation of holistic human development and advancement of all. It is a continuous challenge. Life-long learning enables people to improve their living conditions and contribute to the development of their community and country.

The pupils represent all social levels and come mainly from the nearby town of Bilbeis or the surrounding rural neighborhoods. The school serves Muslim and Christian children alike, encouraging them to live in harmony and have respect for the other's religious practices.

Although the SEKEM School is approved by the Egyptian Ministry of Education and is based on the Egyptian State Curriculum, it also promotes new forms of educational and social interaction. Besides focusing on improving pupils' knowledge and skills, the SEKEM School also emphasizes programmes, which cultivate the integrity and character of the individual. Thus, conventional education is enriched with courses in eurhythmy, crafts, drama, dance or music. By combining traditional educational methods with innovative learning experiences, it is possible to foster the maximum social, cultural and educational development of each child. Working and learning are interrelated and are both practiced at all age levels. For this, the SEKEM School provides spacious and well-equipped facilities, including workshops and a theatre.

2. Why is this a good practice?

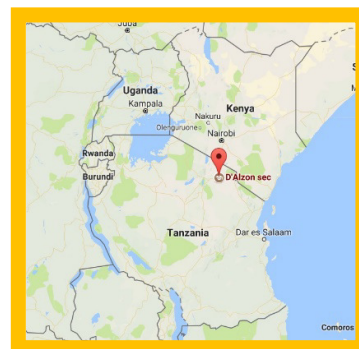
Sekem's basic aim is to strengthen the concept of learning outside the classroom; to teach environmental sciences and its principles; to use inquiry-based and hands-on educational methods and to increase environmental awareness.

In their words, in nature, every organism is independent and at the same time systemically inter-connected with other organisms. Inspired by ecological principles, representing the wisdom of nature and the universe, they continuously strive to gain and sustain a harmonious balance between the following polarities and to integrate them into their development.

Students come to SEKEM schools from rural, semi-urban and urban areas; from underprivileged and privileged families; from children of professional and managerial parents; from children of technical and skilled laborers; from children of farmers and unskilled workers; and from native Egyptians and foreigners alike. Students are also diversified with respect of their educational needs. There are those who seek regular public schooling, to those who desire technical education and vocational training, to those who have special educational needs, and even to those who are school dropouts or have had no opportunity for any type of literate education. Needless to say, that this broad diversity of the student body provides educational and learning experiences that cannot be matched or gained in any other real-life situation. It has won many awards worldwide, amongst many also the Right Livelihood Award, which also became known as the Alternative Nobel Prize.

3. Further links:

- <http://www.sekem.com/>
- <http://goodpractices.agrinnoation.net/Pages/GoodPracticeDetails.aspx?Id=195&lang=EN&I=0&Did=0&Cid=0&CMSId=10>
- http://www.planet-diversity.org/fileadmin/files/planet_diversity/Programme/Plenary_Session/13_05/Abouleish_13_5_Sekem_ppt_en.pdf



Inspiring practice #9

MALIHAI CLUB: ENABLING TREES TO SURVIVE IN A HARSH ENVIRONMENT

School clubs educate and actively engage the youth in environmental conservation practices.



"By becoming an active member of the "Malihai Club" at D'Alzon Secondary School in Arusha, Tanzania, I have become deeply conscious of the need to prevent the destruction of the environment and the need to enhance the health of natural resources, including taking care of trees that struggle to survive in increasingly harsh environmental conditions."

- A member of a Malihai Club says

1. About

The Malihai Club at D'Alzon Secondary School is part of a network of thousands of non-formal environmental education clubs for young people in Tanzania. Malihai, is a Swahili language word that means Living-Wealth inclusive of vegetation, mammals, birds and Air which form the hinge on which revolves the education on the environment that is disseminated to club members and other students.

A Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) called the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), in collaboration with the government of Tanzania under its Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, established the network of Malihai Clubs in 1980. The aim was to establish a sense of commitment by the youth to understand and support efforts to prevent the degradation of the environment.

AWF and the government of Tanzania created the Malihai Clubs as a non-formal environmental education programme basing it on the philosophy that the future of wildlife is in the hands of Tanzanians, especially the young. The essence of the philosophy and programme was to enlighten youths to become the basis for public effort and support to prevent or protect nature and the environment.

These are clubs formed with the intention of bringing awareness to a child in his/her early age about the meaning, importance and value of the environment that he/she lives in, and what he/she can do to make it even better. As a result of such education on environmental awareness, children Malihai Clubshad managed to plant over one million trees (1,000,000) by the end of 2010 in northern Tanzania.

The scope of Malihai Clubs' activities has evolved over the years whereby the emphasis is now on human activities to prevent the destruction of the environment conservation rather than on ecological aspects associated with the environment. At present, the programme actively engages clubs' school members in the establishment of trees nurseries, flowers, vegetable gardens and fish ponds; participation in proper disposal and collection of waste. They also conduct debate on environmental issues, participate in national and international environmental events, prepare flower and tree gardens, beekeeping and aquaculture, write articles for Malihai newsletter, compose drama, poems, songs, and drawing among other environmental friendly activities.

Currently, the Malihai Clubs Secretariat, in collaboration with prominent religious denominations like Hindu, Christianity and Islam coordinates the preparation of an environmental education toolkit to enable young people to use spiritual scriptures to address challenges which are associated with the destruction of the environment.

2. Why is this a good practice?

Establishing Malihai Clubs for youths in schools is a good practice because it brings together teachers, students and members of the community to practice environment-friendly activities and advocate a large participation of the local population in wildlife conservation.

The Malihai Clubs of Tanzania have empowered the young to become environmentally conscious and to reinforce personal commitment for a more sustainable future. The government of Tanzania has since established a Secretariat comprising of full time staff to coordinate activities of Malihai Clubs in the country. The government has been providing funds regularly for 37 years since 1980 to date in order to pay for operations and salaries of staff who have been working for the Malihai Clubs Secretariat.

3. Further links:

- nla.gov.au/anbd.bib-an41261704
- <http://www.worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n94900812/>
- [ihi.eprints.org/348/1/ihieprint_\(45\).pdf](http://ihi.eprints.org/348/1/ihieprint_(45).pdf)
- [http://ihi.eprints.org/348/1/ihieprint_\(45\).pdf](http://ihi.eprints.org/348/1/ihieprint_(45).pdf)
- subnet.loginto.me/30-years-anniversary-of-malihai-clubs-of-tanza...



Inspiring practice #10

RIGHT TO WATER: GENDER AND WATER ACTIONS IN CHIAPAS

An initiative that fosters the right to water in several indigenous communities in the Highlands of Chiapas (Mexico). Developed by a collective feminist NGO and based on a gender focused approach.



"We learned how to make water tanks, we believed that only men could do it, but now we realized that we can, too. We really liked that both could work – men and women together."

~ An indigenous woman from Chiapas

1. About

Chiapas is a Mexican region that receives a lot of water in the form of precipitation, although rural and urban communities face a limited and inequitable distribution of water. Main factors for such a situation are the pollution of water sources, deforestation, lack of integrated water and waste management, the impulse of mega projects such as mines, dams or monocultures.

In order to improve the access to water, a group of Mexican NGOs (lead by feminist NGO "Mujer y Medio Ambiente") developed the project "Gender and water actions: ecotecnías, organizational strengthening and human right to water in the Highlands of Chiapas, Mexico".

The initiative, that started in march 2014 and ended in march 2015, was developed in several indigenous communities of 5 municipalities (Chenalho, Las Margaritas, San Cristobal de las Casas, Pantelhó and Huixtán) with a very high level of marginalization and poverty. Despite the fact that indigenous communities have a strong culture of community organization, local customs and practices limit the integration of women in water decision-making processes. Challenging this situation was the main focus of the project.

The starting point of the project was the realization of a participatory diagnosis in every indigenous community involved, with a gender and human rights approach. Afterwards, the facilitators implemented workshops on leadership and the empowerment of women in water management. Workshops were aiming at raising awareness of the importance of enabling

women to be taken into account at all decisions made on water management in the communities. Those workshops were realized with women and men, both separately and together. The educational activities and trainings allowed the integration of new planning strategies and management for new infrastructures projects (ecotecnías) related to the needs of women (water tanks, ecological baths, rain water harvesting systems, water filters, etc.).

Project managed to install the capacities and skills necessary for the operation and maintenance of different infrastructure projects realized. In addition, it strengthened the organizational processes and contributed to the modification of gender patterns to incorporate women in water decision-making processes. In all activities, a fair participation between women and men was encouraged, creating spaces in which voices, opinion and experiences of women were taken into account. From the history and experience of each community depended how gender approach was incorporated, giving different results in each case but forcing to analyze the social and cultural inequity between genders, especially in water related issues.

2. Why is this a good practice?

A generally accepted fact is that women should play an important role in water management and that this role could be further enhanced through the strategy of gender mainstreaming (UN Water). This initiative offers a good example of how to mainstream a gender approach in educational and capacity-building activities related to the right to water and the conservation of the environment that are replicable in different cultural and geographical contexts.

3. Further links:

- [Mujer y Medio Ambiente: https://www.mmambiente.org/](https://www.mmambiente.org/)
- [Water as human right: http://www.cepazdh.org/wp/?p=618](http://www.cepazdh.org/wp/?p=618)
- http://media.wix.com/ugd/59becd_46074d46824d4c60a1e2ef3bb90d152c.pdf



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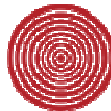
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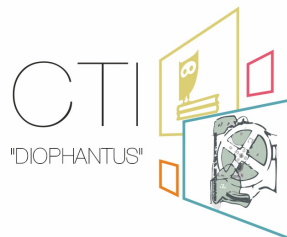
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