

C4.1 Education curricula on water management

Characteristics

This tool involves the incorporation of locally relevant sustainable water management topics into pre-school, primary, middle, and high school education. Bringing water issues into education programmes provides a means of encouraging young people to understand not only the wider water concepts, but also the effects of their own behaviour on water, its quality, and eco systems.

There are many ways that water issues can be introduced into the general curriculum both inside and outside the classroom. In the classroom, people can:

- Develop and use water textbooks like more general environmental textbooks in middle schools; support these with Internet support sites and CD-ROMs;
- Develop experiential models around water to add to science, geography, and history courses;
- Use actual local projects as learning classrooms for water management lessons, and use visits to water infrastructures to broaden the middle school learning process.

Water managers and teachers can cooperate to:

- Think about how local water assets can be used as learning resources for local communities and schools;
- Hold joint seminars on water issues and brainstorming to devise methods to use assets to help meet learning goals.

Learning programs at visitor sites (such as wetland centres, river banks or reservoirs) can also be used as such educational tools. Educational programmes should be integrated with local museum and science exhibits on major public and private water works and infrastructure.

Lessons learned

- Studies on introducing water conservation behaviour show that the most efficient way to affect adult behaviour is through educating children at school.
- Educational tools are particularly effective in middle schools, but can also be applied at the elementary, and high school levels.
- Introducing local science projects into the classroom learning environment will give students a feeling for the realities of water issues.
- Promotion of environmental education can focus on the children as well as teacher training.

- The integration of environmental issues in education curricula has become well established and offers lessons for how to stimulate knowledge and understanding of water issues.
- Good practice at school (e.g. providing latrines, especially for girls, and promoting hygienic practices) can increase school attendance and influence the wider community.

