Swiss Water & Sanitation Consortium

Blue Schools – linking WASH in School with the other SDG 6 Targets

Blue because **Water** is common to all aspects: Watershed, Waste & WASH

Authors: Lucie Leclert (Caritas Switzerland), John Brogan (Terre des hommes), Daya Moser (HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation), October 2017

Background

The Blue School concept was pioneered by the International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance (IRHA) and further developed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and partners. In addition to activities related to **Water, Hygiene and Sanitation (WASH)**, a Blue School promotes **school gardens** as a practical place to demonstrate the relationship between food production and an efficient management of water; as well as **watershed and land management practices** and **solid waste management**. The concept builds on the WASH in School (WINS) community of practice and addresses all SDG 6 targets.

What is a Blue School?

A Blue School offers a healthy environment and exposes students to environmentally-friendly technologies and learning that can be applied in their communities.

A Blue School has the necessary infrastructures to fulfill students' **WASH needs**. It also has a **school garden** and a **solid waste** separation and collection pit. Depending on the context, more **environmentally-friendly technologies** or **practices** can be introduced.

In a Blue School, students practice good hygiene behavior. Teachers complement the theoretical lessons on biology, chemistry, agriculture, etc. with practical exercises so that students can **learn about their environment by doing**. Sustainable water and land management practices are demonstrated through the school garden and other environmental-friendly activities or technologies in the schoolyard or in nearby locations. Students are also introduced, in a visual and fun way, to new concepts such as watershed, water cycle and waste reduction, reuse and recycling.

Blue School is a **pathway:** WASH should be addressed as a priority before embarking in gardening or introducing waste separation and collection, good land and water management practices and other environmental-friendly activities. But what to start with and the priorities can vary from one school to another.

Catalogue of Technologies – selected examples

From Plants to Food

Keyhole Gardens
A single, compact unit, designed to use less water – a compost and garden in the same 3m radius

Bucket or Bottle Drip Irrigation
Even when rainfall is low or erratic, the bucket drip irrigation system enables farmers to nourish and grow the crops they need

Composting Pit
Shallow pits for the collection of waste materials and creation of compost

Zai or Planting Pits
Zai pits are a traditional method for rehabilitating dry lands and restoring soil fertility

Sanitation & Hygiene

Tippy Tap
An easy technique for washing hands with soap that can be made at home

Drinking water

Ceramic Water Filters
A pot-shaped filter that fits into a receptacle

Watershed

Infiltration Trenches
An infiltration or percolation trench is a method for managing rain runoff, preventing flooding and reducing downstream erosion

Gender & Growth

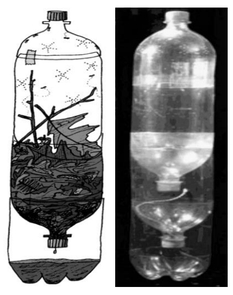
Reusable Pads
For Menstrual hygiene management: trainings on making pads for focal teachers to cascade to adolescent girls

The Blue School Kit

The Blue School Kit provides guidance to education authorities and school personnel, including:

I. A **Concept Brief** defining a Blue School, minimum requirements, key principles and components, including a step by step road map on how best to engage government institutions and build ownership of the school stakeholders
II. A **Facilitator's Guide** for teachers with suggestions for learning objectives for each component and practical ideas for teachers to use with students; as well as ideas on how to introduce overlooked topics such as gender, menstrual hygiene management and transformation of waste into resources
III. A **Catalogue of Technologies** that can be demonstrated in a school or its environs at low cost, focusing mainly on water & land management, waste, as well as drinking water, sanitation and hygiene
IV. A **Catalogue of Practical Exercises** for teachers on low costs but hands on exercise they can carry out with students to complement the theoretical lessons, requiring materials at little to no cost

Catalogue of Practical Exercises – selected examples



Decomposition Bottle
To understand the process of decomposition in the formation of compost

Crumpled Paper Watershed Model
To design & understand topography –spray the model and watch the water run down slopes and soak in in low areas

Inspiring the next generation of Water sector champions

Contact Details

Lucie Leclert (lleclert@caritas.ch)

John Brogan (john.brogan@tdh.ch)

Daya Moser (daya.moser@helvetas.org)

Since 2011, the eight NGO partners of the SDC-funded Swiss Water and Sanitation Consortium have piloted innovative approaches, exchanged experiences and documented good practices —including the Blue School concept in more than 200 schools in Bangladesh, Benin, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Nepal, and Nicaragua.