

# DROPS OF KNOWLEDGE FOR RIVERS OF CHANGE



GLOBAL TEACHING AND  
LEARNING MATERIAL

A hands-on guide to teaching  
and learning about  
water, sanitation, hygiene,  
and the environment

SWAROVSKI  
WATERSCHOOL

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In Swarovski Waterschool (SWS) programs, everything revolves around water—the Earth’s most precious resource. Swarovski’s flagship community investment program embodies the company’s integral relationship with and to water. The company’s respect and concern for the environment was established by Daniel Swarovski, who founded the company in Wattens, Austria, in 1895. Water has always been essential for making Swarovski’s high-quality crystal products, and for more than 100 years, the company has harnessed water as a source of electricity.

Swarovski Waterschool programs are designed to encourage respect for the human and environmental importance of sustainable water policies and practices, contributing to the long-term availability of water for the benefit of communities, ecosystems, and biodiversity. The goal of Swarovski Waterschool activities is to engage and empower current and future generations as stewards of our planet, supporting access to plentiful, safe, clean water and adequate sanitation for all.

An international icon, Swarovski designs, manufactures, and markets crystals, genuine gemstones, and created stones, as well as jewelry, accessories, and

lighting. The company also makes precision optical instruments, such as telescopes and binoculars, and tools for grinding, drilling, and sawing. Today, water remains fundamental to Swarovski’s production processes, particularly cooling, cutting, and polishing.

Although water is readily available in Austria, the situation is very different in many parts of the world, where shortages, droughts, and environmental pollution endanger communities and vulnerable groups—including children. In response to these issues, Swarovski’s management places great emphasis on developing Swarovski Waterschool as a worldwide educational program on the use and preservation of water.

The first Swarovski Waterschool program was developed in Austria, in collaboration with Hohe Tauern National Park. In 2000, the program was implemented in schools located in the National Park regions of Tyrol, Salzburg, and Carinthia. Over the years, the program has been extended to schools along the banks of some of the world’s largest rivers, from the Danube in Austria to the Ganges in India (2006), the Yangtze in China (2008), the Nile in Uganda (2009), the Amazon in Brazil (2014), the Ping

in Thailand (2016), and the Mississippi in the United States of America (2016). All Swarovski Waterschool programs are carried out with non-profit partners who have knowledge of local communities and environmental challenges.

All Swarovski Waterschool programs feature participatory teaching and learning, centering on water as the primary theme and extending to hygiene education and access to sanitation. The programs also recognize that children are proven to be the most effective ambassadors in communicating messages related to healthy lifestyles to their families and communities.

Engaging with children and the adults who influence their lives, Swarovski Waterschool programs teach sustainable and responsible usage of water, good hygiene, and the importance of adequate sanitation in a practical and imaginative way, both in schools and through less formal outdoor activities. Encouraging active engagement with the topics through experimentation, practical action, games, music, art, and theater—all tailored to the local culture, environment, location, and school type—helps to develop meaningful understanding.

[International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River \(ICPDR\), icpdr.org/main/danube-basin/austria](http://icpdr.org/main/danube-basin/austria)

[Ministry of Water and Environment, Water and Environment Sector Performance Report 2014, Government of Uganda. Available at: mwe.go.ug/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=cat\\_view&gid=15&Itemid=223](http://mwe.go.ug/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=15&Itemid=223)

[Swarovski Waterschool, swarovskiwaterschool.com](http://swarovskiwaterschool.com)

[UNICEF, FAO and SaciWATERs, Water in India: Situation and Prospects, New Delhi and Andhra Pradesh: United Nations Children’s Fund, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and South Asia Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies, 2013. Available at: scribd.com/doc/186905052/Final-Report-water-management#scribd](http://scribd.com/doc/186905052/Final-Report-water-management#scribd)

## ACTIVITIES FOR SWAROVSKI WATERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

The activities in this section are for Swarovski Waterschool coordinators, teachers, facilitators, and other adult users of this guide. They are intended to support groups in defining the overall objectives and plans for delivering a sustainable Swarovski Waterschool program.

### ACTIVITY 1.1: TEAM BUILDING (TANGLE/UNTANGLE) EXERCISE

This activity is designed to be used at the beginning of a Swarovski Waterschool teacher-training workshop to focus on cooperation, team building, and participation.

**Group Size:** 8-20 / **Time:** 15-20 minutes / **Goal for Learning:** Demonstrate that cooperation and team efforts are effective problem-solving techniques.

 **Materials:** None

#### ACTIVITY STEPS:

- 1 Ask one person to volunteer as the “director” and have them stand off to the side. Ask the other participants to form a circle standing shoulder to shoulder. Then, have each person reach out and join right hands with anyone in the circle who is not next to them and repeat with left hands to form a human knot.
- 2 After the participants have formed the knot, the director is asked to untie them. Everyone must follow the director’s instructions cooperatively. They may not move unless told to do so. Keep track of the time this takes.
- 3 When the group has been untied, the director is asked to join the circle and to form the knot once again. This time, they must untie the knot by themselves, without the help of a director, who represents outside influence. (Note: It should be much easier.) Keep track of the time this takes, and compare the times with and without the director.

- 4 Ask the group what they thought the exercise was about. They will likely comment on teamwork, cooperation, not relying on one director, etc. Encourage this to evolve into a discussion on the issue of teamwork for leading a Swarovski Waterschool.



SWS BRAZIL, TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

### ACTIVITY 1.2: SETTING SWAROVSKI WATERSCHOOL GOALS AND INDICATORS

This activity is designed to be used at the beginning of a Swarovski Waterschool teacher-training workshop that engages participants in program development. Before starting the activity, set a few ground rules with the group to help ensure it is conducted successfully.

**Group Size:** 8-30 / **Time:** 60-90 minutes / **Goal for Learning:** Arrive at a group definition of Swarovski Waterschool program goals and set indicators to measure progress toward those goals.

 **Materials:**  Flip chart paper /  Markers /  Masking tape

**RULES TO CONSIDER INCLUDE:**

**RESPECT** – One person speaks at a time, and all participants give undivided attention to the person who is speaking.

**NONJUDGMENTAL APPROACH** – It is OK to disagree with another person’s point of view or behavior, but it is not OK to insult another person.

**INCLUSIVE APPROACH** – Be aware that participants may have different cultural backgrounds or sexual orientations, and promote a nondiscriminatory attitude in which the group is careful not to make insensitive remarks.

**TIMEKEEPING** – All group members arrive at the agreed time and finish on time. If someone cannot attend, she or he should notify another group member or leader, and agree to follow the decisions the group makes in her or his absence.

**ACTIVITY STEPS:**

- 1 Introduce the group to the three pillars of Swarovski Waterschool, as illustrated and described here. Share basic information about your country, district, or school regarding water, sanitation, and hygiene education.
- 2 Ask participants to form small groups of four to six people. Within the groups, each person will write down three words that come to mind when she or he hears the word “Waterschool.” After the groups share these words with each other, collect all the responses, and display them for everyone in the workshop to see.
- 3 Using the pdf on the three pillars as a guide and agree on a unified definition that is aligned with the three pillars: this will be used as the goal for the Swarovski Waterschool. Then let the small groups brainstorm and list ways to track the progress of their learning on an ongoing basis.
- 4 Display the groups’ lists of indicators to everyone in the session to discuss, clarify, and summarize. Compare the indicators with the goal of the Swarovski Waterschool and with the three pillars, and ask the participants to consider next steps for implementing the goal and integrating the indicators into their plan of action.



**CASE STUDY, PARTNERSHIPS AND PLANNING, SWS BRAZIL**

Established in March 2014, Swarovski Waterschool Brazil, which in Portuguese is named Escola d’Água, is one of the newest gems of the Swarovski Waterschool network. It is located in the municipality of Santarém in the State of Pará, at the confluence of the Amazon and Tapajós Rivers. Swarovski Waterschool Brazil is working to build capacities of teachers and students from 35 schools in the municipality to preserve the Amazon region habitat through promotion of water, environment, and sanitation education of good quality, while contributing to local actions and shift of behavior and values among those involved in the educational process.

Planning ahead for long-range sustainability, Swarovski Waterschool partner Earth Child Institute established local partnerships with the Municipality and Secretary of Education in Santarém, the Federal University of Pará in Amazon, EMATER (Extension Services of the State of Pará for Technical and Rural Assistance), and UNICEF. Together with these key stakeholders, the Swarovski Waterschool team visited each of the 35 schools to conduct a survey of knowledge, attitudes, and practices.

The senior technical adviser in Santarém, Professor Lucineide Pinheiro, explains, “We intend to help train a new generation of people who can treat the environment with more respect. Seeing children as protagonists of their history, the Waterschool seeks to empower them and bring them to a critical reflection on the role of water in relation to the way that they treat their body, home, school, and the community. We understand that we are in the Amazon region and the importance of taking care of what is ours.”

The survey findings indicate that the issue of annual flooding is getting worse and, at the beginning of the flood season, there is a great deal of water-related illness linked to poor sanitation. In addition, the increasing prevalence of agricultural chemicals being spilled into the river presents a health challenge to the communities during the rainy season. Although schools are often surrounded by water, in many cases, it is not safe to drink, and many schools do not have filters or access to safe drinking water.

After two workshops in September 2014, Marluce de Pinho, coordinator of the project for schools located on the rivers, affirms that “the greatest intention is to put into practice the actions that have already been developed and assimilated in the first stage of the seminars.”



SWS BRAZIL



TRADITIONAL PAINTING, SWS CHINA

“Knowledge without wisdom is like water in the sand.”

— GUINEAN PROVERB

