

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

ACTIVITY 5.1: CHILD-LED SCHOOL WATER, SANITATION, AND ENVIRONMENT MAPPING

Before beginning this activity, review the basic terms with your students: a “hazard” is a human-made or natural danger that causes damage to people, property, and the environment; a “risk” is the potential for something to go wrong or for something harmful to occur. A “risk assessment” is a survey that investigates, monitors, and anticipates factors that could combine to harm children and adults in a community. Managing or reducing risk means acting to limit the possibilities for something to go wrong and being prepared to deal with the effects of a disaster if one occurs, so that individuals and communities can prevent or reduce damage or even loss of life.

During a school mapping project, the children in your group can interact with their peers and the wider community while collecting and recording data. This technique builds knowledge, provides a participatory method for monitoring and evaluation, and strengthens risk-reduction capacities. The mapping exercise will also enhance children’s understanding of the links between the natural environment, health, and personal empowerment. The exercise is designed to be fun and participatory, and teachers are encouraged to adapt it in new ways. Children can plot vital features of their community—schools, health centers, toilets, water points, environmental hazard zones, and so forth—by placing icons on a grid. Characteristics that describe each feature in more detail can also be assigned to these icons.

Encourage your students to be detectives! The school environment can provide some unlikely but very effective opportunities for addressing environmental issues. Help students map the physical location of their schools and the child-friendly services within them, such as safe water points and separate latrines for girls, boys, and staff; school and classroom infrastructure, including the presence of informal learning centers; school gardens, canteens, or food services; and environmental hazards such as stagnant water and solid waste.

Time: 90 minutes / **Thematic Areas:** Science, Geography, Social Studies /

Goal for Learning: Work with children to map their school grounds for hazards, and identify opportunities for children to contribute to making improvements.



Materials: Marking pens/markers (different colors if available) /
 Poster paper

ACTIVITY STEPS:

1 Work with the students to develop and write out a checklist of things that could be mapped. The samples listed here should be adapted for your school:

Energy use – electricity (for lighting, heating, etc.)

Energy use – cooking

Water use – drinking (add other uses)

Sanitation – where facilities are located, where they are needed

Waste – where it comes from, where it ends up

Pollution – where it comes from

Environmental problems – where they are located

People – Where are we? Where are the people our age?

Programs, community groups – Where do they take place or meet?

2 Questions to consider for the investigation can be decided as a group. These questions could include:

- Does the school have latrines? How many? What kind? What is the condition of the latrines? Are there sufficient cleansing materials?
If there are no latrines, where do students and teachers go to relieve themselves?
- Does the school have a place to wash hands? With soap? Water?
Are there enough places to wash hands for the school's population?
- Where do students and teachers get drinking water? Is it safe, e.g., from a pipe, or treated and stored properly?
- Does the school have a clean courtyard or school grounds?
Animals? Trash?
- Do teachers give any lessons on hygiene? Do the lessons cover hand washing, safe drinking water, and using latrines?

3 Draw a baseline map of the school that shows basic information, such as the locations of water points, toilets, gardens, and playgrounds. Then divide the participants into groups and allocate tasks that are required to conduct the survey of resources and risks. For example, if the school has toilets, is soap available for hand washing? Is anything broken? Do doors lock from the inside for safety and privacy? Are existing pit latrines cleaned out regularly?

ACTIVITY 5.1

If the map indicates a playground, is there garbage on the ground? If so, where does it come from and what can be done to clean it up and prevent future rubbish from accumulating? Are there puddles or other areas of standing water on the playground that could be slippery for children or breeding grounds for mosquitoes?

What is the condition of the school garden? Is there a compost bin? Are paths kept clear of debris? What is growing in the garden? Is there a nearby source for watering?

OBSERVATION AND DISCUSSION:

Draw the students' findings on a map of the school, then cross-check the accuracy of the information on the map with experts in the community. After the map is finished, display it in a public place in the community.

Discuss and analyze the information obtained, especially information about risks and resources. Use the map as a guideline for developing a Swarovski Waterschool action plan.

WATER MAPPING, SWS THAILAND

