



KEEP IT COOL

CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION

**Set 3 for School
Leadership Teams:**
Supporting your
school in responding
to climate variability

This is a support set for School Leadership Teams (SLT) - which includes the School Management Team and the School Governing Body. This set works together with a group of sets for teachers and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) participating in the Keep It Cool: Climate Change Education (KIC:CCE) Project.

The KIC:CCE Project aims to implement innovative, curriculum activated CCE projects, involving learners and communities. The project aims to facilitate collaborative, continuing professional development and improve the teaching and learning of climate change education in the South African education system. School Leadership Teams are asked to guide and support Secondary school teachers as they implement the change projects, for their successful implementation. At the same time, teachers have the opportunity to form Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to facilitate their professional development collaboratively. Key themes that run through the materials are gender equity, good governance, and social inclusion. The support sets provide a poster, stories, examples, tools and processes that can be used within the KIC:CCE Project by the School Leadership Team, PLCs, and teachers.

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Brooklyn Forum
1st Floor, Lobby 1
377 Veale Street & Fehrsen Street
Pretoria 0181
South Africa

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Enquiries: +27 (0)12 753 1135
www.vvob.org
<http://southafrica.vvob.org>

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Review team: Misser, S., Snyman, C., & Thomas, K.

Copy-editing: Angela Vogt. Original Cover Design: Francis Lotz, adapted by Leanne Burford.
Layout: Nelson Sampaio.

SET #3 FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAMS:

Supporting your school in responding to climate variability



THERE ARE 8 SETS FOR TEACHERS IN THIS KEEP IT COOL: CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION PROJECT.



WHAT WILL YOU FIND IN THE SLT SETS?

The sets are arranged into three key activity groups:



A poster exploring "WHAT DOES A CLIMATE ADAPTED AND CLIMATE RESILIENT SCHOOL LOOK LIKE?"



The role of the SLT in creating resilience to climate change



Supporting your school in responding to climate variability

WHAT IS IN THIS SET?

This set is about supporting the school to become more sustainable.



ABOUT AN SLT THAT HAS HELPED A SCHOOL TO BECOME SUSTAINABLE

This set looks at a school where the SLT has systematically supported the efforts of teachers, learners, and the community to create a sustainable and resilient school.



Sustainable projects supported by the SLT

Shea O'Connor Combined School

These stories might inspire your SLT to try out similar ideas or ways to support the implementation of a curriculum activated climate change project.

About Shea O'Connor Combined School

Where is it? Nottingham Road, KwaZulu-Natal

What type of school is it? Combined school, quintile 5, in a rural area

How many learners? +/-800 learners, from Grades R-12



What happens at Shea O'Connor School that is so special?

Governance:

- The SLT actively supports climate change activities and projects.
- After consultation, a 'no plastics' policy was written which is followed by all.

Preparing learners for the future:

Past learners are pursuing careers in the environment:

- A young lady has graduated with a master's degree and is an environmental officer in a municipality.
- A young man who started in the school's food garden is an entrepreneur who grows and sells organic vegetables.
- Others are preparing for careers involving care for the environment.

Teaching and learning:

- The SLT encourages teachers to use transformative teaching methods, the school grounds, the environment, and the food tunnel project as tools in their lessons.
- The school has had a thriving eco-club since 2004, in partnership with a climate change NGO.
- Acting principal, Antonio Mkhabela:
 - Won an award for her excellence in teaching that embodies transformative teaching in action, as the environment and climate change concepts are used to encourage critical thinking.
 - Encourages colleagues to use climate change concepts across the curriculum.
 - Encourages collaboration with stakeholders as she believes in the 'commons' – that the environment belongs to all who live in it.
 - Completed the Fundisa for Change course.
 - Focused her Masters on the environment and teaching.



Community partnerships:

Food security is a matter of concern for the community.

The food tunnel at the school produces vegetables for the community, helping to improve their lives.

A teacher says:

Our learners ask their parents and grandparents how they preserved food, or kept it safe to eat, before they had refrigerators. Learners are asked to find out how older family members cooked and preserved food in the past. They learn about sustainable ways of living from their elders.



Another teacher at the school says:

We use knowledge from the elders – for example, we use ash from wood fires to kill the aphids on plants, rather than poisons that could damage the environment.



Risk mitigation tips:

Involve all stakeholders in preparing for and lessening risks, **through their climate change projects if possible.**

Communicate clearly and widely about risks, necessary actions, and compliance.

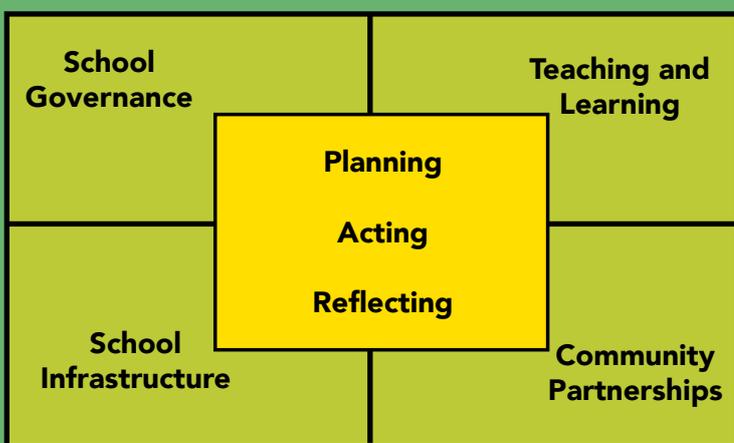
Communicate risk events timeously.



(Adapted from Search disaster recovery, risk mitigation, p.1).

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSES AS A SCHOOL

The story of Shea O'Connor school is organised around four concepts. As an SLT, you would probably recognise these as the components of **planning** and **implementing**. You may also have noticed that the poster on a climate adapted and resilient school is organised in a similar manner.

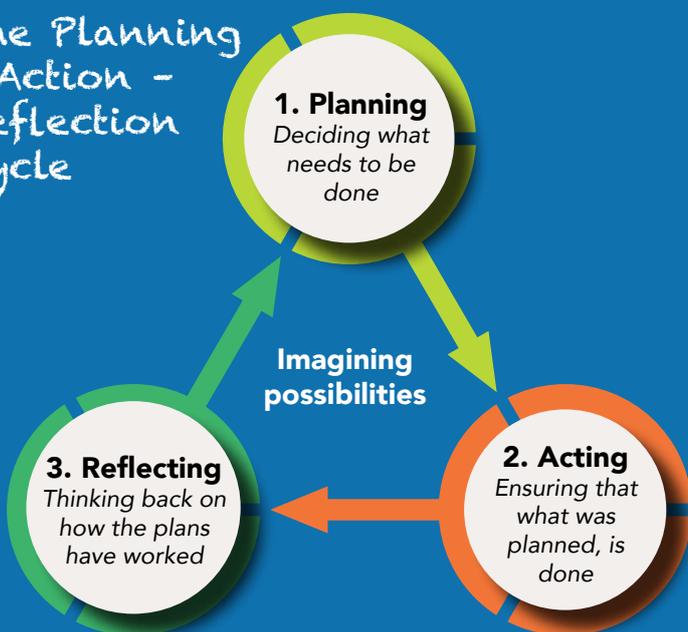


Adapted from Sustainable and Climate-Friendly Schools, p.7.

This is not an add-on!

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) requires schools to do a **School Self Evaluation** (which looks at 9 areas) and then prepare a **School Improvement Plan** (SIP). Your thinking and planning about the four areas could form part of the response to the SIP.

The Planning - Action - Reflection Cycle



IMAGINING POSSIBILITIES FOR CHANGE

Planning

- Self-assessment (school's performance related to sustainability and climate action).
- Identify priorities, set targets, and success measures.
- Plan how to achieve your school's vision for change.
- Consider how school stakeholders will be involved.

Action

- Actions need: specific tasks, expected outcomes, timeframes.
- Identify curriculum links; link climate change projects to the curriculum; clarify roles and responsibilities; and collect data to demonstrate progress.

Reflection

- Your school's School Improvement Plan (SIP) should reflect goals, strategies, achievements and methods; changes made; and how the school reimagines what does not work.

(Adapted from Sustainable and Climate-Friendly Schools. UNESCO's Guidelines for Climate Change, p.26.)

TRYING
OUT

WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR SCHOOL'S JOURNEY TO SUSTAINABILITY

GOVERNANCE

Governance is **how the school runs** – the leadership; management systems; processes, support for all areas of school functionality; policies; and values – the 'way things are done', and 'what is valued'.



A.

Key questions that you could ask as you **plan**:

- Does our school community have shared values and beliefs about the need to take action for a sustainable and resilient society?
- Does our school vision, mission and values statement reflect concern for the environment?

B. **Actions** that demonstrate the SLT's commitment to a sustainable, just, and resilient environment, good leadership and governance:

- Talk often and clearly about the school's commitment to:
 - o sustainable practices,
 - o a just society; and
 - o caring for our school and community.
- Review the school's Vision, Mission, and Values.
- Revisit and revise policies to reflect a commitment to a fairer, healthier, more environmentally sustainable society.
- Involve everyone in the school in discussions about a sustainable, fair, and clean environment.

(Adapted from *Sustainable and Climate-Friendly Schools: A Teacher's Guide to Taking Action*, pp.8-11.)



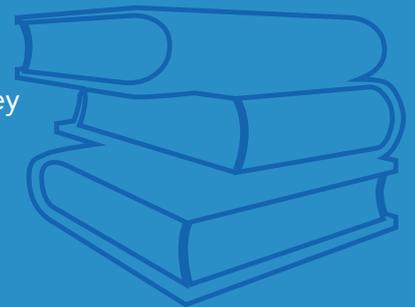
TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning is about what methods teachers use; how interactive they are; and how learning is assessed.

"How does the curriculum activate climate change projects?"

"Does teaching go beyond CAPS to CAPS ++?"

"How does the SLT support teaching about climate change?"



A.

Key questions that you could ask as you **plan** around transformative teaching and learning:

- Are concepts that cover sustainable development and care for a fairer, cleaner environment, taught in all subjects?
- How does our SLT support teachers and encourage the use of transformative teaching methodologies?



- B. Actions** you could take to **demonstrate your commitment** to transformative teaching and learning, that considers the need for sustainable practices and a fair and clean environment:
- Arrange discussions about imagined and possible futures for learners – areas of study; identifying their strengths; and building on learning from the climate change project.
 - Encourage each grade to have a carefully labelled food garden.
 - Enable the use of the outdoor classroom as a teaching and learning resource.
 - Encourage learning across the curriculum. Language learners can write a story about the river clean-up, or the story of the project. History learners could investigate indigenous practices.
 - Ensure that CAPS ++ extension is used in the classroom.
 - Discuss encouraging critical, problem-solving thinking; imagining a different future; thinking about different perspectives; and learning from other cultures.
 - Celebrate learner activism and what it means to fight for beliefs.

(Adapted from *Sustainable and Climate-Friendly Schools*, pp.12 -17.)

INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is about how the school **cares** for its environment, buildings, and assets. It is about **maintaining** what is there and making plans to **develop** assets. It asks **how** and **where** funds are spent. The infrastructure of the school reflects the school's values.

A. Key questions that you could ask as you **plan** to make the most of your school's infrastructure:

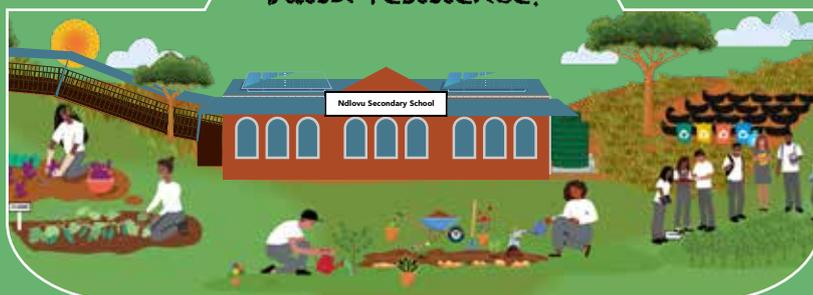
- Do our school grounds, our buildings, our classrooms, reflect a commitment to the environment, our people, and our natural resources? Do they improve the wellbeing (emotional, psycho-social) of all stakeholders? *A sustainable environment helps to redress inequality.*
- Do we care for, use, manage and respect all of our resources? Is the atmosphere of the school calm and conducive to well-being?
- Does our school's infrastructure promote healthy living and respect for diversity?

B. Actions you could take to demonstrate your commitment as an SLT to caring for the school's resources and infrastructure, to help create and maintain a sustainable, fair and clean environment:

- Plan to review the school infrastructure - its grounds, buildings, and equipment.
- Fix areas of waste (start small with dripping taps, saving electricity).
- Protect the school's natural assets (wetland, stream, indigenous trees).
- Prepare a maintenance plan for school facilities.
- Prepare a longer-term development plan that uses climate adaptation methods – installing gutters, or irrigation trenches, or (ultimately) solar power.
- Discuss with all stakeholders, how to make your school more resilient to climate change.
- Develop a sense of care and concern for self, others, and the environment.

(Adapted from *Sustainable and Climate-Friendly Schools: A Teacher's Guide to Taking Action*, pp.18-20.)

Ask: How can we build resilience?



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Community involvement and partnerships are about the school as the centre of the community and its environment. It is about working together to make the school more adaptive and resilient to climate change. How does the SLT encourage and enable partnerships to form and flourish?



Key questions that you could ask as you **plan** to develop meaningful community partnerships:

- Does our school consciously build (and nurture) partnerships?
- Do the partnerships include parents and the broader community (business, NGOs, local service providers, the municipality, regional government, other schools, local and international organisations)?
- Are the 'matters of concern' of the community and the school, similar? What is the most common matter of concern?

A.



Actions you could take to demonstrate your commitment as an SLT to building partnerships with the aim of ensuring a sustainable, fair and clean environment:

- Include the community in discussions about 'matters of concern' – to ensure alignment.
- Discuss different ways to support teaching and learning or to assist with the climate change project with elders, parents and community members, or experts.
- Establish what community members can contribute – knowledge, skills, funds, resources, time, support?
- Include the community in activities to improve the school environment, and to help with the climate change project. Suggestions: clean ups; a guided tour of the project (perhaps led by learners); planning, maintaining, extending, or expanding a project; or celebrating project achievements.

B.

(Adapted from Sustainable and Climate-Friendly Schools, pp.20-21.)

WHAT HAS BEEN COVERED IN THIS SET?

This set explored how the SLT of the Shea O'Conner School led climate change projects that have made a real difference to what the school looks like, its policies, and how it operates.

Suggestions for a risk mitigation plan follow. If a school follows the example of the Shea O'Connor school, then it can achieve the requirements of the DBE (which requires a risk assessment plan) while working collaboratively with:

- teachers to support climate change projects; and
- the broader school community to improve the school infrastructure while building partnerships; improving governance; and supporting interactive teaching and learning strategies.

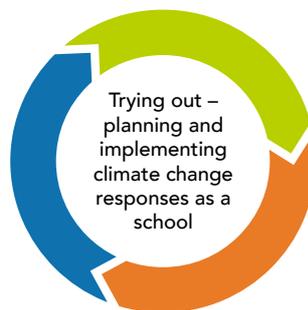
This is about how a collaborative, integrated approach led by an SLT can help a school to be sustainable. School stakeholders found their voice and their agency to act.

The remainder of the set offered suggestions for supporting your teachers in the curriculum activated climate change project.

This is about helping your school to be able to adapt to climate change.

WHAT IS IN THIS SET?

This set is about supporting the school to become more sustainable.



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Another resource for teachers and for SLT members, if you wish to access these:

The KIC: Climate Change Education Project has developed an extensive digital library of materials for all KIC partners.

What is in the resource? Open Educational Resources (OER's) that focus on teaching and learning about climate change and sustainability

When will you be able to access it? The website is live

How can you access the resource? <https://ibali.uct.ac.za/s/ccse/page/welcome>

How can the resource be used? Its primary purpose is to provide the teaching community (from primary, through to teacher educators) with relevant text and media resources to enhance their teaching practices and courses. You can do general searches by main categories such as climate change topic, foregrounded approach, or target audience. Each general category is then broken down into subtopics to help you find your areas of interest

You will be able to add interesting materials that you generate or find!

If you would like more information about curriculum focused, transformative learning, and transformative teaching and learning methods, then look at the Fundisa for Change core resources. You can download them from the Fundisa for Change website.

<https://fundisaforchange.co.za>





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