

Learning for the future?



Ben Ballin, Tide~ global learning
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Tide~ global learning has been taking groups of teachers out to The Gambia, West Africa for the past nine years, looking in depth at sustainability issues.

The people in the previous slide work for The Gambia's Renewable Energy Centre: seeking sustainable solutions to meet the energy needs of a young and growing population.

This requires some care, creativity and imagination.
One solution is the passive solar water heater shown on the slide.
There are many others.

***Learning for the future is about real people
applying real ingenuity
about the real needs of people and the environment.***

www.jatropha.de

Jatropha is an indigenous and fairly common Gambian plant, which is scrubby, thorny and mildly toxic.

Its main current use is as hedging, to keep animals off crops.

But it is also rich in oil.

The Gambia's main export crop is groundnuts, and the country is full of oil threshers and pressers. Peanut oil is rich in energy, but the country needs cash from these exports ... and what isn't exported helps meet food security needs.

GREC is currently investigating the economic viability of using jatropha as a biofuel: for oil lamps, engines, even cars.

**In terms of *learning for the future*,
GREC's jatropha experiment involves:**

Economic concepts and skills, planning
[food security, energy security]

Environmental understanding, action
[erosion, using local materials, responding to climate change]

Knowing the community context and relevance
[women's income, local solutions to local needs ... in a global context]

Thinking out of the box.
Innovation, experimentation and evaluation

In other words, this is
a learning agenda

**... with many of the characteristics of
quality learning for sustainability.**

**If we are serious about learning for the future,
we want to move away from simply assuming that
yesterday's solutions will work for tomorrow.
They may well, but they may not.
We need deeper, and more critical learning.**

**This requires time and space for all engaged in schools to think
through ideas about sustainability, take action, try things out,
evaluate, make changes, try again etc
... as a sort of action learning process**

**This *absolutely* includes teachers, who also have the crucial job of
thinking through the educational implications of this agenda.**

Climate change, local & global

There is a need for a range of creative experiments.

For example, about the benefits of taking a learner-centred enquiry approach to the issues. Climate change, with its complexity and uncertainties, offers a particularly rich context for enquiry learning.

In the Tide~ project and resource *Climate change, local & global*, teachers used four key questions to frame young people's enquiry learning at KS2-3

Climate change, local & global

What is it?

Why does it matter?

What can be done about it?

What have we learnt and how?

www.tidec.org

- How can your work contribute to young people's thinking?
- How could regional support help move this forward?