

Domain: Sanitation
Subjects: Latrine design and construction

Age group: 8-14 years

2.6 Building blocks

Learning goals:

Knowledge:

- Children understand how latrine slabs are made.
- Children learn the differences between school and household latrines.

Attitude:

- They develop a feeling of pride in and ownership of the school latrines.
- They appreciate good quality technical work.
- They come to see domestic latrines as affordable.

Practical skills:

- They learn how to measure.
- Older children learn how to make a 'mortar' mix.
- They experience how cement is moulded and shaped and learn how to cure it.

Psychosocial life skills:

- They do away with gender stereotypes on technology (technical skills for both sexes).

Participatory methods:

Demonstration, do-it-yourself exercises

Materials:

Measuring tape, angle

Activities:

Sanitation platform/SanPlat construction

The teacher takes the children to see the artisan mixing the cement, sand, ballast and water to create the concrete. The artisan can explain the proportions of the various ingredients. S/he also shows how the mix is placed with the mould for the platform and explains reasons for and methods of curing. Girls and boys assist in keeping the platform(s) wet to cure the concrete (i.e. help it to set solid).

Pegging of the superstructure

The teacher takes the children to meet the technician/construction person. S/he explains the measurement of the superstructure and where the pillars will be put to give it support. The children can be involved in verifying measurements with the help of the mason. They can peg their own ground plan for a household latrine.

Application:

When children and parents see school latrines, they sometimes think that building a household latrine will be as expensive. To prevent misunderstanding,

- ask them to list the differences between a school latrine and a domestic latrine;
- ask them to draw a domestic latrine using local materials;

- invite the mason to explain the differences between a school latrine and household latrines in design and costs to the children and their parents;
- facilitate a discussion about the different materials that can be used in building a household latrine, and how a family could gradually improve its latrine over time. Make an inventory on the blackboard of the different materials that the families of the children, or in the village, have used for building a latrine.

Depending on the curriculum, sessions can be added on other technical skills, e.g. building a drying frame, making a soak pit, making a compost heap, making soap, treading a pipe, fixing a handpump or replacing a washer on a tap.

Learning indicators:

- All children can measure and set straight angles correctly.
- They can give at least three differences between a school latrine and a household latrine.
- They can explain the importance of having a latrine and everyone using it.

Competence:

Basic technical know-how



Child-friendly pre-school latrine in India (Photo: Mariëlle Snel)