

Nature Clubs – School children promoting awareness on environmental issues in CBRM project areas

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A Nature club is a united forum of students, established with a purpose to first, aware students about the composition of environment and related issues and second, to promote collective and individual activities by students for solving/preventing some of the environmental issues through simple initiatives.

CBRM is committed to increase environmental awareness among rural communities, especially the young generation, and to promote a positive attitude towards nature. Engaging students in conservation is rewarding as their minds are more receptive for shaping their attitudes. CBRM makes an effort to provide a platform to the students in the form of nature clubs for their involvements in conservation measures. CBRM with the support of WWF-Pakistan until now has established over two dozen nature clubs in various schools in the project areas. Student-teacher management committees are jointly implementing the activities in a way that helps in developing leadership skills in students (and of course teachers too!). A group leader is chosen among student members of the club who supports the teacher to impart special lessons and activities in the club.

How is a nature club formed?

In order to establish a club, permission is taken from the District Education Officer of the relevant district in which the project operates. An enthusiastic school head is identified who appoints a teacher interested in the activity. The club leader is an active student who has a perspective of staying in the school for at least three more years. The leader should be a student of natural sciences in middle, secondary or higher secondary class. Around 15-20 members are chosen in the school to be members of the club. They are nominated from



the highest grade in the school (such as 5th grade in case of primary, 8th in Middle and 10th in case of secondary school). The members are chosen for a year and are replaced by the next batch of students arriving in the new class.

What are the activities of nature clubs?

Different class-room and outdoor activities are undertaken with the students. The clubs are provided with awareness raising material (developed by WWF or CBRM).

Special lessons are organized for the members on environment. Class-room activities also include practical exercises on making food chains and inter-dependency between animal and plant species. They learn and understand the importance of trees through making real life observations around a tree growing in their premises. The class-room activity takes its essence from sharing observation and elaboration. The students are also introduced with the concept of indigenous knowledge regarding flora and fauna through various

exercises. They collect plant specimens while going back to home each day and ask question from their parents regarding the collected plants.

As an outdoor activity, the students raise a nursery in their school, celebrate cleaning week in the village and participate in debates, quizzes, essay-writing and drawing contests. Exposure visits to biodiversity hotspots are also organized, including sometimes, nature camping.



It is quite interesting to observe how children often try to act as a strong force to correct their elders in their wasteful and careless practices towards environment. CBRM hopes that they will retain their sensitization when they will grow older and will contribute to a positive change in attitude at societal level!