

SECTION 3: THE SOCIO ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

3.3 THEME: EDUCATION

OVERVIEW

Education plays a vital role in empowering people, providing economic growth, improving the standard of living and personal growth. The vast majority of environmental problems could be dealt with, if the bulk of South Africa's population had a good solid grounding in environmental education.

Environmental education is perceived by rural people as a way of improving the economic situation of a village, through rational management of environmental resources. It is, thus, the link demonstrated between economic development and the protection of environmental resources that very often convinces the population to take action. Recognising this link is the determining factor in people's attitude towards environmental education.



Primary School Education Program during National

WHAT ARE THE PRESSURES?

The empowerment of the people of Mogale City.

WHAT IS THE STATE?

- Mogale has a total of 83 schools (refer to map 29)

WHAT IS THE RESPONSE?

115. **Promoting equitable, socially viable and stable human settlements** is inextricably linked to eradicating poverty. The concerns of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty and the International Decade for the Eradication of Poverty are shared by the international community, which also acknowledges the feminisation of poverty. Poverty has various manifestations, including homelessness and inadequate housing. The eradication of poverty requires, *inter alia*, sound macroeconomic policies aimed at creating employment opportunities, equal and universal access to economic opportunities (and special efforts to facilitate such access for the disadvantaged). **Education and training** that will promote sustainable livelihoods through freely chosen productive employment and work; and basic social services, including health facilities. However, there are no universal solutions that can be fairly applied. People living in poverty must be empowered through freely chosen participation in all aspects of political, economic and social life. Other key elements of a poverty eradication strategy include: policies geared to reducing inequalities, increasing opportunities, improving and providing, as appropriate, access to resources, employment and income; promoting rural development and measures to improve economic, social and environmental conditions in rural areas; providing social protection for those who cannot support themselves; recognising the needs and skills of women; developing human resources; improving infrastructure, including communication facilities, and making it more accessible and promoting domestic policies for meeting the basic needs of all.

*UN HABITAT Agenda,
Social development: eradication of poverty, creation of productive employment and social integration
<http://www.unhabitat.org/unchs/english/hagenda/ch-4c-7.htm>*

- The Department of Education in conjunction with the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism have taken the lead in formulating policy on environmental education and introducing environmental subject matter into the school curricula. The environmental education network and materials available have increased during the past two decades, and all levels of government and non-government organisations are involved. Courses have been introduced to build the capacity of organisations and individuals involved in environmental education. The scope of environmental issues addressed through environmental education has widened considerably. Environmental and health awareness networks have expanded rapidly in low-income communities.
- The council could publish an “Ecohandbook”, informing communities regarding sustainable living, e.g. basic information on what to do with used batteries, and how to start your own compost heap.

WHAT ARE SOME OF OUR PROPOSED INDICATORS?

1. *Total schools for every 1 000 people*
2. *Pupil: Teacher ratio*
3. *School attendance*
4. *Attendance of tertiary education institutions*
5. *Adult literacy*

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Promote a school going culture.
- Join you local library.
- Start an environmental awareness club.