

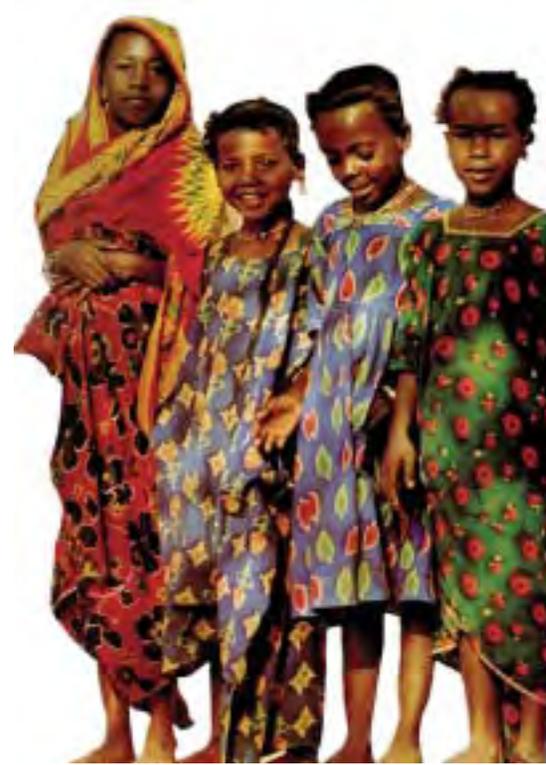
# Africa Environmental Education Assessment II

## Mali, Tanzania, and Zambia



**In 1999**, USAID's Africa Bureau asked GreenCOM to conduct assessments of selected environmental education programs in three countries: Mali, Tanzania, and Zambia. The school-based programs chosen for these assessments were widely recognized for their success in linking the schools with surrounding communities in environmental education initiatives.

The overall goal of the assessments was to determine why these programs were successful and to provide practical suggestions for replication in other locations throughout Africa. These objectives reflected the commitment of USAID's Africa Bureau not only to excellence in environmental education but also to helping African educational systems develop community investment in local schools.



### *Investigating the Factors of Success*

Assessment specialists collected data by administering surveys of key individuals (students, teachers or environmental club leaders, school principals, parents, and community members). They also spent time observing program activities and reviewing program materials.

The assessments were specifically designed to:

1. Determine how the program **linked schools** with local communities
2. Evaluate the program's ability to **improve student learning**
3. Evaluate the program's ability to **increase community knowledge** and awareness of particular environmental issues
4. Measure the **impact of program** activities on environmental issues addressed

The programs selected in each country were:

- **Mali:** The Training and Information Program on the Environment (TIPE), an educational curriculum adopted by many public primary schools and funded by the European Union.
- **Tanzania:** Three environmental clubs that provide extracurricular activities through schools—Mali Hai Clubs (funded by the Tanzanian government and a group of international funding agencies and NGOs), Wildlife Conservation Society Clubs (funded by the nonprofit Wildlife Conservation Society of Tanzania), and Roots and Shoots (funded by the nonprofit Jane Goodall Institute).
- **Zambia:** The Chongololo Clubs, government-funded groups organized in public and private schools.

## Assessment Findings

An overall analysis of the individual assessments enabled GreenCOM to explain the factors of success in these programs.

### ■ Linking Schools and Communities

In creating strong links between schools and communities, the school-based nature of these programs was critical. Schools serve as a permanent home base and a respected community institution. They provide not only physical facilities but also the human resources (teachers and club leaders) necessary for the initiatives to succeed. The support of school administrators is also critical for sustaining the programs and convincing local communities of their importance.

### ■ Emphasis on Experiential Learning

The education programs in this assessment were successful in improving students' knowledge of important environmental issues because of their emphasis on experiential learning. Whether such learning came from volunteering on local conservation projects or becoming environmental advocates through the use of local media, it was clear that hands-on experience generated curiosity and willingness to learn more about environmental issues.

### ■ Ability to Increase Community Knowledge and Awareness of Particular Environmental Issues

Two factors were key in the programs' ability to increase community knowledge: commitment to community service and local relevance of the issues addressed. Students often worked on existing community conservation projects, thereby gaining the trust of community members. And, by addressing environmental problems with local relevance these programs captured the attention of both students and community members.

### ■ Impact on Environmental Issues

Insufficient time and resources were available to determine the impact these programs had on the environmental issues they addressed. Many of the programs were relatively new, making it premature to determine the role they played in helping schools and communities confront environmental problems. Moreover, the resolution of environmental problems often takes place over the long term and is the result of many influencing factors, of which environmental education is only one.

## Selected Publications and Products

Allen, Irma, & Bruce K. Downie. *School-Community Linkages: Success Factors of Conservation Clubs in Tanzania*. Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development (AED), 1999.

Diarra, Sékou Oumar. *School-Community Linkages in Environmental Education: Success Factors in PFIE, Non-PFIE, and Community Schools in Mali*. Washington, DC: AED, 1999.

Downie, Bruce K. *School/Community Links in Environmental Education: A Review of the Factors of Success in the Chongololo Clubs of Zambia*. Washington, DC: AED, 1999.

Grieser, Mona, and Barbara Rawins. *Issues in Urban and Rural Environments: GreenCOM Gender Reports*. Washington, DC: AED, 1996.

Seidel, Renata. *Lessons from School-Based Environmental Education Programs in Three African Countries* (also in French: *Programmes d'éducation environnementale en milieu scolaire: leçons de trios pays Africains*). Washington, DC: AED, 2000.



GreenCOM is funded and managed by the USAID Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade Bureau: Natural Resources Management Office. Technical services for GreenCOM (Contract no. LAG-I-00-01-00005-00) are provided by the Academy for Educational Development in partnership with Chemonics International.