

Transforming teaching-learning process: managing resources for effective student learning



Teacher Education
through School-based
Support in India
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This School Leadership OER (Open Educational Resource) is one of a set of 20 units from TESS- India designed to help school leaders develop their understanding and skills so that they can lead improvements in teaching and learning in their school. The units are essentially practical, with activities to be carried out in school with staff, students and others. They are based on research and academic study of effective schools.

There is no prescribed order for studying the units, but 'The school leader as enabler' is the best place to start, as this provides an orientation for the whole set. You might choose to study the units in combinations related to specific themes; these 'families' of units have been aligned with the National College of School Leadership Curriculum Framework (India) key areas: 'Perspective on school leadership' (1); 'Managing and developing self' (2); 'Transforming teaching-learning process' (3); and 'Leading partnerships' (6). Key areas 4 and 5, on leading innovation and leading teams, are addressed in multiple units but not as a specific focus. Some units address more than one key area.

The units can be used by school leaders for self-study or as part of a taught leadership programme. In either scenario, there are benefits in keeping a personal Learning Diary, and in sharing the learning experience with others through discussion of the activities and case studies. The term 'school leader' is used in these units to refer to a headteacher, principal, deputy teacher or any individual taking leadership responsibility in a school.

Video resources

The  icon indicates where there are TESS-India School Leadership video resources in which Indian school leaders talk about how they are enacting change in their school to improve teaching and learning. It is hoped that they will inspire you to experiment with similar practices. The video resources are intended to complement and enhance you working through the text-based units, but are not integral to them should you be unable to access them.

TESS-India video resources may be viewed online or downloaded from the TESS-India website, <http://www.tess-india.edu.in/>. Alternatively, you may have access to these videos on a CD or memory card.

About the TESS-India (Teacher Education through School-based Support) project

TESS-India aims to improve the classroom practices of elementary and secondary teachers in India through the provision of OERs to support school leaders and teachers in developing student-centred, participatory approaches. The 105 TESS-India subject OERs provide teachers with a companion to the school textbook in the subjects of language, science and maths. They offer activities for teachers to try out in their classrooms with their students, together with case studies showing how other teachers have taught the topic and linked resources to support teachers in developing their lesson plans and subject knowledge.

All TESS-India OERs have been collaboratively written by Indian and international authors to address Indian curriculum and contexts, and are available for online and print use (<http://www.tess-india.edu.in/>). The OERs are available in several versions, appropriate for each participating Indian state and users are invited to adapt and localise the OERs further to meet local needs and contexts.

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What this unit is about

As a school leader, you are responsible for ensuring that all students have the opportunity and support to participate fully in learning. This will only be possible if resources are managed effectively and for the explicit purpose of improving learning. By far the most important resource that a school leader will manage is human resources. You have access to a group of people (teachers, other staff, students, parents and community members) who all can contribute skills and knowledge to supporting learning. Alongside human resource management you will also be responsible for managing financial and material resources in order to ensure they are suitable, accessible and used effectively to improve student learning.

Schools in India have widely differing contexts, ranging from the environment and climate of their geographical location to the cultures and languages of their students. A school could be really small, such as a single-teacher multi-grade school in a rural area, or have large numbers of staff for a student population running into thousands on the plains in a big city. Students will have access to different types of resources outside school but all school-based resources should be available to all students equally, to meet their learning needs.



Figure 1 The challenge of equal access to educational resources.

Many schools have limited physical resources to support learning, but once the mindset changes, all resources in the school – including the people, its surroundings, and, beyond, in the wider community – become available as resources for learning.

School leaders and teachers need to adopt this wider perception of educational resources to be able to enrich the teaching–learning experience of both teachers and students.

This unit will help you widen your view of what constitutes an educational resource and will encourage you to explore how best to ensure resources are being used to their maximum effect.

Learning Diary

During your work on this unit you will be asked to make notes in your Learning Diary, a book or folder where you collect together your thoughts and plans in one place. Perhaps you have already started one.

You may be working through this unit alone, but you will learn much more if you are able to discuss your learning with another school leader. This could be a colleague with whom you already collaborate, or someone with whom you can build new relationship. It could be done in an organised way or on a more informal basis. The notes you make in your Learning Diary will be useful for these kinds of meetings, while also mapping your longer-term learning and development.

What school leaders can learn in this unit







- To understand the broad range of resources available both within and outside the school.
- To identify different resources within your school with a focus on those that are underutilised.
- To engage staff in ensuring resources are utilised appropriately and effectively for learning.
- To draw up a plan for the effective use of resources in your school.

1 Types of resources within and outside your school

Anything can be turned into an educational resource where it becomes the vehicle for learning through discussion, dissection, observation, comparison or experimentation. Of course, there is a financial dimension to the availability of resources: some will cost money and funds have to be found. But others may be freely available if only they are recognised.

Table 1 offers some different categories of resources that a school can use to create a richer learning environment. You may not have considered all of them as resources before. The following activity will invite you to review what resources may be available for your school.

Table 1 Categories of resources.

	<p>Category 1: People – teachers, students, parents, non-teaching staff, past students, staff in other schools, neighbours, sponsors, benefactors, experts in the community, etc.</p>
	<p>Category 2: Living things – domestic and wild animals, birds, insects, reptiles, their habitats and herding spaces, trees, flowers, crops, fruits, vegetables, etc.</p>
	<p>Category 3: School environment – indoor spaces, such as classrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, offices, corridors and laboratories; outdoor spaces; sources of heat, noise, light, etc.</p>
	<p>Category 4: Classroom equipment – desks, chairs, blackboards, etc.</p>
	<p>Category 5: Local environment – urban, rural, coastal, mountainous, climate, river, industrial, arable, etc.</p>
	<p>Category 6: Materials - books, writing materials, posters, maps, games, maths kit, lab equipment, computers, mobile phones, art materials, tools, satellite TV, subject-related resources, artefacts, etc.</p>






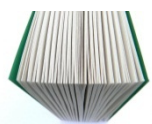
It is important that you look at the resources available in your school based on the Right to Education Act 2009 (RtE) under 'The Schedule Norms and Standards for a School', highlighting a number of aspects; namely, teachers, buildings, minimum number of working days or instructional hours in an academic year, minimum number of working hours per week for the teacher, teaching-learning equipment, library, and play materials, games and equipment.

Activity 1: What resources are available?

Choose a subject area or specific part of the curriculum (e.g. a topic that is taught) that you are familiar with. You may have an understanding of it from teaching it yourself or from observing the teaching of your staff. Ideally, work together with a member of staff or group of staff who teach the subject or topic, to give you additional insight into the resource issues. These staff may form a working group to complete activities with you as you will return to this audit at various points in the unit.

- Using the categories in Table 1, identify the resources that are currently available and used to support learning. As in the example below, identify the category of resources and whether they are within or beyond the school grounds. Table 2 shows some examples of resources from different categories to get you going (the category number is given). For each resource, identify whether it is within the school or outside the school.

Table 2 Examples of identifying what resources are available inside and outside a school.

Resource		Available within school buildings and grounds	Available beyond school perimeter
	Category 1: People Shopkeepers nearby		✓
	Category 2: Living things Vegetable patch and mango tree	✓	
	Category 3: School environment Sports field	✓	
	Category 3: School environment Blackboards in each class	✓	
	Category 5: Local environment River		✓
	Category 6: Materials Internet café		✓

- Now think about possible resources that you could utilise for this subject or topic that are not currently used. Think carefully about what would be effective in supporting learning for this area and consider carefully human resources as well as materials (i.e. consider if any staff, students or parents could contribute effectively to this learning).

- When you have completed your table, take another look at each of the resources and identify two resources that are perhaps not equally accessible to all your students. Put a star next to these resources just to remind you of this. You may, for example, note that the blackboards are so high on the wall that short students cannot reach to write on them, or that it is only the boys who play down by the river. Make notes in your Learning Diary of any inequities you identify, and think about how you could take account of this in your use of resources.
- Finally, consider your list again and make a note of which resources are free (mark with a '☺') and which require funds (mark with a '/Rs.').

Discussion

Identifying resources you currently use or have access to, and thinking about other possibilities and whether they promote effective, inclusive learning is an important first step in managing your school's resources.

You will probably have identified that some are being utilised more effectively than others and you may have discovered some that you had not thought of as resources up to now. You will be using this useful list throughout the module and you may find it helpful to continue to work with particular members of staff to develop your understanding of their use of resources.

You will also have begun to identify inequity in access to resources. These inequities may be due to gender, income, home location, size, physical ability or other factors. It is important to use resources that are available to all, or to provide alternatives for those students who may be disadvantaged. It may, for example, be common for a computer to be grabbed by the boys in a class; the teacher therefore needs to address the gender imbalance by allocating the girls time on the computer and encouraging students to take responsibility for sharing more equally.

Funding of resources can be a problem. Many schools are lacking available funds to invest in resources, so it becomes important to concentrate on those resources (human and material) that are free. Raising funds to buy or pay for resources is often easier if the purpose and impact of those resources is made clear to funders (see Section 5).

2 Identifying underutilised resources within and outside your school

You are now going to consider how well your staff use the existing resources that you have identified to support learning. You may have blackboards in all the classes, but how well and how often are they used for active student learning? Maybe they are not used very much because the black paint is so worn away that the writing is illegible to the students at the back of the class, or they are used as static displays rather than demonstration sites. You may want to work collaboratively with the members of staff involved before you make these judgements in order to accurately identify the actual use of different resources.

Activity 2: How far are resources actually used?

Using your list of resources you identified in Activity 1, think about how effectively the resources support learning by adding one of the following gradings to each:

- **A:** Very effective in supporting active learning.
- **B:** Partially effective in supporting active learning, but not used as frequently as it could be.
- **C:** Partially used to supporting active learning, as not always used effectively or to its full potential, or only used with some students.
- **D:** Not effective at supporting learning, as either not used at all or used ineffectively.

Again, you may find it useful to include others (teachers, school management committee (SMC) members, students and parents) in the judgements about the grading or assessments of these different resources.

You may have found that you need to include others in the judgements about the grading or assessments of these different resources. Using the example of the blackboard, you may need to conduct classroom observations or ask teachers and students to describe how the blackboard supports their learning in order to judge whether it is used effectively to support students to explore topics, share ideas or develop arguments.

3 Using resources to their full potential for learning

Next you will be looking at how to improve the use of resources that are underused (scoring a B or C) and how to access and use some of these previously unrecognised resources (probably scored D) in your school to contribute to improved learning outcomes for your students. It may take some creative thinking and some organising to make these resources a regular part of the teaching and learning in your school, partly because other teachers may not yet be confident about including them in their lessons.

Equally, there may be good reasons why resources are not being used in their current form (e.g. they are out of date, need repairing, do not support student learning as well as an alternative resource). Resource management therefore becomes an important responsibility for the school leader, although it can become overwhelming if allowed to dominate your agenda. You should link your direct involvement in resource management specifically to those areas where you can enable an improvement in learning. For example, you may prioritise managing the resources for the science curriculum as this is an area in which you know, from data, that girls are not achieving good grades.

One way to manage resources in a targeted way is to set resource targets as described in Case Study 1.

Case Study 1: Mr Kumar's resource management

Mr Kumar was newly appointed as school leader in a rural school that had a wide range of students who generally came from impoverished backgrounds. He was immediately aware that the school itself also looked poor – there were no displays of work, students lacked basic equipment and there was no furniture or shelving. But there was a large school compound with trees, vegetation and a supply of water. With his three teachers, Mr Kumar looked at how they could better use the resources at hand. They came up with lots of ideas about how they could use the immediate area as a resource for teaching sciences and environmental studies, but recognised that the area would need some nurturing to make the most of its potential.

Mr Kumar, helped by his teachers, made a plan to manage the compound as a resource. The target was that every student be active in the compound at least once a week as part of their learning. This target meant that teachers needed to organise their teaching accordingly.

Mr Kumar's plan included that the older students establish a vegetable patch and create rotas for watering and tending to the crops. He enlisted the help of two parents, who were to erect some poultry cages from drawings the children had made in a mathematics class. One teacher agreed to do a letter-writing activity in the English class to ask a local business to donate gardening tools and the students started a project to gather and grow seeds for planting. Mr Kumar was thrilled when a local forestation charity volunteered to plant some trees on the edges of the compound – news spread of the new 'green' school leader, and soon a group of parents were regularly seen helping maintain the grounds.

Activity 3: Reflecting effective resource management

Reread Mr Kumar's case and reflect on the following questions:

- What was effective about how Mr Kumar led the change to turn the compound into a learning resource?
- How did Mr Kumar establish a process for monitoring the use of the compound as a learning resource?
- How do you think Mr Kumar could have identified the impact on student learning outcomes?
- What can you learn from this case study which can be applied to managing resources in your own context?

Discussion

Mr Kumar set about making a plan for managing the compound as a teaching resource. It had the added benefit of making the school more attractive and the students gained a sense of pride. He needed to manage activities and people to reach his target. The people that are part of the school and its wider community are an important resource. They may be able to offer time and/or expertise and some may be able to offer funding. Their time and expertise are, however, just as valuable, and Mr Kumar managed a great deal with their help. The school leader motivates and inspires people to contribute resources to the school, and then manages their efforts according to an overall plan related to improving learning outcomes.



Video: Using local resources

<http://tinyurl.com/video-usinglocalresources>

Activity 4: Preparing for staff involvement

You will see that Mr Kumar immediately involved his staff in discussing better use of available resources. As school leader he started a conversation and involved his staff in the problem solving. If you have already included others in making your lists and grading the use of resources, you will have colleagues who will be open to the findings. But you may also have colleagues who are sceptical about any suggestion of a change to their regular ways of working.

Look at the resources you identified where the gradings were B, C or D. Consider in your Learning Diary the following questions and make notes about your thoughts.

- What would you need to do to make these resources effective in supporting student learning?
- How would you begin this conversation with your staff?
- How would you overcome the resistance of those staff and colleagues who do not want to change the way they do things?

Discussion

As a school leader you need to engage with your staff to guide and enthuse them to use a wide range of resources. They may need some guidance at first to draw on resources outside the school and to use the resources that are available in more creative ways. The biggest resource in any classroom is the students themselves, who bring a wealth of experiences and knowledge that can be used by the teacher to enhance the learning of their peers.

You may think about providing examples to your staff that inspire them to work differently; for example, a biology lesson that involves students bringing leaves to school that are then categorised, or an English lesson where students bring a piece of packaging to develop a vocabulary list of foods or their nutritional contents. You may also want to think about how your teachers could learn from each other or from teachers in other schools – people are less resistant to new ideas when they can see their colleagues being successful with them.

You may find the table in Resource 1 useful to share with your team when you engage them in the discussions about improving the use of resources in your school. Resource 2 might be a helpful handout to share as part of the discussions.

Activity 5: Planning a session with your staff on resource management

Understanding what resources are available across a school (particularly a large one) and whether existing resources are being fully utilised will involve the whole staff. As the school leader you will need to explain the rationale for addressing the issues of underutilised and unutilised resources, and the impact this may be having on learning outcomes. You will also need to make explicit that you need the staff's help in identifying human resources (or people) that fall into these categories. Your starting point for this process is to invite the staff to participate in thinking about these issues.

Make some notes in your Learning Diary as to how you plan to run the session. Afterwards, make sure that you evaluate how it went and make notes about what you may do differently another time. The points listed below could form a basis for how this meeting may progress.

- Introduce your rationale for addressing underutilised and unutilised resources, making sure it is rooted in improving student learning. Discuss the auditing you have done so far and what you have learned from it.
- Introduce the idea of a wider view of resources and what an educational resource can be. You may want to explain the different categories and get the staff involved in thinking about what resources are available in your school for each category, to help them understand these.
- Discuss how, as a school community, you could work together to identify underutilised and unused resources in other subjects or curriculum areas.
- Discuss how, as a group, you could best ensure that everyone's skills and knowledge is being utilised fully in support of student learning (this includes parents, students and others in the community, as well as teachers).
- Set some targets for the use of resources or actions to be taken before a review on a set date – remember to relate these to learning outcomes for students.
- Seek volunteers to work with you on a plan to better use the available resources. Fix a follow-up meeting with them to work on a utilisation plan for these resources.

Discussion

Planning sessions like this invariably lead to a better outcome. As with students, there has to be the right balance between instruction and information giving, and active engagement by your staff. You should be modelling active learning when you introduce new approaches and when you are seeking changes in practice. When people understand what has brought something into focus and feel supported in making a change, they are more likely to see this as an opportunity rather than as a threat. In this situation, you are inviting your staff to bring more variety, energy and resonance to their lessons through employing a range of different resources: they could find that exciting!

You may find Resource 2 a useful handout to give to your staff.

One way to share the benefits of a wider view of resources is through case studies such as Case Study 2, which is an interview with a school leader about how she introduced field trips as a learning resource in her school. She explains the rich learning opportunities that resulted from the trip, but also acknowledges the added workload that comes from planning and organising these trips. There may also be financial implications for transport or paying fees, which needs to be factored in to any plan.



Figure 2 Managing your school's resources will improve your students' learning.

Case Study 2: Interview with a school leader about introducing field trips

Interviewer You have undertaken two field visits per term for each of your classes. Why has this been such an important aspect of your school's life?

School leader I found that the students were learning concepts in a bookish way, but were not able to relate it with real life. So although the students learnt that letters were a means of communication, they had never written a letter – nor had they visited the post office, which is just down the road from the school. The older classes were learning about germs and contamination, but many of them had never realised that the pathology laboratory in the next town was the place where the doctor sent blood samples for testing. I felt that they must know these things and so I spoke with the teachers.

Interviewer And they agreed?

School leader Well, they asked me how we could take so many students and whether the laboratory would agree to this visit. So I asked all the teachers to come up with some visits for each class and then we approached the parents and shared what we wanted to do.

Interviewer Why the parents?

School leader We don't have the resources to do this, so parents would have to contribute. One of them runs a bus service and he agreed to operate the bus at cost for us. The other parents agreed to provide some money for the visit.

Interviewer So the visits were quite easy to manage?

School leader Actually, most things are easy once you make a decision, but we did undertake a lot of planning. The teachers went to the places to get permission and explain what we wanted to do and why. We had to think about how we would introduce the visit to the students, how we would collect questions and what we would do with the information with which they returned.

Interviewer I noticed that the students in Class VII had some drawings in their book about buildings.

School leader Class VII recently went to the building site three roads away from us and came back with a lot of information on how the excavation is done to lay the foundation. So then we called up the man doing the excavation and he brought the architect with him and they spoke to the students about the kinds of excavations they have done, the kinds of buildings they have built and which soil is easy to build on and which is difficult. The students spoke with them about the difference between building the tall buildings in big cities and the huts that they live in. The architect was quite impressed. The next day the teacher brought a calendar she had at home that showed different buildings and the students drew the sort of building in which they would live. It's a good way to learn about gravity, force, weight, mass, etc.

Activity 6: Reflecting on people as a resource

Case Study 2 identifies the wide variety of ways that people can be used as a resource. Spend some time reflecting on this, using the following points as guidance:

- Think about the students in Class VII, and the learning they were doing about buildings. Make a list of all the people who were involved in making their learning experience come alive and what it was that they contributed.
- Think about people (staff, parents, those in the local community) who could be used as an important resource for learning, but currently are not. You may find it easier to think of a particular subject or topic that is taught and then think about who may help.
- What would be the barriers to you utilising these people to support learning and how could you overcome these barriers?

Discussion

In thinking about Case Study 2 and answering the questions above, you may have become aware that your staff and others have a wealth of resources that you do not utilise. As in the case study, this may be in the form of parents or local community members who could contribute time, money or expertise. As with any initiative, initiating collaborative activities can be time consuming, and there may be difficulties on the way; but you may quickly find other people volunteering to help once word spreads that you are looking for opportunities, and you may find you can run regular events, which require less organising.

Equally, you may have begun to think about staff who have a range of skills and knowledge beyond that of their subject, have links with other organisations, and have hobbies, experiences or material resources which could be used. One way is to make staff aware of topics or subjects that could benefit from additional resources, and asking them if they have any suggestions or something to offer. This discussion could become a regular feature of staff meetings. You may feel that the case studies and activities in this section provide a useful exercise for your staff to engage with in order to get them thinking about resources they can draw on beyond the four walls of the classroom.

4 Planning for the use of resources

Having conducted your audit, you should plan for the utilisation of resources in a more systematic way, so that there is a good chance of enhanced learning through improved use of resources by the teachers and the students in your school. A plan does not have to tackle every category of resource or every year group: it may be about a specific initiative, like the introduction of field trips as mentioned in Case Study 2, or to address a particular concern you have about a particular aspect of the curriculum or student learning. It could be staggered over time, or delegated amongst your staff team. The Case Study 2 showed how one school leader approached her plan. You will now start to plan for your own school setting.

Activity 7: Imagining your end goal

Good planning first looks at your end goal. Imagine what your school would look like if you, your students and your staff used most of the available but unused resources in your lists in designing and creating their learning. Describe this scenario in your Learning Diary.

You may, for example, imagine such scenarios as ‘The students bring in stories from their grandparents and develop them into a class book which results in them extending their use of language and their heritage’, or ‘Students make musical instruments from tin cans, leading to an understanding of how different sounds can be produced’. Make sure that your examples **focus on the learning outcomes for the students rather than the actual resources**. You could share this scenario with the people who volunteered to help you with the planning activity.

Discussion

This will be a very individual scenario. You may focus on the whole school or on specific details. You may have identified a ‘quick win’ in your school where you could introduce a new approach to educational resources – like the school leader in the case study who set up field trips as part of each class’s learning experience.

Backward planning is a way of creating a plan based on the end goal (Elmore, 1979). When you are working backwards from a goal, think about the skills, attitudes and motivation of every stakeholder who will be a part of the plan. Consider the notes below, made by a school leader before they planned the introduction of a visitors’ programme at the school.

Goal: To establish a visitors’ programme such that at least six visitors for each class (IX, X, XI and XII) are invited to school to speak about their profession and relate it to the content of the syllabus.

Stakeholders:

1. Teachers
2. Students
3. Parents or guardians
4. Office staff
5. Support staff



The role of the teacher is to:

- identify the professions that relate to the content of the syllabus
- discuss with the visitor what the syllabus includes and what the visitor may discuss with the students

- prepare students to think of what they would like to know more about
- prepare students with the skills of thanking the visitor appropriately
- give the students the opportunity to apply their learning from the visit.



The role of the student is to:

- help to identify appropriate people they know to visit the school
- identify what they already know and what they would like to know more about from the visitor
- host the visitor appropriately
- apply the information learned from the visitor and discuss it further with peers and their teacher after the visit.

It is important to take a whole-school approach to the use of resources with all staff and stakeholders involved, not only in the use of resources but also in the maintenance and care of resources. In the scenario above, where visitors come to the school, it is important, for example, that all staff (not just teachers) are aware of the visitor's reasons for being there, that they are greeted appropriately and have a good impression of the school. A visitor is a valuable resource and should be treated with as much care as a physical resource. Case Study 3 takes another resource, books, to consider how the school manages it to maximise its use and reach.

Case Study 3: Making the most of a donation of books

The school had received almost 100 books as a donation. The books lay in packing cases in the office for a month. The school leader called a special meeting of staff to share his idea about how to use this resource. To him, it was a shame that the books were available but unread. He suggested that 25 books could be distributed to each class so that each student would be able to read a different book each month, over the year.

The teachers agreed that it was a good idea, but appeared reluctant to adopt it. The school leader interpreted his staff's reluctance to mean that they did not see the advantages of reading and were feeling worried that they would be held responsible for the loss of the books. He then addressed the students at assembly and suggested they come up with a system to implement his idea.

The following week, the school leader put up a notice offering the choice of any of the books to the student who could come up with the solution. That seemed to have an impact! A group of girls came up to him with their plan. He worked on the plan with them, and then shared it with his staff. Two staff members volunteered to support the girls. They spoke with the local printer and soon some stick-on labels were sent to the school office. The girls worked together with the staff members, and soon the books were catalogued in four notebooks.

The school leader then announced the system in the assembly and praised his students for the solution; he also handed them the books they had chosen as their prize. He said they had worked it out really simply – the first 24 students who wanted to read would get the books first. After a month, they would have to return the books, along with a brief description of what they liked about the book, but without giving away the story. Each month, some time would be assigned to the students to talk about the book they had read to the other students. The teacher would then ‘issue’ the books to the next 24 students, each of whom would write the date and their name on the page in the notebooks.

One of the students raised his hand hesitantly to ask what the consequence would be of losing a book or failing to return it. The school leader said he had discussed this with the staff group and spoken with a librarian in the big school. The solution in most libraries, he had found, was for the student to replace a lost book, pay for its repair, if damaged, and pay a fine if returned late. The students agreed that this was acceptable, and the system was put into place.

Over two years, the headteacher managed to get more donations of books. Reading had become common practice; and the class libraries were exchanged every six months between classes.

Activity 8: Reflecting on developing resource systems

This case study illustrates a system that needed to be put in place to ensure a resource was able to be used effectively by all students to support their learning. Spend some time thinking about what you can learn from this case study by answering the following questions:

- What aspects of the school leader’s leadership enabled the system to be successfully introduced?
- If you had been the school leader in this scenario, what arguments would you have used to persuade the teachers of the value of this resource and therefore introducing a system to use it?
- What resources in your own context require a system to ensure they are distributed and used effectively for learning? Does the system currently work? What improvements to the system could you make?

Discussion

The books in Case Study 3 were a much under-used resource in this school and it needed someone to take the initiative to mobilise it for wider use. This is a good example of collaborative planning around resource management. Did you notice how the students were also involved in solving the problem? There is a skill in turning your staff and students into becoming solution providers with you (rather than just identifying problems). With some creative thinking and organisation, you and your staff will begin to access more resources to improve the educational outcomes of your students.

The school leader in the scenario established a library system that encouraged donors to give more books to the school, as it was apparent that the resources were well used and benefited the students. It was important that time was allocated each month for students to discuss the books, because by making it part of the curriculum, and sharing their experiences through discussion, the books could contribute more significantly to learning than if they had just been loaned out.

5 Resources that need funding

In this unit you have mainly considered resources that are either already in the school or freely available in the surrounding area or community. There will, however, be times when funds are needed to pay for transport, fees, equipment, materials or tools. This may be for new items or for the maintenance of current resources.

This is a challenge for school leaders in schools where the community is poor. Where there are affluent parents, donors or benefactors, there are options to seek money for resources; however, some school leaders and committees, like the SMC, will need to be more persistent in not only seeking but maximising optimal utilisation of funds.

Funding is most readily given for specific projects (e.g. a library, gardening tools, blackboard paint) and is more likely to be given on an ongoing basis if the resource is seen to be effective in supporting student learning and is well used. The school leader needs to be able to offer a persuasive argument for investing in the school's resources but then also follow up with evaluation reports on their use in order to inspire further investment. It may be useful to share your resource target and plan with a potential funder in order to encourage their investment. You may even present a budget. It may be that if there is not a single investor, there are individuals who are prepared to contribute to a larger resource target; people may, for example, each donate a single gardening tool or some seeds for a farming project.

Where parents are asked for contributions towards resources, this should be commensurate with their income levels and take account of their other financial outgoings. There is potential to exclude some students if a resource depends on parental contribution (e.g. school field trips) and therefore options for subsidy or payment plans needs to be considered if students are to have equal learning opportunities.

6 Summary

There is great variety in the level and range of resources available to schools, but as a school leader you can take action not only to better manage your limited resources, but also to turn available resources into learning tools. An audit of current and potential resources is a good place to start but you need to remain conscious of how far resources you identify are equally accessible by all your students. The use of resources is directly linked to learning outcomes for students. You started to consider how to motivate your staff, students and other stakeholders. You can work collaboratively with them on the goals that you have created for your school in this unit. So, armed with these ideas and tools, you can now lead your school towards a resource-rich learning environment that makes best use of the circumstances and realities of your school.

This unit is part of the set or family of units that relate to the key area of transforming teaching-learning process (aligned to the National College of School Leadership). You may find it useful to look next at other units in this set to build your knowledge and skills:

- *Leading improvements in teaching and learning in the elementary school*
- *Leading improvements in teaching and learning in the secondary school*
- *Leading assessment in your school*
- *Supporting teachers to raise performance*
- *Leading teachers' professional development*
- *Mentoring and coaching*
- *Developing an effective learning culture in your school*
- *Promoting inclusion in your school*
- *Leading the use of technology in your school.*

Resources

Resource 1: Auditing your available resources

Table R1.1 Auditing your available resources – template (see Activity 1).

Resource	Available within school buildings and grounds	Available beyond school perimeter

Resource 2: Using local resources

Many learning resources can be used in teaching – not just textbooks. If you offer ways to learn that use different senses (visual, auditory, touch, smell, taste), you will appeal to the different ways that students learn. There are resources all around you that you might use in your classroom, and that could support your students' learning. Any school can generate its own learning resources at little or no cost. By sourcing these materials locally, connections are made between the curriculum and your students' lives.

You will find people in your immediate environment who have expertise in a wide range of topics; you will also find a range of natural resources. This can help you to create links with the local community, demonstrate its value, stimulate students to see the richness and diversity of their environment, and perhaps most importantly work towards a holistic approach to student learning – that is, learning inside and outside the school.

Making the most of your classroom

People work hard at making their homes as attractive as possible. It is worth thinking about the environment that you expect your students to learn in. Anything you can do to make your classroom and school an attractive place to learn will have a positive impact on your students. There is plenty that you can do to make your classroom interesting and attractive for students – for example, you can:

- make posters from old magazines and brochures
- bring in objects and artefacts related to the current topic
- display your students' work
- change the classroom displays to keep students curious and prompt new learning.

Using local experts in your classroom

If you are doing work on money or quantities in mathematics, you could invite market traders or dressmakers into the classroom to come to explain how they use maths in their work. Alternatively, if you are exploring patterns and shapes in art, you could invite maindi [wedding henna] designers to the school to explain the different shapes, designs, traditions and techniques. Inviting guests works best when the link with educational aims is clear to everyone and there are shared expectations of timing.

You may also have experts within the school community (such as the cook or the caretaker) who can be shadowed or interviewed by students related to their learning; for example, to find out about quantities used in cooking, or how weather conditions impact on the school grounds and buildings.

Using the outside environment

Outside your classroom there is a whole range of resources that you can use in your lessons. You could collect (or ask your class to collect) objects such as leaves, spiders, plants, insects, rocks or wood. Bringing these resources in can lead to interesting classroom displays that can be referred to in lessons. They can provide objects for discussion or experimentation such as an activity in classification, or living or not-living objects. There are also resources such as bus timetables or advertisements that might be readily available and relevant to your local community – these can be turned into learning resources by setting tasks to identify words, compare qualities or calculate journey times.

Objects from outside can be brought into the classroom – but the outside can also be an extension of your classroom. There is usually more room to move outside and for all students to see more easily. When you take your class outside to learn, they can do activities such as:

- estimating and measuring distances

- demonstrating that every point on a circle is the same distance from the central point
- recording the length of shadows at different times of the day
- reading signs and instructions
- conducting interviews and surveys
- locating solar panels
- monitoring crop growth and rainfall.

Outside, their learning is based on realities and their own experiences, and may be more transferable to other contexts.

If your work outside involves leaving the school premises, before you go you need to obtain the school leader's permission, plan timings, check for safety and make rules clear to the students. You and your students should be clear about what is to be learnt before you depart.

Adapting resources

You may want to adapt existing resources to make them more appropriate to your students. These changes may be small but could make a big difference, especially if you are trying to make the learning relevant to all the students in the class. You might, for example, change place and people names if they relate to another state, or change the gender of a person in a song, or introduce a child with a disability into a story. In this way you can make the resources more inclusive and appropriate to your class and their learning.

Work with your colleagues to be resourceful: you will have a range of skills between you to generate and adapt resources. One colleague might have skills in music, another in puppet making or organising outdoor science. You can share the resources you use in your classroom with your colleagues to help you all generate a rich learning environment in all areas of your school.

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