



2019 Report of the Arab Forum for Environment and Development

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

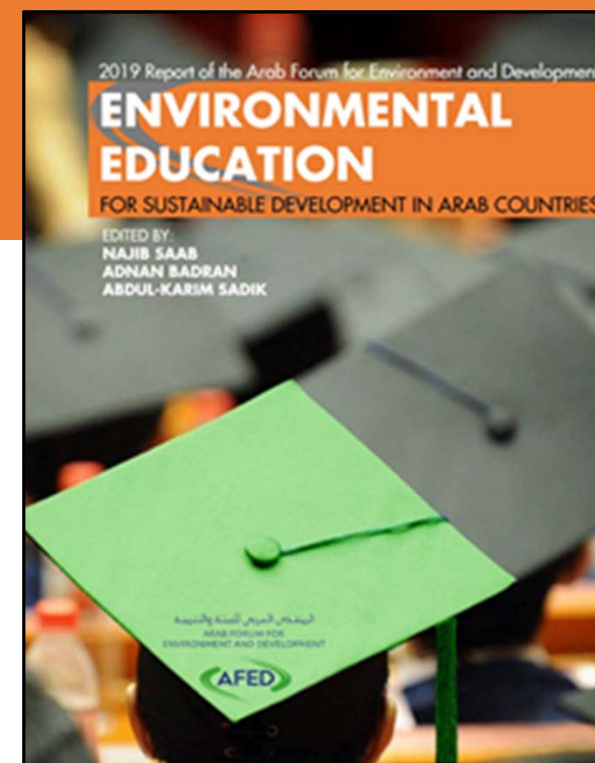
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ARAB COUNTRIES

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ENVIRONMENT IN ARAB SCHOOL CURRICULA

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Le Bristol, Beirut



Overview

- Environment is quickly becoming an integral part of education in schools across the Arab region
- Varying success in different countries
- New environmental challenges led to the inclusion of new concepts and approaches in the curricula
- More recognized role of education in protecting the environment and preserving natural resources



Overview

- Gap between the Arab region and other regions of the world
- Announced National Strategies and Programs to include EE in schools' curricula are not implemented in most of the cases
- Environment is not considered as primary versus other topics
- Lack of financing for national and regional initiatives to enhance EE in schools



AFED Survey

The survey and chapter analyze data collected and compiled by AFED research team during the first half of 2019, based on textbooks used by schools in the Arab region, supplemented by detailed course curricula provided by ministries of education in 10 Arab countries: Egypt, Lebanon, Bahrain, UAE, Jordan, Syria, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Morocco.



Main Findings

SDGs

Sustainable Development → standard topic in most textbooks



Green Economy

Lacking



Green Growth

Spotted



Ecological Footprint

Syria (Geography)

UAE - Jordan



Green Economy

Lebanon: new high school programs

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Main Findings

Most common topics



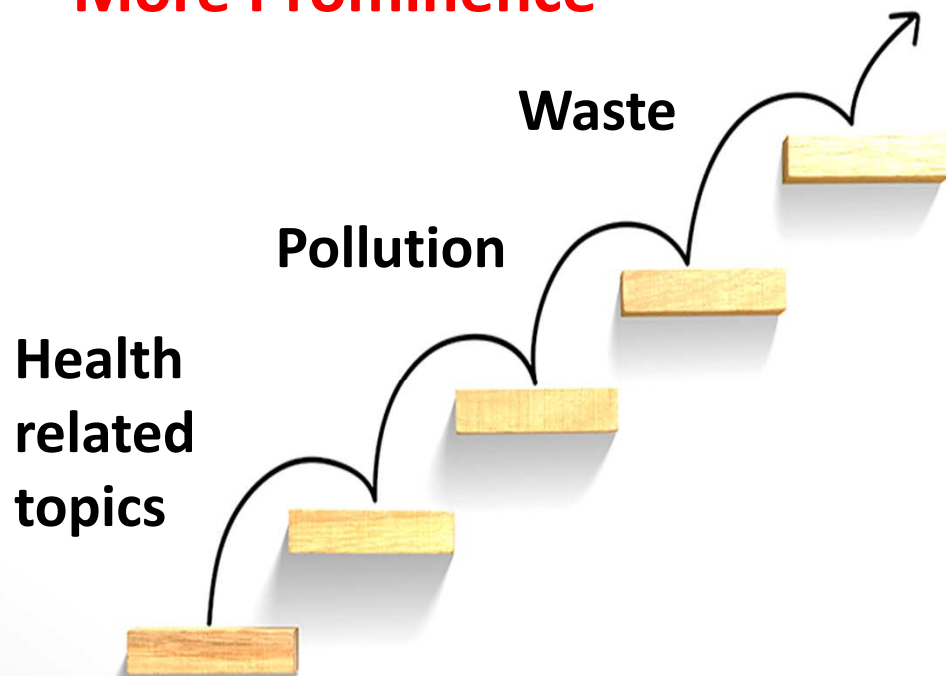
Climate Change was absent or not adequately discussed in 40 % of the countries covered



Natural disasters, virtually absent in 50% of the countries, and weak in the other half where the concept was covered.

Main Findings

More Prominence



Environmental concepts were covered

most in...

GRADE
5

GRADE
11

least in...

GRADE
6

Grade 6 vs Grade 11















	1-Ecosystem	2-Pollution	3-Natural resources	4-Climate change	5-Waste	6-Biodiversity	7-Sustainable development	8-Natural disasters
Grade 6								
Grade 11								

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Environmental topics integration in curricula

- Environmental topics are no longer restricted to science, geography and civics
→ languages, literature, history and economics (Lebanon, Syria, Morocco)
- Personal action to protect the environment and to preserve natural resources, such as instructions to consume water and electricity in a sensible manner, recycling and tree planting
- Fieldwork and nature expeditions have started to be part of environmental education in some Arab countries
- Students are encouraged to engage in community work to champion environmental causes



Areas of Strength and Weakness

The analysis covered the status of eight main environmental topics in Arab school curricula



Ecosystems



Pollution



Natural Resources



Climate Change



Solid Waste



Biodiversity



Sustainable Development



Natural Disasters



Ecosystems

Strength

- Focus on plants, animals and nature reserves, biotic and abiotic elements, sources of threat to the ecosystems, alongside the food chain and the food pyramid.

Weakness

- In addressing issues such as oceans and global ecosystems
- Lack of a balanced distribution of topics among scientific and literary courses and different grades.

Areas of Strength and Weakness



Pollution

Strength

- 4 basic aspects : definition of pollution and its types, sources and causes of pollution, and how individuals can help to fight it.
- Types : air, water and soil pollution.

Weakness

- Some topics are insufficiently discussed, (food, noise, plastic and radioactive pollution) and the distribution among various courses and grades is not balanced.



Biodiversity

Strength

- Definition, significance and major problems – mainly the dangers of extinction.
- Each country includes sections on the national natural reserves.

Weakness

- National legislations and international treaties on the conservation of biological diversity are not adequately discussed, and in some cases entirely absent.

Environmental concepts by grades and by country

TABLE 14

ENVIRONMENTAL CONCEPTS IN THE CURRICULA OF SAUDI ARABIA

Subject	Family Education									Arabic language									Social and National Education									Science									Geography								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Grade 1		x	x			x							x																																
Grade 2		x				x																																							
Grade 3		x	x		x																																								
Grade 4		x	x																																										
Grade 5						x			x							x																													
Grade 6			x		x																																								
Grade 7									x																																				
Grade 8									x																																				
Grade 9																																													
Grade 10																																													
Grade 11																																													
Grade 12																																													
1- Ecosystem																																													
2. Pollution																																													
3. Natural resources																																													
4. Climate change																																													
5. Waste																																													
6. Biodiversity																																													
7. Sustainable development																																													
8. Natural disasters																																													
9. Others																																													

Other Environmental Topics



**Environmental
Tourism**

Egypt – Grade 5



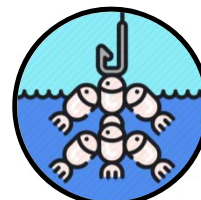
**Environmental
Impacts of Wars**

Syria – Grade 8



**Environmental
Responsibility**

UAE – Grades 1,2,4,6



**Overfishing
/Overgrazing**

Jordan – Grade 4



**Healthy
Home**

KSA – Grade 5



**Green jobs
/Green
buildings
Lebanon**

Recommendations

- The environmental content of school curricula needs to be strengthened in depth and breadth.
- Environmental aspects in school curricula should be discussed in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in such a way to relate environment to the social and economic aspects.
- Sound management of natural resources, to achieve sustainability, should be given priority.
- Introduction of the concept of ecological footprint, alongside options for green growth, with a focus on Arab countries.



Recommendations

- Enhance extracurricular activities and community work (environment school clubs)
- Cooperation between different ministries
- Environmental content in school curricula should be designed to adequately prepare students to be responsible citizens, to provide them with enough knowledge to place them on the right path for higher education





Thank you
