

10 Prevent blindness in your community

Examples of activities you can do in groups

- Make a demonstration garden at school
- Cooking clubs
- First aid club
- Health education club using drama and puppets
- Sanitation club
- Eye detectives – finding eye problems in your communities
- Club to help people who are blind.

Now that you have read this book and done these activities, you can prevent blindness in your community. This section gives some ideas on what you can do if you join together with your friends.



Class Activity

Make a school garden



The school can make a kitchen garden. Each class in the school can grow different plants to provide sources of vitamin A that is good for the eyes. For example: papaya, mango, spinach, carrots, pumpkin.

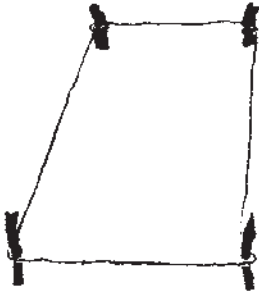


Class Activity

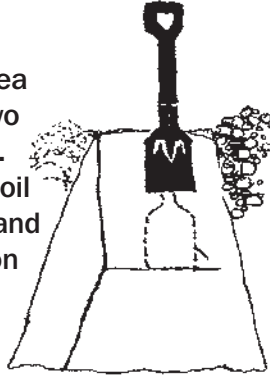
How to grow vegetables where there is little water

If you are in a place with little water, you could use the 'trench method' of growing vegetables.

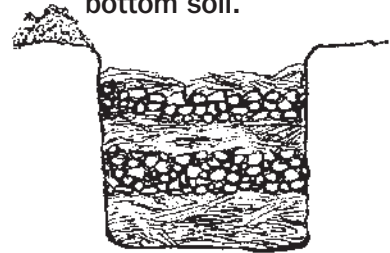
1 Measure the bed out.
1 metre x 2 metres.



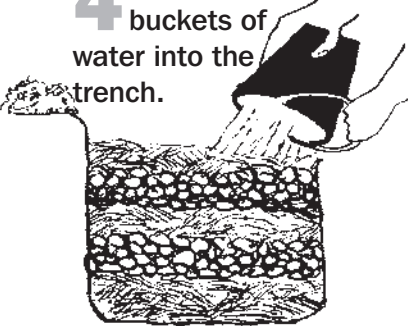
2 Dig the whole area of the bed two spades deep. Put the top soil on one side and bottom soil on the other.



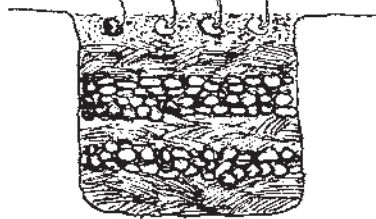
3 Fill the trench with layers of grass and bottom soil.



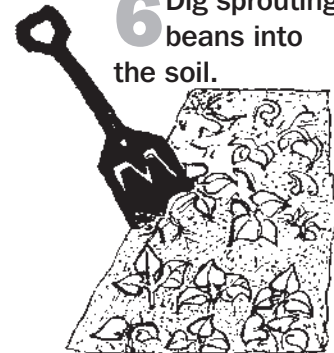
4 Pour a few buckets of water into the trench.



5 Put top soil on top. Sow bean seeds.



6 Dig sprouting beans into the soil.



Class Activity

How to grow vegetables where there is little space

Even people who live in crowded cities can grow nutritious vegetables. Vegetables can be grown in containers on windowsills, verandas, balconies, doorsteps and rooftops. Can you think of any other places?



Containers for growing vegetables should:

- be large enough to support fully grown plants
- have adequate drainage (make sure to drill holes in the bottom and to add rough gravel or stones)
- never have contained products that are poisonous to plants or people.

Make a list of all the different types of containers that you could use to plant vegetables.

For example:

- clay pots
- drums
- wooden barrels
- drain pipes.

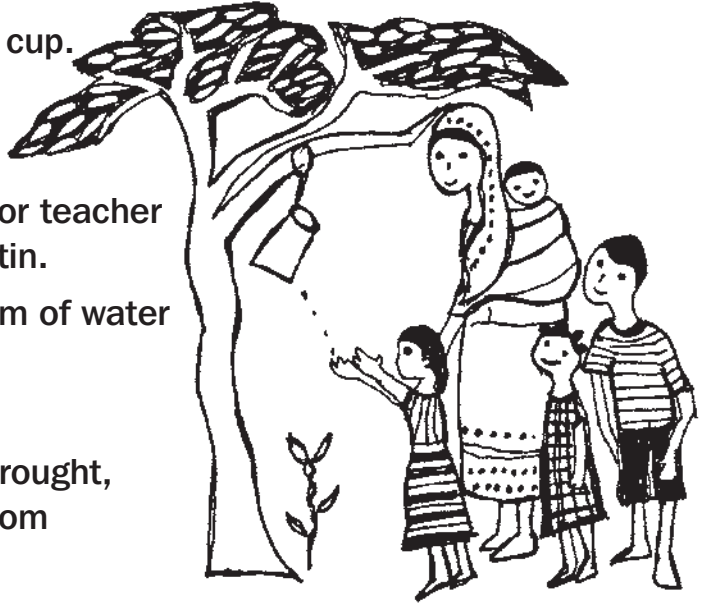


Class Activity

Make a leaky tin

If you live in a place that has little water, make a leaky tin for washing many children's faces.

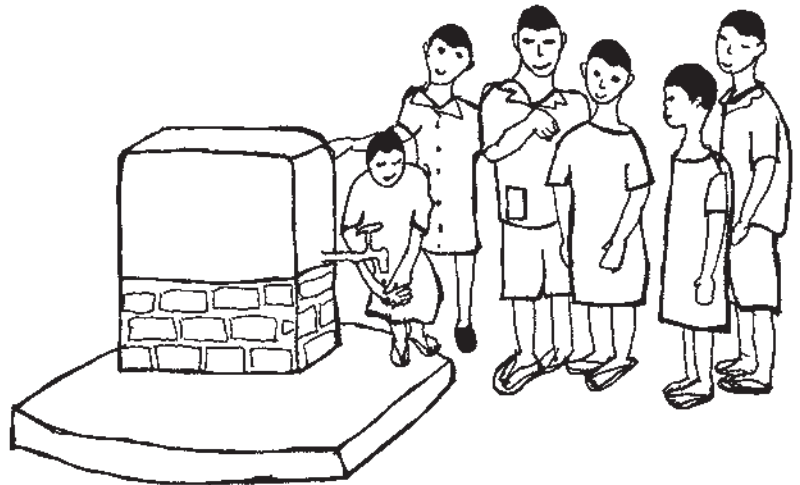
- 1 Find a small empty tin or plastic cup.
- 2 Make a hole near the bottom.
- 3 Hang it from a branch or a nail.
- 4 Once or twice a day the mother or teacher pours one cup of water into the tin.
- 5 Children wash faces in the stream of water leaking through the hole.
- 6 Plant a tree below the tin.
- 7 If the young plant suffers from drought, the children's eyes may suffer from trachoma or other eye infections.



Case study


Hauma School in the Gwembe district of southern Zambia

School children at Hauma school in Zambia designed a locally made water tank to ensure that everyone washes their hands. This tank is along the path to the toilets of the school. It is made of burnt bricks and plastered with cement, and at the bottom of the tank is a tap. Each morning the children fetch water from the well and fill the tank so each child coming from the toilet is reminded to wash his or her hands.




This was made possible by the introduction of boreholes. In the year 2001, this school almost closed down because no teacher was willing to go there to teach because it was so remote. It happened to be in the area where a SAFE strategy for trachoma control was being implemented. Two boreholes were given to the school. This has transformed the school. Now the 6th grade is in session. This school, which almost closed, is now looking like an oasis in the desert with a fruit garden and shade-giving trees.


Remember:




Do not play carelessly with stones, sticks, knives and other things which can hurt the eyes




Eat good food like green vegetables and fruits




Breast milk can protect babies from blindness




Never put anything in your eyes unless it has been given by the doctor




Never try to remove something from your eye – always ask for help




Keep your faces clean so that flies do not carry germs from eye to eye



Never let anybody else put traditional medicines in your eyes



In case of an accident go to the clinic as soon as possible



If there is someone you know who is blind, encourage them to go for help