

# SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

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EDUCATION RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS AND FACILITATORS



# SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

## EDUCATION RESOURCE



Half of humanity—3.5 billion people—live in cities today, and this number will continue to grow. Because the future will be urban for a majority of people, the solutions to some of the greatest issues facing humans—poverty, climate change, healthcare, education—must be found in city life. Learn about these connections in this resource and how we can take actions both locally and globally.

## WHAT ARE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS?

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an intergovernmental set of 17 goals with 169 targets covering a broad range of sustainable development issues including ending poverty and hunger, improving health and education, making cities more sustainable, combating climate change, and protecting oceans and forests.



## SDG 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

More than half of the world's population now live in urban areas. By 2050, that figure will have risen to 6.5 billion people – two-thirds of all humanity. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without significantly transforming the way we build and manage our urban spaces.

The rapid growth of cities in the developing world, coupled with increasing rural to urban migration, has led to a boom in mega-cities. In 1990, there were ten mega-cities with 10 million inhabitants or more. In 2014, there were 28 mega-cities, home to a total 453 million people.

Extreme poverty is often concentrated in urban spaces, and national and city governments struggle to accommodate the rising population in these areas. Making cities safe and sustainable means ensuring access to safe and affordable housing, and upgrading slum settlements. It also involves investment in public transport, creating green public spaces, and improving urban planning and management in a way that is both participatory and inclusive.



## 7 FACTS ABOUT CITIES:



Tokyo is the world's largest city, with the greater Tokyo area housing about 38 million people



By 2030, almost 60 per cent of the world's population will live in urban areas



95 per cent of urban expansion in the next decades will take place in developing world



828 million people live in slums today and the number keeps rising



The world's cities occupy just 3 per cent of the Earth's land, but account for 60-80 per cent of energy consumption and 75 per cent of carbon emissions



In 2017 the cities with the highest Quality of Living were Vienna and Zurich, at the bottom of the list were Dhaka (Bangladesh), Sana (Congo), Bangui (Central African Republic) and Baghdad (Iraq)... Find out Why: Mercer Quality of Living Survey, 2017 <https://www.mercer.com/newsroom/2017-quality-of-living-survey.html>



But the high density of cities can bring efficiency gains and technological innovation while reducing resource and energy consumption



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## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### What is it?

'Sustainable development' can be defined as 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.'

The challenge for anyone who wants to live 'sustainably' is to define what are our 'needs'...

- how do my 'needs' today take from future generations?
- how am I helping future generations to meet their needs?



**THE FIVE LARGEST** urban areas in Ireland are; Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford. Between 2011 and 2016 the population in each city increased between 3% (Limerick) to 5.6% (Dublin). With expanded growth comes increased challenges to provide homes for all inhabitants, to provide jobs, schools, hospitals, public transport, parks and 'clean' waste disposal services.

There are over 8,300 people homeless in Ireland, with the vast majority living in our cities. In Dublin alone, 20,000 people are on the City Council social housing waiting list.

This is just one of many challenges cities face in Ireland. **Find out about other challenges and write a blog or an article for your local paper on; "Five things we can do to help make our cities sustainable".**



### TEACHER/ FACILITATOR ACTIVITY 1

#### World Wide Web

Exploring Connections between environmental, social and economic issues in cities

**NEED:** Ball of string, Post Its, Pens, List of themes

**ROOM:** Students in groups of three in a large circle

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Place students in groups of three and give each group a word from the list of themes written on a post-it
- Ask each group to brainstorm anything they associate with their word. Elicit responses from each group
- Ask all groups to come together to form a larger circle
- Ask each group to say their theme. Starting with the group with Global Warming, and ask them to look around at the other themes in the circle and see which theme they think links to Global Warming (E.g Pollution is linked to Global Warming)
- Give the first group the ball of string to hold and ask them to throw it to the group they feel is linked to their theme. Repeat this step until a web is formed.
- Once a full web is formed and each group has spoken, ask the teams to try and un weave the web.

#### List of themes:

- Global Warming
- Affordable Housing
- Unemployment
- Poverty
- Pollution
- Public Transport
- Heath
- Waste
- Education
- Homelessness

#### DEBRIEF

- Ask each group to list how their theme was connected with other themes in the group
- Give each group a copy of the SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities Targets and ask if they can identify targets related to their given theme



## TEACHER/ FACILITATOR ACTIVITY 2

### Plan Newtown: Part One (Plan Newtown activity gratefully received from Gerry Jeffers)



The built environments in which we live are concrete examples of the results of decisions made by people. The layouts of our cities, towns and suburbs reveal particular values about people, their needs and how those needs should be met. Planning a new town involves making numerous decisions that reflect definite values about people's needs and particular understandings of human development.

**Plan Newtown** encourages a creative approach to problem solving. The strategy aims to encourage people to move away from thinking solely in terms of 'right' or 'wrong' answers to complex questions.

#### NEED:

- 6 Large sheets of flip chart paper - One per group
- 6 Handouts of features to add per group (p6, 7)
- Markers
- 6 Scissors
- 6 Handouts detailing task for each group (p5)
- 6 Pritsticks

#### ROOM:

Six large tables with space for groups to all draw on flip chart paper

#### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Introduce SDG 11 using the statistics above. Ask students if there are any amenities in their area that they feel are lacking such as public transport, youth centres etc.
2. Explain to students that they are going to have the opportunity to develop their own town, called Plan Newtown. Discuss with students that we tend to accept the layout and structures of the places in which we live, without much questioning, as if those layouts and structures were inevitable.
3. In pairs, encourage students to discuss what are essential amenities for a community
4. Divide students into groups and give each group their worksheet and a photocopy with images of houses etc.  
**Explain that they have been tasked to design Project Newtown to home 3000 people.**
5. Ask each group to draw a diagonal line across their sheet to signify the River
6. Tell students to begin their rough drafts in pencil. **They can include roads and six other amenities that they see fit.** They must be able to defend their decisions when presenting to the class. Tell students to nominate one person in their group to cut up the items and another to glue them down where the group thinks they should go
7. Give groups 30 minutes to complete the task

## TEACHER/ FACILITATOR ACTIVITY 3

### Plan Newtown: Part Two



1. Invite each group to present their plans for Plan Newtown. Encourage other groups to pose questions to each group
2. Ask each group questions related to their design to initiate discussion
  - Which housing would best suit an eighty year-old living alone?
  - How well does Newtown cater for car-drivers/pedestrians?
  - How well does the town cater for people confined to wheelchairs?
  - How much is Newtown's structure likely to lead to people feeling included and/or excluded?
3. At this stage teachers/ facilitators should explain that : Built environments impact on people's lives. Decisions about built environments should, ideally, be informed by people's needs. Policy decisions about towns and cities have long-term and serious consequences. Our understanding of 'development' is challenged by Plan Newtown.
4. Give each group the below five questions to discuss and ask for feedback:
  - Did you segregate the private and social housing or mix them? Give reasons why for your choice.
  - In what way is Newtown a sustainable city?
  - What do you think the strengths of planned development are?
  - What are the weaknesses of planned development?
  - Half of humanity, 3.5 billion people, live in urban areas today. Would you use your plan of Newtown as a template for a city in a developing country? Why or why not?





## PLAN NEWTOWN WORKSHEET

**Newtown is being planned at present. Thirty-three miles from a major city, adjacent to a national highway, the new town will accommodate about 3,000 people when completed. Currently the land on which Newtown will be built is used for agriculture. A small river, the Owenbeg, flows diagonally across the site.**

You are part of the group that is to plan Newtown.

To assist in the initial planning your group is to produce an outline sketch marking in the proposed locations of the features listed below. Essential roads should be included. Your group may also agree to nominate six additional features, not listed here, which might be included in Newtown.

Newtown must include:

1. Two bridges.
2. 200 local authority three-bedroomed housing units.
3. 100 local authority two-bedroomed housing units.
4. 100 private purchase two-bedroomed housing units.
5. 300 private purchase three-bedroomed housing units.
6. 150 private purchase four-bedroomed houses.
7. 50 private detached 'luxury' houses.
8. A residential centre for up to 50 intellectually disabled adults.
9. A shopping centre.
10. A refuse dump.
11. A bus terminus (Bus service is from Newtown to the city)
12. A youth club.
13. Public parkland to include at least three sports pitches.
14. A primary school.
15. A post-primary school.

16. A public health centre.
17. A branch of a commercial bank.
18. A Post Office.
19. A factory manufacturing pharmaceutical products.
20. A Church.
21. A licensed premises.
22. An Office of the Department of Social Protection.
23. A public car-park for at least 400 vehicles
24. A filling station and garage.
25. A serviced halting site for travelling people
26. Two bus-stop shelters.
27. A Garda Station
28. A factory manufacturing electronic components..
29. An Arts centre

Using the large sheet of paper provided, your group should agree on the overall design of Newtown. Work initially in pencil. Be prepared to explain and defend the decisions made on behalf of the group.

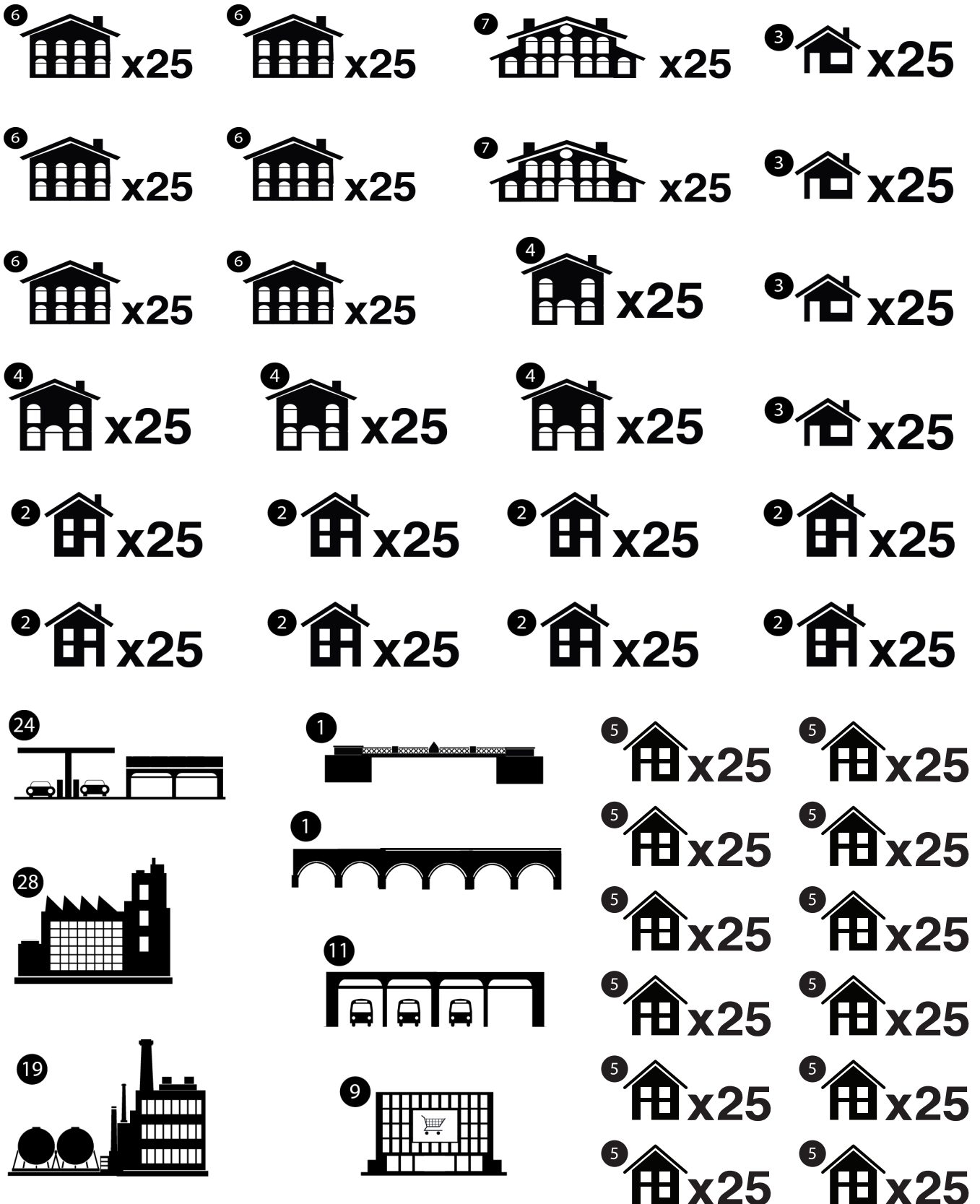


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*Photocopy Me*

One sheet for each group. Ask students to cut up each individual item along with any number attached. Each number corresponds to the number on the worksheet.

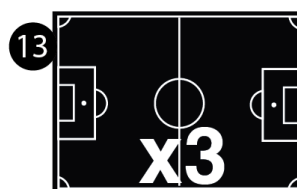
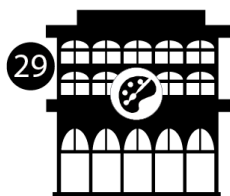
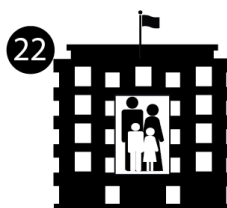
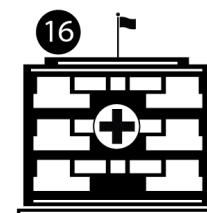


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## CONCERN AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

**Concern has been fighting extreme poverty in Bangladesh since 1972. For over 40 years, we have worked relentlessly to reduce extreme poverty by focusing on three dimensions – lack of assets, risks and vulnerabilities, and inequalities.**

With Dhaka fast becoming one of the most densely populated cities in the world, Bangladesh's urban poor grow increasingly invisible. Concern's urban programmes in Dhaka and Chittagong aim to address urban poverty by improving livelihoods and facilitating access to rights and entitlements for the poorest communities. Our focus is on pavement and squatter dwellers, an often overlooked and extremely vulnerable community. In addition, Concern will also be working with slum dwellers in the coming years.

Our **InvEST project** trained pavement dwellers in Dhaka to independently run a chain of mobile kitchens/ food carts. Meanwhile, our Amrao Manush (meaning "We are people too") project has expanded to become a model for empowering street dwellers by providing business grants, education support, health and childcare services and security through dedicated "Pavement Dweller Centres".

Among the 2.8 million urban extreme poor in **Bangladesh**, pavement dwellers account for at least 4% or 112,000 people. Living in the harshest conditions, they are deprived of their socio-economic, political and human rights every day.

With limited or no access to shelter, healthcare, education, water, or sanitation, survival is a daily struggle. 95% of urban expansion in the next decades will take place in developing countries. The cost of poorly planned urbanization can be seen in some of the huge slums, tangled traffic, greenhouse gas emissions and sprawling suburbs all over the world. Slums are a drag on GDP, and lower life expectancy. By choosing to act sustainably we choose to build cities where all citizens live a decent quality of life, and form a part of the city's productive dynamic, creating shared prosperity and social stability without harming the environment.

**Pictured:** Lucky and Jamal work in Mazar area in the centre of Dhaka. Both are beneficiaries of the Amrao Manush Programme. Photo: Sarah Whiteley December 2016 Dhaka, Bangladesh



### *What can I do to help achieve this goal?*

- Take an active interest in the governance and management of your city
- Take notice of what works, and what doesn't in your community
- Advocate for the kind of city you believe you need
- Develop a vision for your building, street, and neighbourhood, and act on that vision

