

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION & PRODUCTION

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS AND FACILITATORS



RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



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Although we may be from different countries, speak different languages and have different cultures, the planet does not recognise the differences we see in each other. Something that happens in one part of the world can have a very real every real and profound effect on another part of the world many miles away from the event. Over consumption and production methods are seriously damaging the environment which impacts on the most vulnerable communities. If we continue to produce and consume at current rates, using the same methods we will also be affected and it will lead to devastating consequences for parts of the world already feeling the effects of climate change.

This resource contains activities, information and ideas to reflect on sustainability and how we can make changes in our lives!



Are you a hunger hero?

This resource goes along side our Hunger Heroes resource which focuses on food waste. This resource could be used as a standalone, or with students who have completed Hunger Heroes and are looking to go further on their sustainability adventure!

CONSUMPTION: WHY IS THIS A PROBLEM?

The planet is facing a crisis: over use of resources such as fossil fuels, high levels of consumption of both goods and the resources to make them, are taking our environment to breaking point. This can't last forever. We live in a disposable culture where we want to keep up with the latest trends, but what is the cost of this? Forests are cut down and minerals mined for objects that will be used for a short amount of time then thrown away.



Our consumption habits have a direct impact on the planet that we live on, our lives and they lives of others who live in different parts of the world. Unsustainable consumption and production of material goods and food products lead to climate change, which in turn affects countries which are already vulnerable and facing high levels of poverty. On the other hand, those who experience extreme poverty do not consume enough to meet their needs.

Our throw away culture leads to a higher rate of waste and high strains on land, water and resources to constantly make new products which may only be used once or not at all.

This lifestyle is a driver in climate change, which in turn keeps people in poverty.



Oceans and seas are an important part of our ecosystem and vital for the 3 billion people which rely on them for livelihoods.

Plastics often end up in oceans and seas. As they do not biodegrade, they break down and can become ingested by fish and birds. Overfishing can also lead to loss of species.



Conflict has many causes and one of these is linked to the struggle for control of natural resources such as land, oil, precious metals and water.

Demand for resources to make products such as phones and food can lead to tensions between those who traditionally live on the land and developers.



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TEACHER/ FACILITATOR ACTIVITY 1

How much waste do you produce?

This is a data gathering task that students could take home as a homework project. It will allow students to consider how much waste their households produce and compare to other communities around the world.

NEED:

- Printed copies of the table on page four or in the spirit of less consumption, you could ask them to make their own table on the computer and fill this in digitally.

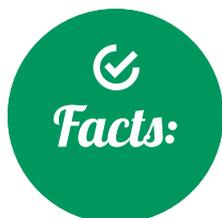
INSTRUCTIONS

- Ask students to take the table home and complete it for as much of the waste in their household as possible. Ask them to note what types of materials are thrown away (plastic, cardboard, fabrics), how much and if any of it is recycled
- After a week, students should bring their data in
 - In groups of no more than 4, ask them to: Compare how much is thrown away, if any was reused in their household, what types of things are thrown away
 - What do they think happens to the packaging once it has been collected/recycled?
 - How many times do they think the waste was used?
 - What do they think of the amount that is being thrown away?
- You could also ask them to present this visually through a graph or infographic



DEBRIEF

- Explain that packaging and over consumption is a huge problem as many resources are used to create single use packaging just for it to be thrown away immediately.
- Share some of the statistics on page 4 with the class about waste and consumption
- Ask the group to brain storm ideas to reduce the amount of packaging and waste used by households



The population by 2050 is expected to be over 9 billion...to maintain our current consumption habits and lifestyle would require three planet earths!



The average time that people use a plastic straw for is 20 minutes – these are then thrown away and cannot be reused for drinking. However, the plastic never breaks down and instead becomes smaller and smaller which may have implications for our food chain



The industries that make plastic use as much oil as the aviation industry



Only 5% of plastics are recyclable. 40% goes to landfill and 32% into the environment such as our rivers, oceans and beaches

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TABLE FOR ACTIVITY ONE

Day	No. of pieces of rubbish/waste produced	Materials	How much recycled? Or reused?	Items not recycled or thrown away
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

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ONE USE PLASTICS

One use plastic problems are a huge problem for the environment.



These products include plastic cutlery, cups, straws, bottles and food packaging. As many of them are never recycled they often end up in landfill sites, rivers and oceans.

Due to the nature of plastic, they will never ever fully biodegrade (or break down like natural products) so just become smaller and smaller, but still exist. This is having devastating consequences for our environment and animals who ingest these plastics.

Did you know:



- Traditionally 90% of fabrics were recycled. Because of new fabrics with multiple fibres and embellishments the recycle rate of fabric is now at 4% and in Ireland, most ends up in landfill sites
- If fabrics were recycled, it would reduce 300,000 tons of emissions. That is the equivalent of taking 50,000 cars off the road

LIFECYCLE OF A PLASTIC STRAW



- 1 Straws are made in factories from a by-product of petroleum called polypropylene. This means that straws, like most other one use plastics are made from oil. Colourants and plasticizers (to make the product flexible) are added.
- 2 The straw, once completed, is wrapped in an individual plastic or paper cover. It is then shipped to their final destination; this uses more oil as it will be transported either by boat, lorry or plane or a combination of the three.
- 3 The straw is used once, for an average of twenty minutes. Because of the chemicals involved in making straws they cannot be dish washed and used again.
- 4 The straws useable life has already come to an end! As they can't be recycled, they will end up at best in landfill sites and in worst oceans and other places in our environment.

The straw will always now exist as polypropylene cannot be broken down, but will never be used again.

TOP TIP:

Why not explore the lifecycle of other products such as food, mobile phones and disposable cups?



KEY WORDS

- **Sustainable** – this means the ability to keep going over time at a particular level. The way that people in developed nations are living at the moment is not sustainable as we will not be able to keep up this level of consumption
- **Consumption** – the act of using something

You could contrast this with finding out about lifecycles of recyclable and reusable objects!

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TEACHER/ FACILITATOR ACTIVITY 2

Breathing life into our rubbish

NEED:

- Rubbish, especially plastics, which cannot be recycled e.g.: Disposable coffee cups, takeaway pizza boxes, plastic bottle caps, drink cartons, Styrofoam. Make sure they are cleaned before use. Be sure to check the instructions on the packaging to see what can and cannot be recycled!
- Glue, scissors, paper, pens

INSTRUCTIONS

- Divide students into groups of no more than four and give them each a selection of the rubbish
- First of all, on paper, give them ten minutes to come up with some designs for their used packaging in front of them. This could be a product, a use or a piece of art work to highlight this issue
- Give the students time to prepare their designs and then ask them to present them to the rest of the group



DEBRIEF

- What is the alternative to one use plastics?
- Who are the winners and losers of these products?
- What can people, shops, governments do better?
- How can we make a change?
- How does food waste and over consumption of food link into this issue?



Extra extra!

- Ask students as part of their homework to research what various companies and organisations are doing to help people move away from one use packaging.
- Ask them to think about various food products and the changes that both people and shops would need to make to make this work.
- What are the short-term costs and long-term gains?
- You may want to ask the students to research zero-waste stores that exist already.

Over consumption and production of one use objects such as plastic cups, cutlery and straws is having a huge impact on the world around us and the communities in which Concern work.

Using resources to produce huge amounts of food and objects which may only be used once, and then transporting them to their final destination is a huge contributor to climate change which impacts most on those who are already vulnerable.

Production of plastics alone are responsible for CO₂ emissions which is a huge contributor to climate change. 1kg of plastic bags produces around 6KG of CO₂.



The Paribartan project has set up task forces for early warning within coastal communities Before a disaster occurs, these early warning task forces are able to warn villages so they can implement their preparedness activities and, if necessary, evacuate to safety. N/A.Gabura, Shyamnagar, Satkhira Bangladesh Shafiqul Alam Kiron/Map Photo Agency. October 2015



TEACHER/ FACILITATOR ACTIVITY 3

Visual posters

Use this activity to encourage students to share their knowledge with the rest of their community! You could undertake this as a whole group project giving each person a different role, or break students into smaller groups.

NEED:

- A camera/phone with a camera/video recorder or alternatively an audience
- Props to make your posters visual and stand out



INSTRUCTIONS

- Inform the class they are going to make posters to raise awareness of over consumption in Ireland and/or once use plastics However in order to reduce their waste, they are going to make the posters using only themselves, any reusable props and either photo or video the poster. This can then be shown to others.
- Ask students to brainstorm ideas about what their posters might include, what messages they feel are important and how they can make the most impact
- You may also wish to decide on an 'action' you wish the viewer to be motivated to do after watching the poster/seeing the poster
- Either divide the class into groups or as a whole group begin to create your 'poster'. You may wish to practice a few times/plan this over the course of a few sessions
- Film or photograph your poster! (Top tip: make sure you have permission to share pictures of your students!)
- Share pictures or the video of your poster on social media, via email to other students, send to the local newspaper, perform your poster in assembly, etc... to get your message out there! If you share on twitter, remember to tag us if you share on twitter! @concernactive
- Remember to emphasis what you want your audience to do!

DEBRIEF

- What are the benefits of creating visual posters rather than traditional ones?
- What impact do you think your posters had?
- Did you get any feedback?
- What are the challenges to trying encourage people to engage with your message?
- What went well with your posters?

BANGLADESH AND CLIMATE CHANGE

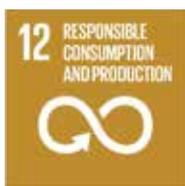
Bangladesh is one of the world's most vulnerable countries to climate change. This is the result of a combination of factors including its geographical location, low lying lands, reliance on the lands, high population and widespread poverty. The climate in Bangladesh is changing: its summers are hotter, rains irregular and often very heavy when they come which causes flooding and landslides.

The effects of climate change in Bangladesh come with human consequences. High levels of rainfall and a rise in temperatures lead to prevalence and outbreak of diseases such as malaria, dengue fever and cholera. Also, flooding and a change in predictable seasons impacts on agriculture and therefore food security for Bangladeshis. Additionally, natural disasters lead to displacement of peoples which can cause conflict for resources and tensions in areas where people move to.

Bangladesh is prone to large-scale natural disasters every year which are exacerbated by climate change.

Concern are on the ground leading intensive relief operations for disasters such as flooding and cyclones.

We are also there long before disaster strikes, helping communities to be prepared so that they can reduce their risk from natural disasters. This includes physically strengthening homes to withstand storms, planting trees as wind breakers and raising houses to protect households from flooding.

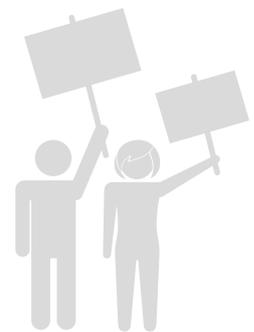


Take action!

Now you have the knowledge it's time to take action. Why not start a campaign in your school to highlight this issue and encourage your community to reduce use of one use plastics, or even get rid of them completely! Let us know what action your group taken and its impact on your community and receive a certificate from Concern.

Here are some ideas to get you started, but remember, the more creative the better!

1. Write to your local TD's about the issue and importance of reducing plastics
2. Take action on food waste! Check out our Hunger Heroes resource
3. Organise a plastic free event to inform people about this issue and to give them ideas about how to make a change
4. Challenge yourself and your community to go plastic free for a month
5. Look in your kitchen cupboards – is there anything you could make yourself instead of buying to reduce packaging?
6. Grow your own fruit and veg!
7. Research products and companies which are trying to reduce waste and seek inspiration from them
8. Teacher younger students about this issue and set them a challenge. You may wish to organise some prizes!
9. Buy reusable cups and bottles instead of buying plastic ones, and be sure to carry these around!
10. Organise a fashion show to reuse waste/old fabrics, or a clothes swap to give your wardrobe a new life!
11. Say no to plastic straws!
12. Create a piece of art work/a display/visual poster to spread the word about SDG12



GET IN TOUCH!

- We love to hear about what you and your students have been up to! Tell us about any actions or sessions you have done with your groups by emailing us schools@concern.net or tweeting us [@concernactive](https://twitter.com/concernactive)
- We also run schools workshops and talks on development issues. Email schools@concern.net to organise one today!
- Have you completed 8 or more of the actions on this page? Get in touch and tell us all about it and receive your own Concern reusable water bottle!

