



GOAL 11: SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES — MAKE CITIES INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE

'When the wind of change blows, some build walls, others build windmills'
[proverb from China]

One day spent with Kim from China

Nín hǎo! Wǒ shì Kim. It is the school holidays now, but I am just about to do my maths homework. All children, living here in Peking, the capital of China do school work in their holidays, two hours a day minimum. I have lived here in this flat for all my life, so that is 12 years now. I spend a lot of time here. I am either at school, at home or at my piano lessons. My father is a photographer, that's why we have all those beautiful landscape pictures hanging on the wall. Sometimes I catch myself standing in front of them for hours, picturing myself in one of them, lying in the green grass or swimming in one of the pristine lakes. Then I look out of the window of our apartment and can't see nothing but dense fog. Although the sun is shining, you can't see the sun. That is because of the smog conditions here in Peking. My teacher has told me that the word 'smog' is made out of two words from the English language: 'smoke and fog'.

The smog consists of fine dust, which we call particulate matter. It is in the air and is caused by heavy traffic and by many factories. How dangerous this particulate matter is we already got taught in kindergarten. You can't really see the tiny dust particles in the air. But if you breathe them in, they

can cause lung cancer, heart attacks or asthma. In China, 4000 people die daily because of air pollution. Can you imagine that? Before I go to school, my dad checks the air standards on his smartphone. There have been days, where I wasn't able to go to school because the air pollution level was too high. I often have to wear a facemask on my way to school.

A few years ago, during the Olympic games in Peking, the air suddenly was very clear and clean. My dad told me that people weren't allowed to use their car in the city because of all the athletes staying there. They wouldn't be able to perform in the games, if they didn't have clean air to breathe in.

I used to love playing football, but there aren't very many sports halls and most football fields are outside. So it depends on the weather and smog forecast whether I am allowed to play or not. 11 Million people live in Peking at the moment and the city is growing and growing because many people move here from the countryside to find a job. It's probably really difficult to organise public transportation and housing for all.

I often dream of a Peking without cars, and that I am able to play football outside. I really wish we had clean air and many green parks in the city.





Sustainable cities and communities — Ensure a high living standard in cities with access to affordable housing

Half of the world population- that is around 3.5 billion people live in cities. In the future this number will increase even further. Cities have to be planned and organized well, in order for everyone to live there comfortably. Streets and housing need to be built, public transport, such as buses and trams must be made available and there need to be enough schools, hospitals, supermarkets and parks.

Urban planning needs to ensure that no slums are created on the outskirts of the city. A lot of people cannot afford to live in the city and thus settle in suburban locations. Often there is no running water, there is no waste collection service, no electricity and no public institutions, such as schools or hospitals. It would be sensible to mix people with different ethnicities and backgrounds in the cities districts and neighbourhoods: There should be young and old people, wealthy and poorer people, and people with all different backgrounds living together in one place. That is important, so that no inequalities in terms of education and employment are created.

For example, if you only have Polish speaking families living in one district of Vienna, their children will probably only talk Polish amongst themselves. This makes it more difficult for them to learn German, which might make it difficult for them to find a job later on in life.

Goal 11 sets out to create secure and affordable housing for all people in the cities. Slums on the outskirts of the city, which often are made of tin huts, where many poor people live, should be supplied with water, electricity and better construction material, so they can be equally integrated in the city and society.

Reducing the air pollution is one of the most important world goals. This can be achieved through the expansion of public transport and the creation and development of parks and public green spaces. Moreover, there is a need for good dirt filters for factories. Besides the poor air quality, big cities often encounter problems with the waste disposal.

In Peking, the capital of China, every inhabitant produces around 480 Kilograms of waste per year. In China's countryside it is only around 90 kilograms, so that is not even one fifth.

The goal until 2030 is to reduce the city's environmental impact per capita. And last, but not least every person should be integrated in the planning and designing of the urban public areas.

What can we all do to help achieve this goal?

- Your parents have probably taught you right to throw your waste in the waste bin and at home you probably separate your waste into paper, glass and plastic. Unfortunately, not everyone on this planet has learned to do this. Many cities and communities organize rubbish collections, where schools can take part. This is not only useful, it also brings a lot of fun and team spirit.

**Anton (9) from
Viertelfeistritz, Styria: :**

'My school took part in an annual waste collection organized by the volunteer fire department. That was great! It makes me really angry, when people just throw away their rubbish on the ground and leave it there.'

**Tara (14) from
Bad Ischl, Lower Austria:**

'The director of our youth centre helped us write a letter to the mayor because there are a few things that we like to change in our village.'

- At communal level you can get together with others to gather ideas how to make changes in your community. Youth organizations such the Austrian 'Landjugend' for example are a good place to meet like minded people, who are looking to make a contribution. In cities there are a lot of opportunities for participation. You can get an overview of all the projects, taking place in Vienna: www.wiengestalten.at
- Within city and community partnerships experiences and knowledge on urban planning development can be exchanged. Check out whether your city or community has a partnership. Maybe there are youth organizations too in which you can get together and exchange views.