



SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

Topic Overview	Learning Objectives
<p>SDG 11 calls for cities and human settlements to be inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. Today, over half of the world’s population live in cities, which is expected to increase significantly by 2030. Major cities are seen as the centre of the economy, but cities are responsible for 70% of global green house gas emissions. Therefore, cities play a pivotal role in limiting global warming and effecting change. The wake of COVID-19 has exasperated the inequalities present in many cities and communities; achieving SDG 11 is imperative for a sustainable and resilient recovery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the impact of cities on global warming. • Analyze business and investment opportunities related to sustainable and resilient cities. • Analyze the interconnected relationship between cities and businesses – considering social, economic, and environmental impacts. • Describe how businesses can address the targets of SDG 11. • Assess the resilience of cities using the OECD framework of Resilient Cities.
Resource Summary	
<p>Busch, C. & Hallie, K. (2016, February 9). <i>How sustainable cities can drive business growth</i>. GreenBiz. https://www.greenbiz.com/article/how-sustainable-cities-can-drive-business-growth</p> <p><u>Summary:</u> This article makes an argument for sustainable cities driving business growth, discussing a changing workforce, the smart choice for cities, and the business payoff. Some of the benefits of sustainable cities include increased time efficiency, lower costs, greater access to talent, and improved health and wellbeing.</p>	
<p>Blanchett, T., Gomez, A., Sharma, V., Sterling, K., & Suzuki, K. (2016, December 14). <i>“Living Benefits” in Sustainable Cities Enabled by Business Solutions</i>. WBCSD Education https://www.wbcd.org/Projects/Education/Leadership-program/Resources/Living-benefits-in-sustainable-cities-enabled-by-business-solutions</p> <p><u>Summary:</u> The report discusses a visible for sustainable cities enabled by business solutions. The focal points of sustainable cities are included, such as urban mobility, green building, green spaces, water and sanitation, waste management, food systems, and e-governance. Case studies of living benefits are provided for each topic.</p>	
<p>Molenaar, A., Sorkin, L. N., Tuts, R., Van den Berg, R. (n.d.). <i>WRI Commentary: Building Climate-Resilient and Equitable Cities During COVID-19</i>. World Resources Institute. https://www.wri.org/news/building-climate-resilient-and-equitable-cities-during-covid-19</p> <p><u>Summary:</u> This commentary discusses the response to COVID-19 as an opportunity to build green and resilient cities for the long term. The proposed solutions address equity, climate change, and COVID-19. The adaption addresses underlying inequalities, produces lifestyle changes, preservation of ecosystems, new communities and institutions, and people centric city planning. Further than a response to COVID-19, the solutions aim to rebuild and improve our systems for a sustainable and resilient future.</p>	



TED. (2017, August 31). *7 principles for building better cities* | Peter Calthorpe [Video]. Youtube.
<https://youtu.be/IFjD3NMv6Kw>

Summary: Peter Calthorpe discusses principles for building better cities to respond to climate change. He covers topics such as urban sprawl, mobility and transportation, health impacts, and mix-use development.

Discussion and Exam Questions

1. Discuss the business and investment opportunities available for building resilient and sustainable cities.
2. Why should businesses care about the sustainability of the cities in which they operate in?
3. What is the impact of cities on global warming?
4. What makes a city resilient? How has COVID-19 exacerbated the need for resilient cities?

Sustainability in Cities: Examples

[Sponge Cities, China](#)
[Electric Buses, Santiago](#)
[Lighting our Neighbourhood, Salvador](#)
[Electricity Generation from Landfill, Hanoi](#)
[The Lowline, New York](#)
[Smart Commuting, Israel](#)
[Vertical Forests, Milan](#)

Additional Resources

[Resilient Cities](#)
[The Future of Nature and Business, Chapter 3](#)
[World Resources Institute](#)
[C40](#)

Related Business Topics

- Climate change
- Investment opportunities
- Disruptive technologies
- Sustainable development

Related Sustainable Development Goals Targets

[SDG 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable](#)

11.1 By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums

11.2 By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport, with special attention to the needs of those in vulnerable situations, women, children, persons with disabilities and older persons

11.3 By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries

11.4 Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage



11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations

11.6 By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management

11.7 By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities

11.A Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning

11.B By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels

11.C Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials

Suggested In-Class Activities

Part 1: How resilient is your City?

Break students into pairs. Each pair must evaluate a city based on one of the four factors of a resilient city: society, governance, environment or economy. Refer to the [OECD Framework on Resilient Cities for metrics of resilience](#). Allow students to choose a city, or pre-assign cities from different countries to offer an international perspective. You could also choose cities according to a theme: capital cities, coastal cities, mountain cities, poor cities, small cities... etc. Then put four pairs together to build a holistic picture of how resilient that city is. Have students report out to the class on their results.

Part 2: Discussion

Run a large group discussion based on the question, would you open a small business in this city?

Sub questions:

1. What kind of business would thrive in this city?
2. What issues might a business face in this city?
3. How could a business help the city to become more resilient?
4. What role does investment play in making a city resilient?