

MOTHER EARTH

Protecting Families –
Protecting the Planet



A Development
Education Resource
for Primary School

trōcaire

ABOUT TRÓCAIRE

Trócaire, the overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland, aims to:

- Support and advocate for people in the wider world who are living in poverty.
- Educate people across Ireland about global poverty and justice issues.

Trócaire believes that every woman, man and child is born equal. We understand poverty as being more than the absence of basic needs. It is the absence of opportunity, the lack of power, a lack of voice and a lack of control over one's life. We see that real and lasting change happens when people secure their basic human rights. We influence this by working in partnership with local communities

affected by poverty and injustice. Partnership means working with individuals, communities and local organisations to help bring about the change they want to see in their lives. Fundamentally, partnership is about solidarity, respect and empowerment.

We have long-term development programmes in nineteen countries around the world. In 2019, we also provided humanitarian assistance in eight countries.

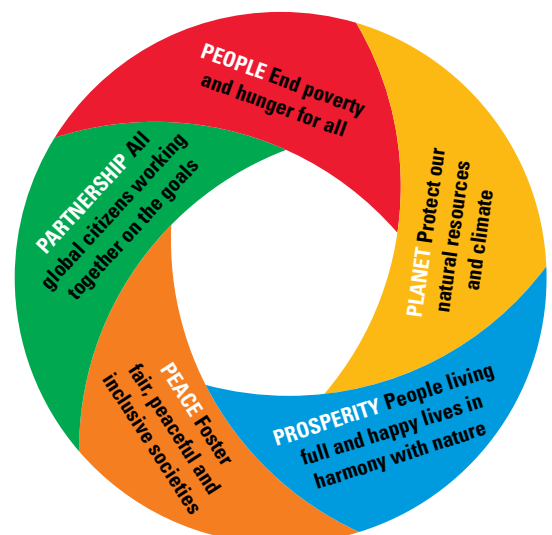
THE GLOBAL GOALS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Development means change. Trócaire wants the world to develop, but in a way that is sustainable.

Sustainable development means developing in a way that will not harm the lives or ignore the rights of future generations. In September 2015, seventeen Global Goals for Sustainable Development were adopted by world leaders at a United Nations (UN) summit. These goals universally apply to all countries, therefore Ireland and Northern Ireland are committed to achieving

them. Efforts will be made by governments, institutions and citizens from the 193 UN member states across the globe to end all forms of poverty, fight inequality and protect the planet.

The Global Goals can be broken down into five key elements:



Children in primary school in Embu County, Kenya. Photo credit: Gary Moore



HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

Development education is an active and creative process – a lens through which you can teach. It challenges stereotypes and perceptions of global justice issues and encourages action for a just world. This resource supports you to explore the concept of stewardship of the earth across thematic curricular areas.

Mother earth is about caring for every living thing on this planet, being stewards of the earth. In order for people to live healthy and happy lives now and into the future, we must ensure the responsible and sustainable use of the earth's natural resources.

We received this world as an inheritance from past generations, but also as a loan from future generations, to whom we will have to return it!

Pope Francis

Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children.

Native American Proverb

We are the only species with the power to destroy the earth and also the capacity to protect it.

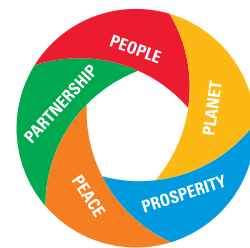
The XIV Dalai Lama

The generation that destroys the environment is not the generation that pays the price. That is the problem.

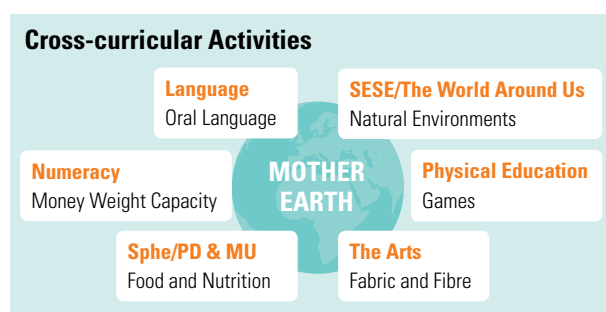
Wangari Maathai

This resource highlights examples of people and families who live stewardship of the earth throughout their daily lives – the families of Madris in Kenya and Angela in Honduras. By examining their stories, children here in Ireland are encouraged to make connections to their own lives and reflect on their own stewardship of the earth. The Global Goals for Sustainable Development is a plan that enables us all as global

citizens to be stewards of the earth. As you work through this resource, frame your discussions through the five Ps, the key elements of the Global Goals. Focus questions will be suggested throughout the resource alongside this logo to help you.



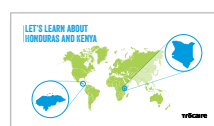
This Resource Pack Includes:



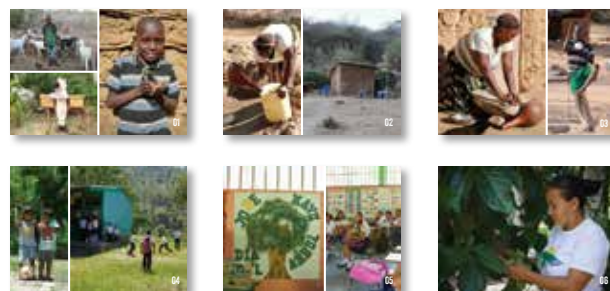
Board Game



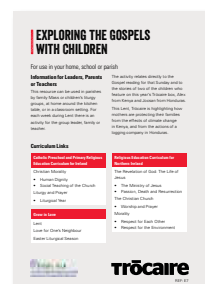
Website:
trocaire.org/education/motherearth



Six Photo Cards



Religious Education Booklet



NURTURING LIFE IN KENYA

The role of women in environmental stewardship is powerful.

Women produce the majority of the world's food, but the effects of climate change are making it harder each year. Droughts are worsening, meaning these women are struggling to provide for their families. Environmental degradation because of growing populations, difficulty in accessing land and seeds and land-grabbing by large-scale agricultural companies add to the ongoing challenges faced by farmers. Despite these challenges, Trócaire meets amazing women who are overcoming the odds to protect their families.

Madris is a forty-three-year-old mother of six living in Embu County, Eastern Kenya. Each day she defends her family against drought and hunger. As climate change exacerbates the situation for farmers in Kenya, Madris manages to support her children and keep going, despite the challenges she faces every day.

'It is very important that I'm strong, because that's how I can take good care of my family.'

Kenya itself is an unequal country. It is transforming rapidly, with high levels of economic growth. It achieved the status of a 'middle income country' in 2014, however, this masks significant social and economic inequality. Over one third of Kenyans live below the poverty line and 80 per cent of the country is either arid or semi-arid (very dry making it difficult to grow vegetation). Chronic malnutrition



Madris harvests maize. Photo credit: Gary Moore

rates among children aged six to nine months stands at 26 per cent. Despite some economic growth, many are clearly being left behind. The failure of two seasons of rains put between one and two million people in need of assistance over the dry summer months of 2019.

Madris has been supported by Trócaire's local partner, Ishiara Parish. This support has enabled her to learn new methods of zero-waste organic farming. She learns how to harvest rainwater, prepare sunken beds, use waste from animals to fertilise the crops, and grow crops together that can maximise yields and keep the soil nourished in this harsh environment. She breeds chickens that supply her family with nutritious eggs and provide an income.

Madris is a member of a women's savings and loans group. For Madris, the support that she gets from the group goes beyond the economic impact. The group comes together to help each other in a communal spirit, for example, during times of planting and harvest, they will work together on each other's farms. They also sometimes help the elderly people in the village by bringing them firewood and water.



Madris and her children, Embu County, Kenya. Photo credit: Gary Moore

PROTECTING THE FOREST IN HONDURAS

Angela is a thirty-nine-year-old mother and farmer, living in Honduras.

Each day she makes the one and a half hour journey on foot to her land to grow maize and beans.

Not only does Angela provide food for her five children, she is also a steward of the earth by defending her forest.

'As a woman, as a mother of five children, I have learned a lot, to fight for the defence of our territory, of our goods. Because our life lies in this forest, it lies in the rivers, it's in all of our nature.'

Logging companies are exploiting the land, cutting down double the amount of trees that they are reporting and damaging the natural habitat. Angela is not happy with the destruction of the natural resources without consultation with the local people. She participated in human rights and women's empowerment training provided by MADJ – (Movimiento Amplio por la Dignidad y la Justicia), a local organisation dedicated to combating corruption and Trócaire partner. This group of people fight for justice for indigenous



Angela and her children, Honduras.
Photo credit: Simon Burch

peoples in Honduras. With the support of MADJ, Angela organises groups of women to peacefully protest. They have stopped a number of trucks by placing rocks in the middle of the road. Angela faces huge risk. She has been arrested by the police and received threats from the logging company.

Honduras is classified by the World Bank as a 'Low Middle Income Country'. Since the *coup d'état* in 2009, the situation in Honduras has deteriorated in terms of freedom of expression, political violence, the quality of the justice system, levels of general violence and crime and human rights violations. Inequality of access to land is one of the most notable expressions of injustice and exclusion in Honduras and the principal cause of rural poverty. Resource exploitation is the main strategy for national development, which has increased conflicts.

Honduras is the most dangerous place in the world to be an environmental activist, according to a 2017 report by Global Witness. **123** land and environmental activists were killed in the period 2009–2016, with countless others threatened, attacked or imprisoned.

'I have never considered giving up. I know I'm doing the right thing. This will benefit my children. I want a better life for them and for their rights to be respected.'



Angela,
Honduras. Photo
Credit: Simon
Burch

LANGUAGE: ORAL LANGUAGE

Watch and Respond to the Global Goals

- Children calculate what age they will be in 2030. Discuss how they would like the world to be at that age.
- Explain the term 'sustainable development' (definition on page 2).
- On the board, write the focus question: *How will the Global Goals help us to achieve the world we want?*
- Watch the 'Human Beans' animation at: trocaire.org/education/motherearth
- Discuss the children's response to both the focus question and the video.

Examine and Discuss the Photo Cards*

- Divide the class into groups and give a photo card and sheet of paper to each.
- Children write questions about their photo on the paper.
- Turn the cards around. One student reads the information and asks the discussion questions.
- Children discuss as a group and feedback their responses to the class.

* A hard copy of the photo cards is included in the resource pack. To download a soft copy to show on the board, go to: trocaire.org/education/motherearth. You can also download further activities to do with the photo cards.

NUMERACY

Money

- On the reverse of photo card two you will find details of the savings scheme Madris is part of. Calculate how much money each member of the scheme will have saved by the end of the year, firstly in Kenyan Shillings, then into euro/pounds.

Capacity

- Photo card two shows Madris collecting one 20 litre container of water from the river. It is a three-hour round trip. When there is no rain in the rain harvesting tank, the container she collects from the river must do her family of seven for the day.
- Children calculate and measure out how much water each family member gets when Madris can collect only one 20 litre container of water. At home, children experiment using this same amount of water for one day with their families.

- Investigate the nationwide daily average water use per person in Ireland/Northern Ireland. If Madris was to use this much water, how many trips would she need to make to the river? How long would it take her?

Weight

- On the reverse of photo card three it states that Madris only harvested 5kg of mung beans last year, enough for her family for just one month.
- Buy 5kg of mung beans (or similar beans). Ensure they are uncooked and dried (These beans will also be used in another activity).
- Madris and her six children are dependant on this 5kg of mung beans. If seven portions are needed for dinner each night for a month, calculate and measure out a portion size. Is this enough?

SPHE/PD & MU: FOOD AND NUTRITION

Food Categories and Nutrition

- Categorise food into the four main food groups: breads and cereals, fruit and vegetables, dairy, meat, fish and alternatives.
- Draw examples of each and display them on a food pyramid.
- From the information on the back of the photo cards, make a list and draw pictures of the foods eaten by the families in Kenya and Honduras.

- Create a food pyramid for each family and add their food. Discuss if the families' food is providing adequate nutrition.

Food Origins

- Examine a selection of foods typically eaten in Ireland. Read the labels to find out their origins. Mark the countries on a map. Discuss the impact of food production and transport on the environment.

SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC EDUCATION/ THE WORLD AROUND US: NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

Exploitation of the Natural Environment

- Ensure the class is aware of Angela's dependency on the forest in Honduras by discussing photo card six.
- In groups, children follow instructions and play the **Human Rights Defenders** game. A hard copy is included in this pack. For a soft copy and teacher instructions, log onto: trocaire.org/education/motherearth

Creating Environmental Awareness

- Children create a board game, card game or video game to communicate the theme of 'Mother Earth' to their peers.
- Ensure the game has a global justice lens, by exploring climate justice, human rights or the Global Goals.
- Enter the game into Trócaire's Game Changers competition. Find out more by going to the last page of this resource or trocaire.org/education/motherearth

MOTHER EARTH

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: GAMES

Playground Games

- Play the Honduran games described on the back of photo card four.

THE ARTS

Make a Poster Using Fabric and Fibre

- Discuss the classroom poster in photo card five, what it is promoting and the fibres used to make it. You can download a soft copy to show on the board at: trocaire.org/education/motherearth
- Decide on a local or global environmental issue the class would like to highlight and create posters to display around your school.
- Ask half of the class to collect natural fibres (such as leaves, grass, straw) to make their posters and the other half manufactured fibres (such as recycled materials). Discuss the different impact of the fibres on the environment.

Create and Play a Rain Stick

- In many cultures around the world people summon rain using musical instruments. A well-known example is the rain stick. Traditionally they are made from dried cactus or hollow bamboo

filled with dried beans or pebbles. When you tip them from side to side they make the sound of rain.

- Each child in the class brings in a long cardboard tube (e.g. from kitchen roll or tinfoil). Decorate the tube with paint or use recycled materials to do a collage.
- Cut out two large circles from brown paper. Attach one circle to the end of the tube using an elastic band.
- Experiment with different twisted materials to put in the rain stick (e.g. pipe cleaners, tinfoil, wire).
- Add a portion of mung beans, weighed out in the numeracy lesson, to the tube.
- Once happy with the sound of the rain stick, close off the other end with the paper circle and elastic band. Use wool or coloured string to decorate the ends.
- Create music and summon the rain with your rain sticks!

TRÓCAIRE GAME CHANGERS



Create a game. Change the world.

A competition for young people who want to change the world and believe games are a way to do this!

Explore the theme of **Climate Justice**, **Human Rights** or the **Global Goals**. Create a game to play with friends and family.

BOARD GAME | CARD GAME | VIDEO GAME



The competition is open to students in third – sixth class/P5 – P7. Entries must be submitted by 3 April 2020. To download game design guidelines, entry forms and last year's winning games, log onto: trocaire.org/gamechangers

TRÓCAIRE IS THE OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND

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Cover photo: Madris and her children in Kenya.
Photo credit: Gary Moore.

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