girl scouts

Global Action Award

Activity Guide for Cadettes, Seniors, and Ambassadors

Global Action Award

In 2015, leaders around the world agreed to work together to accomplish 17 goals by 2030. These are referred to as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals—"SDGs" or "global goals" for short. They focus on initiatives like taking care of the environment, making sure all people have enough to eat, and improving people's health. They're big goals, but Girl Scouts know a thing or two about changing the world!

The Girl Scout Global Action award calls for girls to address the global goals by discovering, connecting, and taking action in their communities and the world. In 2022, the award focuses on SDG 3: Health and Well-Being and SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.

Learning About the Global Goals

If the global goals are new to you, start by teaming up with an adult to go online and learn about the SDGs at www.globalgoals.org.[1] You can also read a short booklet about the goals called *The World We Want: Guide to the Goals for Children and Young People*, available for free at World's Largest Lesson.[2]

Once you know what the goals are, you're ready to move on to the activities you can do to earn your Girl Scout Global Action award.

Note: Some of the targets that the United Nations created for the Sustainable Development Goals refer to sensitive issues. Volunteers should talk with parents and guardians, and obtain parental/caregiver permission before discussing this topic with girls. Choose the issues or targets that are appropriate for your group and context. Your council may have a "sensitive issues" form that you can use. Please consult with your council before discussing content of a sensitive or controversial nature to ensure that appropriate training, planning, and permission is established.

Girl Scouts of the USA understands that parents or guardians are the primary decision makers for their children, and therefore does not expect or require girls to participate in any activities relating to the Sustainable Development Goals that may be inconsistent with their family's faith or beliefs.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations in 2015

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[1] GSUSA acknowledges the Global Goals Campaign. For more, see https://www.globalgoals.org/asset-licence (accessed April 14, 2021)

[2] Arenas, Paola, and Dora Bardales, *The World We Want: A Guide to the Goals for Children and Young People*, August 2015, Global Movement for Children of Latin America and Caribbean – MMI-LAC, PDF.

Earning Your Global Action Award

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

This year, the Global Action Award focuses on Goal 3: Health and Well-Being and Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. These two goals go hand in hand because a healthy, sustainable community supports everyone's health. Think about how, during the COVID-19 pandemic, communities created safety protocols aimed at the specific needs of their area.

Every Girl Scout must complete five steps to earn her Global Action Award. The first, second, and fourth steps each have three activities to choose from. You only need to do one activity in each of those steps to earn the award, but don't let that stop you—you can do as many as you like!

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

Steps:
1. Explore the Global Goals and Global Action award.
2. Explore good health and well-being issues.
3. Create a health and well-being challenge.
4. Explore sustainable cities and communities.
5. Create a sustainable cities and communities challenge.

When you've earned this award, you'll understand what good health, well-being, and sustainable communities and cities mean, and you'll have created challenges for SDG 3: Health and Well-Being and SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.

STEP 1: Explore the Global Goals and Global Action Award

Choice 1. Create a Message About a Goal

Start your award experience by learning more about the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. This activity is a good one to do with your Girl Scout troop or a group of friends. Start by looking at the Global Goals Icon Grid and Descriptions included in this packet so that you are familiar with them.

Think of the goals you've read as a compass or roadmap to sustainable development. The goals cover three basic areas: economy, environment, and society. Goals that fall under "economy" are those that address ways to end poverty. "Environment" tackles climate change action. And "society" speaks to the fight against inequality. Look at the goals and write the number and keyword for each goal underneath the category where you think it belongs. Were there any goals you felt fit into more than one category? Which ones?

As a group or individually, choose a goal and research it by answering these questions: what does the world need to know about this goal, and what can we do about it? Then read a story that focuses on your goal in "Stories for a Sustainable Future" from World's Largest Lesson, pages 10–42.[3] These can help give you ideas on what type of message to create.

Create a graphic or meme that sends a message about your chosen goal. For more information on your message, check out the SDG Tracker online. This resource features up-to-date information on the progress made for all 17 goals.

When you get together as a troop, share your work and get feedback from one another.

Choice 2. What World Do You Want in 2030?

One definition for sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." What does this mean to you? We need to consider how the plans and changes we make now affect the future.

What are some ways you can leave a responsible footprint that considers the world you live in today and the one that you will ultimately leave behind for future generations? You can do things like recycle, use less energy, eat local and organic, plant a garden, avoid the use of plastics, or ride a bike instead of taking a car.

In this activity you will work in groups or individually to create an SDG country—your vision of what a sustainable country would look like in 2030. Use the Global Goals Icon Grid and Descriptions included in this packet to help frame the description of your country.

Then write it up as a description or draw it as a map, pointing out the different ways your country meets the global goals. For example, think about the facilities and infrastructure your country might need to look after its population. How does your country handle its environment and natural resources? Are there solar options and other alternate energy options available? What does your country do for schools, hospitals, water sources, waste management, and safe roads? How will you make sure that you're designing a country where everyone is included? How will you make sure nature is protected?

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³ GSUSA acknowledges the Global Goals Campaign. For more, see https://www.globalgoals.org/asset-licence (accessed April 14, 2021)

Choice 3. Keep an Activist Diary

In this activity, you will prepare a physical or online notebook to keep as an activist diary.

Take a look at all the global goals and make a plan for the ones you care about the most. Information is power, so gather what you can find out about your goals to share with others and make a plan for how you'll get involved. Start today by doing research and writing notes in your diary. Read a story that focuses on your goal in "Stories for a Sustainable Future" from World's Largest Lesson, pages 10–42.[4] This can help inspire you to see what kind of diary material you can keep and share.

For more fun, you can use stickers or write on your notebook cover to decorate. Or you can decorate your online notebook digitally by using images and GIFs. You should plan to share one thing from your diary at your next troop meeting.

STEP 2: Explore Good Health and Well-Being Issues

Choice 1. Team up to Investigate Health

In this activity, you will team up to investigate health and well-being issues, and make a mind map of your findings. Look at the Mind Map Sample included in this packet, and use it as a guide for the one you will create. A mind map helps you make connections between different pieces of information. It's a great way to communicate your issue.

With your friends or individually, choose a health issue to investigate:

▶ Mental health

▶ Cancer

▶ Pandemic

▶ Maternal health

▶ Ebola

▶ Clean water and sanitation

▶ Hunger and poverty

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[4] GSUSA acknowledges the Global Goals Campaign. For more, see https://www.globalgoals.org/asset-licence (accessed April 14, 2021)

Start by going online and using search terms to learn more about your subject. Make sure to evaluate the websites or news stories you're using for accuracy. Open the site and skim it. Can you understand the content? Will the site be useful? Is it a credible author site? Is the information current?

Take notes about the most relevant information. Let's say you picked Ebola. Find out what it is, how contagious it is, where it exists, how many people are affected, how many people have died so far, what treatment exists, and how many people have access to the treatment.

Then take the information you've learned and create a mind map. Show your topic in the middle and add your summarized notes in boxes around it. Make sure to include solutions and ideas for your health issue in your mind map.

When you are finished, come together with your troop to share information and ideas for promoting the right to good health for everyone. Talk about these questions:

▶ What was the most surprising thing you learned about your issue?

▶ Who is responsible for our health and well-being?

▶ What steps do you think are needed to achieve SDG 3?

▶ How do you think health and well-being affect society?

Make a personal health and well-being plan right now. Write it down. You don't have to share it. It can be one thing, like "unplug from social media several hours a week," "exercise regularly," "eat more healthy food," or "spend more time with my family." Fold your paper and keep it someplace where you can check in on your progress. As you learn more about yourself and your health, feel free to make changes to it.

Choice 2. Design a Healthy Meal

For this activity, you'll focus on healthy eating. First, watch this urban farming video from HuffPost.[5] Then team up with your friends in pairs or groups to design a healthy plate of food. In the video, the urban farmers said that feeding their city is key to revitalizing it. Why do you think it's important for people to learn more about the food they eat and even grow their own food?

What's your favorite meal? What adjustments would you make to make it healthier? Could your food selections on your plate come from local farms or neighborhood garden cooperatives? Would this be possible where you live?

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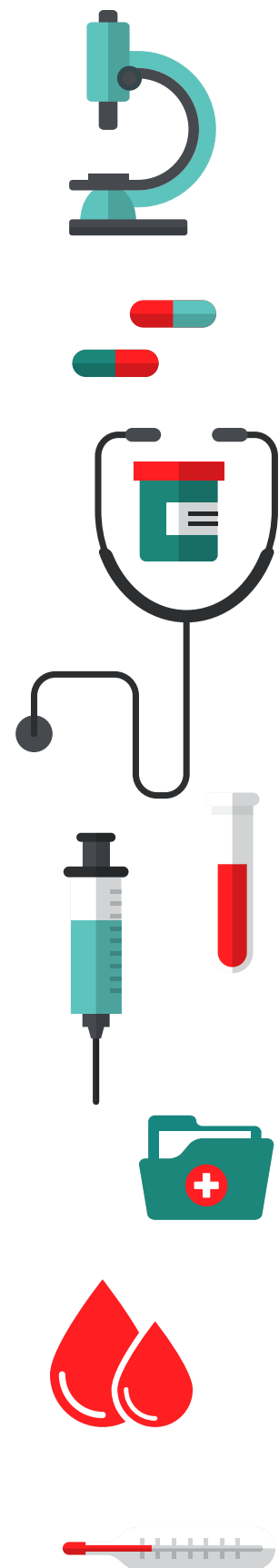
5 "How an Urban Farm in Philadelphia Is Transforming Lives," interview by Alyona Minkovski, HuffPost, 4:05, YouTube video, July 28, 2016, https://youtu.be/ZHmChfUwWmU.

Do the research to find out what foods to include and what to avoid. Write up a recipe for your favorite meal and include as many details as you can.

When you have finished, share your healthy plates with your troop and talk about these questions:

► What would you change or add to your meal after seeing what others have designed?

► Did this activity change your view toward healthy eating?

► How did learning about food insecurity and access affect your view on healthy eating for yourself and your community?

► Is there something you can pledge to do today that will make a difference in your healthy eating?

For more fun, get together as a troop to share and eat the meals you designed. You can also go on a local field trip to find your closest community garden.

Choice 3. Have a Global Health-Care Briefing with an Expert

You might remember all the health-care briefings during the COVID-19 outbreak with health experts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization.

These experts kept the public informed about the latest findings about the disease and what health measures we needed to take to prevent spread. In this activity, you'll talk to a health expert about global health care and preventing illness, then create a message to share with others. Before you start, come up with some questions you want to ask or hear addressed by the expert.

After you hear from the expert, talk about this question with your friends: what did you learn from our guest that you want to share with your community?

Work alone or team up to create a message. If you decide to share on social media, be sure to talk with your parents or caregivers first, and get their permission. Review the Girl Scout internet safety pledge for more information! Be sure to tag Girl Scouts USA and your local council, and use the hashtag #GlobalGoals3.
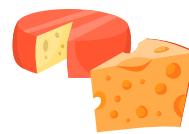
STEP 3: Create a Health and Well-Being Challenge

Create a Health Bill of Rights for Your Community

In this activity, you will do a community mapping exercise to identify health services in your community, then create a bill or rights to propose changes.

Many of the global goals focus on the rights of children to have better education, health, and a clean and safe environment.

Several decades ago, the United Nations (nearly all the governments in the world) agreed on a legally binding document called the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It includes 54 articles that set out children's rights and how governments should work together to make them available to all children.

One of those rights is the right to live and develop healthily. What does that mean to you? Every child has the right to life, survival, and development. Children have the right to the best health care possible, safe drinking water, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help them stay well.

For your challenge, you'll come up with a bill of rights for health in your community.

First, as a group, map out your community's health-care services. Where are the emergency rooms and urgent care facilities located? How about senior care facilities? Community clinics? Are there dentists, optometrists, dermatologists, gynecologists, oncologists, and other medical services? How easy or hard is it to get care? How many pharmacies does your community have? Are the pharmacies easy to access? Think about other forms of health care in your community, such as gyms, spas, physical therapists, psychologists, mediation centers, and more. Do your schools have nurses or health-care programs? Compare your community to an adjacent community.

Think about your community's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Were there enough health-care workers care for patients? Did your local hospitals have enough protective gear, medicines, and equipment to fight the virus? Enough medical workers to answer emergencies and transport patients? What were the COVID testing sites, vaccine programs, and vaccine rollout like?

Write what you find out and then come up with a bill of rights for your community. Is there something missing in your community that you think
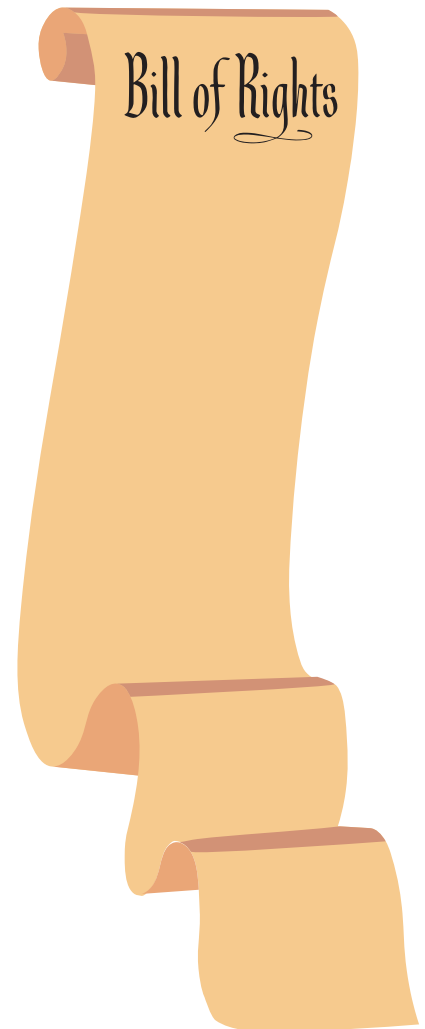
people need? What would you hope to see happen if another pandemic hits? How can you hold your government, local leaders, and other decision makers accountable to their commitments to improve people's access to health and health care?

Consider posting your bill of rights on social media. If you decide to share on social media, be sure to talk with parents or caregivers first, to get permission. Review the Girl Scout internet safety pledge for more information! Be sure to tag Girl Scouts USA and your local council, and use the hashtag #GlobalGoals3. You can also send your findings to a decision maker in your community.

STEP 4: Explore Sustainable Cities and Communities

Choice 1. Design a Gender-Inclusive City

In this activity, you will consider the unique problems people face in their community and design a city with gender inclusivity in mind.

First watch these two videos: "Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design" from the World Bank[6] and "Gender and Mobility" from UN-Habitat.[7]

In the video about gender-inclusive urban planning, the World Bank's Sameh Wahba says, "Men, women, gender minorities, and people of different abilities tend to use the public space in different ways." What do you think he means by this? According to Wahba:

> We all have different needs and routines when it comes to our access to the city. However, if the city is built for the "neutral" male user, it neglects the needs, interests, and routines of women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities in the city. This has enormous impacts on women's access to jobs or schools, on their freedoms and safety, as well as their health and agency, and it reinforces gender inequalities.

How do you think safety affects gender inclusivity in a city? What makes cities or communities unsafe and unhealthy? Have you ever felt unsafe in your community or city?
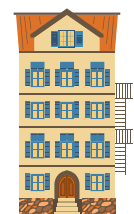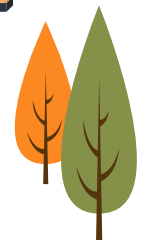
[6] "Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design," World Bank, multimedia video, 0:37, February 11, 2020, https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/video/2020/02/11/handbook-for-gender-inclusive-urban-planning-and-design.

[7] "Gender and Mobility," UN-Habitat, YouTube video, 3:53, March 4, 2015, https://youtu.be/tC54cTnVtSU.

Break into teams to design a model of a city that is inclusive and accessible for people of all genders. It can be a map or list that shares the features that make the city gender inclusive. Be sure to reference the Gender Inclusivity Checklist included in this packet.

Share your city with your troop and talk about these questions:

▶ What was the first thing you made sure your city had to support gender inclusivity?

▶ What did you see in the other teams' ideas that you had not thought of?

▶ Did thinking about this issue inspire you to explore a career in architecture or urban planning?

Choice 2. Explore Your Community and Its Growth: Talk to an Expert

In this activity you will interview a local expert in your community and then create a timeline of images showing how your community has developed or changed over the years.

There are several careers in our communities that focus on how we live. Some include building inspector, city council member, real estate agent, community planner, environmental auditor, city historian, land use advisor, parks planner, real estate developer, cartographer (mapmaker), transportation planner, urban landscaper, urban planner, zoning inspector, and sustainable housing policy consultant. You might choose to interview one of these people or someone else who has lived in the neighborhood for a long time.

When you are done with the interview, work with your friends to research your community and come up with a timeline for growth. You can use dates and facts, and if possible, printed-out images. You can use the images to create a historical photo collage to show how your city or town has changed.

Share your findings with your troop and discuss these questions:

▶ What was the most relevant thing you learned about our community that you'll pass on to others?

▶ How has growth helped or hurt your community?

▶ Did you discover anything you're proud of? Anything you're concerned about?

▶ If you were going to request changes or improvements to a decision maker, what would they be?

Choice 3. Create a City on Paper

Watch the "Paper City" video from UN-Habitat . "Paper City" is an animation that shows today's urban challenges using a paper and cardboard mock city.

The video was created using a stop-motion technique. Over 1,500 photo stills were taken of a 4-square-mile mock city, including buildings, streets, trees, cars, and people made from paper and cardboard. The frames were then put together to create motion.

In this activity you'll design a blueprint for a city on paper (or you can design one on your computer using an app). Plan your city on one piece of construction paper, and make sure that it rates high on the three P's:

▶ People: quality of life, such as health, education and work-life balance

▶ Planet: environmental—includes energy consumption, renewable energy and green spaces

▶ Profit: economic health of the city, how businesses are doing

Start by cutting out and placing the diagrams for as many of these elements that you want your city to have.

Use the City Schematic document included in this packet to cut out and tape the following areas on a large sheet of paper:

▶ City services: government offices, hospitals, schools, libraries, post offices, landfill, jail, fire and police departments

▶ Business: office complexes, restaurants, industrial campuses, strip malls, shopping centers

▶ Recreational: movie multiplexes, golf courses, arcades, parks

▶ Housing: houses and apartments

▶ Roads: freeways and streets

Share your findings with your troop and discuss these questions:

▶ Explain why you placed the city services where you did.

▶ Explain why you placed the businesses, recreational facilities, housing, and roads where you did.

▶ What makes this city environmentally friendly?

▶ What makes this city a place where people can thrive?

▶ What makes this city a place where business can thrive?

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[8] "Paper City: An Urban Story," UN-Habitat, YouTube video, 3:21, October 9, 2014, https://youtu.be/-Bqx2BuFjik.

Houses

Industries

Office Complex

Jail

Houses

School

Shopping Center

Park

Library

Theater

Low-Income Housing

STEP 5: Create a Sustainable Cities and Communities Challenge

Safe City for Girls Challenge

In this activity, you will develop a safe and sustainable city for girls and then share your ideas on social media.

For your challenge, either as a single group or in teams, brainstorm what would make a city safe and sustainable, specifically for girls. Think about any challenges you encounter in your city or community. For example: stranger danger, unsafe crosswalks, and poorly lit streets.

What would you do to help girls have better access to support systems, such as mentors and mental health care? How can they have safe access to part-time jobs, like pet sitting? How would you make sure girls have access to healthy foods? How would you encourage girls to get outdoors and stay healthy? How can you design your city so that all girls have equal access to education, events, and opportunities?

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many girls have had to socialize, do schoolwork, and participate in activities like Girl Scouting virtually. How would your city help girls if they find themselves in the same situation due to the climate crisis or another virus?

Think about how technology can support safety in your city. For example, Dr. Kalpana Viswanath, a researcher who has been working on issues of violence against women and safer cities for women, co-founded an organization called Safetipin. Safetipin created three apps that collect information on safety in public spaces throughout the world and act as personal safety trackers so users can call for help if they're in trouble.

Next, create a social media campaign to promote your messages on how to make cities safer and healthier for girls. You can use this campaign to connect with influencers and decision makers in your community. For example:

▶ Your local government

▶ Urban planners (in design, regulation, transportation)

▶ Faith-based groups

▶ Human rights organizations

▶ Local police and other community stewards

▶ Media
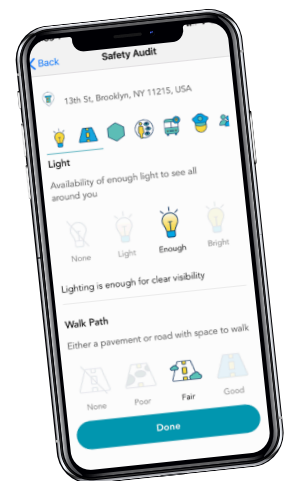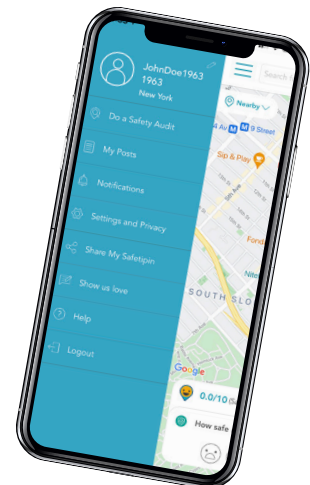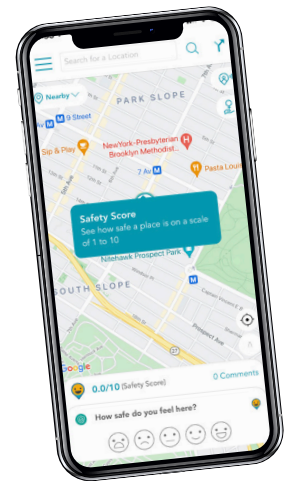
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If you decide to share on social media, be sure to talk with your parents or caregivers first and get their permission. Review the Girl Scout internet safety pledge for more information! Be sure to tag Girl Scouts USA and your local council, and use the hashtag #GlobalGoals11.

Share your findings with your troop and discuss these questions:

▶ How will you promote your ideas for your safer city for girls?

▶ Is there someone in your family or friend group who can help get your message to a city planner in your community?

▶ What else can you do to get your ideas out?

When you've completed all five steps, make sure you celebrate! By earning your Global Action award, you've helped the world get one step closer toward achieving the global goals!
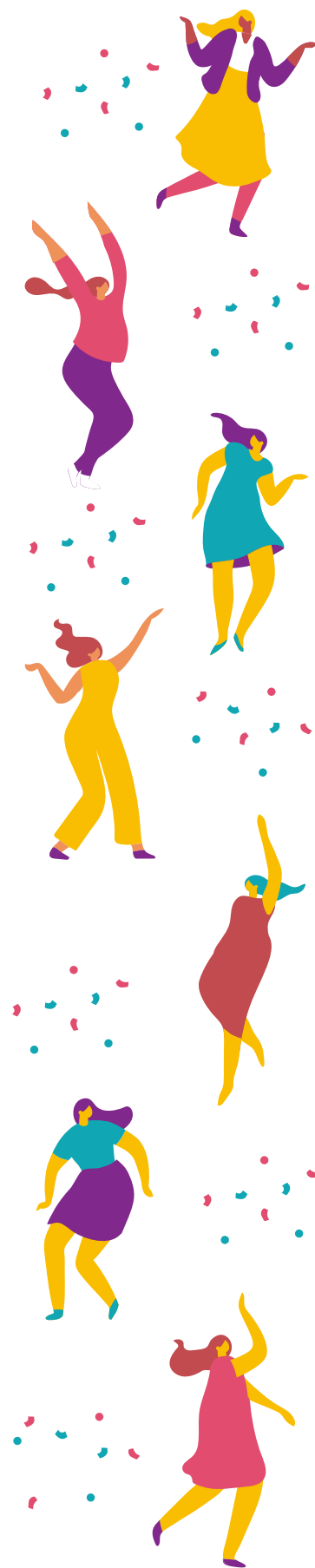
Glossary

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): U.S. health protection agency formed to protect people from health threats

Cooperative: a business or organization owned and operated by its members, who share in the profits

Food access: when households can afford to buy the food they need to live a healthy life and there is a place in their community to buy it

Gender inclusivity: open to everyone regardless of their gender identity or expression

Green space: an area with grass and trees in an urban setting, such as parks, community gardens, schoolyards, and cemeteries

Hygiene: keeping clean to stay healthy and prevent disease

Infrastructure: basic facilities and services needed for a community to function

Mental health: a person's psychological or emotional well-being

Mind map: a diagram that shows words or concepts that are linked to a main subject

Natural resources: materials from Earth used to support life and meet needs; for example: metals, sand, stone, oil, and water

Pandemic: the outbreak of a disease that affects many people around the world

Renewable energy: energy that comes from sources that are constantly replenished, such as solar and wind

Sanitation: the process of keeping places healthy, such as providing a sewage system and clean water supply

Sustainable: when something can last or continue for a long time

Urban farming: growing or producing food in a city

Urban planning: developing and designing how land will be used and the infrastructure it will have

Waste management: collecting, treating, and disposing of garbage, sewage, and other waste products

World Heath Organization (WHO): UN agency that works to combat diseases and protect the health of people worldwide

Global Goals Icon Grid and One-Sentence Global Goal Descriptions

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Goal 2: End hunger and ensure everyone has access to healthy and nutritious food.

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and good education for all people.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Goal 6: Make sure everyone has access to safe and clean water.

Goal 7: Make sure everyone has access to safe and clean energy.

Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth so that everyone is able to have decent work prospects.

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure and ensure these do not harm the environment or people, and help companies to design and create new technologies and innovations.

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries.

Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and help stop food waste.

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

Goal 14. Conserve and protect the oceans and marine life.

Goal 15: Protect, restore, and promote nature and the animals that live in it.

Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development; provide access to justice for all; and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Goal 17: Create new partnerships around the world for the SDGs.

Notes on Nutrition

Empty calories
Foods that lack the nutritional value or the substances that keep you healthy, like vitamins and minerals. They might give us energy, but not much else. These foods include candy, chocolate, chips, soda, donuts, ice cream, and more.

Free sugars
Sugar added to food and drink. Also sugar found naturally in honey, syrups, fruit juices, and fruit juice concentrates. Sugar ingredients can be called agave nectar, corn sweetener, dextrose, honey, corn syrup, sucrose, fructose, glucose, and molasses.

Organic foods
Organic foods can include poultry, meat, dairy, and eggs that come from animals raised free from antibiotics and growth hormones, as well as fruits and vegetables that have never been treated with pesticides, ionizing radiation, or bioengineering. These foods are usually inspected and certified by a government entity (e.g., U.S. Department of Agriculture).

Plant-based foods
Foods from plants, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds, herbs, and spices. Plant-based foods exclude all animal products, including red meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and dairy products.

Processed foods
Packaged foods, like carbonated drinks, ice cream, candy, bread, soups, deli meats, cereal, frozen pizza, and so much more. In addition to salt, sugar, oils, and fats, processed foods use additives that are not natural, like preservatives and chemicals.

Saturated fat
A fat found in foods such as cheese, butter, milk, cream, and most meat and meat products. It's also present in many processed foods, particularly baked goods, like cakes and cookies. Eating a lot of saturated fat can increase the levels of cholesterol in your blood. Having high cholesterol can increase your risk of noncommunicable diseases, such as heart disease. It is not that saturated fats are "bad" or "unhealthy," but rather that the amount of saturated fats that are consumed can be a problem.

Whole foods
Foods that are not processed and are in their natural or raw state, without any added ingredients. These include fresh fruits or vegetables, nuts, seeds, eggs, dairy, meat, fish, and whole grains.
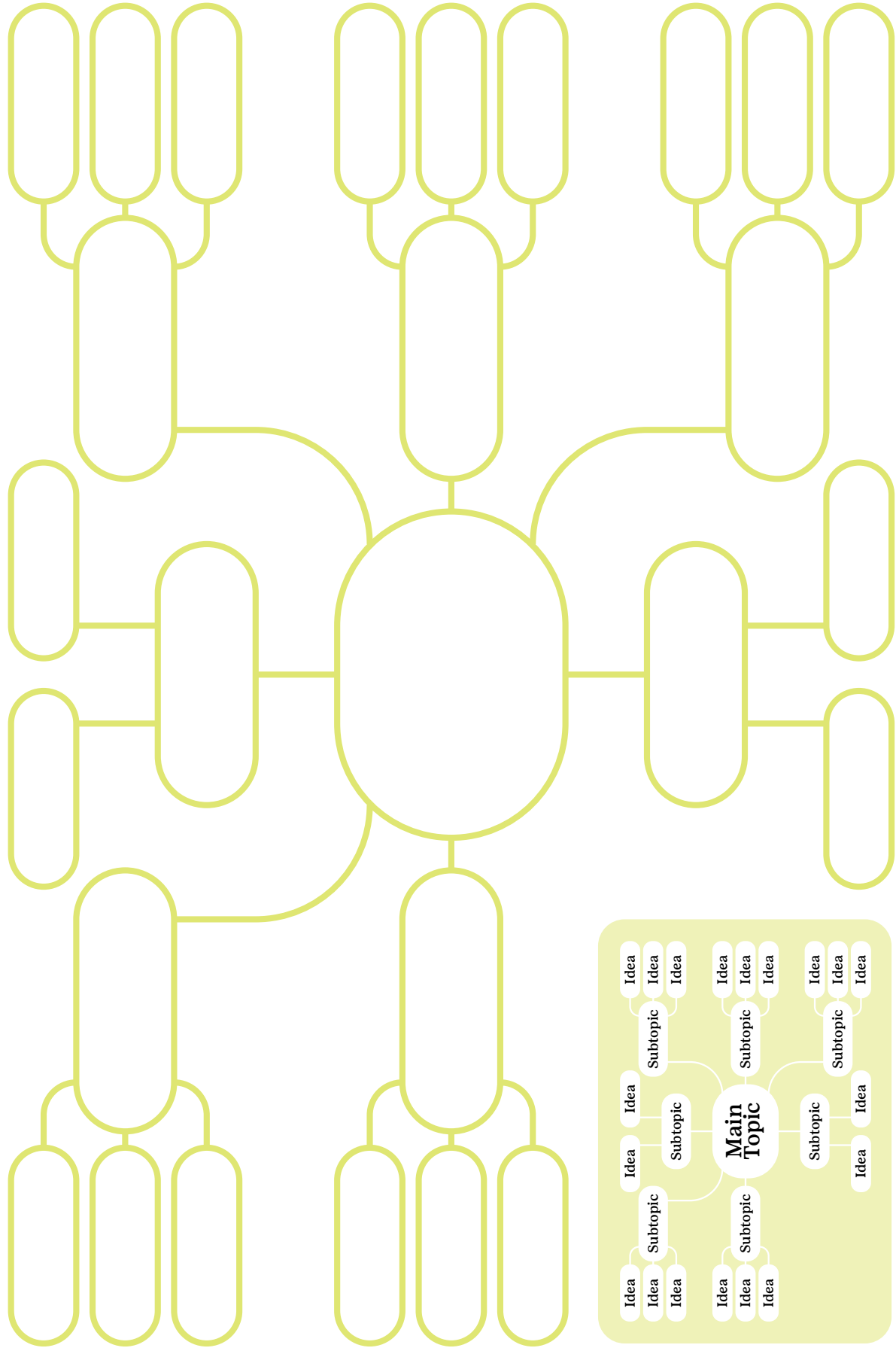
Gender Inclusivity Checklist

According to the World Bank, the group behind the *Handbook for Gender-Inclusive Urban Planning and Design*, here are six issues to focus on in your city:

❏ **Access:** Being able to use services and spaces in public that are free from constraints or barriers.

❏ **Mobility:** Being able to move around the city safely, easily, and affordably.

❏ **Safety and freedom from violence:** Being free from real and perceived danger in both public and private spaces.

❏ **Health and hygiene:** Being able to lead an active lifestyle free from health risks in the environment.

❏ **Climate resilience:** Being able to prepare for, respond to, and cope with both the immediate- and long-term effects of disaster.

❏ **Security of tenure:** Being able to access and own land and to find housing so as to live, work, and build wealth and agency.

From https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment/publication/handbook-for-gender-inclusive-urban-planning-and-design.

Sample Mind Map

The blank mind map template with oval nodes branching from a central oval.

A sample legend showing the mind map structure:

Main Topic connects to multiple **Subtopic** nodes, each of which connects to several **Idea** nodes.

City Schematic

Library

Theater

Houses

Houses

Landfill

Houses

Park

Post Office

School

School

Fire Department

Freeway

Freeway

Strip Mall

Strip Mall

Apartments

Industries

Golf Course

Police Department

Shopping Center

Office Complex

Hospital

Jail

Low-Income Housing

Government Offices

Restaurants