

# Addressing issues of Global Citizenship

## Transport

Important topic information | Classroom activity ideas | Suggested further

### Transport

#### -unequal movement-

*Transport, the process and means of moving people and goods, is a basic requirement for all kinds of social and commercial activities.*

*When we talk of transport we tend to mean cars, trains, buses and planes. But for the majority in the South who do not have access to or cannot afford such modes, transport means walking, cycling or using animals such as oxen, horses and camels.*

*Most scientists agree that our desire for travelling the way we do, as far as we do and as often as we do is contributing enormously to global warming and climate change. Yet those most likely to suffer the greatest consequences of climate change are the poor of the South – whose means of transport cause virtually no global*

### Accelerating global warming

Transport is responsible for pumping out millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) into the atmosphere. CO<sub>2</sub> is the main 'greenhouse gas' believed to be responsible for global warming and climate change.

#### Is global warming really happening?

Scientific processes and weather records provide us with clues as to what is happening. Since the beginning of the industrial revolution 200 years ago the use of fossil fuels - namely coal and oil - has increased rapidly. The result is that concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere have risen by a third. CO<sub>2</sub> forms a 'blanket' around the planet, trapping heat reflected from the earth's surface. The greater the quantity of CO<sub>2</sub>, the thicker the blanket and the more heat that is trapped.

Temperatures are rising more quickly than they have at any time in the last 10,000 years: the 1990s were the warmest decade on record and 1998 the hottest year since temperature records began. Sea levels have risen by between 10 and 25 cm in the last 100 years due to sea water volume increases and melting polar ice caps.

#### So what has it all got to do with transport?

Motor vehicles are the fastest growing source of air pollution and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the UK today. There are now 23 million cars on the roads in the UK, more than one car for every three people. This compares with one car for every 200 people in Sudan. While many people in the South, particularly women and children, walk miles each day, often carrying great loads of wood or water, half of all UK journeys under two miles are made by car. These journeys would be ideal for walking and cycling.

Since the 1970s the proportion of children walking to school has declined from one in three to one in nine. As traffic gets worse parents are more worried about letting their children go to school on their own due to fears over safety and are more likely to take them in the car, perpetuating a vicious circle.

Increases in car dependency have had a detrimental effect on children's physical and emotional health. Pollution from traffic aggravates asthma, and levels of obesity in children are on the rise. Traffic filled streets deny children valuable opportunities for outdoor play

### EXERCISING RIGHTS, AND TAKING RESPONSIBILITY: THE WORLD OF GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

*Global citizenship education identifies key areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes which foster concern for social justice and the environment.*

*It helps develop critical thinking skills and enables these to be applied to complex and controversial issues.*

*A Global Citizen is someone who:*

- has an understanding of how the world works economically, politically, socially, culturally, technologically and environmentally*
- understands the links between their own lives and those of people throughout the world*
- is outraged by social injustice*
- participates in and contributes to the community at a range of levels from the local to the global*
- is willing to act to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place*

*(based on Oxfam Curriculum for Global Citizenship)*