Application of Sustainable Development Goals to Dayton: Sustainable Cities and Communities

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What is a Human Rights City?

The Human Rights City Initiative began from the Global Human Rights Movement. Human Rights Cities work with activist groups and political actors to increase the respect of residents' economic, social, and cultural human rights.

At the World Human Rights Cities Forum in 2011, Human rights cities were defined as "both a local community and a socio-political process in a local context where human rights play a key role as fundamental values and guiding principles."

This initiative can be accomplished through the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
"Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable"

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For our purposes, we will be focusing on indicators:

11.1 Ensure equal access for all for safe, affordable, and adequate housing and services for all

11.3 Enhance inclusive and sustainable urban development

11.5 Decrease number of deaths, people affected, and economic loss due to disasters

11.6 Reduce environmental impact of cities

11.1

Dayton's black residents are more likely to experience homelessness than white residents, and predominantly black neighborhoods are harder to get mortgages for. In 2015, 32.5 percent of black residents in Montgomery County lived in poverty, compared to 12.3 percent of whites.

11.3

The Green Building and Redevelopment Projects works to revitalize existing buildings, which reduces cost, preserves character, and reduces energy and water usage. This project also encourages the sustainable development of new infrastructure to preserve natural resources and preserve habitats.

11.5

Montgomery County prioritized three goals in preparing the community for disaster: education, protection, creating/and or strengthening partnerships, and creating safer developments to survive disasters. They created goals, objectives, and strategies in response to each of these priorities in response to a wide range of natural disasters.

11.6

Between 2008 and 2010, Dayton's air quality was improving. However, in 2012, Dayton was ranked 17th in year round particle pollution. When breathed in, these affect the heart and lungs and can lead to health problems. This poses a risk to vulnerable populations, such as infants, the elderly, and those with diseases, those who have low income, and those who work outdoors.

Challenges and Opportunities in Meeting the Goals

11.1

Challenges: existing attitudes/prejudices/racism

Opportunities: mandating banks to provide loans for mortgages in lower incomes areas can lower the rates of abandoned buildings and help to revitalize neighborhoods

11.3

Challenges: costs, ordinances, policies, requires a lot of collaboration

Opportunities: can create tax incentives for businesses claiming historic status and for those following Green Development practices

11.5

Challenges: climate change making natural disasters more frequent, vulnerable populations affected more heavily

Opportunities: limiting the damages caused by natural disasters can improve the economy because businesses are less likely to be affected, and less resources for people displaced will be needed

11.6

Challenges: The data is disputed about Dayton's ranking, so people may be less willing to work to improve air quality

Opportunities: Improving health can lower healthcare costs, illness-related retirement, school absences

How do these goals connect to International Human Rights Articles?

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

- Right to adequate standard of living and health
- Right to take part in planning of the government
- Right to life and security of person

International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights

- Take part in public affairs
- Inherent right to life

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

- Elimination of racial discrimination in forms of housing
- Political rights for all

Convention of the Rights of the Child

- Children can form and express their own views
- Children have the right to life and the needs of every child are taken into account

What can we do to help Dayton become a Human Rights City and implement SDG 11?

Creating an Awareness Campaign

- Awareness and education are essential to any project or initiative, people cannot support it if they do not know about it. People may also have negative opinions about things simply because they are not knowledgeable about them.
- Hosting community meetings during which residents can hear about these projects can increase knowledge and support for the projects, and they can offer crucial insights about the needs of the community and past projects that have not worked.
- Educating the public about the benefits of policies and initiatives can have for them, their community, and the city, while also finding out what issues they think are being ignored. Garnering public support and finding out more about those needs can be useful to government when making decisions.
- Many companies and organizations are already working on increasing awareness about sustainability, but this campaign would work to educate ALL members of the community so that everyone has a voice!

Reflection

Greater Awareness of Local Issues

I am from Cincinnati, and we see many of the same issues, however I feel like the Dayton community is working more towards becoming a Human Rights City

Global Connections

Many cities have the same problems as Dayton, and we can learn from their mistakes and what has worked for them

Application of International Human Rights

Human Rights do not just have to do with law, they also have involve a good quality life, which includes a safe, healthy, and adequate living situation and environment

Resources

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