



Global Action Plan Ireland supports schools, communities and businesses to take practical, environmental action to live and work as sustainably as possible.

www.globalactionplan.ie



WELCOME

Welcome to Global Action Plan (GAP) Ireland's Annual Report.

2015 was a good year for GAP. We continued to focus on the expansion of our activities and programmes throughout Ireland working towards our mission of encouraging more individuals, schools and communities to live more sustainable lives.

Our programmes continued to be enthusiastically attended by all the communities we work with. Our environmental education and training programmes were broader this year, more accessible and more widely engaged than ever before. Our community gardening programme was a great success reflecting the growing national trend of people coming together in their communities, growing food and living healthier, greener lifestyles.

In 2015 we also embarked on a review of our Strategic Plan - to re-energise and re-focus our vision as an organisation and to expand and measure the impact of our work.

Despite the continuing challenges facing the voluntary sector, the expertise of our Board has ensured that GAP remains at the forefront of good legal governance as a registered charity and as an employer. GAP is committed to adopting the principles of the Governance Code - a voluntary code for the community and voluntary sector in Ireland. We expect to be fully compliant by early 2016. The Board continue to be committed to strong governance and transparency, and are fully registered and compliant with the requirements of the Charity Regulatory Authority (CRA) in 2015 [CRA 20053338].

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of GAP's truly dedicated staff, interns and volunteers, they are the cornerstone of our success to date and forward into the future.

Additionally I would like to acknowledge and thank our financial supporters and sponsors who make possible our vision to create more vibrant, sustainable and resilient communities throughout Ireland.

Penny McRedmond
Chairperson of Global Action Plan (Ireland) Board



CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.

- Robert Swan, OBE - Explorer turned Environmentalist

At Global Action Plan, we believe that empowered people can make a difference! We recognise that collective action by empowered individuals and communities can accomplish some of the most significant environmental work at grassroots level, and be an integral part of the solution to climate change. Seeing the tangible and measurable impacts each community achieves with GAP's support is truly inspiring and something which I am very proud of.

In 2015, our impact grew even stronger, as we launched a number of exciting initiatives - from our international schools based Water Explorer programme to our local Ballymun Lets Talk Science festival.

In 2015, we worked with over 34,000 students and adults throughout the country continuing to support people to live more sustainable lifestyles, by offering practical yet creative solutions that inspire people to act. Act on reducing their personal and collective environmental impact.

None of this impact would be possible without the continued support of our funders. Your confidence in GAP to deliver nationally recognized programmes and events sees our commitment to delivering sustainable living and environmental education programmes growing stronger than ever. Thank you.

A final thank you to our Board of Directors for their continued guidance and expertise. A warm welcome to our new directors Geoffrey Milton and Paul Nolan who bring a wealth of expertise to our board. Unfortunately we said farewell to John Rizzolo, who has been an invaluable and long serving member of our board.

The following Annual Report is a snapshot of the incredible work our team at GAP does, delivering industry leading sustainable living and environmental education programmes nationally.

Vanessa Moore
Chief Executive Officer

GLOBAL ACTION PLAN
CREATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES
ANNUAL REPORT 2015

2015 - A YEAR OF GROWTH

In committing to creating sustainable communities, our core programmes grew in considerable strength in 2015, reaching over 34,000 participants.

Our focus is **environmental education** and **professional training**, led by our national team of scientists and expert facilitators. Our goal is to inspire and support everyone throughout Ireland to take practical steps towards a more sustainable lifestyle.



Some of our highlights included:

- 2015 saw the launch of Water Explorer - an interactive, online educational resource engaging 8-15 year olds to learn about water issues. Serving 11 different countries, this ambitious project is funded by HSBC Water Programme.
- Other new nationwide initiatives include Water Wise, Creating the Climate for Change and the Environmental Stewardship & Sustainability Programme.
- Regular features in local and national media as examples of innovative environmental and community based projects.
- GAP was a national finalist in the Eir Spider Awards in two categories: Best Charity & Not-for-Profit and Best Digital Start-Up for Water Explorer.
- Relocating to Axis in Ballymun, the GAP team now has access to conference rooms, a lecture theatre, workshop space and excellent office facilities.
- Investment in a new website www.globalactionplan.ie now clearly communicates the supports and resources GAP develop for schools, communities and business on their journey towards sustainability.

GAP programmes introduce sustainable habits and lifestyle changes, but measurement is key to determining the success of these changes.

With a focus on sustaining these changes in the long-term we measure the impact and savings of participants actions, and use the results for support and feedback.

Measurement of environmental impact is a key metric in continuing to develop our own resources. Part of our strategy in 2015 was to significantly raise our profile in our core areas of water, energy and waste, concentrating on our evidence-based, results-focused model.



COMBINED ACTION OF PARTICIPANTS:

TOTAL SAVINGS ACHIEVED:

| | |
|--|---------|
| m ³ waste diverted from landfill | 132 |
| m ³ reduced CO ₂ emissions | 2,948 |
| m ³ reduced CH ₄ emissions | 5,033 |
| € saved in energy/water/waste bill reduction | 18,543 |
| kWh saved | 96,873 |
| litres of water saved | 796,181 |

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PROGRAMMES

We expanded our range of programmes and workshops to a wider audience in 2015:

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME IN BALLYMUN

GAP continues to play a vital role in the environmental regeneration programme in Ballymun.

Education Programmes:

Designed and delivered 6 individual programmes for local primary schools, 1 post-primary and an environmental competition for schools and youth groups in the community. Grow Your Own, Biodiversity in Parks Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability were among the most popular themed programmes this year, reaching >1,000 pupils and young people in the community in 2015.

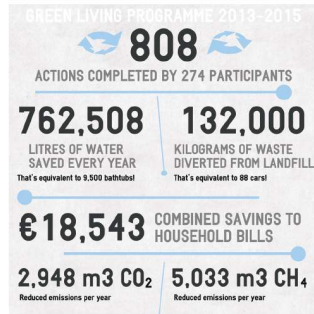
Community Environmental Initiatives:

Facilitating weekly activities and workshops in 2 community gardens attracted an average of 60 attendees weekly. Led by our horticulturist, organic growing, composting, rainwater harvesting, ecology studies and biodiversity enhancement were the main components delivered. All of these skills were practical and easily transferable to homes and community spaces outside of the community gardens.

- One community garden awarded 1st place for Best Sustainability Initiative at Dublin City Neighbourhood awards.
- TV3's Renovation Nation programme - January 2015: Episode 3 featured GAP's community garden programme showcasing the rejuvenation of the space with the support of volunteers.

National and international public events and campaigns included National tree Week, Biodiversity week, National Heritage Week, Science week and European Mobility Week reaching >800 residents of varying ages.

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING LABORATORIES FOR SUSTAINABILITY



Results achieved in Ireland

GAP launched the Community Environmental Learning Laboratories for Sustainability (CELLS) initiative in 2013, which was part funded by the EU Lifelong Learning programme. The programme was completed in 2015.

Reflecting on the CELLS project on its conclusion after 3 years, and the opportunity to collaborate with 5 partner organisations across Ireland, Hungary, Sweden and Spain, it's impact on sustainability through adult education has far exceeded our objectives.

The results have been shared with numerous academics, professionals, businesses and citizen groups across Germany, Switzerland, Ukraine, Austria, Czech Republic as a benchmark for adult sustainability education.

CELLS saw the evolution of new training methods and world leading educational content. These were extensively tested, as were new learning and outcome measurement methods. Gamification - the application of design and game principles in non-game contexts to support engagement in learning was piloted with GAP partners in Sweden. Collectively the programme involved > 3,000 adult learners in developing and testing new training and coaching methods, new educational content and new or improved communication tools to support adult learning.



PROGRAMMES

PRIMARY SCHOOLS ENERGY WORKSHOPS AND EXPLORING OUR ENERGY (SEAI)

As part of Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland's (SEAI) primary schools energy workshops GAP delivered 403 primary school workshops to 365 individual primary schools and 38 post primary schools throughout the country reaching >10,353 students.

In addition, the delivery of 23 teacher training workshops to 325 teachers as part of a new programme, Exploring our Energy - a primary school education programme designed to enable teachers to teach energy in the classroom.

LOCAL AGENDA 21 WORKSHOPS

The Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund promotes sustainable development by assisting small-scale environmental projects at local level.

In 2015, GAP were commissioned to deliver 43 workshops across 8 local authority areas, forming new collaborations and partnerships with primary and post-primary schools, Tidy Towns Associations and community groups across the country. This led to the development and launch of new Climate Change workshops for post-primary schools and Biodiversity workshops for community groups nationwide.

In delivering LA21 workshops, GAP dramatically expanded its national reach and intends to build on this further in 2016.

LETS TALK SCIENCE FESTIVAL MAY 2015 (21ST - 24TH MAY 2015)

GAP brought the first ever science festival to the community of Ballymun in 2015 in partnership with the Rediscovery Centre. LTS festival promoted STEM activities (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths):

- 6 second-level Interactive STEM workshops delivered to 93 2nd year students and 12 teachers on Biomimicry -how we look to nature for ideas and solutions to our pressing environmental challenges.

- 6 primary level workshops delivered to 79 students and 14 teachers from 4 schools in the Ballymun area.

- 31 individual STEM activities and workshops including wind turbine construction, food chain analysis, the chemistry of bubbles, and biodiversity were delivered over the 2-day public event to >1420 attendees.



PROGRAMMES

WATER EXPLORER

Launched in 2015 with 10 delivery partners in UK, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, Poland, Italy, France, South Africa, Bermuda and Turkey, Water Explorer aims to reach >9,000 young people over the next 2 academic years.

These young people will pursue projects to tackle water issues including water saving, cleaner water, embedded water and access to water.

This ambitious online education platform captures data from thousands of participants throughout the globe, so that we can record tangible results from small individual actions and track our global collaborative effort.

Results from January to June 2015 - the pilot year of programme in Ireland:

- 15 Teachers trained
- 71 challenges completed
- 157 schools actively participating
- 5256 people reached by WE campaigns
- 33,673 litres of water saved

In September, we hosted the first National Water Explorer awards, and were delighted to announce Duncan Stewart as our Ambassador.

To date Water Explorer has received extensive national press coverage. RTE News2day featured the National Water Explorer awards. (video here: www.globalactionplan.ie/programmes/rtes-new2day) Water Explorer was featured on national radio for Newstalk in addition to 9 local radio interviews, 2 national newspapers and 19 local newspaper editions.

Water Explorer was a national finalist in the Eir Spider Awards for Best Digital Start-Up. Together with our international partners and core funder HSBC, we have set ambitious targets for Water Explorer 2016 and beyond, leading technological innovations in education.



FINANCIAL REPORT

| | 31/12/2015 | 31/12/2014 |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| INCOME | | |
| Core Income | €347,553 | €387,594 |
| Grants | €35,962 | €36,240 |
| | €383,515 | €423,834 |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| Salaries & Wages | €193,397 | €234,719 |
| Project Costs | €116,222 | €102,694 |
| Administration Costs | €51,524 | €44,154 |
| | €361,143 | €381,567 |
| SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR | €22,372 | €42,267 |

Global Action Plan is funded by a variety of agencies and organisations contributing to both the overall development of the organisation and project specific work. In 2015, GAP's funding from government agencies reduced due to cuts in public spending. However, as part of our funding strategy, we continue to diversify our range of funding sources and will continue these efforts in 2016.

In 2015, our main funding came through:

- The Social Regeneration Fund, through Dublin City Council for our community environmental programme in Ballymun.
- Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) for Energy in Schools programme.
- EU Lifelong Learning programme (Grundtvig) for our CELLS programme.
- HSBC Water programme for our national Water Explorer programme

We also received additional funding from:

- Local Authorities nationwide under the Environmental Partnership Fund
- Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) for our Lets Talk Science Festival
- The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government core funding grant administered by the Irish Environmental Network (IEN).

GAP also generates funds through training courses and workshop delivery.

2016 - A YEAR TO BE AMBITIOUS

Our ambitions as a national organisation take root in the environmental challenges facing our world.

The recently agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) presents an opportunity and challenge for us all to work towards ending poverty, protecting the planet, and ensuring prosperity for all as part of a new sustainable development agenda over the next 15 years.

Of particular interest to GAP will be the environmental themed SDGs. These aim to protect the planet from degradation, through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of present and future generations.

We are excited to work towards new ideas, initiatives and to play our part in supporting communities meet these ambitious targets



Our future plans include the continued expansion of our Water Explorer programme aiming to reach more schools nationally. We expect to double our reach into local authority areas with the expansion of our educational outreach workshops and to expand the profile of the organisation while building a greater online presence.

We also intend to ensure the highest governance standards and regulatory compliance.

We recognise that in order to achieve our mission collaboration and partnerships will be an important part of our strategy. GAP is part of Global Action Plan International - a network of organisations working towards the SDGs. Each of the 27 member organisations of Global Action Plan are independent entities, yet sharing knowledge and learning opportunities with partner countries has offered unique opportunities to secure funding for international projects such as Water Explorer and CELLS.

We are also proud members of the Irish Environmental Network, Environmental Pillar and the Science Foundation Ireland Discover Centre Network.

Collaboration remains at the forefront of achieving our objectives.





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