



capacity global
living in a clean and healthy environment is everyone's right

Press release 04/11/11

The launch of a toolkit – designing cities for kids

On November 4th, Capacity Global will launch the 'Just Cities' toolkit at the Globe Academy School in Southwark.

The toolkit will help young people understand how decisions that affect their communities and their environment are made. It also gives practical advice about how they can influence these decisions by campaigning on the environment and social justice.

Capacity Global is a London based non-governmental-organisation that tackles social and environmental justice issues in urban areas.

The launch will be attended by Jean Lambert, Green Party Member of the European Parliament for London, and Capacity Global director Maria Adebowale.

Jean Lambert MEP, who supported the project said: *"A clear message from young people involved in some earlier research from Capacity Global was that they were interested in their environment and community but didn't know to get involved. This toolkit helps to answer their needs. It has been done with young people for young people. They need to be part of the decision-making that shapes their lives. I hope that the toolkit will encourage young people across the capital to exercise their democratic powers and to make a positive difference"*.

The toolkit is part of Capacity Global's Just Cities project, which aims to start a conversation with young people about their vision for the communities they live in and how they can change the world for the better.

The Just Cities project was designed in 2005 in response to the riots across Europe, which took place in a context of young people facing problems of poverty, high unemployment and racial discrimination.

The toolkit was co-written by young people who participated in the Just Cities project. It is a positive 'can-do' alternative to the riots witnessed this summer.

Capacity Global's director Maria Adebowale said: *"With this summer's riots, higher education being made ever more expensive and jobs being harder to come by, it's not surprising that young people feel opportunities available to them are becoming*

increasingly slim. Crucially, young people often feel too excluded from their communities and political processes that can change things. The Just Cities project aims to help more young people get their voices heard in the political processes that can improve the environment, communities and economic opportunities."

NOTES TO EDITOR

Capacity Global (<http://www.capacity.org.uk/>) is an independent think tank and social enterprise that aims to promote environmental justice. It works directly with the deprived communities affected by environmental injustice, as well as pioneering innovative thinking and policy-development on environmental justice issues.

Environmental justice is making sure that everyone has equal access to a clean environment and equal protection from possible environmental harm irrespective of race, income, gender or class. Everyone has the right to breathe clean air, drink clean water and live in safe housing or on safe land. Anything that interferes with this right can be described as environmental injustice.

Everyone is responsible for looking after the environment for us now and for future generations. To carry out our responsibilities we need resources such as access to information that will help us make good decisions about protecting our rights and the rights of others.

The Just Cities project was funded by Jean Lambert, Green Party MEP for London (<http://www.jeanlambertmep.org.uk/>). Jean works on a wide range of social and environmental issues, from workers rights and access to healthcare to climate change and animal welfare.

Maria Abedowale, director of Capacity Global, and Jean Lambert are available for interview. Maria can be contacted via Clare Lawton at comms@capacity.org.uk or 020 3117 0102. Jean Lambert can be contacted via Anna Rutter, Press Officer at media@jeanlambertmep.org.uk or +44 (0)20 7250 8417 Mob: +44 (0)7917 881648