



AFRICAN CLIMATE ALLIANCE ACTIVIST GUIDE



THIS AFRICAN CLIMATE ALLIANCE ACTIVIST GUIDE IS A LIVING DOCUMENT THAT SEEKS TO HELP ASPIRING CHANGEMAKERS OF ALL GENERATIONS TO MAKE THAT A MORE JUST WORLD A REALITY. IT IS A GUIDE FOR ACTIVISTS - PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA - THAT AIMS TO OFFER YOU SUPPORT ON YOUR JOURNEY OF CONTRIBUTING TO THAT WORLD.

Published October 2022
African Climate Alliance
Cape Town, South Africa
Contact us: [activistguide@
africanclimatealliance.org](mailto:activistguide@africanclimatealliance.org)

Produced with funding by European
Climate Foundation and Sunrise Project
Printed on recycled paper.



Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International
(CC BY-NC 4.0)

You are free to:

- Share – copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format.
- Adapt – remix, transform, and build upon the material.

Under the following terms:

- Attribution – You must give appropriate credit, link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so reasonably, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or the use of the material.
- NonCommercial – You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

A big thank you to everyone who has been part of making version one of this guide a reality. A big thank you also to every person who has been a part of making the African Climate Alliance (ACA) into what it is today.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4	WHAT IS CLIMATE ACTION AND WHAT ARE VARIOUS TYPES OF ACTIONS WE CAN ENGAGE IN?	33
WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT IT?	6	ART AND ACTIVISM: HOW TO INCORPORATE CREATIVITY INTO CLIMATE ACTION	35
WHAT IS CLIMATE JUSTICE AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?	8	HOW TO START AN ECO CLUB	37
WHAT IS INTERSECTIONALITY AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT IN CLIMATE JUSTICE WORK?	9	WHAT DOES A CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTIVIST LOOK LIKE?	40
WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT IN THE MOVEMENT?	14	HOW TO BUILD A SUCCESSFUL MOVEMENT	42
IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CREATING EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES	16	WHY WE MUST ORGANISE	46
HOW TO HOLD AN EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP	17	GOING DEEPER	54
WHAT IS CLIMATE ADVOCACY AND HOW CAN WE BECOME CLIMATE JUSTICE ADVOCATES IN OUR DAILY LIVES?	21	WHAT IS DECOLONISATION AND HOW DOES IT APPLY TO THE CLIMATE MOVEMENT?	55
Advocating for the future we want	21	WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CLIMATE MITIGATION AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION, AND HOW CAN WE AIM TO ACHIEVE BOTH?	57
Your voice has power!	22	WHAT IS “LOSS AND DAMAGE”, AND WHY SHOULD IT BE INCLUDED IN CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTIVISM?	59
HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ADVOCACY	24	A FINAL NOTE FROM THE AFRICAN CLIMATE ALLIANCE TEAM	61
HOW TO WRITE A GOOD OP-ED	27	CASE STUDIES OF YOUTH CLIMATE ACTIVISM IN AFRICA	66
WHAT IS POLICY AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ENGAGE WITH POLICY TO DRIVE A CLIMATE JUSTICE AGENDA?	30	The African Climate Alliance	66
		Green Generation Initiative	68
		CONTRIBUTORS	70

INTRODUCTION

The world is deeply complex, with some overwhelming challenges and glaring injustices that disproportionately impact the lives of Black and Indigenous people and People of Colour. The world is full of people, all with their own experiences and struggles, most of whom want to do all they can to create a just world. People everywhere are working to shift the systems of injustice that, for too long, have seemed unchangeable. People like you, who want to come together to create a world defined by social, economic, environmental and ecological justice. A world worth living in. A world for us all.

THE AFRICAN CLIMATE ALLIANCE ACTIVIST GUIDE IS A LIVING DOCUMENT THAT SEEKS TO HELP ASPIRING CHANGEMAKERS OF ALL GENERATIONS MAKE THAT WORLD A REALITY. IT IS A GUIDE FOR ACTIVISTS - PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA - THAT OFFERS YOU SUPPORT ON YOUR JOURNEY OF CONTRIBUTING TO A MORE JUST WORLD.

This guide explores the basics of climate change and its associated intersectional struggles. It offers explanations of some of the more complex terms and concepts, as well as how-to-guides for actions, mobilisations, campaigns, advocacy, and much more! We hope you will use this guide alongside some excellent resources on climate justice that exist for people wanting to make a difference in the world.

This guide was developed to be a truly collaborative process so as not to speak from only one perspective. Activists of all ages, ethnicities, and genders contributed from various African countries, each bringing their unique perspectives in their areas of expertise.

We see the guide, in the form that you have in your hands or are looking at on your screen right now, as a draft. We encourage you and the people who you engage with to get involved so that it can continue to grow and develop over time. So, in the name of togetherness and collaboration, once you have read through the guide, we welcome you to send suggestions. What would you like to bring to the guide and what would you like to see more of in future versions? We also invite you to collaborate with us as the guide develops. Please email activistguide@africanclimatealliance.org to get involved!

The guide is an open-source document that we encourage you to share far and wide in your communities and on social media. Find an electronic copy at <https://africanclimatealliance.org/activist-guide/>. You can email us for more hard copies.

WE HOPE THAT THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF MANY GREAT THINGS TO COME AND THAT THIS GUIDE WILL PLAY A PART IN HELPING DEFINE OUR ROLE AS ACTIVISTS AND CHANGEMAKERS AS WE REDEFINE OUR FUTURE!



**LET'S REDEFINE
OUR FUTURE!**

WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE AND WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT IT?

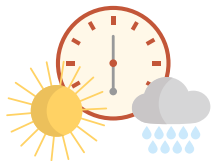
WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WEATHER AND CLIMATE?



WEATHER refers to conditions in a specific place and time.

So, when someone asks what the weather is like where you are, they want to know if it's hot, cold, windy, or rainy at that time. On the other hand, a place's climate is based on weather patterns over time. For example, Uptington in South Africa is seen as having a hot and dry climate, even if it sometimes gets cold.

A changing climate is normally a natural process that has happened over millions of years, giving plants, animals, and humans the chance to adapt. But since industrialisation in the 1800s, humans caused the process to occur dangerously faster.



CLIMATE CHANGE refers to changing long-term patterns all over the world due to human activity.

When humans discovered fire, we started burning all sorts of natural resources. At first, we only burned wood, but when the world started to become industrialised, **FOSSIL FUELS** were used, such as coal, petrol, and gas. The energy that comes from burning these fossil fuels has been used to generate electricity, cook our food, power cars, trains, planes, and more. However, whenever fossil fuels are burned, greenhouse gasses such as carbon dioxide (CO₂) and methane are released into the air. We call them **GREENHOUSE GASSES** because they hang around in the atmosphere and trap heat, making the Earth's climate warmer – just like a real greenhouse is used to trap heat from the sun and keep plants inside warm. This is called the **GREENHOUSE EFFECT**.

The more fossil fuels that are burned, the worse climate change will get. The more fossil fuels are burned, the more greenhouse gasses hang around in the atmosphere. As more heat is trapped, the polar ice caps melt and the global climate changes. This is made worse by things like:

- **DEFORESTATION** because trees absorb CO₂ from the air and release oxygen back into it. We can think of them like "air conditioners" that limit climate change.
- **INTENSIVE PLANT AND ANIMAL AGRICULTURE** because this releases potent greenhouse gasses and ruins our soil, which like trees can also reduce CO₂ in the air.

WHY DOES CLIMATE CHANGE MATTER?

Climate change doesn't only mean it's getting hotter. It also causes many other dangerous problems such as:

- More extreme weather events such as floods, heatwaves, wildfires, and cyclones that kill thousands of people every year or cause people to lose their homes.
- Increased droughts that make water more scarce.
- Difficulty in predicting weather patterns which makes it more difficult to farm and produce food. This makes food less easy to access and causes food prices to go up.

- Some places becoming too hot to work during the day, which could lead to people losing their jobs.

Climate change affects everything and everyone but especially people who already live in poverty in climate change hotspots such as Africa. Climate change effects will only become worse if we don't act. That is why we are doing something to address the worst effects of climate change.



WHAT IS CLIMATE JUSTICE AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?



CLIMATE JUSTICE is the term we use to refer to the social, ethical, and political implications of climate change, as opposed to only the physical and environmental impact.

Climate justice begins with recognising that different groups of people are affected differently by climate change.

For example, the rich are less affected than the poor and can adapt more easily. At the same time, countries in the global south, Indigenous people, and the youth of today are not responsible for most greenhouse gas emissions. Still, they will suffer the consequences of climate change far more than richer nations and previous generations.

**CLIMATE JUSTICE =
ENVIRONMENTAL +
SOCIAL + CLIMATE
CHANGE JUSTICE**



WHY CLIMATE JUSTICE MATTERS?

Climate justice calls us to understand the challenges faced by the people and communities most vulnerable to the impact of climate change. Those on the front lines of climate change have often contributed least to the crisis.

Furthermore, these communities affected by climate change are unlikely to have the resources needed to adapt to the changing climate. This makes them particularly vulnerable to climate change effects. For example, someone living in an informal settlement will be less able to cope with drought, flash floods, and heat waves than someone who lives in a wealthy area. Likewise, rising sea levels could force millions of people to move to areas where they do not have jobs or networks.

A community's ability to mitigate and adapt to the negative consequences of climate change is shaped by factors such as:

- Income
- Race
- Class
- Gender
- Economic and political representation.

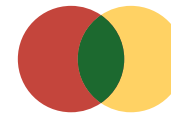
Climate justice also helps us determine how we should fight climate change. It can help governments to allocate resources effectively and assist the most vulnerable.

When we improve society with those most impacted in mind, everyone wins!

WHAT IS INTERSECTIONALITY AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT IN CLIMATE JUSTICE WORK?

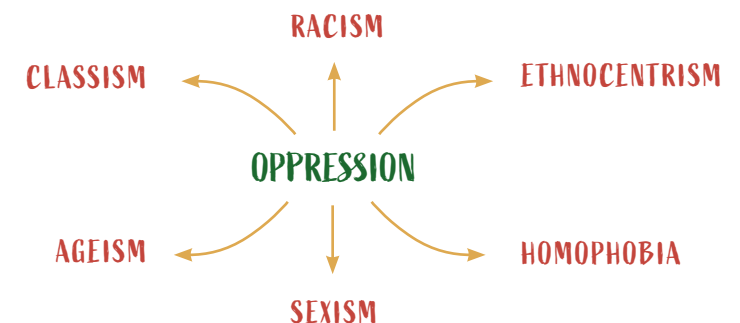
WHAT IS INTERSECTIONALITY?

Intersectionality comes from the root word "intersect", which means to join, meet, or cross. An intersection is the point where two or more things meet (or simply a place where things come together). The term "intersectionality" was coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw to help us better understand layered inequalities in the world.



In practice, **INTERSECTIONALITY** is research that connects forms of discrimination and oppression.

Intersectionality acknowledges that there are many forms of oppression that might be present at the same time in a person's life or in a particular struggle (for example the struggle for social justice). Examples of these oppressions include:



The world works in a way where those most affected by inequality, structural racism, and classism, and other systems of oppression also suffer more due to climate change, environmental breakdown, and natural disasters. Applying the intersectionality framework means we are able to centre the people most affected. This then allows us to better develop and apply solutions that benefit all.

In all this, it is also important to understand that the idea of intersectionality cannot fix all the problems that exist in our world. However, it is a necessary framework that can help us usefully engage with issues around privilege and power – and find proper ways forward.

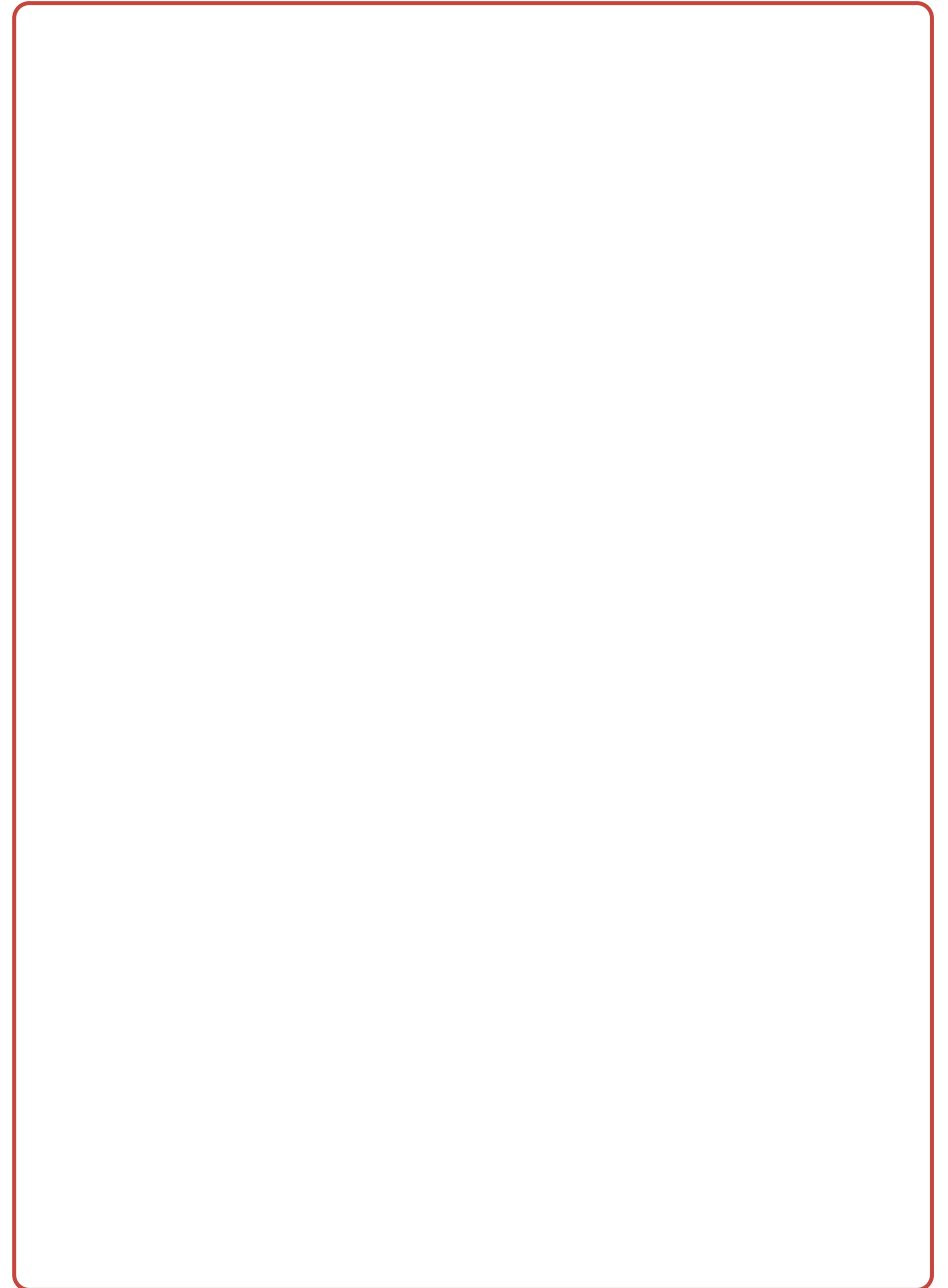
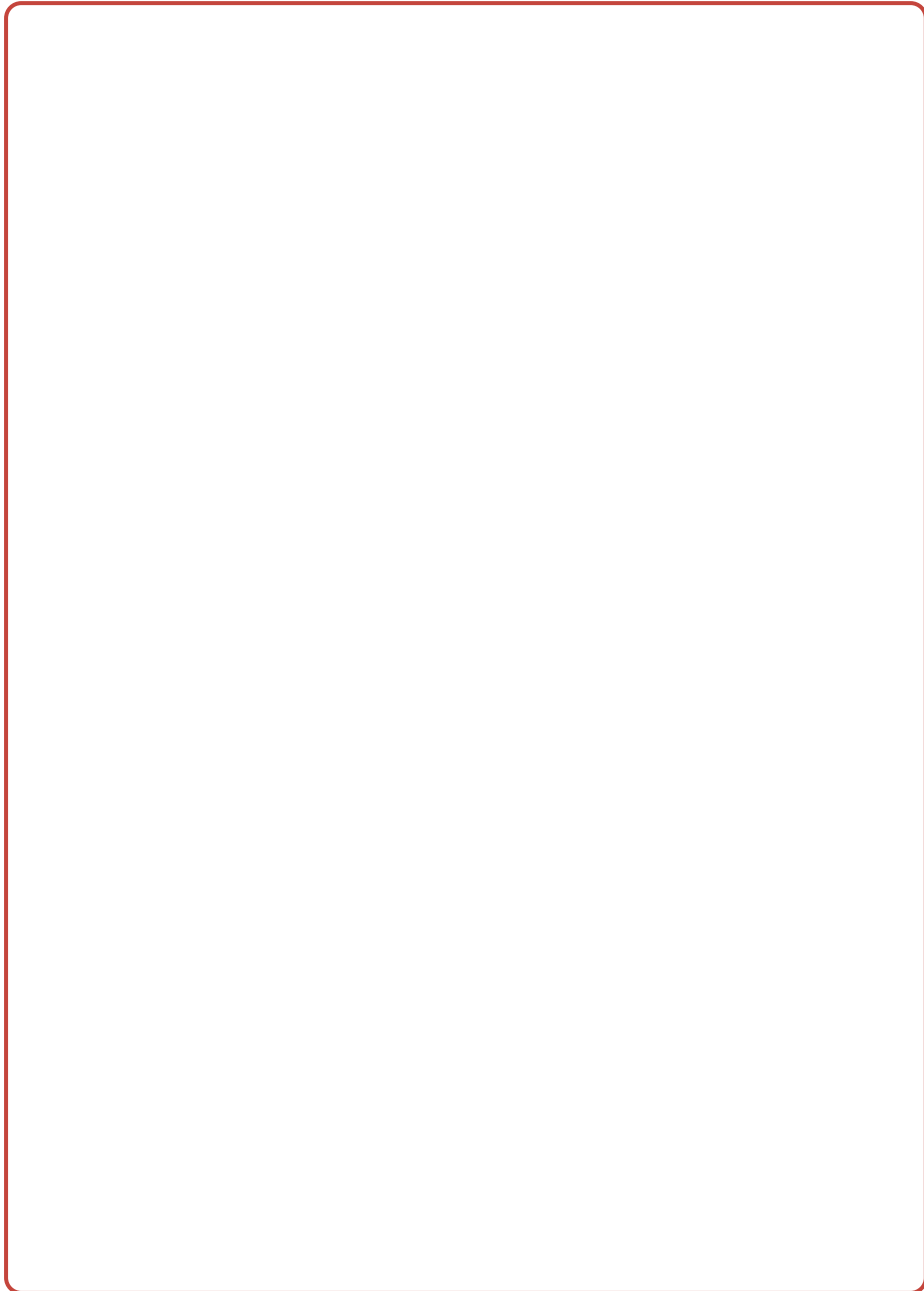
EXAMPLES OF APPLYING AN INTERSECTIONALITY FRAMEWORK TO ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The problem	Possible solutions
Nations in the global north that took part in colonising Africa and extracting its resources have continued to mine many of those resources in ways that have caused enormous environmental harm. The same countries contribute the most to releasing the carbon emissions that cause the climate crisis that we see today. At the same time, countries in Africa are far more vulnerable to the harms of climate and environmental breakdown	People from all around the world who are serious about confronting the climate crisis must work together to find fair solutions. This can look like: working to ensure that the global north provide funding to the global south in the form of climate reparations. Reparations which are transparently spent and put people before profit, and reparations that will be used to shift to sustainable practices and economies
The apartheid government in South Africa forced Black and Brown people out of areas classified for white occupation by the Group Areas Act. The Black and Brown people were set up to live in areas that were environmentally inadequate and resource deficient. They also had few trees and little plant life. As a result, the majority of Black and Brown people experience heatwaves, floods, and food insecurity in far more intense ways.	It is important to apply measures that are able to address social, economic, and environmental issues at the same time. To name a few: • Land reform and restoration • Environmentally conscious affordable housing • Implementing basic income grants • Providing accessible (environmental) education • Creating green jobs that focus on transitioning away from fossil fuels while restoring degraded landscapes and building food sovereignty.

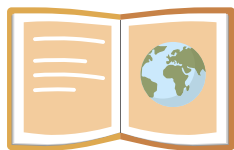
REFLECTIONS



NOTES



WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT IN THE MOVEMENT?



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION is a process that allows groups of people to gain knowledge about the environment (and the intersection of environmental and social issues).

Environmental education also helps people adopt positive attitudes towards the environment and understand that people are not separate from our natural world. Being environmentally literate (being informed about the environment and environmental justice) encourages people to take action to address environmental problems (such as climate change and climate injustice).

Environmental education mainly focuses on decision making and problem solving. As a result, individuals develop a deeper understanding of social and environmental issues. Then they have the necessary skills to make informed and responsible decisions.

Effective environmental education has many different elements, including:

- Building knowledge, awareness, and sensitisation to the environment and its challenges, including how we are part of our environment
- Being learner-centric by empowering learners and allowing them to participate in the planning of their learning activities

- Fostering attitudes of concern for the environment and motivation to improve or maintain (good) environmental quality
- Developing skills to identify and help find solutions to social and environmental challenges
- Participatory activities that lead to solutions for environmental challenges being developed
- Teaching individuals how to compare many different sides of an issue through critical thinking and by improving their own problem-solving and decision-making skills
- Being learner-centric by empowering learners and allowing them to participate in the planning of their learning activities
- Adopting a democratic style of working by encouraging solidarity, equality, respect for human rights, and intercultural collaboration.

WHY IS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IMPORTANT?

- It promotes and provides awareness of the realities we face.
- It allows for an exchange of knowledge in various ways allowing for skills and capacity building.
- It is the first step to achieving a habitable, just, and fair future.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IS NOT A ONCE-OFF FIX OR ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL TYPE OF TOOL. RATHER, ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION MEANS UNDERSTANDING A PROBLEM, POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS, AND HOW TO CREATE MEANINGFUL SAFE SPACES OF LEARNING, COLLABORATION, AND ENGAGEMENT FOR PEOPLE (EDUCATORS AND AFFECTED COMMUNITIES ALIKE).

Check out our Back2Basics workshops and African Climate Alliance Dialogues, which take place regularly and are found online at <https://africanclimate-alliance.org/education/>



IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CREATING EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

By Xoli Fuyani

What are things to think about when developing educational materials? What are some of the ways to make education materials attractive and make sure your content meets the learning objectives?

1. Group characteristics: For the proper development of educational materials and content, it's important to take into account the unique characteristics of the learning audience that will be using the materials. For example:

- Age group
- Gender
- Health risks
- Vision and hearing

2. Research: You need to consider your group's pre-existing knowledge, as well as its needs. Bear in mind

- The generation you are presenting to
- Cultural background
- Possible learning difficulties.

3. Inclusiveness: Your educational resources need to be structured and based on the learning audience's profile. Remember to produce resources that respect all individuals.

- Make sure that the content is presented in a way that respects the particular characteristics of specific groups, such as gender, religion, or race.

- Be mindful of the visuals you choose. Visual representation is essential as some depictions might offend some social groups.

- Include local languages to make your content accessible.

4. Presenting the knowledge: Be creative about how you present the information.

- Don't be limited by text.
- Text should be accompanied by graphics illustration, sound, and videos.
- Engage with different learning styles.
- How you present your content is a crucial factor to consider when planning and implementing educational materials.

5. Interactivity: Offer an opportunity for the audience to interact with the content itself.

- People learn best when they are asked to do something, that is, to interact, instead of passively engaging with the materials.
- One way to enhance interaction is to enrich your materials with stories and scenarios that offer various ways to engage and various choices about ways of thinking.

At times, when developing resources, we can be caught up with appearance and graphics, but content is more important than appearance. Keep it simple! Throughout the process, keep asking yourself what the purpose of the resources will be.

MOST OF ALL, HAVE FUN.

HOW TO HOLD AN EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP

By Xoli Fuyani

Conducting an **EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP** involves facilitating or guiding a group of people through the process or an active dialogue to help them increase their knowledge or work on solving a particular set of problems to reach a particular goal together. Here are the processes and steps to help you plan and have an effective workshop.

ONE WEEK BEFORE THE WORKSHOP



1. Get to know the participants: Try to understand who the participants are and how best to match the workshop content to their knowledge. If you can, find out their ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds. Think about what knowledge and experiences they may already have when they arrive at the workshop.

2. Define your purpose: Once you understand who will be attending, make sure that you have a clear idea of the purpose of the workshop, for example raise awareness or ignite action. If you are facilitating the workshop with others, it's important to meet with them to make sure that everyone has a shared idea of what you're trying to achieve. Only when you feel confident that everyone is on the same page can you move on to the next step.

3. Set a clear goal: It can be useful to set some objectives while you are in the planning stages to measure the workshop success afterwards. Make sure that the group has a shared understanding of the objectives and can discuss whether the objectives have been met when you review the workshop afterwards.

4. Plan: It's important to plan the entire workshop ahead of time. Make sure to include what will happen before and after the workshop. Questions to ask yourself in the planning process include:

- What kind of exercises and activities are best suited for the workshop?
- Have you taken people's needs into consideration?
- Is there enough time for every element?
- How can I raise enthusiasm for the workshop in the days before the actual event? For example, sending a reminder email or posting on social media.

- What do I want the participants to leave with? What should the participants do afterwards?
- How should I set up the room to best suit the group's needs?
- Will I need any tools, equipment, or resources? For example, a whiteboard, markers, and posters, among other things.
- Am I prepared for the unexpected, for example few participants attending and electricity outages, among other things?

Remember that what you have planned may not be what the workshop participants need the most, so stay open to their needs when that's the case.

DURING THE WORKSHOP

Now you have prepared for the workshop, it's time to have some fun!

1. **Setting up the space:** Before the participants arrive at the venue, make time to create the welcoming atmosphere you want. Do you want the group to feel calm, energetic, or relaxed? Think about how to arrange the furniture, for example arrange chairs in a circle for inclusivity. Set up a welcome table with nametag materials. You can even play soft music in the background. It's the little things that make all the difference!
2. **Attendance register:** As the participants arrive, ask them to complete the attendance register.



3. **Check-in:** Once everybody has settled in, go around the room and do a check-in. This gives participants a chance to share what they're feeling and what kind of mood they're in. Are they excited about the workshop, or did they have a terrible journey to the venue? You'll never know what people are arriving with unless you ask.
4. **Logistics:** Where are the bathrooms? What time are the breaks? What will create a positive learning environment? and what are the rules of engagement? Take a moment, in the beginning, to set some ground rules and go over the logistics. Once the basic needs have been taken care of, the workshop participants will be able to focus on more important things.
5. **Goals and agreement:** To build an educational space, it is important for the participants to participate in setting the goals. The participants may have goals that also need to be considered. It is also important that participants clearly share their agreement with the goals.
6. **Clarify expectations:** Go through the agenda with the participants and share the purpose and goals of the workshop so that they'll be able to recognise whether or not their discussions throughout the day will help achieve the shared goal.
7. **Icebreakers:** Make time at the beginning of the day to build trust and use icebreakers to lift the mood throughout the session. This will build a safe learning environment. This is especially true if the participants are unfamiliar with each other.
8. **Facilitation:** Create a learning environment by leading the discussion without taking part. Make sure that participants stay on topic for the most part but always keep an open mind about unexpected topics, as these unexpected topics often prove to be valuable.
 - Make sure the participants feel seen and heard.
 - Alternate between different methods and activities to create a balanced agenda that support the participant's varying strengths, such as a group discussion combined with a hands-on activity, like creating a poster or collage as a group.
9. **Documentation:** Take photos and videos and write down quotes. These are great ways to document the workshop and could be useful for reporting and workshop evaluations. Make sure that participants have agreed to having pictures taken of them and explain how they will be used.
10. **Assess goal completion:** Before you let everyone go home, ask whether or not you achieved the goal you'd set for the workshop. If yes, awesome! And if it's no, take time to understand why the goal was not reached and whether you can or even should still aim to reach that goal.
11. **Check-out:** When the workshop is nearing the end, go around the room once again and have everyone share what they're taking away with them. Ask what they've learned, or one thing they are going to implement in their communities or do next.
12. **Communicate the next steps:** Remind your participants to reach out if they need more assistance or resources and explain what sorts of assistance they can expect.

AFTER THE WORKSHOP

1. **Congratulations:** Give yourself a hug! Workshops can be quite intense. Take a deep breath in and out, reset, and re-energise. Pick up where you left off and carry on with the process.
2. **Communicate progress:** After the workshop, your participants' awareness should have increased, and they should have a better understanding of the big picture and their role in creating change. Find ways of reaching out to the participants and try to gauge whether or not they know ways to continue increasing their awareness and knowledge. Share relevant events and webinar links.



3. **Ask for feedback:** You have an option to do this immediately after the workshop or ask for feedback once the whole process is coming to an end. Another good time to send a request for feedback is two days after the workshop. That way, the participants will have had time to reflect and will be in a better position to judge whether the process has been successful.

Educational workshops are important for developing knowledge towards climate justice and a stronger climate justice movement. Anyone can hold a workshop if the intention is right and the preparation is done.

WHAT IS CLIMATE ADVOCACY AND HOW CAN WE BECOME CLIMATE JUSTICE ADVOCATES IN OUR DAILY LIVES?

At the basic level, **ADVOCACY** means using our voices to ask for change we seek. So,



CLIMATE ADVOCACY is to use our voices for the cause of climate justice, which we now understand is a combination of social, environmental, and climate change justice.

ADVOCATING FOR THE FUTURE WE WANT

Advocacy can be a way of conceptualising, imagining, and speaking into existence what a future looks like where climate justice has been achieved – even if we know some of those achievements can only happen beyond our own lifetimes. When we advocate for the change that we want, it is important to stand against the things we believe are wrong, unjust, or cause harm. Importantly, in addition, we must also use our voices to speak out and seek out the kind of future that we believe in.

With this in mind, here are some forms of climate advocacy. We go into more in-depth in the rest of this section on some of these key areas of advocacy.

- Putting pressure on lawmakers and government decision-makers using facts or laws (this can be done with big corporations too).
- Commenting on and engaging with policy
- Creating campaigns that must include grassroots engagement and can include media and digital aspects.
- Using writing as a tool (such as by writing opinion pieces and having them published in local or international media).
- Using social media to amplify your message.
- Engaging with fellow, community members, and stakeholders to raise awareness and inspire allyship.

ABIGAIL KIPRONO KIMA is a young energy expert and climate activist from Kenya. She recently launched Hali Hewa Podcast (Hali-Hewa is a Swahili term for climate) with the aim of amplifying African climate stories. Hali Hewa profiles African activists and climate experts over eight 30-minute episodes on themes including a just energy transition, loss and damage, youth participation in intergovernmental processes and Indigenous people's rights. You can find it on YouTube!

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfLiQasiBfWCJldWe2R3y4g>.

YOUR VOICE HAS POWER!

During a workshop in Cape Town in South Africa, the African Climate Alliance explored the theme 'the power of our voices'. The organisation gathered these advocacy tips from a group of young climate and social advocates from across the city:

- Education and advocacy go hand in hand (education is the foundation).
 - Representation matters.
 - Know your context and audience well, and try to find common ground to speak from
 - Know your facts.
 - Prepare.
 - Always keep your aim in mind.
 - Think of your voice like a lion (a lion never questions its worth).
 - Use your advocacy to build networks and grow the collective, because there is power in numbers.
 - Use the power of your lived experience.
 - Learn how best to approach others.
 - Channel your frustration and also focus on what you can change.
 - You don't have to be directly impacted or the most impacted by an issue to advocate and amplify a cause, but be sensitive to listening to and following the lead of the most affected or impacted people.
 - Hold yourself accountable.
 - Know your history and look to learn from those who came before you.
- 
- Look for good places to raise your voice and think about what is needed, where it is needed, and how it can be provided.
 - Be authentic (it's not about looking like an activist, it's about being an activist).
 - Commit yourself to continuous (un) learning.
 - It's ok to be angry. But please treat one another with kindness so that when you speak out, your aim is for transformation, compassion, and change rather than to catch people out or 'cancel' – especially when it comes to those who are not causing direct harm.
 - Be okay with discomfort and saying things you are scared to say.
 - Always introspect, be kind to yourself and accept the complexity and nuance of the world as you try to change it.
 - Remember your health comes first. Your advocacy starts with advocating for yourself.

ADVOCACY IS AGAINST WHAT IS UNJUST AND IS ALSO FOR THE GOOD AND JUST THINGS YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO USE YOUR VOICE IN YOUR COMMUNITY, ONLINE, AND THROUGH OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT.

ADVOCACY IS ABOUT USING YOUR VOICE IN WAYS THAT WORK FOR YOU TO AMPLIFY YOUR CAUSE.

USE THE TOOLS THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU AND LOOK OUT FOR OPPORTUNITIES THAT WORK FOR YOU.

ALWAYS CONSIDER YOUR OWN MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH.

REMEMBER TO TAKE BREAKS.

HOW TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ADVOCACY

By Stella Hertantyo



Have you ever come across a social media post that shifted your perspective? Or sparked an idea? Or sent you down a rabbit hole learning about a topic you did not know much about before? For many of us, I'm sure the answer is "yes".

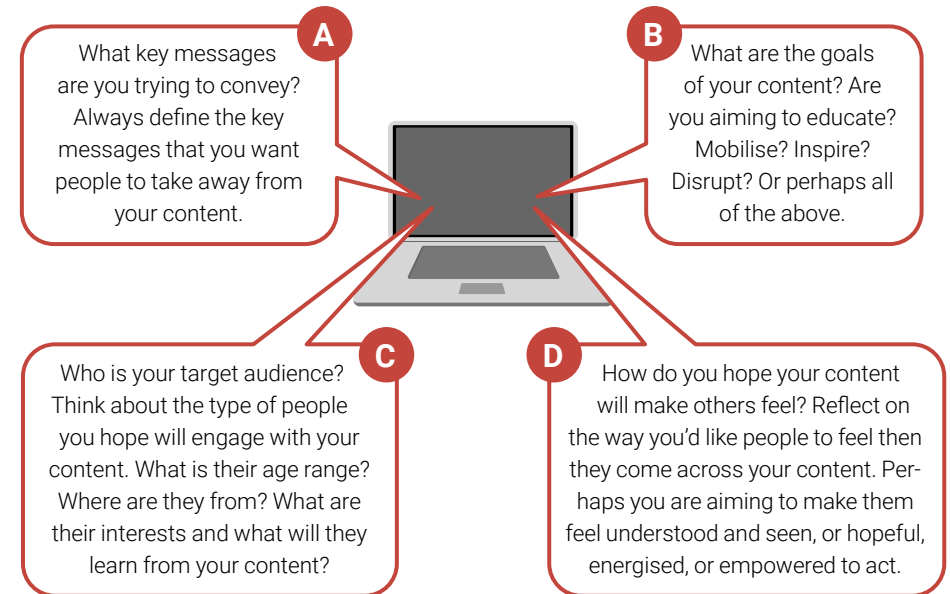
Social media platforms have become powerful spaces for connection and movement building. In many ways, these online platforms have democratised storytelling and allowed the voices, lived experiences, and perspectives of grassroots activists across the world to be amplified like never before. We have seen the rise of online climate justice activists using their platforms to inspire, mobilise, call out injustice, and advocate for change. While it is essential for online activism to be accompanied by in-person action, we cannot underestimate

the potential of social media as a tool for advocacy as we continue to find new ways to make this movement more inclusive and widespread.

Whether you are an individual climate justice activist or want to create an online presence for a grassroots organisation, here are a few ways to use social media for climate advocacy:

1. What is your why? Figure out your why and always return to it. Before you begin sharing content online, it's important to take some time to reflect on why you feel compelled to create content in the first place. And what the aim of your content is.

2. Think about:



3. What social media platforms do you want your content to appear on? Decide which social media will best suit your goals. Each has a slightly different appeal. The main ones are Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok. Do some research and decide on which platforms are best suited, depending on your aims and target audience.

4. How can you best share your messages to make them most interesting and effective? There isn't just one way to use social media to create awareness and amplify your cause. If you enjoy videos, you could make Instagram reels, TikToks, or YouTube videos. If you enjoy design, you could create graphic posts and Canva.com is a great free design tool for this. If you are a writer, you could choose to focus your energy on informative captions on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. Or try a mix of them all!

5. Have you researched what you want to share? Remember that the learnings you share should be rooted in research. If you are going to be sharing information online, make sure you have done your own research first. And always cite facts and share sources. It's vital to share trustworthy, verifiable information to avoid spreading misinformation. Likewise, you should always encourage those interacting with your content to do their own research on the topic too.

6. Have you presented a balance between harsh realities and good news and ways to take action? It is important to create awareness and tell the truth about the devastating realities of the climate crisis. But be mindful about not only sharing the doom and gloom. Too much negativity can make people feel helpless and overwhelmed. Try to balance sharing the realities with positive climate news,

stories of activists doing good work, and clear ways to take action. This will keep people engaged and hopeful in the long run.

7. Have you tried to be inclusive? Adopt a lens of intersectionality. When you are creating or resharing content, try to create connections between overlapping social issues, such as racism, sexism, and classism, and climate justice issues so that your online community can see the connections between various systemic issues.

8. Have you thought about how to include your local community and their issues? Think global, but stay local. While sharing stories and news items from across the world allows us to see the similarities and differences between different contexts, it is also important to be firmly rooted in your local context. This is what will set your content apart from other climate advocacy content and allow for online engagement to lead to in-person action. Make use of local languages, amplify local actions, and create content that is sensitive to your local context.

9. Have you considered when creating your content how you can reach people who need more consideration? Always keep how they can access your content in mind. When building online movements, it is important to try to make the movements as accessible as possible. This means avoiding overly complicated language, adding subtitles when creating videos, and perhaps even writing out descriptions of the images you share for people who may not be able to visually experience the images.

10. Have you reached out to interact and engage with like-minded changemakers? At the end of the day, social media is about community. Take the time to engage with the content of like-minded organisations, activists, and creators. Amplify the voices and posts of those people too. Interact with the people who resonate with the things you are sharing. As much as possible, reply to comments and direct messages.

11. Have fun and be yourself! Our most meaningful contributions to the movement for change will be ones that are firmly rooted in each of our unique skill sets, circles of influence, and ideas that spark joy. Perhaps you'll choose to use music, art, writing, speaking, or poetry as your chosen medium to share your message. Regardless of what mediums you choose, make sure that they reflect who you are – that is what will set your content apart.

12. Don't forget that social media activism is not the be-all and end-all. For one, we know that the digital divide is real and many people cannot access online tools for engagement. We also need to ensure that social media users are engaged and participating in real changes, online and offline. While the online world often feels all-consuming, try not to see social media as a site for activism. Rather, social media is a place to educate and communicate for offline action.

TOGETHER, WE CAN UNLEASH THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO BUILD A MORE INCLUSIVE, ACCESSIBLE, AND INTERSECTIONAL CLIMATE JUSTICE MOVEMENT.

HOW TO WRITE A GOOD OP-ED

By Claire Rousell



An **OP-ED** is an article published on a media platform that is written by a member of the public rather than a journalist. It is called an op-ed because in traditional newspapers, it was usually placed opposite the editorial page. Op-eds are a space for opinion and an opportunity for issues or perspectives that might not make the mainstream news where it would be seen by a wide audience.

Activists, members of civil society organisations, or any member of the public can write an op-ed about the issues that they feel the public needs to know about. They can be written by an individual or a collective. Unlike many other areas of public life, the op-ed is not usually restricted by age and so it is an excellent place for youth activists to have their say.

In an op-ed, the writer draws on their lived experience and subject matter expertise to help the reader connect the dots between events, issues, and the broader social context that may or may not be covered in the news. For example, an op-ed might report on how large amounts of smoke from a factory affect children in your area. In an op-ed, the writer has more control over what is published than if their views were being reported via a journalist. Op-eds can include details that commonly get left out by mainstream news.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD OP-ED?

1. The op-ed is short – around 750 to 800 words.

2. The op-ed has a clearly defined topic

Example: The effect of air pollution on children in a particular area.

3. The op-ed links the topic to a specific theme.

Example: Environmental damage affects young people differently to how it affects adults and this impact is often unseen due to the experiences of adults being more dominant in the media.

4. The op-ed expresses a clear opinion on the topic and advocates for specific actions.

Example: Policy makers should acknowledge the social impact of environmental damage that affects people of various ages in various ways. Policies should be adapted to reflect this awareness and provide children and their caregivers with the support they need. Measures should be put in place to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the policies.

5. The op-ed has a target audience in mind. Choose your tone, angle, and where you want to publish the op-ed according to your chosen audience.

However, bear in mind that the op-ed should be readable by a variety of people, as you will not always be able to control who reads it.

Example: Your target audience is decision makers in municipal, provincial, and national government. By reaching a wider audience, you might gather more support from people directly and indirectly affected by the issue, which could increase the possibility of decision makers paying attention to the issue.

6. **The writing in an op-ed is clear and to the point.** Don't try and cover too many topics in one piece because it may dilute your intended message.
7. **The op-ed is backed up by thorough research** and you have checked your facts – false claims or exaggeration may negatively impact the cause and directly affect communities which may have serious consequences. Don't make accusations against people unless you are 100% certain that they are absolutely true and it is in the public interest that this is known about.

8. **The topic chosen for the op-ed is one you know well and/or relates to your lived experience.** If you are writing about other peoples' experiences, make sure they are fully in support of the op-ed and have read and understood everything that you have written before publishing.

9. **The op-ed is edited carefully.** Ask your collaborators to read your op-ed and to check the following:

- a. Does the op-ed make sense to an audience who may be new to the topic? Acronyms should be spelled out and some terms may need to be explained.
- b. Does the op-ed make a clear case for why this issue needs attention?
- c. Have you checked the grammar and spelling in the op-ed?

10. **The chosen publisher of the op-ed is carefully selected.** Choose carefully where you will publish your op-ed so that your target audience and others who need to read it will see it.

OP-EDS ARE AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO SHARE MORE IN-DEPTH INFORMATION ABOUT A TOPIC WITH A WIDE AUDIENCE.

OP-EDS BUILD KNOWLEDGE OF AND SUPPORT FOR THE CAUSE OR ISSUE YOU WANT TO HIGHLIGHT AND CAN BE PART OF AN EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGN.

OP-EDS STIMULATE PUBLIC DEBATE AND FORM THE BASIS FOR OTHER FORMS OF MOBILISING.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO BE AN EXPERT TO WRITE ONE. JUST FOLLOW THE STEPS REQUIRED TO WRITE A GOOD OP-ED AND YOUR OP-ED WILL EFFECTIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO YOUR WORK.

WHAT IS POLICY AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ENGAGE WITH POLICY TO DRIVE A CLIMATE JUSTICE AGENDA?

By Tyler Booth

WHAT IS POLICY?



A **POLICY** is a document that sets out the intentions, aims, and goals or actions a group wants to commit to, in other words what should be done. In general, policies can set out an agenda on a specific subject. For example, in the context of climate change mitigation there would be a policy regarding a specific CO2 emission reduction target for a country, and it would say specifically who must do it, such as the government, businesses, or individuals.

Legislation refers to laws, such as Acts, Regulations, and By-laws that create the rules and obligations that bring a policy to life. Legislation can tell us how an action should be done and penalties for not doing it. An example of a policy that is also legislation is a country's Constitution, which sets out the actions citizens should and should not do. If they are not followed, there are legal implications that can take the form of fines, or imprisonment.

Schools and universities also have policies in the form of a code of conduct that tells all students how to behave. These are not legally binding in the way that legislation is and therefore breaking these rules is dealt with by the school or university.

Examples of climate change policies:

- Paris Agreement
- Nationally Determined Contribution
- Low Emissions Development Strategy

More general types of policies include:

- Regulations, taxes, levies, subsidies, pollution standards

Examples of climate change-related legislation:

- Greenhouse Gas Reporting Regulations
- Climate Change Bill will become legislation once it becomes the Climate Change Act
- Carbon Tax Act

WHY SHOULD I ENGAGE IN POLICY?

POLICY is the rules of a system. In a democratic setting, the decisions a country makes get written into policy. So, if we engage in policy, we can directly affect decisions. When we don't agree with a policy,

we can write comments and submit them to a decision-maker to ask them to change that policy. As young Africans, it is vital for us to participate in policy because:

- We can only vote after we turn 18 years old.
- We often have very little representation in parliament.
- Decisions are being made for our future, without the voices of young people.
- Ensuring that decision-makers (parliament, government or principals, educators) and civil society are accountable to those policies.
- Engaging with policy will get your concerns onto the decision makers' agenda.

HOW TO ENGAGE WITH POLICY?

Policy language is highly technical, lengthy, and can take a long time to understand. The best place to start is to ask yourself and the policy some general questions:

- What is the subject of this policy?
- At what stage of development is this policy? Is it a Bill, an Act, or an Amendment to a previous Act?
- Are there other pieces of legislation that I need to read to understand this policy more fully?
- Who is the target of this policy, and why? (Even if you are not the target it may still be relevant for you to interact with it)
- How does this policy affect me? My education? My lifestyle? My career? My future?

More specific questions, once you have some understanding:

- What does this policy aim to do?
- Who is the audience?
- Do these actions make sense? Do I agree or disagree with them? Why do I feel this way?
- Are my views captured in this document?
- What should be changed so that what I believe, think, and feel will be captured by this policy?

HOW TO SHARE POLICY COMMENTS?

There are several routes you can take to share your comment. If you wish to provide a direct policy input to the government department, details of online or postal addresses are typically included in a draft policy up for comment, or can be found on the department leading the policy's website. Sometimes you may be able to instead share these comments at a stakeholder consultation in the form of a dialogue with policy makers. Alternatively, you can circulate your comments through social media or traditional news outlets, such as through an opinion piece. You can also make a statement regarding the policy on your organisation website and social pages, and tag the relevant government departments and officials.

ENGAGING WITH POLICY IS A WAY TO VOICE
YOUR CONCERNS, CHANGE, OR ADD TO THE
CLIMATE AGENDA AND POTENTIALLY
CO-CREATE THE DECISIONS FOR YOUR
PRESENT AND FUTURE ENVIRONMENT.

ENGAGING WITH POLICY BOTH REAFFIRMS
AND ENHANCES YOUR POWER AND ENSURES
JUSTICE WITHIN THE DECISION MAKING
OR POLICY PROCESS AND JUSTICE AS AN
OUTCOME OF THE PROCESS.

WHAT IS CLIMATE ACTION AND WHAT ARE VARIOUS TYPES OF ACTIONS WE CAN ENGAGE IN?

By Gabriel Klaasen

When we start to investigate our role in the climate justice movement we begin to question the tools available to us to make meaningful change. One of these tools is climate action. But what is climate action? There are various understandings of this term and different ideas about how to go about implementing climate actions.



One definition is that **CLIMATE ACTION** is a range of activities, mechanisms, policy instruments, and so forth that aim to reduce the severity of climate change. While this is true, the heart of defining climate action is through your own practice and is dependent on the context of your area or community.

Within climate action, we are activists and changemakers. We change people's opinions about what is needed to address climate change and social and environmental justice. We take the reality we are dealing with into account and identify the best action for solving the crisis or injustice. We can then implement the best form of action that we have identified to best satisfy the needs of that reality change.

For example, climate action can be:

MASS MOBILISATION

Organising to mass mobilise is an important climate action but it is only one form. While mass mobilisation may work in one setting, it might not in another. And often mass mobilisation must be paired with other forms of action. Understanding this and beginning to understand the other forms of climate action helps us bring forward a movement that serves the broader needs of climate justice while focussing on our community's needs as well.

COMMUNITY GARDENS AND FOREST MAKING

Community gardening, planting indigenous forests, and growing food forests are central to combat food insecurity, address land degradation, and reduce carbon emissions by creating carbon sinks.



CARBON SINKS are bodies of land and water like oceans, forests, grasslands and wetlands with diverse ecosystems, and healthy plants and soil that absorb and store CO2 from the atmosphere.

ORGANISING WORKSHOPS AND CONSULTATIONS



Workshops can help build understanding within communities. They can take the form of traditionally structured workshops, open-space dialogues, and other creative methods. Holding consultations with your communities on specific topics can help build the authentic voice of community members to be heard in spaces they might not ordinarily have been heard.

ARTIVISM



ARTIVISM uses various forms of art, drama, music, storytelling and more to convey a message and practise activism. Artivism is a form of art that intersects with activism. This type of art is used as a tool for meaningful change and its inclusive nature allows anyone fighting for a cause to take part in it.

SMALL-SCALE ORGANISING

While large mobilisations may be more difficult to put into action, small-scale mobilisations at schools and in communities can be very effective. These mobilisations can bring more awareness about local change and tackle the injustices in our own spaces.

As we explore what climate action is and the best action we can employ as individuals, we also need to realise that there are no one-size-fits all approaches. What works in South Africa, might not work in Kenya, and what works in Kenya might not work in Algeria. Although there are many ways that we can take action as individuals, it is up to governments to create and foster environments that encourage meaningful climate action. In the meantime, identify a tool that you can use to solve some of the problems your community is currently facing and implement it.

ART AND ACTIVISM: HOW TO INCORPORATE CREATIVITY INTO CLIMATE ACTION

By Mosibudi Molokomme

WHAT IS ART'S ROLE IN ACTIVISM?

In activism, artivism has the power to evoke empathy among all types of people because it transcends barriers.



EMPATHY allows us to be in someone else's shoes for a moment and take a look at the world through their lens. Empathy inspires action.

HOW IS THIS RELEVANT TO ACTIVISM IN AFRICA?

Art offers freedom of expression that transcends the emphasis on logic, structure, and rigidity that is everywhere in western society today due to its legacy of colonial, patriarchal, and capitalist ideologies. Injustice, inequality, and oppression are commonplace experiences in Africa. Thus, the creative work produced by African artists has always, to a certain degree, related to social issues.

Musical activist Fela Kuti believed that the social and economic troubles and the imposition of European culture on

Africans were due to colonialism. Kuti was outspoken and so he wrote songs in a mixture of English and the Yoruba language to demonstrate his non-conforming artistic expression. He critiqued the western conditioning of Africans and the brutality of the Nigerian government. In songs like 'Teacher don't teach me nonsense' and 'Sorrow, Tears and Blood', Kuti used his artistic talent in music as a tool against the oppression of the Nigerian government and colonial powers. The timelessness in his creations allows them to still be relevant to social issues today. His songs inspire the next generation of artists to continue his legacy.

Musical performer Miriam Makeba also used her art as activism. She dedicated her adult life towards defying the apartheid government in South Africa. Her music was a tool for awareness, using the international stage to share her experiences from her home country through her illustrious melodies and taking every opportunity to speak out about the unjust apartheid regime. Makeba's legacy of storytelling through her art incited action and engagement from international audiences against the apartheid government that ruled South Africa until the mid-1990s.

Contemporary activist Aida Muneleh is an award-winning photographer from Ethiopia, an arid country faced with water scarcity exacerbated by the effects of climate change. She released a series of twelve

artworks that focus on water scarcity issues and the burden that water scarcity places on women because they are forced to travel far distances to collect water.

One of Ghana's artists is El Anatsui, who collects used bottle caps and scrap metal to create sculptures that represent reuse, materiality, and the environment. His installations speak on societal themes relating to excessive consumption, waste, and its environmental impact.

Numerous artists across the continent are committed to creative work that addresses social issues.

As an **ARTIVIST**, the art you create reflects your activism. Creativity is just another conduit that allows us to utilise the skills we are most adept at to organise community

engagement for a common cause. Activism is different from regular activism. Art's ability to rise above barriers, as mentioned before, generates a common understanding through empathy.

If you doubt your creativity, know that there are a variety of disciplines you can get into, such as performative protests, poetry, poster making, music, writing, visual art, and theatre, among others. It is important to remember that the focus is to cultivate awareness about a social issue. For example, climate justice asks people to see that the impact of climate change impact is not felt equally by everyone in the world. This message can be translated into art by simply tapping into one (or all) of your creative interests. By doing so, any creative endeavour has the potential to inspire climate action and reaction.



HOW TO START AN ECO CLUB

By Yola Mgogwana

My name is Yola Mgogwana, I am 14 years old and the name of my eco club is Green Environment. I started my club two years ago, inspired by my advocacy and longing for more green spaces in Khayelitsha in South Africa. I work with children between the ages of 9 and 11. Let me walk you through how to start an eco club.

FIRST! WHAT IS AN ECO CLUB?



An **ECO CLUB** is a space in which you can empower a group of children or youth to participate and take up meaningful environmental activities and projects. You can reach out to your community and engage children, neighbours, and local schools to raise awareness and promote sound environmental behaviour.

KNOW YOUR WHY?

I decided to start my club due to a lack of knowledge on climate change and other environmental issues that are affecting our community and daily lives. I wanted to bring change to my people by focusing on children and creating a fun space where they can learn about the environment and increase their knowledge about climate change.

IDENTIFY A CAUSE AND START SMALL

It's always good to identify a project, such as planting a garden or focus on a cause, for example, increasing awareness of waste or marine protection. Knowing my cause was to increase awareness helped me focus my activities and projects. Also, I started with only ten children, so I am able to give them individual attention, but I am also learning how to work with groups.

GET SORTED

You need a place to meet your group. Make sure it's a comfortable space with as little disruption as possible. You can ask a local school if there is a space you can use, or meet in a local park or in a community centre. I meet my group in my yard. It's not a fancy space but it's safe and big enough to accommodate my group. We have created our own seating benches with eco bricks. (I'll let you know about that idea later on.) Also, choose a day and time so that your sessions will take place regularly.

FIND YOUR TRIBE

You do not have to start your club alone. I am lucky to have friends who support my cause. They help me plan activities, collect resources, and facilitate sessions. On days when I feel sick or can't make the session, I can rely on them to hold space.

RECRUIT MEMBERS

Don't assume that all children or youth will be part of your club. Make posters to announce and promote your club, including explaining your why! Maybe you can do a presentation at your school or local library, after which interested people can sign up.

CLUB MEETINGS

Now it's time for fun! In your first session, take time for team building for the group to get to know each other. Play name and trust-building games.

DEVELOP YOUR ECO CODE



What is an eco code? The **ECO CODE** is your eco club's mission statement. It should demonstrate your group's commitment to improving its environmental performance in a positive, clear, and imaginative way. The eco code can be anything you want it to be – a song, statement, poem, rap, acronym, or something even more creative.

ACTIVITIES

Educate your club on local environmental issues and create fun activities to do this.

- In my eco club, one of our focuses is waste management because it is an issue the children see every day. We do fun activities such as going around our community, picking up litter and making eco bricks. While making the eco bricks, we talk about the impact of waste on our sewerage systems because our drains are permanently blocked. We link the sewerage system blockages to marine awareness. We then turn the eco bricks into benches we use to sit on during our sessions.
- We also started a vegetable and herb garden that helped during the Covid-19 lockdown because the club members could feed their families from the harvest.

BRING IN FUN

Start your session with songs or games. Also, challenge your members to devise campaigns involving your wider community members and families.

- Once a school term, we do a big community clean-up and invite our families.
- During the school holidays, we volunteer in our local community garden by helping the mama in the garden.
- In September, we plant trees in our local park.

CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS

So far, my highlight is seeing the dedication of the children in my community and their families, helping build our community in little steps. These little steps make a good impact on our lives and the environment. Another highlight is seeing the children who are willing to save our Earth and fight against pollution.

- Invite the local newspaper to write an article about your club.
- Ask a local radio station to give you airwave time to talk about your club.
- If you are over 16 years, you can start an Instagram and a Facebook page to spread your work and celebrate your achievement.

CHALLENGES TO LOOK OUT FOR

- Noticing a drop in attendance: Some members might drop out as time goes on. It's okay, and don't let that stop you.
- Lack of resources: You might not have all the resources you need for some projects. Ask local shops and families to help support your cause. Also, look for a more significant environmental organisation that can assist you with resources and information.

MORE TIPS

To those who are not brave enough to start big clubs, remember you can start by talking to your family and friends. Encourage them to start by making small changes, such as not littering, not wasting water, and following the 3Rs – reduce, reuse, recycle. Ask them to tell their friends and family. But remember not to preach the gospel but be the gospel – you need to be an example. By doing all these small things, you are contributing to making change and doing the right thing for our mother Earth and for future generations.



WHAT DOES A CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTIVIST LOOK LIKE?

By Nastaha Tshuma

The following article was written by the 2021 African Climate Alliance ambassador Nastaha Tshuma. The article is about her experience applying for and going through the ambassador programme. As you read it, replace the term 'African Climate Alliance ambassador' with 'climate justice activist' in your head.

We hope that if you have any doubt that you could be an activist, this article will change your mind. Also, the article will shine a light on the fact that there isn't only one way to be an activist.



WHAT DOES AN AFRICAN CLIMATE ALLIANCE AMBASSADOR LOOK LIKE?

I would not have been able to tell you a year ago.

The application process for me was one filled with doubt and uncertainty.

"I'm not potential ambassador material", I would think to myself.

I would think of the likes of Greta Thunberg and Ayakha Melithafa.

And I would write myself off.

Submit.

I submitted the application form with even more uncertainty than I had in the beginning.

"Will it take too much of my time?" "I have to lead my own action? I could never."

The thoughts and the questions were endless.

"Congratulations!"

I was selected! But, the same doubt and uncertainty stole the joy of the moment.

"What does an African Climate Alliance ambassador look like?"

Today I can tell you that an African Climate Alliance ambassador looks like you and me.

A young person with a vision of a sustainable future for all.

I could have mentioned bold, confident, loud, and well informed on everything related to climate change and climate justice – but that's not who I am.

But we often only associate climate activism with these attributes.

Young and inspirational people from Malawi, Cameroon, and South Africa gathered to learn, share, and grow.

All from different backgrounds with different experiences of climate change, and with the same passion and vision for our communities and the world.

The ambassador programme shed light on several aspects of advocacy –

The silent yet striking = the world of op-eds and art pieces.

The open and enlightening = the world of environmental education.

The loud and bold = the world of climate actions and public speaking.

The end of the programme has come, but our work as ambassadors has just begun.

The world needs everyone, including you and me (who often doubt ourselves) to stand up for what we believe in, in a way that we are best able to do so and in a way in which everyone can hear our message and story.

HOW TO BUILD A SUCCESSFUL MOVEMENT

By Courtney Morgan

In a world that is heating up, with profit-driven expansion wreaking havoc on communities and the environment, a strong movement is a necessity. Although there are lessons to be learned from past movements such as civil rights, anti-colonial, and social movements, the climate justice movement cannot function in the same way and cannot employ the same tactics. The climate justice movement is tackling a growing, evolving, and violently destructive opponent: the ever-changing and worsening climate crisis. Thus, the movement that is required to overcome it needs to be equally dynamic and evolving if it is to address all the complexities of the climate crisis. There are a number of interventions that activists and communities can work toward which would contribute to a strong and successful climate justice movement, and they are outlined below.

CONSCIOUSNESS BUILDING



One of the most significant strategies that we can employ in the movement is to build consciousness. It is imperative that people are educated about climate change, climate science, and the alternatives that exist. Instead of talking about the science in isolation, it is important to link this climate science to real-life events and struggles that are tangible to people. This makes climate science less abstract and demonstrates how climate change is affecting people, conveying the urgency and the need to act. Having the knowledge will enable people to join the movement and be informed, empowered, and encouraged to participate.

GRASSROOTS ENGAGEMENT



It is imperative that the climate justice movement begins at the grassroots and is led by those who are most affected by the impact of the climate crisis. Organisations and activists must centre vulnerable communities in a very real and tangible way, as it is impossible for the movement to be truly successful without communities. One key practice in this regard is to support communities consistently and always call for communication and engagement. Ensuring consistent solidarity is key. One tactic is to hold regular meetings and consultations with communities. Along with engagement, the production of knowledge and the building of movements must be done collaboratively, based on alternatives and strategies that are led and conceptualised from within the most affected communities.

BREAKING BARRIERS



Part of building the climate justice movement is to break barriers within and beyond our space. Activists have to make an effort to be inclusive, going beyond gender, race, and class-based categories. Part of breaking barriers is about making the movement a space that is open and breaks down the existing hierarchies that perpetuate inequalities. Part of building an anti-hierarchical space is for activists to recognise their potential to dominate spaces and to actively share the space with others, particularly those most affected by the impact of climate change. We need to learn how to pass the mic. We also need to break down barriers between ourselves and other movements, particularly the labour movement. The dynamics around worker communities make the worker communities an important component of the discussion: Their relationship to corporations, their seeming to benefit from extractive industries while simultaneously being at the coalface, and their being most severely exposed to toxic environments.

We must also recognise that everybody has a role in the movement – somebody has to do the research, make the posters, write the articles, and hold the microphone. Not everybody has to be a loud voice making speeches at protests. It's about emphasising equality through all our practices, actions, and interactions with each other – this cannot be tokenistic and must be a deep and intentional form of unity and solidarity.

BUILDING ALLIANCES



Once barriers are broken, we must make sure to build alliances strategically and in good faith. There is a need for alliances to go beyond environmental justice groups. The alliances must bring in feminist groups, the youth and unions, all under a joint campaign, without diluting the message of any of the movements. This practice must be done at multiple scales, with both international networks and local groups. A key alliance must be built with scientists, particularly climate scientists. The power of an alliance between climate scientists and climate activists is that such an alliance gives the movement science-based evidence, which helps build legitimacy. It must be noted that this does not replace context-specific lived experiences by community members but rather amplifies and supports their experiences.

It must be noted that while building alliances, there are ways to engage with powerful actors within the oppressive systems that we are challenging in a way that doesn't necessarily lead to formal or long-lasting alliances. This can apply to government bodies, for example who are not always seen as our allies, but do need to be strategically engaged with to create long-lasting change.

EXPANDING THE MOVEMENT THROUGH SOLIDARITY AND BUILDING INTERNAL STRENGTH

Our priority as activists in the climate justice movement is for the movement to grow. The movement has to be constructed in a way that allows the activists to grow as people. If we recognise that people can grow and evolve, then we also recognise that the movements made up of these people also have the potential to shift and evolve where needed. This is powerful because it would change the experience of activism and make the movement space more accepting and forgiving, and relieve anxieties around rigid and unforgiving spaces that do not allow for mistakes. Another strategic or tactical practice is prioritising respect and equality while building solidarity, not for the sake of likeability but rather to build our strength and unity in the movement. By calling for respect from those in the movement, we avoid the various ways that disrespect manifests. Prioritising respect and equality means accepting ideas or suggestions without judgment of how they are articulated and with what accent or language they are delivered. Respect also means that qualifications and backgrounds

do not determine how much value you are given in the movement, but rather there is an acceptance of different types and forms of knowledge, including Indigenous people's knowledge. At the very core of the movement, democracy must be a fundamental tenet of how organisations and movements function.

Throughout history, it has been social movements, peoples' unity, and collective power that have brought down inhumane regimes and unfair systems. But never before have we had to fight a ticking time bomb. The climate crisis is ever changing and threatening our very existence. The climate crisis presents an existential crisis to the human race, with the most vulnerable in our society being exposed to the most severe climate impact while simultaneously struggling with structural inequality and poverty, hunger and lack of access to basic services.

THE MOVEMENT THAT WILL DEFEAT THE CLIMATE CRISIS MUST USE PRINCIPLES OF PEOPLES' UNITY AND COLLECTIVE POWER. THE MOVEMENT MUST ALSO GO BEYOND THIS AND BUILD CONSCIOUSNESS, CENTRE COMMUNITIES MOST AFFECTED, BREAK BARRIERS, BUILD NECESSARY ALLIANCES, AND BUILD SOLIDARITY AND INTERNAL STRENGTH.



WHY WE MUST ORGANISE

By Irfaan Mangera

Creating large-scale social and systemic change requires many people to work together. Consistent and co-ordinated organising ensures that large groups of people are effectively brought together in processes that fundamentally shift the way society re/constructs and envisions its future. The starting point for effective organising is developing an alternative vision for what that future looks like. A vision that encapsulates the desired society we wish to live in, underpinned by a set of foundational values. For many activists, these values include equality, freedom, democracy, and justice, among others.

Once the vision is clear, we can then prepare and design a pathway to achieve that vision. Often this is not done by large groups of people but by small, disciplined and effective organisers who are able to guide and lead people towards a particular objective. In doing so, these organised groups are able to cultivate a plan of action that mobilises communities through popular campaigning on issues that directly affect them. This could be anything from a polluted water source to high rates of gender-based violence.

The art of effective organising is in the ability to connect these issues to a broader problem and understand its root causes. For example, the struggle for independence from colonialism in most African countries from the 1960s to 1990s is an example of organising that brought about significant social change. However, despite great strides, there is still work to be done to address the underlying issues. In many

countries, people are still living with the long-term impact of this exploitative system that continues to extract resources from Africa without directly benefiting the majority of people who live here. By looking at the root causes of the issues, it becomes clear that inequality and poverty are not merely products of current government policy failures but the legacy of oppression and resource extraction. Through this process, we can understand important connections between colonialism and the climate catastrophe we are currently facing.

Below are guidelines and ideas for activists aiming to create impactful change through organising and mobilising:

- 1. Understand and promote your principles.** As an activist, your principles are your fundamental truths and should serve as a constant guide when making decisions. Any activist must first be driven by love – love for people and the planet. It is through love that we develop a commitment to serving the needs of the people first. Other principles of effective organisers include simplicity, honesty, service, humility, care, courage, foresight, patience, tolerance, equality, and justice.
- 2. In order to strengthen your capacity as an organiser, make sure you incorporate practices that support your objectives.** Encourage participation and involve as many people as possible in decision making and developing campaigns. People have varying skills,

resources, and ideas. Enabling others to bring their abilities to the campaign will enhance any programme of action that you embark on.

- 3. Make sure your campaigns and programmes earn the trust and support of the people you wish to mobilise.** Communities have different challenges and issues. Your task is not to solve those issues alone but to work with the community in addressing the challenges and issues. This means making sure you respect differences of opinion and understand the community members' varied lived experiences.
- 4. Be honest and clear** about the risks and challenges involved in any task.

TEAMS

The strength of good organisation is your team. Working in teams ensures a movement is not individualised but that there is a shared sense of ownership. Once you've brought people together and identified the issue you wish to mobilise people behind, ensure that there are clear roles and responsibilities that are defined based on people's strengths. Some characteristics of good teams include:



STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Your strategy and tactics are crucial for your success, but be careful not to confuse the two.



A **STRATEGY** is an overarching plan that involves understanding power and relationships that currently exist in society. A strategy outlines your objectives, vision for change, and the pathway to get there. It incorporates short, medium, and long-term goals. A good strategy includes lists of demands (what), target audiences (who), current and available resources (what we have and what we need), and potential supporters and tactics (actions).

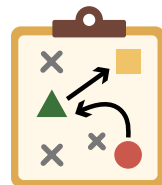
To help you think about this, you could follow this process:

1. **Identify the change you want to see.** Then understand how you will achieve the change and who would be responsible for tasks that will get you there.
2. **Research to better grasp who are the people you need to influence.** Acquaint yourself with the cultures, traditions, and beliefs of that community so that you don't offend any members.
3. **Research which policies or laws are in place** and what resources are available to make sure you achieve your objectives.

4. **Develop a list of supporters and strengthen relationships** with people who can help you. It is important to extend your solidarity and support to other causes and movements that share your vision and want to achieve the same or similar objectives. This support could take various forms, such as supporting other social justice movements' protests, online campaigns, or even attending some of their meetings.

5. **Identify risks and challenges.** You will set yourself up for failure if you do not adequately prepare for risks and train your team to manage difficult situations. As best as possible, understand the dynamics and restraints in the communities you aim to work with.

6. **Ensure you have timelines** in place so that you can keep track of the progress you are making. In order to stop the climate crisis from worsening, we must ensure our timelines reflect the urgency required to get things done. However, some tasks may need a medium to long-term approach.



TACTICS are a set of actions taken to meet your demands or to achieve a particular goal. They must demonstrate your strength and power while also providing space to advance your strategy. For example, the most commonly used demonstration of power is the depiction of mass-based support. This is why movements and political formations

often use mass rallies to showcase their support and draw more people into the movement. Your tactics should not dictate your strategy and each will come with varying success. Sometimes the success of the tactic is difficult to measure and may only become clear in the long run. Each tactic is adopted based on the approach you take to further your cause. It is important to understand the limitations and risks involved. Make sure you research the laws and legislation beforehand so you can select the appropriate tactic and, where necessary, get the appropriate permissions to carry out the task without hassle.

Various tactics work for various purposes. An organiser must decide on the best tactic to use at any given time. These could be formalised statements (speeches, petitions), communication/social campaigns (slogans, leaflets, radio, social media, guerrilla theatre), group representations (mock awards, picketing), symbolic actions (displaying flags, banners, prayers), honouring the dead/living (funerals or awards), public engagements

(rallies, marches, or protest meetings), and physical interventions (sit-ins or non-violent occupations). There have been new methods of mobilisation and organisation that have gained broad-based appeal and support. Social media and other technological tools have changed the landscape of organising and have prompted us to think differently about how to bring people together in support of a particular cause.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Remember, to organise is to build power. To mobilise is to show the strength of that organised power. Often in difficult periods, one can succumb to hopelessness, but all it takes is one moment that can ignite great change. The great pan-Africanist poet Umarudin 'Don' Mattera would often say,

"ON YOUR MARKS, GET SET, BUT BEFORE YOU GO, MAKE SURE YOU LOOK BACK AND TAKE SOMEONE WITH YOU".



REFLECTIONS



HAS YOUR VIEW OF WHO CAN
BE AN ACTIVIST AND WHAT
IT MEANS TO BE AN ACTIVIST
CHANGED? IF SO, HOW?

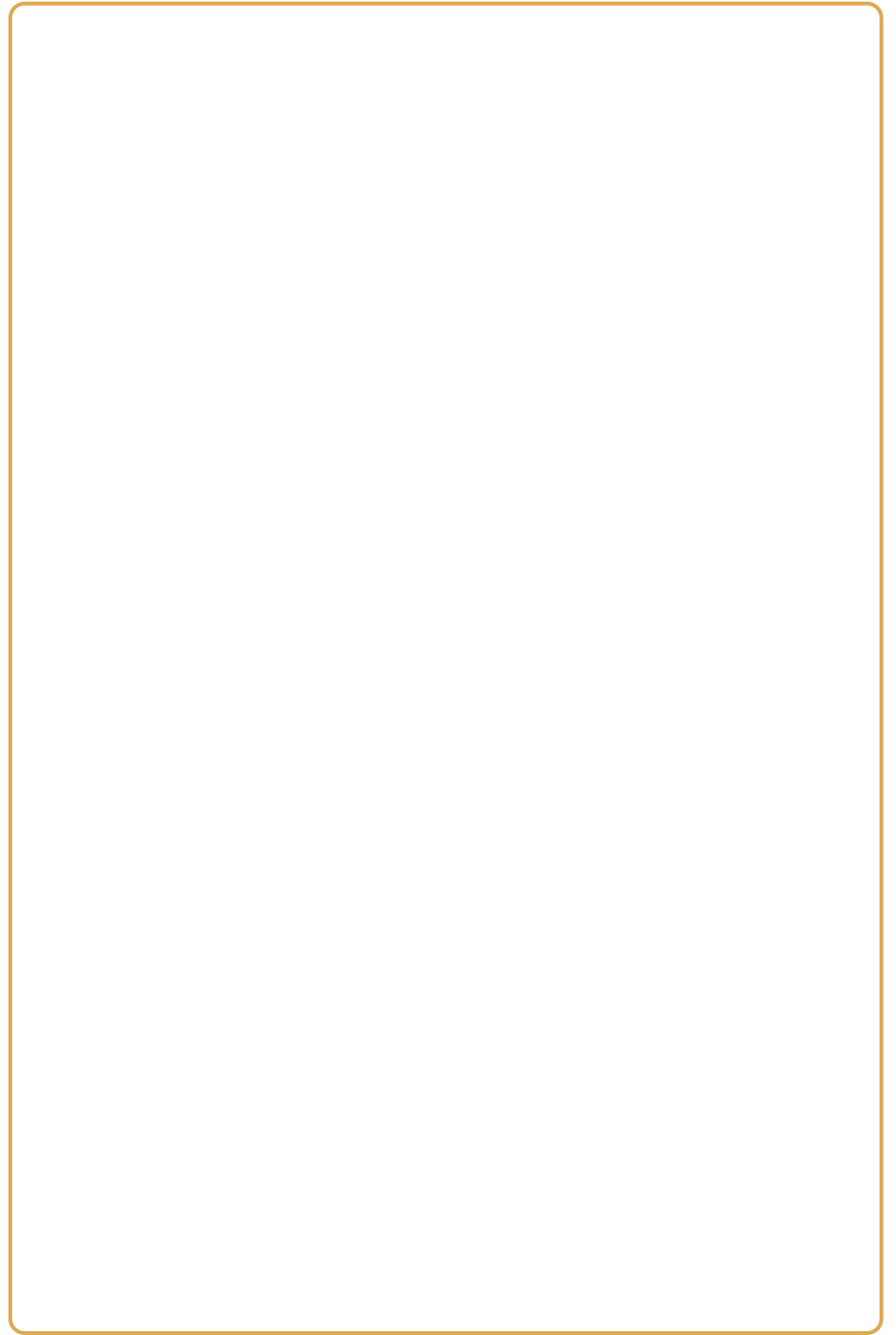
WHAT ARE THE HOPES,
FEARS, CHALLENGES, AND
OPPORTUNITIES THAT YOU
SEE IN YOUR PATH WHEN IT
COMES TO ORGANISING YOUR
OWN ACTIONS? HOW CAN YOU
ADDRESS OR HARNESS THEM?

WHAT ARE WAYS YOU CAN
USE ART, MUSIC, DANCE,
AND CREATIVITY IN YOUR
ACTIVISM?

REFLECT ON YOUR OWN COMMUNITY,
ORGANISATION, OR CONTEXT. WHAT
COULD SUCCESSFUL CLIMATE ACTIONS
LOOK LIKE FOR YOU? WRITE OUT SOME
POINTS ABOUT WHAT THE ACTIONS
WOULD BE LIKE AND HOW YOU COULD
ACHIEVE THE ACTIONS? WHO COULD YOU
WORK WITH TO ACHIEVE THE ACTIONS?

NOTES

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin orange border, intended for taking notes. The box is positioned on the right side of the page, below the 'NOTES' header. It occupies most of the right half of the page.



GOING DEEPER

We've covered some of the most important high-level concepts and ideas when it comes to climate justice.

Now we take a few notable concepts considered important and circulating in the movement, and we have gone a bit deeper. We chose the following concepts:

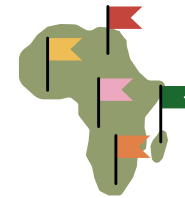
- Decolonisation
- Mitigation versus adaptation
- Loss and damage



WHAT IS DECOLONISATION AND HOW DOES IT APPLY TO THE CLIMATE MOVEMENT?

By Mitchell Mufaro Mhaka

In order to understand decolonisation, we must first understand colonisation.



COLONISATION is the invasion of a place by a group of people or nation for the sole purpose of exploiting the resources of the land and its people. Between the 17th and 20th centuries, Africa was colonised and exploited for its resources by European powers. This invasion of Africa saw the continent and its people being displaced through the slave trade and other forms of injustice that forced people to live under oppression. The process of colonising Africa saw Indigenous people portrayed as “barbarian” or “uneducated”. This was bolstered by the use of scientific racism that was used as an attempt to justify the conquests. Indigenous people were forced to conform to western standards of being, from the language, way of dressing, and even cuisine.

There is no doubt that the effects of colonialism are still felt today. One case in point is South Africa. Having abolished apartheid and achieved democracy in 1994, in 2022, South Africa is still deemed the most unequal society in the world. Despite improvements worldwide, Black and Brown

people are still confronted by oppression in the forms of institutionalised racism, sexism, racialised capitalism, and other legacies of imperialism.

While colonisation is understood by different schools of thought in very different ways, when we start talking about decolonising, we are aiming to undo the impact of this gruesome imperial system. For some,



DECOLONISATION refers simply to the end of colonial rule, for others it is about the return of stolen land, and for others it is a process that affects every part of society, requiring rethinking how things are done in education, health, agriculture, and language, among other things.

With all this in mind, we arrive at the fact that the climate justice movement itself must be decolonised! This could mean centring African experiences, solutions, and the realities of other nations in the global south or most affected people and areas (MAPA), acknowledging the fact that Indigenous communities everywhere have practised and promoted sustainable ways of living and interacting with the environment.

Mainstream climate activism has often been an exclusionary movement, one that did not reflect the realities of those most impacted by the effects of climate change. Even when climate activism tried to centre these people, the result was quite often tokenistic and white washed. Without centring justice for Black, Brown, and Indigenous people, climate action and activism can fall into the trap of being a modern-day equivalent of colonialism or neo-colonialism that centres western technological fixes and continues to allow Black and Brown bodies to be expendable in comparison to their white counterparts. The climate action movement has often pushed the ideals of white scholars, environmentalists, activists, and other practitioners as viable options while not fully incorporating (or merely extracting) knowledge from Indigenous peoples.

In Indigenous communities, nature has always been understood as an extension of self rather than an external and disconnected environment. This means that Indigenous people care for the environment with the understanding that we have a finite amount of resources and recognise that the resources at our disposal are to be shared in community. The disconnect from this concept of community that we see today is one example of the impact that colonialism had and continues to have.

For the climate justice movement to be truly just, it must be decolonised. Decolonisation can mean distancing ourselves and our ideals from the harmful ideas that have emerged from colonialism and capitalism and (re)establishing trust in our ability to care for the environment and continue to be the earth's stewards. Decolonising can look like Black and Brown people being at the centre and having ownership of the movement. Decolonising ensures that diversity and inclusion are not just terms thrown about and are instead a true investment made in making sure that decision making is informed by as many voices and experiences as are relevant. Decolonising means decisions taken to preserve and protect our environment and climate are taken with equity and true habitability in mind.

Using decolonisation as a framework to reimagine our world can offer a starting point to enable us to continuously and consciously embody and practice decoloniality. It can empower us to be intentional about our existence, disrupt colonial ideals of power, and force us to investigate the relationships we have to power and the disconnection we have suffered from our natural world. Decolonisation can grant us a good footing that allows us to tackle the systems and crises meaningfully and effectively that continue to oppress and spell disaster for our future and for the future of the planet.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CLIMATE MITIGATION AND CLIMATE ADAPTATION, AND HOW CAN WE AIM TO ACHIEVE BOTH?

By Koaile Monaheng

Climate mitigation and climate adaptation are two primary strategies that have been agreed upon by various institutions as the main approaches to dealing with climate change at both local and global levels.



MITIGATION refers to the stabilisation and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as a priority to prevent dangerous environmental global warming caused by human activities. For example, technological advances and strong policies that make vehicles more energy efficient means they use less fuel and produce fewer carbon emissions.



CLIMATE ADAPTATION was introduced in later years to describe the strategies, policies and actions put in place to adjust to climatic changes and their negative impacts. An

example includes improving stormwater infrastructure in urban areas to cope with extreme rainfall that causes flooding, such as drainage, permeable pavements, canals, parks, and wetlands. The main difference between mitigation and adaptation is in their objectives. While mitigation is intended to stop climate change from getting worse by reducing emissions at the source, adaptation is an acknowledgement that climate change is already happening and there needs to be an adjustment to the negative effects.

Attempts to manage global climate change occur through different kinds of institutions and processes, including global governance procedures, the combination of informal and formal ideas, values, rules, norms, policies, and organisations. These help all actors to identify, understand, and address global problems. The actors include states, intergovernmental organisations, civil society and non-governmental organisations, transnational corporations, communities, and individuals.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the umbrella body responsible for managing and implementing what has been decided at various conventions associated with climate change. It was formed in 1994 to discuss global climate governance, based on the understanding that climatic changes

in the atmosphere that caused faster global warming were caused by humans through the greenhouse effect.

The UNFCCC identified two key strategies for managing the global response to climate change – mitigation and adaptation. These two approaches have been a source of tension in the UNFCCC negotiations due to the uneven distribution of climate change impact, risks, and responsibilities. Many countries in the global south are more vulnerable to climate change risks and impact than the rest of the globe and call for urgent mitigation responses from the global north. While developed nations find it easier to mitigate climatic changes in the atmosphere because of the political, technological, and economic power they hold, ultimately, both approaches are needed and can be integrated together instead of being thought of as separate solutions. Mitigation would best be seen as complementary to adaptation for limiting the severity of those climatic changes within the system. For instance, investing in renewable energy, like solar and wind, instead of fossil fuels to reduce emissions leads to an overall improvement in the quality of life through cleaner air and water. At the same time, even with ambitious mitigation actions proposed through the **NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDCS)** as part of the **PARIS AGREEMENT**, the world will continue going through climatic changes, albeit less severe, and humans and the natural system would still need to adapt to these changes. We can contribute by protecting our oceans from pollution, planting trees, and pivoting from fossil fuels towards cleaner renewable energy, effectively restoring the ecosystems as a natural carbon sink where trees, wetlands, grasslands, and oceans absorb greenhouse gasses from the atmosphere and lock it away.

Mitigation and adaptation are two important instruments to fight climate change and can be integrated. However, it is crucial to note that climate risks and effects are unevenly distributed globally. They are experienced differently across the world, and to address climate change, require various responses specific to the contexts.

DEFINITIONS



NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDCS) are commitments countries make to domestic mitigation measures allowing countries to take on individual responsibility and ownership of the climate crisis.



THE PARIS AGREEMENT is a legally binding international treaty on climate change. It was adopted by 196 parties at the Conference of Parties (COP) 21 in Paris in 2015. The core objective is limiting global warming “to below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels”.

WHAT IS “LOSS AND DAMAGE”, AND WHY SHOULD IT BE INCLUDED IN CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTIVISM?

By Pato Kelesitse

As the results of the climate crisis become clearer with each passing day, the demands for climate justice become louder as its need becomes more apparent. The destruction caused by climate change worsens inequalities between the global north and the global south. One mechanism that is being developed to address this is loss and damage (L&D).



LOSS AND DAMAGE refer to the destruction caused by climate change that has not or cannot be avoided by mitigation and adaptation measures. If adopted to its full potential, loss and damage could provide a means for compensation to be paid by big greenhouse gas emitters to those who have experienced loss and damage due to climate change. These will often be countries and communities in the global south that have caused significantly less damage and yet are the most affected by climate change. Many countries in the global south contend that loss and damage should be addressed separately from adaptation measures as an acknowledgement of historical emissions that have led to the climate crisis. Large emitters have been delaying the formal

adoption of this mechanism by insisting that loss and damage be accounted for under adaptation provisions so as to avoid accepting liability. A separate facility would address the loss and damage suffered by the developing countries, which are most vulnerable to the intensifying effects of the climate crisis.

Although the call for loss and damage has been gaining momentum recently, it has been around for a while. It was first introduced in 1991 by the Alliance of Small Island States that proposed an insurance mechanism for countries vulnerable to rising sea levels. The call for loss and damage then made an appearance again in 2007 at the Bali Climate Change Conference and was formalised in 2013 through the establishment of the Warsaw International Mechanism on loss and damage. Since 2013, at-risk nations, including many in Africa, have been putting increasing pressure on global north countries to establish loss and damage as a mechanism for meaningful support and compensation.

The loss and damage mechanism is also central to the work of youth climate activists because, while we appreciate the funding and support available for adaptation, albeit inadequate, there needs to be an accommodation for existing inequalities. An accommodation must also be made for how communities will recover once they have lost everything in an extreme weather event or after watching their homes swallowed

by the rising sea. Loss and damage should be structured in a manner that is flexible enough to be responsive to the abruptness of extreme weather events and the depth of historical damage to communities. This will potentially allow for people to have homes again, infrastructure to be rebuilt and livelihoods restored when they fall victim to a crisis they had little part in creating.

ALTHOUGH THIS IS A CONTESTED TOPIC AT PRESENT, WE URGENTLY NEED AN AFRICAN CONFERENCE OF PARTIES THAT ADDRESSES THE LOSS AND THE DAMAGE AFRICA HAS SUFFERED DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE! WE NEED CLIMATE JUSTICE FOR AFRICA!



A FINAL NOTE FROM THE AFRICAN CLIMATE ALLIANCE TEAM

Lau Tzu said, "If you want to awaken all of humanity, then awaken all of yourself. If you want to eliminate the suffering in the world, then eliminate all that is dark and negative in yourself. Truly, the greatest gift you have to give is that of your own self-transformation."

In order to eliminate what is dark or negative in ourselves can also be to nurture these parts of ourselves so that we do not shy away from injustice and our anger at the state of the world. Thich Nhat Hanh said that we should hold onto our anger to use it for compost in our gardens.

But we cannot plant gardens and we cannot organise actions, make art, or do anything for the greater good unless we make sure that we are taking care of ourselves first and foremost. That means rest and that means self-care. We need rest to be fully functional and to be meaningful contributors in the fight for change.

This calls us to start viewing rest as a very important part of the movement. We need to care for ourselves in ways that do not necessarily have to cost any money. Joi Lewis describes radical self-care as "the intentional practice of attending to our mind, body, and soul in ways that oppose the forces of oppression that want us sick".

WHAT DOES FEELING GOOD LOOK LIKE FOR YOU? HOW CAN YOU BRING JOY INTO YOUR LIFE AND ACTIVISM? HOW CAN YOU PRIORITISE REST AND FUN, WHILE STILL ACTING TO MAKE YOUR HOME A BETTER PLACE FOR ALL?

WE INVITE YOU TO CONSIDER HOW YOU PRIORITISE YOUR OWN WELL-BEING AT EVERY STEP OF YOUR ACTIVISM JOURNEY.

In love and solidarity,

African Climate Alliance team

REFLECTIONS



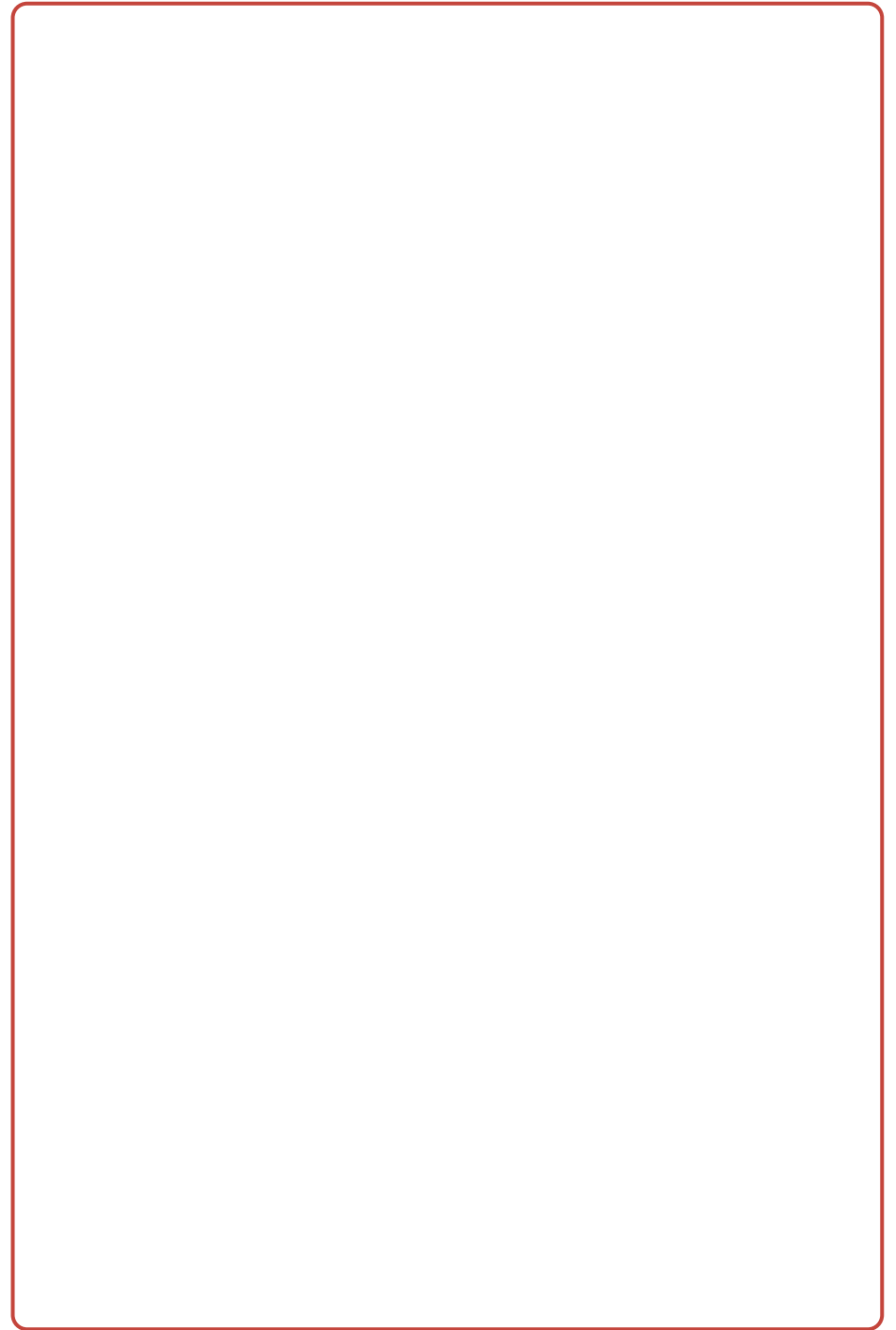
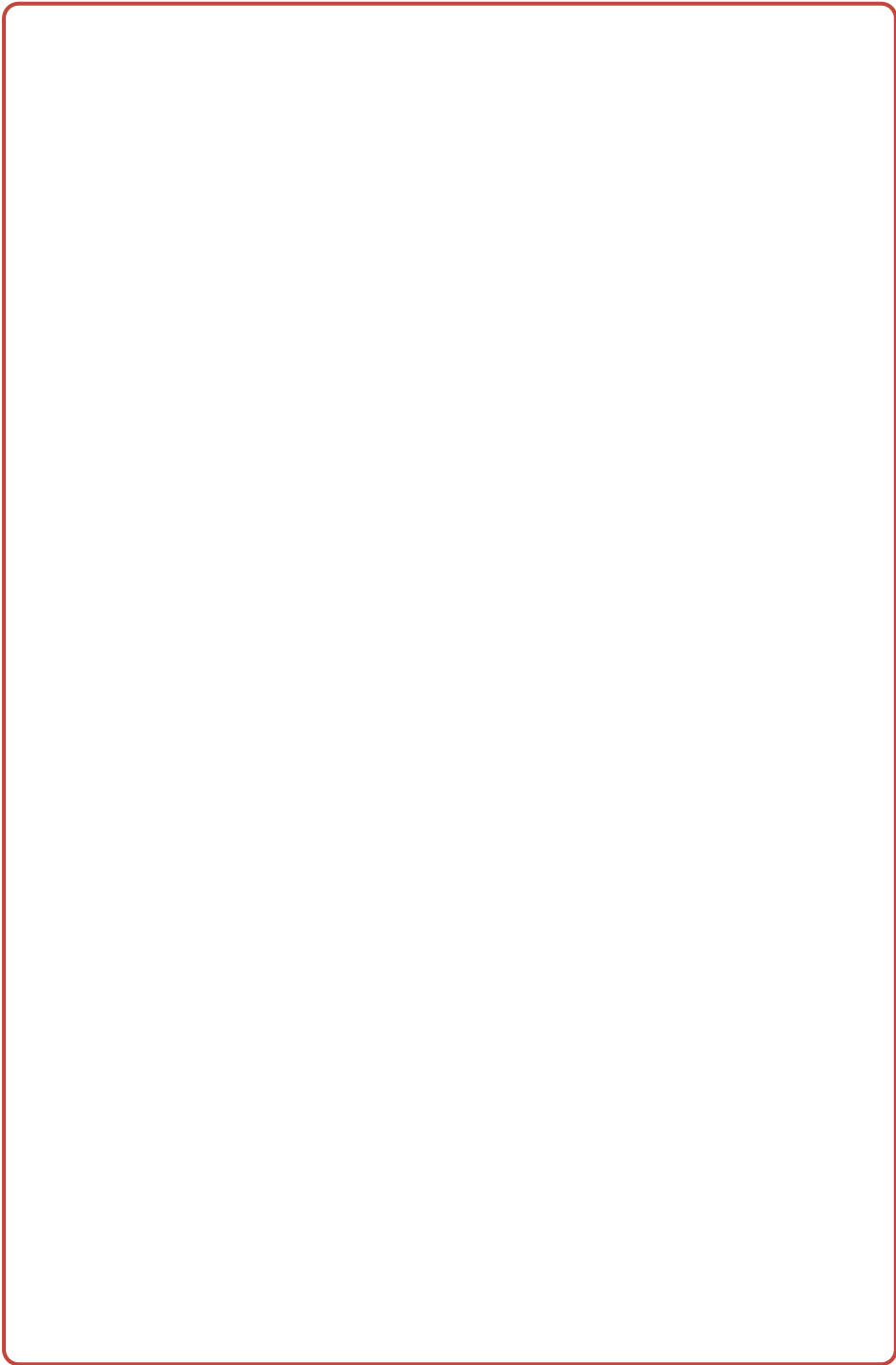
WHAT ARE KEY LEARNINGS
YOU HAVE TAKEN IN GOING
DEEPER INTO SOME OF
THESE TOPICS?

WRITE OUT A LIST OF WAYS
YOU CAN BRING JOY TO YOUR
LIFE AND ACTIVISM AND
WAYS YOU CAN COMMIT TO
PRIORITISING REST AND
SELF-CARE. WHAT DOES
THAT LOOK LIKE FOR YOU?

WHAT DOES A
DECOLONIAL CLIMATE
JUSTICE PRACTICE LOOK
LIKE TO YOU? HOW CAN
YOU APPLY THIS IN YOUR
OWN WORK?

NOTES

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin red border, intended for the user to write their notes.



CASE STUDIES OF YOUTH CLIMATE ACTIVISM IN AFRICA

THE AFRICAN CLIMATE ALLIANCE

17-year-old **RUBY SAMPSON** had travelled around Africa with her family in a big green carbon-neutral truck before returning to do her final year at Wynberg Girls High in Cape Town, South Africa. When the first international climate strike date was announced, Sampson asked her mom **SAM PEARCE** to help her heed the call.

Simultaneously, 27-year-old **SARAH ROBYN FARRELL** and community activist **CHANTAL DETTE** had met during their search for the right movement to channel their activism. They too had agreed to organise a protest in Cape Town for the global strike. Through the powers of social media, the group connected with one another and agreed to work together to organise Cape Town's first-ever major climate protest.

Within only three weeks, Sampson led mobilisation across schools in Cape Town, while Farrell and Dette led on logistics, general mobilisation, public relations (PR), and transport (to ensure equal access to students on the outskirts of Cape Town), with Pearce organising media and guiding the team from the big green carbon-neutral truck in Malawi. The protest saw more than 2000 mostly young people in front of parliament. The protest included a diverse and powerful line-up of speakers, including environmental educator **XOLI FUYANI** and her mentee 11-year-old **YOLA MGOGWANA**, who had also engaged with the group in the media leading up to the protest.

After the first protest, the core team of the fledgling African Climate Alliance continued to organise with the help of the interschool Youth Climate Council, as well as a supporting group and steering committee consisting of civil society, parents, and concerned older youth and adults.



The Youth Climate Council wanted to promote intersectional climate justice, while engaging an Afrocentric version of the global youth movement. They hoped this mobilisation could lead to youth-led climate alliances across Africa. The aspirational name African Climate Alliance (ACA) was chosen and the group formalised.

More youth leaders emerged from African Climate Alliance, such as matric student **AYAKHA MELITHAFA**. When the African Climate Alliance was approached to include a young South African in an international lawsuit defending the rights of the child against polluting countries, Melithafa showed interest in taking on this massive task. This assisted in springboarding Melithafa as a prominent South African climate activist who has since attended the World Economic Forum and now holds a seat on the Presidential Climate Change Coordinating Commission.

The second and third protests were organised by the core African Climate Alliance team in partnership with a youth and adult steering committee. Each protest drew hundreds of youth and more than 2500 protestors in September. The protests garnered local and international attention and were recognised by the president. Momentum and coalition with civil society partners grew, especially with environmental educator Fuyani and her young mentee eco warriors who joined the growing youth activist network.

Despite this growing momentum, one thing was clear: the European way of climate organising didn't necessarily fit the South African mould. There was a lack of climate literacy among the youth, especially in underserved areas, and the space was dominated by those with financial,

educational, and racial privilege. This meant the most affected youth were not the voices who always felt welcome or were heard well enough.

The core team recognised the need for a more sustainable approach to growing the movement while a more structured backing was called for by the African Climate Alliance youth. They needed freedom to continue their schooling and university lives while having a structured entity to keep the work consistent and receive training and support to lead the movement in their communities.

It was with these understandings that African Climate Alliance began to transform. Fuyani officially joined as a coordinator in 2020 and together with Farrell, focused on transforming the group, making Afrocentric climate literacy and social inclusion a focal point. Despite the disruption of Covid-19, the youth network had regular meetings with Farrell and Fuyani, facilitating youth-led conversations to develop the group's aims and values and working on media pieces and actions within the constraints of lockdown.

This process saw the emergence of youth leader 21-year-old **GABRIEL KLAASEN**. With a natural affinity for leading and connecting with youth of all ages, Klaasen officially became youth coordinator of the African Climate Alliance in July 2020. Despite challenges posed by Covid-19, a 2020 action was organised by the group led by Klaasen. While still aligning with the global climate strike, this action saw elements of education and protest in three communities across greater Cape Town. Their action is a testament to the way the group was starting to live up to its desire to transform.

Towards the end of 2020, the African Climate Alliance was formalised as an organisation with three directors: Fuyani, Farrell, and

Dette. The aim: to build youth leadership and hand over the organisation to a group of younger people who could further sustain a cycle of capacity building for young people in the climate space. With this in mind, Klaasen has since taken over from Dette as the third director. In 2021 another emerging 21-year-old youth leader, **MITCHELLE MUFARO MHAKA** was appointed as the youth education coordinator. With Mhaka and Klaasen contributing further to the ongoing transformation and development of the organisation, the organisational team started to expand.

Since then the organisation received its first year of core funding, enabling the team to focus more fully on the work of the movement-based organisation. It has expanded its programmes into:

- Education
- Advocacy
- Ambassador
- Action
- Adaptation.

Despite being led by a small team, the African Climate Alliance has a network of young people from across Africa, and is slowly growing into its aspirational name. The team continues to organise protest actions, but now leads with education at the heart and foundation of everything they do. They are also the first youth organisation to be involved in a climate-change court case in South African history. They are calling for a stop to the building of new coal infrastructure in the country. Importantly the team doesn't only focus on what those in power can and must do. The team has expanded its reach into actions on the ground that develop climate adaptation through practical solutions that foster food security and other important socio-environmental justice issues.

GREEN GENERATION INITIATIVE

The Green Generation Initiative is a youth-led initiative that was founded in 2016 by **ELIZABETH WATHUTI** with a sole focus on addressing environmental issues through education, tree growing for impact, advocacy, and activism.

Kenyan environmentalist and climate activist Wathuti was the fourth recipient of the Wangari Maathai Scholarship Award. Wathuti decided to focus on a solution to the climate and ecological crisis in her community. She had an opportunity to spend time out in nature with trees, bushes, and clean streams that were flowing close to her homestead during her childhood.



However, she also faced ecological grief witnessing that natural world that she and her friends knew changing before her eyes. She learned the art of turning her reactions and feelings into a hunger to do something about the challenges of deforestation and climate change. This led to the birth of the Green Generation Initiative that initially focused on planting trees in schools and engaging schoolchildren.

The initiative has since expanded its focus to mentoring young children into being climate conscious, establishing food forests in schools, carrying out environmental education with school children, planting trees for birthdays and special occasions, capacity building for communities, and creating awareness of climate change among the general public.

The Green Generation Initiative runs the following programmes:

Tree Growing and Food Forests programme

Through the Tree Growing and Food Forests programme they are championing locally led nature-based solutions, such as growing trees and establishing food forests for food security. Through this programme, they aim to connect people to nature, increasing Kenya's forest cover while still building community resilience and enhancing food security. Key projects for this programme are the 'Adopt a Tree Campaign' and food forests establishment in schools and community gardens.

Open Hearts for Nature programme

The Open Hearts for Nature programme is an opportunity to stand up for climate justice through local organising, capacity building, and amplifying unheard stories from frontline communities impacted by the climate crisis. Through this programme, Green Generation Initiative are telling the true human stories of impact and challenges caused by the climate crisis to communities on the frontline, including Indigenous communities. They aim to support communities directly who are dealing with climate change impact. They are getting people to connect to nature and to love nature through outdoor activations, events, and forums.

Eco Schools programme

Through the Eco Schools programme, Green Generation Initiative are able to nurture and educate young people to love nature and be environmentally conscious while creating eco-learning environments and institutions. This programme aims to change the face of learning institutions by starting up Green Generation Initiative clubs and eco corners. The Green Generation Initiative clubs advocate for environmental education for sustainable development among school-going children. The eco corners are physically designated green structures fenced out within the school compound and have incorporated a green school model and eco projects all in one structure.

Through these activities, the initiative is now creating a generation of environmentally conscious individuals by nurturing young people to love nature through experiential learning and on-the-ground nature-based solutions.

CONTRIBUTORS

GABRIEL KLAASEN is an intersectional justice activist and youth co-ordinator from South Africa who works on capacity building and knowledge development around socio-environmental justice with young individuals across Africa, focusing on action and advocacy. Klaasen works as part of African Climate Alliance and Project 90 by 2030.

IRFAAN MANGERA is a youth activism programme manager from South Africa who works on training activists, organising, and facilitating mass-based community youth mobilisations across a range of social issues, including education, climate change, service delivery, policy, and democracy building. Mangera works as part of the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation.

KOAILE MONAHENG is a climate change and sustainable development researcher from Lesotho who works on corporate climate governance, African political economy, integrated reporting, and environmental and social governance (ESG). Monaheng does this work as part of his master's candidacy at the University of Cape Town (UCT) through the African Climate and Development Initiative (ACDI).

MITCHELLE MUFARO MHAKA is a socio-environmental justice activist and programme coordinator from Zimbabwe and is based in South Africa. Mhaka works on capacity building and knowledge development in socio-environmental justice among young individuals across Africa, with a focus on education and adaptation. Mhaka works as part of the African Climate Alliance.

MOSIBUDI MOLOKOMME is a climate justice activist from South Africa who works on activism and endorsing the Climate Justice Charter at Wits University. Molokomme works as part of the Climate Justice Charter.

NATASHA TSHUMA is a climate activist from South Africa who is an ambassador of the African Climate Alliance.

PATO KELESITSE is a sustainable development practitioner from Botswana who works on climate justice and gender equity issues. Kelesitse works as part of Sustain267.

SARAH ROBYN FARRELL is a climate justice organiser, musician, and writer. She uses her work and art to contribute to the pursuit of a more just and sustainable world. Farrell works as part of the African Climate Alliance.

STELLA HERTANTYO is a social media manager, writer, and editor from South Africa who works on encouraging an approach to socio-environmental justice that is inclusive, intersectional, accessible, and fun. Hertantyo works as part of the African Climate Alliance, Twyg, and Conscious Life & Style.

COURTNEY MORGAN is a climate justice activist and campaigner from South Africa who works on public finance and climate literacy as part of the African Climate Reality Project.

TYLER BOOTH is a climate activist and researcher from South Africa who advocates for meaningful youth and women's participation in climate policies. Booth works as part of the Youth Policy Committee Global Change working group.

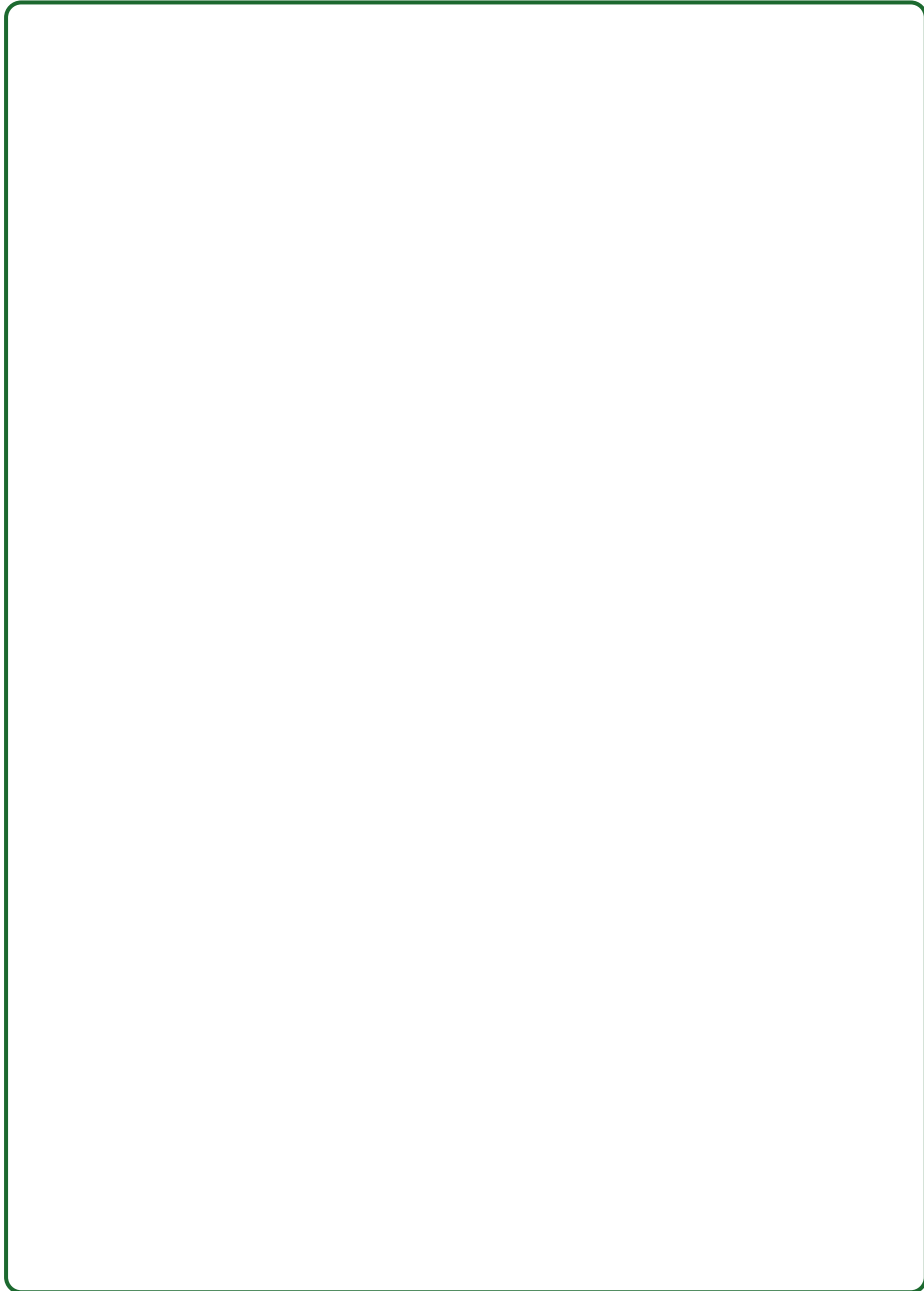
XOLI FUYANI is an environmentalist from South Africa who works on socio-environmental issues, focusing on environmental education and advocacy, and training and mentoring young activists. Fuyani works as part of Black Girls Rising and the African Climate Alliance.

YOLA MGOGWANA is a young climate activist from South Africa who works on raising awareness, creating learning spaces in marginalised communities, and being a voice for change. Mgogwana works with Black Girls Rising and the African Climate Alliance.

CLAIRE ROUSELL is an artist, writer, and researcher from South Africa who works on agroecology and alternative food systems. Rousell works as an independent practitioner with a number of different organisations.



NOTES



JOIN US AS WE ADVOCATE
FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE NOW



AFRICAN CLIMATE ALLIANCE