

How to mobilise young feminists for climate justice!

Workshop Starters guide for young activists

GENDER IDENTITY

GENDER EQUALITY

GLOBAL WARMING

FAIR SOCIETY

NATURAL DISASTERS

CLIMATE CRISIS

EN



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Introduction

Being a young person today is equal parts exciting and confusing. Navigating a global pandemic, the climate crisis, as well as taking time to understand yourself and how you relate to the world around you can be a lot sometimes. Luckily, you are not alone in feeling like this! Many youth from all over the world are coming together to fight for their present and future, and in doing so are not only changing the world but are also better understanding themselves and what they want. This interactive toolkit will help you make sense of some of your political desires and demands, and explain how you can use these feelings to inspire action!

The link between wider global issues and your own personal identity is important, even if it might not be obvious to begin with. Gender identity intersects with other areas of self-identification (racialized group, dis/ability, migrant or refugee status, sexual orientation, religion, class) and this will change how you understand and experience the climate crisis. Fighting against climate change, environmental degradation and natural disasters should be intertwined with a fight for an equitable and fair society.

If this interests you but you do not know where to start, then look no further! This workshop toolkit aims to put you and your experiences at the centre to help you create strategies to influence decision makers on these important issues and gain a better understanding of yourself.

This toolkit is the fourth publication in our series of toolkits, following our [Climate Justice Toolkit for Youth written for the COP26](#), the Climate Summit in Glasgow, the [Climate Justice Toolkit for Youth 2022](#) and our [Activity Kit for the CSW66](#), the Commission on the Status of Women, and gives you tips for engaging in activism around climate justice.

This toolkit takes a different approach and gives activities for self-reflection, self-development, and a workshop program on 'How to mobilize young feminists?', which you will find summarized at the end of this Toolkit.

How you use this toolkit is up to you! You will find some explanatory information on why youth engagement is important, how you can engage, and how to take your type of activism to the streets safely.

Secondly, there are some activities to help you reflect on what role, or activism type suites best for you, safety and security based on privileges in society, your identity, what is important to you and how you relate to the world around you.

Lastly, you will find in addition to this toolkit 'Useful sources' with links to books, podcasts, organizations, and petition platforms. This toolkit comes with a workshop program that is designed to, and can be given by anyone that has basic knowledge in this field.



WECF stands for Women Engage for a Common Future. We are a nonprofit network dedicated to a gender just and healthy planet for all. Our network consists of over 250 women's and civil society organisations implementing projects in 70 countries. We believe that a sustainable future and environment needs holistic solutions reflecting the lives of people on the ground. We believe in feminist solutions based on our partners' visions and needs. That is why we work on transformative gender equality and women's human rights in interconnection with climate justice, sustainable energy & chemicals, less toxic waste, safe water & sanitation for all.

WECF is a non-governmental organisation that is part of civil society. But what does that mean? Non governmental organisation (or NGO) means that we do not work for profit, and that our work is separate from governments. NGOs along with other non profit organisations such as universities, trade unions, faith based organisations, youth organisations make up civil society. Civil society is sometimes called the third sector because it is different from the private (organisations that work for profit) and the public (government funded) sectors. The main issue WECF works on is ecofeminism, which is explained on the next page! Our work includes awareness raising and mobilisation, implementing projects on the ground with our partners, advocating for ecofeminist issues with governments and promoting our ideals at international events such as the CSW (Commission on the Status of Women) and COPs (Conference of the Parties) on biodiversity, climate and hazardous chemicals.

Section One

YOUR ECOFEMINIST KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

This section mentions some key terms and definitions to help you understand more about the link link between environment, climate and gender. At WECF, we base all of our work on Ecofeminist principles. Ecofeminism is also not just about gender, but also other identities such as dis/ability, migrant status, social class, income, racialized group etc. So no matter who you are, you will have important contributions to make to the ecofeminist fight for a better world. Before we begin with some activities, we have an ecofeminist fact box to get you thinking and reflecting on what is important to you and to explain the key terms and definitions.

Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism shows the lived experiences of marginalised groups under climate change; how they bear an unfair burden of this change as well as being powerful in their agency to overcome it. Ecofeminism emphasizes that the existing heteropatriarchal capitalist system is not compatible with women's rights and a sustainable planet.

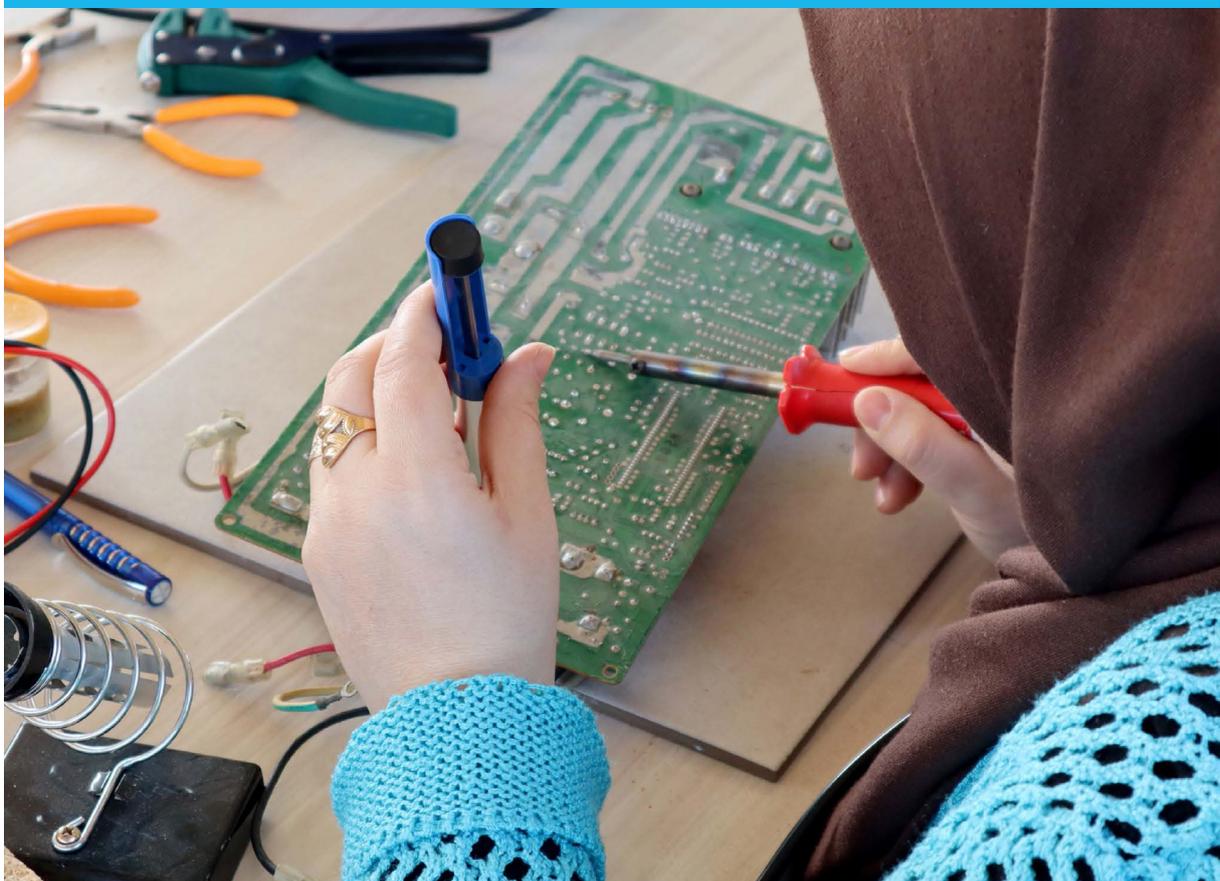
For us, ecofeminism means using an intersectional feminist approach when fighting structural barriers that prevents us from enjoying a healthy environment. Meaning, we take a holistic approach, recognising that we all come with a different baggage of discrimination (or lack thereof) depending on our gender, age, race, ethnicity, sexual identity, education, religion, ability or social class. These barriers, among others, include capitalism, extractivism, militarism, gender-based violence and shrinking space for civil society to influence.

Ecofeminism is a concept that emerged during the second-wave feminist movement of the 1970s. The concept highlights how the patriarchy and colonialism have created binaries in our modern day society e.g., man-woman, white- nonwhite, straight-queer. Ecofeminism has evolved a lot since its inception, largely due to the work of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer Intersex Asexual Plus (LGBTQIA+) and Black, Indigenous (and) People of Colour (BIPoC) activists who utilise an **intersectional** conception of ecofeminism.

Solar Age: empowering refugee women through solar engineering (Gender Just Climate Solutions)

The Solar Age project is implemented by the organisation 'Imece Inisiyatifi' in Turkey. The Solar Engineering Course, a 10-day theoretical and practical training in solar energy has benefitted 200 Syrian women refugees. Some have also been taught how to build Energy for Everyone solar batteries (EFE) which they then sell on the local market. This gives Syrian refugee women agency over their own energy. For refugees, the EFE battery can be a life-saving tools they can use the EFE battery as a flashlight or to power their phones to improve communication. This is ecofeminism in action!

After the devastating earthquake hitting Turkey and Syria, our partner IMECE, is providing as many EFE solar powerbanks as possible in the cities that have been ravished by the 7.7 magnitude earthquake. The solarbanks integrate a flashlight for SOS signals and provide an autonomous source of energy for mobile phones – to facilitate life-saving communication.



Other Important Ecofeminist Definitions

Climate Justice

Climate justice is the idea that climate change needs to be framed as an ethical, political, and social issue. Climate justice is linked to human rights in that it highlights how the burden of climate change does not fall equally on everyone, it impacts under-represented and historically excluded groups/countries in society and demands justice for these groups.

Intersectionality

This term was originally coined by American black activist Kimberlé Crenshaw to explain the dual oppression black women face, and highlight their lived experience at the intersection of racist and sexist structures. Intersectionality has since been expanded on to highlight all dual oppressions that occur at the same time. For example, an older woman from the middle class living in Germany experiences the climate crisis differently than an indigenous young woman living in Brazil. Here, the identities and experiences of gender, age, indigeneity, and location all intersect.

Minority groups

A population subgroup with social, religious, ethnic, racial, or other characteristics that differ from those of the majority of the population. The term is sometimes extended to cover any group that is the subject of oppression and discrimination, whether or not it literally comprises a minority of the population.

BIPOC

BIPOC, which stands for “Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour,” is person-first language. It enables a shift away from terms like “marginalized” and “minority.” These terms might remain factually correct, but they lack a sense of humanity, since there’s no clear indication they refer to people. “BIPOC” emphasizes, more specifically than the term “People of Colour,” the following:

People of Color face varying types of discrimination and prejudice. Systemic racism continues to oppress, invalidate, and deeply affect the lives of Black and Indigenous people in ways other People of Colour may not necessarily experience. Black and Indigenous individuals and communities still bear the impact of slavery and genocide. In other words, the term aims to bring to center stage the specific violence, cultural erasure, and discrimination experienced by Black and Indigenous people. It reinforces the fact that not all People of Colour have the same experience, particularly when it comes to legislation and systemic oppression.

Safe space

The term *safe space* generally means “a place or environment in which a person or category of people can feel confident that they will not be exposed to discrimination,

criticism, harassment or any other emotional or physical harm.” It is a place situation in which you are protected from any harm, danger, or bias.

Equity

The term “equity” refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality: Whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances. The process is ongoing, requiring us to identify and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures.

Equality

Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome.

LGBTQIA+

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual Plus is an umbrella term that encompasses groups living out with the dominant sexual orientation (straight) and gender identity (gender assigned at birth, aka cis gender). Also often referred to as rainbow/queer community.

Ableism

Ableism is the discrimination of and social prejudice against people with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior. At its heart, ableism is rooted in the assumption that disabled people require ‘fixing’ and defines people by their disability. Like racism and sexism, ableism classifies entire groups of people as ‘less than,’ and includes harmful stereotypes, misconceptions, and generalizations of people with disabilities.

Ageism

Discrimination against people based on how old they are.

Environmental Racism

Environmental racism is the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on people of color. Environmental justice is the movement’s response to environmental racism. Environmental racism is a form of systemic racism whereby communities of colour are disproportionately burdened with health hazards through policies and practices that force them to live in proximity to sources of toxic waste such as sewage works, mines, landfills, power stations, major roads and emitters of airborne particulate matter. As a result, these communities suffer greater rates of health problems attendant on hazardous pollutants.

Misinformation

Misinformation is false, or inaccurate information getting the facts wrong. Disinformation is false information which is deliberately intended to mislead intentionally making the misstating facts.

Security

Security is about efforts and measures which protect us from deliberate harm and threats that are outside of our control. When we talk about security, we generally mean the protection of individuals, organisations, and assets against external threats and criminal activities that are likely to cause harm.

Safety

The term safety is used to refer to the condition of being protected from the aspects that are likely to cause harm. In addition, the term safety can be used to refer to the state at which one has the control of the risk causing aspects hence protecting himself or herself against risk that is fully unintended.

Social movement

a social movement may be defined as an organized effort by a large number of people to bring about or impede social, political, economic, or cultural change. Social movements often work *outside the system* by engaging in various kinds of protest, including demonstrations, picket lines, sit-ins, and direct action.

Grassroots movements

Grassroots movements are self-organized local-level efforts to encourage other members of the community to participate in activities, such as fundraising and voter registration drives, in support of a given social, economic, or political cause. Rather than money, the power of grassroots movements comes from their ability to harness the effort of ordinary people whose shared sense of justice and knowledge about a given issue can be used to influence policymakers. In growing the seeds of an idea into a flourishing cause through increased participation in the political process, grassroots movements are often said to create democracy – government by the people. Grassroots organizations increase their size and power by recruiting and training new volunteer leaders and activists.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)

Groups that are not part of political decision making but serve to influence the government in various ways. For instance, WECF is an NGO!

Youth Participation

Youth participation refers to numerous ways of involving young people as an integral part in the process of planning, identifying needs, finding solutions, implementing

programs and decision making within organizations and communities.

Advocacy

The act or process of supporting a cause or proposal. It is the act, or process of advocating.

If you want more definitions, examples, and an overview of climate justice as a youth activist, check out the first toolkit in this series, [Climate Justice Toolkit for Youth](#).

Global North, Global South and Global East

Terms often used are Global North and Global South. This terminology refers to the power imbalance in global politics. The Global North comprises wealthier countries that were typically colonisers, whereas the Global South comprises poorer countries that had their development hindered by colonialism. This is not a strict geographical distinction (for example Australia and New Zealand are in the Global North), but it is preferred to other terms such as developed/developing which suggest a hierarchy of countries. It is useful to understand the Global dynamics as it has important implications for gender and climate. For example, one of the reasons that the Global South countries are less able to handle the climate crisis is because of their exploitation and extraction by the Global North. Additionally, the Global North as colonisers used their colonies to industrialise rapidly, meaning they are more responsible for global warming.

In recent years, the term Global East has been used to explain the dynamics of countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia which were part of the Soviet Union and Soviet influence and before that were already colonised and exploited for centuries by the Russian Empire. This is important as there is a tendency in Global north media and politics to ignore the complexities of the process of decolonialisation of countries in the Global East, and the different historical development people in these countries experienced under Soviet oppression and communism.

In the Global East, issues such as energy and fossil fuels are tied to power politics with the Russian Federation using fossil fuel dependency and propaganda to influence regional politics and destabilise politics world wide, with the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, a sovereign country as the most pressing example.

Section Two

LET'S TAKE ACTION!

Why is youth engagement important?

Different bodies like the UN have recognized that young people are a major human resource for development and key agents for social change, economic growth and technological innovation. It's simple. Youth engagement can and does change lives. This toolkit is designed to give you insight into how to mobilize youth. Youth engagement recognizes young people's right to participate in decisions that impact them and acknowledges the great skills and strengths they bring to the table. It informs young people to become valued stakeholders into creating effective and inclusive policies, programs and environments. Effective youth engagement leads to positive outcomes for young people at three levels:

- The individual level: which means that it can give you increased personal skills, the knowledge to make healthy choices, and a sense of identity.
- The social level: it might lead to stronger positive connections with different organizations, collectives, and a larger support network.
- The system level: leading to greater civic engagement, with policies and programs being responsive to the needs of young people and new creative ways to govern.



How to mobilize youth?

Mediums to use when getting in touch with youth, social media (short video on Instagram, TikTok, Facebook), Art work on a building/online that includes your main message, or go speak at schools there are various ways to catch young people their attention. Social media is always a great idea but often has an overflow of information. What makes your message different and stand out? Make it creative and attractive. An eye-catcher always works, use humour. Once you found your medium you want to communicate through, you need to figure out what to do next and what to take into account.

We just mentioned that youth engagement can changes people's lives. But how does it work? There are some important things to reckon with. We have highlighted here seven ways on how to involve and mobilize youth:

- Be relatable – this is what plants a seed, you feel like you belong and you feel heard
- Explain things for beginners – this triggers interest
- Make sure they receive the right information – it's what gets you started to research on your own and battle misinformation and disinformation
- Setting goals in order to reach your main objective – is what keeps you motivated
- Safety and security – enables you to keep doing your activism
- Take action responsibly now that you gathered all the relevant information
- Regenerate your energy – Is a radical act of self-love which is needed in order to keep advocating for change

Be relatable

People gravitate towards people that “just get it”, this is no different than with youth. We see that with online engagement, and we see that with social movements and the number of citizens gathered on the streets. Being able to relate plants a seed that you can take immediate action too. For example, when speaking to BIPOC communities make sure their community is represented. A person that understands their systemic and societal struggles. The climate movement is predominantly white. But when we look at the faces of various movements, we also notice that these public figures are often white. Diversity is often not present in numbers.

Black lives matter: George Floyd being one of many victims of institutionalized racism and police violence. George Floyd represented the Black community when it came down to police violence and racism in society. BIPOC people organized demonstrations worldwide and showed up in numbers.

Explain your core message

Use beginners' language when you explain your message. Formulate your core message/objective within the first few minutes of speaking. This in beginners' language. Once you got their attention and they show an interest in the topic, whether this is signing up for a workshop, coming to speak to you one on one, or reaching out afterwards the first few minutes are crucial to make the decision to scroll past the video or keep engaging. If you use advanced language people are less likely to engage as they do not know what you are talking about. Avoid complicated numbers, terms, concepts.

Inform + what do you want them to do next?

Once you have your audience together, those that decided to stick around and gather more information, it is your task to get the right information across. What is your narrative formulating your message in such a way that requires an action of your audience? **Giving them resources to do their own research** on topics that interest them (reliable websites, (scientific) articles, organizations, books, podcasts, etc.) can be a very good start. This will battle misinformation and disinformation simultaneously.

Let it be known that **there is no right way to do activism**. Whether it is speaking with various communities, being vocal on social media, signing/creating petitions, running for major, being active in a movement everything contributes to the greater cause. What is important during your activism journey is to set besides the main objectives/goals, set smaller goals as well. Without any wins along the way It will become hard to stay motivated, therefore **setting smaller, and easier to achieve goals** is crucial to gaining **motivation**. Remember that a win is a win.

Safety and Security

In every way you end up advocating for a specific issue **safety and security** remain the most important topics of activism. Without any awareness of privilege differences, prevention methods, or risk analysis participants or you can get in unintended and unwanted situations.

Natural disasters are set to increase with global warming, and yet gender intersects with other factors to mean that they disproportionately impact marginalized groups.

See for example:

- LGBTQIA+ persons are [more likely to experience discrimination and violence](#) in the aftermath of natural disasters.

- During the big freeze in Texas 2021, Black and Hispanic people were [more impacted and likely to lose their lives](#) due to living in poorer insulated homes and having on average less income. This is an example of environmental racism.
- Women and children are [14 times more likely](#) than men to die from natural disasters

Questions we can ask to minimize risks during actions:

- Why is this inequality there?
- What can we do about it? How can we prevent the impacts on marginalized groups?
- What structures can we build during protest to use the privilege certain individuals have for the benefit and protection of the participating marginalized groups?
 - Examples: organized assemblies, one focal point for police negotiations, a human chain with people who are willing to use their privilege in order to protect others (undocumented people, BIPOC people, LGBTQIA+ people, disabled people, etc.)
- Do we have the resources? Do we have a network to help us prevent harm from being done?

Regeneration

There will be times where you are at a loss for energy. This does not mean you failed this means you worked hard and your body tells you to take a break. That break can be found when regenerating and recharging your energy.

This break is a radical act of self-love. Be sure to listen to your body and mental health along the way. There is a lot to fight for and we can't conquer every battle at once. We need to take care of three things; our earth, our own body, and our communities.

Regeneration: is renewal or restoration of a body, bodily part, or biological system (such as a forest) after injury or as a normal process. What is meant by regeneration as practice is the healing, reconnecting to, or discovery of yourself. In order to keep going. See it as a reset button with the additional knowledge already gained.

Now that you have all the relevant information to take action by independent research, attending workshops, the discovery of the way you want to engage in activism it is time to take action!



Section Three:

TYPES OF ACTIVISM

Whenever there's a positive change in society, we can thank activists. They work in every corner of the world on issues like racial injustice, gender discrimination, and the countless intersections of social issues. You can find activists lobbying their governments, calling for corporate accountability, and campaigning for equality. Visions and specific goals vary, but activists want a better world. To be effective, activism combines many strategies. Here are five different types that [Human Rights Careers](#) identifies:

Demonstrations and protests

Demonstrations are arguably the best-known type of [activism](#). During a demonstration or a protest, people united by a common belief gather. They might march along a specific route, sit in at a specific place to draw attention to the cause, or hold a vigil to honor someone's life. Time and place are often important. Many demonstrations take place on the anniversaries of certain events, like the birthday/death of someone important to the movement or the birthday/death of a victim of injustice. Organizers often also pick a location that's meaningful, like outside a capitol to protest a law. The right to peaceful assembly is so important, it's included in the United Declaration of Human Rights. Article 19 and Article 20 protect the right to gather publicly and express, promote, and defend a belief. Together, these rights are often called the [right to protest](#). National constitutions (like the United States) also protect this right. Demonstrations and protests are often complicated by the presence of law enforcement and counter-protesters. Activists should anticipate resistance and work to ensure everyone's safety.

Boycotts

Boycotts are designed to economically impact a "target," like a business that's engaging in exploitative practices. Like with protests, boycotts are most successful when large groups of people participate. The 2009 Fruit of the Loom boycott is a good example. Fruit of the Loom/Russell closed a Honduras factory after workers organized a trade union. Around 1,800 Honduran garment workers lost their jobs. The Workers Rights Consortium and Fair Labour Association found that the company was at least partially motivated to close because workers were organizing a trade union. Students in Canada, the UK, and the USA pressured their universities to boycott Fruit of the Loom. Over 100 universities joined in the largest garment boycott in history. The result? Fruit of the Loom reopened the factory, returned the jobs with union rights, and awarded workers \$2.5 million. To be effective, boycotts need clear goals and [strong leadership](#).

Strikes

When workers deal with unfair or dangerous work conditions, low wages, or other issues, they might refuse to work when negotiations are refused or they fail. Strikes were a feature of the Industrial Revolution as there were few work protections and companies depended on mass labor. Many countries made strikes illegal to deter workers from engaging in them. While strikes are most associated with businesses, they're also used to pressure governments to change certain policies. In 1975, [90% of women in Iceland](#) went on strike to protest the gender pay gap. This included women who worked in offices and stay-at-home moms. Factories, banks, schools, and childcare centers had to close and men were left to pick up the work. The next year, parliament passed a law ensuring equal pay. Five years later, Iceland chose the first democratically elected female president in the world.

Letter-writing and petitions

Letter-writing and petitions are two of the most common forms of activism. They're used to pressure public officials, corporations, and other power-holders. The more letters or signatures on a petition, the more likely it is that people will pay attention. Organizations like Amnesty International understand the [power of letter-writing](#). In the internet age, emails are also a common strategy. They have some benefits, like being useful in urgent situations and when postage is expensive. On the downside, officials sometimes shut



down their emails so emails bounce back. They can't do that with physical letters or faxes. Letters also imply a degree of commitment that emails don't, which makes it harder for power-holders to dismiss people's demands. Petitions also have the downside of being so accessible and easy that they lose some of their power. They are most successful when paired with other actions.

Social media campaigns

Social media activism is a new form of activism taking the world by storm. Also known as "hashtag activism," it brings activism to social media networks like Instagram and Twitter. Users raise awareness of issues, organizations, and actions through posts, graphics, videos, and more. The reach of social media activism became clear in 2020 with the hashtag "Black Lives Matter." According to data from Pew Research, the hashtag was used over 47 million times on Twitter between May 26 and June 7. Despite its popularity, many are skeptical about social media activism. It often stops at simply sharing a post, so there's no real-world action. It becomes performative. However, when paired with other strategies, social media activism is a very effective way to share information and broaden an issue's reach, especially among the young. The first step to activism is engagement, and while many people will stop at sharing posts, others will take what they've learned on social media to the real world.

Exercises

Now that you know various types of activism would like you to answer the following questions.

- What change do you want to see in society?
- How do you want to achieve that objective, through what form of activism? (a combination is allowed)
- Why would you choose for that specific type of activism?
- How does that type of activism relate to you?
- Would you use the chosen type of activism for every action, or would you change it up depending on the strategy and objective? And why would you use the same type of activism, or change it up?



Section Four:

OUR WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

We developed an inspiring [training- and workshop program](#) that not only represent WECF's vision and work as an ecofeminist network, but also offers concrete tools and tips for engaging in activism around climate justice in both national and international environments. Our workshop program is aimed to reach, train and mobilise young ecofeminists. **If you want to organise a workshop yourself or want us to support you in setting up on of these workshops you can always contact us to join our Train the Trainers Programme!**

Workshop One

Understanding concepts + Understanding the past to better understand our future

This workshop will help you reflect on how you relate to the world around you and the link between the past and the present. We will be going into depth on concepts and issues that were present in our past and shaped our present. These will continue to shape our future. The workshop will give you an understanding of what interconnections there are regarding the climate crisis. We will be discussing intersectionality and how that intersectional perspective can help you fight for true equity. Touching up on crucial terms & topics in the fight for climate justice.

Workshop Two

Stay informed and connect! Get in touch with frontline communities, organizations, grassroots movements, advocates!

In the first workshop we bombarded you with information, because in order to understand our present we should better understand our past. With that information you can do research on additional information that interests you. When doing research you will come along misinformation, and/or disinformation. How do we battle this? Following on that topic we will continue today. When you have the information that you needed it is time to figure out what way of activism fits you best. Maybe a social movement is nothing for you, then there are a number of other ways to engage. We will be answering questions like what is the grassroots? How do I figure out how and what I want to advocate for? How can we connect? How do we mobilize and unite? How do you get started as a beginner activist/feminist? That is what we will discover during this workshop.



Workshop Three

Get on ground and mobilize! How to create a safe and secure environment at protests, rallies, and direct actions!

When you have your knowledge, the connections, you know what your role is, and when you decided that a movement is the right way of activism for you, then it is time to act! As an advocate, activist, and/or feminist it is crucial to know how to guarantee a safe and secure environment. This workshop will give you an understanding of what safety and security means and who is more vulnerable when safety and security cannot be guaranteed. We will discuss how to deal with changing environments, as well as how to create the safest possible space even in non-violent direct actions (NVDA).

In every country there are different ways of governing. One country can be largely repressed, and in other countries you are allowed to protest. But it is always crucial to know how you can secure the safest environment. In our third workshop we will cover differences, privileges and how to guide your movement, or individual activists through demonstrations safely.

Section Five:

STARTING YOUR OWN ACTIVISM

Activity 1: Finding fellow activists

Once you have found a cause you want to be active for, you can start to find other people to engage with. More tips on this, as well as existing organizations you might want to join can be found in the [Climate Justice Toolkit for Youth](#).

- Make a list in the bubble of those around you might want to get involved with. This could be total strangers that you engage with online, people you know only vaguely or maybe some close friends who are already keen to get involved in some activism.
- Once you have done this, think about the different steps of engagement. For example, those at the top of the steps are people who would want to create and advocate with you, whereas people at the bottom are maybe just those you have engaged with once or twice. For now, it doesn't matter who you have on the steps or how they participate, just that you understand a bit who you can engage with.
- Once you have filled in the bottom of the steps, you can start to come up with strategies for moving people up them! The closer to the top they are the more engaged they are with your cause.

Activity 2: Linking Issues

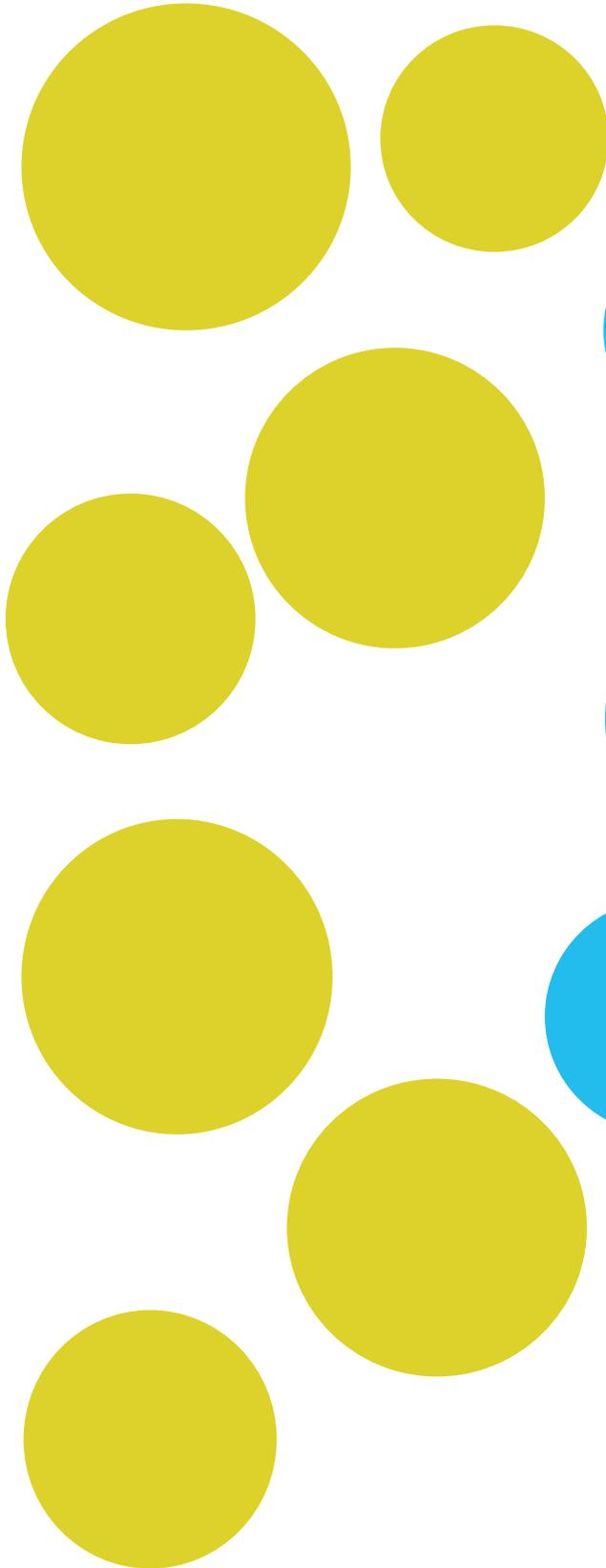
Choose a couple of key facts that matter to you. Write them in the yellow bubbles under 'My key issues'. Look back on the self reflection task and identify some of your strengths and what you think matter to you. Put them in the blue bubbles under 'My experiences' Once you have done this you can start to link them to each other, and get a better idea of your cause! Remember there is no right or wrong answer here. The links can be super global, or they can be things that are very important to you. They can be actions you want to see happen in the next few years (better access to menstrual products) or longer term goals (smashing the patriarchy). There is no right or wrong answer, the point of the exercise is just to get you making some links and thinking about causes.

Activity 3: Influencing Decision Makers

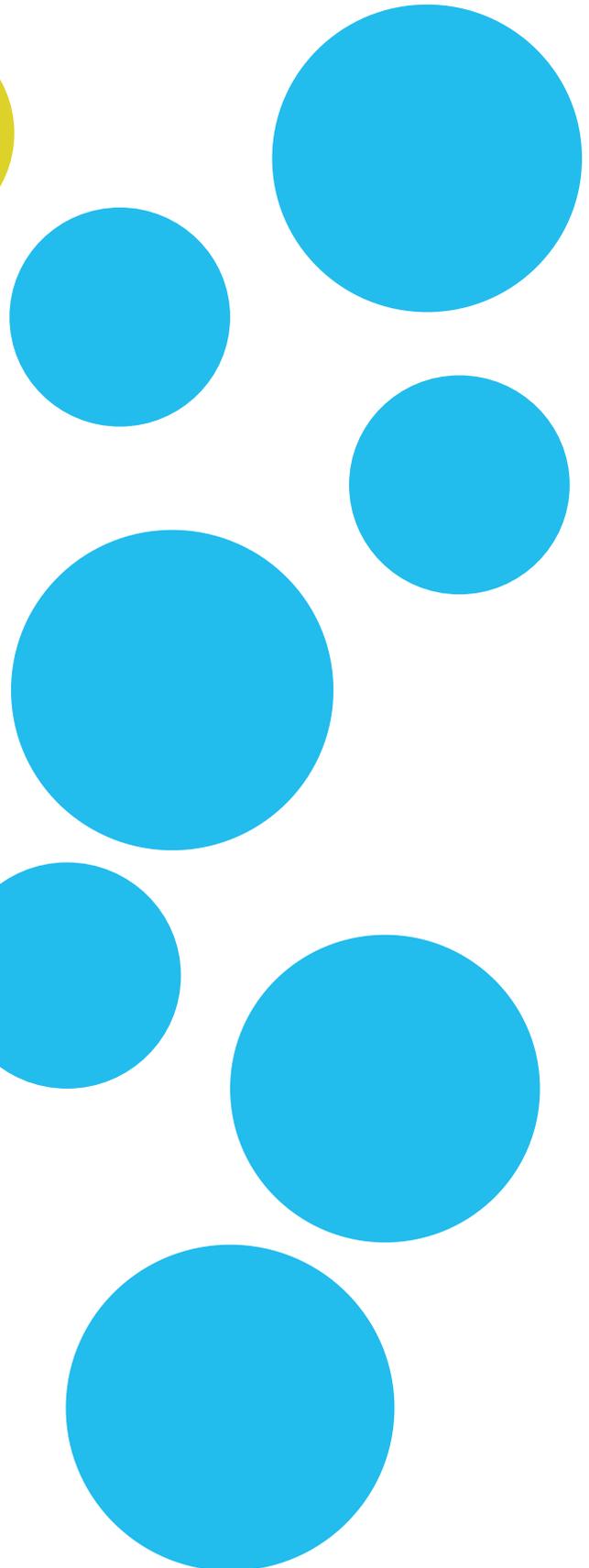
During international processes such as the Climate Summits or the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), negotiations take place between representatives of Member States (governments) , UN bodies, and other stakeholders – such as non-governmental organizations.

To influence the decisions and negotiations, it is important to know who is representing your government. Member-States send in delegations for the negotiations. The

My Key Issues

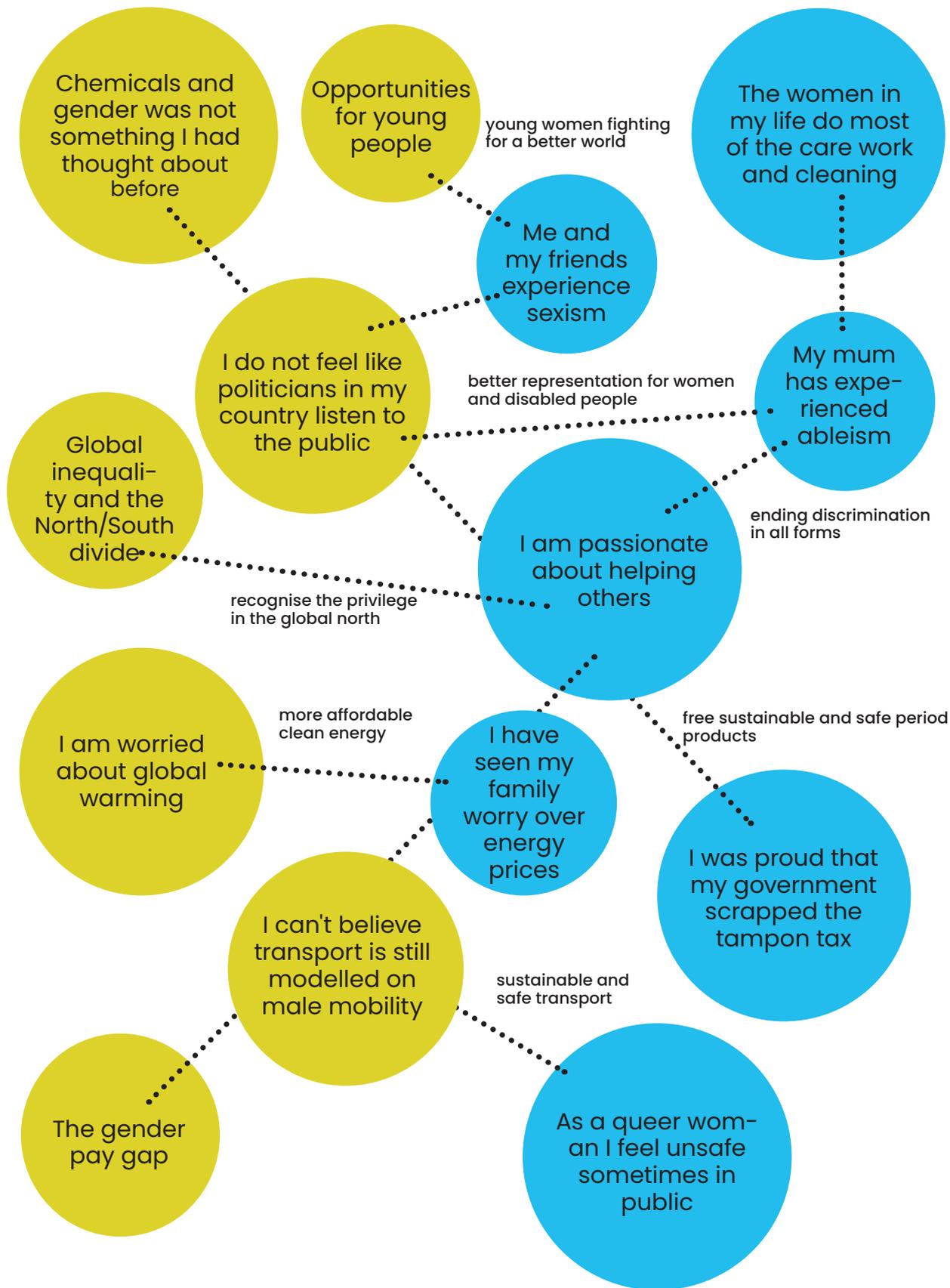


My Experiences



My Key Issues

My Experiences



delegations consist of diplomats based in your home country at (departments of) Ministries of Women's Affairs and often also Foreign Affairs, as well as diplomats working from the country's Permanent Representation in New York. Some Member states, like the Netherlands, also take on board an NGO-representative to their Delegation. In the Netherlands, the Ministry for Education, Culture and Science (OCW) coordinates Dutch priorities, in collaboration with the Gender Task Force of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the CSW for example.

It is also important to be aware of European Union dynamics. EU Member-States negotiate at many international processes, as a bloc. This means they prepare their joint positions and priorities for the negotiations well in advance. Your government representatives in Brussels negotiate at EU-level months prior to the UN summits, to finalize common priorities. Therefore, if you want to influence decision-makers, you have to prepare in time.

What to keep in mind when influencing the process?

- Prepare your own positions in time. If you have your priorities clear in time, it leaves enough time to influence decision-makers.
- Reach out to other NGOs (or NGO networks) in advance of UN summits. By working together with many other NGOs, the messages to the Delegation are stronger and more convincing.
- Arrange meetings with your Delegation before and/or during the negotiations. Often this is coordinated by an NGO network, but you can also reach out to Delegations individually. Make sure you present your priorities and asks to the Delegation clearly.

Some things to consider:

- Ask for a personal meeting to introduce yourself and your demands, and hear the priorities for the negotiations from the government.



- Proposals for language and/or important priorities for the Agreed Conclusions on the thematic focus of the year, with clear argument on the importance
- A proposal for an official side-event with the Delegation

Activity 4: Planning your own event

Most international political gatherings include spaces for participation in the form of events. At many international events there are “official” side events and “unofficial” parallel events. The first are always organised together with a specific government and the second can be purely led by non governmental organisations. You can join in on both, as governments official side events work with civil society (depending on your government). Unofficial parallel events are easier to organise since you can have full control as your organisation! Since Covid-19 has led to more hybrid formats.

The deadline for applying for side events is often months in advance, and so even if you go down this route and do not need to contact delegations etc, you still want to start organising your event in advance to ensure you have a good concept when you submit the application.

In order to begin planning and applying, you will need to create a concept note. A concept note is how you apply for a slot to hold an event – and it should capture why your event is important as well as its key themes. Below is space for writing your concept note, including tips for all the bits to include!

Title

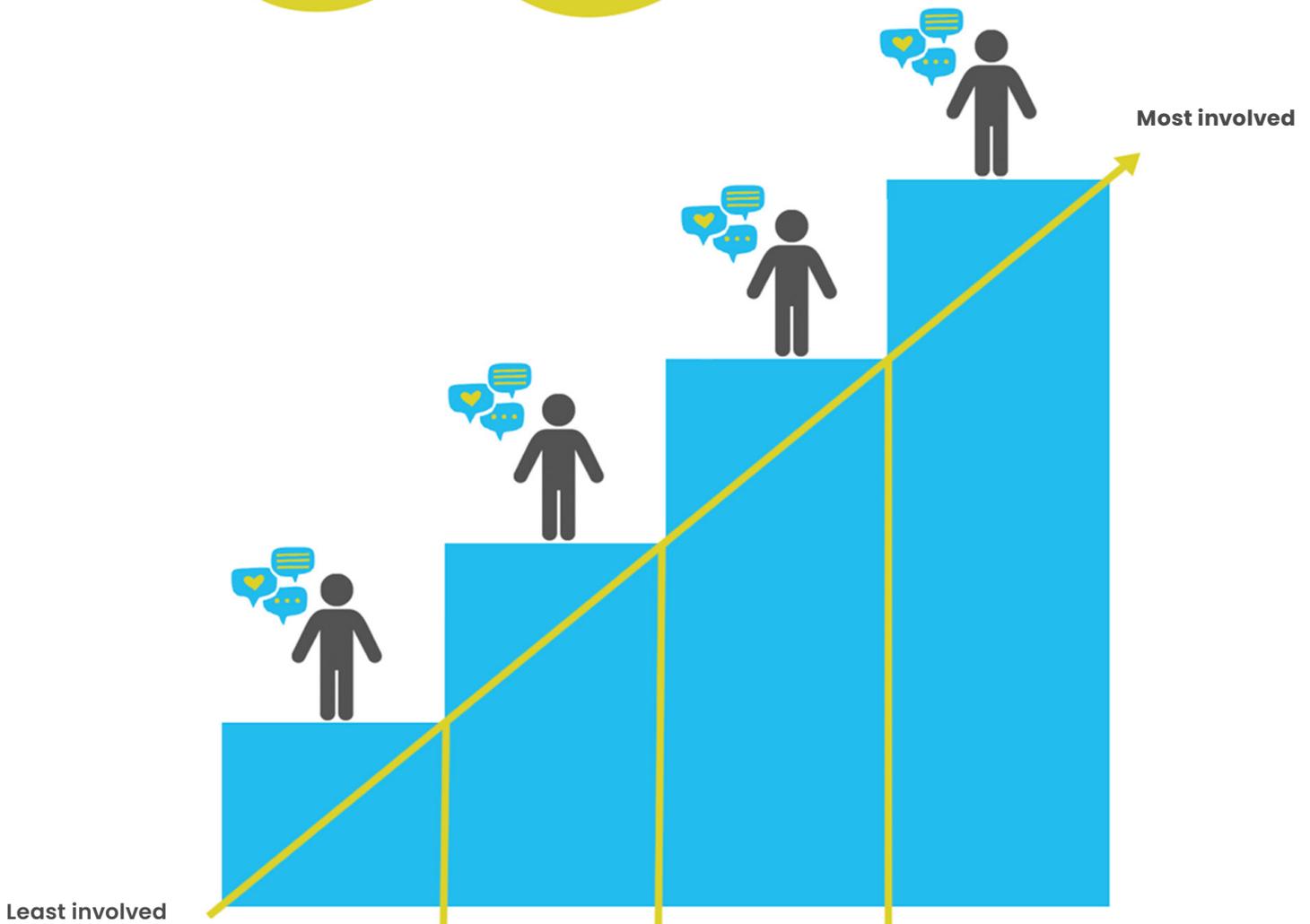
The name of your event should be snappy and convey what it is your event will focus on.

Background

This section should give an overview of

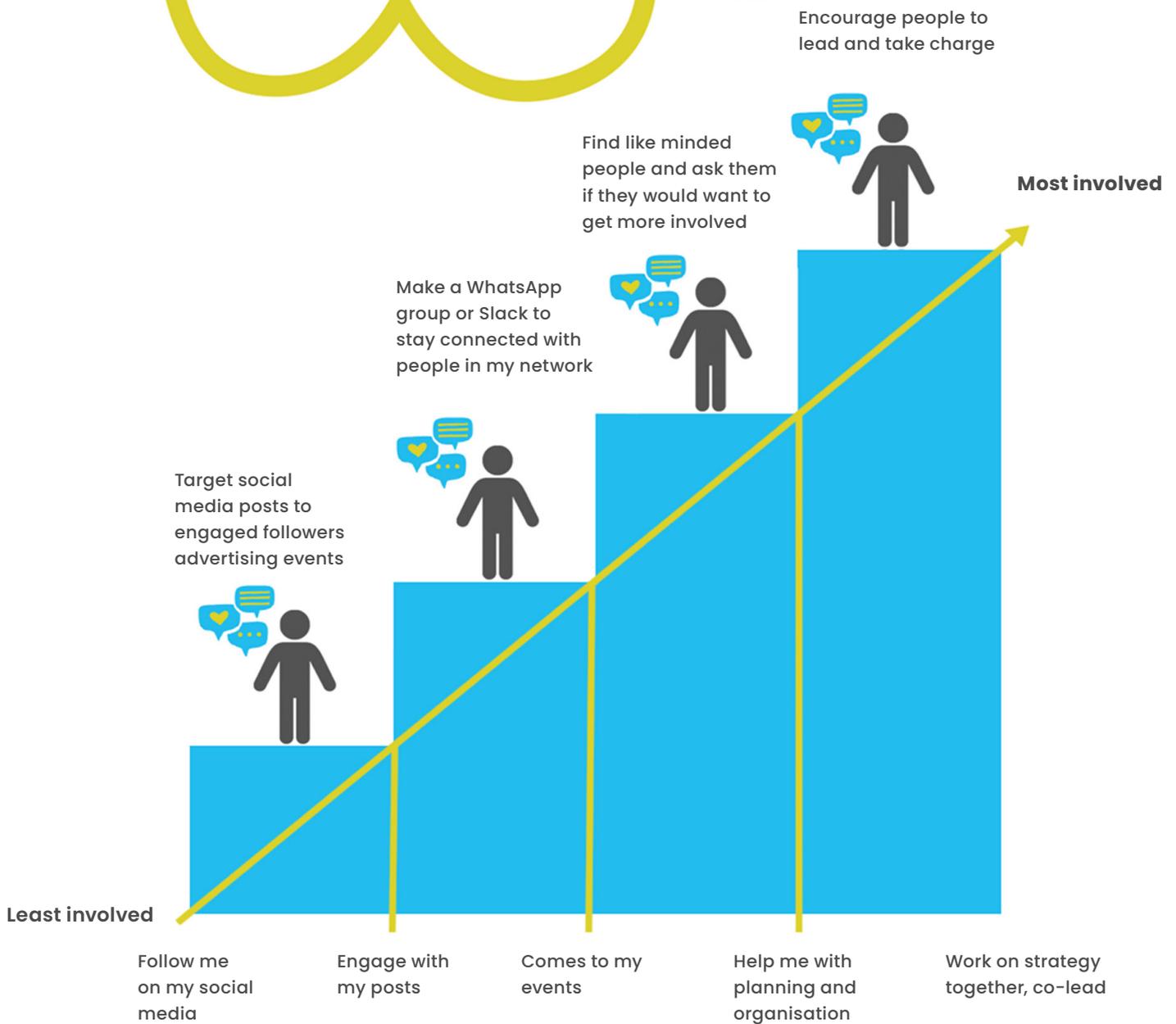
- **Format:** Many events are now in hybrid format (a mix of online or offline). It is important you clarify which it is you will be using. Online is good as it allows for participants all over the world, and it is free! But the atmosphere of in person events is also harder to recreate online.
- **Software:** It is good to have some ways to get the audience engaged, such as PollEverywhere, MiroBoard, Slido or Padlet. Remember your audience is the most important part of an event! Nobody wants to sit in a room and listen to someone else talk for hours.
- **Accessibility:** Simultaneous interpretation, captioning or sign language all improve the accessibility of events. However these services often cost money, if you cannot provide them due to lack of funds it is okay.

People to engage with



People to engage with

- People on my course/at my school
- Colleagues at Work
- Friends who are interested in feminism
- People in my extracurricular social clubs
- My twitter followers



Agenda

It is good to give an overview of the speakers, as well as what they will be talking about, and the time slot they have to speak. Slots for events often run on a strict time schedule, and it is important that you stick to it as much as possible.

- **Moderator:** A moderator helps manage the flow of the event, and ensure that everyone sticks to their timings, as well as introduce the different speakers.
- **Speakers:** If you have some ideas for people to be speakers but they have not confirmed their attendance, you can write (tbc) by their name. Your speakers should represent a diversity of locations and people where possible.

USEFUL SOURCES FOR BEGINNER ACTIVISTS

Now you know the right tools and about the types of activism you can choose from it's time to take some time and read up on what other activists have done in the past and learn from them. You can find some useful resources in these lists:

Books

- "It's Not That Radical" by Mikeala Loach
- "This Changes Everything Capitalism vs. Climate" by Naomi Klein
- "What is intersectionality" by Kimberlé Crenshaw
- "Hood Feminism" by Mikki Kendall
- "Freedom is a constant struggle" by Angela Davis
- "Pleasure Activism" by Adrienne Maree Brown
- "It's Not Just You" by Tori Tsui
- "We Will Not Cancel Us" by Adrienne Maree Brown
- "Beyond the Gender Binary" by Alok Vaid-Menon
- "The Intersectional Environmentalist" by Leah Thomas
- "Rest Is Resistance" by Tricia Hersey
- "Unapologetic: a Black, queer, and feminist mandate for radical movements" by Charlene A. Carruthers
- "Feminism Is For Everybody" by Bell Hooks

Podcasts

- Bad Activist Collective
- The YIKES Podcast: climate justice, activism, liberation and more
- Your Angry Neighborhood Feminist
- Therapy for Black Girls

Petition platform

- [Change.org](https://change.org)
- [Avaaz.org](https://avaaz.org)

Social movements/groups

- Freedom For Alaa
- Environmental Justice movement
- Civil Rights Movement (history)
- Black Liberation Movement
- Gay Rights Movement (history)
- LGBTQIA+ Movement
- Indigenous Peoples Movement
- Immigrant Rights Movement
- Women's Rights Movement
- Modern Slavery + Anti-Human Trafficking Movement
- Black Feminist Movement

Organizations + groups

- Systemic Justice NGO: <https://systemicjustice.ngo/>
- Fridays For Future International: <https://fridaysforfuture.org/>
- Black Lives Matter: <https://blacklivesmatter.com/>
- Greenpeace International: <https://www.greenpeace.org/global/>
- Civil Rights Defenders: <https://crd.org/>
- Amazon Frontlines: <https://amazonfrontlines.org/>
- Earth Uprising: <https://earthuprising.org/>
- Climate Activist Defenders: <https://climateactivistdefenders.org/>
- Women Engage for a Common Future: <https://www.wecf.org/>
- 350.org: <https://350.org/>
- Climate2025: <https://www.climate2025.org/>
- One: <https://www.one.org/de/>
- Intersectional Environmentalist: <https://www.intersectionalenvironmentalist.com/>
- Black Girl Environmentalist: <https://blackgirlenvironmentalist.org/>
- Black Women Radicals: <https://www.blackwomenradicals.com/>
- Oxfam International: <https://www.oxfam.org/en>
- Human Rights Watch: <https://www.hrw.org/>
- Amnesty International: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/>
- Color Of Change: <https://colorofchange.org/>
- NRDC – Natural Resources Defense Council: <https://www.nrdc.org/>
- Frontline Defenders: <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/>
- IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: <https://www.ipcc.ch/>
- Women and Gender Constituency: <https://womensgenderclimate.org/>
- Demand Climate Justice: <https://demandclimatejustice.org/>

PERSONAL REFLECTION

- How did you feel after reading through the toolkit? Were there any examples that stood out to you?
- What examples could you not relate to? Why do you think that is? What advantages do you have?
- What climate change related issue(s) matter the most to you? Why? How will they impact the people around you?
- What aspects of your identity do you struggle with when speaking out for (environmental) justice? How do you think this will impact your future related to the climate crisis?

CONCLUSION

Activism and advocacy should be fun, and we hope you found a particular interest in doing some of the activities in this toolkit. It can be daunting not knowing where to begin, and we hope that we have given you the space where you can reflect and discover on what matters to you and how to get involved.

Youth are so often at the forefront of change, and we hope you feel inspired to make some changes to the world around you no matter how big or small. Advocating for climate justice and smashing the patriarchy go hand in hand, and we must work together to build an intersectional feminist movement for people and planet.

We would love to hear from you and see how your ecofeminist efforts are getting on! Check out our [ecofeminist committee](#), or follow our work on our [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) or [Website](#).





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