



# COMMUNITY ACTION FOR FEMINIST CLIMATE JUSTICE

A TOOLKIT TO DEVELOP CAMPAIGNING  
STRATEGIES FOR FEMINIST CLIMATE JUSTICE

●● feminist communities  
●■ for climate justice

## ABOUT

# FEMINIST COMMUNITIES FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

- **Feminist Communities for Climate Justice** is a campaign for climate justice that reflects feminist and community work values. The project is developing a feminist and community work analysis of climate justice in Ireland in work, groups and communities.
- This campaign is a partnership between the National Women's Council and Community Work Ireland. We seek to amplify the voices of women and marginalised communities that are most impacted by climate breakdown, building momentum in communities to engage, understand and influence climate policies.
- The campaign is funded by the Department of Environment, Climate and Communications. It is funded through strand two of its Community Climate Action Programme, which focuses on building capacity and know-how within communities to develop low carbon communities and further engage in climate action.



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## INTRODUCTION

# WHO AND WHAT IS THIS TOOLKIT FOR?

This toolkit is a living document that can be adapted to suit your group's needs, experiences and knowledge. It is a toolkit offering practical activities and exercises for communities to begin to unpack the climate crisis as a feminist issue and apply a feminist approach to their organising.

The area of feminist climate justice and the work of transforming systems is long and slow because it's about building relationships and challenging power. This toolkit offers a way into this topic and some activities to start building connections for this long-term and deep work.

This toolkit is for facilitators and community workers with a baseline of facilitation skills and grassroots organising experience.

## HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is part of an '**educate/ agitate and organise**' set of two toolkits surrounding climate justice developed by the Feminist Communities for Climate Justice project. This toolkit is the '**ORGANISE**' of the set, which offers practical tools and activities to explore feminist approaches to climate justice.

**The Creating Climate Justice Communities toolkit**, aims to inform practitioners and highlight existing and future injustices related to climate change which will impact those already marginalised in Irish society. The toolkits can be used in tandem or on their own.

This toolkit is inspired by feminist popular education; you can read more about this approach [here](#). It aims to allow complex issues around the climate crisis to be connected to everyday lives and experiences. Key terms are explained throughout, and case studies are used to illustrate points.



# FEMINIST CLIMATE JUSTICE

Climate justice is the concept that the climate crisis is created by unequal systems (economic, social, political), and those that contribute least to the crisis are affected the most. Feminist climate justice asks us to pay particular attention to how the dimensions of climate justice affect individuals and communities according to their gender and the intersectionality of their lived experience and identity.

BY WOMAN WE MEAN ANYONE WHO IDENTIFIES AS A WOMAN, NOT SOLELY THOSE ASSIGNED FEMALE AT BIRTH.

The climate crisis is about more than carbon in the air, it impacts all aspects of daily life in material ways, from air pollution to energy poverty, housing, transport, food and our ability to live healthy and happy lives.

We know that women and marginalised communities are first and worst impacted by climate change.

See the *Creating Climate Justice Communities* toolkit for more information and concrete examples of how this plays out in Ireland.

It's important to note this is because of systems of oppression, not because women or any other marginalised group are biologically weaker. Systems disadvantage these groups through structural inequalities, brought about through laws, policies and cultural norms. These groups are more likely to live in poverty, are paid less, and are doing the care work that puts them in closer contact with the environment.

For example, if a fracking drill or mine poisons the water it is often women who notice first due to the care-work they do in the home. Or the fact that 77% of the Traveller community in Ireland face energy poverty, an inequality the climate crisis will worsen.

PATRIARCHY IS A SOCIAL SYSTEM OF DOMINATION, CONTROL, EXPLOITATION, HIERARCHY AND SUPREMACY. WOMEN ARE OPPRESSED, AND THEIR BODIES AND WORK ARE EXPLOITED FOR THE BENEFIT OF MEN. IT IS A SET OF IDEAS, OR IDEOLOGY, THAT MAKES THIS DOMINANCE SEEM NATURAL OR COMMON SENSE.

Patriarchy is one of the key systems of oppression explored through this toolkit. It doesn't work alone, it is closely interlinked with racism, colonialism, capitalism, and more. All of these reinforce each other by exploiting our bodies, the land and nature. Feminist climate justice involves dismantling these systems of oppression through transforming relationships we have with each other and the Earth.

WE RECOMMEND THIS FACILITATOR HANDBOOK DEVELOPED BY SIAN COWMAN FOR FRIENDS OF THE EARTH IRELAND ON CLIMATE CHANGE, EXTRACTIVISM AND COLONIALISM TO EXPLORE THESE INTERRELATED OPPRESSIONS.

The social and ecological crises we are facing have their roots in the systems that organise life around markets and profit-making rather than human and nature's well-being. These systems ignore the fact we are part of nature and depend on nature to sustain life (food, shelter, water, energy). It also ignores we depend on relationships and the care of others to survive.



So, structural changes are needed to put relationships of justice, respect of nature, and cooperation at the centre to allow us to live a good life and one that does not destroy the planet. We also need to reorganise care work which is devalued and invisible.

When we see the climate crisis as just as a technical issue requiring us to just swap from one energy (e.g. fossil fuels) system to another (renewables), we won't address inequalities such as energy poverty or the system causing the crisis. There is no climate justice without social justice and system change, a feminist approach brings gender and social justice to the front.

Feminist Climate Justice organising calls for system change not tweaks to the system and false solutions. When we have solutions which are purely scientific, technical or market based, social inequality worsens. False solutions are rooted in the same way to relating to the world that created the crises we are facing in the first place.

It's not just about individuals but the system that needs to change. For example, if we have more female CEOs of fossil fuel or mining companies, this is not a real solution. The company will continue to put profit above people and the Earth, with environmental and Human Rights abuses.

We understand these systems as mutually reinforcing and therefore alliances between frontline communities and all groups fighting these oppressions are vital to dismantle patriarchy and achieve system change. This includes LGBTQI groups, trade unions, feminist movement and women's organisations, environmental justice groups, migrant and racial justice groups, peasants and farmers, Indigenous people and more. We need to build strong coalitions and solidarity across these groups to achieve feminist climate justice.

## FEMINIST PRINCIPLES OF ORGANISING:

Black feminist Audre Lorde said,

**"the masters tools will not dismantle the masters house".**

This means the approaches and ways of working that got us into this crisis will not get us out, **we need new ways of doing, relating and being** - based on **care, reciprocity, justice and solidarity**. This involves valuing different ways of knowing; local and collective knowledge, storytelling, creative and artistic methods and challenging who the expert is. This is central to feminist organising.

Feminist Climate Justice demands **collective action**. Because it is systems we are up against we need collective action to challenge them. We aim to build grassroots power by organising together in our communities, working towards dismantling oppressive systems. This work needs to be led by affected and frontline communities.

**Relationship building** is key to feminist climate justice organising. We don't just mean friends, but the collective community relationships needed to organise and build power together. It's not always easy, we need to learn to navigate conflict together.

Dismantling systems of oppression is a long and complex struggle, while focusing on these outer systems it's also important to reflect on how they show up in our own **personal relationships**, with each other and the natural world, and make changes here too.

Feminist climate justice understands we need to build relationships not just between humans but also with the **more-than-**



**human.** Can we widen our understanding of community to include the natural world?

The climate crisis is loaded with messages of urgency and fear-based timelines and actions. Feminist approaches ask us to **slow down**, it's not about quick fixes but going to the roots of problems, this takes long and deep work. Building community, laughing, celebrating and dancing together is part of resistance. This way of thinking resists the ableist notion of endless productivity pushed by capitalism.

The principles of popular education used in this toolkit align closely with feminist principles. Popular education is an approach that asserts that **people are the experts** on their own lives and that knowledge is held in communities. Many of the activities in this toolkit start from concrete experiences of women's and marginalised groups' daily lives. Popular education helps us **connect individual stories to collective experiences** and draw out themes and patterns in our own experiences. Through this work we can **build a shared analysis of systems of power** and then take action to challenge them.

Many of these principles align with the **All Ireland Standards for Community Work.**

**"THE MASTERS  
TOOLS WILL NOT  
DISMANTLE THE  
MASTERS HOUSE".**

## OUR VISION OF FEMINIST ORGANISING BUILDS ON PRINCIPLES OUTLINED BY ADRIANE MAREE BROWN IN EMERGENT STRATEGY

- SMALL IS GOOD, SMALL IS ALL. (THE LARGE IS A REFLECTION OF THE SMALL.)
- CHANGE IS CONSTANT. (BE LIKE WATER.)
- THERE IS ALWAYS ENOUGH TIME FOR THE RIGHT WORK.
- THERE IS A CONVERSATION IN THE ROOM THAT ONLY THESE PEOPLE AT THIS MOMENT CAN HAVE. FIND IT.
- NEVER A FAILURE, ALWAYS A LESSON.
- TRUST THE PEOPLE. (IF YOU TRUST THE PEOPLE, THEY BECOME TRUSTWORTHY.)
- MOVE AT THE SPEED OF TRUST. FOCUS ON CRITICAL CONNECTIONS MORE THAN CRITICAL MASS - BUILD THE RESILIENCE BY BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIPS.
- LESS PREP, MORE PRESENCE.
- WHAT YOU PAY ATTENTION TO GROWS.



## BUILDING A CULTURE OF CARE

Feminist climate justice recognises there are always power dynamics within groups and aims to create inclusive spaces. These spaces mean everyone feels comfortable to participate, is listened to and there is a culture of care and trust built within the group. See this [feminist facilitators guide](#) for more information on making safe or brave spaces.

The use of embodied, creative and participatory activities in this toolkit aims to encourage a sense of care and accessibility while being aware of power dynamics within groups.

To assist with the complexities of bringing diverse peoples together to deal with climate justice and systemic inequalities we recommend working through [these step forward/ step back](#) prompts offered by the Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures Collective. Further assistance for working through power dynamics within groups can be found in these [facilitation guides](#).

Consider childcare needs when designing workshops and offer participants chances to share needs to make their participation more accessible, i.e. hearing, ability, language or cultural needs.

Starting with a diversity welcome is one way to create a space that acknowledges the different identities, emotions, bodies and experiences people bring to a group setting. Acknowledgment can also be made to the land, the more-than-human world, those who have come before us and future generations. These can be adjusted to fit your group and some guidelines can be found [here](#).

## DIVERSITY WELCOME EXAMPLE

- TODAY I'D LIKE TO WELCOME:
- PEOPLE OF ALL GENDERS
- PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS IRISH, AND THOSE WHO DON'T
- ALL THE LANGUAGES SPOKEN HERE
- THE DIFFERENCE CLASS BACKGROUNDS IN THE ROOM
- PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE
- YOUR BODIES IN ALL THEIR BEAUTIFUL VARIATIONS AND THE DIFFERENT WAYS WE EXPERIENCE THEM
- OUR EMOTIONS, HOW IT FEELS TO SIT IN THIS GROUP NOW
- THE AGE RANGE PRESENT IN THE GROUP
- PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT CARING RESPONSIBILITIES
- OUR ELDERS AND ANCESTORS, THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE US AND SUPPORTED US
- THE MORE-THAN-HUMAN OTHERS THAT MAKE UP OUR COMMUNITIES
- FUTURE GENERATIONS WHO WE DO THIS WORK FOR

Energisers and icebreakers can change the energy in meetings, offer a break and lighten the mood. Some examples can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

**Openings, check ins and closings:** It is important to set aside time for opening a workshop with icebreaker activities, introductions and group agreements. Check ins throughout the workshop allow you to assess the groups wellbeing and if needs are being met. Closings offer chances for reflections and gaining a sense of the group's wellbeing.





## INTRODUCING FEMINIST CLIMATE JUSTICE

### IMAGE THEATRE:

### COLLECTIVE

### DEFINITIONS



**Duration:** 10-30mins

**Materials:** Flipchart, markers

**Objectives:** Introduce and unpack new concepts and words in the collective

This activity can be used at the start of a workshop to explore key concepts that will come up throughout.

#### STEP 1:

Participants stand in a circle and are invited to close their eyes. You explain that you are going to read out a word and when you count to three participants can make any shape with their bodies in association with that word. Then open their eyes. Participants do not have to know the meaning to the word.

#### STEP 2:

Take a moment to let everyone look around the circle at each person's shape. Invite participants to share why they choose that shape and what the word means to them. Collectively build up a definition for that word, note these down on a flipchart.

**FACILITATOR NOTE: SOME EXAMPLE WORDS: GENDER, POWER, PATRIARCHY, CLIMATE CRISIS, FRONTLINE COMMUNITY, FEMINISM, COLONIALISM, CAPITALISM, RACISM, ACTIVISM, CARE WORK, MISOGYNY**

**YOU MAY WISH TO ADD TO OR FILL IN GAPS IN THE DEFINITIONS COLLECTIVELY CREATED, SOME DEFINITIONS ARE OFFERED HERE, AND OTHER USEFUL DEFINITIONS CAN BE FOUND IN THE CREATING CLIMATE JUSTICE COMMUNITIES TOOLKIT.**

## DEFINITIONS

### GENDER

IS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN MEN, WOMEN AND GENDER NON-CONFORMING PEOPLES. IT IS SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED NOT BASED ON BIOLOGY, IT IS FLUID AND NOT A BINARY. IT'S ABOUT POWER DYNAMICS, AND HOW WE ARE SOCIALLY CONDITIONED TO TAKE ON DIFFERENT ROLES IN SOCIETY. GENDER IS A KEY ORGANISATIONAL ASPECT OF SOCIETY AND OFTEN DETERMINES THE DIVISION OF LABOUR IN SOCIETY, THAT MEANS WHO DOES THE PRODUCTIVE WORK (NORMALLY WAGED WORK) AND WHO DOES REPRODUCTIVE WORK (CARE WORK AND DOMESTIC ROLES, OFTEN UNPAID). SEX AND GENDER DON'T ALWAYS MATCH UP, WE HAVE TRANS GENDER, NON-BINARY AND INTERSEX PEOPLE.

### FRONTLINE COMMUNITY

ARE THOSE LIVING ON THE 'FRONTLINES' OF CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS, EXPERIENCING THE FIRST AND WORST IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE. THESE GROUPS ARE OFTEN ALREADY SOCIALLY EXCLUDED AND LIVE IN AREAS MORE VULNERABLE TO IMPACTS LIKE FLOODING OR 'LESS DESIRABLE' AREAS, SUCH AS THOSE NEAR MINES OR INDUSTRIAL DUMPS. BEYOND JUST BEING AFFECTED, FRONTLINE IMPLIES THE COMMUNITY HAS RECOGNISED THE INJUSTICE AND IS MOBILISING TO CHALLENGE IT.

### FEMINISM

IS A POLITICAL TOOL, SOCIAL MOVEMENT AND ANALYSIS OF POWER AND OPPRESSION. IT WORKS TOWARDS EQUALITY BETWEEN ALL GENDERS AND SEXES AND AIMS TO FIGHT PATRIARCHY.

### MISOGYNY

A HATRED FOR WOMEN

### CARE WORK

OUR DEFINITION OF CARE WORK COMES FROM OUR FEMINIST CLIMATE JUSTICE REPORT. THIS INCLUDES BOTH PAID AND UNPAID CARE WORK. IT INCLUDES CARE WORK AS PAID WORK IN THE CARE SECTOR OF THE ECONOMY INVOLVING SOCIAL CARE, CHILDCARE AND HEALTHCARE. IT ALSO INVOLVES CARE WORK WHICH IS PAID BUT CARRIED OUT IN LESS FORMAL SETTINGS; INCLUDING CARE RECIPIENT'S HOMES. IT ALSO ENCAPSULATES UNPAID CARE WORK CARRIED OUT IN FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES, INCLUDING CARE FOR FAMILY MEMBERS, NEIGHBOURS AND NETWORKS OF FRIENDS

## UNDERSTANDING PATRIARCHY AND POWER

**Patriarchy** is a social system of domination, control, exploitation, hierarchy and supremacy. Women are oppressed, and their bodies and work are exploited for the benefit of men. It is a set of ideas, or ideology, that makes this dominance seem natural or common sense. It is a system, not just about individuals, all genders can act in patriarchal ways and can be hurt by patriarchy.

Patriarchy divides the world into strict binaries or opposites, with one valued more than the other. This includes, man above woman, people above nature, western above non-western, science above tradition, mind above body. The devalued side of the binary, like women, nature, non-western peoples are dehumanised and treated like a resource to extract from. Feminists say this way of thinking about the world is at the root of our social and environmental crises.

Violence or the threat of violence is used to maintain patriarchal power. Those who don't follow these rules and fit in the binaries, such as trans people or queer people are often targeted with violence.

**Power** is a complex idea to grasp and means different things to different people. There are many different types of power, you can read about these [here](#). Power describes a certain relationship, it can be discriminatory and oppressive or collaborative:

- **Power-over** is oppressive power. It can be **visible** such as government policies and actions that restrict human rights, **hidden**, such as a corporation lobbying a government behind the scenes, or

"PATRIARCHY IS A  
POLITICAL-SOCIAL  
SYSTEM THAT INSISTS  
THAT MALES ARE  
INHERENTLY DOMINATING,  
SUPERIOR TO EVERYTHING  
AND EVERYONE DEEMED WEAK,  
ESPECIALLY FEMALES, AND  
ENDOWED WITH THE RIGHT  
TO DOMINATE AND RULE  
OVER THE WEAK AND TO  
MAINTAIN THAT DOMINANCE  
THROUGH VARIOUS FORMS  
OF PSYCHOLOGICAL  
TERRORISM AND VIOLENCE."

- BELL HOOKS

**invisible**, such as the values, beliefs and cultural norms that support discrimination and inequality in society (for example, the media reinforcing gender stereotypes).

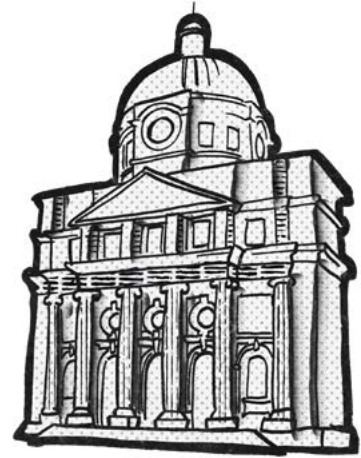
- **Power-with** is transformative power. It is built through movements and collective organising working in solidarity with each other to shift the balance of power and challenge injustice. It is about using one's power to work with others equitably and is what we mean by people power or grassroots power.

Power can also be understood using the 4 I's of oppression: ideological, interpersonal, institutional or internalised. All four are needed to oppress but they do so in different ways.



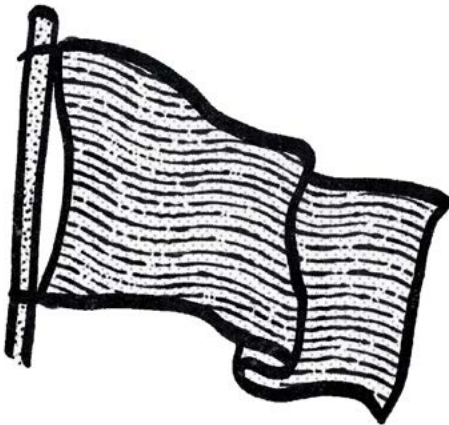
### INTERPERSONAL:

The everyday interactions between individuals and groups. This can be intentional or subconscious and ranges from violence to thoughtless comments.



### INSTITUTIONAL

The systemic oppression that is embedded in the institutions of society, like the laws, legal system, policies and social practices.



### IDEOLOGICAL:

The beliefs, ideas and value systems that maintain oppression. These are often unnamed and silent but are the dominant story we follow, often seen as common sense.



### INTERNALISED:

How individuals take on beliefs as their own and integrate them into their own stories. Feelings of inferiority for oppressed groups and superiority for the dominant group are absorbed.

Often discussions about oppression focus on the interpersonal, such as one bad police person rather than seeing the long-term institutional policies and practices that make the policing system unjust. Focusing on only the interpersonal distracts us from the root causes of oppression.

If we want to address the roots, not just the symptoms of injustice and inequality, a deep analysis of power in all its forms, and how it operates in our societies is important. The following activities are designed to help us start to explore this together.



**ACTIVITY:**

# POWER DANCING

**Duration:** 30mins**Materials:** Space to move and dance.**Objectives:** Begin conversations about different types of power and how that feels in our bodies.**STEP 1:**

## POWER DANCING (15MINS)

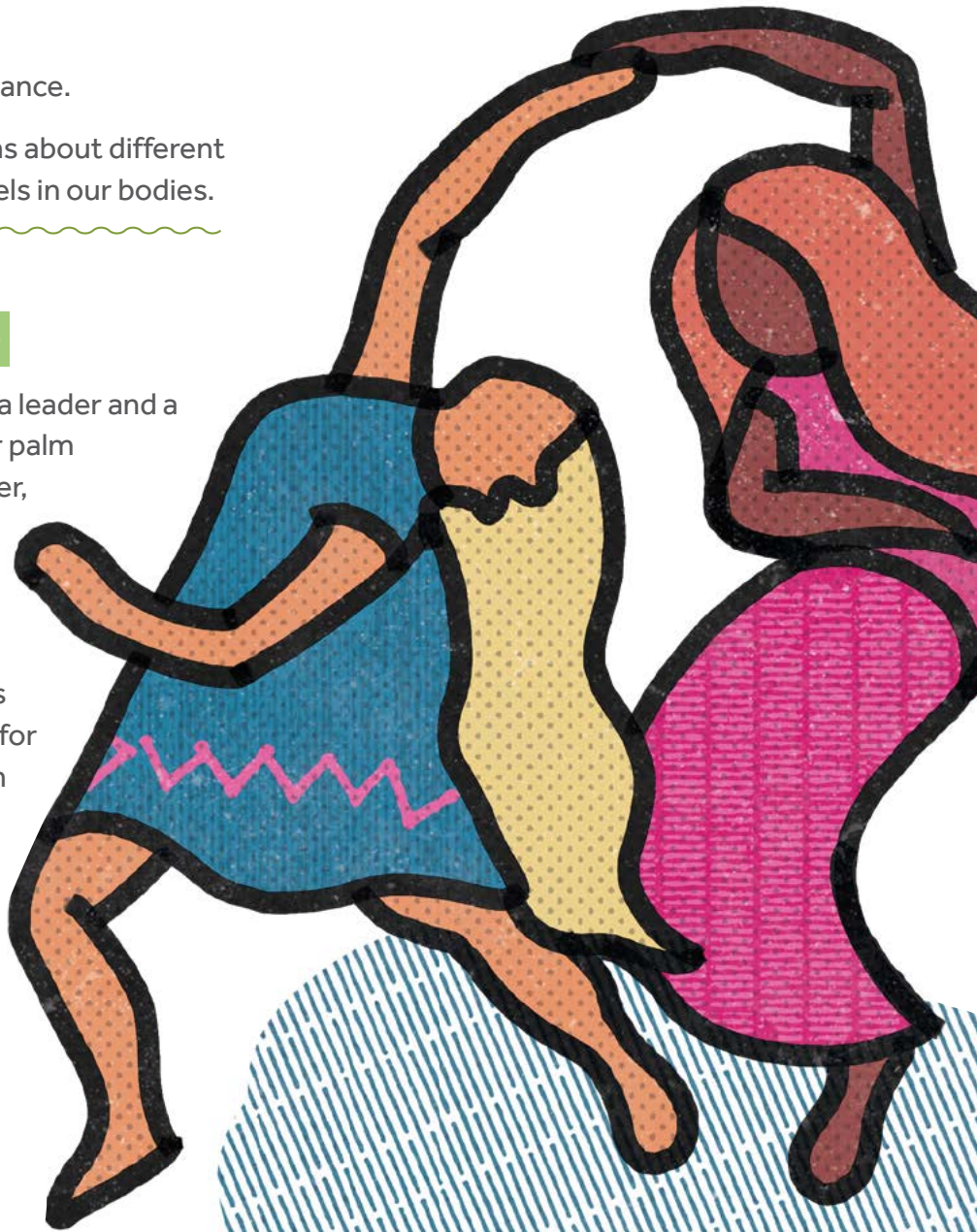
In pairs ask participants to pick a leader and a follower. The leader places their palm in front of the face of the follower, explain that the leader moves the follower with their hand, the follower must move so that their face is always the same distance from the leader's palm. The leader is responsible for the safety of the follower, watch out for objects or other pairs. Offer a demonstration. Play some music and invite pairs to start moving. After some time ask the pairs to switch follower and leader.

**STEP 2:**

## DEBRIEF (15MINS)

**Ask the group:**

- What was that experience like?
- How did it feel in your body follow? How did it feel to lead?
- Which did you prefer?
- Did the experience remind you of situations from your life or the world?



**FACILITATOR NOTE:** THIS ACTIVITY CAN BRING UP STRONG EMOTIONAL REACTIONS. PARTICIPANTS MIGHT REFLECT ON COMFORT OR DISCOMFORT IN EACH ROLE BASED ON THE POWER AND PRIVILEGE BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS, SUCH AS GENDER OR RACE. IT WORKS BEST WHEN SOME TRUST IS ALREADY BUILT UP IN THE GROUP.

**ACTIVITY:**

# DISMANTLING THE MASTER'S HOUSE!

**Duration:** 3 hours

**Materials:** Flip chart paper, scissors, pens, sticky notes, coloured card, large paper or wall space to construct house.

**Objectives:** Reflect on the ways society teaches us to perform our genders, understand patriarchy as a system, think through the ways we uphold patriarchy in our relationships, connect patriarchy to climate change. Reflect on ways to dismantle patriarchy. Analyse the structures that a system is organised through in order to change them.

This activity is based on Audre Lorde's famous quote "*The Master's Tools will never dismantle the master's house*". We interrogate what exactly the master's house is, the bricks that build it and how we maintain it. Here the Master's House is used as a metaphor for patriarchy. Minna Salami in **Sensuous Knowledge** reminds us that the Master's house is not really a house but a prison and the only way to be free is to get out of it.

Decorating it or spray-painting feminist slogans on the walls will not change it, the Master's House needs to be dismantled.

Through this activity we discuss the tools needed to dismantle the house, as Lorde explains we need new ways of thinking, being, relating based on care, solidarity and reciprocity. The Master's tools involve marginalization, division, exclusion, fear, alienation, and subordination;

"AS FOR THE MASTER'S  
TOOLS, HERE'S WHAT  
THEY ARE NOT: THE  
MASTER'S TOOLS ARE  
NOT POETRY, PLAYFULNESS,  
EROS, BORDERLESSNESS,  
CONSCIENTIOUSNESS, DIALOGUE,  
INTUITION, SOULFULNESS.  
STILLNESS, WARMTH, PASSION,  
BEAUTY, COMPASSION,  
MYSTERY, WISDOM, HONESTY,  
FEMININITY, INTERIORITY,  
SENSUOUSNESS"

- MINNA SALAMI, **SENSUOUS KNOWLEDGE**

Patriarchy is a system that we participate in and uphold even if it disadvantages and creates the inequality we experience. We often leave this system unquestioned and see it as normal and natural. This activity offers the chance to make visible the varied ways patriarchy is built in our societies and how we participate in it. This involves both visible, invisible, and hidden power. For example, the visible government policies that disadvantage women, or the invisible cultural beliefs that lead to victim blaming of survivors. People make up these systems, but on the bright side that means we can also transform and change them.



## PART 1:

# BUILD THE MASTER'S HOUSE



Duration: 1 hour

### STEP 1:

Prepare the outline of the house, using strips of flipchart paper to make a simple outline of a house with roof and walls. Write up this quote from Audre Lorde on a flipchart and refer to it when introducing the workshop:

*For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.*

### STEP 2:

In plenary brainstorm the pillars of society that make up the Master's House, in other words the places that teach us how to be a man or a woman. These might include the family, community, religion, education, culture, the State and media. As a group select 4 or 5 that are most relevant to your group.

### STEP 3:

Write the pillars on differently coloured cards and place under the roof.

### STEP 4:

Form small groups of 3-5 people and give each group a different pillar to think through. In these groups they discuss the rules, beliefs or narratives that make up their pillar. Some questions to consider:

- How do these places teach us how or how not to be a man or woman? How are we taught to behave and feel in our

bodies? How are decisions made? How do we relate to the environment? What is valued in this society? Who does what work?

- Write a summary of each point on a sticky note, these are the "bricks" that build the master's house. Use a different colour for each pillar.

### EXAMPLES:

**Family:** Women still hold most responsibility for care work in our society. In Ireland women carry out 15 hours more of unpaid care work in the home than men every week.

Land inheritance and ownership is based on a patriarchal system. Of all the women who work on Irish farms only one quarter own the land, women represent only 13% of Irish farm owners.

**The State:** Reproductive Justice, despite repealing the 8th Amendment in 2018, and decriminalisation of abortion in the North of Ireland in 2020, women still struggle to access to abortion services.

Women and girls face double standards and misogyny in the policing and legal system.

**Culture:** Men are taught to be tough, not show emotion and be domineering.

REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF CLIMATE JUSTICE, IT'S ABOUT PEOPLE HAVING AUTONOMY OVER THEIR LIVES. REPRODUCTION ISN'T JUST THE PHYSICAL ACT OF GIVING BIRTH OR JUST ABOUT ABORTION ACCESS. IT INCLUDES ALL LIFE SUSTAINING PRACTICES AND SO REAL REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE INCLUDES THE RIGHTS TO HOUSING, A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELLBEING.

### STEP 5:

Each group presents their notes in plenary adding their bricks to the house under their institution.

## STEP 6:

In plenary discuss the following:

- How do these intersect with other oppressions? Think about racism, classism, homophobia.
- How does each part of the house interact with other parts of the house?
- What happens when you step out of the house? Are you disciplined? Is there violence or social isolation? What mechanisms make you stay in the house? Note even those that stay in the house experience violence. Facilitator can write mechanisms on sticky notes and put them on the walls of the house.
- How do you feel looking at the master's house?

## OPTIONAL STEP 7:

You may want to take this opportunity to explore what type of power or oppression each of these bricks and mechanisms represent. Introduce the 4 I's of oppression introduced earlier and ask, is it interpersonal, institutional, ideological or internalised? You could also ask is this visible, invisible or hidden power?

## BREAK (10 MINS)

Further reading on patriarchy by bell hooks.



## FACILITATOR NOTE:

IT'S IMPORTANT TO BRING AN INTERSECTIONAL PERSPECTIVE TO THIS ACTIVITY. THE WAYS WE EXPERIENCE THE MASTER'S HOUSE ARE DIFFERENT BASED ON RACE, AGE, SEXUALITY, CITIZENSHIP STATUS AND MORE. IF THESE PERSPECTIVES ARE NOT PRESENT IN THE GROUP, MAKE SURE TO ASK PARTICIPANTS TO REFLECT ON DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES.

YOU MAY WISH TO PREPARE A CASE STUDY OF A WOMEN'S LIFE TO START THE ACTIVITY, SUCH AS A TRAVELLER WOMAN, LGBTQ WOMAN, DISABLED WOMAN, TO ILLUSTRATE DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES AND HOW PATRIARCHY MIGHT IMPACT THEIR LIFE.

## FACILITATOR NOTE:

AN ACTIVITY VARIATION INVOLVES USING A SPIRAL INSTEAD OF PILLARS. THIS ALLOWS THE INTERRELATEDNESS OF DIFFERENT OPPRESSIONS AND SCALES TO BE UNDERSTOOD CLEARLY. INSTEAD OF PLACING PARTICIPANTS' EXPERIENCES UNDER EACH PILLAR THEY ARE PLACED IN A SPIRAL. THE HEART OF THE SPIRAL REPRESENTS PERSONAL EXPERIENCES, THE NEXT LEVEL REPRESENTS THE SOCIAL, HOW DO PEOPLE RELATE TO EACH OTHER? NEXT, THE CULTURAL, WHAT ARE THE DOMINANT VALUES AND HOW ARE THEY PASSED ON? THEN, THE POLITICAL, WHO MAKES THE DECISIONS, AND FINALLY, THE ECONOMIC, WHO OWNS AND CONTROLS RESOURCES? ARROWS ARE DRAWN FROM AND TO THE PERSONAL ALONG EACH CATEGORY TO SHOW HOW EACH LEVEL IS DEPENDENT ON AND IMPACTS EACH OTHER.

THIS VARIATION IS ADAPTED FROM AN EXERCISE BY BANÚLACHT, AN IRISH FEMINIST EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY ORGANISATION WHICH CLOSED IN 2012 AND MAUREEN BASSETT.

## PART 2:

# PERSONAL REFLECTIONS



Duration: 30mins

This step is important to explore the ways we internalise patriarchy and uphold the system of oppression by acting in patriarchal ways in relationships, this can be done by all genders. Ask the group to individually reflect on these questions:

- How do I live in the master's house? How does it affect me?
- What do I do to maintain and build this house?
- Write reflections anonymously on sticky notes and stick them to the base of the house.

## PART 3:

# CONNECT TO CLIMATE INJUSTICE



Duration: 40mins

As we've discussed in the opening sections of this toolkit, women and marginalised communities are first and worst impacted by climate change. This isn't due to some inbuilt weakness but because the systems we live under, like patriarchy, disadvantage these groups through structural inequalities. These groups are more likely to live in poverty, are paid less, and are doing the care work that puts them in closer contact with the environment. This part invites participants to connect the uneven impacts of the climate crisis to the ways patriarchy has structured society.

### STEP 1:

In small groups of 3-5 invite participants to consider the ways the bricks of patriarchy could impact marginalised groups when it comes to climate change.

## EXAMPLES:

**PATRIARCHY** MEANS WOMEN ARE SOCIALLY CONDITIONED TO BE CAREGIVERS, ARE IN LOW-PAID JOBS OR MAKE UP THE MOST OF SINGLE PARENT HOUSEHOLDS. THEREFORE, DURING FOOD SHORTAGES WOMEN ARE DISPROPORTIONALLY IMPACTED AND ARE OFTEN FIRST TO REDUCE HOW MUCH THEY EAT. IN IRELAND FOOD POVERTY IMPACTS MARGINALISED WOMEN THE MOST. WOMEN IN DIRECT PROVISION ARE FURTHER IMPACTED BECAUSE THEY HAVE NO CONTROL AND CANNOT MAKE CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE FOOD FOR THEMSELVES. WITH FOOD SHORTAGES INDUCED BY CLIMATE CHANGE THIS WILL ONLY GET WORSE WITHOUT A GENDERED LENS.

STUDIES SHOW THERE IS AN INCREASED RISK OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AFTER CLIMATE INDUCED DISASTERS SUCH AS FLOODING, HEATWAVES AND STORMS.

**TOXIC MASCULINITY** AND THE CLIMATE CRISIS. STRICT GENDER ROLES HURT ALL GENDERS. THE MESSAGE THAT MEN MUST SUPPRESS EMOTIONS REINFORCES STRICT GENDER BINARIES AND DICTATES

WHO IS "CARING" OR "NURTURING" IN SOCIETY. TO ADDRESS THE CLIMATE CRISIS, WE NEED EVERYONE TO BE CARING. RESEARCH SHOWS MEN FEEL IT'S MORE FEMININE TO BE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY. CARBON INTENSIVE ACTIVITIES LIKE EATING RED MEAT, DRIVING A BIG CAR, ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THE MASCULINE AND VALUED BY SOCIETY. IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT INDIVIDUAL MEN AND WOMEN BUT A CULTURE OF MASCULINE NOTIONS OF DOMINANCE THAT PROMOTE CLIMATE DENIAL, MILITARISM (THE US MILITARY IS THE LARGEST INSTITUTIONAL CARBON EMITTER IN THE WORLD) AND AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENTS DEDICATION TO FOSSIL FUELS.

**LGBTQI** PEOPLE ARE ALREADY AT THE MARGINS OF SOCIETY FACING HIGH RATES OF HOMELESSNESS AND POVERTY AND ARE AT RISK AS THE CLIMATE CRISIS DEEPENS INEQUALITY. OFTEN LGBTQI PEOPLE LIVE IN POORER URBAN AREAS THAT FACE AIR POLLUTION, FOOD AND WATER INSECURITY AND INCREASED RISK OF CLIMATE DISASTER LIKE FLOODING. THEY FACE HIGH LEVELS OF VIOLENCE FOR STEPPING OUTSIDE THE PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM AND THIS INCREASES DURING AND AFTER CLIMATE DISASTERS.



**FACILITATOR NOTE: IT IS IMPORTANT TO BRING THE DISCUSSION BACK TO THE SYSTEMS, LIKE PATRIARCHY, AS THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE INEQUALITIES AND CLIMATE IMPACTS YOU DISCUSS.**

### TOXIC MASCULINITY

IS A HARMFUL STEREOTYPE THAT ENCOURAGES CERTAIN CULTURAL NORMS OF WHAT A "MAN" IS (INCLUDING TRAITS SUCH AS DOMINANCE, VIOLENCE, AGGRESSION, MISOGYNY AND HOMOPHOBIA), TOXIC MASCULINITY CAN HARM SOCIETY AND MEN THEMSELVES. IN OUR PATRIARCHAL WORLD, MEN WHO DISPLAY FEMININE ATTRIBUTES ARE VIEWED AS WEAK, WHEREAS MASCULINE TRAITS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH BEING POWERFUL.

### STEP 2:

groups share feedback in plenary.

### STEP 3:

Next, in the same small groups invite participants to consider the mechanisms identified also relate to the way we treat the earth. For example, how we might seek to control, dominate, exploit or objectify the natural world. Note that these approaches are rooted in a patriarchal worldview and extend to women and marginalised communities too. Open a discussion of how patriarchy is at the root of the climate crisis.

### STEP 4:

Groups share feedback in plenary

### BREAK (10MINS)

### PART 4:

## DISMANTLING THE MASTERS HOUSE AND REFLECTION



**Duration: 30mins**

### STEP 1:

Share Audre Lorde's analysis that differences between marginalised groups are not weaknesses but strengths, we need to build solidarity across difference to dismantle the Master's house. The Master's tools involve using difference, like race, class, sexuality etc., to divide groups of people and weaken solidarity between them. We shouldn't ignore differences but acknowledge and see them as forces for transformation and change. Share this quote from Lorde:

*The sharing of joy, whether physical, emotional, psychic, or intellectual, forms a bridge between the sharers which can be the basis for understanding...*

### STEP 2:

In small groups of 3-5 discuss any of the following prompts:

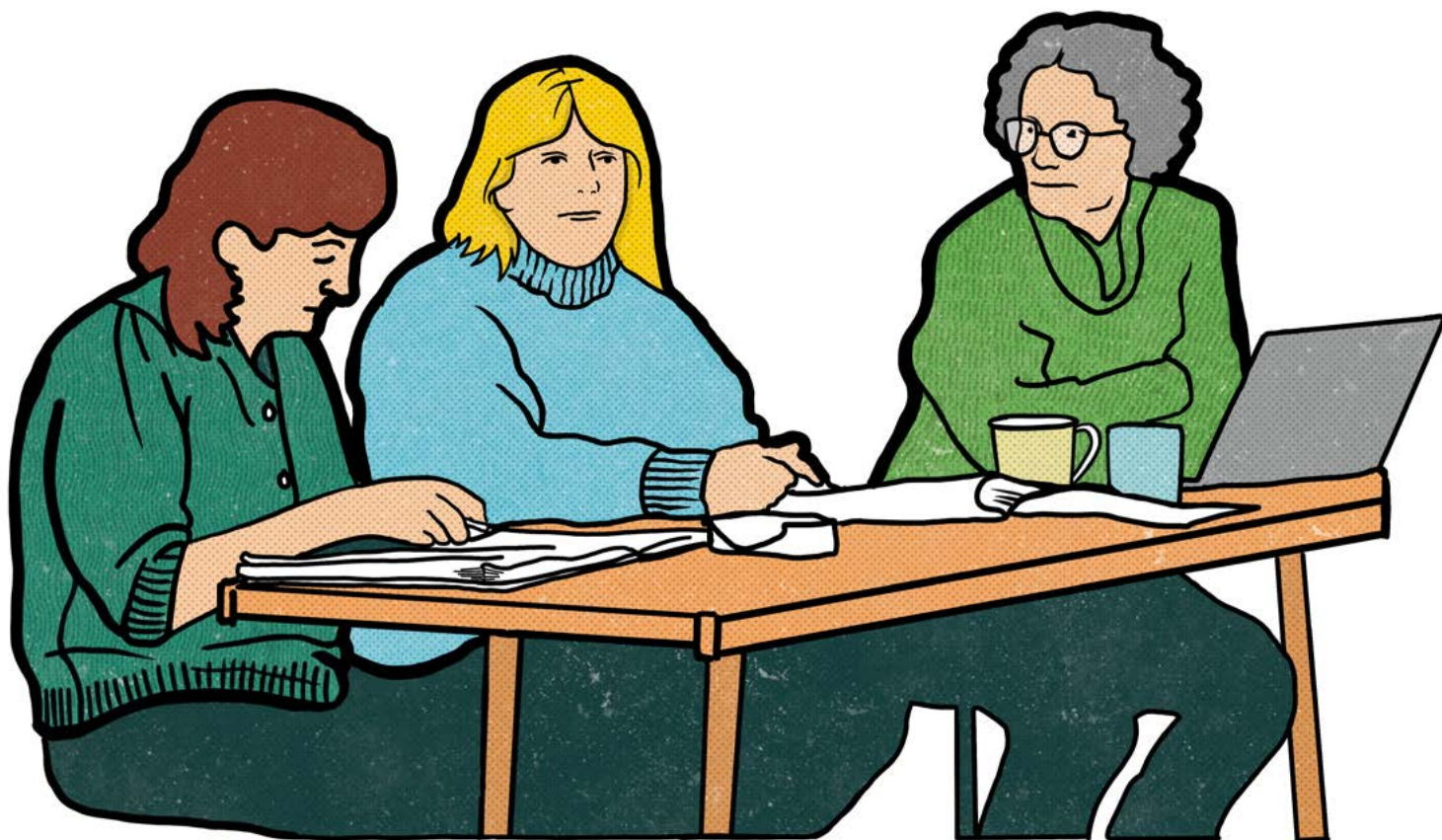
- What does breaking down the master's house look like? Do we take it brick by brick/ break out through the window?
- What are some of the tactics to take down the walls? Emphasise collective organising and power.
- What are some of the ways we can unlearn patriarchy or loosen its grip on us?
- What is a fear, belief or cultural message that is holding us back from imagining the end of patriarchy?

**FACILITATOR NOTE: THROUGH THE DISCUSSION WHEN A TACTIC OR STRATEGY COMES UP TO DISMANTLE THE HOUSE YOU CAN TAKE THE BRICK OR MECHANISM IT REFERS TO AND RIP IT UP.**

### STEP 3:

Offer participants the chance to share their thoughts and close the workshop.





#### CASE STUDY:

## RIGHTS OF NATURE MOVEMENT IRELAND

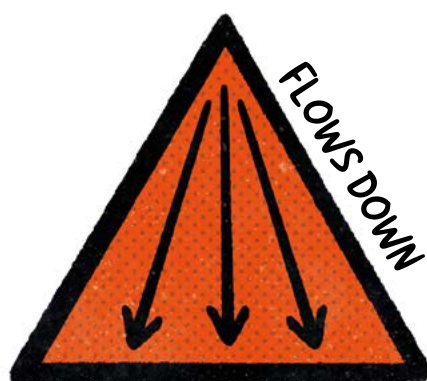
The systems identified so far, patriarchy, capitalism and colonialism create a worldview of separations where men are valued over women, humans are valued over nature and Western thought and culture is valued over every other culture. Turning this on its head is the movement for the Rights of Nature in Ireland which is being led by communities impacted by environmental injustice. The Rights of Nature is a global movement to give legal personhood to non-humans—many rivers, mountains and other features have been granted rights and Ecuador and Bolivia included it in their constitutions in 2008 and 2010. Unlike the patriarchal worldview it emphasises there is no separation between nature and humans, we are nature too.

Environmental Justice Network Ireland (EJNI) describe the Rights of Nature as, “a way of re-thinking our relationship with nature – from one of dominance to one of sharing, caring, respect and interdependency. It can also act as a catalyst to shift our thinking from an extractive economy towards a regenerative economy”. This approach follows feminist approaches which calls for shifts in worldviews and systemic economic change. Communities from Donegal to Cork and Galway to Down have been leading the charge for Rights of Nature and already more than five County Councils have adopted motions supporting Rights of Nature. EJNI have compiled a range of Rights of Nature resources here including documentaries, briefings and leaflets.

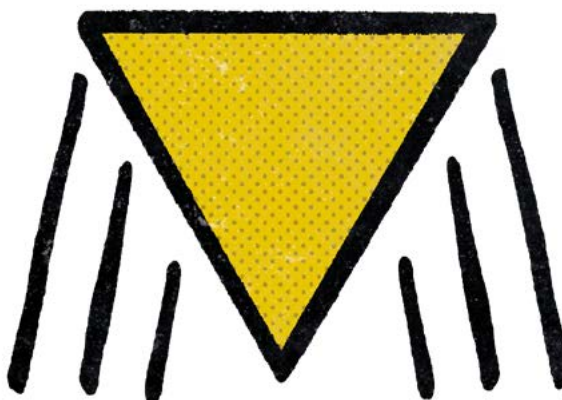
[Listen to this video from 5mins 20sec](#) to hear communities in the Sperrins speak from the perspective of the more-than-human world that is threatened by gold mining.



## TRADITIONAL VIEW OF POWER



## PILLARS OF SUPPORT



### POWER MAPPING

In this section we introduce activities to help us start to identify and analyse power and how to collectively build a power-with, a grassroots people power to take action for feminist climate justice. These two activities complement each other or can be done on their own.

#### ACTIVITY:

### TRIANGLE OF POWER:



**Duration:** 30mins - 1 hour 30mins

**Materials:** Paper, pens

**Objectives:** Identify targets for campaigns; explore people power and change making.

The triangle of power challenges the traditional view of power which is seen as top-down. In this view we must influence those at the top to change their ways. The grassroots view of power sees it as an upside-down triangle. This triangle has pillars of support to hold it up. Campaigns can strategically identify these pillars and think of ways to take them down to topple power in their favour. This activity can also be paired with this [power mapping activity](#).

#### STEP 1:

### IDENTIFY TARGET

Draw the upside-down triangle with pillars of support on a large piece of paper. Identify the target of your campaign and write it in the centre of the triangle.

#### STEP 2:

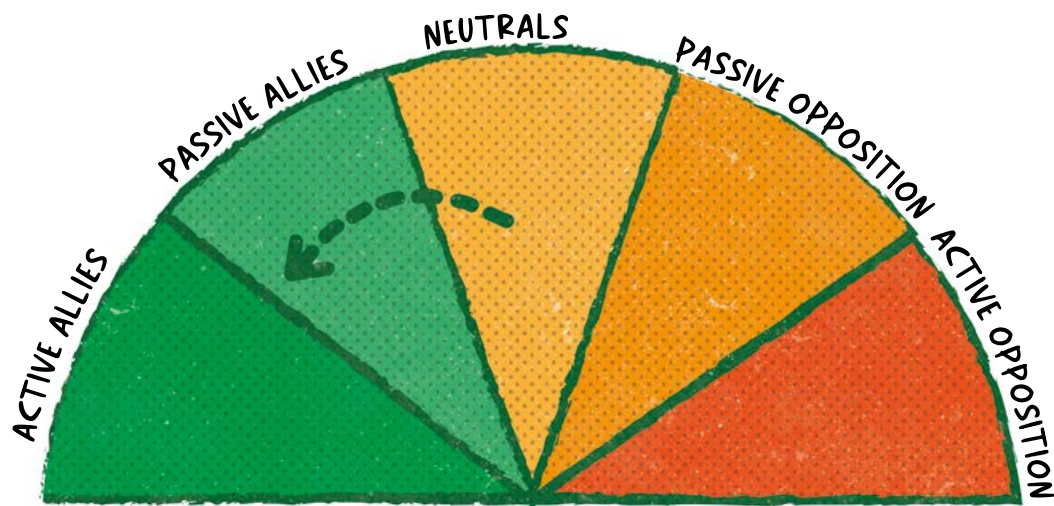
### PILLARS OF SUPPORT

Brainstorm all the pillars that hold up your target and write them along the pillars holding up your triangle. Be as specific as possible, these might include unions, secretaries, media, logistic companies, government departments, councils or might be certain beliefs, fears and attitudes.

#### STEP 3:

### TOPPLING THE TRIANGLE

Seeing all the pillars that support your target can be overwhelming but we don't need to remove them all, a strategic campaign focusing on one pillar can be powerful. Considering your group's capacity, resources and skills discuss the pillars you feel you have the most ability to change, weaken or topple. You can make this pillar the target in another triangle, breaking the problem down until you reach levels you feel you can influence. Repeat this as often as needed.



#### ACTIVITY:

## SPECTRUM OF ALLIES



**Duration:** 30mins- 2 hours

**Materials:** Paper, pens

**Objectives:** To identify allies and opponents in our campaigns and understand how to move them closer to your position.

This activity acknowledges you don't need to have everyone on your side to win. The belief we need to change even our most active opposition to achieve change can invite despair and overwhelm. It's helpful to identify social groups, institutions and networks that you can shift closer to your position. Shifting each group one position closer to you on the spectrum of allies can build people power and weaken your opposition. For example, a campaign for free public transport doesn't need to get the car industry on board but could move someone neutral like the union representing bus drivers.

#### STEP 1:

### IDENTIFY YOUR ALLIES AND OPPOSITION

Start by drawing a half circle and dividing it into five slices, and label it like the drawing above.

- Active Allies are those working alongside you
- Passive Allies may agree with you but haven't taken action
- Neutrals may be uniformed or not engaged in the issue
- Passive Opposition may disagree with you but aren't actively working against you
- Active Opposition disagree with you and are organising against you

Place yourself in the active allies' section and place your main opponents in active opposition. Being as specific as possible fill in all the sections. For example, "the public" is too broad, what group of contactable people can you think of to invite to a meeting or action?

## STEP 2:

### CHOOSE A GROUP TO SHIFT

Select one of the groups on the spectrum and discuss ways to shift them one segment closer to you.

Consider how will you appeal to this group and name at least one tactic to shift them one segment closer to you.

#### Some questions to consider:

- Which groups do you have access to?
- What is their position on your issue/ goal? What is their track record- what have they done?
- What is their self-interest? What do they want regarding this issue?
- What motivates them? What or who tends to influence their decisions?
- Who is their boss? Who are they answerable to?
- Who are their allies? Who do they rely on for support?
- Who are their opponents? Who can be relied upon to come out against them?

## STEP 3:

### CLOSING

Offer participants a chance to reflect on the activity and invite the group to highlight some actions they will take forward from the workshop.







#### ACTIVITY:

## CREATIVE STORYTELLING

Central to feminist organising is valuing other ways of knowing and being. This includes embracing arts and storytelling as important sources of knowledge and tools for change. In this section some arts-based tools are introduced to explore climate justice.

Telling our stories, personal and collective is important to build power and recognise the communities, movements and lands that nurture and shape us. Through story we can build community, communicate our values and motivate people to make change. Stories allow us to learn from each other and build solidarity.

The Story of Self, Us and Now is a useful way to frame storytelling in movements. Starting with personal stories, it moves to the collective shared experience and on to how we can rally for change.

Source: [The Commons: Social Change Library](#)



## ACTIVITY:

# PHOTOVOICE PROJECT



**Duration:** 1-6 months

**Materials:** disposable cameras (if participants don't have a camera/smartphone), pens, post-its, printer, computer, markers,

**Objectives:** Provide structures for active dialogue within a community to identify problems and solutions. Create a safe environment for critical reflection. Promote social change through informing wider public debate and decision makers.

This longer activity uses photography to allow affected communities to tell their own stories of environmental or social (in) justice and advocate for change. Informed by feminist theory, critical pedagogy and community based documentary photography, photovoice supports participants to share their lived experiences as they see them. Participants take photos of their experiences, which are discussed, themed and narrated with captions in workshops. The work is often exhibited to expose how policies affect the well-being of communities and the Earth.

There is power in who and what is represented in images surrounding climate and social justice. Often images of climate change involve empty devastated landscapes, melting glaciers and polar bears. While this is part of the story, it makes the issue seem removed and unrelated to our everyday lives. Photovoice puts the camera directly in the hands of



affected and marginalised communities to tell their own stories by recognising they are experts of their realities.

**Further reading:** See this detailed facilitation guide or this academic article about Photovoice and the coalfields of Appalachia.

## STEP 1:

### INTRODUCING PHOTOVOICE

The first session of the process is for building relationships within the group, introducing the concept of photovoice and agreeing a schedule that works for everyone. Some topics typically addressed are:

- Ice breaker/ round of introductions
- Introduce photovoice concept and process
- Agree timeline for meetings- how many/ frequency
- Agree how many photos (this depends on group size but 1-2 photos per person is recommended to ensure enough time for everyone to share in following meetings)



- Develop group agreement to create a safe space
- Discuss ethical considerations
- Share prompt for taking photos. This could be specific or open ended, for example "take photos of your experience of gender inequality/ flooding/ climate change/ resisting mining/ direct provision..."
- Disposable cameras are given out if needed

### FACILITATOR NOTE:

YOU MAY WANT TO INTRODUCE THE BASICS OF PHOTOGRAPHY AND HOW TO USE A CAMERA IN THIS SESSION. SEE PAGE 37 OF THIS GUIDE FOR MORE INFORMATION. ALTERNATIVELY INVITE AN EXPERT TO GIVE A SMALL TALK OR DEMONSTRATION.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE CLEAR ANY ASPECT OF EVERYDAY LIFE IS WORTHY OF BEING PHOTOGRAPHED, THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG WAY TO PARTICIPATE. PHOTOS DO NOT NEED TO BE BEAUTIFUL OR SPECTACULAR.

### ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:

RESPECT FOR PERSONS, CONCERN FOR WELFARE AND JUSTICE ARE THREE PRINCIPLES TO KEEP IN MIND DURING THE PROCESS. SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER MIGHT BE; HOW TO GAIN INFORMED CONSENT, SHOULD UNDER-18S OR PEOPLE'S FACES BE INCLUDED IN PHOTOS? HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN TAKING PHOTOS?

You can find more information on ethical considerations from page 5 of [this manual](#).

### STEP 2:

## TAKE PHOTOS

Based on the discussion of the timeline agreed in the first meeting participants go out and take their photos. 2-4 weeks is recommended for this step.

### STEP 3:

## DISCUSS AND SHARE PHOTOS

The second meeting offers a chance for participants to come together and tell the stories around their photos. This meeting could include a community feast or other community building activity.

The facilitator will have printed all the photos before the session begins and gives everyone their photo at the start.

Open with an icebreaker activity and round of introductions. Next give participants a chance to tell the story of their photo using the PHOTO prompt below. Allow other participants a chance to share their reflections on each photo. If participants have more than one photo do a second round. Consider setting a time limit for each sharing to allow everyone a chance to share their photo.

- P** Describe your **photo**?
- H** What is **happening** in your picture?
- O** Why did you take a picture **of** this?
- T** What does this picture **tell** us about your experiences?
- O** How can this picture provide **opportunities** for us to improve things?

**STEP 4:****DEVELOP THEMES AND  
WRITE CAPTIONS**

The second part of this meeting is important to move from personal storytelling to identify collective experiences. Place all photos on the ground or stick to a wall with blue tack, participants are encouraged to identify themes they see emerging through the photos and during the discussion. Group photos together and write themes on sticky notes.

After theming the photos participants are invited to write captions for their photographs. The facilitator can emphasise it's not about the most beautiful photo but the stories and meaning behind them.

Some prompts for writing captions:

- What do you want to audience to see?
- Where is the viewer supposed to focus?
- What is your experience? What is the story behind this picture from your perspective?

**FACILITATOR NOTE: THIS PROCESS CAN ALSO BE HELD ONLINE, PARTICIPANTS CAN SHARE PHOTOS BY SHARING THEIR SCREEN AND A DIGITAL WHITEBOARD CAN BE USED TO THEME PHOTOS AND COLLECT CAPTIONS.**

**STEPS 2-4 CAN BE REPEATED AS MANY TIMES AS WANTED FOR A LONGER MORE IN-DEPTH PROCESS.**

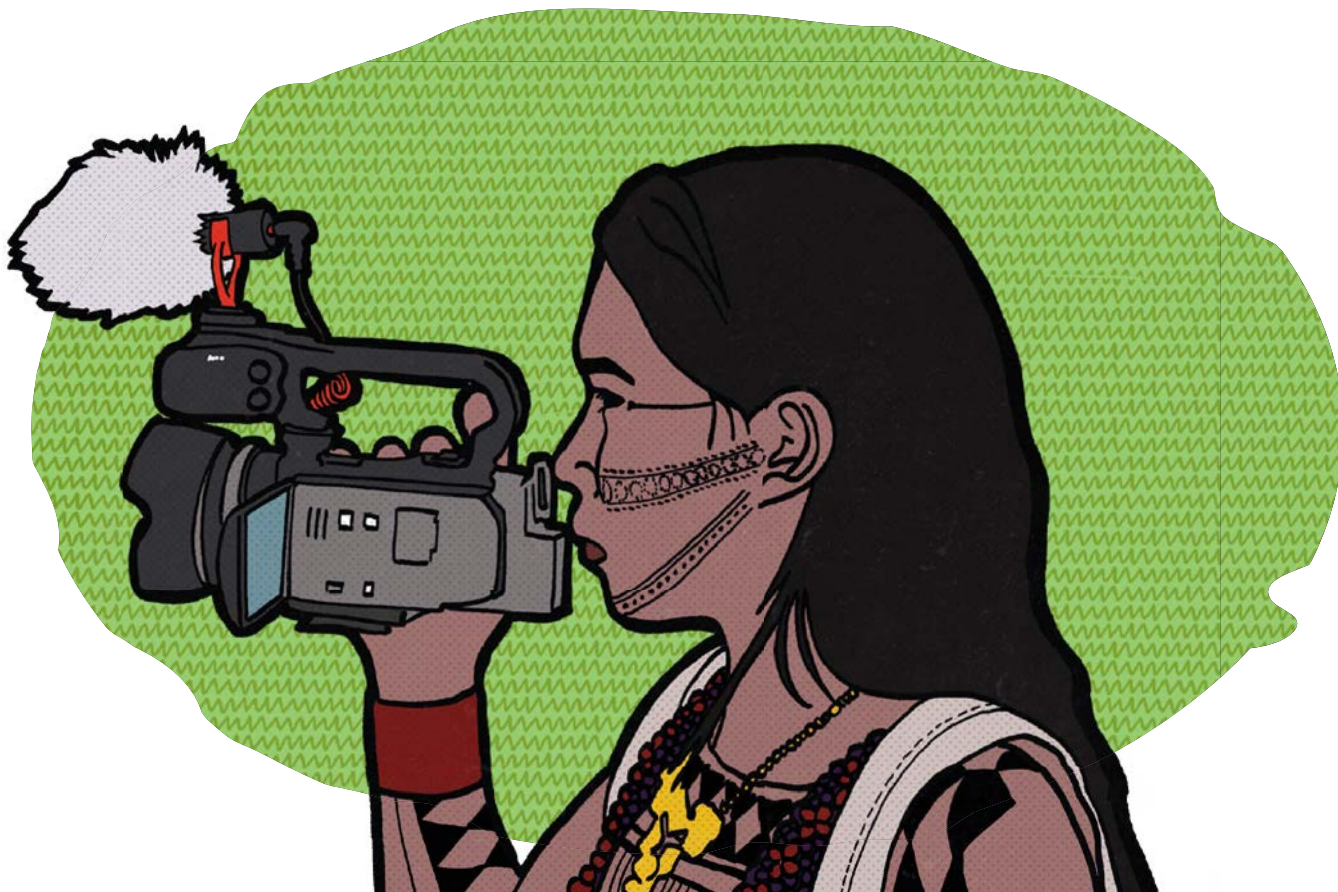
**STEP 5:****SHARE PHOTOS FOR  
SOCIAL ACTION**

At the next meeting, decide how your group would like to share the photos, captions and themes for social change. Identifying an audience is important; do you want to engage other affected communities? Policy or decision makers? Community leaders? Hosting an exhibition is a good way to achieve these aims. For example, see this [\*\*virtual tour\*\*](#) of a photovoice exhibition, which explores migrant women's experiences in Northern Ireland and Canada. Another option is to develop a booklet organised around the themes identified. For example, see [\*\*photovoice booklet\*\*](#) on community resistance to extractivism in the Sperrin Mountains, North of Ireland.

**STEP 6:****REFLECTIONS**

The final meeting offers a chance to reflect on the process and discuss next steps with your group. Some guiding questions for reflections could be:

- What have you learnt about [insert topic of project] during this photovoice experience?
- What has been the response to the issues raised through your photography?
- Have you made any new relationships in your community as a result of this project?
- What has been the best/ most challenging aspect of participating in this project?
- Would you do this process again?
- How can we continue this work together?



#### CASE STUDY:

## MUNDURUKU WAKOBORUN AUDIOVISUAL COLLECTIVE: INDIGENOUS FEMINIST

Across the world, Indigenous communities are on the frontline of the climate crisis while protecting around 80% of the world's biodiversity. In the Brazilian Amazon a group of Munduruku Indigenous women are raising awareness about illegal logging, dams and mining in their territory through audiovisual tools. The Wakoborun Audiovisual Collective is part of the first Munduruku Women's Assembly, **Associação das Mulheres Munduruku Wakoborun** set up in 2018.

Like photovoice, this collective recognises the power of telling their own story by reclaiming the camera as a tool to spread awareness and defend their lands. Instead of the narrative being defined by outside journalists or filmmakers it is created by frontline communities themselves. Their work encourages intergenerational sharing of traditional knowledge and centre their right to memory, territory and preserving their Indigenous culture. In **May 2023** women from this collective travelled to Ireland to show their film "Awaydip Tip Mutaxipi/ The Ailing Forest" in the Sperrin Mountains where communities are **resisting gold mining**. Watch **this video** to find out more.

## ACTIVITY:

# RIVER OF LIFE



**Duration:** 1.5 hours

**Materials:** A3 paper with holes punched around outside, paints, pastels, pencils, markers, coloured string cut into 10cm pieces, flipchart.

**Objectives:** To map personal life journeys and build solidarity through common experiences. Build relationships within a group. Recognise emotions that guide our work.

The river of life activity offers a chance to reflect on where we have come from and where we want to go. This activity highlights the different experiences, relationships and identities that have shaped us individually while also drawing connections with others through sharing our stories. Emotions may arise through this work, creating a safe space for this to be held is important (see the section on building a culture of care above).

The famous feminist slogan “*the personal is political*” reminds us that knowing our personal stories and how they connect to wider issues is a radical act. During this activity, you can guide participants to reflect on how climate change or another relevant issue has impacted their lives and if it is an activist group, how they have come to be active on an issue.

## STEP 1:

# VISUALISING YOUR RIVER OF LIFE

(10MINS)

Start with an icebreaker and round of introductions. Invite participants to find a comfortable sitting position and take three large breaths. When ready invite them to close their eyes and guide them through this visualisation.

*Continue breathing and visualise yourself sitting beside a river. Take a moment to notice what size and shape this river is, the colours, light, smell and feel of this river. Notice what the weather is doing around you, how does the air feel? What time of day it is? Are you accompanied by any non-human companions? Birds, animals, insects? You feel a strong connection to this river and come to realise it is part of you. You zoom out and find yourself floating above the river, taking in its full course from the source to the mouth. This river represents your life and the journey you have taken to get to this point. Keep breathing and imagining this flowing river as we ask the following questions:*

- If your life were a river, what shape would it take?
- Where are the bends and turns, when your situation or perspective changed? Was the transition smooth or sudden?
- Are there rocks or boulders, obstacles you’ve had to find a way around?
- Are there points at which it flows powerfully and purposefully or slows to a trickle?
- How do all of your identities shape the river? (gender/ race/ class/ sexuality/ nationality)
- Who has supported, shaped, nurtured and cared for you on your journey?
- Have there been losses of relationships that shape your river?
- Are there stagnant waters or deep pools for swimming and community?
- How does what is happening in the world shape your river? How has the climate crisis [or other issue e.g. gender inequality] shaped your river?
- What values or commitments were most important to you at different points in your river? What goals influenced the flow of your river?



*Keep breathing and imagining the flow of your river. Now we are going to return to this room and leave our river. Slowly wiggle your fingers and toes and gently open your eyes when you are ready.*

### FACILITATOR NOTES:

SPEAK SLOWLY THROUGH THIS VISUALISATION ALLOWING PLENTY OF PAUSES FOR PARTICIPANTS TO REFLECT.

THESE QUESTIONS CAN BE ADAPTED TO FIT YOUR GROUP/ MOVEMENT. IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL TO HAVE THESE WRITTEN ON A FLIPCHART FOR THE NEXT PART OF THE ACTIVITY.

#### STEP 2:

### MAKING YOUR RIVER (30MINS)

Invite participants to paint or draw their river on paper in whatever way they want. Use, symbols, words, shapes or colours, it can be as detailed or abstract as wanted. Mark life events, relationships, feelings, obstacles, anything at all using the river as a metaphor.

#### STEP 3:

### WEAVING TOGETHER OUR RIVERS

(30MINS)

- Give each participant a few pieces of string each.
- Invite them to make pairs where they can share the story of their river.
- If they find a commonality or shared experience, they can use one of the strings to tie part of their pages together (this is why it's important to have holes already made on the paper from the start).
- Next each pair finds another pair and

repeats the process, this repeats until it's one big group again and all pieces should be tied together to form one large piece.

#### STEP 4:

### REFLECTION AND CLOSING

(20MINS)

As a group gather around the rivers woven together on the ground and invite reflections, comments, sharing on the things that connected the rivers and the differences.

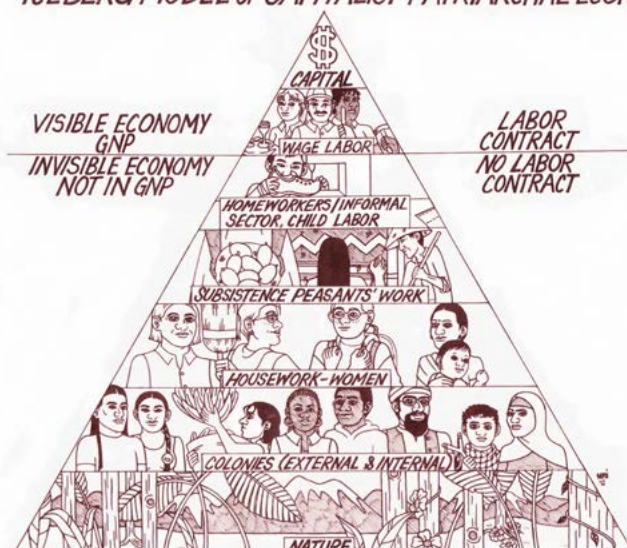
Finish by asking participants to return to the first pair they were in and reflect on how the activity was for them.

**Variations:** This activity can be done for the life of the group or movement on one large piece of paper with everyone contributing. You can also start with the river going into the sea, representing the group's goals, and work backwards to trace the moments that helped you reach the goal.





## ICEBERG MODEL OF CAPITALIST PATRIARCHAL ECONOMIES



## CARE BASED FEMINIST JUSTICE:

Care is a central feature of feminist analysis and organising. **The Feminist Climate Justice** Report, and the creating climate justice communities toolkit both outline the relevance to care and climate in Ireland. This next section offers activities and case studies to explore gendered care work and alternative economic models.

### ACTIVITY:

## ICEBERG ECONOMY



**Duration:** 30mins

**Materials:** Print out of the iceberg model of capitalist patriarchal economies, flipchart paper, pens

**Objectives:** To make visible the work that capitalism depends on but makes invisible, to recognise how this connects to our lives.

### STEP 1:

## INTRODUCE THE ICEBERG

Show the group the image of the iceberg and explain that the work above the line is the iceberg that sticks out of the ocean,

this is the waged work. Everything else under the line is the invisible work that capitalism depends on to survive but it is undervalued and often taken for free.

### STEP 2:

## BRAINSTORM THE INVISIBLE ECONOMY

As the group to shout out as many jobs as they can think of that make up the categories in the invisible economy. Write these down on a flipchart. They might include, cooking, emotional labour, elder care...

### STEP 3:

## THANK YOU

Go around the room and give participants a chance to thank whoever does those jobs for them, this may be themselves. Reflect on who is doing this work to sustain families and communities.

### STEP 4:

## GOING FORWARD

Discuss actions we can take to value and make visible the work identified in previous steps.



### ACTIVITY:

## CLOCK OF WORK

### ACTIVITY 1



**Duration:** 1 hour 30mins

**Materials:** Flipchart paper, pens, projector, laptop, internet access

**Objectives:** Reflect on the gendered division of work. Consider how we can revalue care work in society.

### STEP 1:

## CLOCK OF WORK

**(30MINS)**

In small groups of 3-5 people draw a 24-hour clock on flipchart paper. Ask participants to fill in as many activities to the clock as they can. Ask participants to record their personal experiences based on their gender. If not all genders are represented, ask them to try and imagine others' daily clocks.

### STEP 2:

## SHARE IN PLENARY

**(30MINS)**

Each group feeds back to the larger group presenting their clocks.

### STEP 3:

## VIDEO- FEMINIST ECONOMIES

**(30MINS)**

Watch [this video](#) explaining the idea of feminist economies for communities and the earth.

**As a group discuss these questions:**

- What are the main principles of a feminist economy?
- What is the difference between productive and reproductive work?
- Does anything from the video relate to the earlier discussion around the clock of work?

**Further reading:** Care work and Just Transition [report](#) by WECAN. Building Narratives for a Caring Green Economy [report](#) by the Feminist Green New Deal Coalition.



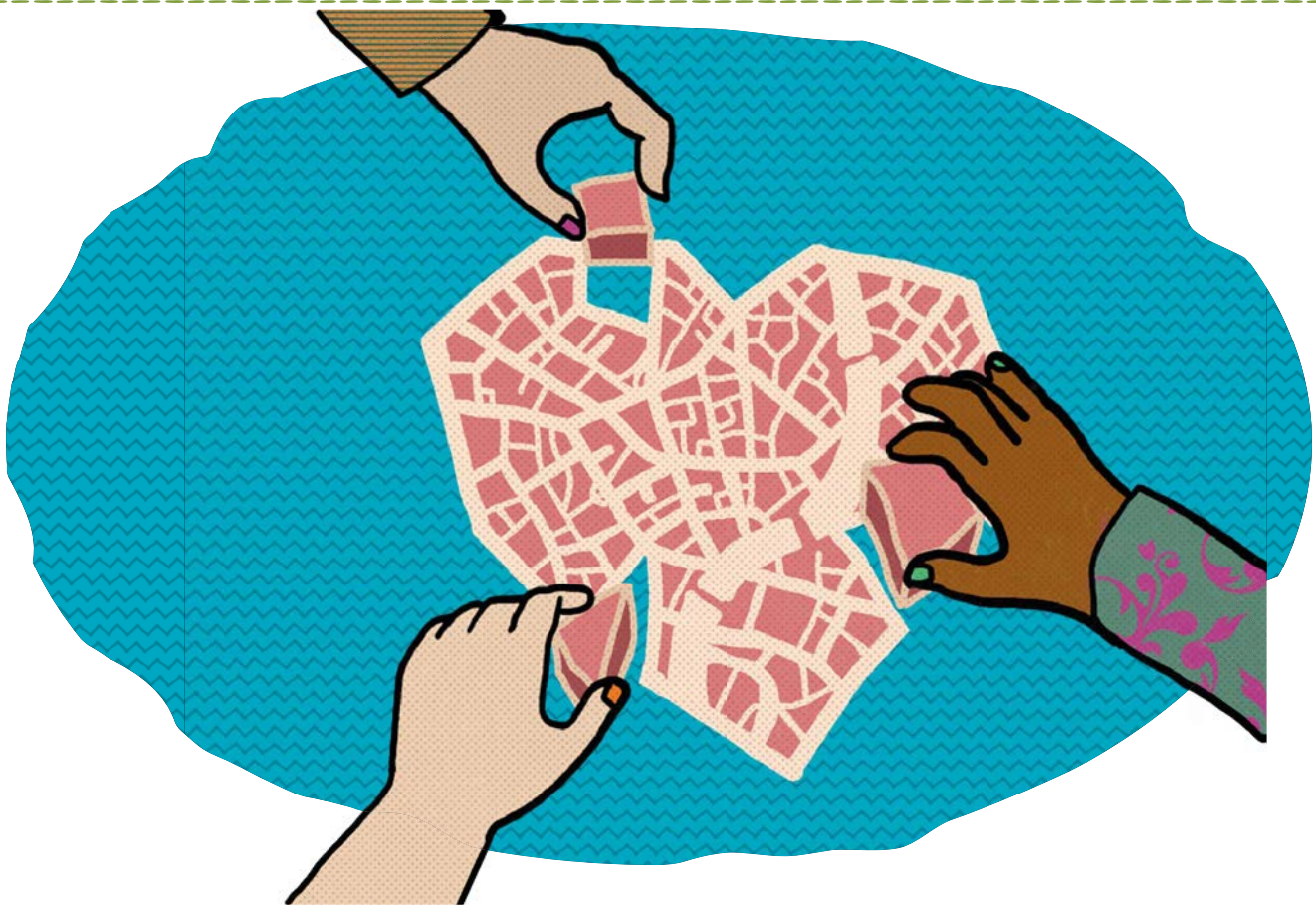
#### CASE STUDY:

## BELFAST CLEANERS SOCIETY: A CARE-WORKERS COOPERATIVE

The Belfast Cleaners Society is a cross-community (meaning all sides of the community are involved, including Nationalist and Unionist workers) cooperative based in Belfast. Cooperatives are economic structures that are based around cooperation rather than competition and profit-making. A group of people decide to come together to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs by working together in a democratic way. Cooperatives place the well-being of workers at the centre. This model can be part of climate justice because it directly challenges exploitative and extractive economic structures that put profit before people, communities and the earth. Offering alternatives, creating social and economic transformations and building sustainable economies is important work for system change.

In 2010 women's groups from the Shankill Road (mainly loyalist/ unionist community) and the Falls Road (mainly republican/ nationalist community), areas of high social and economic deprivation were working on human rights courses with Trademark Belfast, a social justice anti-sectarian organisation. After these courses ended the women decided they wanted to continue working together and collectivise. By 2012 they had set up a cooperative that was built around their own caring responsibilities and needs, allowing them to carry out commercial cleaning. In 2016 they won the living wage employment award for all of Northern Ireland. Watch this short [documentary](#) which tells the story of the coop. [This webinar](#) on feminist economics and the politics of care, hosted by climate justice group Sli Eile, includes the Belfast Cleaners Cooperative, Dr. Conor McCabe and other care workers based in Ireland.





**ACTIVITY:**

## MAPPING A RADICAL POLITICS OF CARE



**Duration:** 1 hour

**Materials:** Paper A3 size, markers, pencils, pens, crayons

**Objective:** To collectively brainstorm all the collective care practices already present in our communities.

AR SCÁTH A CHÉILE A  
MHAIREANN NA DAOINE:  
UNDER THE SHELTER OF  
EACH OTHER THE  
PEOPLE SURVIVE

This popular Irish saying shows us that social cooperation and collective care have a long history in Ireland. It refers to the fact people live in interconnected relationships with each other and the world around them. All around us are abundant examples of these practices but we often see them as unconnected and small scale. However, it is exactly these ways of relating that build the community, resilience, and solidarity that is needed in the face of the climate crisis.

Looking after ourselves is part of building a culture of care. The term self-care has drifted from its original meaning. Now we associate it with individual acts like taking a bubble bath (which are still important to care for the self and recharge) however, self-care is part of collective care. Can we make visible all the ways we already care for each other?



MUTUAL AID IS ABOUT CREATING NETWORKS OF CARE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS. UNLIKE CHARITY MODELS IT IS HORIZONTAL AND AIMS TO BREAK DOWN HIERARCHIES BETWEEN GIVER AND RECEIVER. MUTUAL AID GREW IN STRENGTH TO MEET NEEDS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT RESPONSE TO CLIMATE DISASTERS, FOR EXAMPLE IN PUERTO RICO AFTER HURRICANE MARIA.

Building community care might involve collective childcare networks, mutual aid, resource sharing (tool libraries), mapping local skills and needs, community gardens, repair cafes, movements that resist extractive industries and so much more.

For example, Solidarity Dinners are hosted by Refugee and Migrant Solidarity Ireland (RAMSI), Movement of Asylum Seekers in Ireland (MASI) and Dublin Central Housing Action (DCHA) in Dublin. People living in Direct Provision, migrants and local people come together to share food and music, building relationships and joy in the face of violent systems.

#### STEP 1:

### MAPPING CARE (30 MINS)

Introduce the idea of collective care to the group. In small groups of 4-5 make a map of all the practices of care you can think of in your community, (for both humans and more-than-humans) draw, write, mark, make these places, groups and people who sustain these practices.

#### STEP 2:

### PRESENT MAPS (30 MINS)

In plenary, each group presents their care map to the group. Allow time for a discussion of how we can strengthen these practices. Invite reflections on how these practices are important in relation to the climate crisis. How do these practices build resilience and the capacity for transformation?





## DREAMING OUR FEMINIST FUTURES

“LET US BEGIN TO  
IMAGINE THE WORLDS  
WE WOULD LIKE TO INHABIT,  
THE LONG LIVES WE WILL SHARE,  
AND THE MANY FUTURES  
IN OUR HANDS”

- SUSAN GRIFFIN

Feminist futures are those without exploitation, inequality and supremacy. These futures are not just within reach but are being created here and now in the present through all the feminist movements, approaches, organising and solutions that centre on care, reciprocity, justice and solidarity. In this section, we explore ways to foster these feminist futures in Ireland for climate justice.

**Further learning:** Explore this [Feminist Realities toolkit](#) for more ideas and information. Check out this [worldmaking game](#) by Just Associates and adapt it for your community and listen to this [podcast](#) on creating feminist futures





#### CASE STUDY:

## A FEMINIST GREEN NEW DEAL

Around the world groups are dreaming up feminist futures. One of these visions is the Feminist Green New Deal. Traditional Green New Deals are public policy plans to address climate change, they push for a switch to renewable energy and more green jobs. There is a [European Green Deal](#) and a [campaign](#) in the UK.

Green New Deal narratives focus on construction, technology and energy jobs—mainly held by men—based on a patriarchal view of the economy and ignoring care work. Often, they rely on images of men in hard hats installing solar panels. A Feminist Green New Deal understands that social justice is also needed, so housing rights, ending gender based violence, healthcare, childcare, reproductive justice and more are central.

### 10 PRINCIPLES OF FEMINIST GREEN NEW DEAL:

- REQUIRE INTERSECTIONAL GENDER ANALYSIS ACROSS ALL ACTIONS
- CONFRONT INSTITUTIONAL PATRIARCHY AND RACISM
- RESPECT THE LEADERSHIP OF YOUNG PEOPLE AS THEY FIGHT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS
- CREATE REGENERATIVE ECONOMICS THAT CENTRE SYSTEMIC FEMINIST ALTERNATIVES
- ADVANCE REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE
- CENTRE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S RIGHTS AND LEADERSHIP
- RECOGNISE THAT THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS DOMESTIC CLIMATE POLICY
- SYSTEMICALLY CONFRONT EXPLOITATIVE AND UNSUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION PATTERNS
- ENSURE DEMOCRATICALLY CONTROLLED, COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS
- REJECT FALSE AND HARMFUL RESPONSES TO CLIMATE CHANGE THAT FAILS TO ADDRESS ROOT CAUSES

Watch [this webinar](#) for more information on a Feminist Green New Deal

## ACTIVITY:

# FEMINIST FUTURES IN IRELAND: HOLDING UP OUR VISION



**Duration:** 2 hours

**Materials:** Large paper (A3 or A2), pens, art materials (for example: pencils, pastels, paints, old magazines, scissors, glue, glitter), sticky notes

**Objectives:** This activity invites us to dream about what a feminist futures might look like in the Irish context, for your community or group specifically. Create strategies, tactics and actions to overcome obstacles and achieve the vision. Celebrate lifting your vision up.

## STEP 1:

### CREATING A VISION

(30MINS)

Divide group into smaller groups of around 5. What is our vision: draw, write, document your feminist future vision.

**You may wish to envision 4 aspects :**

- **Relationships** - How do we relate to each other and our bodies?
- **Labour** - How is work structured?
- **Land** - How do we relate to the natural world around us?
- **Governance and Justice** - How are decisions made? How is power distributed in society?

FACILITATOR NOTE: ENCOURAGE PARTICIPANTS TO BE AS SPECIFIC AS POSSIBLE, WHAT DOES THIS VISION FEEL, SMELL AND LOOK LIKE? THE VISION CAN TAKE ANY FORM, WRITTEN WORD, A MAP, COLOURS, SKETCHES, POETRY, INVITE ANY INTERPRETATION.

## STEP 2:

### PRESENT VISIONS

(30MINS)

In plenary invite each group to present their vision, allow time for questions and comments from other groups.

FACILITATOR NOTE: YOU MAY WANT TO ASK PARTICIPANTS IF THEY IDENTIFY AREAS WHERE THESE RELATIONSHIPS, PRINCIPLES OR ACTIONS ARE ALREADY IN EXISTENCE.

## STEP 3:

### HOLDING UP OUR VISION

(50MINS)

Choose one vision and place on the ground. Everyone gathers around the vision. Explain to the group that in order to achieve this vision everyone needs to lift the paper up off the ground. To start ask the group to think of 3 obstacles to our vision (for example: cultural beliefs, government or corporate power, policies, practical considerations). Now choose 3 people to represent these obstacles. Each person representing an obstacle places one foot on the vision. Ask for a notetaker.

1 These 4 aspects are adapted from activities in the Feminist Realities Toolkit by AWID

“LOOK CLOSELY  
AT THE PRESENT  
YOU ARE  
CONSTRUCTING.  
IT SHOULD LOOK LIKE  
THE FUTURE YOU  
ARE IMAGINING”

- ALICE WALKER

Next ask the movement (everyone else in the group) what can be done to remove the feet of the obstacles? The notetaker writes down suggestions on sticky notes and sticks them onto the body of the obstacle it relates to. After each one is placed ask the obstacle if they feel it's enough to remove their foot - is it realistic? If not, we keep going. After all feet are removed everyone rejoins the movement (rest of group). Now the same process is done with the tactics. Choose 3 tactics to achieve your vision. Ask for 3 volunteers to represent these tactics, they step one foot onto the vision. Ask the movement what actions are realistic and can be successful to implement these tactics. The notetaker writes these on sticky notes and sticks to the body of each tactic. We ask each tactic if they feel they have enough actions to take their foot off the vision. If not, we continue.

When all tactics are confident that they have enough actions stuck to their bodies, they take their feet off the vision. Next, they ask the rest of the movement to gather around and place their hands on the vision. Together we lift the vision above our heads and celebrate! You can play some music and encourage dancing and whooping!

FACILITATOR NOTE: THE VISIONS COULD BE VERY WIDE RANGING AND TAKE IN A LOT OF AREAS, YOU CAN ASK PARTICIPANTS TO FOCUS IN ON A SPECIFIC AREA OF THE VISION IF NEEDED.

#### STEP 4:

#### DEBRIEF

(10MINS)

As a group consider the following questions to finish the activity:

- How did you feel during that workshop?
- What did it feel like to lift your vision?
- Which tactics did you find the most exciting?
- What action will I take away from this workshop to achieve a vision?





# BUILDING INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY AND THE GLOBAL STRUGGLE FOR FEMINIST CLIMATE JUSTICE

The systems that create the climate crisis, patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism, are global and so our feminist solidarities and responses must be too. An international feminist perspective recognises that it is women in the Global South, Indigenous women, peasant and working-class women are on the frontlines of the climate crisis. Solidarity is not the same as charity, it recognises that under systems of oppression no one is free until we all are. Solidarity flows horizontally, not from top to bottom.

FEMINIST TRANSNATIONAL SOLIDARITY MEANS "WHEN WE LISTEN AND GENUINELY FEEL FOR AND WITH EACH OTHER, WE ARE ULTIMATELY TRANSFORMED THROUGH THE REPAIR AND RENEWAL OF RELATIONS" PASCHA BUENO-HANSEN AND SYLVANNA FALCÓN

There are many examples of Irish movements and communities standing in solidarity with women and other marginalised groups on the frontline of the climate crisis. We explore these connections in this section and ask how we can continue to grow this feminist solidarity across borders.

## ACTIVITY:

### WOMEN ON THE FRONTLINES IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH



**Duration:** 1 hour – 1 hour 30mins

**Materials:** laptop, projector, access to internet, flipchart, pens

**Objectives:** Learn from and listen to voices of women from the Global South and their experiences of the climate crisis, build solidarity.

## STEP 1:

### WATCH THE WOMEN

#### WHO HOLD UP THE SKY (35MINS)

Women Hold Up the Sky documents resistance to extractive industries in South Africa, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Produced by African Women Unite Against Destructive Extractivism (WOMIN) it tells the story of exploitation of the natural world and the impacts on marginalised communities, especially women.

We learn how these groups are working to protect their land, bodies and rights.

As a group watch this 35 min documentary, available [here](#).



**STEP 2:**

**DISCUSSION.**

**(30MINS - 1 HOUR)**

Reflect on the following questions:

- What are the main impacts of climate injustice on these women's communities and lives?
- How is corporate power being resisted?
- Are there commonalities/ differences between experiences here in Ireland?
- How might we show solidarity with these communities?

FACILITATOR NOTE: USING A FLIPCHART NOTE SOME OF THE KEY CONCEPTS AND IDEAS FROM THE DISCUSSION. YOU MAY WISH TO HIGHLIGHT THIS IS NOT ABOUT CREATING HIERARCHIES OF WHO SUFFERS MORE. IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNISE THE UNEVEN IMPACTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE INJUSTICE AND THEN GO ON TO BUILD SOLIDARITY ACROSS DIFFERENCE AND UNITE IN A COMMON STRUGGLE AGAINST A GLOBAL SYSTEM.

YOU MIGHT WANT TO UNPACK SOME THEMES LIKE, RESISTANCE, GENDERED IMPACTS, ENERGY JUSTICE, NEOCOLONIALISM, FEMINIST SOLUTIONS, CORPORATE POWER.



#### CASE STUDY:

## THE ZAPATISTA JOURNEY FOR LIFE

In 2021 a group of Zapatistas came to Ireland with the **Journey for Life**. The Zapatistas are a revolutionary Indigenous movement from Mexico. For thirty years, the Zapatistas have lived autonomously in their own territory in Chiapas, south-west Mexico. They stand against neoliberal capitalism, patriarchy and colonialism.

During their time in Ireland they linked up with many communities who are organising for climate justice, gender justice, LGBTQ justice, housing rights, migrant justice, food sovereignty and more. These groups included CAIM (communities against the injustice of mining) a network of grassroots communities resisting mining across the island. This visit was a chance to learn from each other, share stories, and inspire each other to take action based on your own context.

Listen to a **podcast** about the Zapatistas produced by the Galway Feminist Collective. Read more about this visit and other visits from Indigenous Nations in this **blog post**.





## TOOLS AND RESOURCES:

### IRISH RESOURCES

#### AND NETWORKS:

- The Feminist Climate Justice Report, published by the Feminist Communities for Climate Justice project, provides a baseline review of Irish environmental and climate policy, focusing on its impacts on women and marginalised communities in Ireland.
- Community Law and Mediation offer legal advice and support for communities impacted by climate injustice.
- See the Women's Policy Group Northern Ireland briefing on climate justice and video on feminist climate justice in Northern Ireland.
- Environmental Justice Network Ireland have produced this manual for environmental justice.
- Latina Women Against Violence work to support migrant women facing violence.
- Anaka Collective is a group of migrant women organising in Belfast using creativity and community.
- Talamh Beo Women is a group bringing feminism to the network of agroecology and land workers in Ireland.
- CAIM: Communities against the injustice of mining is a grassroots network of communities across Ireland saying no to mining.
- CATU: Community Action Tenants Union works towards housing justice across the Island.

- Slí Eile is an anti-capitalist group organising for climate justice, they have hosted three climate camps in Ireland together with frontline communities in Kerry, Leitrim and around Lough Neagh.

### FEMINIST

#### CLIMATE ACTION:

- The Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN) women's speak database is full of stories from women on the frontlines of the fight against the climate crisis.
- Friends of the Earth International have produced this Gender Justice and Dismantling Patriarchy Booklet. Learn more about the Friends of the Earth International Gender Justice and Dismantling Patriarchy working group here.
- Women and food sovereignty: <https://www.wecaninternational.org/foodsovereignty>
- Gender climate tracker: <https://www.genderclimatetracker.org/>
- CARE's gender equality in national contributions: <https://careclimatechange.org/score-card-ndcs-gender-equality/>
- Intergenerational feminist climate justice: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDGcIPkgKhl&t=109s>
- WEGO's 10 policy recommendations from a feminist political ecology perspective.

## KEY MOVEMENTS

## AND ORGANIZATIONS:

- Chipko Movement (India, see Vandana Shiva)
- Greenbelt Movement (Kenya, see Wangari Maathai)
- Idle No More (Indigenous ecofeminists, North America)
- Women's Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN)
- Women, Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO)
- Women's Environmental Network (WEN)
- Kurdish Women's Liberation Movement- Jineoloji (a science based on feminism and ecology)
- The 'Brave Women of Kruščica' movement against hydro dam projects in Bosnia & Herzegovina.
- The anti-fracking nanna's in England opposing Cuadrilla fracking company
- Tiny House Warriors- Indigenous movement against extractivism and housing injustice
- African Women Unite Against Destructive Extractivism (WOMIN)

## BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ecofeminism- Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies
- Caliban and the Witch- Silvia Federici
- Disobedient Bodies: Reclaim Your Unruly Beauty- Emma Dabiri
- What White People Can Do Next- From Allyship to Coalition- Emma Dabiri
- Emergent Strategy- adrienne maree brown

## PODCASTS:

- Mothers of Invention
- The Zapatista Podcast: Lessons and Stories from Chiapas by the Galway Feminist Collective
- Earthcare Fieldcast
- Ecofeminism and anti-extractivism in Ireland podcast episode

## FILMS AND VIDEOS

- Daughters of the Lake/ La Hija de La Laguna- film
- Abuela Grillo- film
- Yintah- Film about Indigenous resistance to pipelines
- Women Hold up the Sky by WOMIN- film
- Short video for feminist climate justice
- Women of the Sperrins video (In Irish)





●● feminist communities  
●■ for climate justice