

ACTIVITY 5

THE CLIMATE GAME

Time: 40 minutes

Aims

1. To appreciate the wide range of unequal impacts that people experience because of the climate emergency.
2. To draw conclusions about the complex inequalities inherent in the climate emergency and strengthen understanding of climate justice.

Background

As explored in Activities [1](#) and [2](#), a key element of **climate justice** is **inequality**. One way to introduce this concept is through this '**Climate game**' activity. This is a variation of the '[Power Walk](#)' activity used in humanitarian training (pp. 58–62) and has been more recently adapted as a '[Privilege Walk](#)' activity. The basic methodology is similar and is flexible.

Running the activity

1. Give each learner a **Climate game** role card ([Activity sheet 5](#)). Explain that it describes a person somewhere in the world. There are 13 role cards altogether. You may remove cards or allocate cards twice or three times depending on the size of the group.
2. Learners should play the role described on their card but keep their role a secret from the other participants. Ask learners to spend a few minutes imagining the daily life of the person whose role they are playing. Tell them they will be answering questions in that role, but that there are no right or wrong answers. They should use their best judgement to decide.
3. Clear space in the room (or go outside) and ask learners to line up shoulder-to-shoulder facing you. Read out the [15 statements](#) one by one and explain that any learners who believe their character agrees with the person described in the statement should take one step forwards. If their character disagrees with the statement, they should stand still. Try to make sure everyone takes roughly the same-sized steps. It's not a race! Eventually the young people will be spread out depending on how many steps forward they have taken.
4. When you have finished reading through the 15 statements the group should be spread out across the space. Ask each learner to introduce

their role. Encourage learners to think they are standing in the correct place for their roles, in relation to others. Permit them to re-position themselves if they wish.

Follow up discussion

1. Discuss the **inequality** of the climate emergency. Who is impacted the most and in what ways? Who is impacted the least? Why do they think this is? Is this fair?
2. Each role is allocated a gender (e.g. **male** or **female**). Do learners think their climate game would have had different outcomes if they had been a different gender? Binary genders are suggested for this question to make it straightforward to answer. However other gender descriptors may be used, and the exercise may be adapted. Encourage class participation in the terminology you decide to use.
3. Ask learners whether they think any of their responses were influenced by the impacts of the **Covid-19 pandemic** as well as the **climate emergency**? The experience of living through the Covid-19 pandemic may influence learners' responses to some of the scenarios. For example, was the character in lockdown?) Allow learners to make their own judgements about this issue and encourage discussion.

CLIMATE GAME ROLES

Activity sheet 5

<p>Play the role of A teenage girl who's been excluded from school. You live in a housing estate next to one of the UK's busiest motorways.</p>	<p>Play the role of A jet-setting international businesswoman who exports tropical fruit from South America to European supermarkets. You live in a luxury villa on the beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.</p>
<p>Play the role of A male sheep farmer living in the Scottish Highlands. You use the farming methods you learned from your parents and grandparents.</p>	<p>Play the role of A female secondary school student living on a Caribbean island at risk of rising sea levels and frequent severe tropical storms.</p>
<p>Play the role of A skilled male worker in a car factory making petrol engine cars in a large British city.</p>	<p>Play the role of A male farmer with a small landholding in a central American country which has been affected by drought for the last six years. This year the rain has not arrived in time for you to plant your corn.</p>
<p>Play the role of A wealthy male lawyer who went to Oxford University. You live in a large house with a big garden on the edge of a pleasant British town.</p>	<p>Play the role of A teenage girl who dropped out of school and sells snacks on the street for a living. Your home is a shack built on stilts over a polluted lagoon in one of South Asia's largest cities.</p>
<p>Play the role of A female part-time hotel worker without any qualifications in a popular European holiday resort. You make beds and clean rooms.</p>	<p>Play the role of A fisherman living on the coast of a West African country where rising sea levels are eroding the beach and making the fresh water supply salty. You need the beach to land your catch of fish every day.</p>
<p>Play the role of A highly educated female office worker with a well-paid job in the IT sector in one of Africa's fastest growing coastal cities.</p>	<p>Play the role of A male nomad who herds cattle in the Horn of Africa (Somalia and Ethiopia). Water is becoming scarcer every year and you have acquired a gun to protect your community's water sources from outsiders.</p>
<p>Play the role of A low-paid female worker with basic skills at a new computer factory in a city in South East Asia.</p>	

CLIMATE GAME SCENARIOS

Resource sheet

Read out the scenarios one by one and ask learners to either take one step forward or stand still.

Take one step forwards if:

1. Up to now, climate change has affected your everyday life for the worse in some way.
2. Up to now, climate change has lowered your income or quality of life.
3. The climate emergency has disrupted your or your child's education in some way.
4. You expect to change your job in the next 10 years because of the climate emergency.
5. You expect to leave your home in the next 10 years because of the climate crisis.
6. You expect to have to move to a different country because of climate change.
7. You expect to be financially worse off in the next 10 years because of the climate emergency.
8. Your family faces the risk of hunger because of climate change.
9. The climate crisis is damaging the environment (nature and/or wildlife) in the community where you live.
10. Your lifestyle and job do not create significant carbon emissions.
11. Climate change makes it harder for you to get clean water for your family.
12. The climate emergency makes you more vulnerable to poor health or disease.
13. The climate crisis will have a big impact on your children.
14. The climate emergency places your life at risk.
15. I (your character) would become a climate campaigner or activist.