

LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY®

LEGO® Serious Play® as method for connecting to gender and climate justice' is created by Elizabeth Wright Veintimilla, in 2025.

This method is part of the online trainers hub, which is one of one of the key adult education tools developed in the multi-year collaboration entitled: **"Gender and Climate Justice: Knowledge for Empowerment", in brief COPGendered.** This project builds up tools and knowledge for learners to upskill themselves (in groups, individually or with a teacher) in the relationships between gender inequality and the climate crisis. This includes providing tools for adult education providers. The project which lasted for three years ended in November 2025.

The associations involved are in this project: WIDE+ (Europe), GenderCC-Women for Climate Justice/LIFE e.V in Germany, WIDE in Austria, GADIP in Sweden, KULU Women and Development in Denmark, Mundubat in Spain and CSCD in Bulgaria.

COPGENDERED PROJECT PARTNERS



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für Frauenrechte und feministische Perspektiven



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The current illustrations are provided by the author. The photos of people are taken with explicit consent by the participants during the COPgenderd transnational training in 2024. Consent has been given before or at the beginning of the event that is pictured. The picture at page 7 is of Elizabeth Wright Veintimilla who facilitated the workshop around the methodology at the training.

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LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® AS METHOD FOR CONNECTING TO GENDER AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The method will contribute to facilitate attitude and emotional shifts in participants by creatively exploring the links between gender inequality, climate change, and intersectionality through Lego® Serious Play® (LSP).



SUMMARY

Participants will engage in building LEGO® models as responses to challenge-questions designed to spark personal and collective reflection, creative storytelling, and shared meaning-making. This hands-on, inclusive process provides a safe space to explore the intersections of gender and climate justice, while also connecting these issues with diverse lived experiences and identities. Participants leave, not only with a deeper understanding of the issues, but also with a renewed sense of commitment and clarity about the actions they can take.

Time needed: 3 hours (with 2 short breaks)

Space needed: Room with tables to work on and 1 chair per person. Additional 2 tables to place materials.

Number of participants: 6-12 (if more participants, more facilitators are needed)

Age: 18+

Material needed: LEGO bricks/building blocks - make sure you have enough variety of bricks for the topics that are relevant to your workshop. And in addition: Flipcharts, pens, and post-its. This methodology is authored by an accredited facilitator with Lego® Serious Play®. In this context, the author recommend for specific kits, the LSP webpage - [click for link](#).

Material provided in this guide: potential challenge-questions as you can see in the detailed facilitation guide below.

Citation: [Lego® Serious Play®](#) (LSP)

FACILITATION GUIDE DETAILED DESCRIPTION

LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® (LSP)

This method uses a creative approach to enable reflection on complex topics. Scientific findings show that a variety of approaches, not least creative ones, are helpful in facilitating reflection and enabling insights and innovation. We subconsciously possess a wealth of knowledge that can be tapped into through creative methods such as LSP. Creative methods rely on our intuition and imagination, thus enabling new perspectives and possibly also new ways of understanding and solving problems. In LSP we can shape the world the way we want it to be.

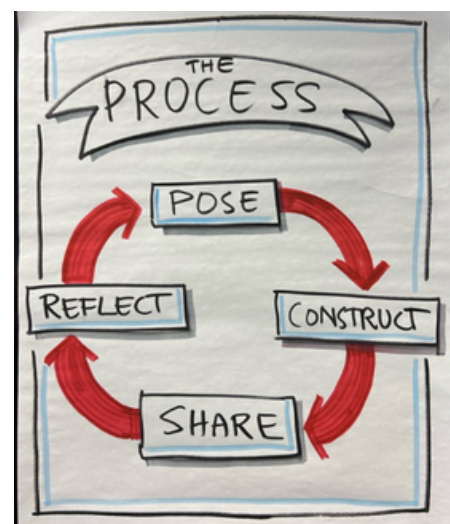
LSP is a facilitated thinking, communication and problem-solving technique for use with organisations, teams and individuals. It draws on research from the fields of business, organisational development, psychology and learning, and is based on the concept of “hands-on knowledge.” We often know far more than we realise, and that we live in a world that is neither linear nor predictable. By combining what we already know with what we can imagine, we can work intentionally and creatively to shape the world the way we want it to be. The purpose of LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® is to change “lean backward meetings” to “lean forward meetings”, where the result is more participation, more insights surfaced, more engagement and, ultimately, more commitment and faster implementations (<https://seriousplay.training/lego-serious-play/>).

BASIC INFORMATION ON LSP FOR FACILITATORS

LSP workshops work best when they're carefully tailored to the specific needs, challenges, and goals of your group. You can start by clearly defining the purpose of your session and by understanding who your participants are – their backgrounds, experiences, and expectations. Be specific about what you want them to explore or take away. For example, your objectives might include deepening understanding of how gender and climate issues intersect; identifying the gendered impacts of climate change in local contexts; or co-creating ideas for more inclusive, equitable climate action. Designing with clear intentions helps ensure the experience is both meaningful and impactful.

LSP follows a 4-step core process per challenge-question or prompt:

1. Pose the challenge: A powerful, open-ended question.
2. Build a model: Participants use LEGO® bricks to build symbolic models.
3. Share the story: Each person explains the meaning of their model.
4. Reflect and capture insights.



It is important not to conflate Step 3 (Share) with Step 4 (Reflect). In Step 3, participants should focus solely on explaining the meaning of their own individual models. Step 4 then opens space for collective reflection, guided by questions from the facilitator to draw out patterns, insights, and deeper understanding.

It is also strongly advised to build into the workshop some time with your group to build up the skills using the material. Not all participants will be familiar with using LEGO® bricks, especially for symbolic expression or storytelling. That's why the skills building phase is essential. It helps everyone feel comfortable with the materials while gently introducing the practice of thinking metaphorically. In this phase, participants learn to build, assign meaning, create stories, and practice active sharing and listening. It sets a safe, creative foundation before diving into the deeper themes of the workshop. This phase should never be skipped, as it is critical for enabling meaningful, inclusive participation throughout the session.

APPLICATION TECHNIQUES

Seven application techniques are the structured foundation of how the LSP method can be applied across different contexts. These techniques are designed to help facilitators choose the right approach based on the session's purpose—whether it's individual reflection, community dynamics, strategy development, or system modeling.

Here are the 7 Application Techniques of LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® (LSP):

1. Building individual models

Participants build LEGO® models that represent their personal thoughts, experiences, or understanding of a question or topic. The purpose of this technique is to encourage personal reflection and bring individual perspectives into the conversation.

2. Building shared models

After individuals build their own models, they work together to combine ideas into a single, unified model that represents the collective view. The purpose is to build alignment and shared understanding within a group or team.

3. Creating a landscape

Participants place their individual or shared models into a physical space to show relationships, patterns, and structures. The purpose is to visualize systems, networks, or organisational dynamics.

4. Making connections

Participants build LEGO® connections (literal links using large and narrow bricks or rods) between elements in the landscape to show how they influence or relate to each other. The purpose is to explore interdependencies, influence, and causality.

5. Building a system

This is a deeper extension of the landscape and connections, where the entire group co-creates a dynamic system model, often representing real-world complexity. The purpose is to understand and simulate how a system functions or how changes impact it.

6. Playing emergence

Participants simulate real-time changes or disruptions in the system (e.g., a new policy, market shift, or crisis situations, etc.), observing how the models respond and adapt. The purpose is to explore adaptability, resilience, and the impact of uncertainty or decisions.

7. Extracting simple guiding principles

From the models and stories built, the group identifies overarching insights or values that can guide future actions. The purpose is to derive actionable takeaways, shared principles, or strategic direction.

In a full LSP workshop, a facilitator might use multiple techniques and in different orders, but not necessarily all of them. Every technique requires to start with building individual models first.

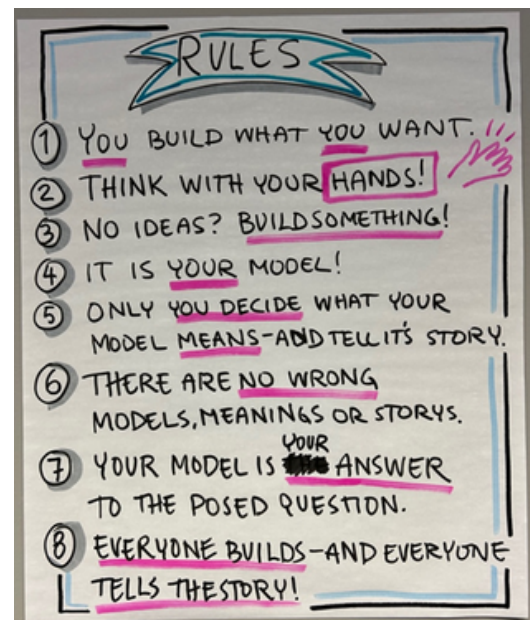
For further study and understanding, you can find a more comprehensive [LSP facilitators manual](#) online.

FACILITATION GUIDE

After a brief explanation of the LSP methodology, you will find now a facilitation guide for doing one workshop. The duration is 3 hours, and it makes use of the first four techniques outlined above:

1. Building individual models
2. Building shared models
3. Creating a landscape
4. Making connections

The step of the preparation is not further outlined, but obviously the materials for the session need to be available for the workshop, a flipchart, post-its and pens.



STEP 1: WELCOME (15 MINUTES)

This step is planned for 15 minutes: When you have your participants together in the room, you open the workshop and:

- Introduce the workshop purpose: exploring gender and climate justice intersections creatively.
- Explain basic ground rules: confidentiality, respect, openness, active listening.
- Briefly introduce LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® and its process.
- Share the 4-step LSP core process: Pose → Construct → Share → Reflect.
- Emphasize that there are no “wrong” models or answers.

STEP 2: SKILLS BUILDING — GETTING COMFORTABLE WITH LEGO®

This step is planned for 30 minutes: you facilitate the participants to get familiar with the materials, by doing an exercise in which participants build individual models. You give the following assignment:

- Challenge 1: Build a simple tower using only two colors and place a minifigure on top.
- Invite participants to share their towers briefly (What's special about your tower? Any choices you made or feelings you have about your tower?)
- Reflect briefly: highlight how different the models are even with the same challenge.

- Challenge 2: Build a model representing "Your ideal leader" or "An obstacle to change".
- Invite participants to share their stories.
- Purpose: build confidence using bricks metaphorically and storytelling skills.

STEP 3: PERSONAL REFLECTION ON GENDER (25 MINUTES)

In this step that lasts 25 minutes, you facilitate the application techniques of building individual models + building shared models. You give the following prompt:

- Challenge: "Build a model that shows a challenge that women face related to gender equality in your community."
- Build time: 5-7 minutes.
- Sharing round: Each participant explains their model (2 minutes each).
- Collective step: In pairs or small groups, participants combine elements of their models into a shared model reflecting common themes or shared challenges.
- Group reflection: Facilitator leads a discussion on common patterns, feelings, and emotional impact.

STEP 4: INTRODUCING CLIMATE JUSTICE

After practicing the techniques, you can apply it to the domain of climate justice intersected with gender. You start again with the technique of building individual models for 20 minutes. In this step you also explain the topics and their interrelationship very briefly:

- Brief introduction to climate justice by facilitator, focusing on gendered impacts (use simple visuals or metaphors).
- Prompt: "Build a model showing a challenge that women and gender-diverse people face that might get worse as the environment changes."
- Use visual aids to briefly show how climate impacts (like floods or heatwaves) can affect daily life.
- Encourage building from emotion and memory rather than facts or data.
- Participants build and share their individual models.
- Facilitator highlights diversity of impacts and experiences.

STEP 5: EXPLORING INTERSECTIONALITY — GENDER, CLIMATE & IDENTITY

In this step that requires 40 minutes you use three techniques: building shared models + creating a landscape + making connections. You facilitate the following:

- Prompt 1: “Build a model representing how gender inequality and climate change may intersect in your community, including perspectives of migrant women and LGBTIQ+ people.”
- Build time: 7 minutes.
- Sharing round: Each participant tells the story behind their model.
- Prompt 2: “As a group, arrange individual models into a shared landscape on the table showing relationships or overlaps.”
- Prompt 3: Invite participants to connect models to illustrate links and influences using long/narrow bricks (Making Connections).
- Reflection: What patterns emerge? What feelings or attitudes arise? How do identities and climate intersect?

STEP 6: ATTITUDE CHANGE & FUTURE SCENARIOS (25 MINUTES)

Step 6 requires 25 minutes, and the technique used is building individual models. It contains the following exercise that you prompt to the participants:

- Prompt: “What characteristics does a future where gender and climate justice are achieved look like?”.
- Build time: 7 minutes
- Sharing: Focus on emotional insights, hopes, and new attitudes discovered through building.
- Reflection: What changed? What barriers remain? What is possible moving forward?

STEP 7: ACTION PLANNING & COMMITMENTS

Step 7 also uses the technique of building individual models but lasts 20 minutes. You:

- Prompt: “Build a model representing one action you can take to support gender and climate justice.”
- Sharing: Each participant explains their commitment model.
- Document commitments on flipcharts or post-it notes.
- Encourage peer support for accountability and follow-up.

STEP 8: CLOSING REFLECTION & FEEDBACK

For the final step you have 10 minutes to do a closing, with:

- Round of “check-out”: Each participant briefly shares 1 key takeaway or shares an emotion, learning, or surprise.
- Thank participants and share resources for continuing learning.

FACILITATOR TIPS:

- Remind participants that diverse models and views enrich the learning space.
- Encourage deep listening during storytelling.
- Capture key insights visibly as well on flipchart, whiteboard, post-its, etc. even though the models are the key method to document what is shared.
- Include two short breaks in the 3 hours, keeping in mind the flow of the workshop.

FACILITATOR CERTIFICATION IN LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY®

Ideally, those who design and facilitate workshops using the LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® (LSP) methodology will be certified in the method. Certification ensures a solid understanding of its principles, structure, and ethical use. However, not everyone who is interested in using LSP may be able to access formal training, due to factors such as cost, time, or access to materials.



If becoming a certified facilitator is not possible, it is still valuable to learn more about the theory and mindset behind LSP and consider how its principles might enrich your broader facilitation practice. Another option is to collaborate with a certified LSP facilitator to co-design or co-facilitate a workshop.

- To find certified facilitators or explore more about the methodology, you can visit: www.lspdirectory.com

CONCLUSION

This guide is not intended to replace the full [LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® \(LSP\) Facilitator Manual](#) or a formal 4-day certification training. Rather, it offers a grounded, practical introduction to applying LSP in a workshop format focused on gender and climate justice – especially for trainers and activists who may not have access to formal accreditation.

By integrating LSP's core principles with intersectional feminist and climate justice perspectives, this methodology supports a shift from knowledge-based training toward emotional engagement, critical reflection, and collective meaning-making. Participants are not only invited to think about gender and climate, but to feel, visualize and even touch the links through creative storytelling and building metaphors.



Moreover, working with your hands helps tap into emotions and lived experiences —things that are often difficult to explore through just talking. Building and storytelling with LEGO® bricks also makes big, complex topics like intersectionality and climate change feel more approachable and tangible. When people reflect together and build shared models, they often uncover patterns and connections that might stay hidden in more traditional discussions. The LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® (LSP) helps level the playing field so that everyone in the room has a chance to be heard and contribute.

Finally, this adaptation remains a simplified version of LSP. Facilitators are encouraged to deepen their understanding of the method over time, through further reading, practice, or co-facilitation with certified facilitators.