

PARAT – CONSTELLATION GAME TO PROMOTE GENDER AND CLIMATE JUSTICE AWARENESS



'Parat – Constellation game to promote gender and climate justice awareness' is created by WIDE in Austria, 2025

WIDE is an Austrian network of NGOs and individuals who engage for women's rights and feminist perspectives in development policies and humanitarian aid. <https://wide-netzwerk.at/wide-austria/>

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 in this project are: 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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Center for Sustainable Communities Development



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Bildung Umwelt Chancengleichheit

wide Entwicklungspolitisches Netzwerk
für Frauenrechte und feministische Perspektiven



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LEARNED LESSONS

The game "Parat" is a roleplay game or constellation game, and therefore well suited to make the topic of climate and gender justice emotionally accessible to participants. In the way it is designed here, with a brief reflection phase, it will help the participants connect to the topics of gender and climate justice through role play in which they stand in the shoes of people differently affected by climate change. The method creates awareness around relevant coping & resilience factors and how structural discrimination affect these factors. It will open up discussion as a prelude to other kind of activities that enable deeper understanding of the interconnections of issues of discrimination (based on gender, disability, etc.), questions of justice, and coping with climate change and environmental degradation.

SUMMARY

Participants will put themselves in the shoes of another person by a role that they receive in which they are a member of the country Parat that has a significant indigenous population. They will imagine the life of another person in times of climate change and how this person can cope or not cope with climate change events. The game offers many different roles that create a nuanced pattern of people that are having more or less unique kinds of privilege and discrimination. These roles experience the same set of events in which people take a step forward if this event is a positive impact, and if negative, they take a step backwards. After the game there is a brief phase for reflection.

Time needed: at least 60 minutes

Space needed: Large room – this method needs a large open space; all participants need to line up in one row and then have space to move ahead in front of them or backwards.

Number of participants: for groups of 10-30 persons

Age: 16+

Material needed: In case the group is particularly large in number, a microphone might be good, and it will be helpful to print out the roles and info text.

Material provided in this guide: Role cards, Info text on the fictitious country "Parat", List of events in "Parat"

Citation: Adapted by Magdalena Meier (Catholic Women's Movement's Family Fast Day Campaign Austria) from a Turkish organization

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FACILITATION GUIDE

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

STEP 1: PREPARATION

When you plan the activity, it is advised that you make sure that the room offers enough space to carry out the game. You need to also print out role cards (a few sheets that you cut to each role) to fit the size of the group. And, if necessary, you sort the role cards in advance: which ones are relevant to represent diversity and injustice in any scenario? Which cards are less relevant? This reflection can lead to you inventing further roles, depending on what you know about the participants and the topic they will address.

STEP 2: INTRODUCTION

You will need around 5 minutes for this step. This is to welcome the participants and explain the game in general.

Explain, it is a constellation game, in which participants will receive a fictional role that they play during the game. Invite them to act if they would like to do so, but leave this as an open invitation, no acting skills are needed. You explain that they will receive information about where their role is in life and what happens to the character. You explain that participants decide how they would react to the events with this information. To play the game, their reaction might be taking steps forwards, backwards or remaining in the place that they are in, if they do not believe there is any significant impact on them.

You mention explicitly that participants are allowed to express their feelings during the game but should not tell who they are (their role). Then, ask the participants to line up side-by-side close to one side of the room, leave a bit of space behind everybody and a lot of space in front of everybody. All participants start from the same line.



STEP 3: GET TO KNOW THE ROLE

The participants receive their role description, which can be found further below in this guide. In case you have too many participants, pair them and give one role to two persons. Plan for around 5 minutes for this step.

Ask the participants to think about their role for a few minutes, imagining the story and situation for their character, without sharing this information with other players. You can give them the following questions:

- Imagine, how does your life look like? Where do you live and with whom? Are you with your family? What do you do in your free time?
- What do you do for work? Can you live well or badly on your income? What do you own?
- Do you have worries? What are you afraid of?
- What connections do you have with environmental protection?

STEP 3: PLAYING THE GAME

In this step the game starts, where you start with reading the background information about the country and then reading out the events to which the players take a step forward, backward, or stand still accordingly.

The background information:

“Parat is a small country. It consists of a highland in the north and a coastal region in the south.

In the 14th century, indigenous people founded a civilization that flourished thanks to the fertile farmland, fishing, and mining.

However, when the Europeans ‘discovered’ the country, freedom came to an end. The treasures were plundered and Parat became an English colony. With independence from India, other colonies also became independent, as did Parat.

In 1992, oil exploration was discovered and oil production began. In 2019, Parat held 12% of the world’s remaining oil reserves. The oil industry plays an important role in the country and is also very influential. Oil exploration in the southern coastal region has caused environmental damage and fishermen are losing access to the fishing regions, their livelihood. As a result, many people here live in precarious conditions. The income from oil extraction flows into the infrastructure of the modern capital San Parata.

Most of the people in Parat are at least partly of indigenous origin. A small minority still lives in the traditional way.”



Explain very briefly that now you will read out events, see the list further below, and the participants decide on their own assessment how these events affect the role/person they play, if they have options to cope with these events or not, thus moving forwards, backwards, or remain still. You can also remind the participants that they are allowed to express their feelings during the game.

After all the situations have been read out and all the participants have reached different destinations in the room, some participants might have nearly remained in the place that they started others might have moved far to the other side of the room.

Facilitation tip: make sure that participants do not feel stressed about right or wrong answers, emphasize there is no right or wrong, answers are up to the participants' imagination of what the person they play can do or can't do in the given event.

STEP 5: REFLECTION AND CLOSING CIRCLE

You should have at least 10 minutes for this part. After the game, tell participants that they now can let go of the role, they can take a deep breath or shake themselves if they want.

You can take more or less time for reflection. As this activity is planned in this method for an hour, the amount of time for this reflection is restricted. You can start by asking participants who they were and how/why did they get there (in front of everyone, in the middle or at the back)? And: 'How did you feel during the game?', 'Why?', 'What were your observations during the game?' You can start with those at the back, then those at the front, and then those in the middle.

You summarize major differences and similarities to end the session.

Now you ask the participants to sit down in a circle – get chairs or if persons are fine sit on the floor. Have a flip chart close so you can take notes from the following discussion. Ask: What are your reflections from what you heard so far?

Then invite the participants to focus on the specific reasons why different roles had difficulties to cope and were less resilient – prompt if gender roles, abilities & health, material resources, or education level were important in regard to coping and resilience, and if so, how? What could be ideas to improve coping and resilience of the people in this play? Summarize important ideas. Close with ideas that highlight the agency of persons/characters in the play to change the situation.

CONCLUSION

The game gives a lot of flexibility to adjust it to intersections and circumstances. You can also increase the time for reflection and make this a much more thorough part of the workshop, for example with small group discussions. And depending on the time and/or size of the room, you can decide to include only two steps: going forward and staying in one place. In the COPGendered participants played this in a room in which there wasn't that much room to move forward or backward. Even with only two options possible, the game led to major differences between people.

LIST OF EVENTS TO BE READ BY THE FACILITATOR TO THE PARTICIPANT ("EVENT PHASE")

- 1.It's a beautiful day. Take a step forward if you have the opportunity to go out with friends in the evening.
- 2.You are hungry. Take a step forward if you can afford enough as well as good healthy food.
- 3.Take a step forward if you live a full and interesting life.
- 4.Take a step forward if you are not worried about your future and that of your family.
- 5.Due to government budget cuts, the cost of doctor visits, medications and hospital stays will increase. Take a step forward if this is not a problem for you.
- 6.Prices for basic foodstuffs have been rising steadily for several months. Take a step forward if you and your family are not experiencing difficulties as a result.
- 7.A major hurricane is forecast for the next few days. Go one step ahead if you have enough food supplies at home.
- 8.The storm is coming closer. Take a step forward if you live in a safe house.
- 9.It's the day of the hurricane. Take a step forward if you receive the latest information via mobile phone or television.
- 10.The hurricane is terrifying. You all know people affected by the storm and the flooding that follows. All of you take one step back.
- 11.Your pulse beats strongly, your body is shaking. Take another step back if you felt the power of the storm on your own skin or if your children are still in shock and need all your care.
- 12.Take a step forward if your accommodation, your house is still able to be lived in.
- 13.There is little clean drinking water due to the flooding. Take a step forward if you can afford to buy enough drinking water for you and your family.
- 14.The next few months will be very hot. What the storm did not destroy in the fields is now visibly drying out. Take a step forward if you have no loss of earnings and can afford the more expensive imported food
- 15.Diseases are spreading rapidly due to the garbage. The health system is overloaded. Take a step forward if you still have access to private health services to protect yourself from infectious diseases.

16. Many people are still in shock, some houses will probably remain in ruins, others will be rebuilt. Take a step forward if your life is not much different today than it was before the hurricane.
17. Step forward if your job and lifestyle have contributed more to the climate crisis than most of your fellow players.
18. Take a step forward if you will still be feeling the effects of the climate crisis in 40 years' time.

ROLES FOR THE PARTICIPANTS (PRINT THEM ON CARDS THAT YOU CAN HAND OVER TO THE PARTICIPANTS)

- You are a European tourist traveling through Parat with a friend. Your parents finance your studies and with this trip, you have no financial difficulties. You are currently taking part in a yoga course lasting several days with participants from Australia and the USA in the south of Parat, about 2 days by bus from the capital. You are completely in love with the friendly people of Parat and the simplicity and hospitality you experience.
- You are a single Hollywood star who visited Parat for a movie shoot. Then you decided to settle down here. You often travel from one continent to another. You have four houses in different countries. You are currently relaxing in your house by the sea.
- Your grandparents already had trade relations with England. You became wealthy by exporting tar sands. You own two houses in the capital San-Parata and another in England, where your children attend boarding school.
- You are the mayor of a small town on the coast. You live in a house with a garden with your three children and your husband. The eldest child is currently working for the army in disaster control. Your husband exports the kiwis that Parat is so famous for.
- You are a wealthy man, single and chairman of a construction company and have both an apartment in the city and a house on the coast. Since Corona, you have mostly been working in your house, from where you can see the sea. During this time, a cook provides you with the delicacies of the fertile surroundings.
- You are male, in your mid-30s and a middle-income employee of an oil company. Your boyfriend works as a nurse in a public hospital. You live with your partner in an apartment – officially a shared flat – near the center of the capital. You keep your relationship hidden and receive support from your friends, but not from your family, which puts a lot of burden on you.
- You are in your early 20s, female, blind and live with your brother in the outskirts of San-Parata. Your parents live at the other end of San-Parata. Your well-earning, single brother finances your law studies but is rarely at home due to his job. You rely a lot on support in your life, which is mostly provided by employed assistants. In your free time, you like to meet up with friends and go swimming.

- You are male, 30 years old and work for a fast-food restaurant chain in the capital San-Parata. You can't afford the rent in the city, so you live with your wife and two children in your parents' house in the village and commute to work by bus.
- You are female, 28 years old and live with your husband in his parents' house in the country. Your husband must take the bus into town every day to work in a fast-food chain. You live off his salary and your parents-in-law's pension. You look after the children, the sick parents-in-law and the household. You can't earn your own income.
- You are a man, 85 years old and receive a small but adequate pension. You have already experienced a lot in your life. You live with your granddaughter, who looks after you. You have your own small room in her house in the center of the country. But the heat in it makes it hard to sleep, especially on hot days. The rising heat is particularly hard on you. And you also notice the changes in the small garden in front of the house.
- You are a 16-year-old young woman. Your family was affected by environmental disasters caused by oil drilling and had to leave their village when you were just 10 years old, which has left its mark on you. Today you live in an apartment on the outskirts of an industrial center, close to the capital. Your parents commute to the capital every day and earn a medium income there. You network online with environmental and climate activists at home and abroad and sometimes experience harassment for your commitment.
- You are a young woman and homeless. Your family sent you to the capital to earn money here. Now you live on the streets of San Parata and have to sell sex. You can't go back to your family like this.
- You are a farmer's wife with 3 children. You cultivate a small piece of land with your husband. You live in a fishing village in a small hut. You help haul in the nets and earn a little extra money. There is good solidarity in the village, so you are always getting offers to help out and earn a bit of money.
- You are a woman (25 years old) and have two small children. You fled with them from the civil war in a neighboring country of Parat and live illegally in the capital San-Parata. Your husband died in the war. You live with two other families in a small apartment and keep your head above water with mostly informal jobs.
- You are a single man in your 50s and live in the capital. Your only son is unemployed; you work as an employee in the construction industry and repair apartments in your spare time. You share an apartment with two other men so that you can afford the rent.
- You are a single mother with two teenage children, a son and a daughter. You work in a grocery store and earn just enough to feed your family. You live with them in a rented apartment on the outskirts of a small town. Your children long for more independence and spend a lot of time in the small town. You can't buy them a cell phone. You often worry when they are absent for a long time on.

- You are a female kiwi farmer on the coast. You can barely make a living. Because money is often tight and your daughter needs medicines for aids; your husband works in a neighboring country and only comes back at harvest time. Otherwise, you are on your own and have to look after your daughter who is handicapped.
- You are 75 years old, female. Your husband has died. You used to run a small farm with him. Watering the fields alone is becoming more and more difficult as you get older and your health is getting worse. You are dependent on the income from your farm. Your children live far away and occasionally send money when they have some left over.
- You are 12 years old girl, the daughter of an illegal immigrant couple. Shortly after you reached Parat, your parents separated, your mother fell in love again and moved away. Together with your little brother, you live in the capital with your dad, who became depressed and is unable to work. You are responsible for your brother and dad and try to earn money by stealing and doing odd jobs. The neighbor keeps offering to pay you for sexual services, but you refuse. You are still very afraid of him.
- You are female, 45 years old and live with your violent, stressed husband in an apartment in the suburbs of the capital. Your husband runs a food supermarket in the capital. He finances the life of your family of five. You couldn't afford to live on your own because he manages the finances, controls your spending and your free time. Since you got married, you haven't had any paid work and hardly have any contact with friends.