

THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

'The Climate challenge' is created by WIMEN, Austria, in 2025

WIMEN, in full: Women in Mobility, Energy & Environment Network, is a space for (interdisciplinary) discussions, for networking, exchange of experience and cooperation to raise awareness on gender in environmental issues, including around energy and mobility. It sets out to initiate change processes at the level of consciousness, through strategies of providing role models and multipliers for diversity, making female experts visible and working together to express collective, perceptible voice.

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, methods 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



Mundubat



Center for Sustainable
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KVINDERNES
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Bildung Umwelt
Chancengleichheit

wide Entwicklungspolitisches Netzwerk
für Frauenrechte und feministische Perspektiven



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THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This method raises awareness of climate change and other cross-cutting issues that may be chosen, such as gender justice. It not only increases awareness but also encourages participants to think about solutions and take action. It enhances a variety of skills, including teamwork, research, and presentation skills.



SUMMARY

The Climate Challenge is a method for gaining ecological knowledge and practicing eco-friendly behaviour through a challenge that is defined and selected by the participants. The objective is for a local supporter (or supporters) who is well-respected in the community and receives public attention to accept the challenge. The supporter(s) should offer the participants something that strengthens their motivation to complete the challenge and signals appreciation of chosen eco-friendly behaviour for the community's well-being. The method is process-oriented, meaning that a gender- and diversity-sensitive approach should be included by the facilitator when guiding the discussions as well as the group dynamics.

Time needed: This method requires the participants to meet more than one time. Facilitators would need to plan for a minimum of 1,5 days over a longer time span. The participants need:

- at least half day kick off workshop.
- Two hours presentation of the challenge to supporter to come to an agreement.
- Minimum half day for the implementation of the challenge.
- Two hours presentation of the results & appreciation/celebration.

Number of participants: 2-3 groups of about 5 to 10 persons per challenge works best.

Age: Young adults and adults

Material needed: This will depend on the challenges selected by the participants. We advise to make sure you have a small budget in case small purchases are needed.

Material provided in this guide: A checklist with questions for the preparation of the facilitators is annexed to help the facilitator.

Citation: <https://www.wimen.at/die-wimen-klimawette/>

FACILITATION GUIDE DETAILED DESCRIPTION

This method requires careful preparation by the facilitator. You will be working with a group of participants who are willing to engage over a period of time and meet regularly to achieve a self-selected challenge. It begins with identifying or forming such a group. In addition, you need to find a supporter or multiple supporters who will take on the challenge. Obviously the supporter(s) should be in agreement with the proposed method and be able to offer something in return.

This methodology has been practiced at schools with youth. In this context it is advised to already find one or more supporter(s) before you meet with the group of pupils. But this methodology can be done with other participants as well in which the group comes up with suggestions for supporters and then together with the facilitator decide and seek out the supporter(s).

Once commitment is established, this method can create a strong dynamic among the participants. They often become very enthusiastic, work hard to develop knowledge about environmental and climate issues or to practice eco-friendly behaviour, and actively engage with their supporter. Through the involvement of the supporter, the challenges often receive public attention and can motivate others to propose their own challenges as well.

STEP 1: PREPARATIONS

For this step we recommend the annex to help guide you. This is a checklist for the facilitators that is annexed to this facilitation guide.

- Find a group of people (participants) who are interested in engaging with and discussing ecological ideas as well as finding and practicing ecological behaviour in response to some environmental problems (e.g. class of pupils, people of an association); they will need to meet several times and work together as a group.
- Find a person of public interest who is well-respected in the community and able to attract public attention. This person (the supporter) should ideally be someone considered relevant by the participants (for example, the mayor of the community or a local celebrity) and be willing to support them. The person should also be committed to taking action to promote climate justice.
- Explain the idea to both parties. The participants should understand that, through a series of meetings or workshops, they will discuss ecological problems and ideas and define a challenge together that helps create ecological awareness and knowledge and/or promotes eco-friendly action. The supporter should be willing to offer something that strengthens the participants' motivation to complete their challenge and publicly acknowledges their ecological efforts.

STEP 2: KICK OFF WORKSHOP (3–4 HOURS)

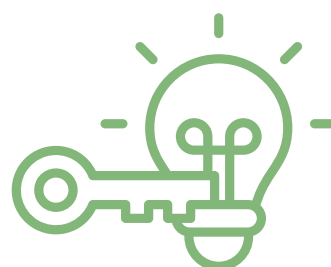
This is the first workshop, and it is with the participants only. The first workshop is for them to come up with challenges that would improve their knowledge about the ecology in their surrounding and eco-friendly behaviour.

1. Introduction and reflection on group: Welcome everybody and reflect together on the group's composition. Appreciate diversity and highlight the presence of people who are often not represented or are underrepresented in groups. Emphasize that people may sometimes feel unsafe expressing themselves due to group pressure or perceived roles they believe they need to fulfil. Encourage participants to remain open-minded during the workshop and to share their thoughts. Suggest that there are no wrong thoughts. Ask them which "ground rules" would help them feel welcome, equal, and able to express themselves freely. Write the agreed-upon rules on a flip chart to guide the rest of the process.



2. Explanation to the concept of challenge: Introduce the idea of a challenge once again and ask participants about challenges they have heard of. Invite them to share examples of challenges on any topic. Once the concept of a challenge is clear, explain that during this workshop they are invited to create challenges related to ecological awareness and knowledge, as well as eco-friendly action in response to environmental problems such as climate change. Inform them that there is a supporter for the challenges they develop and tell them who this person is. Explain that the supporter will offer something in return for their commitment to working toward and achieving the challenge they will in the end choose. The exact nature of this offer will be negotiated in a session with the supporter after this first workshop.

3. Exploration of the meaning of key concepts: Ask: "What is meant by ecology?". Invite participants to brainstorm and write their answers on a flip chart. Make sure it becomes clear that ecology is not only about nature itself, but also about our inter-relationship with nature. Prompt participants with questions such as: "Why is our interrelationship with nature relevant? What responsibility do we have toward nature? What problems do you observe in your surroundings? What are your thoughts on climate change?". Ensure there is sufficient time for discussion. It is advised to prepare sure relevant data—especially on climate change issues in your country—in case you need to provide additional input or factual background to enrich the discussion.



You can decide to add the gender inequality dimension, by asking what it means and how it is connected to climate justice. Obviously, questions can be: "Is everyone equally impacted by ecological disasters? Does everyone create the same amount of pollution? Are there differences in energy use? Who decides on the climate justice policies in your area, nationally and/or globally?".

4. Brainstorm and selection of challenge: After the previous steps, the group is ready to come to a decision on their challenge. Once the key terms (ecology, environment, etc.) are clear, provide a few examples of challenges that align with these concepts or that you have encountered before. Do not provide too many examples—just enough to inspire participants to develop their own ideas.



You can organize the brainstorming in different ways. For example, participants might first reflect individually, then share their ideas in small groups and agree on one strong proposal. Alternatively, you may collect all ideas in a plenary session and ask participants to vote for their two favourite suggestions. Regardless of how you organize the brainstorming process, ensure that the main points are addressed and provide clear guidance for developing ideas for the challenges.

The challenge should not be too simple. It should be carried out by a group and involve some research on their natural environment or on a specific environmental problem in their surroundings. If they choose to focus on an environmental problem, also consider possible solutions and whether they or other people can contribute to improvement (e.g., by changing certain behaviours). Make sure that all group members can participate and speak up.

Remember that the group will need to explain the challenge to their supporter. It must be clear what the challenge involves (What will you do as a group? What do you aim to achieve?), how and when it will be completed, and how you will demonstrate that it has been achieved.

Organize the session in a way that participants are exposed to more than one idea for a challenge and that the main ideas are discussed in the whole group. This discussion will help refine the ideas so that they become truly interesting and challenging for them. Ensure that participants have a choice and understand that engagement is voluntary. Remind them to be inclusive and to value different forms of contribution. At the same time, encourage them to choose a challenge that stretches them beyond their comfort zone.

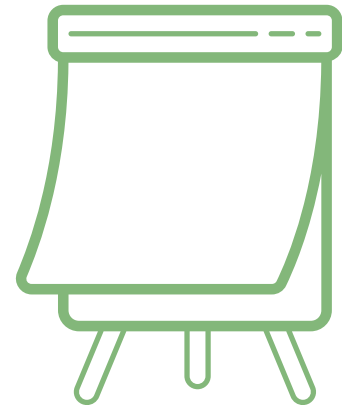
By the end of the session, make sure that environmental issues have been thoroughly discussed and that there is commitment to two or three challenges. Each participant should know which group they are part of and should be able to coordinate with their group members on how they will present their challenge at the next meeting. Explain what will happen during the next session and how participants can prepare—for example, by already deciding who will present their challenge and what the presentation will look like. Finally, set a date for the next meeting.

STEP 3: PRESENTATION OF THE CHALLENGES AND CONTRACT SIGNATURE (2-3 HOURS)

This session consists of a one or two-hour preparation by participants and one hour of presentation by participants to supporter(s), possibly in the presence of an audience. This meeting is focused on presenting the challenge(s) and signing the agreement. For this, the invitation goes to the participants and the supporter(s) and - if possible - you can try to invite also some further persons as audience members that are witnesses to challenge(s) agreed.

When you invite the supporter(s) you can inform them the general content of the challenges, so that the supporter can think about an offer for the participants that will motivate the participants to take on their challenges. The supporter has to state, "I believe that you will succeed in the challenge" and "if you really succeed and reach your goals, I offer you ...".

When coming together the participants should start and prepare their presentation of the challenge to the supporter, they should also put the “main points” of their challenge in written on a flip chart – these details should be included:



- What is the challenge about?
- What are the main activities that you will do? Will there be concrete outputs?
- The timeline of the challenge
- How will you document the challenge?
- When would the challenge be met? Who will check, or how can it be proven?
- Who is part of the group?
- What will you do in case you fail?
- What will the supporter do if the participants meet the challenge? Proves for fulfilment of the supporter’s contribution.
(Leave here space for the supporter/supporters to fill in her/his/their part)
- Signature of all participants and signature of the supporter/supporters.

The supporter(s) and possibly the audience will arrive when the preparation is ready. You can start then the formal part to the meeting. Explain the purpose of the meeting and give a short agenda:

- 1.Introductions
- 2.Presentation of the challenges
- 3.Q & A from supporter(s) and audience
- 4.Presentation of the offer of the supporter(s)
- 5.Negotiation of the offer with the participants
- 6.Signature of the contract
- 7.Closing

Put the signed contract in a public space where it is visible and can easily be followed up.

STEP 4: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHALLENGE (MINIMUM 3 TO 4 HOURS)

You should plan at least one additional meeting of three to four hours for the implementation. However, depending on how ambitious the challenge is, multiple meetings may be necessary.

Participants will work on their chosen challenge. Some challenges may require research to develop knowledge and create a knowledge product (a presentation, a quiz, etc.), while others may focus on practicing eco-friendly action. For both types of challenges, it is important that the facilitator also addresses how the challenge(s) and their outcomes will be documented (e.g., photos, recordings) and shared with others.





STEP 5: CHECKING THE RESULTS, PUBLIC APPRECIATION (2 HOURS)

In a final meeting the results are presented and there is an appreciation of the work done with a celebration. In case there is an audience for the presentation, you could decide to first have an internal meeting with the participants to come up with a presentation (following the guidelines in step 3).

- The group shows the results. The results are checked against the contract; the supporter, the facilitators and the other participants of this session decide if the challenge is met or not.
- Celebrate!
- Maybe discuss for a follow up of knowledge/behaviour after some time.

It is important to also plan how you will publish the results and where, such as local media, school homepage, homepage of association, etc.

STEP 6: THE SUPPORTERS CONTRIBUTION

In case the challenge is met by the participants, make sure that the supporters' contribution is also documented and proof of the contribution is shared with the participants.

CONCLUSIONS

It is most important to accompany the whole process as a facilitator – in order to fulfil the contract, stick to promises, value the attempt and the process.

It is also important to visualize the project timeline and milestones to all participants and be aware of the resources needed. The latter strongly depends on the challenge chosen.

The climate challenge brings together participants and the public. It may be fun working together and trying something new. Due to self-commitment out of free will by participants, new knowledge & behaviour might be picked up.

ANNEX: CHECKLIST FOR THE FACILITATORS OF THE CLIMATE CHALLENGE

The process depends very much on your preparation and facilitation! Think about the following in advance for the first meeting:

- Which group of people would be interested in participating?
- Note: If the participants are children, consider who needs to be informed and from whom permission must be obtained.
- Which person of public interest could serve as a credible and reliable supporter of the challenge?
- How much time do the participants have?
- If they have at least two days, focus on a knowledge-based topic. If they have three days or more, consider introducing a (new) behaviour that can be tried and practiced over a certain period of time.
- Explain the “contract” at an early stage. The main points are:
 - The challenge is a group decision.
 - A concrete result must be defined.
 - Participation is a voluntary self-commitment.
 - It is based on teamwork.
 - There is a defined time span with clear deadlines.
 - The agreement is confirmed with signatures.
 - Also explain why these details are important.
- The contract is an agreement among all group members to work together voluntarily as a team. Each member contributes to achieving the group’s result over the next XX weeks. By signing the contract, each person commits to this agreement.
- Knowledge or behaviour: Prepare some initial suggestions to support the discussion. Which themes are of interest to the group? What should be done? How often?
- Consider how changes in knowledge or behaviour can be measured in order to define and assess whether the challenge has been successfully completed. Who will be responsible for documenting progress and/or results?
- You will need to discuss with all group members: “Which kind of challenge will be chosen? What exactly will be done? How often? How will success be measured?”. You might want to plan already how this discussion could best be structured.
- Write the “contract” or challenge and its key parameters on a flip chart and complete it together with all group members.
- Everyone signs the “contract”. Display it visibly in a public space. This moment can be celebrated as a kick-off event!

Keep in mind during implementation of the challenge:

- Location for conduction
- Additional material/devices needed
- Documentation as well as material needed for documenting
- Contact person for help
- Plan some follow up to see if the group members stick to the contract
- Remember of timelines and deadlines
- Plan the coming together, book a location for the final event

Final event

- Contract is presented
- The group presents its results
- Assessment: is the challenge met or not?
- Celebrate and inform the public.