

CARING FOR AND DEFENDING LIFE



Caring for and Defending Life is created by Mundubat based in Bilbao, Spain, in 2025

The Mundubat Foundation has spent over 30 years working to transform a world in which, increasingly, the few take advantage of the inequality of the many. Apart from their important work in the Basque Country and other regions of Spain, they also work with several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Palestine, Western Sahara, Senegal and Mali. Mundubat's efforts are focused on four different areas: human rights, food sovereignty, gender and social action. Mundubat uses 'purple glasses' in all their work, as a means of revealing and deconstructing social structures and events that generate inequality.

This method is part of the online trainers hub, which is 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



Mundubat



Center for Sustainable Communities Development



KVINDERNES U-LANDSUDVALG
KULU - Women and Development



Bildung Umwelt Chancengleichheit



wide Entwicklungspolitisches Netzwerk für Frauenrechte und feministische Perspektiven



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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The workshop seeks to help participants reflect on their connection with Mother Earth and their personal experience of this, while developing awareness of the local ecosystems around them. It also aims to deepen the understanding of the interdependence between the earth, body, and territory. It also focuses on building strength for actions towards protection. Participants will practice imagining collective strategies of resistance and care and will be encouraged to commit to concrete personal or community actions that contribute to protecting and sustaining life.

SUMMARY

This method combines storytelling, observation, dialogue, and creative action through different short exercises that can be carried out in plenary or subgroups (depending on the number of participants and the kind of activity). Participants explore their relationship with nature through trees, water, and energy, while connecting personal memories with global environmental challenges. They also imagine strategies for defending life and with symbolic commitments for the future.

The method rests on symbolic and emotional engagement. Many of the themes—nature, memory, defence, resistance—can touch people deeply. Through using metaphors, simple rituals, or symbolic gestures (like the “seed of commitment”) people can make the experience memorable and embodied. The method is designed to keep the atmosphere light enough and encourages creativity and play.

Age: Adults of all ages

Number of participants: A minimum of 2-3 and a maximum of 20 participants is recommended

Material needed: Large sheets of paper or flipcharts, markers, coloured pencils, post-its, small cards for participants.

Time needed: at minimum 3 hours (can be shortened or extended by having shorter or longer breaks as well as reducing the time for each step). The breaks are optional, but we recommend regular breaks.

Citation: This workshop methodology is an adaptation of a pedagogical kit developed by Ara!Gorputz Cooperative within a Feminist Economics Schools project carried out with Mundubat in 2024. Parts of the exercises are drawn from:

- Body mapping from feminists and activists from Latin America adapted by Life - Bildung, Umwelt Chancengleichheit <https://life-online.de/>
- Mundubat's "[Escuelas de Economía Feminista en Euskal Herria](#)": Schools of Feminist Economics in the Basque Country - Learning from feminist economics and food sovereignty through Popular Education.

FACILITATION GUIDE

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

This method briefly outlines several exercises that could be applied separately as well. However, by combining them, facilitators can achieve the combined objectives set out for this workshop. To keep the facilitation notes concise, the exercises are described in general terms, without providing granular guidance. For detailed guidance that is especially beneficial to facilitators with no or very limited experience, we refer to other methods in the online trainers' hub. Given the more abstract description in this facilitation guide, we leave out the preparation phase. Obviously, facilitators will have made sure that the needed materials are available, and the set-up of the space is conducive to carry out the exercises.

The number of participants for this method varies greatly. This should inform decisions to organise of one or more collective reflection in sub-groups instead of a plenary reflection. We do not mention this consideration explicitly with each step, but kindly reflect on this dimension before the workshop.

This method uses a "**Body-Earth-Territory**" framework that encourages participants to explore the interdependence between their own bodies, their local surroundings, and the planet. Through techniques inspired by body mapping, participants physically and visually connect their lived experiences to different environmental themes.

The facilitator(s) guide the participants through a **participatory and experiential journey**, using storytelling and sensory observation to reconnect with nature. Reflecting on local ecosystems (such as trees, water, and energy use), they move from personal childhood memories to a critical awareness of current global environmental challenges. This process encourages emotional engagement through the use of metaphors and simple rituals.

The final sessions focus on **collective action** and the **defense of life**. The participants reflect on the struggles of environmental defenders from around the globe as well as their own strategies of resistance and community care. The workshop concludes with the symbolic gesture of "planting" seeds of commitment - to transform reflections into concrete personal and/or community actions.

STEP 1: ACTIVITY 'CONNECTING WITH MOTHER EARTH'

The **objective** of this session is to create trust, set the tone, and connect participants with their memories of nature. The **materials** you will need are a large sheet of paper or mural paper, markers, colored pencils and glue.

The opening session consists of the following **steps**:

1. Icebreaker: invite participants to sit in a circle. Ask: *What feeling or other thought comes to you when you think of Mother Earth?* Each participant shares one word.
2. Recollection: Each person shares a childhood memory connected to nature.
3. Collective memory map: On the mural, participants draw, write, or paste a symbol, illustration or image of the shared memories.



STEP 2: ACTIVITY 'CLOSE OBSERVATION – TREES AND THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT'

The **objective** of the second session is to foster awareness of trees and their role without leaving the room. For this session you will need the following **materials**: samples (leaves, branches, seeds, bark), or printed/tree photos; as well as paper, sticky notes and pens. We recommend natural samples, but if no natural samples are available, use photos or digital projections.

This session consists of the following steps:

1. **Sensory exploration:** Pass the samples around and ask participants to notice textures, colors, and smells.
2. **Classification:** As a group, organise items on a table by shape, color, texture, or memory. Make sure the groups are small enough to enable a role for each group member.
3. **Group reflection:** What role do trees play in our lives, even when we're not outside?
4. **Optional:** there can be a brief presentation of the small group reflection in the plenary (in case the group is split up into smaller sub-groups).

STEP 3: ACTIVITY 'WATER – WE ARE WATER AND WE DEPEND ON IT'

The **objective** of this session is to encourage the participants to reflect on their own and our society's relationship with water. The third session consists of a guided conversation, and therefore, no specific **materials** are required.

First part – Collective reflection: With guidance from the facilitator, the following questions are answered by the participants:

1. Where does our drinking water come from?
2. Who manages it?
3. How do we use it at home?

Second part – Symbolic dynamic: After the questions above have been discussed, each participant shares one word that links their body to water.

STEP 4: ACTIVITY 'ENERGY – VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE'

The **objective** of this session is to highlight the duality of energy and its many forms. As the fourth session consists of a guided conversation, no specific **materials** are required, besides a flipchart and markers. The participants will reflect together by following these **steps**:

1. **Reflective round:** What do we use electricity for in everyday life?
2. **Energy mapping:** Identify the different types of energy we use (electric, physical, emotional, communal) and put them on a flipchart (this can be structured as a mind map).
3. **Discussion:** What do we know about renewable energies? How can we promote their use at home or in our communities?
4. **Consciousness exercise:** Each person observes their own "personal energy" that day, how it feels and what affects it. You can suggest participants to use the room for this exercise by finding a good spot and position in which they are relaxed; then you can ask them to close their eyes and connect with their body (for example, ask them to feel their feet, legs, etc.), before asking them to feel their personal energy in their body.

STEP 5: ACTIVITY 'RELATIONSHIP – EARTH, BODY AND TERRITORY'

This session is an **experiential workshop** divided into three parts. The **objective** is to reflect on the connections between earth, body, and territory. The **materials** you will need are a large sheet of paper or mural paper, markers, colored pencils and glue. These are the three parts and their respective **instructions**:

- *Body:* Do a movement or breathing exercise, if possible, outdoors, connecting with the ground, else inside.
- *Earth:* Write down a natural element and share its meaning with another participant.
- *Territory:* Create a collective map showing where participants live and how they connect with their surroundings.

Guiding questions: How do these three layers (Earth, body, territory) relate? How can we strengthen them?



SIXTH STEP: ACTIVITY 'MEMORY AND DEFENCE – LEARNING FROM STRUGGLES'

In this session, the **objective** is to recognise the diverse struggles of environmental defenders worldwide and critically analyse the strengths and challenges of movements protecting life today. There are no specific **materials** required, though some sub-steps can be carried out with flipcharts and markers or post-it notes. These are the **steps** for this session:

1. **Group dialogue:** Identify environmental struggles and defenders from around the world.
2. **Mapping current struggles:** Recognise people, groups, or movements who are protecting life today
3. **Collective analysis:** What are their strengths? What are their challenges?
4. **Imagining taking action:** Imagine all the trees in your neighborhood will be cut down to make space for a parking lot:
 - o How would you feel?
 - o What would you do?
 - o What strategies could be effective to defend life?
 - o Who would you ally with?
 - o What creative forms of resistance could emerge?
 - o NOTE: This final step could be further developed into a role play with different stakeholders.

CLOSING STEP – ACTIVITY 'COMMITMENTS AND COLLECTIVE ACTION'

In the closing session, the **objective** is to motivate the participants to take action. We want the participants to feel inspired when they leave this workshop and encourage them to reflect on the process. The **materials** needed are post-its or paper, pens or markers and optionally a pot. The closing session contains the following two parts:

1. **Seeds of commitment:** Each person writes down a personal or collective action (e.g. planting a tree, saving water, supporting an environmental campaign). These are then symbolically “planted” (in a pot, on a mural, or in a symbolic circle).
2. **Closing circle:** Each participant shares one word about what they take from the process.

