

SESSION 4

THE CLIMATE GAME

Objectives

- To appreciate the wide range of unequal impacts that people experience because of the climate emergency.
- To be aware of some factors that might affect how someone is affected by climate change.
- To develop understanding of the concept of climate justice.

Time

- 40 minutes

What you need

- This activity is best carried out in a large open space. You might like to use the playground or a sports hall.
- Cut up copies of the [Climate game role cards](#)

What is a Climate game?

As explored in Sessions 1 and 2, a key element of climate justice is inequality. One way to introduce this concept is through this 'Climate game'. 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.



Photo: Shaikh Ashraf Ali/Oxfam

Starter

1. Show learners this photograph of homes in a refugee camp in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh (provided below and on slide 10). Heavy rainfall here has led to severe flooding and landslides. Extreme weather events, such as flooding, are becoming more frequent because of climate change.

2. Explain that flooding has devastating consequences for the lives of people in the UK and around the world every year. However, some people are affected more than others. Discuss possible reasons for this. For example:

- Some people live in poorly constructed homes which are more likely to be damaged or destroyed by flood waters. Other people live in sturdier housing that is more resistant to flooding.
- Some people don't have a choice about where they live and are more likely to have homes along low-lying coasts or flood plains of a river. Other people live on higher and drier land that is less likely to be flooded.
- Some people don't have any insurance or savings to fall back on if their homes and belongings are destroyed by a flood. Other people will have this support.
- Some people live in countries or places with better emergency services, flood protection schemes and advanced flood warning systems. Other people don't.

Main activity

1. Tell learners they are going to play a game to help them think more about why climate change is impacting some people more than others — why who you are and where you are in the world matters.

2. Organise learners into pairs or groups of three and ask them to line up at one end of the room or learning space (you might want to go outside).

3. Give each pair or group one of the [Climate game role cards](#). Explain that it describes a person somewhere in the world. There are 14 role cards altogether. You may remove cards or allocate cards more than once depending on the size of the class.

4. Learners should play the role described on their card but keep their role a secret from others in the class. Ask learners to spend a few minutes imagining the daily life of the person whose role they are playing. They could also think of a name for their character.

5. Tell learners that 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.

6. Read out the 13 statements in the [Climate game scenarios](#) resource sheet 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!

7. Eventually learners will be spread out depending on how many steps forwards they have taken. Invite each pair or group to introduce their role. Encourage learners to give reasons for their decisions about how many steps they took. Ask whether learners think they are standing in the correct place in relation to others? Permit them to re-position themselves if they wish.

Make it more difficult

Give each learner their own [Climate game role card](#) and ask them to act the role individually.

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 you think this is? Is this fair?
2. Explain that climate change affects everyone, but that some people will be impacted more than others. This might be because of where they live or who they are. If learners completed Session 3, they could be asked to think about the different, overlapping identities their character has – for example, gender*, education or profession. How do you think your character’s position in the game might have changed if one or more of these identities had been different? For example, do you think the position of your character would have changed if they had been a different gender?
3. Make the point that it is the people who contribute the least to climate change who are being impacted the most.
4. Explain that there is also inequality in the barriers people face in having their voice heard and being able to have a say in decisions that affect them. Do you think your character’s ideas and opinions will be listened to and respected by others? Why/Why not?

* Binary genders have been used in this set of role cards. However, other gender descriptors may be used, and the cards may be adapted. Encourage class participation in the terminology you decide to use.

CLIMATE GAME ROLE CARDS 1

Activity sheet

Play the role of

A 12-year-old boy who dropped out of school and now 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.

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 the city of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil.

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.

Play the role of

A 13-year-old girl living in a small village in rural Ghana. You have a disability which makes it difficult for you to walk long distances. You would like to be a doctor, but you had to drop out of school last year. The nearest secondary school is in the next town, and it's too far for you to walk.

Play the role of

A man working in a car factory making petrol engine cars in a large British city.

Play the role of

A female farmer with a small amount of land. You live 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.

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.

Play the role of

A 10-year-old girl who lives in a housing estate next to one of the UK's busiest motorways.

CLIMATE GAME ROLE CARDS 2

Activity sheet

Play the role of

A man who looks after a herd of cattle. You live in Ethiopia. Unpredictable rainfall means that water is becoming scarcer every year. You need to walk further and further to find enough water.

Play the role of

A fisherwoman living on the coast of a West African country. Rising sea levels are eroding (wearing away) the beach and making the fresh water supply salty. You need the beach to land your catch of fish every day.

Play the role of

A male office worker. You have a well-paid job in the IT sector in one of China's fastest growing coastal cities.

Play the role of

A female engineer who is helping to build wind turbines off the coast of Yorkshire in England. You are paid well but it is difficult work. You live on a ship in the North Sea for two weeks at a time, working 12-hour shifts.

Play the role of

A 9-year old boy living on a Caribbean island. Land is disappearing because of rising sea levels. Tropical storms are happening more often and becoming more severe.

Play the role of

A 75-year-old woman living in a small village in the mountains in Nepal. You live with your son and his family. You have noticed the climate change over the years. The rain is becoming more unpredictable. Flooding and landslides last year damaged homes and farmland in your village.

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

Take one step forwards if:

1. Climate change is affecting the life of you and your family.
2. Climate change is making it difficult for you and your family to grow enough food to eat.
3. You expect to change your job in the next five years because of climate change.
4. You expect to leave your home in the next five years because of climate change.
5. You expect to have to move to a different country because of climate change.
6. If you lose your way of making an income, it will be difficult for you to find other work.
7. Climate change is damaging the environment (nature and/or wildlife) in the community where you live.
8. Your lifestyle and job do not produce high carbon dioxide emissions.
9. Climate change makes it harder for you to get clean water for your family.
10. The climate crisis will have a big impact on your children.
11. You don't have savings to fall back on if life gets difficult.
12. If there is an emergency, you can't rely on the emergency services to come and help you and your community.
13. Your thoughts and opinions are often ignored by others.