

CLIMATE ACTION

RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS AND FACILITATORS



Climate Action

Climate change has been described as “the challenge of our generation”. As well as being an environmental issue, climate change is also a barrier to achieving justice and equality. The worlds poorest communities who are contributing least to climate change are feeling its impact the most. Use this resource to explore what climate change is, how it is impacting on vulnerable communities and what your students can do to take action.

What is the difference between weather and climate?

- Weather - The state of the atmosphere at a particular place and time – e.g: day to day weather (heat, wind, rain)
- Climate - The weather conditions prevailing (regular) in an area in general or over a long period (e.g. in summer it is hot in the south of Spain)

Definitions from Oxford English Dictionary



WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE?

Climate change is a long term shift in the planets weather patterns or average temperatures.

The climate is what we expect the weather conditions to be like at a certain time and place (e.g. hot and sunny in the south of Spain in summer, cold and rainy in Ireland during winter) but as the average temperature of the planet increases, these patterns are changing.

The **United Nations** defines climate change as: “a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods”.



1. Radiation from the sun warms the earth
2. Some heat escapes into space and some is trapped by the atmosphere
3. CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels trap heat in the atmosphere increasing average temperatures
4. Increased CO₂ emissions mean an increase in global temperatures (i.e. our planet gets warmer)

Climate change facts

- Human activity has increased the earth’s average temperature by about 1 °C. (IPCC report 2018) Scientists have said that keeping this increase to below 1.5 °C is the ‘safe limit’ of climate change to avoid catastrophe
- Over 1.5 °C increase means impacts such as significantly higher sea levels, less ice in the Arctic, more plant and animal species facing extinction, more extreme weather, among others. (BBC News)
- Global sea levels have increased around 1.78cm in the past 100 years. This doesn’t seem like a lot but if you think about how much of earth is made up of water, it’s a huge amount! (NASA – vital signs of the planet)
- Climate change will impact our health – unpredictable weather means that food production may become more difficult causing hunger and malnutrition, warmer temperatures mean that mosquito borne diseases (malaria, dengue fever) may spread further across the world and extreme temperatures impact most on vulnerable people like the elderly and infants




All of these will impact on the worlds poorest communities who because of geographical location or a lack of financial ability to adapt or cope with their consequences

Climate change is a global problem

Since the industrial revolution (1900s) humans have been burning fossil fuels at a colossal rate to power industry, transport and production. Since the 1950s this has increased further. To understand how we can take action on climate change, we need to understand how and why we have got to this point.



ACTIVITY ONE: Global Development

 15 minutes

Need:

- A sheet of A3 paper for each group
- Pens
- Students into groups of four or five

Instructions:

1. Divide and distribute pens and paper and instruct each group to draw picture of the earth in the middle of their sheet of paper
2. Next, give students around ten minutes to write/draw around the world all the ways that it has changed since 1950. This can include technology, social changes, laws, the way people live, etc.
3. Ask students from each group to feedback to the class some of the ideas they have come up with
4. Finally, ask students how they think these have had an impact on the world's fossil fuel usage. How do we need to change now and going into the future to protect the environment and people from the impacts of climate change?

Note: Since 1950 more people globally have had greater access to disposable income meaning that rates of consumption have increased. Factories, plastics, mining, technology etc. all rely on fossil fuels. Most of our electricity comes from coal and gas which is still a problem for 'green' technology like electric cars.




Did you know?

Around two thirds of the electricity we use in Ireland is from fossil fuels (coal, oil, gas, peat).

(SEAI, Renewable Energy in Ireland 2019)



ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITY: Our footprint on the earth

 15 minutes



For younger students, it might be more helpful to get them thinking about things that produce CO2 emissions. Here is an alternative activity one.

Need:

- Three sheets of paper per group
- Red, green and black pens
- Students into groups of up to five

Instructions:

1. Give each group three sheets of paper and pens and ask groups to write a title on each of the sheets - Our school, Ireland, The world - and underneath each one draw a big food print
2. In **red** inside each footprint, students will write or draw the things that each group do or use which produce carbon emissions (e.g. transport, what we eat, products).
3. After five minutes, prompt students to share a few of their ideas with the class. Explain that these are called emissions and these are the problem.
4. Next, tell students that they are going to come up with some solutions. In **green** next to each of the emissions they have identified, they will write down a way we can change to reduce or omit these

Debrief and discussion:

- How much change is needed to take action on climate change?
- Who has the most responsibility to take action?

The impact of a Climate Change



JamilahSomaliGirl



Rains haven't come yet and it's been so dry. Looks like we won't be going back to our home any time soon as yet again it's another failed harvest. I miss my friends and mum & dad are so worried about making sure we have money to buy enough food 🙏😞👨 #drought #climatechange #home #Farminglife #displaced



VictorMalawi2006



Can't believe how big Cyclone Idai was! Biggest cyclone to hit this part of the world ever they are saying. Homes gone, roads are gone, we're in this camp. What next? Is this what climate change means for Malawi? 🌪️🐼 #Climatechange #displaced #home #CycloneIdai



LouthLadLiam



Great to take part in the Schools Strikes for Climate in Dublin with my TY campaign group! Taking action on climate change to protect our beautiful planet is so important. It is starting to impact us here in Ireland too – when will the adults wake up?? #FridaysForFuture #ClimateEmergency #ClimateActionNow



RabiaInPakistan




Check out our solar water pumps in our village! No more walking hours each day to fetch water now in the heat. This will really help our community - making sure everyone has enough to eat, keeping away disease and for women who will save so much time not having to walk to collect water. The climate is changing and it's getting dryer – but this is helpful for now. Who knew water was so exciting? #ClimateChange #Water #Life

PHOTO CREDITS:

1. Severe drought across the Horn of Africa has forced thousands of families to leave their homes in the countryside and seek help near urban centres. March 2017/Keiran McConville
2. Gavin Douglas/ Concern Worldwide/27th March 2019
3. 15th March 2019/RTÉ News. Student Climate Strike in Dublin
4. Paylaaj from Satla Bheel village is filling water container from the newly installed water plant. Photo: Black Box Sounds/ Concern Worldwide/Sept 2017

ACTIVITY TWO: The impact of Climate Change

 10 minutes

This activity could be used to introduce how climate change is changing people's lives. This activity can be completed by individual students in class/for homework, or in groups.



Need:

A copy of the Instagram posts from page four for each group/student (or have them displayed on the board)

Instructions:

1. Ask each student/group to take a look at the Instagram posts
2. Give them a few minutes to try and work out and make a note of the following information from each post:
 - Who posted it?
 - Where are they from?
 - How old do you think they are?
 - What else can you work out about their life?
 - How is climate change impacting their life?
3. Ask a few groups/students to feedback their discussion to the class

Debrief and discussion:

Ask students to reflect on/discuss these questions, and then share with the class

- How is climate change having an impact on people's lives?
- Is climate change impacting on everyone equally?

Extension and follow up activities:

- Research one of the countries mentioned in the posts and find out how climate change is impacting on people's lives there. The [Concern website](#) is a great place to start!
- Using your research, write a story or make a story board about one of the young people who posted to show how a changing climate is impacting their lives
- How is climate change impacting on people's human rights? Read the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) to consider how climate change impacts on access to rights
- Find out how will climate change impact on the things that you like and enjoy



Climate action is one of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals set by the United Nations in 2015. If we do not work together globally to take action on this issue, it will be impossible to reach the other goals. Water access, food production, where humans are physically able to live, being able to go to school, how healthy we are determined by the environment in which we live. [Urgent action by governments and businesses is needed now.](#)



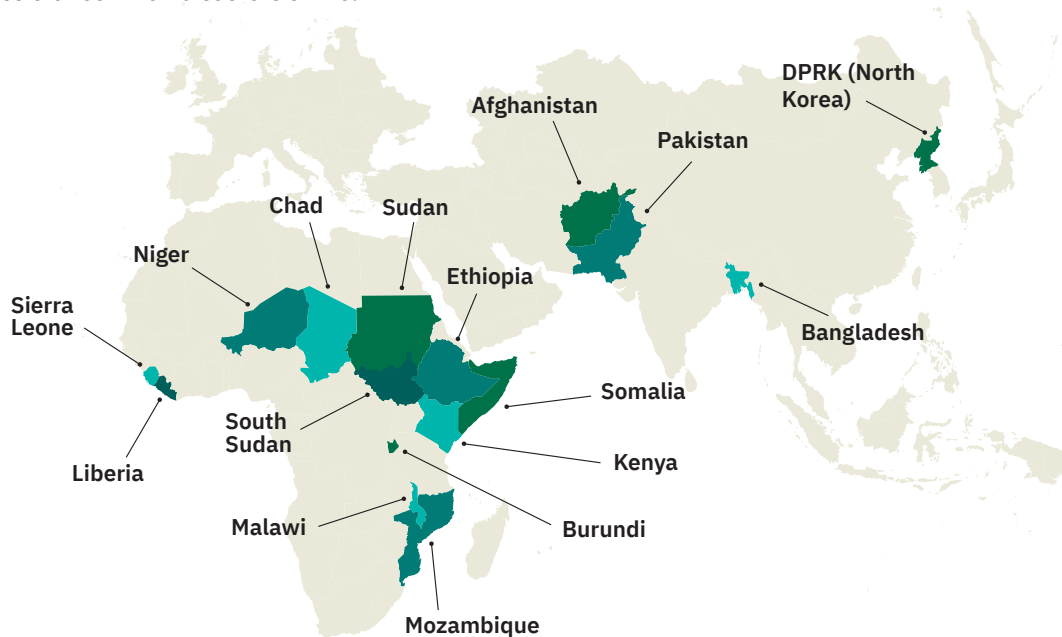
“I want you to act as you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if our house is on fire. Because it is”.

Greta Thunberg - Speech at the World Economic Forum 25th January 2019

Concern and Climate Change

Concern are working in the world's poorest communities, many of which are feeling the impacts of climate change. This is due to a combination of geographical location, weather events getting more intense and poverty limiting people's ability to respond and prepare for weather shocks.

We are working with communities and local organisations to support people in preparing and responding to climate change, as well as supporting with emergency assistance when disasters strike.



Climate smart agriculture



- DPRK
- Malawi
- Niger
- Republic of Sudan
- Somalia
- South Sudan

Emergency response to climate related disasters



- DPRK
- Malawi
- Mozambique
- Niger
- Somalia

Disaster Risk Reduction and resilience



- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Burundi
- Chad
- DPRK
- Ethiopia
- Haiti
- Kenya
- Liberia
- Malawi
- Niger
- Pakistan
- Republic of Sudan
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- South Sudan

Climate Smart Agriculture

These are agriculture approaches and methods that sustainably increase the amount of crops that a community can produce. These provide ways to adapt to changes in the expected climate in the short term (to storms, intense heat, flooding) and in the long term to adapt to a different climate (more or less rain, increased temperatures year on year). Climate Smart agriculture also aims to reduce emissions and impacts on the land as a result of farming. This aims to ensure that communities can cope and overcome negative impacts due to a changing climate – these impacts include hunger and poverty.

Places face different challenges so this looks different across the world. However, it might involve changing and diversifying crops, harvesting rainwater, keeping soil covered with organic matter to keep moisture in – amongst other things!



Emergency response to climate disasters

Climate change doesn't cause storms, floods, droughts or heatwaves but it is causing them to occur more frequently and severely which means they have a bigger impact on people's lives. Concern supports communities when disaster strikes.

Emergencies can happen anywhere in the world and on the map are a few examples of our recent responses to climate related emergencies. This may involve providing food and cooking equipment, clean water and sanitation facilities, materials for shelter as well as helping to support rebuilding.



Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience (DRR)

We are working with communities to reduce the risk of present and future hazards (flooding, droughts, etc) which will have a negative impact on their livelihoods health and access to food and education. It is about working with different parts of society - from individual to national level to make sure that there are things in place to avoid disaster, cope with unpredictability and support those who face the challenges the unavoidable hazards bring.

Some of these projects might include people diversifying their incomes, improving housing and protecting land through drainage systems and agroforestry, and communities developing early warning systems and plans (e.g. announcements on the radio).



ACTIVITY THREE:

Climate Response

 15 to 20 minutes



Use this activity to get students thinking about how extreme weather events impact on people's lives. This can be used to extend activity one, or used separately. Let students use their imagination in this activity to consider how unpredictable weather events can be complicated or made more challenging by how wealthy a person is.

Need:

- Students in groups of three or four
- The Instagram posts on page four printed and cut out with one available for each group
- A dice for each group

Instructions:

1. Give each group an Instagram post and ask them to read through it. What do they know about the person and what is happening in their life? (You might wish to give students time to research the country or situation that is mentioned to flesh out this activity)
2. Explain to students that climate change has no boundaries. Although some places are more impacted than others, we all share the planet and anyone can feel its effects. Give each group a dice and a copy of the key below or display this on the board. Tell students that these represent situations that people can suddenly find themselves in due to their climate changing.
3. As a group they will throw the dice, and then they will need to imagine this event happening to the person in their post. They need to discuss the impact on the person and their community, and how they might cope with this. This can be written down or just discussed. Round one lasts five minutes.
4. After five minutes, ask groups to feedback and share their experiences and thoughts
5. Next, give each group one of the situation cards which will provide a twist in their scenario to bring into the game. Ask the students to continue rolling the dice, this time taking into account the situation on their card
6. After five minutes, ask the class to feedback and share their experiences and thoughts

Debrief:

- Who is most impacted by climate change?
- Why are different communities better able to cope with weather stresses and shocks?
- How would your community cope in these situations?

Note: The situations on the card are applicable for any of the Instagram posts as all countries in the world face inequalities. Use different combinations of them to really help students understand the relationship between wealth and injustices caused by climate change.



SITUATION CARDS

Your family is wealthy – you have savings in the bank, a good place to live and your father works for a multinational company
You have support from a charity to ensure that your family have enough to eat and in training opportunities
Your family is not wealthy and food is scarce. The head of your household is female and your sister has a long term illness
Your country breaks out in conflict – money becomes very tight, you have to leave your home to go to another part of the country and three family members are recruited to the army

DICE KEY



1. Flash floods hit your community
2. No rain falls for three months
3. Food prices increase 50%
4. A hurricane is forecast
5. A wildfire breaks out
6. A new disease breaks out that isn't usual for your country

Take Action



Climate change is a **BIG ISSUE** that plays a part in:

- Increasing levels of hunger
- Reducing access to safe and clean water
- Giving people no choice but to move from their homes due to extreme weather events (too much/too little rainfall, storms, heat)
- Leading people into poverty, or trapping them there



...And as a consequence of these takes away peoples dreams, opportunities and rights

By taking action on climate change, you are taking a stand against the issues above and showing solidarity with all those impacted by this crisis.

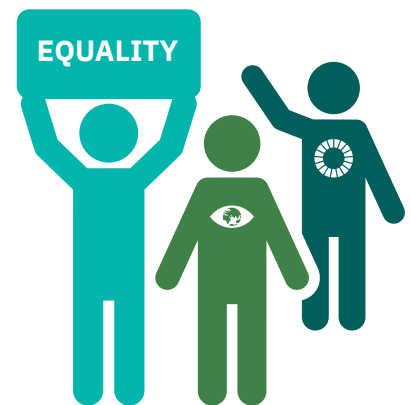
SPEAK ACT DO

Speak, Act, Do is a programme to support students and teachers in taking action on important global issues which impact our world!

Choose a topic, do your research, organise two actions (a solidarity action and a community action) to address a global justice issue and then share this with other schools at our Agents of Change event!

Visit our website to find our simple guide to Speak Act Do or email schools@concern.net to find out more.

Below are a few ideas about how you can get involved!



Concern Actions

- Organise an event (a play, a movie night) to educate and spread awareness about the impact of climate change on communities overseas
- Produce a piece of creative writing, cartoon or factual article about how climate change impacts on communities overseas and aim to get it published in a local paper or share it yourself online
- Contact local TD's to tell them why taking climate action is so important
- Check out Stop Climate Chaos' latest campaigns and get involved!

Local Actions

- How can your community reduce its carbon footprint? Choose one idea to focus on (tackling food waste, transport, reducing consumption) and run a project to action this!
- Run a peer to peer workshop or world café in your school. A great idea is to make this intergenerational so that people of all ages can learn from one another
- Plant trees in your school/local community
- Plan a photography exhibition or create a piece of art to display in school to help people reflect on how climate change is disrupting peoples everyday lives around the world



CLIMATE ACTION
RESOURCE FOR TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS

CONCERN
worldwide

**ENDING
EXTREME POVERTY
WHATEVER
IT TAKES**