



BEST PRACTICE IN ADULT EDUCATION FOR A JUST TRANSITION

**Feminist Communities
for Climate Justice**

**Using Feminist Approaches
to Support Communities**

JULY 2024



Co-funded by
the European Union

Feminist Communities for Climate Justice

– Using Feminist Approaches to Support Communities

Context and Initiative Details

Name of the initiative	Feminist Communities for Climate Justice – <u>National Women’s Council and Community Work Ireland</u>
Geographical scope	National
Sources of funding	Community Climate Action Programme, Dept of Environment, Climate Action & Communications
Duration of the initiative	This is a three-year project from October 2022 until September 2025. The Certificate programme runs Jan 2024- June 2024
Target audience	Women and marginalised communities; community workers / volunteers / activists working with communities including Travellers, those seeking refuge and or asylum, disabled people, older people and more
Social justice focus area	Just Transitions, feminist climate justice, gender equality
Goals of the initiative	<p>The aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amplify the voices of women and marginalised communities most affected by the climate crisis • Advocate and influence policy with women and marginalised communities • Mobilise communities to support and learn from one another with the establishment of the <u>Feminist Communities for Climate Justice National Network</u> • Train those working with or active within women’s and marginalised groups and communities through the delivery of the <u>Community Work in a Changing Ireland Certificate Programme</u> in partnership with the Department of Applied Social Studies at NUI Maynooth, developing toolkits for communities and community workers

Good Practices Description

Stakeholder engagement in the process

The Project’s Baseline Research report, carried out by Dr Fiona Dukelow, Dr Catherine Forde and Edith Busted of the Department of Applied Social Studies at University College Cork, examines Irish climate policy and its impacts on women, girls, and marginalised communities in Ireland – this research feeds into the certificate programme, policy positions, the project’s Network, community outreach and more. Through community outreach, meeting people where they are at, the project team heard about the impacts of the climate crisis facing communities while highlighting the connections between climate breakdown and everyday life.

Methodology used

Teaching within the certificate programme is very iterative in nature, responding to the needs of the participants and with an emphasis placed on experiential learning. Workshops, group work, reflective exercises and discussion are highly encouraged, and traditional lecture-style delivery is minimal. Teaching content is shaped around the certificate programme’s six structuring ‘pillars’ but also in conversation with participants. The *Community Work in a Changing Ireland* programme is always delivered in partnership with an organisation working on issues identified on the ground by community workers, and aims to respond to these emerging issues

– this iteration of the programme is responding to an identified need for climate change and climate justice knowledge delivered through a feminist community work approach. The programme is delivered in four locales, each receiving 9 x 2hr workshops, 2 x site visits and 3hrs of 1-2-1 mentoring. There will be a showcase at the end of the first run of the programme in June 2024 to celebrate participants' journeys and achievement. (the second iteration of the programme will commence in Sept 2024).

Teaching approaches

100 hrs of direct delivery across 20 weeks
Tasks including group work
Reflective journalling
Workshops, case studies
One-to-one tutorials
Regional visits to examples of good practice

Challenges and outcomes

Key factors contributing to success

- Programme is responding to real needs expressed by community workers
- Collaboration of two national organisations – the National Women's Council and Community Work Ireland
- Hybrid delivery facilitating participation from across Ireland
- Focus on the particular gender issues of climate justice
- Practical outputs – toolkits for community workers

Encountered difficulties and challenges

Demand was high with 100 applications for the 25 places, so the challenge was to create a learning group that was reflective of geographical and range of challenges experienced at grassroots level where the community workers are engaged. A number of participants are taking the course voluntarily and so are facing particular challenges of time and capacity. Hybrid delivery helps to ameliorate this.

Recommendations

At macro level the initiative recommends more funding streams that enable delivery on an all island basis. Also, policy and practice need to be based on lived experience with consultation transformed into participatory decision-making. Micro level recommendation on future course delivery will follow after the completion of the pilot in June 2024.

Impact

The pilot certificate programme recruited 25 participants, coming from a wide mix of backgrounds. Retention has been strong.

The toolkits for community workers that are being developed in the certificate programme will impact future practice well beyond the course participants.

More information on the impact of the certificate programme and the wider initiative is available [here](#).