

November 2021

# Youth Leadership in Climate Policy:

Turning knowledge and skills into  
action for climate empowerment



Plan International & Unbounded Associates



This document has been financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sida. Sida does not necessarily share the views expressed in this material. Responsibility for its contents rests entirely with the author.

---

# What's in this workbook?

Your journey to climate decision making

**This Workbook aims to help you develop the skills and knowledge you need to participate in climate decision making.**

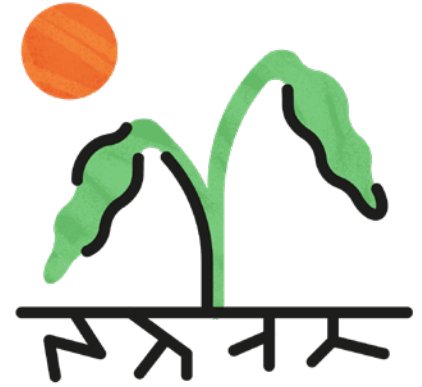
**You can think of climate decision making as a place you've never been before, and this is your map to get there.**

**By reading the content and following the activities in the Workbook, you will be ready to join in climate decision making and keep learning more on your own.**

**Youth Leadership in Climate Policy:  
Turning knowledge and skills into action  
for climate empowerment**

# Introduction

**Welcome! If you want to learn more about climate change and how you can influence the important decisions made in your country about climate change, you've come to the right place. This Workbook will help you develop the knowledge, understanding, and skills to engage meaningfully in climate change policy and decision making (what we call "climate decision making") in your country.**



The Workbook is designed so you can read the text and do the activities independently, with a friend, or in a larger group with an adult leader using the Facilitator's Guide (also available from Plan International). The Facilitator's Guide provides detailed descriptions and activity suggestions for each section of the Workbook. It is for helping educational leaders in schools, community programs, and youth groups to use the Workbook in their programming. It includes ideas for activities like debates, negotiations, competitions, presentations, performances, and group and pair work. If you're using the Workbook on your own but want to do some of the activities with your friends or family members, you can check out the Facilitator's Guide to see our suggestions, too!

Before you begin, you should know that this Workbook does not cover everything you need to know about climate change (see "Five things you should know about climate change" on page 3 of Chapter 1 for a quick introduction). Instead, it provides specific content and activities that prepare you to actively engage in climate decision making and climate action in your country.

By getting involved in climate decision making, you can take action on the issues you care about and help protect the planet, and the plants, animals, and people who live on it. Good luck, and we hope you have fun!



## The authors

Anna Pettee, Christina Kwauk

Unbounded Associates

# 1. Chapter Guide

The Workbook is divided into four separate books. Each book contains one Chapter that focuses on a different area of climate decision making and highlights the importance of equity, justice, and fairness in these processes.

## Chapter 1: What is climate policy and decision making?

*Why action for climate empowerment is needed*

We will start your journey with one of the most important documents in recent climate change history, the Paris Agreement. We will look at why it matters to your everyday life and why it affects your ability to join in the fight to address climate change.



## Chapter 2: How are countries taking action?

*What your country is doing and how you can contribute*

In Chapter 2 we look at what the Paris Agreement calls on countries to do to address climate change and how you can get involved in climate decision-making in your country.

## Chapter 3: Who can help you take action?

*Who makes climate decisions and how you can reach them*

If you want to get involved in helping your country address climate change, you should know about climate change stakeholders - people who make decisions about climate change, influence decisions, or are impacted by those decisions positively and/or negatively.

## Chapter 4: Turning your knowledge into action

*Create your personal climate policy action plan*

Using all the knowledge and skills you have gained through the Workbook, it's now your turn to choose where you go next by creating a Climate Policy Action Plan for an action you personally want to undertake.



## 1. CHAPTER GUIDE

The Workbook is not meant to be used all at once. We suggest using the Workbook over **eight weeks for about 30 minutes each day**.

You can choose to move faster or slower than this recommended pace, too. We hope that once you start the Workbook, you will want to return to it again and again.

Take your time with each Chapter and section of the Workbook. Remember, you can take a break, explore other resources, or go back to sections you already read whenever you want.

### 1. What is climate policy and decision making?

*Why action for climate empowerment is needed.*

#### Suggested time to complete:

2 weeks, 30 minutes/day

#### What you will learn:

- Builds your knowledge and interest in climate decision making.
- Introduces the Paris Agreement, an important document in the recent history of climate decision making which states that countries need to act now to address climate change.
- Introduces Article 12 of the Agreement: Action for Climate Empowerment, also known as ACE, which tells countries that their citizens need to be educated, aware, and able to join in the fight to address climate change.
- Gives you a chance to reflect on climate change related problems and solutions in your own community.

#### Topics covered:

- The Paris Agreement
- Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)

### 2. How are countries taking action?

*What your country is doing and how you can contribute*

#### Suggested time to complete:

2 weeks, 30 minutes/day

#### What you will learn:

- Dives deeper into the content and context of the Paris Agreement.
- Introduces you to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), the main way countries decide and share how and when they will address climate change.
- Has you reflect on your country's priorities and what you would want to include in your country's NDC.

#### Topics covered:

- Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

## 1. CHAPTER GUIDE

### 3. Who can help you take action?

*Who makes climate decisions and how you can reach them*

**Suggested time to complete:**

2 weeks, 30 minutes/day

#### What you will learn:

- Introduces you to climate change stakeholders - individuals and groups in your country who make climate decisions, influence those decisions, or are affected by those decisions.
- Asks you to consider where these stakeholders are acting and how you can connect with them safely.

#### Topics covered:

- ☐ Climate Change Stakeholders in Your Country

### 4. Turning your knowledge into action

*Create your personal climate policy action plan*

**Suggested time to complete:**

2 weeks, 30 minutes/day

#### What you will learn:

- Asks you to consider what's next for your involvement in climate decision making.
- Asks you to turn your knowledge, understandings, and skills into actions that impact your life, community, and country by creating a Climate Policy Action Plan.

#### Topics covered:

- ☐ Climate Policy Action Plan

## 2. Section Guide

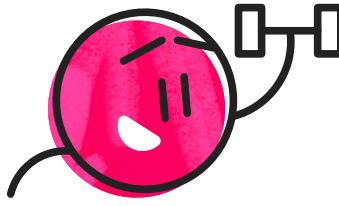
Each Chapter has three sections: **Learn**, **Practice**, and **Act**. Each section has content to read and activities to complete (see the Activity Guide on page 8 for more information).

The activities also come with **example responses** to help you understand new ideas and concepts. Some activities have **reflections** for you to think about what you're working on. Every Chapter has a final, recurring reflection activity for you to consider what you're learning.



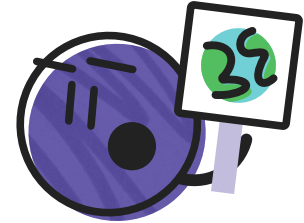
### Learn

- Helps you LEARN new information so you can participate fully in the activities in the next sections
- If you want to learn more, you can do your own research, ask a friend, family member, or teacher, or use the resources we list in the Workbook (see Additional Resources on page 11 for more information).



### Practice

- Helps develop your critical thinking and other key skills by having you PRACTICE using the information you learned



### Act

- Asks you to use what you've learned and practiced to ACT and create something new.
- Brings everything you have done in each Chapter together, and helps you transition to the next Chapter



### Activity Examples

- Activity examples are written in this font in each activity where you are asked to write your own ideas
- You can read the examples to better understand the activities
- These examples are not "answers", and you do not need to copy them
- Instead, you can use them as guidance to think of your own ideas based on your context













### Reflections

Short reflection questions or activities that help you actively think about what you are doing and learning

## 3. Activity Guide










To get an idea of what activities are included in the Workbook, you can see them listed below. The colour of each activity represents whether it is a **Learn**, **Practice**, or **Act** activity.

For example, the first number of each activity, the **1** in Activity **1.1** and the **3** in Activity **3.4**, tells you what Chapter the activity is in.

Chapter	Activity	Type	Description
<b>01</b>	<b>1.1</b>		What is Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)? Let's break it down
	<b>1.2</b>		Can you match each ACE component with its definition?
	<b>1.3</b>		What does a fairness, equity, or justice approach look like?
	<b>1.4</b>		Can you break down these actions for climate empowerment?
	<b>1.5</b>		What's a climate change problem in your community, and how could you solve it?
<b>02</b>	<b>2.1</b>		What are three key terms in climate decision making?
	<b>2.2</b>		Why is it called a <i>Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC)</i> ? Let's break it down
	<b>2.3</b>		What are the seven key components of an NDC?
	<b>2.4</b>		What do you need to know about your country to make an NDC?
	<b>2.5</b>		What should your country's NDC include?



### 3. ACTIVITY GUIDE

<b>03</b>	3.1		Who are stakeholders that influence climate decision making in your country?
	3.2		Who are the stakeholders that make climate decisions in your country?
	3.3		What would stakeholders think of you NDC?
	3.4		What are young people's climate change messages?
	3.5		What's your climate change message?
<b>04</b>	4.1		How have young people started collective climate action?
	4.2		How are young people taking climate action in their own communities?
	4.3		What are barriers to participating in climate decision making?
	4.4		What's next for you? Your Climate Policy Action Plan

## 4. Key terms and concepts

The Workbook includes boxes that provide extra information on specific vocabulary words and concepts.

You can use these boxes to deepen your understanding of key terms and learn more about some of the concepts included in the Workbook.

	Page	Box #, Title	What you're learning
Chapter 1	05	<b>Box 1.</b> What does it mean to use <i>mitigation</i> and <i>adaptation</i> to address climate change?	The two main strategies countries are using to address climate change
	15	<b>Box 2.</b> How is gender related to climate change?	How climate change worsens existing gender inequalities
	24	<b>Box 3.</b> What is <i>climate justice</i> ?	How climate change affects people and groups differently and how climate policies must address this
	25	<b>Box 4.</b> What do we mean by <i>social</i> and <i>political</i> causes and effects?	How we are using the terms "social" and "political" in this Workbook
Chapter 3	02	<b>Box 5.</b> What and who are <i>climate change stakeholders</i> ?	The individuals and groups in your country connected to climate change
	03	<b>Box 6.</b> What's a <i>continuum</i> ?	The meaning of the term " <i>continuum</i> "
	07	<b>Box 7.</b> What is an <i>ACE Focal Point</i> ?	The main point of contact in each country for Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)
	14	<b>Box 8.</b> How can you connect with climate change stakeholders in your country?	Examples of how you can contact and connect with stakeholders in your country
	15	<b>Box 9.</b> How did young people in Pakistan use social media to connect with their government?	The story of how young people in Pakistan made their voices heard using social media
Chapter 4	03	<b>Box 10.</b> What are <i>common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR)</i> ?	How all countries have a responsibility to address climate change but different abilities to do so
	08	<b>Box 11.</b> What does <i>tokenism</i> look like?	How efforts to be inclusive can sometimes not be truly inclusive

## 5. Additional Resources

In addition to the Workbook, we also suggest that you explore other resources on climate change that are useful for young people.

The resources listed below are just a few examples of materials that can help you gain a clearer and deeper understanding of climate change. We also provide links to other resources throughout the Workbook that you can access if you have an internet connection.

Resource	Brief Description
<u><a href="#">Children's Climate Cards</a></u>	<p>The Children's Climate Cards are a collection of inspiring and interactive activities to engage children in learning about climate change.</p> <p><b>Target Audience: Children aged 7-12</b></p>
<u><a href="#">Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction for Children</a></u>	<p>The Sendai Framework is a document that was adopted in 2015 to support countries to understand disaster and risk and better prepare to respond to disasters in their country. The child-friendly version of this document lays out the key terms and concepts of the Framework using more simple language and activities.</p> <p><b>Target Audience: Children</b></p>
<u><a href="#">UNICEF YOUNGO Toolkit for Young Climate Activists</a></u>	<p>The Toolkit for Climate Activists includes resources on climate governance, the Paris Agreement, the Escazu Agreement, tools for climate action, and a climate change glossary. The resources focus somewhat on the Latin America and Caribbean region but can be used by young people anywhere in the world.</p> <p><b>Target Audience: Youth climate activists</b></p>
<u><a href="#">Y-ADAPT</a></u>	<p>Y-ADAPT includes lesson plans for seven sessions of engaging games and activities for young people to learn the basics about climate change and take action in their local community. It includes a facilitation guide, activity materials, and facilitation videos.</p> <p><b>Target Audience: Young people aged 12-25</b></p>

## 6. Recurring Reflection Activity

### What skills do you need to take action for climate change?



The skills on the following page will help you take action to address climate change, and also support your development in other areas of life, such as school, work, and relationships. At the end of each Chapter, you can return to this table and follow the instructions below for the relevant Chapter.

#### End of Chapter 1:

- Put a ♥ next to the skills you feel confident in right now.
- Put a ★ next to the skills you are still working on or would like to work on.
- Put a ? next to the skills you don't understand fully (and then go ask a friend, family member, or teacher)!

#### End of Chapter 2:

- Put a ✓ next to the skills you had to use while going through this workbook so far.
- For the skills you put a tick next to, choose 5-10 and write one way each skill can help you succeed in your everyday life now or in the future.

#### End of Chapter 3:

- Put a ✓ next to the skills that you either used for this Chapter or that you feel are needed for reflecting about stakeholders, power, and vulnerability in climate decision making.
- For the skills you put a tick next to, choose 5-10 and write an example of another situation or scenario in which you could use the skill in your life.

#### End of Chapter 4:

- Put a ! mark next to the skills that are needed for your Climate Policy Action Plan.
- For the skills you put a exclamation mark next to, choose 5-10 and write how you will use this skill for your Climate Policy Action Plan.

## 6. RECURRING REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Skill	Status	Notes
Analyzing inequality and differences in power		
Bringing people together to address an issue		
Communicating clearly		
Creating community around shared values		
Creative thinking		
Critical thinking and reasoning		
Decision making		
Empathy and the ability to take other's perspectives		
Feeling comfortable with uncertainty		
Flexibility in difficult situations		
Leadership		
Negotiation and compromise		

## 6. RECURRING REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Skill	Status	Notes
Networking with different people and groups		
Problem-solving		
Resilience and optimism		
Respecting views different than your own		
Strategic thinking		
Taking care of your physical and mental well being		
Caring for the physical and mental wellbeing of your community		
Thinking about how different sectors, stakeholders, and groups interact		
Thinking about the short and long term future		
Understanding political systems and how to interact with them		
Valuing traditional and Indigenous knowledge		
Working with complex ideas		
Working well with others		

## About the Authors



### Anna Pettee, M.S.Ed.

Anna Pettee, M.S.Ed., is a curriculum developer, global education specialist, and teacher at heart. Anna was adopted from China and grew up in a rural town in the northeastern United States. Her childhood was defined by spending time outside—exploring the nature that surrounded her and learning about herself along the way. Anna is deeply grateful for the continued lessons the earth teaches her, and feels a growing urgency to protect this beautiful world. Throughout her career, Anna hopes to help young people build their skills and confidence to clarify their own relationship with nature and lead meaningful lives of their own design.



### Christina Kwauk, PhD

Christina Kwauk, PhD, is a social scientist working on a wide range of topics, including education for climate action and girls' education in developing countries. Christina grew up in the American South in an immigrant family from China. At first, her climate action was driven by “eco-anxious” recycling. But her graduate studies and later work at a US-based think tank led her to understand the complexities behind collective action problems, the limits to individual action, and the need for policy change and systems transformation. Today she is driven by the prospects of a sustainable future for her two daughters, and this Workbook is one contribution of many she hopes to make toward that vision.

# Acknowledgements

Thank you to the authors of this Workbook and accompanying Facilitator's Guide, Anna Pettee and Christina Kwauk (Unbounded Associates).

This Workbook would not have been possible without the support of Cherop Soy (Mock Cop), Maryam and Nivaal Rehman (The World with MNR), and Renata Koch Alvarenga (EmpoderaClima), who provided critical feedback in their roles as youth consultants.

Thank you also to Loukina Tille (climate activist, Switzerland), Vanda Lengkong (Plan International Asia), Thanapol Kheolamai (Plan International Thailand), Pedruco Capelao (Plan International Timor Leste), Farai Shonhai (Plan International Zimbabwe), Marco Zamorano and Teresa Sossa (Plan International Bolivia), Pablo Pena and Selmira Carreon (Plan International Peru), Yona Nestal (Plan International Global), Kate Phillips (Plan International Australia), Rosie Glenklo (Plan International Sweden), Adriana Valenzuela (Global Center for Adaptation), Paul Mitchell (Save the Children Australia), Sara Cognuck González, Emilia Numer, and Hanoch Barlevi (UNICEF), and Margot Curl (Climate Centre) for contributing their experiences and insights to the development of this project.

Many thanks go to Kate Anderson (Unbounded Associates) for her feedback on initial drafts of the Workbook and project management support, and to Sara Törnros (Plan International Sweden) and Jessica Cooke (Plan International Global) for overseeing this work and contributing to its many iterations.

Design and illustration by Wolf&Player and Jane Bowyer.