

# Rural Action for Climate Resilience

## Learning Festival 6 Resource Book



# 2026



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Johannesburg



Rural Action for  
Climate Resilience



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# Rural Action for Climate Resilience

The Rural Action for Climate Resilience (RACR) project supports rural, community-based organisations and faith-based institutions to strengthen local climate resilience, protect livelihoods and respond to the impacts of climate change.

Through learning exchanges, practical training, community action projects, advocacy support and small grants, RACR helps communities build knowledge, share solutions and take action on issues such as food security, water, energy, environmental protection and climate justice. The project is implemented in partnership between SCAT and SAFCEI.



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Climate Resilience



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The project is funded by the Embassy of Ireland. A previous phase of the project (2021-2024) was co-funded by the European Union.



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Embassy of Ireland | South Africa



Co-funded by  
the European Union

For more information about the project visit:  
[www.ruralaction4climate.org.za](http://www.ruralaction4climate.org.za)

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# Glossary

## Weather and Climate Basics

Weather	The short-term condition of the atmosphere at a particular place and time, such as heat, cold, wind or rain.
Climate	The usual pattern of weather in a place over a long period of time.
Climate change	Long-term changes in temperature, rainfall and weather patterns, now driven mainly by human activities.
Global warming	The long-term rise in the Earth's average temperature caused mainly by greenhouse gas emissions.
Greenhouse gases	Gases in the atmosphere, such as carbon dioxide and methane, that trap heat.
Climate justice	The idea that the people least responsible for climate change are often the most affected, and should be protected and heard.

## Energy and Just Transition

Fossil fuels	Coal, oil and gas formed over millions of years that release greenhouse gases when burned.
Renewable energy	Energy from naturally replenished sources such as sunlight, wind and flowing water.
Just transition	A shift to a low-carbon economy that is fair, inclusive and leaves no one behind.
Low-carbon economy	An economy that keeps greenhouse gas emissions low while meeting people's needs.
Energy access	Reliable and affordable access to electricity and other energy services for households and communities.
Green jobs	Work that helps protect the environment and build a more sustainable future.

## Resilience, Risks and Action

Adaptation	Actions that help people and ecosystems adjust to climate impacts and reduce harm.
Mitigation	Actions that reduce greenhouse gas emissions or prevent them from increasing.
Resilience	The ability of people, communities and systems to prepare for, cope with and recover from shocks.
Vulnerability	How likely people or places are to be harmed by climate impacts.
Hazard	Something that can cause harm, such as a flood, drought, fire or heatwave.

## Justice, Governance and Global Agreements

Paris Agreement	The international climate agreement through which countries work to limit global warming and strengthen climate action.
Equity	Fairness that recognises people do not all start from the same position and may need different support.
Participation	The active involvement of people and communities in decisions that affect them.

# Programme

Time	Item	Theme	Programme content
18 May: Arrival	Travel day	Participants arrive in Johannesburg and check in at the hotel.	
19 May: Day 1			
08:00 to 08:30	Registration	Arrival and settling in	Participants register and receive workshop materials.
08:30 to 09:30	Welcome, introductions and workshop outline	Opening and orientation	Setting the tone for the workshop, introducing participants and outlining the three-day workshop journey.
09:30 to 10:30	Session 1	Understanding the Just Energy Transition	Exploring what the Just Energy Transition could mean for communities affected by mining, water challenges and energy change.
10:30 to 11:00	Tea	Break	Tea break.
11:00 to 13:00	Session 2	Scenario planning climate change card game	Using scenarios to think through climate risks, community choices and possible local responses.
13:00 to 14:00	Lunch	Break	Lunch.
14:00 to 15:45	Session 3	Using social media to create awareness	Using social media to raise awareness about a climate-related issues.
15:45 to 16:30	Wrap-up	Reflection	Reflecting on key insights and closing the day.
17:30 to 18:30	Documentary screening	Climate justice storytelling	Watching Wild Coast Warriors as a story of land, community voice and resistance.

# Programme

Time	Item	Theme	Programme content
<b>Day 2: 20 May</b>			
08:30 to 08:45	Registration	Arrival and settling in	Participants register for the day.
08:45 to 09:00	Morning welcome and recap	Opening	Revisiting key lessons from Day 1 and linking them to the advocacy focus of Day 2.
09:00 to 10:30	Session 1	Advocacy strategies and campaign planning	Learning from the Wild Coast struggle and the strategies used to defend land, livelihoods and community rights.
10:30 to 11:00	Tea	Break	Tea break.
11:00 to 13:00	Session 2	Applying advocacy strategies	Working with case studies to choose strategies, plan responses and compare possible outcomes.
13:00 to 14:00	Lunch	Break	Lunch.
14:00 to 16:00	Session 3	Building a community advocacy campaign	Turning a local issue into a campaign.
16:00 to 16:30	Wrap-up	Reflection	Reflecting on campaign ideas and closing the day.
<b>Day 3: 21 May</b>			
08:00 to 08:30	Registration	Arrival and preparation	Participants register for the day and prepare for the field visit.
08:30 to 09:30	Travel	Field visit preparation	Travel to The Compost Kitchen.
09:30 to 12:30	Session 1	Practical climate action	Learning from practical approaches to composting, food systems, circular economy work and local resilience.
12:30 to 13:00	Travel	Return	Travel back to the hotel.
13:00 to 14:00	Lunch	Break	Lunch.
14:00 to 16:00	Session 2	Field visit, reel and workshop reflection	Reflecting on field visit and drawing together key insights from the full workshop.
<b>Day 4: 22 May</b>			
	Departure	Travel day	Participants check out and travel home.

# What is Climate Change?

## 1 Weather, climate and climate change

Climate change is different from weather. Weather describes the changes that occur from day to day, for example whether it is hot, cold, windy or raining. Climate describes the long-term weather patterns of a place, such as how often it gets rain in a year and how hot or cold it usually is in different seasons. Climate change refers to long-term and lasting changes to these weather patterns.

**WEATHER**  
changes from day to day



**CLIMATE**

long-term patterns over years and seasons



## 2 How climate change affects weather

Climate change is causing weather patterns to shift. More rain may fall over a shorter period of time, which can contribute to flooding. Longer periods without rainfall can lead to drought.



## 3 South Africa's role and responsibility

South Africa is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, but it also has a responsibility to help prevent climate change from getting worse. South Africa produces over half of the greenhouse gases emitted on the African continent. A major reason is that Eskom still burns mostly coal for energy production. This pattern was shaped by the capitalist apartheid system, which prioritised profits for a minority of white South Africans over the health and environment of the majority.



## 4 Why this matters for Africa

African countries will be among the most severely affected by climate change, even though they are among the least responsible for global emissions.



Climate change is a long-term change in weather patterns that is already affecting lives, livelihoods and ecosystems across Africa.

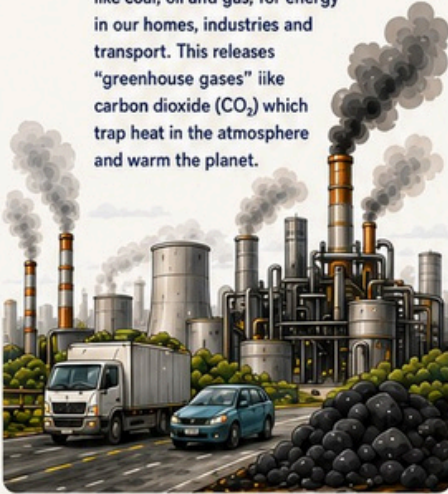


# Why is the Earth heating?

Human activities are causing climate change. The gases we release into the air are trapping heat and making the planet warmer.

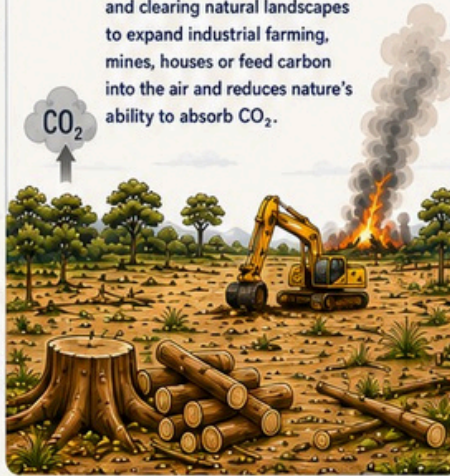
## 1 BURNING FOSSIL FUELS

People are burning fossil fuels, like coal, oil and gas, for energy in our homes, industries and transport. This releases "greenhouse gases" like carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) which trap heat in the atmosphere and warm the planet.



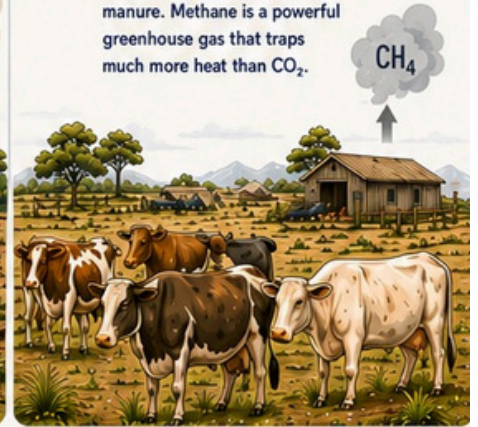
## 2 DESTROYING FORESTS AND LANDSCAPES

People are cutting down forests and clearing natural landscapes to expand industrial farming, mines, houses or feed carbon into the air and reduces nature's ability to absorb CO<sub>2</sub>.



## 3 LIVESTOCK AND METHANE EMISSIONS

The mass breeding of cattle and other livestock produces methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) during digestion and from manure. Methane is a powerful greenhouse gas that traps much more heat than CO<sub>2</sub>.

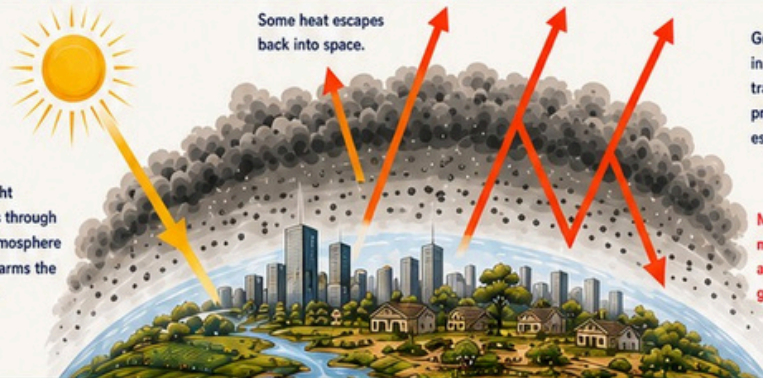


## 4 THE GREENHOUSE EFFECT

These gases create a greenhouse effect as they accumulate in the atmosphere and trap more and more heat near the Earth's surface.

As more heat is held within the Earth's atmosphere, the temperature near the Earth's surface gradually warms up.

Sunlight passes through the atmosphere and warms the Earth.



Some heat escapes back into space.

Greenhouse gases in the atmosphere trap heat and prevent it from escaping.

More gases mean more heat is trapped and the planet gets warmer.

## 5 MITIGATION: TAKING ACTION

Mitigation is the effort to slow down global warming — which is already causing dangerous changes in weather patterns and temperatures.



Use clean, renewable energy



Protect and restore forests



Use efficient transport

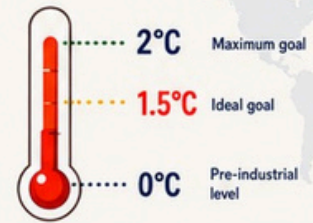


Reduce waste and save energy

We all have a role to play: governments, businesses, communities and individuals.

## 6 THE PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT

The world agreed under the Paris Climate Agreement to cut greenhouse gas emissions, so that the Earth's temperature does not rise by more than about 2°C above pre-industrial times, and ideally that it stays closer to 1.5°C.



## 7 2026 UPDATE: THE PLANET IS GETTING WARMER



In 2025, the world was about **1.44°C** warmer than pre-industrial times. It was one of the three warmest years ever recorded, with 2024 still the hottest year on record.



**OUR PLANET. OUR PEOPLE. OUR FUTURE.**  
ACT TODAY FOR A COOLER, CLEANER, SAFER TOMORROW.



# Direct and indirect impacts of climate change

Direct and indirect impacts of climate change

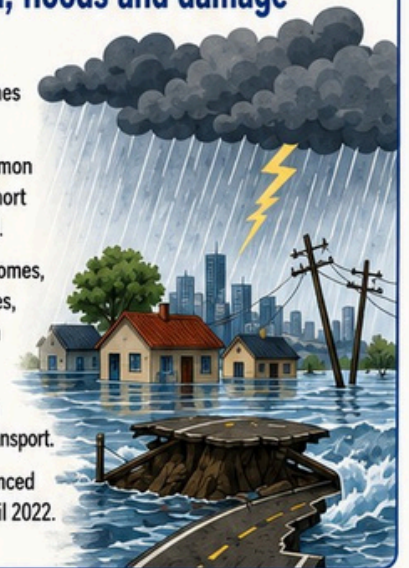
## 1. Heat, drought and water stress

- Rising global temperatures are causing more frequent and intense heatwaves.
- Warmer air increases evaporation, which dries out land and water sources.
- Rainfall is becoming more unpredictable as winds and currents shift in a warmer world.
- Water shortages and longer droughts are becoming more common in some places.
- These conditions increase dehydration, heat stress and heat stroke.



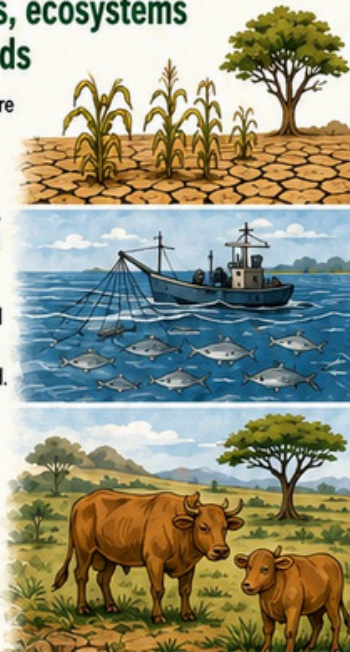
## 2. Heavy rain, floods and damage

- A warmer world can bring heavier rainfall events, cyclones and "rain bombs".
- Flooding becomes more common when intense rain falls in a short time and cannot be absorbed.
- Floods and storms damage homes, roads, bridges, electricity lines, water systems and sanitation infrastructure.
- Damage to infrastructure can interrupt basic services and transport.
- For example, Durban experienced devastating rain bombs in April 2022.



## 3. Food systems, ecosystems and livelihoods

- Climate impacts damage agriculture and ecosystems through drought, heat and extreme storms.
- Ocean changes reduce fish stocks, threatening fishing livelihoods and coastal communities.
- Indigenous cultures and traditional ways of life can be lost when land, water and livelihoods are disrupted.
- In parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, practices such as cattle rearing may become more difficult as the climate changes.



## 4. People, economies and inequality

- Climate migration happens when people move away from places severely affected by climate impacts such as rising sea levels, drought or repeated disasters.
- Damage to roads, farms, businesses and other infrastructure disrupts supply chains and local economies.
- Food and other essentials can become more expensive, increasing the cost of living.
- Repeated disasters reduce the money available for repair and rebuilding and can divert public resources away from services such as education.
- Climate change can increase inequality because poorer communities have fewer resources to recover.
- Loss of life, displacement and the disruption of culture and community life are among the most serious impacts.



### Why this matters

Climate change affects not only weather, but also water, food, health, homes, livelihoods, culture and the economy.

**The people least responsible are often the most affected.**



# How to adapt and build resilience

Practical steps for people and communities

## 1 Get early warnings

Follow SAWS forecasts and local WhatsApp, radio and community alerts. Act early when storms, floods, fires or heatwaves are forecast. Move people, animals and important items to safety.



## 2 Make infrastructure safer

Improve roads, bridges, drains, schools, clinics and electricity systems so they cope better with floods, heat and storms. Raised roads, stronger drainage and cooler buildings can reduce damage.



## 3 Grow food in resilient ways

Use agroecology and indigenous knowledge to grow food in changing conditions. Plant diverse crops such as sorghum, millet, cowpeas and amadumbe. Use mulch, compost, water harvesting, seed saving and solar irrigation.



## 4 Save and manage water

Store rainwater, fix leaks quickly, reuse greywater where safe and maintain local water systems. Careful water use helps communities cope during drought and water cuts.



## 5 Restore and protect nature

Protect wetlands, rivers, grasslands, dunes, spekboom and indigenous trees. Healthy ecosystems help reduce floods, heat and erosion and protect communities at lower cost.



## 6 Stay safe in extreme heat

Use shade trees, reflective roofs, ventilation and community heat plans. Drink water, rest, and protect children, older people, outdoor workers and those waiting at clinics or taxi ranks.



## 7 Diversify livelihoods

Build more than one source of income. Small businesses, food processing, sewing, repair work, recycling and solar skills can help households reduce climate risk.



## 8 Use savings and social support

Savings groups, stokvels, insurance, social grants and emergency funding help families and small businesses recover after floods, fires or drought. Quick support helps communities rebuild faster.



## Why adaptation matters in South Africa

Climate shocks already affect roads, water systems, farms, transport, spaza shops and local economies. Adaptation helps protect lives, livelihoods, food, water and infrastructure before disasters become crises.



The Presidential Climate Commission is prioritising adaptation for South Africa.



# What is a just transition for South Africa



A just transition means moving from a polluting, fossil-fuel based economy to clean, renewable energy in a way that is fair and leaves no one behind. It protects workers, uplifts communities, reduces inequality and builds a healthier, more resilient and prosperous South Africa for today and for generations to come.

## 1 WHY SOUTH AFRICA MUST TRANSITION



### CLIMATE CHANGE

From production to generation to use, fossil fuels emit far more greenhouse gases than renewable energies.



### HEALTH IMPACTS

Fossil fuels create more pollution than renewable energies, which negatively impacts human health.



### COST OF FOSSIL FUELS

Fossil fuels are becoming more expensive and renewable energies are becoming more affordable.



### ELECTRICITY CRISIS

Electricity production is insufficient using fossil fuels. Renewable energies could provide better access to electricity for all.



### ENERGY SECURITY

Fossil fuels are affected by global politics. Renewable energies could contribute to energy security for the country.



### GLOBAL MARKET

There is a global shift away from fossil fuels. Countries using renewable energies will benefit economically.



### SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS

There are opportunities for job creation and new ownership models within renewable energies.



### NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTION

South Africa made a commitment to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions in the fight against climate change.

## 2 THE PRINCIPLES OF A JUST ENERGY TRANSITION (JET) IN SOUTH AFRICA



A shift from dirty and harmful fossil fuels to cleaner, affordable and sustainable renewable energies, together with energy efficiency, is needed. For this shift to be just and fair, the following building blocks are recommended as a minimum.



## 3 ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE ELECTRICITY

### WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?



Millions of South Africans lack access to electricity. All South Africans need access to affordable, low-carbon electricity to provide for basic needs.

- ✓ Draft and implement a National Low-Income Household Energy Strategy.
- ✓ Prioritise energy access for those without reliable access to electricity using renewable energy solutions that are more affordable and accessible.
- ✓ Increase electricity subsidies for low-income households.

Source: Project 90 by 2030

# Building a fair and inclusive energy future



The Presidential Climate Commission (PCC) was created to develop plans for the Just Energy Transition. According to the PCC, a just energy transition builds resilient economies and people by speeding up affordable and diversely owned renewable energy, restoring ecosystems, teaching current and future workers new skills, developing tools to manage big changes, and supporting affected groups to take part in energy decisions.



## WHY SHOULD AN ENERGY TRANSITION FOCUS ON JUSTICE?

Energy is linked to social justice, which means that any decision that affects energy will have a positive or negative impact on people. Because South Africa has high levels of inequality, poverty, and unemployment, even more care needs to be taken when making decisions that affect energy, so that lives are made better and not worse.



## 1. CORPORATE AND BUSINESS REFORM

We need to move away from business as usual. Corporations need to prioritise social and environmental issues and must implement tools to reduce emissions, pollution and waste while also securing decent jobs.



### WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

- There must be strict legal compliance with all environmental regulations, including air and water pollution, carbon emissions, site rehabilitation, workplace standards and employment standards.
- Government should monitor and enforce these obligations, while the private sector must have their own transition plans that protect workers.



## 2. SHIFT IN OWNERSHIP OF ENERGY

Using renewable energy opens up opportunities for more socially or community-owned, and less corporate or privately-owned, energy generation.



### WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

- Support communities in setting up their own energy projects.
- Include more women and youth in the energy sector.
- Revise South Africa's renewable energy programme.
- Support the shift from a centralised system to a decentralised energy system.



Source: Project 90 by 2030

# What justice looks like

## The three principles in action

### 1 PROCEDURAL JUSTICE – FAIR IN THE WAY WE DECIDE.



Everyone has a voice in decisions about the energy transition. Processes are transparent, inclusive and respect people's rights.

- Meaningful public participation and access to information.
- Inclusive decision-making that involves affected communities, workers, women and youth.
- Responsive, transparent and accountable institutions.



### 2 DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE – FAIR IN THE BENEFITS AND BURDENS.



The benefits of the energy transition are shared equitably, and the burdens do not fall on the same people and places.

- Fair sharing of jobs, investment and economic opportunities.
- Protection for workers and communities from negative impacts.
- Priority support for those most impacted and left behind.



### 3 RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – FAIR IN HOW WE HEAL AND REPAIR.



We repair the harm caused by fossil fuels and create a healthier, more equal future for all.

- Acknowledging past harms and supporting affected communities.
- Restoring damaged ecosystems and environments.
- Building strong, resilient communities for future generations.



### 1 EMPOWERMENT OF WORKERS AND COMMUNITIES

Workers and communities should not shoulder the burden of shifting to a low-carbon economy. We need decent jobs and economic opportunities for all to leave no one behind.



#### WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

- Set up programmes for worker placement and retrain workers in coal and other impacted sectors.
- Provide training and education for other workers in need of jobs.
- Invest in infrastructure in areas in need.
- Promote economic diversification and the creation of alternative industries.



### 2 ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION AND PROTECTION

Modern agriculture, mining and industrial development have degraded the quality of our soil, air and water resources. We have to restore these areas and prevent further damage.



#### WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

- Apply the Polluter Pays principle, ensuring polluters pay for restoration of degraded ecosystems.
- South Africans need to hold government and companies accountable.
- Create space for small-scale agriculture which can restore and protect the environment while feeding people.



### 3 WE NEED ENERGY DEMOCRACY IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa needs to move from a monopolised fossil-fuel dominated system, without room for meaningful engagement, to a participatory renewable energy system with inclusive decision-making processes.



#### WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

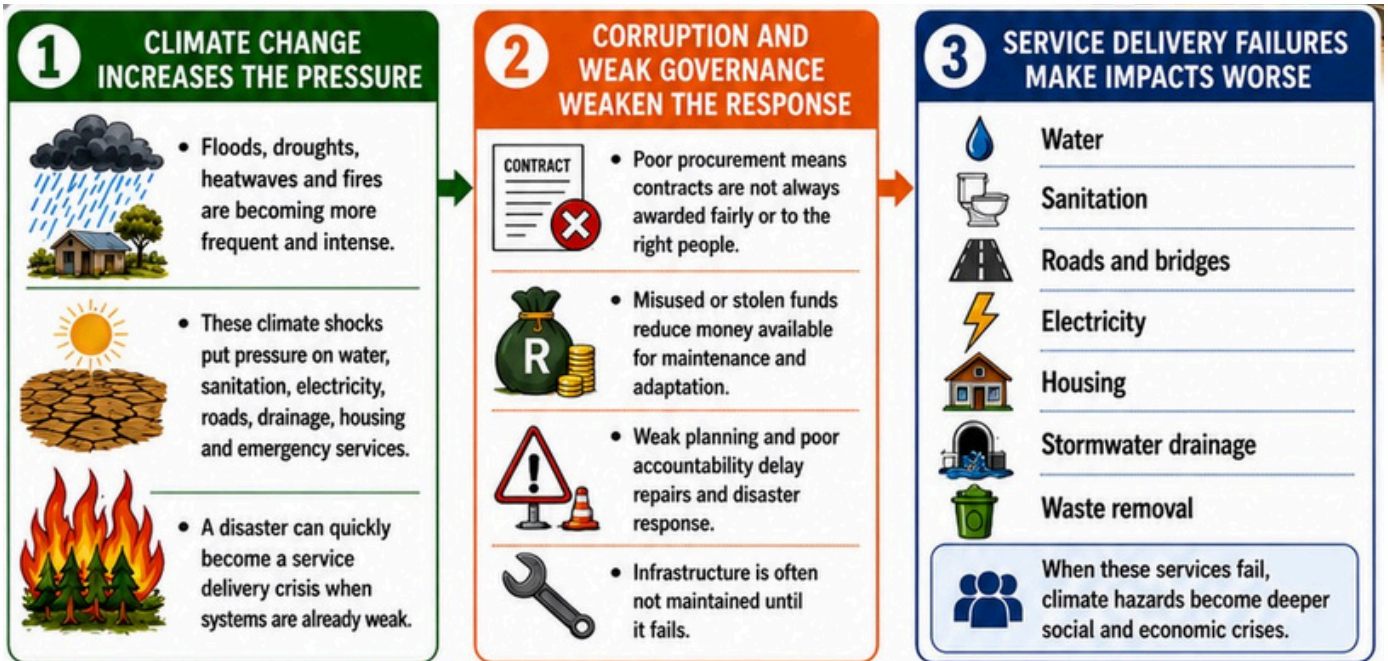
- Conduct regular public participation and stakeholder consultations that include youth and vulnerable groups.
- Draft a joint vision of JET and undertake transparent planning processes.
- Set measurable goals and ensure clear accountability.
- Implement measures to improve and ensure gender equality.
- Educate and raise awareness on energy issues.
- Look at related issues such as land and water.



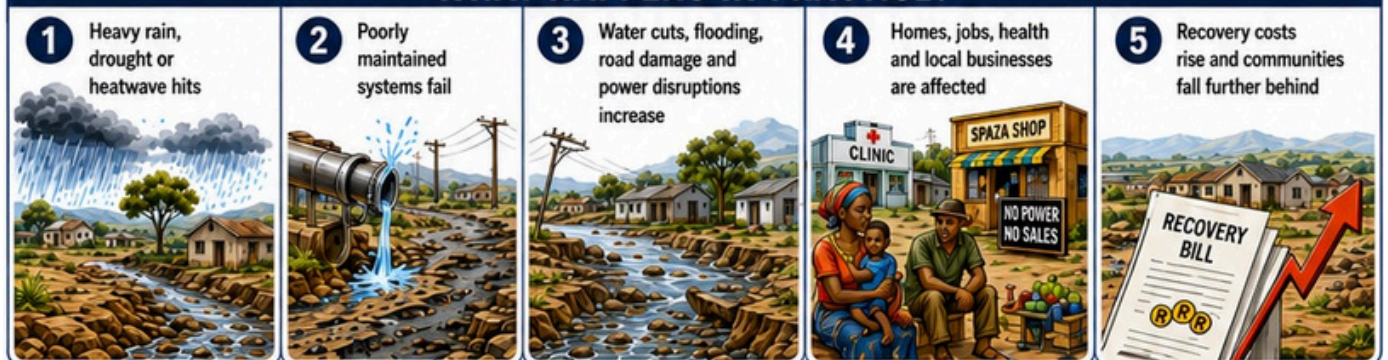
Source: Project 90 by 2030

# Climate change, corruption and service delivery in South Africa

How these issues are connected



## WHAT HAPPENS IN PRACTICE?



## WHO IS MOST AFFECTED?



## WHY THIS MATTERS



# How communities can hold government accountable

Advocacy strategies for climate, corruption and service delivery issues







## 1. START WITH THE ISSUE

<p><b>1 Identify the problem</b> Be specific. For example, water cuts, flooding, blocked drains, poor roads, unsafe electricity, waste removal or damaged housing.</p> 	<p><b>2 Understand the impact</b> Who is affected? How does it affect health, safety, livelihoods, children, older people, schools, clinics or local business?</p> 	<p><b>3 Gather evidence</b> Take photos, record dates, collect testimonies, note service failures, track repair promises and keep copies of letters or complaints.</p> 	<p><b>4 Choose your demand</b> Decide exactly what you want, such as leak repairs, drainage maintenance, a meeting, transparency on spending, better disaster response or inclusion in local planning.</p> <p><b>WE DEMAND:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Leak repairs</li> <li>✓ Drainage maintenance</li> <li>✓ Community meeting</li> <li>✓ Transparency</li> <li>✓ Inclusion in planning</li> </ul> 
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## 2. USE DIFFERENT ADVOCACY STRATEGIES


<p><b>1 Community meetings:</b> Bring people together to agree on the problem, priorities and shared demands.</p> 	<p><b>2 Petitions and memorandums:</b> Submit written demands with signatures and clear requests.</p> 	<p><b>3 Ward committees and IDP participation:</b> Raise issues in ward meetings, IDP processes and municipal planning spaces.</p> 	<p><b>4 Engagement with councillors and officials:</b> Request meetings, ask questions, follow up and demand written responses.</p> 
<p><b>5 Monitoring and evidence:</b> Document leaks, flooding, outages, road damage and missed commitments.</p> 	<p><b>6 Media and public pressure:</b> Use local radio, WhatsApp groups, social media and community newspapers to make the issue visible.</p> 	<p><b>7 Peaceful protest and public action:</b> Marches, pickets and public gatherings can increase pressure when other efforts are ignored.</p> 	<p><b>8 Partnerships and legal support:</b> Work with CBOs, NGOs, civic offices, faith groups, researchers or legal groups when needed.</p> 

## 3. BUILD A CAMPAIGN STEP BY STEP


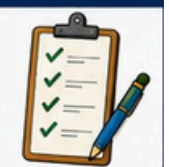
<p><b>1 Organise the community</b></p> 	<p><b>2 Agree on the issue and demand</b></p> 	<p><b>3 Collect evidence</b></p> 	<p><b>4 Choose targets and strategies</b></p> 	<p><b>5 Act and communicate</b></p> 	<p><b>6 Follow up and monitor promises</b></p> 
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Communities often need more than one strategy. Combining evidence, organising, public pressure and formal engagement can strengthen accountability.

## 4. WHO ARE THE MAIN TARGETS?

	<table border="1"> <tr> <td><b>WARD OFFICE</b></td> <td>• Ward councillors</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>WATER BOARD</b></td> <td>• Municipal officials</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>ELECTRICITY ENTITY</b></td> <td>• The mayor or municipal manager</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>DISASTER CENTRE</b></td> <td>• Provincial departments</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>• Water or electricity entities</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>• Disaster management structures</td> </tr> </table> <p>The right target depends on who is responsible for the problem.</p>	<b>WARD OFFICE</b>	• Ward councillors	<b>WATER BOARD</b>	• Municipal officials	<b>ELECTRICITY ENTITY</b>	• The mayor or municipal manager	<b>DISASTER CENTRE</b>	• Provincial departments		• Water or electricity entities		• Disaster management structures
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## 5. GOOD ADVOCACY ASKS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What exactly is the problem?</li> <li>• Who is responsible?</li> <li>• What evidence do we have?</li> <li>• What change do we want?</li> <li>• What is our timeline?</li> <li>• How will we know if progress is made?</li> </ul>	
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# Sharing climate messages in your community

A step-by-step guide to reaching people beyond social media



Not everyone gets information online. In rural communities, climate advocacy also happens through conversation, trusted local spaces and community networks. Use simple, factual messages and choose channels that people already use and trust.



## 1 Use community radio



Share short interviews, announcements, call-ins or climate tips in local languages. Community radio can help spread messages widely and clearly, especially where internet access is limited.

## 2 Use WhatsApp groups



Share short voice notes, posters, photos and meeting reminders in WhatsApp groups. Keep messages clear, short and easy to forward. Community groups, stokvels, farmer groups and youth groups can all help spread information.

## 3 Hold community meetings



Bring people together in safe, familiar spaces to discuss the issue, share experiences and plan action. Use stories, simple visuals and local examples. Make sure people have a chance to speak, ask questions and shape the campaign.

## 4 Work through churches and faith spaces



Churches, mosques, temples and other faith spaces are trusted places for sharing messages, announcements and values-based reflection. Link climate issues to care, dignity, justice and responsibility.

## 5 Use schools and youth groups



Young people can help spread information through schools, clubs, debates, songs, posters and community projects. Youth-led activities can build confidence and bring messages into homes and neighbourhoods.

## 6 Use posters, flyers and notice boards



Put simple messages in places people visit often, such as clinics, taxi stops, spaza shops, schools, water points and community notice boards. Use short text, local languages where possible and strong visuals.

## 7 Share stories face to face



Real-life local stories help people understand climate impacts and solutions. Use one-on-one conversations, small group discussions, home visits or campaign activities to share stories that people can relate to and trust.

## 8 Build partnerships



Work with local groups, traditional leaders, farmers, CBOs, NGOs and local government where possible. Strong partnerships can increase credibility, widen your reach and help turn awareness into action.

### TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY COMMUNICATION



Use local languages where possible.



Keep messages short and clear.



Use real local examples.



Check facts before sharing.



Invite dialogue and feedback.



Be respectful and inclusive.



### BEFORE YOU SHARE, ASK YOURSELF:

Is this clear?

Is it accurate?

Will people relate to it?

Is this the right channel?

Does this support our campaign goal?

What action do we want people to take?

# Storytelling for climate advocacy

A step-by-step guide to using social media to support a community campaign

Climate Change Champions in rural communities can use storytelling to raise awareness, share real experiences of climate change and support local advocacy. Real stories about local impacts and solutions can help build understanding and action.

1



## Choose the issue

Decide what issue you want to advocate for. Focus on one clear local problem such as water shortages, flooding, heat, food insecurity, waste or pollution. Ask: what is happening, who is affected and why does it matter now?

2



## Define your main message

Be clear and concise. Summarise the problem, why people should care and what needs to change. A strong message is simple, memorable and linked to your campaign's values and objectives.

3



## Know your target audience

Think about who you want to reach. Is it community members, young people, local leaders, councillors, municipal officials or the wider public? Consider their concerns, values, language and the type of content they are most likely to respond to.

4



## Use clear language and strong storytelling

Avoid jargon. Use plain language, local languages where useful and real-life examples. Tell stories that show a person, a problem and a possible solution. Photos, voice notes, short videos and simple visuals can help people understand and relate.

5



## Choose the best platform

Decide which social media platform or platforms will work best for your message and audience. WhatsApp is useful for local sharing, Facebook for community groups, Instagram for visuals and TikTok for short videos and youth engagement.

6



## Set your social media objective

Decide what you want your posts to achieve. You may want to raise awareness, encourage people to attend a meeting, increase participation in your campaign, collect support for a demand or generate engagement with your content.

7



## Use tactics to reach people

Use hashtags, tagging, clear captions, keywords and short videos or voice notes to help more people find your message. Encourage sharing. Link posts to local events, important dates or community activities to increase attention.

8



## Make a posting plan

Plan how often you will post and who will do it. Create a simple content schedule with different types of posts, such as stories, photos, reminders, testimonies and calls to action. Review what works and adjust your approach over time.



## CHECK YOUR FACTS

Check the accuracy of your information before sharing it. Social media can spread useful information, but it can also spread misinformation and fake stories. Climate change discussions often trigger scepticism and fearmongering, so it is important to be factual, accurate and responsible.

Before you post, ask yourself:



Is my message clear?



Is my information accurate?



Will my audience understand it?



Does this support my campaign goal?



Am I using respectful language?



Am I using a story people can connect with?

# Youth and climate change in South Africa

## Why young people matter and what they can do

Young people in South Africa are already living with the effects of climate change, including heat, drought, flooding, food insecurity, pollution and poor service delivery. But young people are not only affected; they are leaders, organisers, educators and innovators who can help build safer, fairer and more climate-resilient communities.

### 1 How climate change affects young people

- Disrupts schooling when floods, heat or transport problems reduce attendance.
- Increases food and water insecurity in homes and communities.
- Affects health through heat stress, poor air quality and mental strain after disasters.
- Creates fewer livelihood opportunities when local economies are damaged.

### 2 Why youth voices matter

- Young people will live the longest with the consequences of today's decisions.
- We bring energy, ideas and creativity to solve local problems.
- We connect climate issues to jobs, health, safety, justice and our daily lives.
- Youth leadership helps make climate action more inclusive, fair and future-focused.

### 3 What young people can do in their communities

- Raise awareness through storytelling, school activities and community discussions.
- Identify local problems such as water leaks, illegal dumping, flooding hotspots and unsafe electricity.
- Join or start local campaigns on climate, service delivery and environmental justice.
- Support practical action: food gardens, tree planting, recycling, clean-ups and water saving.
- Help document local impacts and share stories to inform action.

### 4 Build knowledge and communication skills

- Learn about climate change, adaptation and environmental justice.
- Build skills in public speaking, organising, digital communication, research and storytelling.
- Share accurate information and challenge misinformation.

### 5 Take part in decision-making

- Attend community meetings, youth forums, ward meetings or IDP processes.
- Ask questions about water, housing, electricity, transport and climate plans.
- Use petitions, memorandums and meetings with councillors to push for action.

### 6 Work together for change

- Partner with schools, churches, CBOs, youth groups and local organisations.
- Combine practical action with advocacy and accountability.
- Build safer, healthier and more resilient communities for today and tomorrow.

### ASK YOURSELF

What issue matters most in my area?	Who is affected?	What can we do now?	Who must we influence?	How can young people organise together?

### KEY MESSAGE

Young people are leaders, organisers, educators, innovators and advocates who can help build a just and climate-resilient South Africa.

# Youth opportunities in a just energy transition

## How young people can build skills, livelihoods and leadership in South Africa

The just energy transition should create fair opportunities for young people, especially in rural areas, townships and small towns. Young people can benefit through training, entrepreneurship, research, organising and community leadership. The transition must be inclusive and leave no one behind.

### 1 Why these opportunities matter

-  High youth unemployment limits dignity, income and future security.
-  Energy insecurity affects study, health, transport, food and small businesses.
-  Fair access to opportunities reduces inequality and builds stronger communities.
-  We must include rural youth, township youth and young women in every opportunity.

### 2 Where opportunities are growing

-  Renewable energy support roles (wind, solar, storage, mini-grids).
-  Energy efficiency and demand management in homes, schools and businesses.
-  Solar installation and maintenance.
-  Agroecology and climate-smart food systems.
-  Recycling and circular economy work.
-  Water harvesting and repair work.
-  Community-based adaptation (e.g., erosion control, greening, flood resilience).
-  Local climate communication and early warning support.

### 3 Skills young people can build

-  Technical skills: solar, electrical, plumbing, maintenance, energy audits.
-  Social and organising skills: teamwork, facilitation, conflict resolution.
-  Digital skills: data collection, mapping, design, communication, coding.
-  Business and entrepreneurship skills: planning, budgeting, marketing, cooperatives.
-  Advocacy and research skills: policy literacy, research, storytelling, public speaking.

### 4 Where youth can get involved

-  Schools, TVET colleges and universities.
-  Community-based organisations.
-  Youth groups and cooperatives.
-  Municipal councils and ward committees.
-  Internships and learnerships.
-  Public employment programmes.
-  Community training initiatives.
-  Local projects led by communities and local governments.



### 5 Challenges that must be addressed

-  Unequal access to training and opportunities.
-  High transport costs to reach training and workplaces.
-  Unpaid internships and exploitative work.
-  Exclusion of rural youth and young women.
-  Lack of tools, equipment and internet.
-  Need for support, mentorship and funding.



### 6 How to turn opportunity into action

-  Choose an area that interests you.
-  Learn by doing and keep improving your skills.
-  Volunteer your time and get involved in your community.
-  Build a portfolio of your experience and projects.
-  Find mentors and learn from others.
-  Ask: What support do we need to grow and lead?
-  Link local action to a fairer and more inclusive transition.



#### EXAMPLES OF YOUTH ROLES



#### ASK YOURSELF



 Young people can build skills, livelihoods, leadership and community solutions in a fair energy transition.



