

Bridging Voices for Climate Justice

The CAW!—Climate Action Works!—A Project linking South Tyrol in Italy with Ecuador and Senegal

Fabian Kostner

Abstract: *The “Climate Action Works!” project seeks to illuminate the climate policy and socio-ecological challenges facing South Tyrol and the globe. By highlighting actionable pathways toward a socially and environmentally just world, we advocate for a socio-ecological transformation accessible to all. The initiative will feature three virtual teach-ins with experts from the Global South, focusing on climate change education related to both mitigation and adaptation strategies. Our primary audience includes activists and interested individuals from the Global North.*

Insights from these sessions will be synthesized by journalists from the South Tyrolean street newspaper “Zebra”, who will collaborate with young participants aged 18 to 30 in editorial workshops. The culmination will be a special issue of “Zebra” dedicated to climate justice, bridging perspectives between the Global North and South.

Keywords: *Climate Justice; Education; Global South; Socio-Ecological Transformation; Virtual Teach-Ins; Writing Workshops*

Members of the project:

Fabian Kostner—Coordinator, Italy | Viola Ducati—Co-coordinator and workshop leader, Italy | Alessio Giordano—Workshop leader, Italy | David Hofmann—Volunteer, Italy

Motivation for the project and problems tackled:

The “Climate Action Works!” (CAW!) project arises in response to the pressing global challenges of climate change and social inequality, particularly highlighting the intricate relationships between the Global North and Global South. As climate crises intensify, it becomes crucial to address not only the environmental dimensions but also the

socio-economic disparities that exacerbate vulnerabilities among marginalized communities. Our project seeks to foster a deeper understanding of climate justice by providing a platform for diverse voices, especially those from the Global South, who are often sidelined in discussions predominantly led by the Global North.

In South Tyrol, as in many regions, the impacts of climate change are evident. Yet, responses often lack an intersectional approach that considers race, class, and historical context. By organizing three virtual teach-ins, we aim to bridge this knowledge gap and empower activists and interested parties in the Global North to engage meaningfully with climate justice issues. These sessions will feature speakers from the Global South who bring firsthand experience and knowledge about climate adaptation and mitigation strategies.

Their insights are invaluable for challenging prevailing narratives and ensuring that our understanding of climate action is inclusive and equitable.

The project’s focus on global citizenship education highlights the importance of a postcolonial perspective that recognizes historical injustices and current power dynamics. Addressing diversity and discrimi-

nation is not merely an academic exercise; it is a necessary step towards creating a more just society. By fostering dialogues that include multiple viewpoints, we can dismantle stereotypes and biases that persist within climate activism, ultimately paving the way for more collaborative and effective solutions.

Our collaboration with the South Tyrolean street newspaper “Zebra” exemplifies this spirit of partnership, as it not only allows us to disseminate knowledge but also engages young people in critical discussions about climate justice.

Fig. 42: The street magazine “Zebra”



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The editorial workshops with youth are designed to empower the next generation of climate activists, equipping them with the tools to analyze and challenge systems of injustice. By synthesizing content from the teach-ins, these young journalists will gain practical experi-

ence in storytelling and advocacy, essential for driving change in their communities.

Ultimately, the “Climate Action Works!” project responds to the urgent need for transformative education that encompasses themes of (in)justice, intersectionality, and the complexities of migration and neoliberalism. By fostering a holistic understanding of these interconnected issues, we can inspire a more engaged and informed citizenry ready to advocate for a just and sustainable future. Through dialogue, education, and collaboration, we believe that meaningful change is not only possible but imperative for achieving climate justice for all.

Project description

At the heart of CAW! lies the belief that climate action must be inclusive and just. The project will consist of three engaging virtual teach-ins, each focusing on critical aspects of climate change education, including mitigation and adaptation strategies. Our target audience—predominantly activists and interested parties in the Global North—will benefit from the unique perspectives of our speakers, who are deeply rooted in the realities of climate change. These sessions will not only provide essential insights but will also encourage participants to reflect on their roles in the climate movement and the importance of allyship in fostering justice.

Fig. 43: From the local to the global: a hybrid working session.



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International Partner No. 1: Alberto Acosta—Ecuador

Alberto Acosta is an Ecuadorian economist, politician, and intellectual known for his contribution to the concept of “Buen Vivir” (or “Sumak Kawsay” in Quechua), which promotes sustainable development and a harmonious balance between society and nature. He was Ecuador’s Minister of Energy and Mines and President of the Constituent Assembly in 2008, where he played a crucial role in the drafting of the new Ecuadorian Constitution. Acosta is also a critic of the extractivist economic

model and has written several books and articles on development, sustainability, and human rights.

International Partner No. 2: Mensa Kwami Tsedze—Senegal

Mensa Kwami Tsedze is the Program Director of Earth Guardians for Africa. Earth Guardians is an international non-profit environmental organization that provides youth with the resources and training they need to develop anti-racist, anti-colonialist, environmental, and climate-focused projects and campaigns.

We got to know Mensa through the network of academics set up by Hans-Karl Peterlini, the UNESCO Chair at the University of Klagenfurt. In his presentation, Mensa will highlight specific projects implemented on the African continent by his organization, emphasizing aspects of climate justice. He will also provide us with materials that the group of young people we involve through the AfZack youth association can use to delve deeper into the topic.

International Partner No. 3: Daryl LEYESA—Philippines

Daryl Leyesa is an activist of the farmers' organization PARAGOS and the National Coalition of Rural Women of the Philippines (PKKK). These organizations campaign against land grabbing and defend the collective rights of women and rural, indigenous, and fishing communities. They are also fighting for agrarian reform with the aim of a fair redistribution of land and the implementation of agro-ecological agricultural models.

In conjunction with the teach-ins, we will collaborate with the South Tyrolean street newspaper "Zebra" to document and summarize the key takeaways. Through editorial workshops with young people, we will create a special issue dedicated to climate justice that examines the dynamics between the Global North and the South. This issue will serve as both an educational resource and a platform for amplifying marginalized voices, encouraging readers to engage critically with the topics discussed.

Fig. 44: Insight in a workshop



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The materials developed during the workshops, including the recorded videos of the virtual teach-ins, will be used by one of our speakers, Mensa Kwami Tsedze, for their own educational programs.

The CAW! project also emphasizes the importance of global citizenship education from a postcolonial perspective. By addressing themes of diversity, discrimination, and historical context, we aim to challenge existing narratives within climate activism and promote an inclusive approach that acknowledges the contributions of all communities. This focus aligns with several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 13 (Climate Ac-

tion), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

Through our efforts, we aspire to cultivate a new generation of climate activists equipped to analyze and challenge systemic injustices. The knowledge gained from the teach-ins and the editorial workshops will empower participants to advocate for change within their communities and beyond

Connection to the Framework of Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

The “Climate Action Works!” (CAW!) project is intrinsically linked to the principles of Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At its core, GCED aims to empower learners to engage with global challenges, promote social justice, and foster a sense of responsibility towards others, particularly in the context of climate change and its socio-ecological implications.

CAW! aligns with GCED by emphasizing critical thinking, inclusivity, and empathy as foundational elements of education. By featuring voices from the Global South, the project actively challenges dominant narratives in climate discourse, encouraging participants from the Global North to confront their privileges and assumptions. This approach not only enriches their understanding of global issues but also cultivates a sense of solidarity and shared responsibility for addressing climate injustices.

In relation to the SDGs, CAW! directly contributes to several goals, particularly:

- SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities—By promoting diverse perspectives and advocating for marginalized communities affected by climate change, CAW! seeks to highlight and address systemic inequalities that persist in climate action efforts.
- SDG 13: Climate Action—The project emphasizes the urgent need for comprehensive climate education that includes both mitigation and

adaptation strategies. By empowering activists with knowledge and practical tools, we aim to inspire action that addresses the climate crisis effectively.

- **SDG 4: Quality Education**—Through the virtual teach-ins and editorial workshops, CAW! promotes inclusive and equitable quality education. The initiative not only provides participants with valuable insights but also encourages them to become agents of change within their communities.
- **SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities**—By fostering discussions on sustainable practices and community resilience, the project helps create urban environments that are inclusive, safe, and sustainable for all residents.
- **SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals**—Collaboration is a central tenet of CAW! The partnership with the South Tyrolean street newspaper “Zebra” exemplifies how diverse stakeholders can come together to share knowledge and amplify voices in the climate justice movement.

By integrating these frameworks, CAW! positions itself as a catalyst for transformative education that encourages participants to critically engage with the complexities of climate justice. The project aims to inspire a collective commitment to sustainability and social equity, equipping individuals with the skills and awareness needed to navigate and address the pressing challenges of our time.

Lessons learned

In launching the “Climate Action Works!” In the (CAW!) project, the team encountered several significant challenges common to initiatives focused on climate justice and global engagement.

Diverse Perspectives and Representation: Engaging speakers from the Global South posed logistical challenges, including time zone differences and varying access to technology. Ensuring authentic representa-

tion while balancing the perspectives of the Global North and South required careful planning and sensitivity.

Communication Barriers: Language differences and varying levels of familiarity with climate concepts created obstacles in effective communication. The team implemented translation services and simplified content to bridge these gaps, which ultimately enriched the discussions.

Planning and implementation: Managing timetables for virtual teach-ins and workshops across different time zones required careful coordination, and last-minute changes often led to confusion. Creating a good workshop environment was crucial, but maintaining engagement was challenging, as overlapping commitments caused attendance to fluctuate. Ensuring clear communication regarding schedules and expectations proved complex across diverse groups. Additionally, fostering an inclusive atmosphere where participants felt comfortable sharing their thoughts was essential and worked very well. These logistical issues highlighted the need for good organizational tools and communication strategies to enhance both the learning experience and participant involvement in future projects.

Overall, these challenges provided the team with crucial insights into the importance of flexibility, collaboration, and empathy in addressing complex issues. The experiences underscore the necessity of inclusive approaches and the value of learning from diverse voices to create meaningful, impactful climate justice initiatives.

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