DEFENDING THE RIGHT TO PROTEST FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

PROTECT THE PROTEST

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

⏱ **3.5-4 hours**   👥 **20 participants**

1

Define the scope and significance of the right to protest within climate justice movements, emphasising its role in local organising and mobilisation efforts.

2

Describe how the right to protest is protected by international law in the context of climate justice advocacy, considering its relevance to local communities.

3

Identify potential strategies for ensuring the safety and security of participants in climate justice protests and local organising activities, while advocating for adequate and rights-respecting policing practices to protect the right to protest.

WORKSHOP FRAMEWORK:

| Activity	Components	Materials	
Introduction	Welcome, Contribution / revision of learning objectives	▪ Workshop objectives written on flipchart paper ▪ Post-it notes	⏱ **20 mins**
Understanding the Right to Protest	Freedom of Expression, Assembly, International Human Rights Law, Restrictions to the right to protest	▪ 6 x Word Clouds with group numbers written above ▪ Markers ▪ Optional: Powerpoint Presentation	⏱ **60 mins**
Challenges and barriers to the Right to Protest	Examining the Challenges to the Right to Protest	▪ Illustrated regions of the world on flipchart paper ▪ Markers ▪ Optional: Powerpoint Presentation	⏱ **60 mins**

Activity	Components	Materials	
Staying Safe and Secure in Protests	Staying Safe and Secure in Protest	▪ Case Studies and Example Safety Checklist ▪ Markers ▪ Well-Being Workbook for Youth Activists ▪ Optional: Powerpoint Presentation	⏱ **60 mins**
Reflection	Reflection, Q&A, Supplementary Resources	▪ Resource Hub	⏱ **20 mins**
Additional Resources	Interactive Protect the Protest Map		

The workshop outline can be adjusted and modified based on the available time and specific needs of the participants. It is important to create a safe and inclusive space throughout the workshop, promoting active participation and respecting diverse perspectives and experiences.
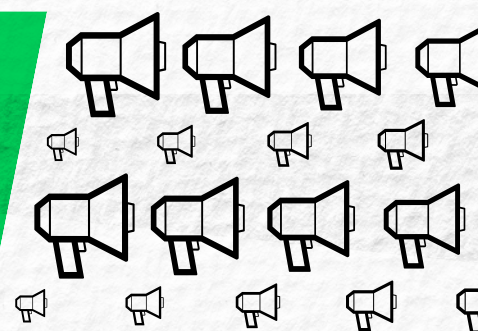
I. INTRODUCTION ⏱ 20 mins

PART 1:

In this activity participants will be asked to introduce themselves and describe their expectations for the workshop. The goal of this introduction is to create a safe, inclusive and participatory space where all participants and facilitators have mutual understanding and expectations for the workshop.

QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS:

- What is your name?
- What is one thing you are bringing to this workshop?

(prompt: expertise/question/experience/curiosity)

Please be aware that participants are not obligated to answer this question if they choose not to, and any information disclosed is entirely voluntary.

In discussions about protest, it's important to acknowledge that individuals in the room may hold differing viewpoints. The purpose of this space is not to engage in specific issue debates, but rather to recognize and uphold the universal right for all people to express themselves and engage in peaceful protests for causes they believe in – rights safeguarded in international human rights law and standards. In this environment, we prioritise respecting all contributions, regardless of perspective, and acknowledge that everyone has the autonomy to leave the space and protect their wellbeing if needed. After the workshop concludes, feedback is highly encouraged and welcomed to foster continuous improvement and understanding.

It is important for facilitators to note that at the core of the discussions taking place in the workshop, it's imperative to uphold the principles of a safe space, especially as participants might volunteer sensitive information. It should be stressed that facilitators and participants are both responsible for building and maintaining a safe space during the workshop. It's crucial that all details are handled with the utmost care, respect, and confidentiality from both the facilitator and fellow participants to ensure a secure environment for all. In areas where appropriate, participants should be encouraged to refrain from using their phones to photograph or record other participants, respecting individual privacy and promoting an environment where everyone feels comfortable to engage freely.

II. UNDERSTANDING THE RIGHT TO PROTEST

⏱ **60 mins**

PART 1: ⏱ **30 mins**

SMALL GROUP BRAINSTORM:

WHAT IS PROTEST?

Break the larger group into groups of 5-6 people. Ask each group to think about the word protest and discuss what images are conjured in their minds. Once completed, ask participants to think of one notable protest in history and answer corresponding questions (their example can be related to the climate justice movement or not).

The group will have 10 minutes to discuss the following points. Ask the groups to write the key points down in a word cloud on flipchart paper. Once completed, ask groups to take 1 minute each to present and post their word cloud on the wall with other groups.

QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS:

1 | **What is protest?**

- Are there different ways to protest?
- What does it look like?
- What does it sound like?
- Who is involved? (e.g., size of the crowd, signs, banners, police presence, etc.)

2 | **Identify a notable protest in history.**

- What was the goal of the protest?
- How did the protesters convey their message or demands during the protest?
- Did the protestors face any challenges? (opposing groups/law enforcement/counter protestors) How did they respond?
- Was change achieved?
- How do these examples relate to any protests you know of on climate justice?

Important Note: Depending on the size of the group, facilitators may need to choose between the above questions.

PART 2: FACILITATED SESSION

PRESENTATION:

In this session the facilitator will lead a 30 minute
right to protest is protected by
rights law and standards.
scuss relevant conventions,
s that safeguard the right to
ensure a meaningful transition
coherence of different parts of
tators are encouraged to link

the key insights from the group discussions to
the material presented in the presentation.

OPTIONAL:

In case time is limited to discuss all regions in
plenary, facilitators can break the group into
smaller groups of participants and encourage
them to explore regional laws.

p: Following the presentation, facilitators are encouraged to
ts into groups and encourage them to ask, question and
e information presented. Facilitators are encouraged to
g questions as prompts, asking one group to answer one
below and present back to the larger group after a
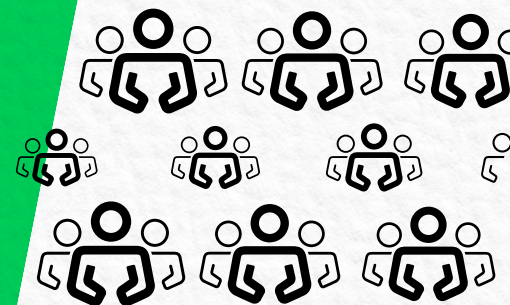
1 How do the international human rights
conventions, treaties, and declarations
discussed in the presentation specifically
relate to and support the advocacy for
climate justice through the right to
protest?

2 Can you pinpoint examples or instances from our
group discussions on climate justice that resonate
with the protections outlined in international
human rights standards for the right to protest in
the context of environmental issues?

3 Considering the unique challenges posed
by climate-related protests, how might
regional variations in laws impact the
effectiveness of the right to protest for
climate justice, and how can we navigate
these differences?

4 For participants in smaller regional groups
focusing on climate justice, what insights
emerged from your discussions about regional
laws, and how do these align with or diverge from
the broader international human rights framework
presented, particularly in the context of
advocating for climate justice through protests?

**Please note that at this point in the training it is advised to provide
participants with a 5-10 minute break**

III. CHALLENGES TO THE RIGHT TO PROTEST

⏱ **60 mins**

PART 1: ⏱ **30 mins**

SMALL GROUP BRAINSTORM

Participants will be asked to move back into small groups and engage in a discussion to identify specific challenges faced by climate activists in different regions. Groups will be given a region of the world broken into: Americas, Africa, Asia-Pacific, Middle East and North Africa and Europe and Central Asia. Participants will be tasked with creatively identifying challenges that climate activists face when engaging in protest in the region they are working on. Participants have the option to focus on challenges at a regional or national level.

GUIDING QUESTIONS:
- What are the structural (i.e. discriminatory laws, economic inequality, limited access to healthcare, etc.) barriers that hinder climate activism and protest?
- How does the political context affect the safety and effectiveness of climate protests and organising?
- What role do technologies and digital resources play in empowering or hindering climate activism?
- What are some of the common narratives that challenge or oppose protests by climate activists?

Groups will be asked to present a wide-ranging overview of the challenges faced by protesters worldwide and post their region of the world on the wall. By the end of the presentations, the poster paper will come together to map parts of the world, and the unifying and unique challenges faced by climate activists engaging in peaceful protest.

*Note: If this workshop is being conducted with participants from the same country or region, this activity can be adapted to reflect the regional or national challenges. Instead of creating a world map, participants could create a map of a region, country or city that illustrates the challenges faced within the location of their choice.

PART 2: FACILITATED SESSION

AND GROUP WORK ⏱ **30 mins**

In this session the facilitator will lead a 20 minutes session on the common tactics used to restrict the right to protest, including laws, surveillance, internet shutdowns, and stigmatisation. In order to ensure a meaningful transition and strengthen the coherence of different parts of the workshop, facilitators are encouraged to link the key insights from the group discussions to the material presented in the presentation.

Please note that at this point in the training it is advised to provide participants with a 5-10 minute break

IV. STAYING SAFE AND SECURE IN PROTESTS
⏱ **60 mins**

PART 1: FACILITATED SESSION ⏱ **30 mins**

In the first 10 minutes of this segment of the workshop, the facilitator will recap some of the challenges that were raised in the previous sessions. In this final session of the workshop participants will be encouraged to brainstorm practical tips and techniques for staying safe and secure while participating in climate (or other) protests in order to protect their overall wellbeing. Based on the findings of the previous brainstorm, ask participants to gather in groups of 4-5 and begin to categorise the challenges under the headings:

▪ **SAFETY AND SECURITY:**
Ensuring the protection and well-being of individuals participating in protests, prioritising their physical and emotional security.

▪ **STRUCTURAL BARRIERS:**
Institutional or systemic obstacles that impede or restrict individuals from exercising their right to protest, such as legal limitations or governmental constraints.

▪ **CORPORATE BARRIERS:**
Obstacles posed by private entities or corporations that may attempt to impede or suppress protests, often through legal, financial, or influential means.

▪ **SOCIETAL BARRIERS:**
Challenges stemming from social perceptions, biases, or cultural norms that can hinder the effectiveness or acceptance of protests, creating obstacles in achieving their goals.

Once participants have categorised the challenges, introduce that now we will begin to think of solutions. For as many of the challenges and barriers that are listed, encourage participants to begin to explore possible solutions in 1 to 1 conversations using the following guiding questions:

Challenge

CHALLENGE #1:
Safety and security (i.e. police violence, arbitrary detention, violent counter protests)

Response

What are some ways to contribute to safety, security and wellbeing in protest?

Challenge

CHALLENGE #2:
Structural Violence
(i.e. Police, government pushback, criminalisation)

CHALLENGE #3:
Corporate Pressure
(i.e. Smear campaigns/misinformation)

CHALLENGE #4:
Societal/Community
(i.e. Race, gender, religion)

Response

In what ways can we address structural violence to ensure overall wellbeing?

How might we mitigate the impact of corporate pressure on wellbeing?

What strategies can be employed to strengthen societal and community support for enhanced overall wellbeing?

It is important to note that the strategies and solutions that come from the brainstorm may not be enough in all cases to protect people from violent action/repression from the state/corporate actors/members of society and all participants must make a personal risk assessment before engaging in any form of protest.

REFLECTION AND WRAP-UP:

Following the exercise, facilitators are encouraged to break participants into groups and encourage them to ask, question and inquire about the information presented. Facilitators are encouraged to use the following questions as prompts, asking one group to answer one of the questions below and present back to the larger group after a short discussion:

- Looking back at the entire workshop, how has your understanding of the challenges and solutions related to participating in protests evolved or deepened?
- What actions or initiatives can you envision taking based on the insights gained in this workshop to contribute to the safety, security, and overall wellbeing of individuals engaged in climate (or other) protests?

OPTIONAL - PART 2:
STAGED SCENARIO   30 mins

Participants will be divided into groups of 5 and given a scenario involving a protest for climate justice that involves a multitude of interlinking challenging factors. Groups will be tasked with creatively identifying these factors and coming up with ways to counteract the barriers that are presented. Participants can write this, draw the scenario or role play the scenario and what they would do to stay safe and present this plan for the group.

At the conclusion of this session, facilitators are encouraged to highlight resources on well-being such as Staying Resilient While Trying to Save the World (Volume 2): A Well-Being Workbook for Youth Activists

V. REFLECTION

⏱ **20 mins**

In this reflection and conclusion, participants will recap the key takeaways from the workshop. Open the floor for questions and answers, allowing participants to seek further clarification or share their thoughts. The facilitator can provide additional resources and references for further exploration.

PART ONE:

Drawing three circles on the ground, ask each participant to contribute one reflection to each of the circles. Participants can write down their reflections on post-it notes and place them inside the circles. After each participant has completed their reflections, the facilitator can open the discussion for anyone who would like to speak to their points. Participants are encouraged to collect their notes at the end of the exercise as a physical take away from the exercise.

- **Inner Circle (Green Post-it Notes):**
  Based on what I learned today, what is something I can do for myself?

- **Middle Circle (Orange Post-it Notes):**
  Based on what I learned today, what is something I can do for my organisation/group?

- **Outer Circle (Purple Post-it Notes):**
  Based on what I learned today, what is something I can do for my community?

PART TWO:

Final questions to ask participants:

- **What have you learned from someone else today?**