

Climate Changemaker Playbook



The ultimate, hidden truth of the world is that it is something we make, and could just as easily make differently.

David Graeber



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Foreword

As I write, news is breaking that the world has, for the first time, exceeded 1.5 degrees Centigrade of warming for an entire year.

Does this mean we should give up, accept that 1.5°C is gone, and head for the hills?

Absolutely not.

Christiana Figueres

Former Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
February 2024

Co-host, Outrage + Optimism podcast
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A 12 month breach is not a permanent breach, and the science remains clear in that

1. the trend line of temperature increase is pretty much on track with what climate scientists predicted it would be, given our ongoing carbon emissions, and
2. the math is still the same: we still have a window of opportunity to prevent that trend line from crossing 1.5°C.

It is more important now than ever, therefore, that we insist on keeping 1.5°C as the scientific guide rail in the Paris Agreement and as the political anchor for all climate action around the world.

Everything we choose to do now matters. More than just avoiding the worst, everything we can do that builds community resilience, that addresses injustices, that brings more beauty and joy into the world, contributes to shifting course towards a liveable future in line with the Paris Agreement. And our governments need our help.

Although we have national agreements in place to limit warming to 1.5°C, and to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, the policies are not yet in place to achieve these goals.

The finance flows are not yet fast enough to achieve these goals. And most people don't yet know how to contribute towards achieving these goals in their everyday actions.

That's where this playbook comes in. It's about extending the invitation for shaping our shared future to as many people as possible. It's a set of tools that will help you bring ever more people into this moment of global transformation, so that every job can become a green job, so that every political party stands for climate action, so that every community can become regenerative.

This transformation is already underway. It's happening in local communities, global companies, board rooms, at kitchen tables and in back gardens all over the world. It's happening inside each one of us too. Transformation is surprisingly personal and all of this is deeply interconnected. What we think and feel inside is in constant interaction with what we are creating in the world. With our every thought, feeling and action we co-create reality in every moment.

There are incredible people in the climate movement, and more joining every day. There are wins in all corners of the globe, many that go uncelebrated, in policy, business and civil society alike. The solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss are so often also solutions to injustice and inequality, meaning that by working towards environmental progress we are creating a safer, more joyous, more equitable, healthier world for all people. And there is also the joy and wonder of the world around us that I savour.

We get to choose the future we want for our planet. Together.

Letter from the Authors

More than ever before, people understand that climate change and biodiversity loss threaten the places, people, and things we love. And they care – deeply. But change isn’t happening at the speed and scale required, leading to feelings of powerlessness and despair. Wider systemic changes seem too slow, and our individual contributions feel too insignificant. And yet, things are shifting, because our individual contributions **do** matter. How can we rapidly increase the number of people closing the gap between caring and acting so that those shifts accelerate?

We need a collective approach. No individual can address climate change single-handedly, but thinking of ourselves solely in relation to our individual impact is part of the problem: people underestimate their power to shift systems. There are so many ways we influence change: making decisions at work, offering (or withholding) our labour, shifting our behaviour as consumers, being intentional in our relationships with family and friends, and using our political power as citizens. All of these speak to our roles as part of a collective – an organisation, an economy, a family, a community, a country. Increasing people’s ability to use the full range of their influence can help shift systems and accelerate the collective global response to the climate crisis.

Climate change is an “everyone-everywhere mission”, as Christiana Figueres says. Because climate change touches everything, there will be roles for everyone. But different people will have different opportunities to act – from the changemaker closest to the effects of a warming planet, to the one closest to decision-making power, and everyone in between. We can be most effective collectively when people find places to contribute where they leverage their unique strengths, positions, and passions.

Yet the status quo exerts a powerful inertia. Individuals and organisations benefit from profitable business models that undermine our planet. Some maintain political power by keeping things as they are, and so are working hard to make sure change doesn’t happen. Shaking the inertia will take all of our energy. As Frederick Douglass said, “Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. If there is no struggle, there is no progress.”

This is a story of power.

What are the best approaches for unlocking our collective power to take action? To distil best practices for engaging colleagues, peers, and communities in climate action, we studied strategies used by climate changemakers around the world. What we found is applicable for people working in business, government and civil society alike.

In the pages of this playbook, you’ll find ideas and inspiration for activating everyone, everywhere.

Pip Wheaton

Planet & Climate Advisor
and Ashoka Fellow, Ashoka

Visiting Fellow, Skoll Centre
for Social Entrepreneurship



Growing up in rural Australia made Pip intensely curious about humans’ impact on the rest of the natural world. Her childhood saw her planting trees and rounding up sheep, finding snakes in her bedroom and echidna in the garden, and solo walks gazing at exceptionally starry skies.

Pip works on climate change, both locally in Te-Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington), Aotearoa New Zealand, and globally. Her work is informed by systems theory and a fierce sense of justice: her decision to work on climate is based on the

recognition it is a symptom of deep faults in our social, economic, and political systems. She has worked in social entrepreneurship, local government, academia, and philanthropy across South Africa, the UK and Aotearoa.

Pip is an award-winning social entrepreneur for founding enke: Make Your Mark, a youth leadership organisation in South Africa. She was a WEF Global Shaper, won a Skoll Scholarship to complete an MBA at Said Business School, and is an Ashoka Fellow.

Marya Besharov

Academic Director, Skoll Centre
for Social Entrepreneurship

Professor of Organisations and
Impact, Saïd Business School,
University of Oxford



Marya leads the Skoll Centre’s work to bridge theory and practice, and equip entrepreneurial leaders to catalyse social impact within and beyond business. Her research focuses on leadership, social innovation, and systems change. She teaches and advises leaders worldwide on how to manage competing strategic priorities for positive financial and social impact.

Marya’s research has been published in leading academic journals such as *Administrative Science Quarterly*, *Academy of Management Journal*, and *Academy of Management Review*, as well as

practitioner outlets such as *Harvard Business Review* and *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. She holds a BA in Social Studies, an MA in Sociology, and a PhD in Organizational Behavior from Harvard University. She also holds an MBA from Stanford University.

Marya’s work on climate is grounded in her research and experience bringing together diverse voices and perspectives to tackle complex challenges, and in the transformative power of empowering others.

Jessica Jacobson

Senior Manager for Research
and Insights, Skoll Centre for
Social Entrepreneurship



Jessica leads the Skoll Centre’s research portfolio, which brings together academic research and expertise from social impact practitioners globally, to develop insights and best practices to catalyse social impact.

An anthropologist by training, she has worked in the international development sector as an applied researcher and gender and inclusion advisor for a decade, working globally and especially in Southern and West Africa.

She holds a BA in Anthropology from Tulane University, and an MSc in Anthropology and Development from the London School of Economics.

Jessica’s commitment to climate action is driven by the unjust impacts of climate change she has seen in this work, and by her fierce hope for a better future for her son’s generation.

Introduction

Our social, political, and economic systems are entangled with climate change and biodiversity loss. They hold both the causes and the solutions to the challenges we face. An effective global response requires systems change – shifting institutions, power dynamics, social norms, and other ‘rules of the game’ to respond to the root causes of the climate crisis. Doing so will require not only policy shifts but also behavioural changes, both of which demand action from individuals everywhere.

Climate changemaking:

An individual’s capacity to drive change to address the climate and ecological emergency. It rests on a belief that you can do something about the specific problem or opportunity you’ve identified, often driven by empathy for others or the greater good.

But even when people want to take action on climate change, they face multiple barriers: the complexity can be daunting, it’s difficult to know how to have a meaningful impact, and seeing the impacts of our warming world can trigger paralysing anxiety. Navigating all this alone is hard.

For many people, the journey to climate changemaking requires external support: a person or organisation that activates and assists others to build capacity for action. That’s where this playbook comes in. It is designed for anyone who wants to empower others to drive climate solutions, for the agency unlockers – those leading or poised to lead, and who want to bring others along with them.

How can people be supported to become climate changemakers? By studying hundreds of climate changemakers in Ashoka’s network of social entrepreneurs – people working in diverse sectors and geographies – we identified three evidence-based strategies that have successfully activated people as climate changemakers in a wide range of contexts. These strategies are grounded in decades of research and practice in change management, social psychology, and systems change – fields that offer a rich set of ideas and practices for catalysing change at scale.

We have brought them together in this playbook to support you wherever you are in bringing that change to life.

The first part of the playbook explains the three strategies we identified, details specific tactics for implementing them, and offers questions to help you use the strategies in your work. The second part provides five case studies of organisations bringing the strategies to life. As you read the playbook, ask yourself which tactics address the biggest needs for the people with whom you work. Some will likely be more relevant than others. You might even be using some of the tactics already. Very few of the people we studied engage with all nine tactics, but they all use more than one, combined in a way that makes most sense for their context. We invite you to do the same.

Who is this playbook for and how can you use it?

This playbook is for individuals in any sector, anywhere in the world, who want to mobilise a specific group of people towards action for planet and climate – whether it’s reducing emissions, conserving natural resources, or adapting to the impacts of a warmer world; whether it’s via policy changes, shifting social norms, or investment. While the specific actions will be different in each situation, the mechanisms to build internal motivation are relevant across contexts.

Research Methodology

We studied the work of hundreds of Ashoka Fellows, leading social entrepreneurs from around the world, through three inter-related research projects: 1) surveying 190 Ashoka Fellows, 2) identifying and clustering target issues addressed by the 600+ Ashoka Fellows elected in the climate field since 1980, and 3) conducting in-depth interviews with 22 Ashoka Fellows who focus specifically on climate. The Fellows we studied engage a wide range of actors and deploy varied interventions, and their efforts collectively span five continents. They are training small-scale fishing communities to champion conservation, supporting senior leaders in multinational corporations to transform procurement practices of their companies, bringing together residents of local UK neighbourhoods to retrofit their streets, facilitating diverse, equitable, long-term decision making to transform industry in Malaysia, and much more.

As an organisational leader:

We invite you to read this playbook through two lenses: what support do you most need as a climate changemaker? And how can you use your role to unlock or support climate changemaking in others?

As an employee:

Whether you have “sustainability” in your job description or not, this playbook can help you work with your colleagues to ensure all roles in your organisation can contribute to climate solutions.

As a community member:

Our capacity to work collectively will only get more important as the impacts of climate change accelerate. This playbook can help you and your fellow community members come together to identify where and how you can have most impact.

As a climate funder:

This playbook can help you strengthen the support you offer to people already active in the movement. As you read the strategies, we encourage you to identify opportunities for bolstering your existing work and developing new approaches.

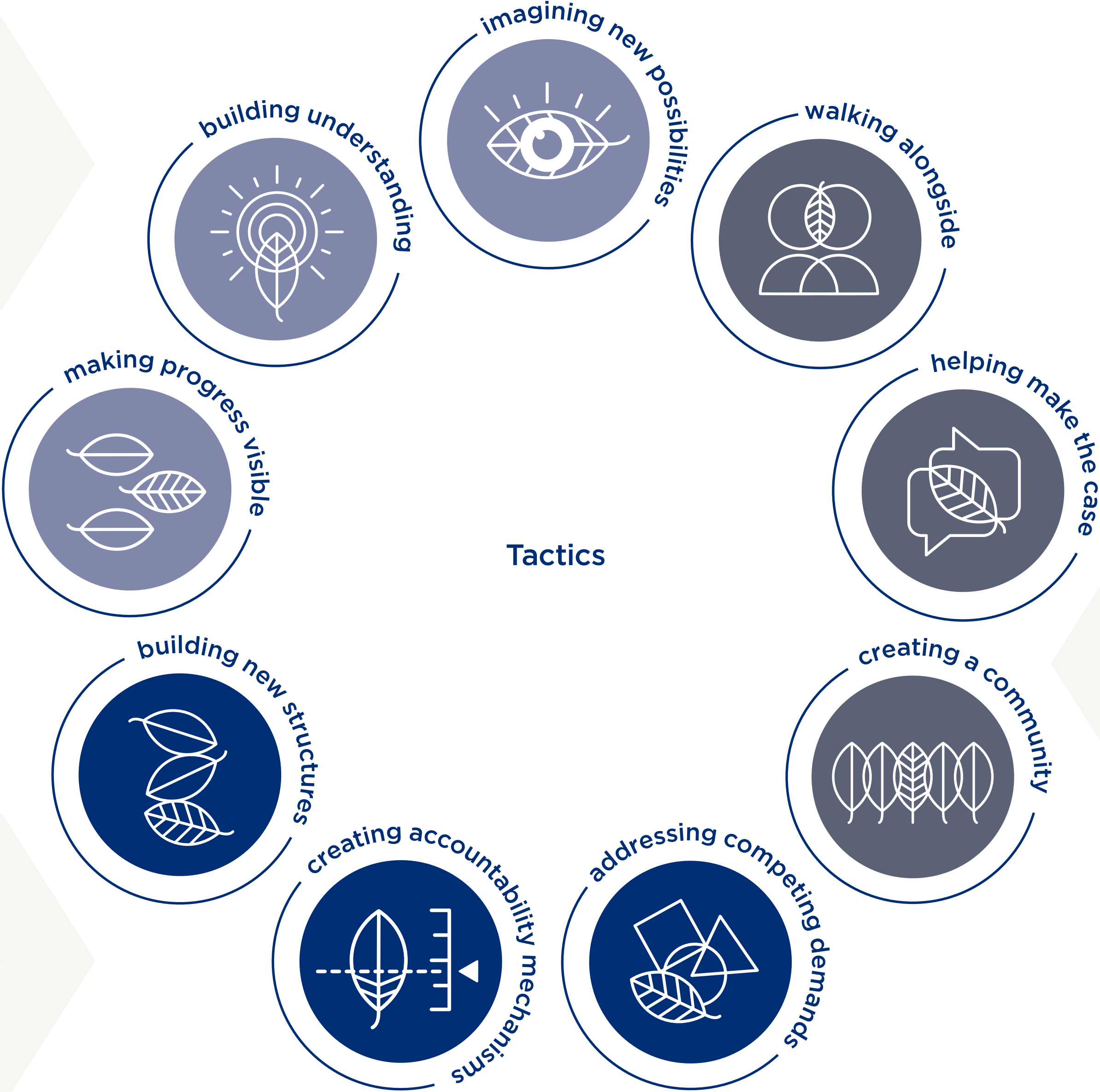
As a campaigner:

The role of narrative in climate action is increasingly gaining attention, yet many of the most pervasive narratives undermine agency or distract from collective action by focusing on the individual. We encourage you to use this playbook to strengthen your campaigns, drawing in particular on the first strategy of *making it personal*.

For everyone, the playbook offers a set of strategies and tactics to help shape your approach for activating climate changemakers. You can dip into the nine tactics to figure out where to start, or how to take your existing work deeper. Because there is much more depth to each tactic than we could cover in one playbook, we encourage you to use the playbook as a launching pad: for tactics that are most relevant to you, go deeper by looking into existing literature and speaking with others who are already using the approach.

Strategy 01:

Making
It Personal



Strategy 02:

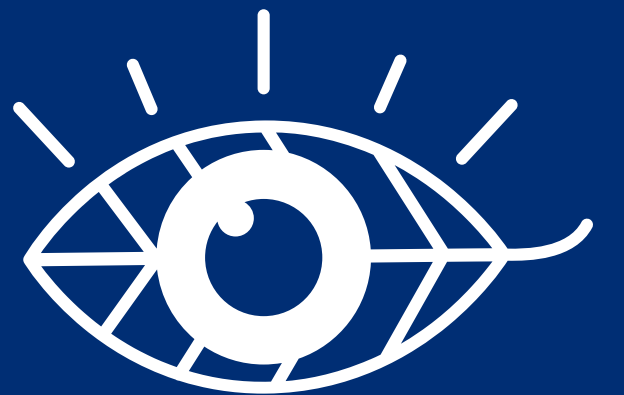
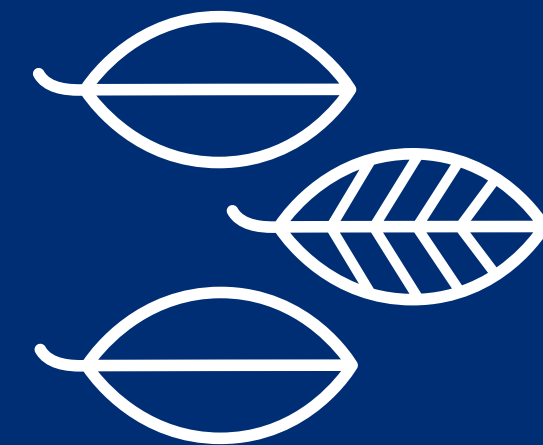
Gathering
Support

Strategy 03:

Creating
Enabling
Conditions

Making It Personal

01


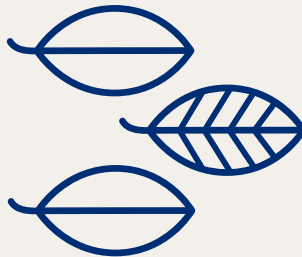
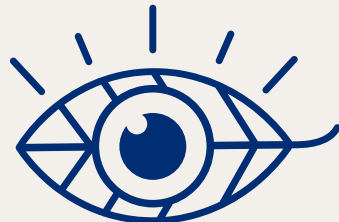


The first strategy, *Making It Personal* is about connecting the climate and ecological emergency to a person’s specific context, role, values, and identity – the things they care about and the actions in their sphere of influence. Doing so builds internal motivation, a key ingredient for agency.¹

Agency involves both the belief you can influence the world around you, as well as the desire and ability to do so. Climate changemakers need high levels of agency – specifically a belief that their actions matter. Although levels of concern about climate change are increasing globally, for many people that doesn’t translate to action or meaningful behaviour change. *Making It Personal* therefore involves more than just sharing information or educating people on the technical details of climate change. It addresses the emotional processes that influence our beliefs about the impact of our actions, our willingness to act, and the dynamics make us feel disempowered.

This is about both building motivation and navigation – both of which are personal.

We found three tactics that can help you *Make It Personal*: Building Understanding, Making Progress Visible, and Imagining New Possibilities.

Logic	Tactics	Examples from our research
<div>Making It Personal</div> <div>Communicating about climate change in a way that resonates with individuals’ specific situations increases their internal motivation to do something about it. This builds a sense of agency and helps people to initiate action.</div>	<div>Building Understanding</div> <div>communicating complex science, data and / or systems theory surrounding climate change in an accessible way, tailored to the specific audience and context</div> <div></div>	<div>Regi Wahyu (HARA) shows small-holder farmers in Indonesia how the changing weather patterns they experience are part of climate change, and he links care of the earth to the Quran.</div>
	<div>Making Progress Visible</div> <div>identifying tangible metrics that help people understand how their contribution is part of a bigger whole</div> <div></div>	<div>Al Harris (Blue Ventures) puts data in the hands of fishing communities so the impact of their conservation work on fishing stocks is visible.</div>
	<div>Imagining New Possibilities</div> <div>leading group processes to help people see opportunities and consequences of acting; creating new products, business models, or ways of organising</div> <div></div>	<div>Cynthia Ong (Forever Sabah) helps diverse stakeholders to think in forever timeframes in Malaysian Borneo.</div>

While the examples in the table above show how a climate changemaker used a particular tactic, this is not the only tactic they use. Each of them deploys multiple tactics across multiple strategies.

Building Understanding

To solve a problem, we need to understand it. Climate change is a vast and often technical topic that cuts across many disciplines and practices. This can lead people to become overwhelmed and disengage, or to misunderstand what types of action will have meaningful impact. The aim isn't to radically increase everyone's understanding of climate science – it's about giving people relevant information in a way that resonates, equipping them to problem-solve for the best actions.

The first step in building understanding is focusing on the most relevant and impactful part of the problem in your specific context. As you think through how climate change plays out in your context, it might be helpful to consider the major emission sources (on both the production and consumption side), how the global decarbonisation process is likely to impact the people you're working with (i.e., the transition risks), and how the physical impacts will directly and indirectly impact the place in which you're working.

Research shows that people often struggle to identify which actions are most effective at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, in a complex problem like climate change, there are leverage points where it's possible to get disproportionate impact for a given level of effort. For example, Bill McKibben's organisation Third Act works with Americans over the age of 60 to help them understand how they can use their professional skills after they have retired from their jobs. In this instance the understanding is about helping people navigate complexity so they can direct their energy toward actions that have the biggest impact on reducing emissions.

Knowing your audience comes next. Your context and who you're working with will determine what is most relevant. Different people will be motivated by different information and have the power to create change in different areas. Explanations need to be tailored to each person's needs, experiences, pain points, and passions. Consider their existing knowledge and gaps, and try linking new information to concepts they already know about. Understanding whom you're working with can also increase your credibility, foster trust, and build empathy.

There are different ways to build understanding. One approach is to engage the heart as well as the head, either through storytelling or simply by illustrating how climate change affects issues important to the people you're working with. Another approach is to help people feel empowered by demystifying science, politics, or systems theories associated with climate change. For example, HARA in Indonesia links the concept of care for the earth with teachings from the Quran: engaging small-holder farmers in discussions about the changing weather patterns they experience, they build understanding about climate change and connect it to farmers' existing worldviews. Offering accessible explanations builds people's confidence in their ability to contribute, removing the assumption that climate change is a problem for experts to solve.

Making Progress Visible

Many people experience a sense of helplessness in the face of climate change because they feel too small or because the challenge feels too big. And given the scale of the challenge, it can be difficult to recognise advancements and achievements. Making progress visible is about recognising the small and big milestones reached, and helping people see themselves as part of a bigger whole. It both keeps people motivated and helps them make the case for climate action to others. This tactic can also be beneficial for identifying lack of progress on a project or initiative and revealing the need for adjustments.

How progress shows up and how it can be connected to the bigger picture will depend on the context. It could involve tracking a group's work and attributing impact, showing trends in a community's behaviour change, or documenting global trends that are especially relevant to the community, such as shifting norms in an industry that the community depends on or that you're working with. If the work is small-scale, then showing progress in delivering on whatever projects or initiatives the community is pursuing can be helpful, particularly when linked to a compelling story of how those kinds of initiatives can cumulatively create bigger shifts.

Understanding whom you are working with helps make progress visible in ways that will make it personal and build motivation; homing in on areas they are passionate about or connected to should be a priority. For example, Blue Ventures gives fishing communities mobile-based catch monitoring tools to improve decision making, which also makes the impact of their conservation work on fishing stocks visible. (See the Blue Ventures case study for more information on their approach.)

Imagining New Possibilities

If we cannot imagine a different version of our world, how can we build it? It can be easy to get stuck thinking within the boundaries of how systems currently work. With climate, the scale of change makes it incredibly hard to imagine what the future will be like. That can reinforce the sense of permanence of the status quo and lead people to feel disempowered. Changing mindsets to break free of what currently is and come up with what could be requires imagination. As Rob Hopkins, founder of Transition Movement says, "imaging the future in a positive way [is] an act of immense courage, of resistance, of rebellion."

Imagining new possibilities is powerful when it's rooted in empathy, which can come from thinking about the needs and desires of future beings, non-human animals, nature, or distant others. In addition, thinking about desirable futures rather than catastrophic climate scenarios can help us tap into feelings of hope and aspiration rather than nihilism. Practicing imagination fuels a stronger sense of agency for individuals, while also unleashing ideas for new products, business models, and ways of organising. For example, Forever Sabah in Malaysian Borneo brings together people from indigenous community groups, businesses, non-profit organisations, researchers, and members of key government organisations to think collectively in "forever" timeframes to imagine and then create solutions towards a diversified, equitable, circular economy. This process of collective, long-term imagination opens up new possibilities and overcomes short-term differences in interests. One project that has emerged from this approach is the Sabah renewable energy rural road map – a community-driven initiative that is working to build low-carbon economies and ensure access to affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy.

Questions to guide your approach

01.

How does climate change show up in your context?

Think through the three components of climate change: mitigation,² transition³ and adaptation.⁴ What are the major sources of emissions in your context? Which current and future impacts of climate change are most relevant here? How will this particular place or industry need to transform?

02.

What do the people you’re working with care about?

Your understanding of the people you’re working with will underpin your work. What are their concerns, needs, values, and interests? What is their perception of climate change?

03.

What are their avenues for impact?

Think about your role as a navigator, guiding people towards the place they can have most impact, whether that’s local, national, or global. What unique knowledge and experience, and influence do they have? What actions are they taking already, and what is missing?

04.

How can you show progress on the changes they want to see happen?

Think about how the work you’re supporting contributes to a bigger whole, and how you can show forward momentum towards this goal. How do the people you’re working with understand the big picture – is it about global emissions, numbers of trees planted, public awareness, or something else? What forms of progress would they find compelling? What data can you track from your and others’ work?

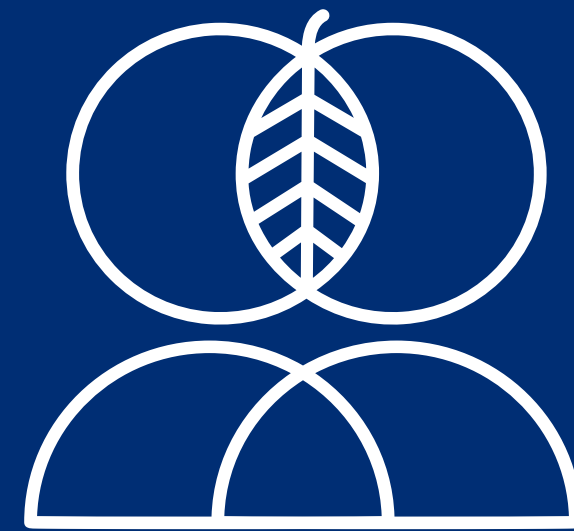
05.

Where are people stuck by the status quo?

This is as much about you personally as about the people you’re working with, because your ability to imagine will help keep you motivated and build motivation in others. What do you care about and how would that show up in your imagined future? What aspects of the system are holding back change? How can these be re-imagined? Which other perspectives could you adopt to help you think differently – someone with a different background, someone born in the future, non-human animals?

Gathering Support

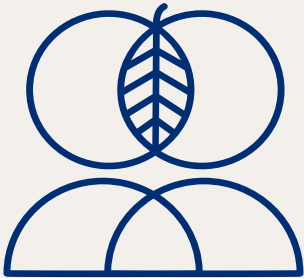
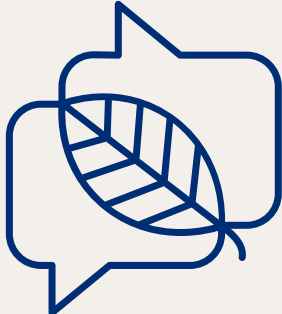

02



Creating change is hard. Doing it alone is even harder. While the first strategy speaks to internal motivations, the second strategy, *Gathering Support*, focuses on how working with others can increase people’s capacity to drive climate action. Bringing people, and their resources, together can help overcome the smallness of individual action in the face of a truly global problem.

Pulling together different types of support for people who want to be climate changemakers increases their staying power and chances of success. It helps them to start tackling tough problems and to persist in the face of difficulties. Feeling like there’s someone in your corner can be the difference between overcoming challenges and faltering.

Adding your energy to encourage another person is a powerful way to help people keep up motivation, and it plays a role in all three tactics for *Gathering Support*: Walking Alongside, Helping Make the Case, and Creating a Community.

Logic	Tactics	Examples from our research
<div>Gathering Support</div> <div>A network of relational support offers energy, expertise, and community. Individuals can draw on this support to overcome the inevitable stumbling blocks that arise.</div>	<div>Walking Alongside</div> <div>offering one-on-one coaching, mentoring and troubleshooting; providing sustained energy to shift the inertia of the system</div> <div></div>	<div>Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka (Conservation Through Public Health) builds stewardship of nature through holistic care of individuals living alongside species like gorilla in Uganda.</div>
	<div>Helping Make the Case</div> <div>helping people to show the business case for emission reduction, find profitable products, or develop new business models</div> <div></div>	<div>Nicole Rycroft (Canopy) works with sustainability managers and corporate leaders to demonstrate the profitability of sustainable forestry, showing how it translates into brand value.</div>
	<div>Creating a Community</div> <div>bringing people together to share learnings, reinforce behaviours, develop positive social norms, and see how their work contributes to a bigger whole</div> <div></div>	<div>Jim Thompson (THIS! is What We Did) convenes over-50s to discuss how to divest from banks that are the biggest fossil fuel supporters.</div>

While the examples in the table above show how a climate changemaker used a particular tactic, this is not the only tactic they use. Each of them deploys multiple tactics across multiple strategies.

Walking Alongside

Catalysing action at the speed and scale required to address climate change requires overcoming inertia in the system, and it demands sustained energy from climate changemakers. When internal motivation falters, having someone walking alongside, providing practical or emotional support can help people to continue on their journey. This tactic is particularly important for people who are pushing against a powerful status quo and those who are working without allies. Walking alongside someone allows you to be their champion behind the scenes and help them maintain the motivation to continue the work in the face of setbacks.

Working closely with individuals allows you to tailor your support and be responsive to their specific needs and contexts, adjusting in real time as those change. It could involve coaching or mentoring to provide encouragement or troubleshooting issues as they arise. It could entail acting as a strategic partner. For example, ClientEarth brings legal expertise to support people leading shareholder uprisings to push financial institutions around the world to move investment away from fossil fuels. The level of support needed will vary between different individuals and stages, so it is important to give them space to communicate to you about what is helpful or not, and where they could use more support.

Helping Make the Case

To enable their work, many people seeking to create change need to bring others on board, or at least reduce others' resistance to change. Helping people make the case to those they need to enlist is an important form of support. This is not a one-off action – it often requires repeatedly presenting the reasons for taking action to key resource or power holders in the community or company the person you're supporting works in. For example, Canopy works with sustainability managers and corporate leaders to demonstrate the profitability of sustainable forestry, showing how it translates into brand value. (See the Canopy case study for more information on their approach.)

A good first step is to identify the decision-makers and power-holders who could enable or block action. Who has the trust and credibility needed to help get these people on board – is it the person you're supporting, you, or someone else? What do they care about, what is their starting understanding of climate change, and what are the specific actions they're working towards? Paying attention to these factors can allow you to help people see climate solutions in a new light.

How climate change is framed is also important for gathering support. Many people are accustomed to hearing about climate solutions as expensive or requiring sacrifice, which reduces motivation to support them. While we must be honest about the implications of getting to net-zero and where there will be painful trade-offs, in many situations there are considerations that could offset or counter-balance the costs: the risks that are reduced or avoided by taking action; the moral and business cases for emissions reductions; opportunities to innovate sustainable business models; other benefits to community, health, the environment that can arise; both short-term and long-term effects. To be effective, such framing needs to be aligned with the culture of the community or organisation you're working in: alignment helps ensure that your message will be heard and will motivate action, while framing that is not aligned risks triggering backlash against the proposed changes or actions.

Creating a Community

Groups can unlock more impact than individuals alone. Bringing people together accomplishes many things: it can shift social norms about taking action, facilitates peer learning, encourages people to move past setbacks, helps maintain motivation over the long timeframe required for creating systemic change, and links individuals' actions to a bigger whole.

Creating a supportive community starts with determining which people to bring together, setting a rhythm of action, and fostering an open and collaborative environment for interaction. There will likely be diverging interests between individuals in the group; allowing time for these to surface and be reconciled creates strong foundations for the work. One way to do this can be seen in the example of Goodlands, an organisation working with the Catholic Church to use its vast land holdings as a tool for climate impact. Goodland brings together people in the church who identify as early adopters, often nuns, creating an internal social movement of those eager to move the church forward and willing to embrace new ways of thinking about land.

Investing time and energy into forming and maintaining bonds builds trust. It can also help to increase resilience, as communities evolve together, rebounding after failures and organising quickly when new opportunities or needs arise. The safety net that a supportive community offers can boost positive risk taking as well: people are more willing to try a new approach and think outside of the box when they know they have backup, increasing creativity and innovation. This is valuable for climate action now, and it also helps build a community's ability to collectively sense-make and act, which are important capabilities for the future, as the impacts of climate change create increasing disruption and more frequent emergency situations.

Questions to guide your approach

01.

What existing support is available?

Look for individuals as well as formal and informal structures that could provide encouragement or technical support. What benefit would be created by strengthening or increasing these existing sources of support? How could doing so help the people you’re working with to manage challenges, setbacks, or barriers?

02.

How much support and autonomy do the people you’re working with need?

Often people who are earlier in their climate action journey need closer support, while those who are more advanced need more autonomy, but that’s not always the case. When challenges arise, how can you provide encouragement to help people reflect and plan a new course of action?

03.

Which power-holders do you need to bring on board?

Understanding power-holders’ motivations and needs will help you and the people you’re working with make a more compelling case. Who could help you identify, understand, and access key power-holders? Who do they trust who could help you bring them on board?

04.

What are the full costs and benefits of the changes you’re working towards?

Having a full understanding of both the immediate and long-term implications of the actions you’re working towards is important to make the case to others. Thinking beyond just climate, what other benefits will be created for the company, community, or place in which you are working?

05.

Where are there opportunities for collaboration?

Identifying other people or groups who are doing similar work or motivated by similar things can help you start building community and fostering collaboration. Can you create a cohort of people who share common experiences or objectives? How could you bring people together and build a collective voice?

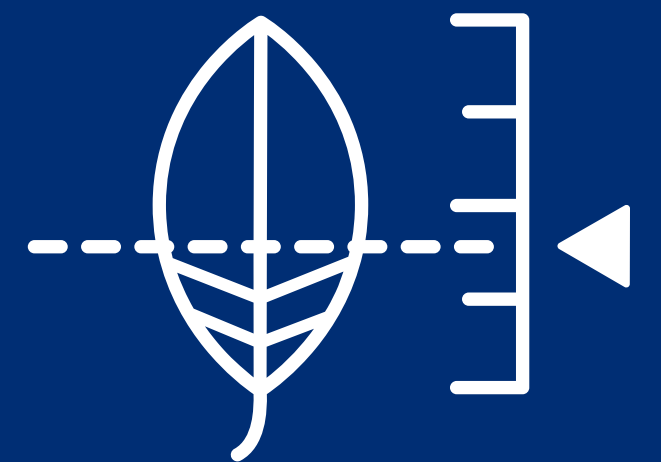
06.

What form and frequency of interaction is most useful for the people you’re working with?

How to build community most effectively will differ depending on the needs and interests of the people you’re working with. How often do people need to hear from you or come together as a group? Does online or in-person work better? What activities meet their needs for information, practical support, connection, and encouragement?

Creating Enabling Conditions

03

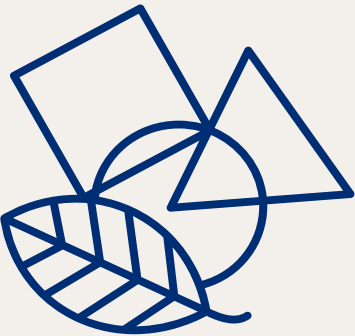

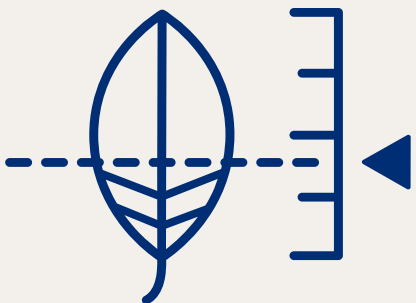


In an increasingly unequal and unstable society, people are often blocked from taking climate action by systemic and structural issues. This challenge shows up in all sorts of ways: people may be working a second job, caring for a loved one, or struggling to meet their basic needs; the rules of the system may be creating barriers to action; or vested interests may be blocking change. When structural barriers get in the way, even the highest levels of motivation and the strongest support systems can be insufficient to create change.

The third strategy we identified, *Creating Enabling Conditions*, is the broadest, as it goes beyond the individuals’ direct agency to focus on the systems in which we are all embedded. It involves breaking down structural barriers that limit individuals’ ability to contribute to climate action, and creating conditions that enable change, helping people to shift wider systems that are not only part of the climate problem but must also be part of the climate solution.

Since the causes of climate change are entangled in the foundations of our societies and economies, invisibly embedded in even the most mundane parts of our daily lives, *Creating Enabling Conditions* runs the gamut from incremental to transformational action. It can range from making information available so that people can make better decisions, to building new structures that shift power towards communities and citizens; from introducing new performance criteria in the workplace to rethinking concepts of ownership and markets. This work is particularly important for ensuring a just transition in which the shift to a decarbonised society and economy doesn’t further entrench existing inequalities.

We found three tactics that can help you *Create Enabling Conditions*: Addressing Competing Demands, Creating Accountability Mechanisms, and Building New Structures.

Logic	Tactics		Examples from our research
<div>Creating Enabling Conditions</div> <div>Existing structures and systems create constraints that limit individuals’ ability to contribute effectively. Realigning incentives empowers more individuals to contribute to climate action and fosters a just transition.</div>	<div>Addressing Competing Demands</div> <div>helping people to meet other needs and priorities so they have capacity to attend to climate action</div> <div></div>		<div>Kinari Webb (Health in Harmony) provides healthcare in communities where illegal logging has been high, enabling people to act on intrinsic motivation to preserve the forests.</div>
	<div>Creating Accountability Mechanisms</div> <div>developing climate pledges and other means of holding individuals, organizations, and collectives accountable</div> <div></div>		<div>Gonzalo Muñoz (UN High Level Champion, COP25 / TriCiclos / Sistema B) and the other UN Climate Change High Level Champions built Race to Zero, a coalition of entities who have made credible net-zero targets.</div>
	<div>Building New Structures</div> <div>using contracts, financial mechanisms, and other tools to facilitate and encourage action</div> <div></div>		<div>Immy Kaur (CIVIC Square) creates neighbourhood initiatives where residents co-create new infrastructure that encourages climate action.</div>

While the examples in the table above show how a climate changemaker used a particular tactic, this is not the only tactic they use. Each of them deploys multiple tactics across multiple strategies.

Addressing Competing Demands

The desire to take action on climate change can be blocked when there is a real or perceived trade-off that creates competing demands on time, energy, and resources.

Competing demands are particularly acute for people with the fewest resources. Historically, those with fewer resources have been left out of decision-making about climate change, even when they are the most impacted. If we want equitable solutions created from a diverse group of voices, then all genders, ethnicities, abilities, classes, and ages of people need to have equal opportunities to be involved. However, it is hard to drive change when your basic needs are not met. Addressing systemic barriers to accessing food, shelter, water, education, and other basic needs can enable people to participate fully in climate action. For example, Kinari Webb's organisation, Health in Harmony, recognised the link between high costs of healthcare and high rates of illegal logging. They provide low cost healthcare in communities where illegal logging has been high, enabling people to act on their intrinsic motivation to preserve the forests. Meeting basic needs helps people have their voices heard and contribute their knowledge and experiences to solutions and decisions.

But it's not just basic needs that create competing demands: climate changemakers can face a variety of competing demands in their personal and professional lives. Deciding not to fly might be the biggest single personal action one individual can make, but it can also prevent you from seeing loved ones in another country.

Pushing your organisation to pursue a net-zero strategy may be beneficial over the long-term and is the right thing to do for the planet, but it often requires moving away from business models that are successful and profitable today. Likewise, divesting from fossil fuels provides long-term protection against stranded assets but often entails sacrificing financial gains in the short-term.

While many competing demands will never be fully resolved, there are ways of managing them to reduce tensions and trade-offs between climate action and the many other personal and professional needs and priorities we all hold. This starts with the mindset we adopt: whereas an “either/or” approach emphasizes choosing between competing demands, adopting a “both/and” mindset helps you find integrative, win-win solutions in which both sides of competing demands can be accommodated. It also fosters flexibility and creativity, helping you to experiment and adapt your approach so that over time, even seemingly incompatible demands can be addressed. For example, SELCO Foundation in India illustrates a both/and approach: they work closely with communities to identify livelihood challenges and solve them using energy-efficient technologies and appropriately designed, decentralised solar energy systems, to ensure that alleviating poverty doesn't have to contribute further to climate change.

Creating Accountability

Much of our climate response – whether adaptation or mitigation – requires multiple actors to move simultaneously. This often goes against the default settings of a system. For example, when firms take decarbonisation actions that increase their costs, they risk giving competitors an advantage unless everyone does the same. Although many companies and governments have set decarbonisation targets over the last decade, most have been readjusted or ignored, and they remain unmet. Creating accountability increases the likelihood that inertia doesn't override targets and goals set. By holding individuals, organisations, and governments responsible for their actions, creating accountability helps us keep one another on track to reach our climate goals.

Accountability can be achieved through both punishments and rewards – and the pros and cons of each should be assessed for your context. For example, focusing on punishments can create fear and hamper innovation, whereas rewards alone might not be sufficient to stop entrenched and highly profitable practices. Increasing visibility, for example by making the actions of individuals and organizations apparent to others, can strengthen punishments as well as rewards, as it activates norms about honesty and the importance of delivering on commitments.

An example of an accountability mechanism on a global scale is the Race to Zero, a United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) campaign that enables cities, regions, businesses, investors, and civil society to commit to net-zero pledges, with science-aligned interim targets. These public commitments can then be used to hold non-state actors to account. Similar accountability mechanisms can be created at the local level through public pledges.

Building New Structures

There is a myriad of formal and informal structures that hold the status quo in place, including regulatory norms, financial instruments, legal precedent, land contracts, power dynamics, and governance tools. We often don't see them, but they determine much of what is possible or not. Many of these create roadblocks that can derail even committed climate changemakers. One way to remove barriers is to build new alternatives that facilitate climate action.

If laws, policies, and systems are made by people, then they can be updated and changed by people too. Contracts and financial instruments can be redesigned to serve as guardrails or incentives that encourage a ground-up approach to problem-solving and support individuals who work to be a part of the solution. For example, when the UK social enterprise Toast Ale was ready to raise investment capital, they wanted to make sure that not only were their investors values aligned, but also that the profit those investors made from Toast Ale would be reinvested in social impact. Partnering with the law firm Hogan Lovells, they developed and open sourced "Equity for Good" – a legally-binding investor pledge to reinvest a proportion of capital gains in another social enterprise or social impact investment fund or to donate the gains to a registered charity.

These structures can also include social infrastructure, such as a community's organising expertise, or the transfer of resources and power to the communities most affected. Enabling bottom-up approaches over which communities have control gives people the power they need to create change. For example, Ugandan organisation Conservation Through Public Health implements an integrated community health and conservation model delivered by local community volunteers: profits from community volunteers' projects are reinvested into Village Saving and Loan Associations, enabling the volunteers to pay their children's school fees or cover other basic needs. This structure requires group decision-making and strengthens the integrated approach of the model.

Questions to guide your approach

01.

How well do you understand the demands on the people you’re working with?

Addressing competing demands often requires non-obvious solutions, so listening deeply and with empathy is the first step. If there are damaging practices that you’re seeking to stop, what is holding them in place? If motivated people are being stopped from acting, what are the barriers?

02.

Who’s missing from the conversation?

Being inclusive is not just about having diverse people present in the room; it means ensuring that everyone there has opportunities to provide input and be heard, recognised, and valued by others. Are there any groups who are left out or not contributing to decision-making? What are the barriers to fostering greater inclusion and how can you break them down?

03.

How can you build a culture of responsibility?

Everyone has a crucial role to play, but to be most effective, they need to understand their roles and the roles of others in the system. How visible are the actions of others within the system? Can community members set collective goals, see progress, and hold each other accountable?

04.

What prevented previous collective goals from being met?

Learning from past challenges can help you design more effective approaches to creating accountability. Were there specific actors that disrupted an otherwise positive trajectory? How can these and other barriers that arose in the past be addressed as you develop new accountability mechanisms to increase likelihood of every actor contributing towards shared goals?

05.

What incentives will motivate people to act?

The specific form of accountability mechanisms will vary by context. Would the individuals and organisations in your context be motivated to change their behaviours based on financial or non-financial, legal or non-legal mechanisms? Would rewards, punishments, or a mix of the two work best?


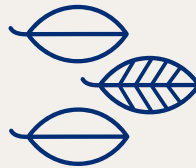
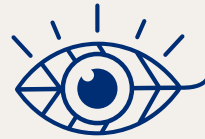
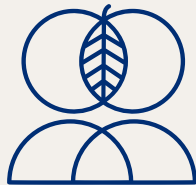


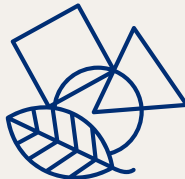


06.

What aspects of the system are preventing individuals from participating?

To effectively create new structures, you need to understand the problems with existing ones and consider how they can be shifted. What policies or guidelines would allow individuals to have more decision-making power? What financial structures, legal requirements, or social practices need to be removed, and what new ones need to be built or adopted?

Unleashing climate changemakers:

A summary of strategies, tactics, and illustrative examples

Strategy	Tactics	Examples
<p>Making It Personal</p> <p>Communicating about climate change in a way that resonates with individuals’ specific situations increases their internal motivation to do something about it. This builds a sense of agency and helps people to initiate action.</p>	<div>  <p>Building Understanding</p> <p>communicating complex science, data and / or systems theory surrounding climate change in an accessible way, tailored to the specific audience and context</p> </div> <div>  <p>Making Progress Visible</p> <p>identifying tangible metrics that help people understand how their contribution is part of a bigger whole</p> </div> <div>  <p>Imagining New Possibilities</p> <p>leading group processes to help people see opportunities and consequences of acting; creating new products, business models, or ways of organising</p> </div>	<p>Regi Wahyu (HARA) shows small-holder farmers in Indonesia how the changing weather patterns they experience are part of climate change, and he links care of the earth to the Quran.</p>
<p>Gathering Support</p> <p>A network of relational support offers energy, expertise, and community. Individuals can draw on this support to overcome the inevitable stumbling blocks that arise.</p>	<div>  <p>Walking Alongside</p> <p>offering one-on-one coaching, mentoring and troubleshooting; providing sustained energy to shift the inertia of the system</p> </div> <div>  <p>Helping Make the Case</p> <p>helping people to show the business case for emission reduction, find profitable products, or develop new business models</p> </div> <div>  <p>Creating a Community</p> <p>bringing people together to share learnings, reinforce behaviours, develop positive social norms, and see how their work contributes to a bigger whole</p> </div>	<p>Al Harris (Blue Ventures) puts data in the hands of fishing communities so the impact of their conservation work on fishing stocks is visible.</p> <p>Cynthia Ong (Forever Sabah) helps diverse stakeholders to think in 100-year timeframes in Malaysia.</p> <p>Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka (Conservation Through Public Health) builds stewardship of nature through holistic care of individuals living alongside species like gorilla in Uganda.</p> <p>Nicole Rycroft (Canopy) works with sustainability managers and corporate leaders to demonstrate the profitability of sustainable forestry, showing how it translates into brand value.</p> <p>Jim Thompson (THIS! is What We Did) convenes over-50s to discuss how to divest from banks that are the biggest fossil fuel supporters.</p>
<p>Creating Enabling Conditions</p> <p>Existing structures and systems create constraints that limit individuals’ ability to contribute effectively. Realigning incentives empowers more individuals to contribute to climate action and fosters a just transition.</p>	<div>  <p>Addressing Competing Demands</p> <p>helping people to meet other needs and priorities so they have capacity to attend to climate action</p> </div> <div>  <p>Creating Accountability Mechanisms</p> <p>developing climate pledges and other means of holding individuals, organizations, and collectives accountable</p> </div> <div>  <p>Building New Structures</p> <p>using contracts, financial mechanisms, and other tools to facilitate and encourage action</p> </div>	<p>Kinari Webb (Health in Harmony) provides healthcare in communities where illegal logging has been high, enabling people to act on intrinsic motivation to preserve the forests.</p> <p>Gonzalo Munoz (UN High Level Champion, COP25 / Race to Zero) builds a coalition of entities who have made credible net-zero targets.</p> <p>Immy Kaur (CIVIC Square) creates neighbourhood initiatives where residents co-create new infrastructure that encourages climate action.</p>

Case Studies

The following case studies illustrate how climate changemakers use the three strategies to activate others to drive climate action. While weaving together all of the strategies can be really powerful, it isn't always necessary. Each of the climate changemakers we profile uses a different combination of strategies and tactics based on the needs of their particular context. To show how the strategies and tactics can be tailored to fit to a wide range of settings, we include cases from across the globe, focusing on different parts of the climate puzzle and engaging with diverse audiences.



Blue Ventures Africa and Asia

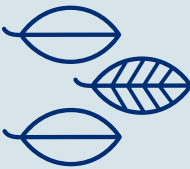
Partnering with small-scale fishing communities to help them address overfishing and safeguard ocean life on their own terms

TACTICS USED

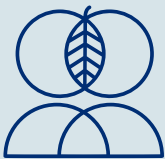
Building Understanding



Making Progress Visible



Walking Alongside



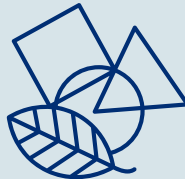
Helping Make the Case



Creating a Community



Addressing Competing Demands



Building New Structures



The problem

Our oceans have never been so vital, nor so threatened. They drive climate and weather, and supply oxygen for all and protein for many. Yet they are under assault from all sides. Overfishing, pollution, and climate breakdown are changing our oceans in ways we've never seen before. They're draining them of life and threatening fish stocks that provide food for billions and livelihoods for hundreds of millions. Time and again, efforts to tackle the ocean emergency break down because they fail to address the needs – and protect the rights – of coastal communities. Yet these are the communities with the most to lose from collapsing fisheries and the most to gain from conservation success. There are tens of millions of fishers in remote and rural communities around the world. With the right support, they can fundamentally reshape humanity's relationship with our oceans, rebuilding fisheries, strengthening livelihoods, and improving food security.

The approach

By engaging and mobilising the small-scale fishers that live alongside – and depend upon – our oceans, Blue Ventures is showing that effective ocean stewardship delivers benefits for people and nature alike.

To empower fishing communities to manage fisheries more sustainably, Blue Ventures uses participatory data collection techniques. Mobile-based catch monitoring tools enable fishers to collect and store data on important metrics such as weight of catches, species, mangrove and reef health, and sex and size of fish, building understanding.

Blue Ventures provides basic training in how to use fisheries management data to avoid overfishing as well as illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. The data can then be used to guide management interventions such as seasonal fishing closures and to make progress visible from these interventions. By providing communities with evidence of the importance of coastal fisheries and the benefits of locally-led fisheries management, the data also help communities to make the case, enabling them to demonstrate the efficacy of management interventions and engage more equitably with policy-makers and seafood buyers.

Blue Ventures has also developed new structures through its Frontline Community Fund, a regranting vehicle which uses participatory governance to distribute flexible, multi-year funding to local organisations working to build climate resilience, transform local livelihoods, and foster regenerative fisheries. In addition, by bringing together fishers and supporting organisations from different regions to learn from one another, Blue Ventures builds community. By advocating for fishing communities' rights together as a cohesive group, fishers and supporting organisations increase their community's visibility and influence, building national support for progressive policy reforms, such as the Government of Madagascar's recent inshore exclusion zone for destructive industrial bottom trawl vessels.

Key insights

Many communities already have solutions; they just need the resources and support to implement them. Because communities most vulnerable to climate change have lived expertise that is critical for sustaining ecosystems while preserving livelihoods, empowering them with the resources to manage their fishing ecosystems offers a more effective and equitable approach than bringing in solutions designed by outsiders. Locally-led marine management can also be adaptive and catalytic: it enables communities to adjust their strategies in the face of environmental change, and it inspires replication by neighbouring communities, scaling to regional and sometimes national movements.



If we look at the issue of climate break down, we quickly see that we’re changing our environment, on land and in the water, in ways that our species has never experienced. Against that backdrop, few will have their lives as profoundly transformed as traditional fishers, people that depend on the ocean. We can’t achieve the conservation of these marine ecosystems at scale without engaging the people that depend on the sea for survival.

Alasdair Harris
Founder, Blue Ventures





Lembaga Gemawan Indonesia

Organizing networks of women to
advocate for their rights to resources
and engage communities in policy change

TACTICS USED	
Building Understanding	
Making Progress Visible	
Imagining New Possibilities	
Walking Alongside	
Helping Make the Case	
Creating a Community	
Addressing Competing Demands	
Creating Accountability	
Building New Structures	

The problem

West Kalimantan faces unprecedented rates of deforestation and biodiversity loss due to unsustainable logging practices and land being cleared for oil palm plantations and farming. With much of the area controlled by large corporations, the indigenous and local communities that depend on the land for their culture and livelihoods have limited voice in ensuring sustainable and just management of resources. As indigenous and local communities are displaced or lose access to forests and lands, ethnic tensions increase. Women in these communities tend to be particularly affected by both land use challenges and ethnic tensions, yet they lack a strong voice due to the patriarchal culture.

The approach

Lembaga Gemawan addresses land use, ethnic tensions, and women’s rights all together. They work closely with approximately 250 villages on West Kalimantan, while also supporting others throughout the area.

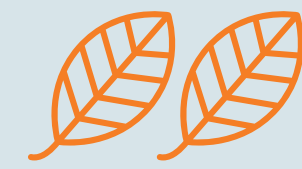
Lembaga Gemawan creates a community by forming small groups of people to discuss problems and potential solutions, which they then advocate to the government and support through campaigns. The groups are designed to be inclusive, with people coming from different ethnic and religious backgrounds. They begin by working together on health and income-generating activities such as planting black rice and other local crops. By covering basic needs, these activities help to address competing demands and create more time for women to focus on advocacy work. During group meetings, women are asked to picture what they want the future to look like, helping them to imagine new

possibilities. They then receive training in leadership and politics to help them turn these possibilities into reality. During the second phase of advocacy and campaigning, Lembaga Gemawan works closely with the media to communicate with the public, helping to make progress visible.

Lembaga Gemawan gives women tools that enable them to conduct field monitoring, enabling them to produce accurate and precise maps of land and gather evidence of concession-holders’ illegal practices. This both creates accountability and helps women better understand and advocate for land ownership and protection priorities. Lembaga Gemawan also developed a complaint mechanism which villagers can use if firms’ sustainability claims don’t match the field data, and they have initiated a public review and examination of draft regulations, an example of a new structure.

Key insights

Working at the intersection of climate change and other social issues can create powerful leverage points: it offers an opportunity to strengthen demands for change by bringing new voices into the movement, and it fosters solutions that address multiple problems simultaneously. Empowering communities to regain their land rights also enables them to be advocates for better natural resource management. However, this hinges on having a strong understanding of local customs and traditions. Lembaga Gemawan recognizes that while women were not traditionally given a voice in West Kalimantan, they have the power to creating lasting social and environmental changes. By mobilising women into the political system, Lembaga Gemawan helps women build solutions to the climate crisis that are grounded in the lived experiences and perspectives of the people most affected.



We don't think this is for climate change prevention. It's about our life, it's about our identity and it's about our cultural practices.

Laili Khairnur

Founder Lembaga Gemawan





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CIVIC SQUARE United Kingdom

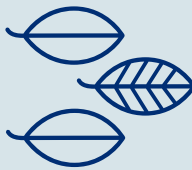
Demonstrating the power of people
in their places to lead social, ecological,
economic, and climate transitions

TACTICS USED

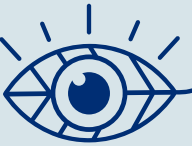
Building
Understanding



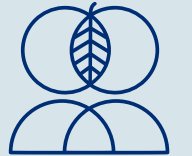
Making
Progress
Visible



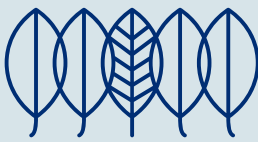
Imagining
New Possibilities



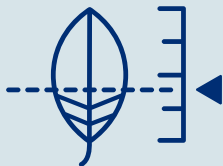
Walking
Alongside



Creating
a Community



Creating
Accountability



Building
New Structures



The problem

Working in Ladywood, an inner-city neighbourhood in Birmingham, CIVIC SQUARE sees climate change as part of the complex and interdependent strategic risks facing the world. It shows up not only in the form changing weather and climate patterns and rising frequency and severity of extreme weather events, but also in increasing energy and food prices and an unstable economy. In the United Kingdom, climate change is intertwined with challenges brought about by the erosion of social infrastructure in cities and neighbourhoods: with communal spaces like libraries closing, public assets being sold off, and the healthcare system at a breaking point, the UK has a deeply divided and increasingly unequal population. Decisions on how to address these intertwined challenges are often made by people with little experience of how they play out in neighbourhoods around the country, and the pace of change is not commensurate with the size of the problems. To meet climate targets, for example, the UK needs to retrofit one home every 20 seconds for the next 10 years, but the way retrofits are currently done simply won't meet those goals.

The approach

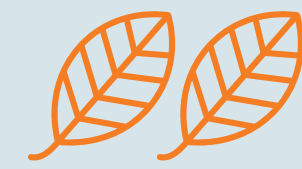
CIVIC SQUARE addresses these interconnected challenges by working to build people's capacity to enact their own climate transitions. Across all of their programmes, the CIVIC SQUARE team works to be consistently physically present in the neighbourhoods in which they operate, bringing people together, providing practical support, and building connections that create community.

For example, staff members regularly show up in the neighbourhood for a cup of tea or coffee with local residents, creating opportunities for conversation and mutual exchange of ideas. They also engage residents in re-designing the neighbourhood's physical and social infrastructure through larger events, festivals, and initiatives such as book shares, community growing projects, and Neighbourhood Trade School classes.

CIVIC SQUARE's Neighbourhood Transitions demonstrator project creates carbon, energy, and ecological retrofits that are designed, owned, and governed by the people who live in the neighbourhood. This project builds understanding by using data and images to help people visualise how much land is in their front or back gardens. In addition, by giving neighbourhood residents access to these data and helping them see the opportunities it offers, the project enables people to imagine new possibilities for addressing intertwined economic, social, ecological, and climate problems at the neighbourhood, city, and national scales. In partnership with the organisation Dark Matter Labs, CIVIC SQUARE is building new structures by working to redesign financial instruments and governance tools so that they foster collective benefits rather than enriching individuals, creating new models of regenerative, rather than extractive, finance.

Key insights

CIVIC SQUARE demonstrates the power of embedding climate action in the physical spaces of a community. As co-founder and director Immy Kaur explains: “We’re always there, in our public neighbourhood café in the park or a local community space, even when only one person turns up in the freezing cold.” This approach this requires patience and a long time horizon – “momentum and movement and trust-building take ages,” Kaur explains – but in the end it brings multiple benefits– for housing, climate, and social connection – because interventions are designed, owned, and governed by the people who live in the community.



Creating spaces where people can practice and demonstrate the big ideas in small ways together gives them confidence to do bigger things later... This gives people a safe way in before you're about to do something huge like decarbonise the whole street, or turn it into a microgrid. We've watched people's confidence and imagination grow through having a new understanding of something as simple as just how much open space we have in our front yards.

Immy Kaur

Co-founder and director, CIVIC SQUARE

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Canopy
Global

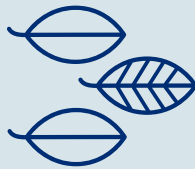
Protecting the world’s forests
by transforming supply chains

TACTICS USED

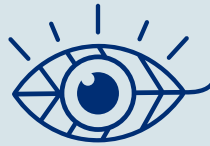
Building
Understanding



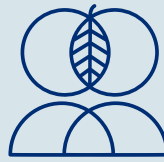
Making
Progress
Visible



Imagining
New Possibilities



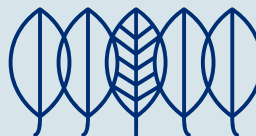
Walking
Alongside



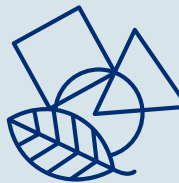
Helping Make
the Case



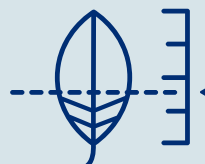
Creating
a Community



Addressing
Competing
Demands



Creating
Accountability



Building
New Structures



The problem

The world’s old growth and high biodiversity forests have been under threat for decades. The pressure on these vital ecosystems is only increasing, particularly with increasing use of paper and cardboard rather than plastic packaging and rising demand from the fashion industry for fabrics derived from wood, such as viscose. Canopy protects the world’s forests, species, and climate by working together with companies from around the globe to transform unsustainable supply chains, catalyse innovative solutions, advance community rights, and conserve vital forest ecosystems.

The approach

“We need to focus on building climate-compatible 21st century supply chains and economies. Businesses are really grappling with what this means for them,” says Nicole Rycroft, Canopy’s founder. Canopy is walking alongside business leaders by providing input into corporate policies, identifying best practices, and directing leaders and their firms to alternative material sources. They help them make the case to managers, boards, investors, and suppliers by showing the business implications of switching to sustainable forestry products.

The Canopy team works with individuals within companies to build new structures: policies and practices that remove any products from Ancient and Endangered forests from their supply chains and commercial relationships. Working as a trusted partner with individual change agents within firms, the Canopy team builds understanding and helps create capacity to drive climate action through global firms.

All of this comes together to equip people with the tools to navigate change internally, to get their companies to make commitments, and to ultimately remove climate-critical forest product from their supply chain.

But Canopy’s work goes beyond the individual businesses they work with: they also work to shift the systems that hold unsustainable practices in place. Through solid commitments from firms, they create accountability that enable alignment across all parts of the supply chain. They have also created new structures through an investment fund to capitalise commercial-scale production of low-carbon, low-impact, circular alternatives.

Key insights

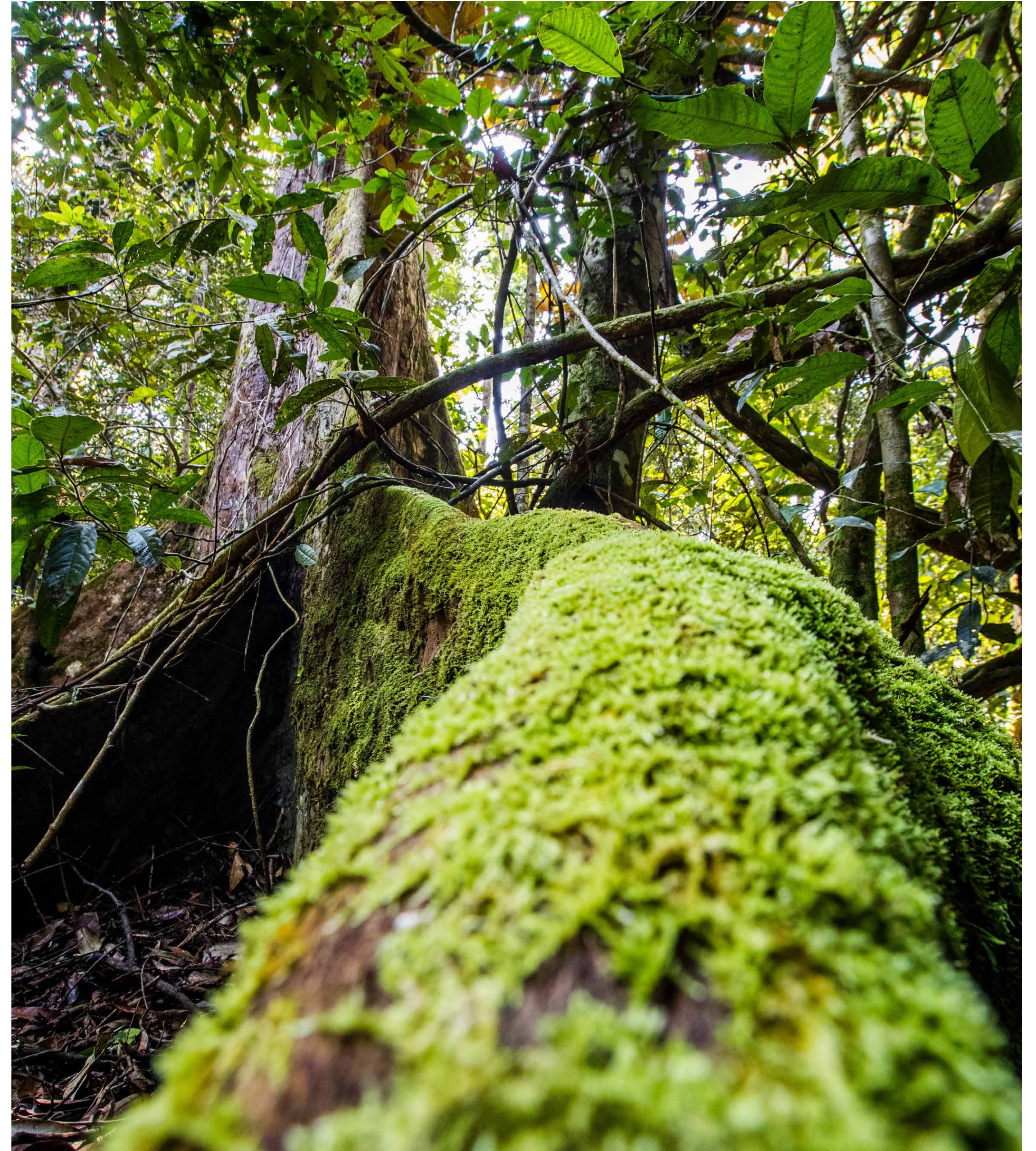
Leveraging insights from human psychology can help to drive the behaviour changes we need to catalyse climate action. As Rycroft explains: “You need to create the enabling conditions, the very specific kind of tools and systems so that individual climate champions can step in together and shift the dial in a meaningful way.” For people who are ready to act, Canopy helps them to move forward. For those who are more resistant, Canopy’s work provides motivation by helping to de-risk individual and organizational actions.



By removing barriers, you're freeing people up to be climate changemakers, to make decisions in their businesses that are better for planet and climate, creating the licence to bring their values actively into their job and the core of their business model. We sweep the resistance away.

Nicole Rycroft

Founder, Canopy





Illuméxico Mexico

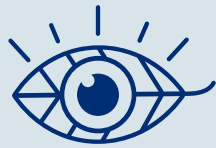
Providing solar energy systems in rural communities to promote sustainable energy use and improve energy access

TACTICS USED

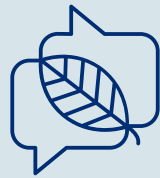
Building Understanding



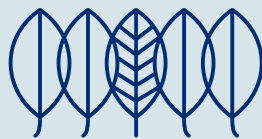
Imagining New Possibilities



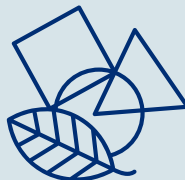
Helping Make the Case



Creating a Community



Addressing Competing Demands



Building New Structures



The problem

Nearly one billion people around the world don't have electricity. Many more have intermittent access and are vulnerable to non-resilient grids, particularly in rural communities. They must resort to inefficient, costly, unhealthy, high-emissions sources of energy, exacerbating existing cycles of poverty. In addition, people in rural communities are often most affected by climate change while also being the least responsible.

The approach

Illuméxico builds solar energy systems specifically designed for the needs of rural communities that are not connected to the grid. It further empowers people by converting community members into beneficiaries, employees, and stakeholders, prioritising employing local community members because they can relate to the customers. Creating greens jobs addresses competing demands by giving people a way to generate income delivering clean energy. Illuméxico's employee training program builds understanding of how renewables work and their role in addressing climate change and helps make progress visible by showing the environmental and economic impact of their work. This is delivered alongside more conventional training in customer service, installation, and maintenance. Showing employees the impact they can have on their environment helps them make the case to others in the community. Illuméxico also works on youth engagement, holds workshops, and builds understanding with the community about renewable energy through myths and legends and comparing greenhouse gas emissions to aspects of everyday life.

Illuméxico's financing is designed to ensure community members become stakeholders – by building new structures they address competing demands. Instead of relying on donations and subsidies, Illuméxico charges affordable fees for their services. This incentivises communities to care for the technology and be involved in the process. A part of the profit generated is then given back to the community and used to finance projects such as lighting in public places and schools.

Key insights

It's possible to create changemakers and engage individuals in problem-solving while running a successful business, but doing so requires flexibility and ongoing adaptation. Illumexico's original objective was to make sure every person in Mexico had access to energy. When changes in government policy reduced the availability of subsidies and donations, Illuméxico could no longer serve some of the poorest communities in a financially sustainable way. Recognizing the need to adapt, Illuméxico developed a new business model centred on accelerating the energy transition as a means of creating better lives. The solar panels they now produce are designed specifically for rural communities. They are durable, easy to use, and adaptable to various needs such as home lighting, computer centres, air conditioning, and school equipment. Through a bottom-up, flexible approach, Illuméxico has continued to empower individuals in rural communities to be climate changemakers, while remaining competitive as a business and expanding to multiple countries.



We want all customers to be better off, but if everyone was to be better off in the same ways that people in richer countries are better off than there wouldn't be a planet for everyone to be better off on.

Manuel Wiechers
Founder Iluméxico



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Endnotes

- ¹ Agency refers to the capability to act – to influence the world through ones actions. In the context of climate change, it involves the set of beliefs people hold about the potential of their actions having impact. There are three kinds of agency: individual (directly influencing what is in your control), proxy (influencing others – generally those who have control over resources or power – to act on your behalf), and collective (pooling knowledge, skills, and resources to act together). All are relevant for climate action.
- ² Mitigation means minimising or preventing the causes of climate change to make the impacts less severe. This covers reducing the heat-trapping greenhouse gases we emit and drawdown of carbon from the atmosphere.
- ³ Transition refers to changes in regulations and markets to meet mitigation and adaptation outcomes. Adopting principles of a just transition means making these changes in a way that is fair and inclusive, identifying opportunities to reverse existing inequities as the world moves to becoming more environmentally sustainable, and putting the people most affected by pollution in control of the solutions.
- ⁴ Adaptation means adjusting to the current and future impacts of climate change. The intention is to reduce risk and harm from increasing temperatures and extreme weather, as well as knock-on effects such as food supply disruptions, migration, and the spread of disease.



Your actions matter.
No action or voice
is too small to make
a difference.

Vanessa Nakate