



Community Work Ireland working collectively
to support and promote community work as a means of
addressing poverty, social exclusion and inequality and
advancing human rights

Westside Community Resource Centre,
Seamus Quirke Road, Galway
Tel 087 9326467/087 2998619
Email info@cwí.ie
Web www.cwí.ie

Eamon Ryan, TD
Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications

Ensuring Ireland is a leader at COP26

Key issues for equity, equality and ambition

As you prepare to travel to represent Ireland at the historic COP26, the Community Work Ireland¹ Climate Justice Working Group asks you:

- To be a **voice for people and communities nationally and globally affected by climate injustice**, particularly as many from the global south are unable to be represented directly at COP26. The World Health Organisation has noted a shocking disparity in vaccine roll-out which effectively amounts to vaccine apartheid. One third of the parties to the Convention are on the UK's Covid-19 travel red-list which places severe limitations on state parties and civil society's ability to attend negotiations. This places the legitimacy of COP26 in question. As you know, Ireland is a global leader in promoting the rule of law and the multilateral systems of the UN, and Ireland's leadership for global solidarity is urgently required at this time. We ask you to directly and overtly support the concerns of the Least Developed Countries, Small Island Developing States and civil society from the global South, including:
 - a. Real zero 2030 targets with real plans – in line with fair shares for 1.5C – rather than the delay and greenwash of “net zero” 2050 targets.
 - b. A process to measure progress towards the Global Goal on Adaptation and ensure adequate financial and technology support is available.
 - c. Pledge to cease public subsidies for fossil fuels and instead scale up the levels of new and additional public finance
 - d. Provide additional public finance to support those bearing the brunt of losses and damages from climate breakdown today to help them recover and rebuild their lives.
 - e. Abandon the false solution of offsetting and carbon markets and make a serious effort to advance real solutions via non-market cooperative approaches.
- To **advocate for a global plan for a rapid just transition away from fossil fuels**, not only in relation to work/employment but in all social and economic aspects of mitigation and adaptation measures so that marginalised communities are protected from the effects of climate action and benefit from the green transition. This transition should also avoid reliance on other extractive, large-scale and corporate controlled false solutions, whilst tackling inequality and prioritising sufficiency and well-being.

¹ Community Work Ireland (CWI) is a national organisation that promotes and supports community work as a means of addressing poverty, social exclusion and inequality; promoting, protecting and advancing human rights and ultimately achieving social change that will contribute to the creation of a just, sustainable and equal society. CWI has been working on issues relating to climate justice and sustainable development for many years and has an active Climate Justice Working Group.

- Be cognisant that **climate change is already accelerating migration and displacement** within countries, mostly from rural to urban areas and will have demographic, social and economic consequences and effects on women's empowerment and gender equality.
- Support a call for States to ensure that **principles for locally led adaptation** that bring finance and decision making to the local level in participatory, inclusive processes are in place and used with parity of esteem which seek the inclusion of all whether resident or citizen.
- To **promote the role of civil society, including the community development sector**, which is uniquely placed to foster broad public participation and support for the rapid transition now urgently required. At COP26, this means taking leadership to strengthen the draft decision on Action For Climate Empowerment following the review of the Doha work programme on Article 6 of the Convention. We call on the Irish negotiating team to support all efforts to enhance the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement. Such efforts should recognise the unique contribution of community development in relation to climate justice in terms of (a) raising awareness within communities, (b) building capacity and climate resilience of marginalised communities and groups and (c) ensuring that those communities and groups are supported to engage in policy dialogue so that policy development in this area takes account of the fact that climate change policies are likely to have a disproportionate impact on those already struggling with poverty and disadvantage.

Climate change is having and will continue to have a profound effect on all aspects of human life. These effects will be felt most deeply by those who are living in poverty and who experience the highest levels of exclusion and inequality, the people and communities that are least responsible for climate change, and those with the least ability to adapt and respond to the effects of the existential crisis that we are facing.

Finally, beyond COP26 we ask you to support the community development sector and community workers who are working in every community in Ireland and are well placed to catalyse the rapid, just and inclusive transition required. We call on you to work with your government colleagues including Minister for State Joe O'Brien to resource the community development sector to upskill in this area so that we, in turn, can support the transformation required.

We wish you and your team a productive and successful time at the negotiations and trust that you will demonstrate the will of the Irish people to take leadership for climate justice. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues further with you and your team on your return.

Le meas,

Jamie Gorman, Convenor, on behalf of the CWI Climate Justice Working Group

Ann Irwin, CWI National Co-ordinator