

AOÛT
2023

TIME FOR A NEW GENERATION BREAK DOWN POWER STRUCTURES

An advocacy in the framework of the program YOU UP (Young for Our Universe Use your Power). Initiated by MeineWelt e.V in Germany in collaboration with the NGO GLS and PLACE for Africa in Benin, and funded by Engagement Global through the German-African Youth Office (DAJW).



MeineWelt



ENGAGEMENT
GLOBAL
Service für Entwicklungsinitiativen



DEUTSCH-
AFRIKANISCHES
JUGENDWERK



GLOSSARY

This glossary is intended to provide the reader with a critical reflection on certain expressions and terminology related to the fight for climate justice.



CALL TO ACTION

We invite governments, institutions, associations and movements to take concrete action for climate and social justice



PROBLEMATIC

Our societies worldwide are influenced by (neo-)colonial, racial, patriarchal and age-related power structures which oppress Black people, women, LGBTIQ+, young people and other discriminated societal groups.



WHAT WE ARE PROPOSING?

We invite governments, institutions, associations and movements to adopt a transformative, fair and equitable vision of climate action in their policies.

GLOSSARY

This glossary is intended to provide the reader with a critical reflection on certain expressions and terminology related to the fight for climate justice.



I'TAL

The origin of the word I'tal comes from the movement of May 1968 in France. Some Africans from the diaspora living in Europe and descendants of slaves came together to discover their origins. In this quest they realised that the African continent has always been in harmony with nature and that this natural link has to be restored.

It should be pointed out that Ital is a lifestyle that goes beyond veganism and considers the environment and nature as precious assets that need to be protected. In addition to consuming no animal products, it takes into account the protection of nature and spirituality.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Although climate change, when defined, has no direct relation to racism or colonialism, but is focused only on the environment, it's also important to note that when closely examined, it has close links to industrialisation, which was fostered by colonialism.

GLOBAL NORTH & GLOBAL SOUTH

The terminologies "Global South" and "Global North" describe the structures of power and oppression that have always emerged and continue to exist today on the global scale.

The notion of the Global South refers to countries and places in the world which, from a global perspective, are in a political and economical disadvantaged position (e.g. countries in Africa, South-East Asia or South and Central America). This situation is due to the European colonial period and all the ensuing kinds of exploitation, which in turn emanate from the global North (e.g. Europe and the United States). The countries of the Global North are in a dominant position and are often called the "Western World" or the "West". The distinction between South and North is understood regardless of geographical location, as Australia, for example, is also part of the Global North.

BLACK IDENTITY

In all contexts, the word Black is capitalised to emphasise that it is neither an adjective nor a colour. What links BIPoCs together are shared experiences of racism, exclusion from the white-dominated majority society and the collective attribution of difference. So it's not a question of biological commonalities, but primarily of commonalities and social experiences. The term takes a stand against attempts to divide people through racism, and against discriminatory foreign designations by majority white societies. Political self-designation is an active, empowering and critical action, and thus an integral part of the history of resistance against European colonialism and racism.

CLIMATE (IN)JUSTICE

This concept focuses on the issue of responsibility in the climate crisis. It explains that not all countries and people in the world cause or generate the same quantities of greenhouse gases.

The countries and people of the global North have always been responsible for the largest proportion of greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, the countries and people of the global South are the ones most affected by the consequences of the climate crisis. This means that not only is the responsibility for the climate crisis unevenly distributed, but so are its consequences.

MOST AFFECTED PEOPLE

For many Black people, Indigenous people and people of colour, who are already structurally disadvantaged, the climate crisis is not only a problem for the future, but it's affecting their present already. We often read reports of natural disasters, drought and famine as a result. For example, people affected by racism and/or sexism do not have the same access to housing, land, medical care or evacuation facilities when a natural disaster happens. They are less likely to sit in decision-making positions concerning measures to fight against climate change or to receive the same incomes as the others.

CALL TO ACTION

We are activists from different origins. We are of great diversity. As experts experiencing and observing current social and environmental crises around the world, we are in great impatience: it's time to break down power structures. It's time for a new generation!

We are MeineWelt e.V., in collaboration with PLACE for Africa and the NGO GLS in Benin.

Our demands are developed by the participants of the exchange program YOU UP (Young for Our Universe Use your Power). The project aims at strengthening the participation of young black activists and sharing experiences between the Global North and the Global South.



Our project is concerned with the voices of affected and vulnerable societal groups and their participation and representation in governmental climate action. Together we demand a meaningful political involvement of these marginalised voices; their competences, expertise and concerned perspectives in the fight against climate change. We demand it now!



PROBLEMATIC



Climate crisis is one of the most pressing challenges the planet has been facing. Our societies worldwide are influenced by (neo-)colonial, racial, patriarchal and age-related power structures which oppress Black people, women, LGBTIQ+, young people and other discriminated societal groups. Thus people affected by racism, and/or sexism or other forms of discrimination do not have the same access to housing, land, medical care or evacuation facilities when climate change related disasters happen. They experience violence, a lack of political representation and participation options, are less safe guarded, and thus disadvantaged on multiple levels. These marginalised groups are socially made vulnerable by existing power structures.

For many young people, Black activists, women, indigenous, LGBTQIA+ the climate crisis is not only a problem for the future but it's affecting their present already. Instead of centering the needs of the most affected and vulnerable in every decision-making, in the current system their voices are not heard. Finally, policy makers need to acknowledge that these marginalised people are not few in numbers. Their diverse perspectives, knowledge and specific needs should play a significant role in climate policies and there in our common fight against the climate crisis.

PROBLEMATIC

Despite the actions already taken in cooperation between Global North and Global South, the world continues to be separated in a variety of challenges that hinder their efforts to tackle the climate crisis. Namely, the colonial heritage of this world renders to this day the progress of Global North and the regress of Global South to be reality. Industrialization brought freedom to where the resources are brought to, not where they come from. Not all countries and people in the world cause the same quantities of greenhouse gases.

The Global North has always been responsible for the largest proportion. Faced with this reality, we cannot talk about the climate crisis, without talking about climate justice! At the same time, the countries and people of the Global South are most affected by the consequences of the climate crisis.



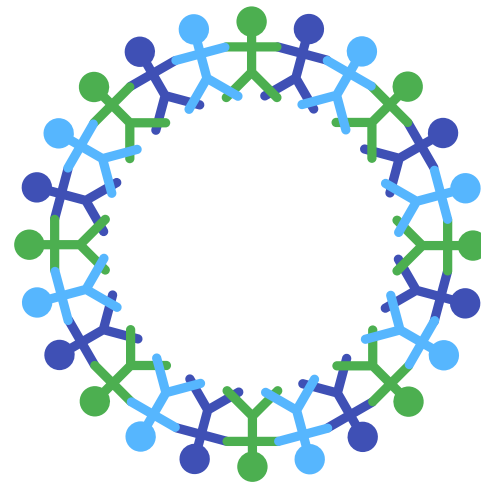
It has been known for a long time that the climate crisis brings about threatening changes to our society and environment. In this situation, we as the young generation are clearly positioned: The climate crisis is rooted in (neo-) colonial exploitation. This statement demands a change of narratives and destructive practices of the West. Narratives and practices are the key to change. Because, the reason for the existence of a society is rooted in the individual, while the individual can only be an individual in the community. Everything is interrelated - singular perspective and overarching context. Therefore, this paper aims to provide crucial first steps for a life worth living for young and future generations.

Our advocacy gathers young people's perspectives from different life situations and parts of the world who unite in their common but differentiated struggles for a better future. Experiences from Global North and Global South come together and try to solve the major problems of our time which are still changeable. In addition, our demands are based on perspectives from various initiatives and activists from Germany and Benin, who fight for a better society.

This advocacy campaign is our fight against power structures, oppressing the very needed expertise of young, Black people, and other marginalised voices in the fight against climate change.



WE DEMAND



Ensure meaningful **PARTICIPATION** of vulnerable made people, such as young people, Black people, Indigenous, Women & LGBTQIA+ people.



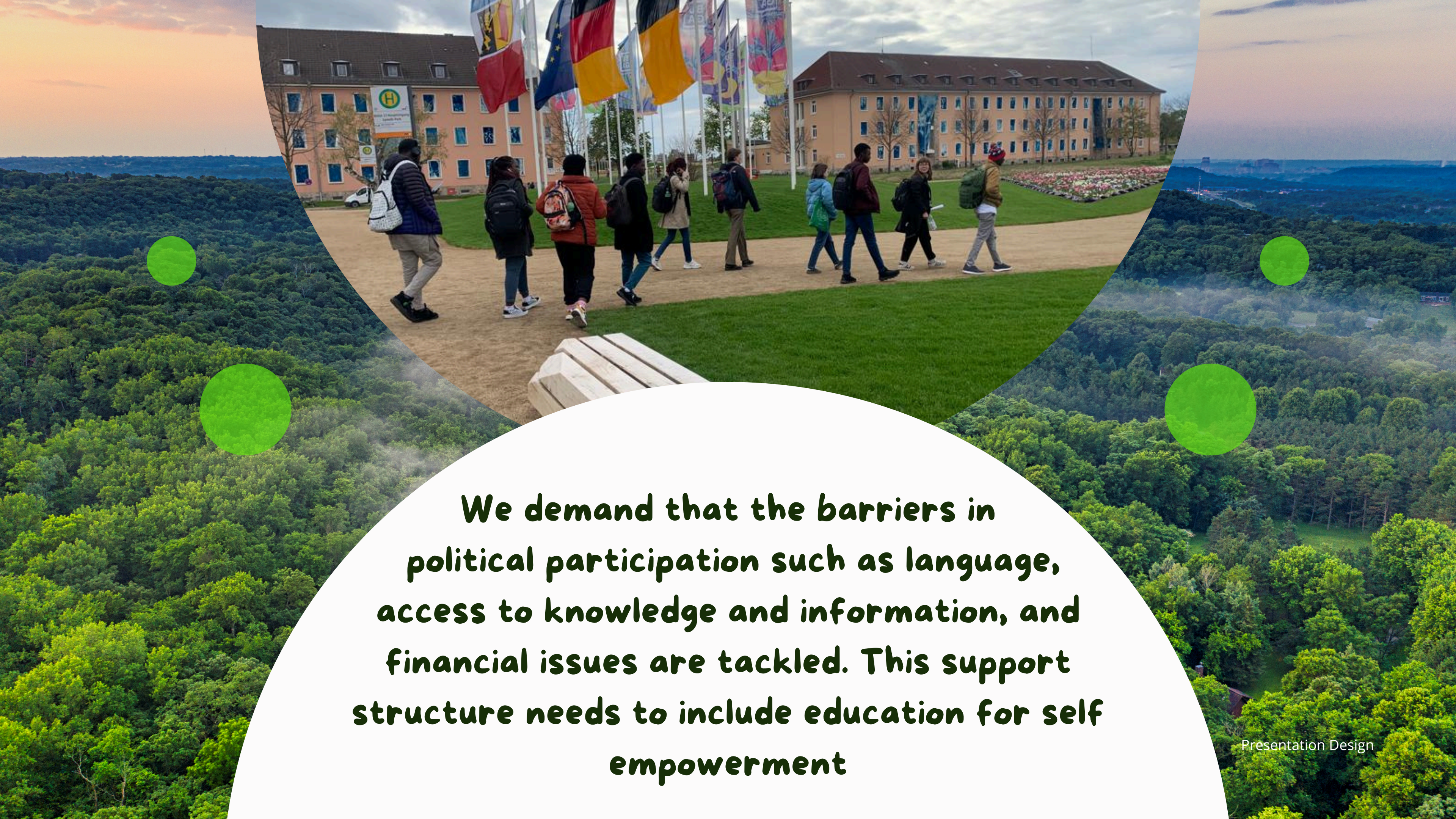
We demand meaningful inclusion in the political decision making of governmental structures of young people, Black people, Indigenous, Women & LGBTQIA+ people.

Societies claiming democratic standards have to account for the voices they govern. Democracy means to open all processes of decision making and to break down barriers around the rule of power. We need to create platforms and channels that report on the silenced, invisible voices. This can be done by creating platforms that must be heard by the government and that are composed of the above-mentioned voices, such as Indigenous structures, regional assemblies, trade unions, youth councils.

This implementation - of the specific actions demanded above - should be in dialogue with local people on the ground and people in the margins. Only there, can resources be beneficial to a society. The specific implementations should be designable by the concerned people, meaning: exchange should be guaranteed.

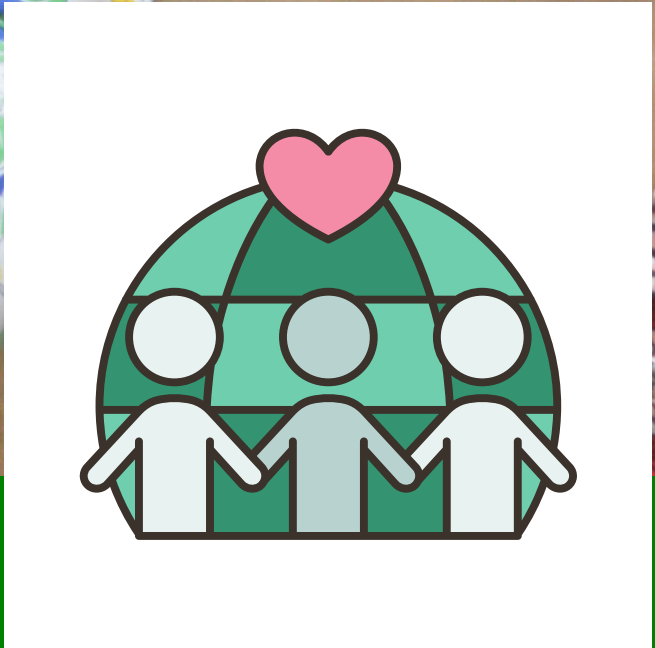
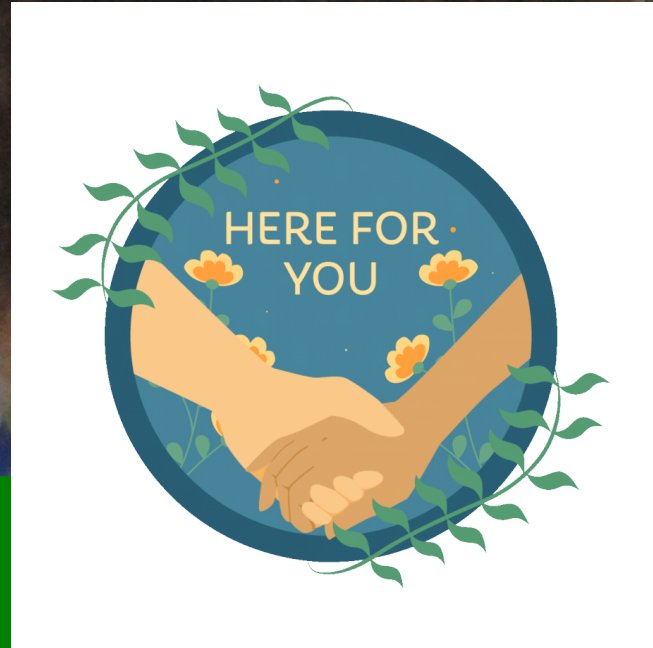


We are experts! Following this claim, we demand that the knowledge of the Global South is highlighted and be an integral part of the discussions. Marginalised people's knowledge is not recognised and accepted in the current political decision-making. To ensure the meaningful participation of the mentioned groups it is necessary to validate and include also their forms of knowledge in order to tackle the complex issues of climate change and their effects.



We demand that the barriers in political participation such as language, access to knowledge and information, and financial issues are tackled. This support structure needs to include education for self empowerment

WE DEMAND



Specific and tangible **SUPPORT** on the ground for people belonging to vulnerable and structurally oppressed societal groups i.e.: young people, Black people, women, indigenous, LGBTQIA+ people in their struggle in the climate crisis

Climate policies and measures have to be implemented and aligned with the care for the special needs of young people, Black people, women, indigenous, LGBTQIA+ people experiencing multiple burdens and forms of discrimination. At the same time these measures need to ensure that structural discrimination of the respective groups are tackled; not reproduce!

At the same time these measures need to ensure that structural discrimination of the respective groups are tackled; not reproduced! To ensure that and to take their very needed expertise into account the design of policies and their implementation must be designed by the people concerned, which means that exchange must be guaranteed.




These participations take place in dialogue with local communities and vulnerable made groups on the ground and on the margins.

Decision-makers at the same time must take over responsibility to work consistently against inequality within their policies and implementations. Fundamental political action is needed.

We see it as necessary to change the prevailing power structures and images, then call for a strong focus on the needs, support and overall resilience of young people, Black people, women, indigenous, LGBTQIA+ communities. This will eliminate multiple burdens and create more and more equal opportunities.



An aerial photograph of a dense, vibrant green forest. A large white circular graphic is overlaid on the bottom half of the image. Inside this circle, there is a smaller circular inset showing a table set up outdoors. The table is covered with a blue patterned cloth and holds several items: several plastic bottles of dark liquid (possibly coffee or tea), several white plastic containers with yellow liquid, and several brown coconut shells used as cups. There are also some papers or documents on the table. The background of the inset shows a sandy area and some wooden chairs. The overall scene suggests a community gathering or a meeting in a natural setting.

All policies and measures have to be assessed to ensure these actions are aligned with the specific needs of these social groups and do not reproduce their structural discrimination.

Healthy environment must be preserved and enhanced consistently as it builds the basis of living. The vulnerable groups are more directly affected by the degradation of nature or have less capacities to protect themselves from its consequences. In order to support the most affected people financial support for agro ecological solutions are needed to support the establishment of resilient life essentials and food sovereignty. It should be ensured that human communities are rooted in nature's own dynamics.

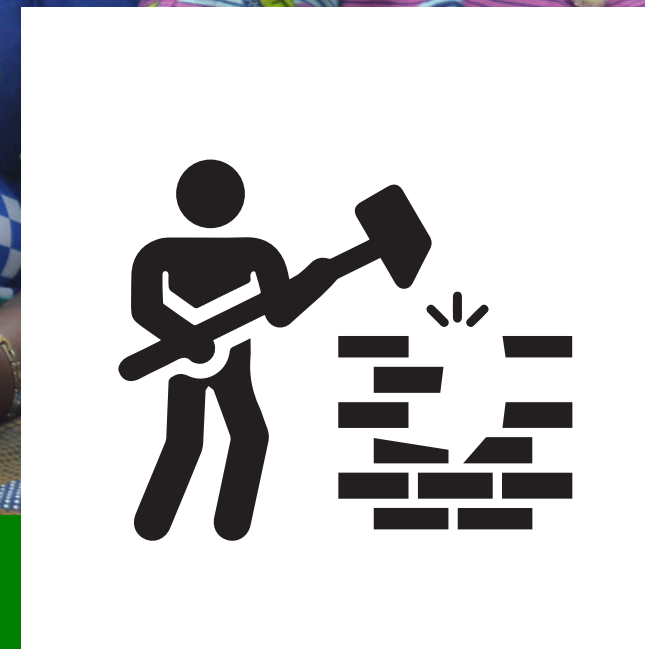
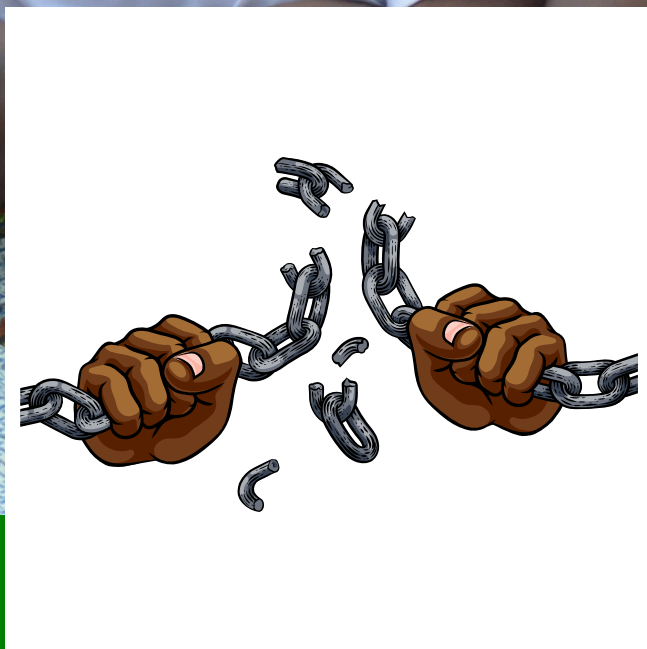
Young people and local communities are initiating and experimenting with social ecological solutions for resilience to climate crises but often they have little access to resources to improve and scale them on a societal level. These pioneers, their locally organised forms of solidarity must therefore be financially and structurally supported by governments. Education of the society on how to support the protection of their natural basis of living is needed in the same way as the education on how to adapt to the effects of climate change.



Existing education programmes should be financed and facilitated. The example of So ava, where the community has developed a water purification and treatment technology, and the strategies for dredging water from the fields, are initiatives that should be encouraged and supported. The Biolife company, which develops organic fertilisers and substrates for ecological agricultural production to reduce the impact of chemical inputs and protect nature.



WE DEMAND

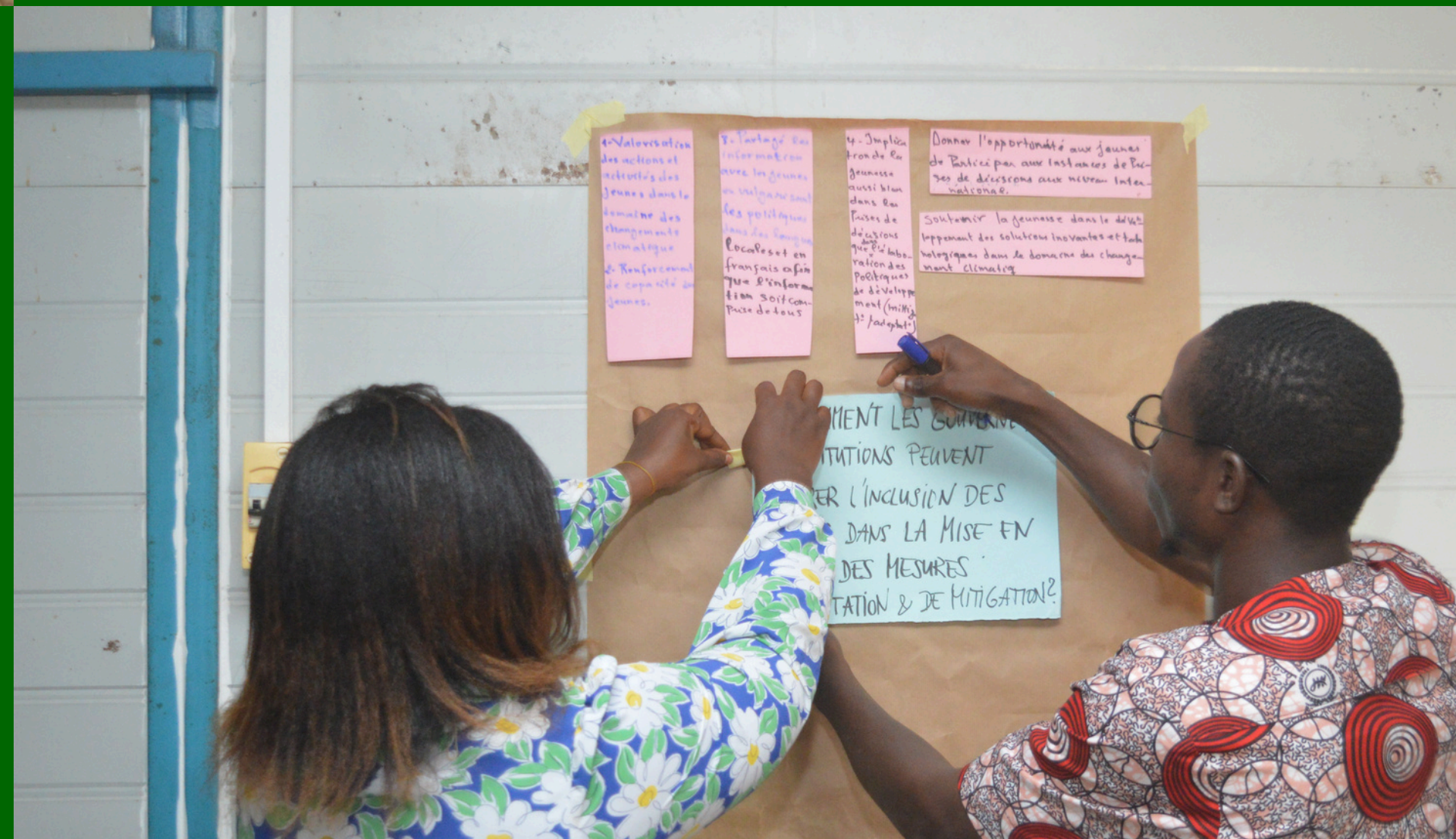


To make our points clear: for successful climate action and climate justice there is no way around the **ABOLISHMENT** of all neo-colonial power structures! They show up as the daily life struggles for the many in this world and coin all international relationships until today. They are thereason for the gross of today's inequalities. We demand to break down these power structures!

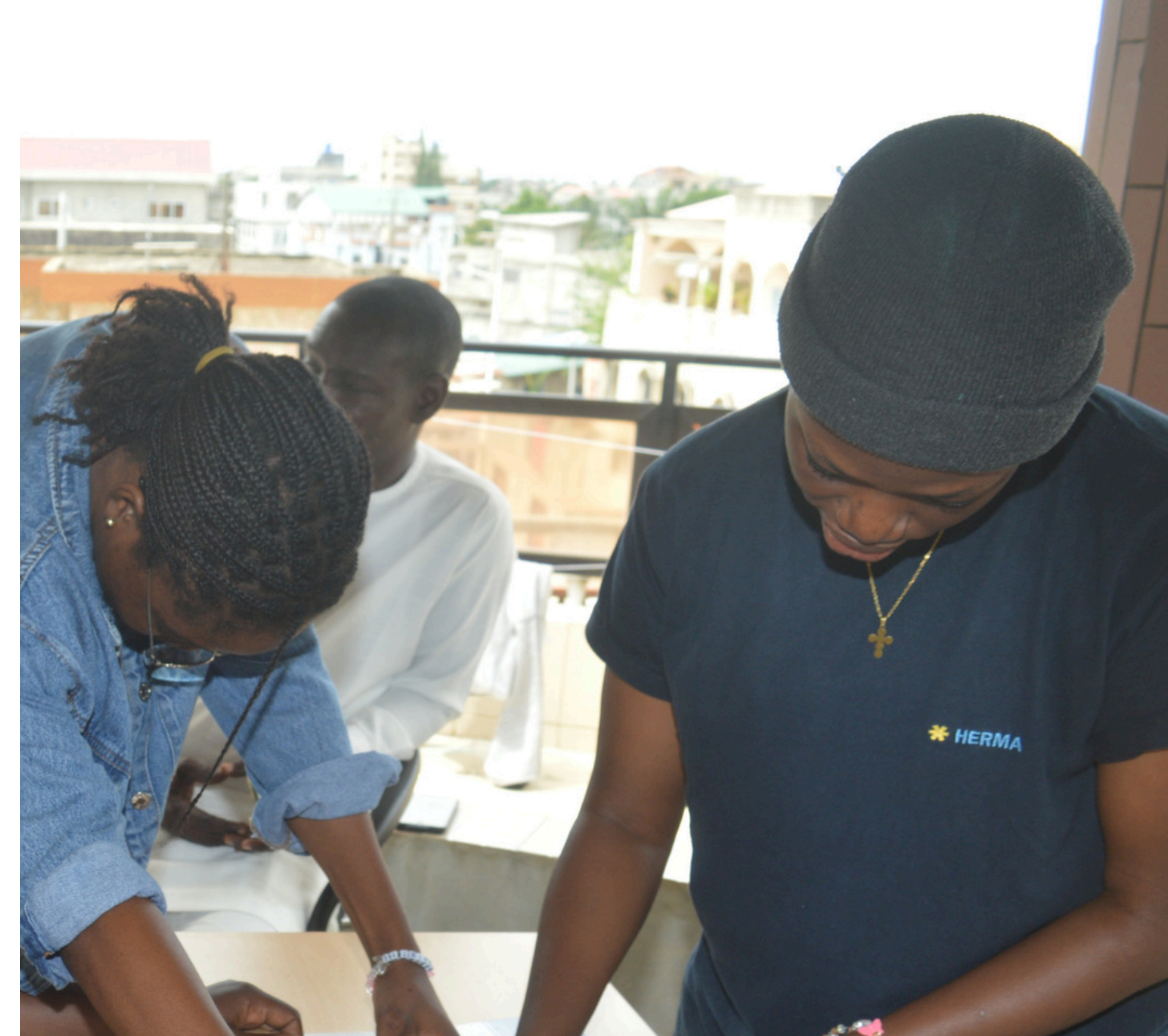


We call governments and institutions from Global North: step beside your global dominance! Step beside the ever only goal of your own economic profit maximisation. Share your privileges and work on equitable partnerships with governments institutions and people of the Global South. We demand you become allies with nations and people that you are still oppressing after 500 years. All political decisions need to take this into account and find alternatives in the above-mentioned demands.

We demand recognition and inclusion of non-western knowledge which are still being neglected as no adequate form of knowledge. The pre-colonial, indigenous and today's African perspectives and knowledge are essential to create alternatives to today's western destructive way of living and therefore to address the complex issues of climate crises.



Sufficient financial reparation payments in the eve of colonial heritage must be provided by the Global North. Every form of poverty is a product of (neo-)colonial oppression.



**BREAK DOWN
POWER STRUCTURES**





In conclusion, the participation of vulnerable people, e.g.: young black people, in the fight against climate change is of crucial importance for our common future. Concerned people are key to the quest for a more sustainable and resilient world. By pushing decision-makers to take specific action we hope for the first steps in that regard.

As the main generations affected by the consequences of climate change, young people have an unquestionable right to participate actively in the decisions that will shape their future. As the backbone of this world's riches, vulnerable people have an unquestionable right to have power to their voice and a decent living standard to their community. Their voices must be heard in climate policies, international negotiations, social movements and sustainable development initiatives.

The participation of young people is a source of inspiration and hope for ambitious climate action. Their ongoing efforts to promote sustainable solutions, raise public awareness and put pressure on governments are essential to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement and preserving the planet for future generations.

By providing them with the necessary resources, platforms and support, we can catalyse their potential to create a more sustainable, equitable and environmentally friendly future for all.



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