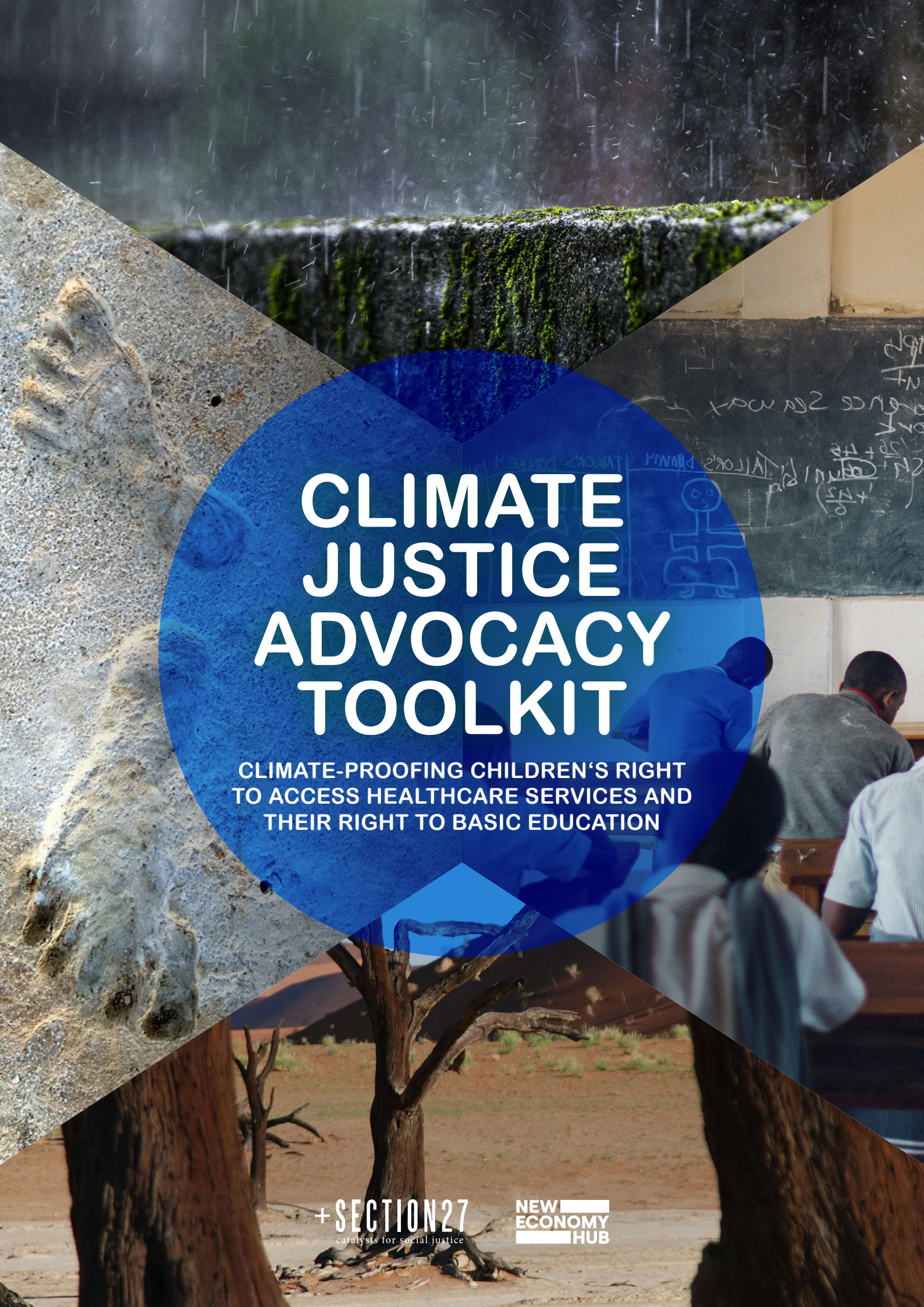




CLIMATE JUSTICE ADVOCACY TOOLKIT

CLIMATE-PROOFING CHILDREN'S RIGHT
TO ACCESS HEALTHCARE SERVICES AND
THEIR RIGHT TO BASIC EDUCATION



“A climate resilient health system is capable of anticipating, responding to, coping, recovering from and adapting to climate-related shocks and stress so as to bring sustained improvements in population health, despite an unstable climate.”

The World Health Organisation

Climate Justice Advocacy Toolkit

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Purpose of the Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to equip civil society organisations with a plan to address the advocacy and campaigning needs in the sector, in a joint effort to hold state actors responsible for child-facing basic education and health services in South Africa accountable.

It has been created in response to recommendations made in a research report titled “Climate Change as a Human Rights Risk: A Resource for Health and Education Rights Activists in South Africa.” It is designed to equip civil society organisations with a plan to address the advocacy, and campaigning needs in the sector, in a joint effort to hold state actors responsible for child-facing basic education and health services in South Africa accountable. It aims to help recognise the intersection of climate change and understand the legal aspects related to the connection between climate change and socio-economic rights in the sector.

Collaborative action within civil society organisations will go a long way to achieve our goal. The tools described here are valuable for anyone looking to expand their understanding of a rights-based approach to climate change response in health and basic education or who are interested in conducting sustained advocacy campaigns in these sectors.



[READ THE REPORT](#)

Overview

South Africa’s Constitution states that everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being; to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations; and to access healthcare services and basic education.



However, the climate crisis poses an undeniable threat to health and basic education systems in South Africa, which need to be strengthened and adapted if they are to withstand the increasingly rapid onset effects of climate change. We have seen the health and education infrastructure challenges that are being exacerbated by climate change, including displacement from schools and health facilities due to extreme weather events.

SECTION27 made submissions in 2022 on the Climate Change Bill, which focused on the human rights impact of the climate crisis, and, importantly, the inclusion of basic education amongst the sectors that should be obligated to develop a sector adaptation strategy and plan. Following from the public participation process, the Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment Portfolio Committee made various amendments to the Bill, notably, that the education sector be included. President Cyril Ramaphosa signed into law the Climate Change Bill which sets out a national climate change response, including mitigation and adaptation actions, which also constitutes South Africa’s fair contribution to the global efforts to reduce greenhouse gasses.



Climate-proofing children’s right to access healthcare services and their right to basic education

Advocacy Plan

Case study for
4: Climate change and
food insecurity.

(Issues)

1. Drought.
2. Competition of scarce resources - conflict.
3. Loss of income, skills and Lifestyle - urbanisation (migration)
4. Input costs.
5. Increase disease burden.

What is the Problem?

The state's lack of preparation for the climate crisis poses a **threat to children's right to basic education and their right to access healthcare.**

The departments of Health and Basic Education have not yet implemented any strategies to mitigate the consequences of climate change. To enhance the effectiveness of the climate justice movement, it is important to integrate socio-economic rights more comprehensively into its advocacy agenda.

An awareness of the negative impacts of climate change on children's access to health services and to basic education is crucial. There is an urgent need to mobilise civil society organisations focused on health-care and education sectors to advocate for improved state preparedness.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN INCLUDE:



Hold the **state actors accountable for child-facing basic education and health services** in South Africa to develop appropriate mitigation and adaptation measures that respond to the impacts of climate change for these sectors.



Mobilise health and education sector-focused civil society to advocate for better measures to be put in place to mitigate the climate crisis.

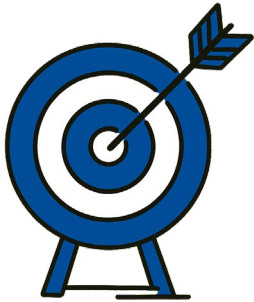


Raise awareness of the **negative impacts of climate change** on children's access to health services and to basic education.





Target Audience & Key Messaging



BASIC EDUCATION SPECIFIC		
Target Group	Objective	Messaging
Director General of Education	- Acknowledge the issue and ensure that environmental education is appropriately and adequately included and taught in the school curriculum. - Acknowledge the issue and ensure that school infrastructure is climate-proofed. - Acknowledge the issue and ensure that scholar transport policy is responsive to the impact of climate change.	- Climate change affects all human systems. Is basic education ready? - Climate change education is crucial to enable learners to thrive in the new world. Ensure that there is appropriate climate change education in the school curriculum. - The Convention on the Rights of the Child obligates governments to ensure climate change education is included in the school curriculum. Comply with your obligations! - School infrastructure is vulnerable to extreme weather events like the 2022 KZN floods. These will become more frequent. Fix our schools and make them climate-proof! - Hot temperatures in classrooms have an adverse impact on educational attainment. Stop overcrowding and ensure cooler temperatures in classrooms. - Learners commute to school is affected by extreme weather events like floods and heatwaves. Ensure that scholar transport policies are cognizant and adaptable.
Provincial Heads of Education Departments	- Acknowledge the issue and ensure that environmental education is appropriately and adequately included and taught in the school curriculum. - Acknowledge the issue and ensure that school infrastructure is climate-proofed. - Acknowledge the issue and ensure that scholar transport policy is responsive to the impact of climate change.	- Climate change affects all human systems. Is basic education ready? - Climate change education is crucial to enable learners to thrive in the new world. Ensure that there is appropriate climate change education in the school curriculum. - The Convention on the Rights of the Child obligates governments to ensure climate change education is included in the school curriculum. Comply with your obligations! - School infrastructure is vulnerable to extreme weather events like the 2022 KZN floods. These will become more frequent. Fix our schools and make them climate-proof! - Hot temperatures in classrooms have an adverse impact on educational attainment. Stop overcrowding and ensure cooler temperatures in classrooms. - Learners commute to school is affected by extreme weather events like floods and heatwaves. Ensure that scholar transport policies are cognizant and adaptable.

BASIC EDUCATION SPECIFIC		
Target Group	Objective	Messaging
Basic Education Portfolio Committee	That the Committee is aware of the threats of climate change to the sector so that they ensure that legislation and policy is enacted to mitigate against and adapt to climate change. Further, that sufficient budget is allocated to enable the above.	- Ensure that environmental education is provided in the school curriculum. - Ensure that school infrastructure is “climate-proofed” against impact of climate change. - Ensure that scholar transport policy is responsive to the impact of climate change.
HEALTH SPECIFIC		
Target Group	Objective	Messaging
Director General of the Department of Health	Ensure that the department of health acknowledges their responsibility to develop appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures that respond to climate change for the health sector.	- Stress testing of public health facilities is crucial in ensuring adaptation of the health system to withstand climate change impacts. Ensure that stress testing of public health facilities is conducted. - Ensure that public health facilities are climate resilient. - Conduct Health Impact Assessments when doing Socio-Economic Impact Assessments in relation to new legislation and policy and to ensure that health interventions address the evolving health issues that are a result of climate change. - Medical waste contributes to environmental degradation and climate change. Ensure that policies and legislation are enacted to deal with this.
Provincial Heads of Health Departments	Ensure that the department of health acknowledges their responsibility to develop appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures that respond to climate change for the health sector.	- Stress testing of public health facilities is crucial in ensuring adaptation of the health system to withstand climate change impacts. Ensure that stress testing of public health facilities is conducted. - Ensure that public health facilities are climate resilient. - Conduct Health Impact Assessments when doing Socio-Economic Impact Assessments in relation to new legislation and policy and to ensure that health interventions match the climate change resultant and evolving cause of health issues. - Medical waste contributes to environmental degradation and climate change. Ensure that policies and legislation are enacted to deal with this.
Health Portfolio Committee	That the Committee is aware of the impact of climate change on the health of children and that it plays a proactive role in ensuring that the health rights of children are protected through oversight of the executive.	- Ensure that legislation and policy ensuring that the health system is resilient to climate change is passed and implemented. - That budgets, whether allocated for climate change matters or not, are used in a way that is climate responsive and that those who are responsible for making use of budgets are made to account when budgets are not used in a climate resilient manner.

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS		
Target Group	Objective	Messaging
National Treasury	- Ensure that Treasury acknowledges the impact of climate change on the basic education and health sectors and to ensure appropriate funding is allocated to enable the sectors to mitigate and adapt to climate change. - Encourage Treasury to apply child rights-based impact assessments as per the UN General Comment 28 regarding climate financing. - Treasury acknowledges the impact of climate change when allocating funding. - Ensure that the interest on the loans/debt taken do not erode investment in education and healthcare.	- The health and basic education sectors are and will continue to be severely impacted by climate change, Treasury needs to ensure that appropriate budget is allocated to ensure the sectors are able to adapt and mitigate the impacts. - Place requirements that even where money is not specifically allocated for climate change, the available budget should be used in a climate responsive manner. For example, Treasury should require both the Education and Health department, when using its infrastructure budget to procure/build climate-resilient infrastructure where possible.
Provincial Treasuries	Ensure that Treasury acknowledges the impact of climate change on the basic education and health sectors and to ensure appropriate funding is allocated to the education and health sector to enable the sectors to mitigate and adapt to climate change.	- The health and basic education sectors are and will continue to be severely impacted by climate change, Treasury needs to ensure that appropriate budget is allocated to ensure the sectors are able to adapt and mitigate the impacts. - Place requirements that even where money is not specifically allocated for climate change, the available budget should be used in a climate responsive manner. For example, Treasury should require both the Education and Health department, when using its infrastructure budget to procure/build climate-resilient infrastructure where possible
Department of Mineral Resources and Energy	- Influence policy choices of the DMRE towards an expedited just transition. - To mainstream the discourse on the impact of energy policy choices on children's access to basic education and healthcare. - Influence policy by highlighting the intersectional impact of climate change on health, education, and the environment.	- The use of fossil fuels has severe impacts on the health of children. Our energy policy choices must have due regard for this impact. - The use of fossil fuels contributes to climate change which has adverse impact on basic education. - The need for the transition to renewable energy is urgent.

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS		
Target Group	Objective	Messaging
Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment	Ensure awareness of the impact of climate change to children's rights to access basic education and healthcare services.	Ensure that environmental and climate legislation and policy address the impacts on children's right to access healthcare services and their right to basic education.
Portfolio Committee on Forestry Fisheries and the Environment	That the Portfolio Committee acknowledges importance of safeguarding the health and education sectors in the Climate Change response and ensures that the executives are of the same mind through oversight.	- The National Climate Change Bill which has now been passed, requires the DFFE to formulate national objectives within a year and a National Adaptation Strategy and Plan within two years. The Minister of DFFE, in consultation with the Ministers for Health and Basic Education, amongst others must ensure that the health and education rights of children are considered and given the appropriate weight. - Ensure that national environmental policy and legislation is sensitive to the impact on basic education and health.
Civil society	Collaborate to advance climate justice and advocate for children's right to access healthcare services and their right to basic education.	Advocate for better measures to be put in place to mitigate the climate crisis, protect the basic education and healthcare sectors and hold the government accountable. Raise awareness of how climate change affects children's access to education and healthcare and empower communities to fight for their rights.
Media	The media provides a platform to contribute to the discourse on climate justice and advocate for children's rights to education and healthcare. It also provides a platform to reach and influence policy and decision makers.	Shine a spotlight on the climate crisis and foster dialogue between policymakers, experts, civil society organisations, and the public, resulting in increased awareness, collaboration, and efforts to protect the children's right to access healthcare services and their right to basic education.
Special Rapporteur on Climate Change and Human Rights	Obtain assistance in ensuring that the state complies with its obligations in terms of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.	Children remain vulnerable to climate change despite the Convention on the Rights of the Child and General Comment 26. Ensure compliance.
Public	Raise awareness of the impact of climate change on health and basic education. Activate/mobilise the public to influence government to ensure the basic education and health sectors are adapted and the impacts of climate change are mitigated.	The links between climate change and basic education and healthcare services as well as the gaps in the state's response to address climate change.





Advocacy Approaches

Approaches will focus on addressing our advocacy target groups in a way that aligns with the key roles they play in achieving our objectives. This section will cover several different approaches, but it's important to remember that the advocacy approaches can go beyond what is provided here.

1. CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENTS

Engage or partner with health-and-education-focused civil society organisations to advocate for improved climate crisis mitigation measures, through litigation.

2. AWARENESS RAISING

Harness both mainstream and digital media to highlight the adverse impacts of climate change and shape public discourse on the issue.

3. COLLABORATION

Engage with a range of stakeholders, such as decision makers, to influence policy.

4. COLLECTIVE ACTION

Mobilise the public to rally behind an issue, spurring them to take action through protests, pickets, marches, petitions, and similar demonstrations. The goal is to create visible public expressions of your stance while pressuring decision-makers to acknowledge your demands and respond.



Climate-proofing children's right to access healthcare services and their right to basic education

1. Civil Society Engagements

Engage with other civil society organisations who are open to integrating climate justice initiatives into their advocacy efforts, for support and learning purposes.

Organisations can use SECTION27's report, titled "[Climate Change as a Human Rights Risk: A Resource for Health and Education Rights Activists in South Africa](#)," as a resource to identify the effects of climate change on health and basic education. It also provides insights into the legal framework related to the connection between climate change and socio-economic rights, both at the international and domestic levels.

Some initiatives that organisations can take part in:

- Participate in civil society convenings to exchange ideas and collaborate on finding solutions.
- Collaborate with other stakeholders to improve school infrastructure; ensuring that the Regulations Relating to Minimum Uniform Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure consider climate change impacts when selecting school locations, avoiding climate-vulnerable areas.
- Conduct research on the existing curriculum and as-

sess if there is a gap in climate change education.

- Engage in collaborative advocacy to address scholar transport, highlighting the importance of considering extreme weather and walking distances in scholar policies.
- Advocate for health impact assessments to be included in Department of Health policies.
- Conduct stress testing of health facilities to assess their resilience to climate change.
- Conduct research to identify any legislative or policy gaps in the management of medical and pharmaceutical waste within the healthcare system.
- Conduct research on the usage and disposal of e-cigarettes and promote legislative and policy interventions to tackle potential risks and harms.
- Organisations can pursue strategic climate litigation collaboratively to drive systemic change.



2. Awareness Raising

Public awareness raising plays a critical role in addressing the impact of climate change on children's right to access healthcare and their right to basic education.

When communities are well-informed, they are more likely to actively engage in decisions that impact them and demand accountability. To build awareness, one can involve both community or mainstream media, make use of online platforms, conduct public outreach campaigns and more.

Media Advocacy

- **Media releases** – distribute press materials to drive media engagement and extend reach
- **Opinion pieces** - write thought-provoking opinion pieces that spark dialogue, encourage public discourse, and have the potential to shape and shift opinions of the public, including decision makers.
- **Media interviews** – respond to topical climate-related issues in the media.
- **Media moments** – take advantage of days dedicated to climate-related issues by using them as strategic opportunities to generate media coverage e.g. World Environment Day, UN Climate Change Conference (COP29), International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies etc.
- **Storytelling** - develop compelling stories and informative videos showcasing climate change's impacts on children in these specific sectors, then distribute them through media channels.

Digital Advocacy

Digital platforms offer an effective means of engaging the public and influencing policymakers regarding climate change matters. We can use them to mobilise, promote, or educate the public regarding our cause. Digital advocacy can take various forms including:

- **Email campaigns** – send a series of emailers to engage your audience and prompt them to act.
- **Social media** - harness the power of social media to distribute your content and engage with the public.
- **Online petitions** - strengthen the voices of those affected by utilising online petitions to collect signatures and mobilise public support.
- **Creative storytelling** - share personal stories at the heart of your campaign to make it more human and relatable.

- **Online protests** – Get your supporters to join forces and tweet a unified message with a campaign hashtag to the advocacy target for maximum impact. We refer to these as Twitter storms. By taking action, they can increase awareness and pressure authorities to acknowledge and respond to public concerns and outrage.
- **Video content** - Videos play a crucial role in advocacy campaigns, as it can be easily shared on social media and through email.
- **Messaging Apps** - Messaging applications like WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger have emerged as effective tools for strengthening advocacy efforts. They allow us to reach a wider audience quicker and keep our networks engaged in supporting important causes.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

Hashtags

- #ClimateJustice
- #ClimateJustice4children
- #ClimateEmergency

Accounts to Tag

- Climate Justice Coalition
- Civil Society Organisations / Activists
- Advocacy targets e.g. Department of Basic Education
- Journalists covering climate-related issues
- Influencers

Campaign Links

[Climate Change as a Human Rights Risk: A Resource for Health and Education Rights Activists in South Africa](#)

[WEBINAR | Climate Change as a Human Rights Risk A Resource for Health and Education Rights Activists](#)

[PODCAST | Discussing SECTION27's new report: 'Climate Change as a Human Rights Risk'](#)



Sample Copy

Did you know? Climate change poses a significant threat to children's health, exposing them to direct effects like floods, temperature change, droughts, and wildfires, as well as indirect effects such as infectious diseases, food insecurity, and air pollution.

#ClimateJustice #ClimateJustice4children #ClimateEmergency

Climate change has a significant impact on the education system, including heat exposure in schools. In schools with inadequate classrooms, mobile classrooms are often provided as a temporary solution, but are frequently used for longer durations.

#ClimateJustice #ClimateJustice4children #ClimateEmergency

Join us in our campaign to influence the government to prioritise and adapt the basic education and healthcare sectors, as well as take effective measures to mitigate the impacts of climate change on children.

Help spread awareness about how climate change affects children's access to healthcare and education by clicking the SHARE button.

#ClimateJustice #ClimateJustice4children #ClimateEmergency

We must frame climate change as not just a future issue, but a present crisis that requires immediate action - Dr Alex Lenferna, Climate Justice Coalition.

#ClimateJustice #ClimateJustice4children #ClimateEmergency

The climate crisis is not just changing the planet. It is changing children. Children's bodies and minds are uniquely vulnerable to climate impacts and children are disproportionately affected by this crisis not of their making." – UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Kitty van der Heijden.

#ClimateJustice #ClimateJustice4children #ClimateEmergency

Climate change also contributes to higher mortality and morbidity rates and negatively affects health facilities and access to healthcare services.

#ClimateJustice #ClimateJustice4children #ClimateEmergency

Climate change in South Africa has significant implications for basic education and healthcare systems. Higher temperatures, increased heatwaves, and more frequent droughts and intense rainfall are predicted for the region. The effects are especially pronounced in schools that lack adequate resources.

#ClimateJustice #ClimateJustice4children #ClimateEmergency

Healthcare systems must be adaptable, and early warning systems must be put in place to ensure mitigation of the impacts on people without exacerbating the issue of climate change.

#ClimateJustice #ClimateJustice4children #ClimateEmergency

3. Collaboration

For effective advocacy, it is important for climate concerned stakeholders to collaborate on issues that they believe are important to the groups they represent.

Collaboration can be a highly effective tool for advocacy, reach and to ensure diverse skills and connections are engaged in the effort.

For example, stakeholders who are concerned about the climate-resilience of school infrastructure may wish to collaborate with civil society organisations that have previously engaged government or parliament or the courts on school infrastructure. In this way, these two groups can draw on each other's knowledge regarding

climate change and education policy.

Engaging key decision-makers, state actors and policy influencers including Parliament on the impacts of climate change on child-facing health and education services is also important in the plight against climate change.

It is important to remember that collaboration over specific issues may have a greater reach and impact than seeking to address all climate related issues at a go.

4. Collective Action

Collective Action refers to organised efforts to demand environmental policy changes and raise awareness through public demonstrations.

These actions aim to pressure governments, corporations, and institutions to address the climate crisis including protests, pickets, marches, petitions and more.

Selecting effective collective action requires aligning tactics with your campaign goals, target audience, resources, and more.



Aknowledgments

<https://ciyd.org/wp-content/uploads/Climate-Toolkit-FINAL-2022-Sept-2022-2.pdf>

<https://climatejusticetoolkit.org.au/>

<https://ndcpartnership.org/knowledge-portal/climate-toolbox/climate-box-interactive-learning-toolkit-climate-change>

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/get-involved/talking-climate-justice-tour-diy-toolkit>

<https://climatejusticehub.org/2022/12/14/climate-justice-advocacy-toolkit/>

<https://climatejusticetoolkit.org.au/resourcelibrary/climate-justice-communication-framing/>





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