



**WORKSHOP MANUAL**

# Be part of the solution, not pollution – Europe's responsibility to fight for climate justice

by Sefa Adzua

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## 1. Introduction

In our youth we are frequently confronted with the phrases, “you have your whole life to live” and “don’t be so impatient!” But do we really have our whole life to live? And how do we define living? As the climate is changing, our attitudes towards this crisis need to change as well. The consequences of climate change do not see race, age, gender etc. – we are all affected by it. With a solution-oriented approach, tackling the issue is possible. However, it is crucial to be comfortable with being uncomfortable in the process.

The aim of the workshop is to introduce different, maybe unknown circumstances, that marginalized groups are confronted with due to climate change. Participants engage in discussions on climate justice and intersectionality. Exchanging with each other allows us to hear various perspectives that represent our diverse society. At the same time, we can reflect on our privileges by learning about the realities of different people. The workshop is meant to inspire people to think globally and act locally by exploring what that means for oneself.

This workshop focuses on the story of Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah, a nine-year-old, who passed away due to the exposure to exhaust gases in her neighborhood. The pollution in Ella’s neighbourhood resulted in her having a deadly asthma attack. After her death, her mother, Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah, fought against the city of London for not preventing the high levels of pollution in the street Ella was living in. Less economically stable people are forced to live in areas that experience a higher degree and greater variety of pollution. In these areas, the majority of residents happen to be People of Color. For

this reason, an approach that caters to topics of sustainability and intersectionality is needed in order to tackle disparities within the community.

Based on Ella’s story, the workshop introduces the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as one attempt to create a more sustainable world. Even though this set of 17 goals is a helpful guide for the UN’s member states to follow, their implementation remains difficult. The SDGs do not offer clear guidelines regarding the execution of them, however they do show the collective interest in bettering sustainability around the world.

Through Ella’s hardships, her mother Rosamund Adoo-Kissi-Debrah stood by her side until the bitter end. Even after her death, her mother kept on raising awareness of the issue of air pollution. She recently became one of the WHO’s (World Health Organization) “Breathe Life” ambassadors and founded the Ella Roberta Family Foundation. The case of Ella shows that standing up for one another is worthwhile. Using our voices to bring change is not just an option but a necessity!



### **DURATION**

120 minutes without a break



### **TARGET GROUP**

14-99



### **FORMAT**

on site



### **MATERIALS**

Ella’s article, SDG handout, electronic devices (laptop, phone etc.), posters, markers, coloured pens

## 2. Schedule

DURATION	MODULE	METHODS / TOOLS	DESCRIPTION
10 min	<b>MODULE 1</b> <b>Welcome</b>	Introduction	The trainers introduce themselves and get to know the group. They will talk about the overall aim of the workshop and give an overview of its schedule.
5 min	<b>MODULE 2</b> <b>Cheer me up</b>	Icebreaker	For an icebreaker activity, the group will play a version of rock, paper scissors.
15 min	<b>MODULE 3</b> <b>Pose for social justice</b>	Pantomime game Tools: handout of all 17 SDGs (available in different languages) <sup>1</sup>	Participants engage in a playful approach to the Sustainable Development Goals: they form small groups and pantomime the SDGs without speaking.
10 min	<b>MODULE 4</b> <b>The fight for mother earth</b>	Presentation Tools: presentation and SDGs handout	The trainer introduces SDGs and explains their intentions for today's society. Terms such as 'intersectionality' and 'racial climate justice' are explained.
25 min	<b>MODULE 5</b> <b>Who is Ella?</b>	Online research Tools: electronic device (laptop, computer, smartphone), SDG handout, article	The facilitator introduces the group to the article on Ella and to the SDG handout. After reading the article, participants are given a list of questions to answer. The questions should be answered with help of online research, the SDG handout and the article.
<b>BREAK</b>			
25 min	<b>MODULE 6</b> <b>Channeling your inner Picasso</b>	Creative work Tools: flipcharts /posters, coloured pens	The participants are separated in small groups to discuss the questions of the last module. Then, they visualize their discussion by drawing on a poster. They also prepare for the presentation of the poster to the group.
20 min	<b>MODULE 7</b> <b>Connecting the dots</b>	Group presentations Tools: posters	Presentation of the research results (with flipchart or a poster to hang on the black board).
10 min	<b>MODULE 8</b> <b>Wrap up</b>	Open discussion and feedback Tools: ball for discussion round, sticky notes	Participants are exchanging opinions on sustainability and its importance in the big round. The facilitator throws a ball to the first person who wants to answer the question. The ball is then passed onto the next person who wants to talk. Anonymous feedback round: students are asked to write down their feedback on sticky notes which are then collected by the facilitator.

## 3. Implementation

### MODULE 1

#### Welcoming and getting to know each other — 10 min

At the beginning, the facilitator waits for all students to participate in the workshop. In the introduction, the facilitators introduce themselves and the participants as well. The information about Understanding Europe and, potentially, the Schwarzkopf Foundation Young Europe is provided by the facilitator. They will also introduce the overall aim, which is adapting to a diversifying Europe.

The workshop is supposed to be a safer space for minority groups who participate in the workshop. Moreover, no participant will be condemned for their opinions and statements.

### MODULE 2

#### “Cheer me up” icebreaker — 5 min

Then the students are asked to form small groups. For an ice-breaker activity, the students are asked to play a few rounds of rock, paper, scissors. In the beginning, each participant plays against another one. The person that loses in the first round steps behind the winner. The winner then has to look for another winner to play against. The winner of the second round gets to have 2 people standing behind them, who chant their name. The goal is for two participants to play rock paper scissors against each other in the end.

### MODULE 3

#### Pose for social justice — 15 min

The facilitator divides the class into groups of 4-5 by choosing a random criteria, such as the colour of their socks etc. After all groups are formed, each group is supposed to draw one of the 17 cards from the SDGs, each featuring one development goal. The participants are asked to think about a way to act out the SDG without talking. They are allowed to use objects in the classroom to help them during this exercise. Students may use a table, books or other objects to impersonate an SDG. Afterwards, the participants guess which SDGs have been acted out by each group.





## MODULE 4

### Fight for mother earth — 10 min

In this part of the program the participants are introduced to the main subject and overall goal of this workshop. Firstly, it is necessary to explain to the students the basic terminology behind the workshop: climate justice and intersectionality. This is especially important as these terms are rather young terms and are not very common everywhere.

The students are given a short insight into Ella's case and are then introduced to the SDGs. They are supposed to read the [article on Ella Adoo Kissi Debrah](#) individually and then discuss it in their groups. With an [explanatory video on the SDGs](#) (preferably in their native language) participants learn about potential solutions to the issue of air pollution. The handout provides an overview of all SDGs and can be used to clarify open questions.

#### THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Sustainable Development Goals are a set of 17 goals to fight the consequences of climate change. The goals were developed by the United Nations Member States in 2015 to enable peace and prosperity for people on our planet, now and in the future. The global partnership between the countries is continuously evolving. All Member States recognize that the fight against hunger, poverty and related challenges is of great importance.

→ [More information on the UN SDGs.](#)

It is of great importance to then emphasize the link between the SDGs and the case of Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah. In order to do so, the trainer should especially pay attention to SDG 3, 11, 13 (but also take a look at the others):

- SDG 3 stands for “good health and well-being”, which is relatable to the state of health of the nine-year-old Ella.
- SDG 11 stands for sustainable cities and communities. It tackles the need for “sustainable cities and communities, catering to the needs of society by offering sustainable solutions, such as broadening public transport within the city etc.
- SDG 13 stands for “Climate Action” which means bringing awareness to a topic by simply talking about the issue of the climate crisis and naming possible solutions for it.

The actual application of SDGs to Ella's case will then be done when answering the questions in the next module.

## MODULE 5

### Who is Ella? — 25 min

After reading the article about Ella Adoo Kissi Debrah (article can be translated in the native language by the facilitator), students are asked to answer six questions in their groups and take notes:

- Who is Ella Adoo Kissi Debrah? What is her story?
- What role did Ella's case play after her death? How is her case an example for climate action/activism?
- Which SDG(s) can be applied to the story?
- What are some initiatives and projects the city of London/ your city offers to aid the issue of air pollution?
- Which obstacles might exist when implementing the SDG(s) in your community/area?
- What methods would the city have undertaken if Ella had not been part of a marginalized group?

The questions should be answered with the help of the SDG handout, the article on Ella and, potentially, with additional online research.

#### → **Special note:** *Intersectional approach*

*Question 1 and question 6 require an intersectional approach, which means that the facets of Ella should be emphasized. She is a girl, black and comes from a poor socio-economic household. The participants are asked to think about how all those characteristics influenced Ella's story. Question 6 should be discussed in the groups and will be discussed afterwards among all participants who are willing to voice their opinion.*

*These questions seek to attempt to bring awareness to the story of Ella. The students deal with issues that are outside the reality of their own life. At the same time, they emphasize that Ella's story is not a single case, rather part of persistent structural problems.*

## MODULE 6

### Channeling your inner Picasso? — 25 min

In small groups of 4-5 people, the students discuss their answers and then design a poster illustrating their findings. The result can turn out to be an information sheet, but art pieces are also accepted as long as they refer to the topic. The facilitator should assist the students in case anything is unclear.

The goal is that students learn to visualize their findings together. Decisions about the structure, design and general content should be made together. While one participant is drawing, the other might write a poem, a catchy phrase etc. The presentation of posters will happen in the next module.

## MODULE 7

### Connecting the dots — 15 min

Presentation: after creating the posters, participants should prepare a presentation of their posters by deciding on what will be said and who the speakers will be. The students are supposed to not only present their research findings on the questions mentioned in module but also explain the ideas and thoughts behind the design of their posters. The students are given three minutes to present their poster.



## MODULE 8

### Wrap up — 25 min

At the end, students are invited to voice their own opinions on climate change and the importance of youth participation in times of the climate crisis.

If students appear to be eager to discuss the content of the workshop, here are some discussion questions that could be implemented:

- Had you heard of Ella's story before this workshop? Which stories have you heard that are similar to Ella's case?
- In which ways do you contribute to climate justice and/or how could you?

#### → **Special note to the trainers:**

*The following question tackles a sensitive topic about ethnicity. Knowing that talking about, race, class and gender can be sensitive to others, there's the possibility of creating a group for BPoC to exchange with each other. This step should be considered before asking the third question. The following question might sound provocative, yet again the goal of this workshop is to get comfortable with being uncomfortable.*

- *Do you think actions would have been taken more quickly, if Ella was not black/part of a marginalized group?*

*During the discussion, facilitators are not supposed to impose their opinion on the participants but should enable them to engage in meaningful conversation. It might be necessary to put some effort into involving as many people as possible in the discussion, since some participants can be more dominant than others.*

*As a last step, the facilitator asks for feedback, which should always be considered as very much welcome. Preferably the facilitator will collect the feedback given by the students on a small piece of paper or post-it in a case, bag etc. By giving each participant the chance to anonymously rate the workshop, the feedback might be more genuine. The feedback is not discussed during the workshop.*

*Possible feedback questions:*

- *What did you like/dislike?*
- *What would you change about the workshop?*
- *What was missing?*
- *Do you feel like you have learned something valuable?*



AUTHOR

**Sefa Adzua**

Sefa Adzua is a Political Science student at the University of Vienna. She is specifically interested in post-colonial studies, sustainability, and intersectionality. Sefa is a “Thinking of Europe Fellow 2022” and keen on educating her peers about unspoken atrocities that happened in the past, are happening in the present and will happen in the future as well. Shining a light on issues close to her heart is of great value to the young activist.

## 4. Sources

About Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah

- <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/dec/16/ella-kissi-debrah-mother-fight-justice-air-pollution-death>

About Environmental Racism:

- Heinrich-Böll-Foundation: [https://www.boell.de/sites/default/files/2021-12/E-Paper\\_The\\_Elephant\\_in\\_the\\_Room.pdf](https://www.boell.de/sites/default/files/2021-12/E-Paper_The_Elephant_in_the_Room.pdf)  
<https://www.boell.de/de/2021/11/26/der-elefant-im-raum-umweltrassismus-deutschland>
- Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-solutions/2020/06/29/climate-change-racism/>
- World Economic Forum: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/07/what-is-environmental-racism-pollution-covid-systemic/>

About Intersectionality:

- Understanding Europe: <https://understanding-europe.org/en/education/glossary/>
- Columbia Law School: <https://www.law.columbia.edu/faculty/kimberle-w-crenshaw>
- Learning for Justice: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6dnj2lyYjE>

About sustainability:

- University of California: <https://www.sustain.ucla.edu/what-is-sustainability/>
- <https://centerclimatejustice.universityofcalifornia.edu/what-is-climate-justice/>

About Sustainable Development Goals:

- United Nations Regional Information Centre: <https://unric.org/en/sdgs-in-your-language/>  
[https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session\\_factsheet1.pdf](https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf)

## 5. Glossary

**CLIMATE JUSTICE** – Climate Justice is aware of the influence climate change has on low-income households and communities of colour; the population least responsible for the issues occurring. However, it also seeks the root causes of the climate crisis in a social, racial, and environmental justice approach.

Source: [University of California](#)

**INTERSECTIONALITY** – This term refers to the analysis of interdependence (mutual conditionality) and the combined effects of various categories of difference with dimensions and social inequality and exclusion. In order to create a thorough understanding of discrimination, their individual forms (such as racism, sexism or heterosexism) may not be considered as independent of one another.

Source: [Understanding Europe Glossary](#)

**PEOPLE OF COLOUR** – People of Colour serves as an analytical and political term, which is used for all people and communities which are racialised as “other” and were and continue to be oppressed. Meanwhile the term BPoC (Black and People of Colour) is used more frequently to expressly include black people. Somewhat less frequently the term is extended to BIPoC (Black and Indigenous People of Colour) which includes indigenous people like the Lakota in the USA, the Mayas in Guatemala or the Aymaras in Bolivia.

Source: [Understanding Europe Glossary](#)

**RACIAL CLIMATE JUSTICE** – Racial Climate Justice is a term used to encourage People of Colour to fight against racism happening in the realm of climate justice. Even though the Global South produces fewer emissions, people living in the Global South are more directly affected by the consequences of climate change. An example for unjust treatment are phenomena such as land grabbing, deterrence from land and waste settlements close to PoC communities.

Source: Definition by the author

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS** – The Sustainable Development Goals are a set of 17 goals to fight the consequences of climate change. The goals were developed by the United Nations Member States in 2015 to enable peace and prosperity for people on our planet, now and in the future. The global partnership between the countries is continuously evolving. All Member States recognize that the fight against hunger, poverty and related challenges is of great importance.

Source: [United Nations](#)

**SUSTAINABILITY** – The term describes the attempt to consume responsibly by taking into consideration that the excessive extraction of resources does not have a positive impact on our well-being. Sustainability is thoughtful of the generations to come by implementing a more eco-friendly approach to trade, production, consumption, life style choices etc. Nowadays more companies are trying to integrate sustainable attitudes by reusing and recycling materials. Being sustainable means reconsidering one’s actions and destructing one’s idea of a “normal” life(style)/way of living.

Source: Definition by the author

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