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Our Rights.  
Our Voice.



**feminist communities**  
**for climate justice**

## Feminist Communities for Climate Justice

### Literature Review

August 2023



Rialtas  
na hÉireann  
Government  
of Ireland

Tionscadal Éireann  
Project Ireland  
**2040**



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## Executive Summary

This literature review aimed to do three things: 1) collate and establish Community Work Ireland (CWI) and the National Women's Council's (NWC) existing work and positions on climate issues; 2) to explore and summarise the current work of other NGOs, Government and other relevant organisations in areas of climate policy and advocacy that might relate to work CWI/NWC are undertaking/could undertake; and 3) to make recommendations about policy focuses for the *Feminist Communities for Climate Justice* project.

This is not a research document – there was not a specific research question, methodological approach, or clear, exhaustive scope of analysis. Rather, it's best understood as a collation and summary of the exploratory investigation that was undertaken by the Project Coordinator and the Project Officer in the initial two months of the project. It was based on, initially, the literature included in the background research of the application for funding for this project; it was expanded in a loose, snowballing fashion depending on engagements/meetings we had with relevant other people and organisations, and our own desk research. It is therefore a useful baseline reference document rather than a research document.

### **Collating NWC and CWI's existing work and positions on Climate and Environment Issues**

Both the National Women's Council and Community Work Ireland have incorporated aspects of climate justice into their previous work.

For NWC this has manifested as including a climate and environment section in significant policy docs, particularly Pre-Budget Submissions since about 2020 and the submission to the National Reform Programme, and a small number of more focused thematic/sectoral documents (such as women and transport, and women and energy). Most of the policy calls contained within these documents are linked to public investment – the need for greater investment in caring infrastructure, more and better (green) physical infrastructure such as public and active transport, tax and investment reform to move away from fossil fuel investment and to put the burden of

paying for increased investment on polluters rather than the general public, access to new and well-paid and conditioned employment opportunities for women in the context of a just transition, and increased participation by women in decision-making on climate at all levels of policy development and implementation.

For CWI this has manifested in a broad range of documentation and collaborations going back to at least 2012. Alongside briefing papers on general issues of climate justice, there have been specific analyses on COPs and on the Climate Action Plan. The primary themes that flow through all of this work as it relates to community work and development include climate engagement, governance and accountability, participation and inclusive processes, just transition, climate consciousness-raising, and tackling energy poverty. The development of strategic alliances has also been highlighted, and CWI submitted a motion (which passed) to last year's NWC AGM calling on the organisation to mainstream just transition and climate justice into their work.

### **Current Irish Policy Context, analysed through a Community Work and Feminist Lens**

We divided this section into a number of different themes: **Just Transition; Energy Poverty; Care; Food, Land Use, Agriculture and Biodiversity; Transport; Access to Environmental and Climate Justice; and Migration.**

While far from an exhaustive list, these emerged as the key themes from the documentation which reflected areas of work/focus that the project might relate to give its focus on marginalised communities and women in particular. Much of the policy work on these issues referenced and engaged with the idea of community empowerment, consultation and support – though the degree to which this is effective likely varied enormously, and the conception of “community” varied enormously also. Regardless, through both governmental and non-governmental policy documents on most of these issues community was a feature of discussion.

Discussion of gender and the impact on women, on the other hand, was quite noticeably absent from much of the documentation. There is some focus (particularly in for example the Climate Action Plan) on the gendered impacts of climate change in other parts of the world (presumably the Global South) in the context of the Overseas Development Aid budget. But there is very limited

focus on the impacts on women in an Irish context. The exceptions to this tended to be the work of the NWC, or a small segment of international literature examined, particularly in the context of care. However, in some of the other topics – most notably Just Transition, energy poverty, food etc. – there was very limited gendered analysis.

This is not to say that there was limited analysis of the impact on marginalised communities, or the differentiated impacts of climate and environmental degradation on specific socio-economic, ethnic, geographic, or cultural groups – but only that gender was rarely a specific factor within such intersectional analyses. It is important that gender is considered to a greater degree within these issues than it currently is, and though of course presumed it is always important to note that any gendered analysis must take into account substantively and holistically the intersecting nature of socio-economic and cultural oppressions of which gender is just one aspect.

## **Concluding Remarks**

There is significant scope for the project to contribute greatly to analysis and campaigning on climate and environment issues. In particular the lack of analysis of the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on women is a policy and campaigning gap which the project can seek to address.

To shape this work, it is suggested to use the five key major pillars of focus to provide a grounding for any analysis and campaigning:

1. **Just Transition**
2. **Energy Poverty (broadened out to include Housing)**
3. **Care**
4. **Transport**
5. **Food, Land Use, Agriculture and Biodiversity**

These cover issues that CWI and NWC have worked on before, as well as some new areas of possible expansion. They cover areas that are relevant to community development, but also areas

that have distinctly gendered impacts. And they are all important parts of the policy landscape at the moment – the Just Transition Commission is due to be established soon; energy prices will continue to be one of the primary cost-of-living issues for the foreseeable, as will the housing crisis; the referendum on care will be happening in the autumn; transport is a constant public service issue across the island; food is another huge cost-of-living issue, a Land Use Plan is due under this Government, agriculture is the biggest and most contentious issue in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, and the recent publication of the Citizens’ Assembly on Biodiversity Report has again highlighted the range of issues which biodiversity affects.

While access to environmental and climate justice and migration are extremely important issues, and there are many other aspects to climate and environment and the associated socio-economic impacts, the above five pillars cover a broad enough range of topics to present a strong but manageable set of possible focuses for the work of the project.

## Section 1 – Background of NWC and CWI’s work on Climate and Environmental Issues

### Part 1: National Women’s Council

#### Strategic Plan

Point 1.8 of the NWC’s Strategic Plan 2021-2024 is entitled “championing feminist and just climate action” and lists as its strategic outcome that the NWC will “have advanced a feminist analysis, approach and mobilisation to just climate action”.<sup>1</sup> As the three measurements of success, NWC commits to 1) producing a policy position on a feminist approach to just climate action; 2) becoming/continuing to be an active member of key national campaigns seeking a just climate transition; and 3) ensuring that a feminist climate action perspective is visible in both state plans and civil society campaigning. These relate directly to the work of the Project – where development of a policy position is encompassed within the Project outcome of development of a feminist community work model/approach for climate justice; being an active member of national campaigns is an essential part of building strong stakeholder relationships in the climate and community work sphere; and bringing a feminist climate justice perspective relates to ensuring that our Project Team has good and constructive engagement with the rest of the teams within the NWC and CWI, from Communication to Policy to Membership and Leadership, sharing our work and facilitating constructive cross-over.

#### Members’ Mandate

In terms of direct mandates from NWC members: having scanned through the list of motions for the last 8 AGMs, only a single motion from CWI from last year related to climate issues or climate justice. This motion (as passed) called on “NWC to prioritise action on climate change and a just transition, mainstreaming a climate justice perspective into the work of the organisation”; and further called on NWC to develop: “Policy work, cross sectoral collaboration, campaigns, communications and media

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<sup>1</sup> NWC Strategic Plan 2021-2024 *No Woman Left Behind*: [www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/no\\_woman\\_left\\_behind](http://www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/no_woman_left_behind)

work, joint initiatives and awareness raising amongst the women's sector including training and capacity building."<sup>23</sup>

### **Report on *Women and the Environment – What can We Do?*<sup>4</sup>**

This document was dropped into the office by a former staff member shortly after the beginning of the project and represents the earliest significant reference to environmental issues that we have found in the work of the National Women's Council (then The Council for the Status of Women).

It primarily focuses on pollution, recycling and environmental degradation issues. The opening address, from then Minister of State Mary Harney, mentions the then-Government's intention to set up the Environmental Protection Agency. Bernadette Vallely of the Women's Environmental Network (UK) gave a presentation on "The Sanitary Protection Scandal", the history of chemical use in the production of sanitary products, and on women as agents for change on environmental issues. There was also a presentation on waste composition and disposal.

The overarching theme of the conference was "What can we do?" and that filtered through so that all of the major calls for action were related to individual responsibility – in particular being aware and informed consumers.

### **Pre-Budget Submissions 2023, 2022, 2021, 2020, 2016**

The first mention of the word "climate" or "environment" in a NWC Pre-Budget Submission (excepting phrases unrelated to climate and environment issues such as "current/difficult economic climate/environment" from PBS 2017, 2012 and 2009 (supplementary), 2005, 2004, 2002, 2000) was in 2016, which called for consideration of environmental factors and responsibility in the spending of public money – specifically in terms of the public service leading on environmental best practice, and environmental considerations as a key criterion for procurement reform.

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<sup>2</sup> For full text of CWI motion see Appendix 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Hard copy document from Conference, February 1991



This does not seem to have been carried through subsequent Pre-Budget Submissions until the 2020 PBS.<sup>5</sup> In the 2020 document, discussion of the climate and biodiversity crises and their disproportionate impacts on women are outlined as part of the overall economic context, calling for the budget to “lay the foundations for a low-carbon future” and mentioning just transition, rural communities, energy poverty and other inequalities and poverties. There is also a call for increased funding for the community and voluntary sector as key to effective climate action, with women’s participation highlighted. There is also a call for an increase in “environmental-based excise charges” and an increase in carbon tax for the funding of a Just Transition Fund, including an increase in “‘polluter pays’ tax policies” and the removal of fossil fuel subsidies.

The 2021 PBS has a significant thread of climate and environmental language running through it.<sup>6</sup> The headline section on “10 Principles for a Feminist Economic Recovery” highlights the need for a new economic model to highlight environmental sustainability, as well as recognising the importance of care and care work in sustainable practices. There is a section on “Green Taxes” highlights the negative impact of fossil fuel subsidies and disproportionately applied taxes, falling heavier on households than corporations. There is a call for ring-fencing of green tax revenue for just transition and spending on support for rural communities, energy poverty and lower socio-economic groups [same language as PBS 2020]. In the section on gender and equality budgeting, the lack of consideration of environmental damage in the GDP metric is mentioned. In the section on improving work/life balance, the benefits of the four-day week for the environment are mentioned. The final section in the document is entitled “Deliver a Green New Deal” and notes the disproportionate impact of climate change on existing inequalities and in particular the impact on women [similar language to the PBS 2020]. There are a list of recommendations including: support for Just Transition legislation; gender- and poverty-proofing of legislation; 8% annual reduction in GHG emissions; ‘polluter pays’ environmental tax measures; remove fossil fuel subsidies and divest from fossil fuel investment; no new fossil fuel exploration licences; prioritise public and active transport infrastructure over roads; invest in natural heritage and biodiversity; invest in Just Transition plan for rural development including ending intensive livestock production.

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<sup>5</sup> NWC Pre-Budget Submission 2020 *Equality Now, Invest in Women*:  
[www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/equality\\_now\\_invest\\_in\\_women](http://www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/equality_now_invest_in_women)

<sup>6</sup> NWC Pre-Budget Submission 2021 *A Feminist Recovery Plan*: [www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/a\\_feminist\\_recovery\\_plan](http://www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/a_feminist_recovery_plan)

The 2022 PBS is very similar in content to the 2021 version, with the same 10 Principles, and references to climate and environmental action and sustainability through the context/intro section.<sup>7</sup> The text on “Green Taxes” is approximately the same, with the phrasing of “shifting the burden of taxation towards environmentally damaging activities”, but with the same calls. There is a brief reference for the need to deliver on climate justice obligations in the section on women in rural communities. There is also a “Green New Deal” section – while the recommendations are essentially identical to 2021’s (with the addition of a call to fund regional Social Environmental enterprises), the introductory paragraphs are reworked to include some new points, including: that while the previous budget had tried to offset the carbon tax increase for low-income households, fuel allowance criteria meant that many on low incomes would still be disproportionately affected; the need for investment in a public model of care to be at the centre of a green new deal; and the NWC and partners in 56 coalitions’ proposals for a just recovery, based on the principles of protecting/investing public services, prioritising public health, investing in people, deliver fairer and faster climate and environmental action, build solidarity and community across borders, inclusive and participatory decision-making, redefining progress through a focus on wellbeing and sustainable development.

The 2023 PBS has “tackling energy costs and climate change” as one of its 10 Priority Asks for Women in Budget 2023, with specific reference to deep retrofits for low-income families and investment in public transport.<sup>8</sup> In the context of investing in the care economy, there is a recognition that investment in care helps us meet climate goals – however, overall there is less reference to climate and environment in the overall context sections which are more focused on the cost-of-living crisis. There is a section on “Green taxes” which is similar in both phrasing and content to the previous two PBSs. The equivalent of the “Green New Deal” section is entitled “Deliver Feminist Climate Justice” – it is significantly longer and more expansive than previous equivalent sections. Here national and international context on the climate and environmental crisis is provided, along with reference to the need for investment in care, and access to employment for

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<sup>7</sup> NWC Pre-Budget Submission 2022 *A Care Economy for a Fair Economy – Investing and Delivering for Women in Budget 2022*:

[www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/a\\_care\\_economy\\_for\\_a\\_fair\\_economy\\_investing\\_and\\_delivering\\_for\\_women\\_in\\_bud](http://www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/a_care_economy_for_a_fair_economy_investing_and_delivering_for_women_in_bud)

<sup>8</sup> NWC Pre-Budget Submission 2023 *Shaping Our Future: Tackling the cost of living for women in Budget 2023*:

[www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/shaping\\_our\\_future\\_tackling\\_the\\_cost\\_of\\_living\\_for\\_women\\_in\\_budget\\_2023](http://www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/shaping_our_future_tackling_the_cost_of_living_for_women_in_budget_2023)

women in the energy, transport and building sectors in the context of ensuring a just transition doesn't disproportionately further disadvantage women. There is a subsection on tackling energy poverty, which calls for a new energy poverty strategy and increased investment in retrofitting of homes in marginalised communities, with particular reference to the impact of energy poverty on lone parents. In this section there are a number of calls related to transport: free school buses, reducing the cost of public transport and developing a cost-benefit analysis of introducing free public transport – noting some of the specific ways women use transport, caring/ “companion” journeys and the need for journeys without a car to be safer, easier and cheaper. There is a subsection on building leadership, with a call for just an equitable environmental decision-making. At the end of this section there are a set of recommendations, some of which are carried over from previous PBSs and some of which are new: ensure climate policies are gender-, equality- and poverty-proofed; support women's participation and leadership as key driver of climate action, at local, national and community level; poverty- and equality-proof the National Retrofit Plan, prioritising worst-performing buildings and those occupied by low-income and vulnerable households, and setting targets for eliminating fuel poverty; invest in public services, including public care infrastructure; prioritise public and active transport infrastructure over roads building, particularly Local Link, free school buses, and cost-benefit analysis for free public transport; invest in a just transition including ending intensive livestock production; introduce 'polluter pays' environmental tax measures, remove fossil fuel subsidies and divest from fossil fuel investment.

### **National Women's Council Climate Report 2019**<sup>9</sup>

This document has NWCI at the top and is entitled “Women and Climate Breakdown: a just and gender sensitive transition within the energy sector in Ireland” It is a broad overview of climate and environmental issues from 2019, outlining context including the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as providing definitions of just transition (“A just transition can be described as the economic dimension of climate justice that is focussed around the fundamental issue of labour within the transition to decarbonisation”), climate justice (“Climate

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<sup>9</sup> National Women's Council of Ireland, *Women and Climate Breakdown: a just and gender sensitive transition within the energy sector in Ireland*.

justice means implementing climate action in tandem with other forms of development such as social protection, the realisation of human rights and gender equality”, drawing on FOE and the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice), and adaptation and mitigation.

The document then goes on to look at the particular impacts of climate change on women, noting the lack of research on the intersection between gender and climate change. The particular void on gendered climate analysis in the Global North is mentioned, as much of this work is focused on women in the Global South – the little that has been done suggests women are more vulnerable to effects of climate breakdown, especially those in poverty; but no specific mention of gender in Irish climate policies.

The rest of the document is focused on energy. After a background section on the energy policy context globally and in Ireland, there is a section on fuel poverty: noting the absence of sex-disaggregated data in relation to energy poverty, but how consistent levels of general poverty are higher for women than men, and this is exacerbated by other societal discriminations. It notes that it’s great to have national-level plans on gender equality, but gender must feature in other policies and analyses too.

The different social places of women and men in terms of climate change impacts are outlined – for example, employment in the energy sector and access to jobs, education, skills etc.; and it warns of the risk of increased work deficit for women or an opportunity to expand women’s impact in a male-dominated sector, noting as well the inequalities in the construction sector and the gender gap in STEM education and employment.

In relation to the energy sector more specifically it notes that in 2010, the Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM) launched an initiative entitled The Clean Energy, Education and Empowerment (C3E) initiative. It aims to advance women’s participation within the clean energy sector by creating opportunities and closing the gender gap in four key areas: awards and recognition; gender data and benchmarking; career development and mentorship; and dialogue and communication.

The document concludes by summarising its points on both women and climate change generally, and women within the renewable sector specifically – stating that “[i]t seems unlikely that Ireland

will be able to appropriately tackle the climate emergency without addressing long-standing, intersectional gender inequalities.”

### **Sustainable Mobility Submission 2020** <sup>10</sup>

This document is a submission by the NWC and Dublin Cycling Campaign to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport on the *Sustainable Mobility Policy: A review of Ireland’s public transport and active travel policy* in February 2020.

Outlining the impacts of the climate crisis on women, the submission notes that transport is not gender-neutral: *“Women are frequently multiply disadvantaged by policies that do not recognise their different realities and lived experiences, including unequal and low pay, responsibilities at work and home, and gender-based violence. Women are more likely to be poor, to parent alone, to be the main provider of unpaid care work, to be in precarious employment, to earn low wages and to be at risk of domestic or sexual violence.”* <sup>11</sup>

It highlights the need for a shift so that we see public transport as a public good, and not necessarily about making money. Gender assessing of all major capital infrastructure investment projects is vital.

The document discusses women and transport in a number of different sections: car dependency; safety for women; promoting cycling – women’s role as “indicator species”; promoting walking; promoting public transport; disability and active travel; link between social inclusion and health; rural transport issues in particular – for education, employment, accessing domestic violence supports.

The document has a significant number of recommendations, the major ones of which are reproduced in edited form below:

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<sup>10</sup> NWC and Dublin Cycling Campaign, Submission to the Department of Rural and Community Development Statement of Strategy 2021 – 2023:  
[www.nwci.ie/images/uploads/NWCI\\_Dublin\\_Cycling\\_Campaign\\_Submission\\_to\\_Dept\\_of\\_Transport\\_Review\\_of\\_Sustainable\\_Mobility\\_Feb\\_2020.pdf](http://www.nwci.ie/images/uploads/NWCI_Dublin_Cycling_Campaign_Submission_to_Dept_of_Transport_Review_of_Sustainable_Mobility_Feb_2020.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. p. 7.

- Incorporate gender analysis in transport planning and implementation as a matter of urgency.
- Identify additional steps to ensure that active travel is a viable option for people with disabilities.
- Create campaigns to tackle street harassment, including sensitising of An Garda Síochána.
- Commit to the European Commission's Vision Zero road safety campaign with the goal of zero road deaths and adopt a policy of zero tolerance towards road violence, speeding, intimidation and aggression.
- Ensure that certain communities and areas are not further marginalised through planning for sustainable transport by implementing a consultative process with communities at risk of social exclusion, and prioritise funding of cycling and walking based on a community social inclusion model as opposed to routes which benefit from tourism but not necessarily ensure social cohesion.
- Provide additional funding to local authorities to prioritise maintenance and improvement of footpaths to ensure they are safe and useable by all, ensure that current and future schemes which support sustainable mobility address rather than perpetuate the current inequality of usage (for example, not the bike-to-work scheme which helps high earners more than low-income persons).

### **Submission to Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality**<sup>12</sup>

This document has two significant references to climate and environment, the points being similar to points made in Pre-Budget Submissions and other docs.

There is a reference to the positive impacts for the environment of a four-day week, calling for a national dialogue on the issue; and to the inadequacy of GDP as a metric in taking into account damage to the environment, calling for the establishment of a commission to explore a new

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<sup>12</sup> NWC Submission to the Citizens' Assembly on Gender Equality 2020  
[www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/submission\\_to\\_the\\_citizens\\_assembly\\_on\\_gender\\_equality](http://www.nwci.ie/learn/publication/submission_to_the_citizens_assembly_on_gender_equality)

economic model for Ireland that takes account of equality, human rights and environmental sustainability.

### **National Reform Programme Feb 2022** <sup>13</sup>

This is the NWC's *Submission on the European Semester and Ireland's National Reform Programme*, from February 2022, saying that "must lay the groundwork for a significant, sustainable and ongoing investment in public services and social infrastructure. It must ensure a balanced, inclusive and green recovery by shifting the focus from propping up low paid work to supporting decent, well paid jobs. Crucially, policy and economic decisions must be gender and equality proofed to ensure that public spending delivers public good for all."

There are seven sections outlined within the document, with section 5 entitled "Deliver feminist climate justice". Much of the language in this section is similar to that of the 2023 PBS, highlighting the lack of investment in the care economy, the need for a just transition, the urgency of Ireland's emissions reductions targets and how they're not being met, and the positive impact that women's participation in political decision-making has.

A list of recommendations is provided, which are mostly identical to the list in the 2023 PBS.

### **Her Rural Future: Key demands for women in Rural Ireland**<sup>14</sup>

Published in March 2023, *Her Rural Future* outlines key challenges and solutions for women in rural Ireland. A number of areas related to climate are touched on that synergise with the five pillars identified in this literature review. Aligning directly with the project's core area is a dedicated section on sustainability, which notes that climate change will have a significant impact on rural Ireland and will affect women's lives differently to men. It calls for gendered analysis of mitigation and adaptation policies; investment in a Just Transition plan for rural development; and the

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<sup>13</sup> NWC Submission to the Department of the Taoiseach on the EU Semester and Ireland's National Reform Programme February 2022.

<sup>14</sup> Her Rural Future: Key Demands for Women in Rural Ireland, March 2023

prioritisation of low-performing buildings and those occupied by low-income, energy-poor and vulnerable households in the government's National Retrofit Plan.

Regarding transport, the document notes that women in rural communities often face long travel distances to access basic services and supports; that the average distance for necessities like a GP, pharmacy or supermarket is seven times longer for rural households than for urban households; that many rural areas have poor public transport access and links, and that many women rely on public transport as they do not own or have access to a car – this is particularly important for older women, of which 70% do not have a driving license and have 'unmet' transport needs which have negative implications for their health and wellbeing.

Care is an area that Her Rural Future also touches on. Women in rural communities are more likely to be the main carers of other members of the household, and the percentage of family carers in rural areas, 42%, is higher than in other areas. The lack of acknowledgment of women's contribution to agriculture and farming is discussed, with women farmers making up only 12% of family farms in Ireland despite a quarter of the farming workforce being made up of women. This work is rarely acknowledged, and inheritance continues to favour men in this area.

Women's access to political representation and decision-making spaces is noted as a particular challenge for rural women – only one in four members of local authorities are women; in sixteen rurally based councils, there are fewer than five women councillors; and decision-making structures overseeing policies and investment into rural communities are consistently overrepresented by men. This means that rural policies, including climate action in rural areas, often go without the input and perspectives of rural women.

Ten key demands are made for rural women under the following headings – active participation; public services; public transport; reproductive health; sustainability; decent standard of living; ending violence against women; political life; community sector; and political representation.



## Part 2: Community Work Ireland

### Introduction

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's Climate Justice work dates back more than a decade; including publications, the organisation of seminars and through their Climate Justice Working Group.

CWI participates in the Department of Rural and Community Developments Cross Sectoral Group which produced and supports the implementation of 'Sustainable Inclusive and Empowered Communities: a 5-year strategy' to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland, CWI directly advocated for the inclusion of *Objective 11 - support community development and local development to engage with Climate Change adaptation and mitigation strategies* (p. 31). CWI is also a member of Coalition 2030: the SDG Coalition, the European Network against Racism Ireland, the Far-Right Observatory, and the National Women's Council.

### Open Letter on the National Clean Air Strategy, signed by both NWC & CWI (2023)

Following publication of the National Clean Air Strategy, Community Law & Mediation along with social justice, health and environmental organisations issued an open letter welcoming the publication of the Strategy, but calling on the Government to; Adopt World Health Organisation guidelines as legally-binding targets by 2030; Address energy poverty and air quality in tandem; and Progress the revised Clean Air Act as a matter of urgency. '*Air pollution is the [single largest environmental health risk in Europe](#) and currently accounts for [2,600 premature deaths](#) across the island of Ireland per year'* - the letter, signed by Age Action, Community Law & Mediation, Community Work Ireland, Environmental Justice Network Ireland, the Irish Heart Foundation, the

Jesuit Centre for Faith and Justice, the National Women's Council of Ireland, Pavee Point and Threshold can be read [here](#).<sup>15</sup>

### **Joint submission to the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications on the Draft Clean Air Strategy Public Consultation 2022 (April)** <sup>16</sup>

CWI worked with the Centre for Environment Justice to develop a joint submission to the consultation on the development of a Clean Air Strategy. They recommend that air quality in Ireland be tackled in a systematic manner, ensuring that the National Clean Air Strategy protects the right to breathe clean air, while also delivering on Ireland's obligations under the Aarhus Convention and the Sustainable Development Goals:

1. Right to Breathe Clean Air: the right to breathe clean air should be the central guiding principle for the National Clean Air Strategy.
2. "Clean" air as the stated aim: in accordance with the World Health Organisation guidelines, the stated aim of the Strategy should be revised to ensure that it aims to deliver "clean" air rather than "cleaner" air.
3. A Whole of Government Approach: The Strategy should be placed on statutory footing to ensure a whole-of-government approach and enhanced policy coherence.
4. World Health Organisation (WHO) Air Quality Standards 2021: the Strategy should set out a path for Ireland to adopt WHO standards for air quality by the end of 2022 at the latest.
5. Improved Specificity: The Strategy should be revised to specify how the priority areas, and the overall objective of the Strategy, are to be implemented and delivered in a timely manner.
6. Monitoring and Accountability: The Strategy should be revised to include clear monitoring and accountability mechanisms that are measurable, actionable, and time-bound, with a

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<sup>15</sup> Open Letter on the National Clean Air Strategy, signed by both NWC & CWI (2023) at <https://communitylawandmediation.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Open-Letter-National-Clean-Air-Strategy.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> CWI and Centre for Environment Justice Submission to the Clean Air Strategy 2022: [www.cwi.ie/submission-to-the-clean-air-strategy-2022/](http://www.cwi.ie/submission-to-the-clean-air-strategy-2022/)

view to ensuring policy coherence and protecting citizens' rights under the Aarhus Convention.

7. Address Inequality: The Strategy should identify measures to engage and consult with impacted communities on air quality issues in accordance with their participatory rights under the Aarhus Convention.
8. Develop a new Energy Poverty Strategy: The last strategy to combat energy poverty lapsed in 2019, three years ago. An inter-departmental strategy must be introduced as a matter of priority and data collection on energy poverty must be improved so that progress can effectively be monitored in tackling this issue.
9. Dissemination of Data: The Strategy should require relevant public bodies and local authorities to engage in greater public dissemination of real-time localised air quality issues as part of a national awareness campaign.
10. Adopt a New Clean Air Act: We recommend the replacement of the Air Pollution Act 1987 with a new Clean Air Act which would consolidate existing legislation relating to air pollution. This new Act would provide greater powers to local authorities to deal with air pollution issues, as well as enhanced access to justice provisions for affected individuals and organisations.

### **Work with Pavee Point (2022)**

CWI piloted a three-session introduction to climate justice with Pavee Point to increase staff capacity on issues relating to climate change and a climate justice perspective, focused around three things; 1) what the organisation can do themselves; 2) what their members can do; and 3) what they can do in terms of political advocacy. This is a really useful breakdown framework for use in engaging with other organisations in terms of structuring what their actions on climate justice issues can be. Pavee Point have an internal climate working group now to steer the implementation of this plan.

This is a relatively new area of exploration for Pavee Point, and in lieu of dedicated funding, they have been incorporating a climate justice perspective into ongoing work relating to Traveller &

Roma health inequalities. A key area of exploration was a walkability audit that they conducted in the Finglas area with Primary Health Care for Travellers Project which found issues with footpaths, high road speeds, air pollution, noise pollution and a lack of green spaces near Traveller accommodation. In the context of these findings, the built environment surrounding Traveller accommodation was highlighted as a determinant of health for Travellers, in addition to restricting their opportunities to engage in emission reducing behaviours (i.e. walking, cycling, etc.)

Pavee Point then presented these findings at the Walk21 conference at Trinity which has led to the beginning of some positive engagement with the active travel teams in Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council.

### **CWI motion to NWC (as per Members' mandate) (2022)**

For the NWC AGM in June 2022, Community Work Ireland proposed and passed, called on NWC to *'prioritise action on climate change and a just transition, mainstreaming a climate justice perspective into the work of the organisation'* and to develop *'policy work, cross sectoral collaboration, campaigns, communications and media work, joint initiatives and awareness raising amongst the women's sector including training and capacity building.'* The National Collective of Community Based Women's Networks (now Women's Collective Ireland) seconded the motion.

### **September 2021 CWI Submission to the Sustainable Development Goals: Irish National Implement Plan (NIP)<sup>17</sup>**

The CWI submission to the National SDG Implementation Plan welcomes the first draft of the Implementation Plan but notes concern at the short timeframe and limited circulation for the consultative process. The submission makes key points informed by CWI members and by CWI's work with the SDG NGO Coalition and based on Objective 8 to *'Strengthen and build understanding and capacity to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals'* in the

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<sup>17</sup> CWI Submission to the National SDG Implementation Plan: [www.cwi.ie/national-sdg-implemenation-plan-cwi-submission/](http://www.cwi.ie/national-sdg-implemenation-plan-cwi-submission/)

‘Sustainable Inclusive and Empowered Communities: a 5-year strategy to support the community and voluntary sector in Ireland’.

CWI supports the plan’s top-line strategic priorities of awareness, participation, support and of policy alignment. They suggest that these goals can be strengthened by an increased emphasis on; *‘Participation – Naming a commitment to support the participation of those most at risk from inequality, exclusion and discrimination, including through community development, as a key approach to ensuring that “no one is left behind” and ‘Support – Including a commitment to support and encourage communities and organisations to engage with the State and hold it to account for its implementation of the SDGs as part of an ongoing and robust democratic process. Again, this commitment must recognise the importance of addressing barriers to participation in community life and policy making such as inequality, exclusion and discrimination.’*

Key Points are;

- ‘Review’ the impact of the NIP is imperative,
- ‘Consultation Process’ – Highlighting that the focus on ‘citizens’ excludes those living in Ireland but do not have citizenship status; *‘This is particularly important given that the SDGs are global and equally apply to migrants and those that are displaced and is contrary to the Leave No One Behind principle.’*
- ‘Progress Urgency’ – emphasising the urgent need for Ireland to progress the SDGs. For reasons associated with the pandemic, little was done for 18 months so CWI welcomed the new personnel within the Department *‘and we believe that it is imperative that this be accompanied by a reinvigorated focus on the goals’.*
- ‘Engagement and Accountability’ – at time of submission, the National Stakeholder Forum had not met for two years. While the pandemic was some of the reason for this, CWI urged use of online platforms as most had adjusted to; *‘there must be a renewed focus on opportunities for civil society to engage with, and critique where necessary, the ongoing SDG work’.*
- ‘Interconnectedness’ – highlighting the strength coherence and interconnectedness of the SDGs; *‘it is critical that the goals are viewed as a collective so that climate action is tempered*

*with the goals focused on socioeconomic disadvantage and lead to a more comprehensive view on action for climate justice’.*

- ‘Using the Goals’ – urges the move of focus from awareness raising to utility ‘*The new plan should facilitate the SDGs to have a tangible impact and support social, economic and environmental justice...There needs to be a concerted effort to produce resource to support members of the public and civil service and members of the community sector to use the goals as a planning framework and associated training opportunities’.*
- ‘Policy Coherence’ - largely unmet. At national and local level, there’s a struggle struggling to advocate for the SDGs to be embedded into local plans like City/County Development Plans, Local Economic and Community Plans.
- ‘SMART’- NIP must be SMART and include tangible, time bound targets, with a named senior person associated with each, as is the case for the Pathways to Social Inclusion strategy.
- Leave No One Behind - should underpin all the actions in the new NIP.
- Funding - Government funding should be contingent on applicants’ ability to make progress on the SDGs as appropriate for their area of work.
- Aligning Rural & Community Development to the SDGs Rural and community development structures and programmes will be vital in the successful local implementation of the SDGs. The plan should note this and give a clear commitment to the aligning of rural and community development to the SDGs.
- Local structures include Local Development Companies, Family Resource Centres, the Network of Women’s’ and Traveller Community Development Projects, Public Participation Networks, Local Community Development Committees and other community development organisations.
- Programmes such as the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP) should be aligned with the SDGs in order to drive SDG implementation locally. Community development workers at the staff of the above listed structures should be supported with resources and training to engage local communities in SDGs implementation, monitoring and reporting.

## COP26 Statement 2021 <sup>18</sup>

A statement / letter to Eamon Ryan from Jamie Gorman, Convenor, on behalf of the CWI Climate Justice Working Group and Ann Irwin, CWI National Co-ordinator, asking Eamon Ryan representing Ireland at COP26; To be a voice for people and communities nationally and globally affected by climate injustice, To advocate for a global plan for a rapid just transition away from fossil fuels, Be cognisant that climate change is already accelerating migration and displacement within countries, 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, To promote the role of civil society, including the community development sector and lastly, they ask for support of 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 (beyond COP26).

## COP26 Brief <sup>19</sup>

This briefing paper for community workers outlines what COP is, the COVID challenges for people to attend and get their voices heard, The Paris Agreement, demands and solutions. The brief highlights that *'The community sector has a unique contribution to make in relation to climate justice in Ireland in terms of raising awareness within communities, up-skilling of the communities with which it works and ensuring 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.'*

## Community Work and Climate Change Green Party Convention Nov 2021

A presentation focused on the benefits and opportunity of a Community Work Approach to Climate Change reflecting on existing CWI work and highlights the challenge of bringing marginalised communities' agenda (*Travellers, migrants, socioeconomically disadvantaged communities and*

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<sup>18</sup> COP 26 – CWI Brief and Statement: [www.cwi.ie/community-work-ireland-brief-cop26/](http://www.cwi.ie/community-work-ireland-brief-cop26/)

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

others...more concerned with preventing homelessness, mental health and wellbeing, avoiding food poverty and ensuring their children stay in education) closer to the climate justice and action agenda.

### **CWI Guide to the Climate Action Plan – Points from a Climate Justice, Just Transition and a Community Development Perspective** <sup>20</sup>

This guide outlines the ‘Climate Action Plan 2021: Securing Our Future’ from the perspective of climate justice, just transition and community development. The guide summarises and describes the main elements of the plan under Just Transition, Citizen Engagement, and Carbon Pricing and Cross-Cutting Policies.

### **CWI Conference 2021, *Not Just Recovery? Reflecting and Reimagining Rights and Resilience* 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021** <sup>21</sup>

See the Climate and a Just Transition video which was chaired by Jamie Gorman with speakers Mary T. McBride of Inishowen Development Partnership and Jerry MacEvilly of Friends of The Earth Ireland.<sup>22</sup>

The CWI Conference 2021, *Not Just Recovery? Reflecting and Reimagining Rights and Resilience*, brought together 250 delegates, community workers, and NGOs working with the most marginalised communities in the country, who were working to mitigate the worst effects of the pandemic on those with the least resources to tackle them.

The conference heard from Dr Mike Ryan Executive Director of the WHO Health Emergencies Programme in conversation with Ronnie Fay and Joe O’Brien Minister of State at the Department of Rural and Community Development and the Department of Social Protection on the experience of the most disadvantaged communities in Ireland and globally during the past 18 months, the lessons

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<sup>20</sup> CWI Guide to the Climate Action Plan: [www.cwi.ie/cwi-guide-to-the-climate-action-plan/](http://www.cwi.ie/cwi-guide-to-the-climate-action-plan/)

<sup>21</sup> CWI Conference 2021, *Not Just Recovery? Reflecting and Reimagining Rights and Resilience*: [www.cwi.ie/community-work-ireland-conference-2021-2021-not-just-recovery-reflecting-and-reimagining-rights-and-resilience/](http://www.cwi.ie/community-work-ireland-conference-2021-2021-not-just-recovery-reflecting-and-reimagining-rights-and-resilience/)

<sup>22</sup> [www.youtube.com/watch?v=25zeNDs-tzQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=25zeNDs-tzQ)



learned, and the key priorities for action in building a just and sustainable recovery as we emerge from the Covid-19 crisis.

**CWI Climate Justice seminar** in Ballinasloe, Galway, to explore community work and human rights approaches to Climate Action.<sup>23</sup> CWI worked with the Galway Environmental Network to organise the seminar on Climate Justice on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2020. This event stemmed from Ireland declaring a climate and biodiversity emergency, and with the development of the *Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities: A Five-Year Strategy to Support the Community and Voluntary Sector in Ireland 2019-2024* to support the community and voluntary sectors in Ireland which included an objective to support community development and local development to engage with Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategies. This event was primarily aimed at community work organisations, community workers and others interested in working with communities on issues of climate change and climate justice.

The day was chaired by Niall Ó Brolcháin of Galway Environmental Network and was split into two sessions with roundtable discussions and addresses on 'The context of Towards Climate Justice' by Ann of CWI, 'Climate Justice: National & International Communities & their Human Rights' by Professor John Sweeney International Expert on Climate Change, 'Climate Justice: Options for Human Rights and Community Work' by Anastasia Crickley International Expert in Community Work & Human Rights, 'Community-led climate action from across Europe' by Iva Pocock of ECOLISE, 'Sustainable, Inclusive and Empowered Communities' by Deirdre Kelly of Dept of Rural and Community Development and 'The Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Justice' by Anthony O'Grady of Dept of Communications, Climate Action & Environment.

### **CWI Climate Justice Working Group**<sup>24</sup>

The Climate Justice Working Group brings together CWI members who are concerned with climate justice, Just Transition and how the climate crisis impacts marginalised communities who have done

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<sup>23</sup> CWI Climate Justice Seminar February 2020, *Exploring Community Work and Human Rights Approaches to Climate Action*: [www.cwi.ie/exploring-community-work-and-human-rights-approaches-to-climate-action-2/](http://www.cwi.ie/exploring-community-work-and-human-rights-approaches-to-climate-action-2/)

<sup>24</sup> CWI Climate Justice Working Group: [www.cwi.ie/cwi-climate-justice-working-group/](http://www.cwi.ie/cwi-climate-justice-working-group/)

the least to cause the crisis and have the least resources to respond. The working group provides an opportunity for knowledge and information sharing, skills-building and collective responses to climate policy consultations. The group enables a social justice, human rights and equality focus on climate change and seeks a fair and fast transition to a decarbonised society that leaves no one behind.

### **CWI Seminar, Towards Climate Justice, Exploring Community Work and Human rights Approaches to Climate Action in October 2019, in Dublin**

Jamie Gorman of the CWI Climate Justice Working Group launched the CWI Brief '*The Urgent Case for Climate Justice*' at the event and the new CWI Working Group on Climate Justice was also launched at the seminar, encouraging people to join. Speakers included: John Sweeney - Emeritus Prof of Geography, Maynooth University and international expert on Climate Change, Niamh Garvey - Head of Policy and Advocacy at Trócaire, Oisín Coughlan – Director of Friends of the Earth, Sadhbh O'Neill - Climate Advocate and PhD Candidate at UCD, Eddie Mitchell - Anti-Fracking Campaigner & Love Leitrim Spokesperson, Paul Geraghty of Dept of Rural and Community Development and Ann Irwin of CWI.

### **The Urgent Case for Climate Justice A Community Work Ireland Briefing Paper <sup>25</sup>**

*'A community work approach to addressing the climate crisis will be essential in delivering rapid and equitable mitigation and adaptation efforts. Community work principles and values can support this societal transition while supporting the most marginalised and disadvantaged communities to act collectively to address inequality and protect human rights in this time of crisis'* - this CWI briefing paper was created by the CWI Climate Justice Working Group to support community workers and members of CWI to act for climate justice, in alignment with the UN Paris Agreement.

It looks at current Irish and International Policy, examining the Irish climate policy context from 2015 to 2019 and environmental justice, identifying key activities for community workers; consciousness-

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<sup>25</sup> CWI Briefing Paper, The Urgent Case for Climate Justice A Community Work Ireland Briefing Paper: [www.cwi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/the-urgent-case-for-climate-justice-final.pdf](http://www.cwi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/the-urgent-case-for-climate-justice-final.pdf)

raising; collective action; and supporting sustainable alternatives. Suggested areas for consideration by CWI; Call for the establishment of robust, inclusive governance and policy-making structures and processes; Do our fair share of mitigation and remove fossil fuels from the Irish energy systems; End energy poverty and ramp up renewables through reinvigorated energy citizenship; Lead the just transition of our industrial and agricultural systems; and Networking communities and building alliances.

### **Community Work Ireland Comments on the SDG National Implementation Plan December 2017** <sup>26</sup>

Highlights concern at the short timeframe and limited circulation for the consultative process meaning that many key stakeholders at a local and regional level have been excluded.

CWI supports the plan's top-line strategic priorities of awareness, participation, support and of policy alignment. CWI believes that all communication and awareness raising initiatives should be based on three principles: 1. Address barriers to participation for marginalised and disadvantaged groups to ensure an inclusive and cohesive engagement, 2. Linking awareness raising efforts with existing community development and local participation structures including local partnerships and development companies, public participation networks and Traveller projects, and 3. Explore and test out innovative community development approaches to move from awareness into dialogue and action. E.g.: local communities could be supported to deliberately develop "Community SDG Action Plans" which enables them to take ownership of and drive the SDG agenda domestically.

Looking at each of the sections within, they comment on

- Mainstreaming the SDGs – the role of local authorities; believe that the plan could be strengthened by giving greater clarity on the role of local authorities in SDG implementation.
- Aligning Rural & Community Development to the SDGs; the plan should note this and give a clear commitment to the aligning of rural and community development to the SDGs, the role of Pobal in the successful domestic implementation of the SDGs should be acknowledged, Programmes such as the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP)

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<sup>26</sup> CWI Submission on the SDG National Implementation Plan December 2017:  
[www.cwi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/CWI-Submission-to-the-draft-SDG-National-Implementation-Plan.pdf](http://www.cwi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/CWI-Submission-to-the-draft-SDG-National-Implementation-Plan.pdf)

should be aligned with the SDGs and supported with resources and training to engage local communities in SDGs implementation, monitoring and reporting.

- SDG vision and priorities - Include a priority on the participation in decision making, commitment to a Just Transition and food sovereignty.
- Key pillars strategies of domestic implementation - include the Framework Policy on Rural and Community Development and National Planning Framework 2040; should be named in the NIP as a key pillar of domestic implementation.
- Governance arrangements - include the Minister for Rural and Community Development; urging the Interdepartmental Working Group to give due consideration to the role of the Minister for, and Department of, Rural and Community Development in driving the successful domestic implementation of the SDGs.
- Stakeholder engagement: the section on stakeholder engagement should include a specific commitment to engaging stakeholders at a local and regional level. community development as an essential approach to supporting broad-based stakeholder engagement which supports the inclusion of marginalised and disadvantaged communities.
- Communications and awareness raising; The NIP should include a commitment to giving communities the knowledge, skills and resources to respond to their needs locally in the implementation of the SDGs.

**Towards Climate Justice, a strategy guide for the community sector in responding to climate change, 2012** <sup>27</sup>

The guide, with a foreword from Mary Robinson and funded by the EPA, shows how climate change disproportionately affects disadvantaged and marginalised communities and analyses the roles of different actors in addressing climate justice. It places particular emphasis on the role that the community sector can play, and the partners that it must work with to highlight environmental

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<sup>27</sup> CWI Towards Climate Justice, a strategy guide for the community sector in responding to climate change, 2012: [www.cwi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Towards-Climate-Justice.pdf](http://www.cwi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Towards-Climate-Justice.pdf)

issues. This guide was launched with a seminar address by Professor John Sweeney, Dr John Barry, Dr Maria Martin (EPA) and Dr Kevin Murphy.

The guide had twin aims; 1. to encourage and support those in the community sector to engage with climate change and to begin to work towards climate justice, and 2. to influence policy makers to take the community sector, and the issues it represents, into account in the design and implementation of climate change and related policies. Split into five sections: *Introduction & Methodology, Scenarios & Workshop Discussions, Climate Change & the Community Sector, Policy Context, and Strategies & Recommendations.*

The report outlines the relatively new area of climate justice and suggests that this is a useful framework to progress the climate change agenda within the sector. This report lays out the key international and policy instruments governing the Irish response to climate change, arguing that the integration of social policies with environmental policies is an aspiration in Irish sustainable development policy but this gap presents a significant opportunity for the community sector to articulate concrete proposals for how social/environmental synergies may be developed. The report presents several strategies that might be used to encourage the community sector to engage with climate change, within their own communities and in wider policy development arenas.

This piece has key recommendations under the following; Social vulnerability – undertake a study on social vulnerability to understand the distributional impacts of climate change; Policy – work to ensure that climate change policy takes account of vulnerability of certain sections of society; Awareness and responses to climate change – state establish support mechanisms which community groups can access; Scenario development – enable community sector to engage with possible ranges of climate-influenced futures; explore what climate justice will mean in an Irish context; and Development of strategic alliances – between community sector and the environmental sector to strengthen capacity of both on environmental issues.

## Section 2 – Climate and Environment Policy Context

This section seeks to set out some of the key issues in Irish climate and environment activism and policy at the moment, seen through the lens of the NWI and CWI's values and targeted priorities.

The literature read for this is a broad, though not necessarily comprehensive, collection of policy papers either: 1) suggested by the Management Committee and the prep work for the project; 2) suggested by colleagues and external partners; or 3) found through desk research on issues/themes or potential/existing collaborative partners. Rather than being mostly peer-reviewed academic research, a great proportion of them are policy and campaigning papers from civil society organisations or state agencies.

The literature included generally follows three (overlapping) styles of publication: the first more theoretical and academic in approach, where the audience is other policy people within that sphere; the second focused on more specific action, focused on an area or a community and targeted at a particular government or state actor in terms of development and implementation, where the audience are a set of policymakers; and the third focused on guides, toolkits or other resources, where the audience is usually activists, campaign groups or community groups. Many of the publications do fall into multiple of these categories but are more heavily weighted towards one or the other.

We could find relatively little existing civil society published policy work/advocacy specifically focused on the gendered aspects of climate and environmental impacts in an Irish context. There were exceptions but in many other cases discussion of the gendered aspects was only part of the wider publication, if present at all. The context where gender and the impact on women were most likely to be discussed was found to be in the international/ development sphere – for example, most of the references to women and gender in the Government's 2021 Climate Action Plan are in the context of Ireland's international aid budget.

This section is divided into eight parts: the first part is a brief discussion of some of the overarching definitions used, particularly climate/environmental action/justice. The next seven parts are key themes, or pillars, which we drew from the literature while taking into account the values and

priorities of the project. They are discussed in turn: 1) Just Transition; 2) Energy poverty; 3) Care; 4) Food, Land Use, Agriculture and Biodiversity; 5) Transport; 6) Access to environmental and climate justice; and 7) Migration.

## Definitions

The general use of climate versus environment, and action versus justice, is hard to pin down – and their uses and the debates around the uses are very likely different within an academic context versus a media context versus a civil society context versus a wider public conversation context.

In general terms, “climate” is the narrower term – referring to the impacts of the changing climate due to a significant increase in the proportion of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

“Environmental” tends to refer to a broader conception of human-driven changes to the planet – including, but not limited to greenhouse gas emissions; biodiversity loss and habitat destruction; pollution and environmental degradation; ocean acidification. “Justice” tends to refer to the social impacts of environmental change and the need for a societally equitable approach in the distribution of environmental harms and benefits, recognising that historically and currently those who have contributed the least to climate and environmental degradation are those who are suffering the most.<sup>28</sup> The DCU/CLM *Environmental Justice in Ireland* Report is a good reference point for discussions on these definitions.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> O’Neill, Gleeson, Torney, Mercier, Daly and Wall, *Environmental Justice in Ireland: Key dimensions of environmental and climate injustice experienced by vulnerable and marginalised communities*, 2022.

<https://communitylawandmediation.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Environmental-Justice-in-Ireland-230322-1.pdf>

Community Law and Mediation and Dublin City University, Environmental Justice in Ireland Project

## Pillar 1: Just Transition

Probably the theme that comes up the most frequently in much of the climate literature orientated towards justice issues is that of Just Transition. Just transition is a key focus of the Climate Action Plan,<sup>30</sup> and a key focus of much civil society and academic work around climate justice.

The Climate Action Plan highlights that the definition of “just transition” is contested – both the transition itself, and toward what exactly the transition is supposed to be transitioning. The Climate Action Plan refers to “a just transition to a climate neutral economy”, while the US-based Climate Justice Alliance sees the just transition as being “from an extractive economy to a regenerative economy”.<sup>31</sup> Fearon and Barry of Queen’s University Belfast describe the (“narrowest”) definition used by policymakers and organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations (UN) and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as defining “a just transition as the requirement to shift economies and societies to a path of net zero carbon emissions within a timeframe dictated by climate science, in a way that advances social justice, eradicates poverty, nurtures sustainable economic activity, and protects workers and communities most affected by the phasing out of environmentally unsustainable sectors and employment”.<sup>32</sup> They highlight key questions around whether a just transition encompasses questions of energy consumption as well as production; and the fundamental question as to whether just transition is about taking the opportunity for change and translating it into transformation rather than just subbing out the fossil-fuelled aspects of society for identical aspects fuelled by green energy: “is [just transition] simply a movement of some workers from certain high-emitting sectors to greener and decarbonised employment; or does it signal a deeper structural transformation in our economy and society?”<sup>33</sup>

Government has committed to establishing a Just Transition Commission, with an indicative date of Quarter 2 of 2023 but no fruition of the Commission yet in Quarter 3. There have been repeated

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<sup>30</sup> Climate Action Plan 2021 (updated 2023), sections 7 and 8: [www.gov.ie/en/publication/7bd8c-climate-action-plan-2023/](https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7bd8c-climate-action-plan-2023/)

<sup>31</sup> Climate Justice Alliance, *What do we mean by Just Transition?* <https://climatejusticealliance.org/just-transition/>

<sup>32</sup> Fearon and Barry, Mapping a Just Energy Transition in Northern Ireland, 2021 [www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/media/Media,1174634,smxx.pdf](http://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/media/Media,1174634,smxx.pdf)

<sup>33</sup> Ibid p.11.



calls from numerous organisations (see e.g., IHREC, FOE) for the Commission to be established as a matter of greater priority than it currently seems to be given within Government.

Numerous civil society organisations and research institutions have published work on just transition and related issues for the Irish context. One of the most comprehensive is TASC (Thinktank for Action on Social Change) and FEPS's (Foundation for European Progressive Studies) just transition and community engagement framework – called the People's Transition<sup>34</sup> – which outlines a model for engaging with communities on their own terms, aiming to distil local needs and priorities, and outline solutions that both drive down emissions and improve community wellbeing. NESC's (National Economic and Social Council) "Four Case Studies in Just Transition"<sup>35</sup> is another of the most comprehensive analyses, looking at regional transitions in Germany and Austria, along with the Scottish Just Transition Commission, and outlining a series of learnings potentially applicable to future transitions – including the necessity of state support, and how past experiences of economic and social change can shape an area's response. The set-up and work of the Scottish Just Transition Commission, both as analysed in the NESC report and as developed since, is useful as an example of a national Just Transition Commission and has been cited and will likely continue to be cited as a model for the development of any Just Transition Commission here.

CWI's "Urgent Case for Climate Justice" highlights just transition as part of the realisation of environmental justice which a key concern for CWI; focus is particularly on energy production job losses and effects on food and farming. The National Women's Council's submission on the National Reform Programme places just transition as a key aspect of delivering feminist climate justice, highlighting the need to avoid further inequality and poverty. In terms of specific recommendations, it includes a call for Government to "[i]nvest in a just transition plan for rural development including ending intensive livestock production";<sup>36</sup> very similar language is also used in the most recent Pre-Budget Submission. It also mentions as key to this investment in "high-quality social, physical and digital infrastructures, including public services" as a prerequisite for this transition. CWI's motion at

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<sup>34</sup> Seán McCabe was lead author of the report: Foundation for European Progressive Studies and TASC, The People's Transition: Community Lead Development for Climate Justice, 2020 [www.tasc.ie/publications/the-peoples-transition-community-led-development-fo/](http://www.tasc.ie/publications/the-peoples-transition-community-led-development-fo/)

<sup>35</sup> Mercier, Four Case Studies on Just Transition: Lessons for Ireland, NESC Research Series Paper no. 15 [http://files.nesc.ie/nesc\\_research\\_series/Research\\_Series\\_Paper\\_15\\_TTCaseStudies.pdf](http://files.nesc.ie/nesc_research_series/Research_Series_Paper_15_TTCaseStudies.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. [25]

last year's (2022) NWC AGM was entitled "Feminist Climate Action and Just Transition", and very much placed just transition as one of the key pillars in any climate-focused work that NWC endeavours to undertake.

Clare PPN's "Towards an Anti-Poverty Strategy for Clare" focuses on the need for the importance of local context and the possibility of concentrated impacts geographically or socio-demographically to any just transition, and criticises the Climate Action Plan's emphasis on "climate neutral economy" rather than on community – calling it more of a "buy-out scheme" than an actual just transition.<sup>37</sup> St Vincent de Paul highlighted the need for a national dialogue on a just transition in their submission on the National Energy and Climate Plan, as have Friends of the Earth (FOE). The Just Transition Alliance is a collaborative group formed last year by trade unions, environmental campaign organisations (like FOE) and other organisations focused on the social impacts of the climate transition – their joint calls for a National Just Transition Commission emphasise the urgency needed for work on these issues, and calls for the retention of key energy assets in public ownership as part of this transition.<sup>38</sup> DCU/CLM's report on "Environmental Justice in Ireland" conceptualises Just Transition as a process of seeking to ensure those hit worst by climate change are not also hit by climate action policies.<sup>39</sup> FEPS' "United for Climate Justice" document calls for Just Transition plans to form a part of national reporting on progress on climate issues by including them in the process of preparing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).<sup>40</sup> Jamie Gorman in his analysis of the lessons learned from youth climate strike mentions just transition as an emerging policy link between youth and climate – what does a just transition look like for young people, and will youth policy be forced to play a subordinate and supporting role to other interests?<sup>41</sup> Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) conceptualises just transition as "principles, process and outcome", an overarching and embedded structure in any move towards a greener society.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Clare Public Participation Network, *Towards an Anti-Poverty Strategy for Clare 2022*: [https://clareppn.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Clare\\_Anti\\_Poverty\\_Report\\_Sept2022\\_web.pdf](https://clareppn.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Clare_Anti_Poverty_Report_Sept2022_web.pdf)

<sup>38</sup> Just Transition Alliance Joint Declaration: [https://ictu.ie/sites/default/files/publications/2022/Just%20Transition%20Alliance%20Joint%20Declaration\\_1.pdf](https://ictu.ie/sites/default/files/publications/2022/Just%20Transition%20Alliance%20Joint%20Declaration_1.pdf)

<sup>39</sup> Ibid. [29]

<sup>40</sup> Foundation for European Progressive Studies, *United for Climate Justice*: <https://feps-europe.eu/publication/694-united-for-climate-justice-executive-summary/>

<sup>41</sup> Gorman, *Disobedient Youth: Lessons from the youth climate strike movement*, 2021, Centre for Youth Research and Development: Maynooth University

<sup>42</sup> IHREC, *Policy Statement on a Just Transition*, April 2023: [www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/2023/04/Policy-Statement-on-a-Just-Transition-Final.docx](http://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/2023/04/Policy-Statement-on-a-Just-Transition-Final.docx)

Much, but not all, of the above work focuses on 1) the need for a Just Transition; 2) the need for a Just Transition Commission; 3) the need for proper dialogue with communities; and 4) the need to avoid furthering existing inequalities. The actual specifics of how Just Transition can or should work are light on the ground – this is due to many factors outlined in the TASC and NESC reports, which both highlight the individuality of different regional transitions. All of these are worthy goals for the NWC and CWI to call for, and relate to calls that they have issued before – though it would be recommended to avoid purely a focus on the mitigation of future inequalities by just transition, and rather seeing just transition as a mechanism for drastically reducing existing social inequalities. It would also be recommended to more explicitly focus on the need for a Just Transition Commission's adaptability and capacity to process learnings, and its ability to manage an overall Just Transition process while recognising there is no one-size-fits-all approach for different regions and/or demographic groups.

The impact on women and the gendered analysis is a glaring omission in most of this work. There seems to be relatively little work done with an explicitly gendered focus on how just transition has and will impact communities, in an Irish context. There is definitely space for NWC and CWI to contribute to it in the context both of social inequalities (heavily gendered and not) and the need for good structures of community engagement. The gender inequalities and imbalances within the engineering and related professions, and how these are addressed in the transition, is something that needs to be consistently highlighted within this conversation. Just Transition as a conversation does have a tendency to concentrate on particular forms of labour – manufacturing, energy production and green technical support. This leaves out, or sidelines, the possibility of a transition from a brown (fossil-fuel) to a green *and* purple society – wherein the reimagining of labour is broader than just manufacturing or industrial, but is a full reimagining of how different forms of labour are valued relative to each other within local communities and broader society, whether or not they are regarded as nominally green.

## Pillar 2: Energy poverty

Since the war in Ukraine began last year, and the resulting and related increases in energy prices, the cost of energy poverty has one of the highest-profile issues in Ireland today. The most visible

aspect of this in the climate justice sphere has been the issue of energy poverty, as in the impact on those with high, but necessary, energy expenditure relative to their income (geographical/transport isolation and inefficient home heating being the main two drivers). Energy poverty is linked to the housing and homelessness crisis, health issues and societal wealth inequalities. Much of Ireland's housing stock has a poor BER (Building Energy Rating), and those in private rented accommodation are stripped of agency regarding the energy efficiency of their home. Ireland's private rental sector has no minimal BER requirement – and the owner of the property, rather than the tenant, makes the decision on whether the property is retrofitted or not, which would reduce energy bills for the tenant<sup>43</sup>. Incentivisation for owners of rental properties to have them retrofitted is low – a challenge acknowledged by the government in the Climate Action Plan<sup>44</sup>. While a huge number of organisations have been consistently campaigning on the issue of energy poverty, there is limited engagement with the interaction of gender and climate in this context – the climate analyses tend to leave out gender (see FOE's recent report<sup>45</sup>), while calls for a more gendered analysis tend not to be from a climate justice perspective (see for example Age Action's An Energy Guarantee for Older Persons: Policy Brief April 2022<sup>46</sup> – which emphasises the issues faced by older women, but not necessarily in a socially or environmentally holistic way).

There is a general call for a new and ambitious national plan for tackling energy poverty – most of the assessed documents predated the Government's Energy Poverty Action Plan published in December 2022. This Action Plan outlines a series of measures implemented or planned to be implemented by Government in response to the increase in energy poverty: electricity costs emergency benefit payment; targeted social protection supports, including one-off social protection measures; VAT reduction and windfall tax; enhanced consumer protection by Commission for Regulation of Utilities. Some aspects of these measures were welcomed, while missed

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid [29]

<sup>44</sup> Ibid [30]

<sup>45</sup> Friends of the Earth, 2023 – *Still left out in the cold*: [www.friendsoftheearth.ie/news/irish-households-still-being-left-out-in-the-cold/](http://www.friendsoftheearth.ie/news/irish-households-still-being-left-out-in-the-cold/)

<sup>46</sup> An Energy Guarantee for Older Persons: Policy Brief April 2022: [www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/age\\_action\\_energy\\_guarantee\\_for\\_older\\_persons.pdf](http://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/age_action_energy_guarantee_for_older_persons.pdf)

opportunities, the overreliance on universal payments, and lack of an energy poverty target were all criticised.<sup>47</sup>

The definition of energy poverty is hotly debated in the academic literature – and a variety of measures have been at various stages developed. The Climate Action Plan divides potential measures into three categories: 1) expenditure-based; 2) self-reported indicators; and 3) multidimensional, usually including physical infrastructure data on homes. ‘What is the state of the art in energy and transport poverty metrics?’ A critical and comprehensive review from 2021 of English-language energy and transport poverty literature, analyse the development of energy poverty metrics, highlighting the move towards more multidimensional approaches and the significant social complications of trying to identify general sets of standards: “In summary the following critiques apply to some or all fuel poverty metrics; 1. The definition changes the problem scale, 2. A combination of metrics is better than a single metric, 3. Extra factors should accompany fuel poverty metrics such as health indicators and household debt measures, 4. Summertime cooling has been overlooked in the fuel poverty debate in the UK, which will become increasingly problematic in a future of warmer summers, 5. Data is a frequent limitation, 6. Heating standard is often defined, yet fuel poverty now also refers to all household energy use. Standards for appliance usage etc. have not been defined, 7. The chosen poverty line is essentially arbitrary, 8. It is very rare for actual energy use to be equal to required energy use.”<sup>48</sup> The paper adopts a definition of energy poverty which considers it as “the inability to secure materially and socially-necessitated energy services, such as heating a home or using appliances” per Bouzarovski and Petrova (2015).<sup>49</sup> This paper also analyses the interaction between energy poverty and transport poverty (“the enforced lack of mobility services necessary for participation in society, resulting from the inaccessibility, unaffordability or unavailability of transport (Lucas et al., 2016) (Mattioli et al., 2017) (Mullen and Marsden, 2016)”),<sup>50</sup> and emphasises the difficulty in generating a single metric which unites the two forms of poverty. The ESRI’s 2019 document on “Carbon Taxes and Compensation Options” also

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<sup>47</sup> Saint Vincent De Paul: Warm, Safe, Connected? *Priorities to protect households in energy poverty – Policy, Practice, and Regulation* Summary Report 2023 [www.svp.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Warm-Safe-Connected-Summary-1.pdf](http://www.svp.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Warm-Safe-Connected-Summary-1.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> Lowans, Del Rio, Sovacool, Rooney and Foley. What is the state of the art in energy and transport poverty metrics? A critical and comprehensive review, *Energy Economics* Vol 101. 2022 [www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0140988321002668](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0140988321002668)

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

outlines the difficulties and challenges in measuring energy poverty and a variety of models for doing so.<sup>51</sup>

The Action Plan, this systematic review, and other aspects of the literature do note the difficulties inherent in adopting a singular measure for energy poverty, particularly one which doesn't identify the intensity (or the different forms of intensity) of the energy poverty. How energy poverty is conceptualised – and whether it is conceptualised in a binary way, that is that you're either in or out – has an enormous impact on how we generate policies to tackle it. The lack of gender/sex disaggregated data, and the lack of significant gender analysis of energy poverty issues further obfuscates policymakers' capacity to effectively build policy responses in this area which recognise the myriad different ways in which energy poverty is experienced (much of the academic literature on energy poverty is UK-based – and more specifically, England-based – but some of it could be applicable here given respective climates' similarities alongside other similarities).

The NWC's 2022 Submission on the National Reform Programme has a call to “[a]ddress energy poverty and support retrofitting for low-income households to deliver on emissions targets in a just way”, tying energy poverty issues into “just” transition issues.<sup>52</sup> It also outlines the need to address energy poverty in a gender-sensitive way, given that women, and in particular lone parents, are more at risk of energy poverty. The 2023 Pre-Budget Submission calls for a new energy poverty strategy and increased investment in retrofitting of homes in marginalised communities, with particular reference to the impact of energy poverty on lone parents. CWI's *Urgent Case for Climate Justice* highlights the need to “end energy poverty and ramp up renewables through reinvigorated energy citizenship”, and calls for a new Strategy to Combat Energy Poverty, the introduction of a fair price for microgeneration, and the establishment of better structures for energy in terms of community development.

St Vincent de Paul's “Warm, Safe, Connected?” report from May 2023 outlines both the statistical picture of energy poverty in Ireland and the experiences of some of those affected. It highlights that the highest rates of energy deprivation experience (where households can't keep their houses warm

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<sup>51</sup> Bercholz, M. and B. Roantree (2019). Carbon taxes and compensation options, Budget Perspectives 2020/1, Dublin: ESRI, <https://doi.org/10.26504/bp202001>

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. [13]

enough) are among lone parents and those unable to work due to illness or disability (both roughly 1 in 5).<sup>53</sup> It has a series of policy recommendations, including: the introduction of a social tariff; benchmarking of social welfare rates against cost of living; introduction of a new Consumer Advocacy Agency and a Community Energy Advice service; address the gaps in retrofitting support, particularly for private renters.<sup>54</sup> SJI in their 2022 National Social Monitor publication repeated their call that carbon tax revenue should be used to target those in energy poverty.<sup>55</sup> Age Action recommend a cash payment indexed to the cost of energy for older persons as their key call on tackling energy poverty.<sup>56</sup> DCU/CLM's report discusses energy poverty throughout, and has an extensive section on energy poverty, defining and outlining the situation in relation to energy poverty. While they note the focus on retrofitting and energy efficiency as the main solution to energy poverty, they also note other research which holds income levels as the main driver. Their primary recommendations are for the creation of a new energy poverty strategy (this doc dates from pre-Dec 2022) and the integration of poverty- and equality-proofing to the National Retrofit Plan.<sup>57</sup> The Director of the European Institute for Gender Equality Carlien Scheele gave a speech to the European Parliament in March 2023 focusing on the gendered aspects of energy poverty, criticising the focus on energy poverty policy (and data collection on energy poverty) at a household level as it "obscures important dynamics" – the internal gendered dynamics of households.<sup>58</sup>

Again, this is an issue where the level of gendered analysis and recognition of the impact on women is notably absent. However, the group EmpowerMed is dedicated to producing gender-disaggregated data related to energy poverty, although their work focuses on the coastal areas of Mediterranean countries. Nonetheless, their research discusses how gendered socioeconomic disadvantage, particularly the gender pay and pension gap, make women more vulnerable to energy poverty<sup>59</sup> – an economic factor we can

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid. [47]

<sup>54</sup> See additionally: Saint Vincent De Paul National Energy & Climate Plan 2021-2030, Submission to the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment. [www.svp.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/SVP-submission-NECP-12th-Nov-2018.pdf](http://www.svp.ie/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/SVP-submission-NECP-12th-Nov-2018.pdf)

<sup>55</sup> Social Justice Ireland, National Social Monitor – Just Transition 2022 [www.socialjustice.ie/publication/national-social-monitor-just-transition](http://www.socialjustice.ie/publication/national-social-monitor-just-transition)

<sup>56</sup> Age Action, An Energy Guarantee for Older Persons: Policy Brief April 2022 [www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/age\\_action\\_energy\\_guarantee\\_for\\_older\\_persons.pdf](http://www.ageaction.ie/sites/default/files/age_action_energy_guarantee_for_older_persons.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. [29]

<sup>58</sup> European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) March 2023 <https://eige.europa.eu/newsroom/director-corner/energy-poverty-not-about-households-its-about-who-those-households>

<sup>59</sup> EmpowerMed, Gender and Energy Poverty: Facts and Arguments April 2021 [www.empowermed.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/2104.Empowermed-Energy\\_Poverty\\_and\\_gender.pdf](http://www.empowermed.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/2104.Empowermed-Energy_Poverty_and_gender.pdf)

presume is mirrored in Ireland also. The consequences for older women are alarming, with many studies pointing out a higher winter mortality rate compared to older men. Despite this, the level of focus of analysis is consistently at the level of the household in Ireland – while this does sometimes allow for consideration of the impact on lone parents and their families, who are predominantly women, the broader impact on women within the gendered dynamic of the household is not examined. Some of this can be explained by the lack of available data disaggregated by sex/gender in government statistics related to energy poverty making this issue very hard to study – with all data created at a household level it masks any gendered patterns internally in households (a critique common to feminist criticisms of data collection across the board) – however, this is of course a decision in and of itself, and how difficult it is to collect this data should not be a barrier to the need to find a way to collect it.

This topic can be expanded and broadened out into the climate justice aspects of housing more generally, as it is related to state and private retrofitting programmes, and the use of carbon tax revenue expenditure.

### Pillar 3: Care

While fighting for the valuation, support, and equitable distribution of care work within our society has always been a key component of feminist research and campaigning, its incorporation into the climate conversation has been very slow. As mentioned above in the section on Just Transition, much of the focus on work within the climate conversation tends to be on industrial, manufacturing and technical service jobs, rather than on care work specifically.

In an international context, there has been a shift towards incorporating care into some climate conversations – the work of the Women's Budget Group in the UK in their "A Green and Caring Economy" report,<sup>60</sup> and the inclusion of a panel on care work in the context of climate and economic growth at the recent Beyond Growth Conference in the European Parliament.<sup>61</sup> However, in both of these instances the focus on care is primarily coming from an economics and social policy

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<sup>60</sup> Women's Budget Group, Policy Briefing – A Green and Caring Economy 2022

<https://wbg.org.uk/analysis/greenandcaringeconomy/>

<sup>61</sup> Beyond Growth Conference 2023 [www.beyond-growth-2023.eu/lecture/focus-panel-7/](http://www.beyond-growth-2023.eu/lecture/focus-panel-7/)



perspective – particularly feminist and heterodox economics and social policy perspectives – rather than from a climate policy perspective. The scope of this review has been narrow and focused on climate literature, so while there is undoubtedly significant work done in Ireland on the engagement between care work and climate within feminist and social policy literature, it has not been covered within this review.

However, this is not to say that care has been totally absent from the literature reviewed. The National Women's Council in particular has repeatedly noted the importance of seeing care work as “green” work – this can be seen in NWC's submission on the National Reform Programme, which includes a call for investment in public care infrastructure as key part of the green transition;<sup>62</sup> and in NWC's submission on sustainable mobility, highlighting how the burden of unpaid care work affects women's transport needs.<sup>63</sup> Clare PPN's “Towards and Anti-Poverty Strategy for Clare” notes the high percentage of unpaid care workers in Clare relative to the rest of the country, and how very little homecare provision is delivered directly by the HSE; and highlights how care impacts both women and disabled persons, particularly those also facing other aspects of social disadvantage. From a community development perspective, Jim Ife, in speaking to the World Community Development Conference in Ireland in 2018, called for a shift in focus towards care in the context of ecofeminism, saying that the matriarchal values of care are also central to grassroots community development values.<sup>64</sup>

It is not merely the gendered nature of care work which prevents women's full participation in social, political and economic life – the cost of childcare in Ireland is amongst the most expensive in the EU<sup>65</sup>, with the majority of childcare services being privately owned/provided. TASC's Inequality in Ireland Report 2023<sup>66</sup> noted that low taxation levels in Ireland negatively impacts social spending, and improving public investment spending would counter increasing societal inequality more

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid. [13]

<sup>63</sup> Ibid. [10]

<sup>64</sup> CWI, World Community Development Conference 2018 [www.cwi.ie/wcdc2018-video-gallery/](http://www.cwi.ie/wcdc2018-video-gallery/)

<sup>65</sup> OECD, Is Childcare Affordable?: Policy Brief on Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, June 2020 [www.oecd.org/els/family/OECD-Is-Childcare-Affordable.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/els/family/OECD-Is-Childcare-Affordable.pdf)

<sup>66</sup> TASC, The State We Are In: Inequality in Ireland 2023, [www.tasc.ie/assets/files/pdf/he\\_state\\_we\\_are\\_in\\_tasc\\_2023\\_final.pdf](http://www.tasc.ie/assets/files/pdf/he_state_we_are_in_tasc_2023_final.pdf)

effectively than increases in wages. The report singles out spending on childcare as particularly important, noting that it is a continuing barrier to women's employment.

A survey carried out by the IFA (Irish Farmers Association)<sup>67</sup> also notes that caring work is a barrier to women's full participation in agriculture. The survey found that the main reason that women respondents to the survey gave for not becoming involved in farming or a farm organisation was that they were 'too busy' – an issue that the IFA linked to the gendered imbalance in caring duties. Just 12% of farmers in Ireland are female, and Teagasc reports that the numbers of female participants in farming courses annually is roughly the same year-on-year, displaying a lack of growth in interest and/or feasibility.

Research by the Feminist Green New Deal Coalition<sup>68</sup> found that many people agree with the statement that any job related to the well-being of people and the planet is a green job – however, existing discourse and narratives around what is considered a 'green job' means that caring roles, despite being low-carbon work and related to the well-being of people, were not often identified as green jobs. Explanations of how caring roles, including teaching, elder care and domestic work, are low-carbon work and ensure a healthy environment for the persons being cared for, were able to convince some respondents who initially had doubts about whether these jobs were 'green' or not. This shows that there is a gap in existing green jobs discourse – which is largely focused on technological and construction roles – which omits care work and caring roles. However, it also shows that people can be convinced of care work's 'green' credentials when this gap in the discourse is filled. Respondents also agreed that these roles would be more attractive to those looking to upskill in 'green' labour and men if they were paid better.

The Hot or Cool Institute's 'Economies that Dare to Care - Achieving social justice and preventing ecological breakdown by putting care at the heart of our societies,' report<sup>69</sup> explores how putting care at the heart of our societies could promote social justice and prevent ecological breakdown. Taking inspiration from six perspectives: ecological, care work, gender inequality, social and

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<sup>67</sup> Quinn-Mulligan, H. (2018) "Father to son inheritance a barrier for women – survey" Irish Farmers Journal [www.farmersjournal.ie/father-to-son-inheritance-a-barrier-for-women-survey-413722](http://www.farmersjournal.ie/father-to-son-inheritance-a-barrier-for-women-survey-413722)

<sup>68</sup> Feminist Green New Deal Coalition, Building Narratives for a Caring Green Economy Sept 2021 [https://feministgreennewdeal.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/FemGND\\_CareClimate-2.pdf](https://feministgreennewdeal.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/FemGND_CareClimate-2.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> Hot or Cool Institute, Economies That Dare to Care: Achieving Social Justice and Preventing Ecological Breakdown, 2023 <https://hotorcool.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Economies-that-Dare-to-Care.pdf>

environmental justice, post anthropocentric and post-colonial approaches, the report is guided by three questions: *'Can we achieve social justice and prevent ecological breakdown by putting care at the heart of our societies?'*; *'How can we make a radical transformation to conscious consumption lifestyles, while maintaining or increasing well-being?'*; *'How can we communicate effectively about just, low-carbon transformations considering gender and race and bring society on board?'*. The report states that the multiple crises that the world currently faces – poverty, global and gender inequality, climate change, and biodiversity loss – are all symptoms of the current paradigm of constant economic growth and competition, which undervalues care. The report suggests that a caring society is the cure for this systemic crisis. Caring societies prioritise the well-being of all beings, including humans, non-humans, and nature, aiming for a fair and equitable distribution of resources, redressing systems of oppression, and reducing carbon emissions and resource use. Unpaid care and the natural environment are linked by the fact that the current economic system cannot survive without them – but it places value on neither. By recognising the value of care work, promoting gender and racial equality, and reevaluating our relationship with nature, societies can strive towards a more equitable and environmentally conscious future. The report notes that care work is disproportionately carried out by women and girls. In addition to the dominance of women in paid care work, women and girls are responsible for 75% of unpaid care and domestic work in homes and communities around the globe every day. The amount of care work, as well as its importance to the economy and society, is heavily underestimated and undervalued. This creates an often-invisible burden for women and girls leading to financial dependence or precarity, even though this unpaid work is fundamental for keeping the economy and society functioning.

The word “care” only appears in the Climate Action Plan four times: twice in general references to healthcare and social infrastructure in the very short section on gender, which is mostly focused on Ireland’s responsibilities in relation to Overseas Development Aid; once in relation to the Second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development; and finally once in the Ministerial forward, in the line “We must take better care of our planet.”

There is a distinct and apparent need for feminist analysis of care work to be incorporated into the conversation around climate and environmental issues. Including a broader range of concepts of work, incorporating care, in our concept of just transition, and aiming for social equity as a prime

focus rather than just a by-product of a new green society, is essential – and the question of how we value care work is key to that.

The creation of an economy and society that is both green and purple is what we should be aiming for, and we can't do either without the other.<sup>70</sup> By bringing in care and gendered inequalities every time we talk about climate, and bringing in climate every time we talk about care – this work is vitally important in relation to furthering the values of social and climate justice present in all of the other issues outlined in this section.

## Pillar 4: Food, Land Use, Agriculture and Biodiversity

### Food

There are significant crossovers between health issues and climate justice concerns, particularly in relation to public health issues like food, air and water quality, housing quality/energy poverty, transport and mobility. The gendered aspects of the interaction between health and climate are not highlighted as much as they should be, and similarly, the value of food and nutrition.

Increases in energy and food are costing families at least an additional €3,200 annually; People who are struggling cannot afford extortionate food and energy prices. Aldi's Irish operation is 71% more profitable than their UK one; large retail chains are making but hiding similarly enormous profits.<sup>71</sup>

The right to food was declared in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as part of the right to an adequate standard of living; *'everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food'*, While the right to healthy food is internationally recognised, the access to nutritious and affordable food is a real problem with this inequity exasperated by climate change.

Food poverty is a health issue; the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) said in their most recent report that *'Climate-driven food insecurity and supply instability...are projected to*

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<sup>70</sup> European Women's Lobby (EWL) The Purple Pact [www.womenlobby.org/Purple-Pact-It-s-Time-for-a-Feminist-approach-to-the-Economy](http://www.womenlobby.org/Purple-Pact-It-s-Time-for-a-Feminist-approach-to-the-Economy)

<sup>71</sup> See: [www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-05-10/8/](http://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/dail/2023-05-10/8/)

*increase with increasing global warming, interacting with non-climatic risk drivers such as competition for land between urban expansion and food production, pandemics and conflict (high confidence).<sup>72</sup>*

The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), in 2012, developed a measure which defined food poverty as the inability to have an adequate and nutritious diet due to issues of affordability or accessibility. This measure is derived using data collected as part of the annual Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC).

A Working Group on Food Poverty was established in April 2021 by the Minister for Social Protection to deliver on a commitment to ‘*develop a comprehensive programme of work to further explore the drivers of food poverty and to identify mitigating actions.*’ The group comprises of officials from various government departments and representatives from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Crosscare and the Children’s Rights Alliance. In July 2022, the Working Group published a report on government programmes, schemes and supports that address food poverty in Ireland, the result of a mapping exercise undertaken by them.

Clare’s Public Participation Network (PPN) ‘Towards an Anti-Poverty Strategy for Clare’ report (September 2022) highlights that there is no official food poverty indicator in Ireland, at a regional, county, and or electoral area / district level. Their report stemmed from a 9-month participatory research project on socio-economic exclusion in County Clare which informs an anti-poverty strategy for the county. The report examines the Clare County Development Plan, highlighting various deficiencies and calling on three areas for address which are required for the anti-poverty strategy for Clare: the need for data on a county level rather than a regional level on food, fuel and child poverty; employment and jobs broken down a variety of different aspects; and the need to re-evaluate the NDP to focus on Clare as distinct from the Mid-West ‘region’.

The report highlights that the Government’s Working Group on Food Poverty is operating in the absence of ‘*basic statistical data on the structural reality of food poverty that is needed to complete its task. It has plans to develop two case studies – one urban and one rural – presumably to use*

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<sup>72</sup> IPCC Climate Change 2023 Synthesis Report – Summary for Policymakers para. B.2.3  
[www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC\\_AR6\\_SYR\\_SPM.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf)

*them as a proxy for all urban and all rural areas. However, we know from the few statistical reports available – such as the Pobal Deprivation Index 2016 – as well as from personal testimony from organisations on the ground in Clare, that there are significant variations to deprivation even within the county, never mind across the state...While there are government commitments to tackling child poverty, food poverty and fuel poverty, there is no concurrent commitment to providing data on these issues and measuring or mapping their occurrence at a county and electoral area/district level.<sup>73</sup>*

When researching for the report, the Minister of the Working Group pointed toward Diarmuid D Sugrue of UCD School of Medicine and Medical Science 2015 ‘Food Poverty and Policy In Ireland: A Review of the Literature.’<sup>74</sup> Sugrue found ‘major problems in the calculation of food poverty in the Irish population’, that ‘no direct population-wide analysis of food poverty has ever been carried out in Ireland’ and that ‘the SILC does not measure access to food, nor the nutritional quality of that which is affordable’. Sugrue highlights that there is a ‘definite trend in nutritional discrepancies across the Irish population...with self-reported food deprivation higher in the lowest quintiles of income and social class. Children are particularly affected by food poverty, with 1 in 5 having reported going to school or bed hungry because of a lack of food at home. Major problems in the calculation of food poverty in the Irish population were found; for example many marginalised groups such as Travellers and asylum seekers have not been included in national surveys. There is currently no coordinated policy in Ireland to guide initiatives which might address social inequality in dietary behaviour...Firstly, it is evident that the creation and acceptance of a standardised measure of food poverty that includes all of society is paramount in order to comprehensively understand the scale of the issue. Secondly, an updated and coordinated all-island policy is urgently needed, coordinating numerous sectors: public health, social work, charity, education and local government. Finally, this policy should not merely focus on education and community work, but on challenging industry to improve our food environment. With the impending tsunami of chronic disease caused by poor nutrition, resolving food poverty should be central to health policy in Ireland.’

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid. [37]

<sup>74</sup> UCD Student Medical Journal, Food Poverty and Policy in Ireland: A Review of the Literature [www.ucdsmj.com/food-poverty/](http://www.ucdsmj.com/food-poverty/)

Michael Drew's 2022 book 'Uncovering Food Poverty in Ireland: A Hidden Deprivation' echoes Sugrue and characterises the policy response to food poverty in Ireland as one led by *'inaction, incoherence and ineffectiveness'*.<sup>75</sup>

Recently, the Climate and Health Alliance's published their position paper 'Fixing Food Together Transitioning Ireland to a healthy and sustainable food system' which demonstrates *'the need for a food system transition for the benefit of human health, planetary health and equality'* and explores Ireland's six challenge areas that must be addressed if we want to move towards a more sustainable food system: 1) ending "the junk food cycle"; 2) promoting transition to a more plant-based diet; 3) harnessing the power of international and national guidelines; 4) reducing food waste, 5) improving agricultural practices and land use; 6) using a policy approach to affect behaviour change.<sup>76</sup>

FEPS-TASC's 2019 'The People's Transition: Community-led development for climate justice' report touches on food waste: *'In the EU, approximately 88 million tons of food is wasted every year, at a cost of €143 billion (Fusions, 2016). This waste comes with a carbon footprint of 170 million tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>-eq per year - approximately equal to the total emissions of the 39 heavily indebted poor countries, as classified by the World Bank'* and how Common Agricultural Policy CAP 2021-2027 is an opportunity to redirect and envelope agricultural practice in more climate-sound practice with *'legally binding targets for member states to use CAP money for climate objectives and ensure that the measures these funds go towards have specified and quantifiable climate outcomes.'*<sup>77</sup>

## Agriculture

Agriculture has been a lifeline for Ireland; providing food and jobs from the farmers to the broader economy.

One of CWI's suggested areas for consideration in 'The Urgent Case for Climate Justice' is to *'Lead the just transition of our industrial and agricultural systems, including calling for:*

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<sup>75</sup> <https://policy.bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/uncovering-food-poverty-in-ireland>

<sup>76</sup> Climate and Health Alliance Position Paper, Fixing Food Together: Transitioning Ireland to a healthy and sustainable food system. <https://climateandhealthalliance.wordpress.com/2023/05/16/fixing-food-together-report-launched/>

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. [34]

- *The establishment of a Just Transition Commission to support workers, farmers and communities who will be affected by job losses in the transition – prioritising the workers engaged in electricity generation by coal and peat as well as farmers reliant on beef and dairy farming;*
- *The development of a fair and sustainable forestry policy with an enhanced commitment to local species, distributes the burden of planting across the country and focus on forestry awareness and use of forests for green recreation purposes;*
- *The establishment of a Green New Deal style plan to drive the decarbonisation of the economy that creates a circular economy while supporting job creation, accelerating public and affordable house building and growing the use public transportation;*
- *The ending of food poverty and ensuring greater resilience in the food system, including by subsidising and supporting the growth of Community Supported Agriculture schemes and supporting the establishment of food policy councils similar to the Cork Food Policy Council;*
- *and Work with farmers, communities, conservation organisations, local authorities and relevant agencies to ensure sustainable land-use and accelerate the development of nature-based solutions to climate change<sup>78</sup>*

The impacts of climate change such as extreme weather events are increasing inequalities and challenges for the agricultural community. *'To date, agriculture has not been a central focus of Just Transition discourse and planning in Ireland'* notes the FEPS-TASC's 2019 'The People's Transition: Community-led development for climate justice' report which highlights the agricultural sector as the most unequal in Ireland in terms of income (Sweeney, 2019) and that the published Farm to Fork Strategy (EC, 2020c) *'makes no explicated reference to enabling participation of farmers or the public in seeking to advance sustainable food production. More needs to be done in this respect.'* Under 'Case Study: Rural Ireland facing transition', the report looks at 'The social cost of food' and the pressures experienced by farmers, using France as a comparative where agricultural incomes are one of the lowest and *'tragically, the rate of suicide among French farmers is 20% higher than it is in the general population (Michalopoulos 2018)'*. The case study continues to highlight the

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid. [25]



inequality of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) – *‘across Europe, between 2005 and 2015, four million farms were lost - more than 1,000 a day - as farmers seek viable work elsewhere (O’Donnell 2019).’*

Within the ‘Towards a Just Transition for agriculture using a capabilities approach’ section; it reports on Ireland’s agriculture model as an extractive one; *‘the labour of the farmer, combined with the cost of inputs and infrastructure, ultimately serve to primarily benefit supermarkets, agribusiness and their shareholders’* while the consumer, who is benefitting from low price, is also experiencing an extractive system as their time and labour is extracted *‘and, in return, is partaking in a system that is economically efficient but one that does not enhance well-being and is neither environmentally nor socially sustainable.’*

Teagasc’s National Farm Survey<sup>79</sup> reveals the uneven nature of income distribution within this extractive model of agriculture – 65% of cattle-rearing farms in Ireland made less than ten-thousand euro in farming income in 2022; 47% made less than five-thousand.

Talamh Beo is an agroecological farming member-led organisation in Ireland, promoting farming for nature, local food production and agroecology as the future of family farming in Ireland.<sup>80</sup> They are a member of La Via Campesina (global peasant organisation) and NWC. Agroecological land use practices are anything from permaculture to regenerative farming, agroforestry, organics and biological farming. Talamh Beo has a dedicated women’s group, and is 50/50 balanced across the organisation.

Talamh Beo’s women’s group identifies places and spaces where inequality prevents women and others from realising their true potential, especially when it comes to bringing their perspective and experience to the discussion, design and implementation of all things food, farming and rural living. Talamh Beo work and are willing to work with organisations and government to replace this inequality with inclusive and participatory policies and practices. They have a number of recommendations, including 1. CAP recommendation for women farming alone and vulnerable categories of farmers to receive average entitlement for their Pillar 1 payments; and 2. CAP

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<sup>79</sup> Teagasc National Farm Survey 2022 Preliminary Results, June 2023  
[www.teagasc.ie/media/website/publications/2023/NFS\\_prelim\\_results\\_2022.pdf](http://www.teagasc.ie/media/website/publications/2023/NFS_prelim_results_2022.pdf)

<sup>80</sup> Talamh Beo <https://talamhbeo.ie/>

recommendation that women must have equal access to CAP resources, through access to credit and microcredit schemes; 1) social inclusion for those farming alone; 2) housing quality issues; 3) etc.

Talamh Beo's report from a 'Words from Women Farmers' research project revealed that women only own 13.4% of farms (with 4% more shared), while making up a quarter of the workforce (often through informal work).<sup>81</sup> They ran a European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on soil biodiversity with a specific focus on women's role in farming and bringing women's perspectives to the table in terms of how we use the land and how we frame our 'agriCULTURE' and asked women five questions about farming over the course of the project:

1. "What solutions do you have to bring more female voices to the tables of discussion, decision-making and leadership?": quotas, training on gender for decision-makers, change the perception of women in farming, dialogues about patriarchy and farming, creating new debate tables and putting women's agenda at tables
2. "What challenges and barriers have you faced as a woman in agriculture?": accessing land and finance, inheritance practices, lack of recognition of care work, unequal distribution of CAP payments
3. "What brought you into farming and what drew you to agroecology or organic approaches to producing food?": desire to work and connect with the land; quality of food; working with animals to high standard of welfare; protecting land rights; desire to help rural degeneration mitigation efforts; taking over from a family member; move away from productivity, exploitation, competition and destruction towards peace-building, well-being, nurturing and community
4. "Irish society has changed dramatically since the 80s. How do you think the family farm model reflects these social changes?": industrialisation of farming has made farming less possible for the next generation; family farm models based around gendered division of labour; society has lost connection to the land; almost no change from a gender equality perspective compared to other sectors

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<sup>81</sup> Words from Women Farmers <https://talamhbeo.ie/projects/talamh-beo-women/#gender-mainstreaming-research/1/>

5. “What do you think the effect will be on Irish agriculture and rural life if more women become farmers and landowners, or if their invisible work becomes recognised on the farm and their perspective becomes represented?”: more recognition and respect for women’s contributions is needed, along with radically change in society’s perception of women; need for collective economy that prioritises food security, sisterhood networks

We need to enable women to take on leadership roles; provide training and education; strategy for fast-tracking educational qualifications and provide qualifying alternatives; break stigmas around the value women can bring to agriculture; set up a system for mentoring and partnerships for women farmers; cross-generational initiatives; stop promoting practices with a focus on exploitation and productivity, but instead nurturing practices.

NESC’s Just Transition in Agriculture and Land Use Report<sup>82</sup> points out that, if done correctly, a Just Transition for the agricultural sector could better engage women in farming. The NESC work complements the work of other initiatives such as the Food Vision 2030 Strategy, the Food Vision sectoral groups exploring transition in the dairy and the beef and sheep sectors, and the development of a Bioeconomy Action Plan (Government of Ireland, 2022a). In particular, NESC’s work seeks to align with the ethos underpinning the Department of Agriculture–EIT Climate-KIC strategic initiative. In a paper prepared as part of the initiative, the authors note that: *if the transition fails to engage farmers in a fair and empowering way, then the trends of declining numbers will continue, and that conversely an approach to transition that repositions farming as a forward-looking, environmentally sustainable and economically viable profession is an opportunity to inspire and attract women farmers and the next generation... There is an opportunity to approach action on climate change and biodiversity loss as a catalyst for change and a positive source of renewed vitality within the agricultural sector and rural communities more generally* (DAFM-Climate KIC, 2023 forthcoming: 13). The report calls for a specific fund to support farmers in the climate transition to be put in place by the Government.

The report notes that there are several dimensions to the social challenge: age profile; female participation; long hours of work; and mental health and well-being. Section 6.2 provides a brief

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<sup>82</sup> NESC, Just Transition in Agriculture and Land Use: Council Report no. 162, June 2023  
[www.nesc.ie/app/uploads/2023/06/162\\_just\\_transition\\_in\\_ag\\_land\\_use-1.pdf?mc\\_cid=fd892b06bf&mc\\_eid=5c424773c3](http://www.nesc.ie/app/uploads/2023/06/162_just_transition_in_ag_land_use-1.pdf?mc_cid=fd892b06bf&mc_eid=5c424773c3)

overview of each of these factors. To be socially sustainable, the sector needs to attract younger farmers and women in greater numbers. As in NWC's *Her Rural Future*, the report points out the small percentage of women-headed family farms and the preferential treatment of men regarding inheritance. Gender equality is noted as important to the social sustainability of primary producers in agriculture, but that poorly planned Just Transition decisions from the State risk making young people and female entrants into farming particularly vulnerable, amongst other groups. The newest iteration of TAMS (Targeted Agriculture Modernisation Schemes), launched in February 2023, has introduced a new Women Farmer Capital Investment Scheme – access to financial grants and schemes has been noted as a barrier to women's participation and equality in farming by Talamh Beo, so this new TAMS scheme targeted for women is promising for the future of women in the sector.

The Irish government is aware of the need to improve gender equality within Agriculture. As part of the National Dialogue on Women in Agriculture, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine Charlie McConalogue hosted the "Women in Agriculture" conference in Portlaoise on 1 February 2023, chaired by former Tánaiste and Minister for Agriculture Mary Coughlan. The Conference examined gender issues in farming and the agri-food sector and explored how we might improve gender balance into the future. The outcomes of the Conference will be compiled into a report, which will feed into future policy in this regard.

In a short background document released before the conference<sup>83</sup>, the figures surrounding women in farming (aforementioned in NWC's *Her Rural Future* in the literature review) were discussed, and the Programme for Government acknowledged that gender equality is a key objective of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and a core principle of the European Union.

Of the 75,113 female farm workers in Ireland, over 58,000 of them are without visibility or farm holder status. This presents a structural challenge to achieving gender equality in farming where participation by women is frequently impeded by their lack of status as farm holders, either as an individual, as part of a farm partnership or as part of a commercial farm entity. This, by extension disqualifies them from registering for a Department of Agriculture, Food and Marine (DAFM)

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<sup>83</sup> Government of Ireland, National Dialogue on Women in Agriculture: "Improving Gender Balance in the Agri-Food Sector" Background Document, 2022 [https://morroweventshub-com.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/account\\_asset/file/2306/National\\_Dialogue\\_Women\\_in\\_Agriculture\\_Background.pdf](https://morroweventshub-com.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/account_asset/file/2306/National_Dialogue_Women_in_Agriculture_Background.pdf)

identifier, such as a Herd Number, that is required for entry to most schemes and interventions operated by DAFM. In order to meet and align with the gender equality expectations and commitments of the agriculture sector in Ireland and in Europe, the visibility, equality and status of women in farming need to be an integral part of the preparation, implementation and evaluation of future policy interventions and strategies. However, the State notes that more research on the topic is required to expand the evidence and knowledge base available to policymakers.

The importance of gender balance/equality is pointed out, as was by NESC, as crucial to the sustainability of the agri-food sector. Goals shared in *Food Vision 2030* include: promoting women's participation in farming through CAP (Common Agricultural Plan) Knowledge Transfer Groups; capturing and publishing gender data on policy implementation; representation of the agri-food sector in the development of the next National Women and Girl's Strategy; promoting and improving gender balance at all levels in the agri-food sector, but particularly at senior management and board level; and promoting and supporting women's networks and mentoring programmes, for example the ACORNS programme for rural female entrepreneurs, funded by DAFM.

The CAP Strategic Plan (CSP) also identifies gender inequality as a weakness, while the economic benefits of increasing female participation were identified as an opportunity. In consultation with stakeholders, several measures have been included in the CSP which will support greater gender equality: an increased grant rate of 60% under the Capital Investment Scheme to fund investments by trained women farmers; the promotion of women-only Knowledge Transfer Groups; improved recording and reporting of gender data and the leveraging of the National CAP Network to increase the involvement of all women in the implementation of CAP; and all CAP interventions to be developed with a gender-aware perspective to ensure there are no inherent barriers to women's participation. In addition, European Innovation Partnerships were noted to offer an ideal opportunity for the agricultural sector to develop initiatives that will promote women's participation in farming.

## **Biodiversity**

Socio-economic and ecological justice are key to a sustainable future as recognised within the Sustainable Development Goals. The loss of biodiversity contributes to climate change, intensifying its effects and deepening existing societal inequalities, especially on women and marginalised communities. Recent figures on Irish biodiversity are concerning – Ireland has the lowest tree cover of any EU member state, with only 2% of that tree cover consisting of native species<sup>84</sup>; a third of Irish bee species are endangered<sup>85</sup>, and a quarter of Irish bird species are in decline<sup>86</sup>.

Biodiversity provides us with a varied food supply, which is needed for balanced human nutrition – the threat that Irish pollinators are under makes preserving that varied food supply much more difficult.

Amanda Slevin's 'Climate, Communities, and Capitalism: Critically Imagining and Co-Creating Pathways for a Sustainable Ireland' emphasises the need for drastic structural change '*profound socio-economic, ideological, political, and environmental transformations across all levels of society*'. '*Exposing historical socio-economic patterns and associated ecological impacts, the IPCC states that 58% of historical, cumulative CO2 emissions occurred between 1850 and 1989 while the remaining 42% of emissions occurred in the last thirty years.*'

*Transgressed three of the nine planetary boundaries – climate change; rate of biodiversity loss; changes to the global nitrogen cycle*

*Atwood's "fantasies of endlessness" – anything produced by nature is ours by right and free.*<sup>87</sup>

Wright Mills uses the term 'sociological imagination' to describe the linkage between private individual problems and important social issues; Slevin adapts this to 'socio-eco-logical imagination'; '*Hence, I use the term 'socio-ECO-logical imagination' to connect seemingly individual behaviours of personal choice and consumption patterns with broader social-economic processes, ideologies and*

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<sup>84</sup> Coillte, A Brief History of Ireland's Native Woodlands, October 2020 [www.coillte.ie/a-brief-history-of-irelands-native-woodlands/](http://www.coillte.ie/a-brief-history-of-irelands-native-woodlands/)

<sup>85</sup> National Biodiversity Action Plan 2017-2021, p. 14

[www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/National%20Biodiversity%20Action%20Plan%20English.pdf](http://www.npws.ie/sites/default/files/publications/pdf/National%20Biodiversity%20Action%20Plan%20English.pdf)

<sup>86</sup> BirdWatch Ireland, Birds of Conservation Concern in Ireland, 2021 <https://birdwatchireland.ie/birds-of-conservation-concern-in-ireland/>

<sup>87</sup> Slevin, Amanda. "Climate, Communities, and Capitalism: Critically Imagining and Co-Creating Pathways for a Sustainable Ireland." *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, vol. 112 no. 445, 2023, p. 61-85.

<https://muse.jhu.edu/article/886338>

structures, in order to foster understanding of wide-ranging interdependencies, problematize socio-ecological crises, and encourage change at multiple levels of society'.<sup>88</sup> There is a need for base-level awareness of the environmental emergency to even know that multi-level climate action is needed; the Youth Strikes for Climate and Extinction Rebellion are helping raise this, but still, most people are not part of these social movements.

Under Climate Change and Biodiversity, Talamh Beo identify three key priorities: 1) reducing fossil fuel use through elimination of agro-chemical inputs and feedstuffs, reduce monocultures and deforested land; 2) transitioning to agroecological production cycles to restore carbon, nitrogen and nutrient cycles, rewarding farmers for ecosystem restoration rather than complex carbon-measuring exercise; and 3) emissions reductions should fall first on the largest polluters, rather than a staggered scale across the board.

The Final Report of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss<sup>89</sup> outright states in its second recommendation that the State has, "*comprehensively failed to adequately fund, implement and enforce existing national legislation, national policies, EU biodiversity-related laws and directives related to biodiversity.*". The Assembly found that incentives to protect Ireland's biodiversity, including conservation, restoration and less destructive farming practices are not attractive enough and are restrictive; additionally, sanctions for environmental destruction were lacking in severity. The Assembly made 159 recommendations in total, including constitutional amendments. Protection of Ireland's biodiversity requires an increase in ambition and funding, including funding for NGOs and local communities to assist State efforts. Economic decisions surrounding biodiversity should go 'Beyond GDP' and ensure that the National Well-Being Framework is at the heart of those decisions instead. Plans to protect biodiversity need to be made in consultation with the groups most impacted by its loss. The development of an environmental court at Circuit and District Court level was suggested, as well as the empowerment of all citizens with legal standing to protect nature and biodiversity in court.

The recommendations for constitutional amendments include:

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Report of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Loss, March 2023 [https://citizensassembly.ie/wp-content/uploads/Report-on-Biodiversity-Loss\\_mid-res.pdf](https://citizensassembly.ie/wp-content/uploads/Report-on-Biodiversity-Loss_mid-res.pdf)

- The right to a clean, healthy and safe environment; a stable and healthy climate; the rights of future generations to the same.
- The right to access environmental information, participate in decision-making and justice in environmental matters.
- Recognising nature as a holder of legal rights - the right to exist, to flourish/perpetuate and to be restored if degraded; the right to not be polluted, harmed or degraded.

Procedural rights of nature – to be a party in decision-making, litigation, etc. where its rights are impacted or likely to be.

The preservation of our biodiversity has multiple benefits for our health and social cohesion outside of food production – the Clúid housing authority, in their *'Landscaping and Biodiversity Guide for New Developments'*<sup>90</sup>, draw attention to the social and health benefits of nature-friendly developments. Their guide notes that there is a growing body of evidence that access to green spaces and enhanced biodiversity can have a positive impact on physical and mental health.

The guide explains that having access to green spaces with good biodiversity where you live can promote and encourage social cohesion and engagement amongst residents; create more peaceful neighbourhoods, improve the moods of residents and their level of physical activity; improve people's health, wellbeing and happiness; and increase the likelihood of residents' growing fruits and vegetables, which reduces food costs and waste, helps improve food security and fosters self-sufficiency.

Biodiversity-rich and functioning ecosystems can also act as mitigation infrastructure for the more adverse impacts of climate change and are an important living educational tool for people of all ages. The guide lists various ways that people can be encouraged to further engage and interact with nature within their development, listing the following examples: providing engaging signage and information boards about nature in their development; creating a biodiversity walking trail for residents; and planting community gardens, fruiting hedgerows, pocket orchards or herb beds in public amenity areas.

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<sup>90</sup> Clúid Housing, Landscaping and Biodiversity Guide for New Developments, 2023 [www.cluid.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Landscaping-and-Biodiversity-Guide-for-web.pdf](http://www.cluid.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Landscaping-and-Biodiversity-Guide-for-web.pdf)



## Land Use

Land use describes the usage of land from a human perspective. “The most recent assessment (CORINE 2018) shows that agriculture is the primary Land Use Land Cover (LULC) type within Ireland (67.6% national land cover), followed by wetlands (14.9%) and forestry (9.5%)”.<sup>91</sup>

NWC’s Transport submission calls on better integration between land use and transport strategies which must also be inclusive and support alternatives for those who are currently dependent on cars.<sup>92</sup>

The Friends of the Earth ‘Eight Climate Policy Challenges the Government faces’ document from 2022, highlights ‘The new Land Use Plan and the future of agriculture’ at number six. *As agricultural emissions now account for over a third (37.1%) of Ireland’s total emissions, the agricultural sector has a key role to play in achieving the 2030 emissions reduction target of 51%. In the 2021 Climate Action Plan, the Government recently set out an indicative emissions reduction target for the agricultural sector of 22-30% by 2030. Ireland’s agricultural emissions increased by 10% between 2015 and 2020. This coupled with the fact that Ireland’s land is a net emitter of CO2 means that for Ireland to meet its climate targets we need to not only address emissions from the agricultural sector itself, but also those being emitted from our soils and forestry.*<sup>93</sup>

The Government’s Phase 1 Land Use Review provides an evidence base to determine the environmental, ecological and economic characteristics of land types across Ireland. This preliminary review gathered evidence about stakeholders; existing policy; and environmental, social and economic characteristics of land use to date. It gives us a holistic understanding of current land use patterns to shape future policies and measures. Phase II will, in consultation with all stakeholders and land users, consider the policies, measures, and actions. The first phase of the land-use review calculates that 78% of Ireland’s land is privately owned and 8% is publicly owned.

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<sup>91</sup> EPA, Land use and landcover

[www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/assessment/irelands-environment/land--soil/current-trends-land-and-soil/#:~:text=The%20most%20recent%20assessment%20%28CORINE%202018%29%20shows%20that,cover%29%2C%20followed%20by%20wetlands%20%2814.9%25%29%20and%20forestry%20%289.5%25%29.](http://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/assessment/irelands-environment/land--soil/current-trends-land-and-soil/#:~:text=The%20most%20recent%20assessment%20%28CORINE%202018%29%20shows%20that,cover%29%2C%20followed%20by%20wetlands%20%2814.9%25%29%20and%20forestry%20%289.5%25%29.)

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. [10]

<sup>93</sup> Friends of the Earth, Media Briefing, From targets and plans to implementation and delivery: Eight climate policy challenges the Government faces in 2022:

[www.friendsoftheearth.ie/assets/files/pdf/8\\_climate\\_policy\\_challenges\\_the\\_government\\_faces\\_in\\_2022\\_-\\_web.pdf](http://www.friendsoftheearth.ie/assets/files/pdf/8_climate_policy_challenges_the_government_faces_in_2022_-_web.pdf)

Limitations on the data meant that 14% of land could not be assigned to either category with certainty. A National Land Use *Plan* follows the review (towards the end of 2022). *In theory, this national land use plan should allocate land to different uses in a manner that is sustainable and meets our needs at and across different scales. Politically, the commitment to a land use plan in the Programme for Government was a counterweight to the commitment to the rapid completion of Agri-Vision 2030 which is industry-led but backed by Government. Civil society coalitions produced their own proposals for the future of Irish Food and Agriculture, having walked out of the industry-dominated drafting committee for Agri-Vision 2030 when their concerns were ignored.*

On 22 June 2022, the European Commission published a long-awaited proposal for the EU Nature Restoration Law. The Commission proposes to restore at least 20 % of the EU's land and sea areas by 2030 and repair all ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050.

## Pillar 5: Transport

Similarly to health, feminist concerns around infrastructural planning are often overlooked by an overly technical and emissions-focused approach to transport planning; some of the gendered aspects of transport policy in Ireland were highlighted by the NWC in the submission on the Government's Sustainable Mobility Policy consultation in 2020.<sup>94</sup> This can be broadened out into larger concerns around planning, for which a feminist and community-based analysis is vital – particularly in the context of the different ways in which transport is used by women compared to the mobility patterns of men which dominate how the physical mobility infrastructure is ordered.

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) issued a report on 2020 entitled “Travelling in a Women's Shoes”<sup>95</sup>, investigating the needs and travel behaviours of women in Ireland. It found that despite a positive view of alternatives like cycling and public transport, women prefer the car as a mode of transport for safety and reliability reasons - 95% of women living outside of Dublin said that a car was a necessity, and within Dublin this figure was 79% despite the availability of better public

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid. [10]

<sup>95</sup> Travelling in a Woman's Shoes Transport Infrastructure Ireland: [www.tii.ie/technical-services/research/TII-Travelling-in-a-Womans-Shoes-Report\\_Issue.pdf](http://www.tii.ie/technical-services/research/TII-Travelling-in-a-Womans-Shoes-Report_Issue.pdf)

transport links in the capital. Women tend to gravitate towards car use as they grow up, some moving from public transport use again for safety and reliability reasons; staying safe is a top priority for women when travelling, with primary responsibility pushed onto women for keeping themselves safe rather than social or infrastructural change. This responsibility being pushed onto individual women has resulted in a 'pink tax' on transportation. Public transport being perceived as unsafe, particularly at night, means that women will opt for more expensive modes of transport – a group of young men feel safe getting the bus back home after a night out, but young women will often avail of a taxi instead. Research conducted in New York by Kaufman et al<sup>96</sup> shows that men spend \$0 extra a month on transport due to safety reasons, whereas women will spend between \$25-50 – and if that is beyond the means of a woman's disposable income, she might forego going out altogether.

This 'pink tax' also exists for caregivers regarding public transport, which is designed primarily for the work commute<sup>97</sup> and is cumbersome for a caregiver who is carrying large amounts of shopping or pushing a pram. Turnstiles in railway stations are not often designed to accommodate prams, and elevators at these stations are frequently out of service – issues that also make public transport inaccessible for those in wheelchairs. Caregivers are also likely to make more trips in the middle of the day, outside of peak public transport provision hours surrounding the morning and evening work commute. Kaufman et al's study revealed that caregivers are likely to spend \$26-50 a month extra on transport to carry out caregiving duties – meaning a female caregiver, taking into account the previous figure cited for safety reasons, will pay up to \$100 extra a month on transport compared to men<sup>98</sup>.

There is a need to recognise the diverse and intersecting needs and circumstances of all women. The TFI Report suggests promotion of policies to reduce car use in the short-term and emphasises the role schools can play in shaping the behaviour and attitudes of children towards transport.<sup>99</sup> Data released by the National Transport Authority in July 2023 shows that 69% of all journeys in

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<sup>96</sup> Kaufman, S. M., Polack, C. F. and Campbell, G. A. (2018) "The Pink Tax on Transportation: Women's Challenges in Mobility" [https://wagner.nyu.edu/files/faculty/publications/Pink%20Tax%20Survey%20Results\\_finaldraft4.pdf](https://wagner.nyu.edu/files/faculty/publications/Pink%20Tax%20Survey%20Results_finaldraft4.pdf)

<sup>97</sup> Criado-Perez, C. (2020) "Can Snow-Clearing Be Sexist?" in *Invisible Women: Exposing Data Bias in a World Designed for Men*. London: Vintage.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid [96]

<sup>99</sup> [ibid](#) [95]

Ireland are taken by car<sup>100</sup>, revealing the need for such policy promotion if ambitions for the transport sector set out in Climate Action Plan 2023 are to be achieved.

NWC's submission on the Sustainable Mobility Review in February 2020 highlighted key aspects of the way in which transport infrastructure design affects women. It outlined a series of objectives to prioritise in planning for transport infrastructure, including the need for gender-assessment of all major capital infrastructure investment projects: tackle car dependency, including better data gathering on the gendered use of cars; greatly improve safety (and perceived safety) for women on the street and on public transport; promote active travel, cycling, walking and public transport; and ensure accessibility and inclusion for disabled women and disabled people.

These two are the main sources of transport discussion focused primarily on the gendered aspects.

The DCU/CLM Environmental Justice in Ireland report highlights the link between social exclusion and transport poverty, and criticises the Climate Action Plan 2021 for a lack of focus on rural transport measures and transport poverty. It also highlights the impact of transport poverties on marginalised and underrepresented groups – including women, migrants, the Traveller Community and older people. Clare PPN's "Towards an Anti-Poverty Strategy for Clare" calls for the development of a county-wide accessible transport system, attributing the high percentage of car use in Clare to the inadequate transport system. It also highlights the impact of poor transport systems on women, particularly those who are victims of domestic violence, and disabled persons, highlighting the discontinuation of personal transport supports in 2013.

Lowans et al published a systematic review from 2021 of English-language energy and transport poverty literature.<sup>101</sup> This paper has been discussed above in the energy poverty section with respect to that topic. This paper also analyses the interaction between energy poverty and transport poverty, defining transport poverty as: "the enforced lack of mobility services necessary for participation in society, resulting from the inaccessibility, unaffordability or unavailability of transport (Lucas et al., 2016) (Mattioli et al., 2017) (Mullen and Marsden, 2016)" – and emphasises

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<sup>100</sup> NTA, National Household Travel Survey 2022, July 2023 [www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/NTA\\_NHTS2022\\_IpsosReport\\_28July2023.pdf](http://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/NTA_NHTS2022_IpsosReport_28July2023.pdf)

<sup>101</sup> Ibid. [48]

the difficulty in generating a single metric which unites the two forms of poverty.<sup>102</sup> It mentions, in its discussion of definitions of transport poverty, Lucas et al. (2016)'s definition: *"An individual is transport poor if, in order to satisfy their daily basic activity needs, at least one of the following conditions apply: 1) there is no transport option available that is suited to the Individual's physical condition and capabilities; 2) The existing transport options do not reach destinations where the individual can fulfil his/her daily activity needs, in order to maintain a reasonable quality of life; 3) the necessary weekly amount spent on transport leaves the household with a residual income below the official poverty line; 4) the individual needs to spend an excessive amount of time travelling, leading to time poverty or social isolation; 5) the prevailing travel conditions are dangerous, unsafe or unhealthy for the individual"* (Lucas et al., 2016)."<sup>103</sup> The paper also notes that transport poverty is distinct from fuel poverty in that it is much harder to define a required "necessary" standard of transport complicating the ability to find a metric which unites the two poverties.

## Pillar 6: Access to Environmental and Climate justice

Government published earlier this year a draft consolidated Planning Bill, which was debated by the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Housing, Local Government and Heritage in the early part of the year before their issuing a report on it in April 2023. The Bill will next be introduced in the Oireachtas. The main parts of this Bill involve reform of An Bord Pleanála and the local authority development plan process, but there are sections of it which have been criticised by environmental NGOs for restricting the access of people and NGOs to judicially review planning decisions – restricting the ability to take judicial review beyond those with “sufficient interest” to those who are also “materially affected” by the matters involved in the application. While the Government has contested that the new legislation is compliant with Ireland’s commitments under the Aarhus Convention, numerous NGOs and legal experts have questioned this. A good summary of these issues, among others with the Bill, is included in the JOC’s report.

Access to decision-making processes for communities and individuals affected by environmental and climate policies features in much of the literature reviewed. Much of this features in the context

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid. p.3

<sup>103</sup> Ibid. p.11

of just transition processes, explored above, but there is some limited mention of legal recourse measures and the Aarhus Convention in particular. The DCU/CLM climate report highlights the need for resourcing access to environmental justice, particularly referencing the framework of the Aarhus Convention in that context, and highlighting the negative impacts for access of legal and other costs, and the proposed narrowing of access in Irish planning reforms. They call for the establishment of a specialised environmental court.

## Pillar 7: Migration

Migration is only mentioned once in our notes on all the documents analysed for this review, in Rachel Doyle, joint National Coordinator of CWI, speech at the World Community Development Conference in 2018.<sup>104</sup> She charged that we must fight against unfettered capitalism, the rise of the right, racism, forced migration, environmental destruction, failure to recognise indigenous rights, violence against women, extreme poverty across the globe – tying these issues in to Ireland's own history of emigration and forced migration, and saying that we need to call out and hold accountable the structures and people who allow this issues to continue.

Racism is mentioned in the speech, in TASC/FEPS' People's Transition document in the context of the need for consideration when developing transformative change structures, and in Clare PPN's document in relation to racism against the Traveller Community.

Similar to the care section above, this is not to say that issues related to migration and racism are not contained within the documentation on climate and environment in Ireland, but that they did not feature heavily in the literature reviewed for this report. It is likely that civil society and policy literature on issues surrounding migration, racism, and social exclusion also engages with issues around climate and environment – but this were outside the scope of documentation reviewed for this report.

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<sup>104</sup> Video footage of World Community Development Conference 2018, including Rachel Doyle's speech: [www.cwi.ie/wcdc2018-video-gallery/](http://www.cwi.ie/wcdc2018-video-gallery/)

## Section 3 – Concluding Remarks

This literature review aimed to collate and establish Community Work Ireland and the National Women's Council's existing work and positions on climate issues, to explore and summarise the current work of other NGOs, Government, and other relevant organisations in areas of climate policy and advocacy that might relate to work CWI/NWC are undertaking/could undertake, and to make recommendations about policy focuses for the *Feminist Communities for Climate Justice* project.

This is not a research document – there was not a specific research question, methodological approach, or clear, exhaustive scope of analysis. Rather, it's best understood as a collation and summary of the exploratory research that was undertaken by the Project Coordinator and Project Officer in the initial two months of the project. It was based on, initially, the literature included in the background research of the application for funding for this project; it was expanded in a loose, snowballing fashion depending on engagements/meetings we had with relevant other people and organisations, and our own desk research.

The first part of this Literature Review collected and collated all of the previous work done (separately) by the National Women's Council and Community Work Ireland on issues related to climate and environment. This has been done primarily through what's available on their respective websites and the NWC's internal database – and it focused on substantial pieces of climate-work, excluding minor references to climate and environment in other work.

For NWC this manifested as including a climate and environment section in significant policy docs (such as Pre-Budget Submissions) and a small number of more focused thematic documents (such as women and transport, and women and energy). Major issues raised in these documents have included calls for feminist climate justice, linking climate issues to women's economic and social equality issues more generally. Most of these calls are linked to public investment – the need for greater investment in caring infrastructure, more and better (green) physical infrastructure such as public and active transport, tax and investment reform to move away from fossil fuel investment and to put the burden of paying for increased investment on polluters rather than the general public, access to new and well-paid and conditioned employment opportunities for women in the

context of a just transition, and increased participation by women in decision-making on climate at all levels of policy development and implementation.

For CWI this manifested in a broad range of documentation and collaborations going back to at least 2012. Alongside briefing papers on general issues of climate justice, there have been specific analyses on COPs and on the Climate Action Plan. The primary themes that flow through all of this work as it relates to community work and development include climate engagement, governance and accountability, participation and inclusive processes, just transition, climate consciousness-raising, and tackling energy poverty. The development of strategic alliances has also been highlighted, and CWI submitted a motion (which passed) to last year's NWC AGM calling on the organisation to mainstream just transition and climate justice into their work.

These pieces of work have not necessarily interacted prior to this point – most of the National Women's Council's work on climate issues is focused heavily at an advocacy level, on influencing government spending decisions on infrastructure. It is also quite sectorally-focused, and important areas such as agriculture and biodiversity are under-examined. There is less explicit focus on the community aspects of climate action than there is in CWI's work, which is consistently touching on community development issues and is focused on climate issues at that level. However, there tends to be less of an explicitly feminist approach in CWI's work, and limited focus on the gendered impacts of climate change and how that might influence the development of solutions.

While far from an exhaustive list, these emerged as the key themes from the documentation which reflected areas of work/focus that the project might relate to give its focus on marginalised communities and women in particular. Much of the policy work on these issues referenced and engaged with the idea of community empowerment, consultation and support – though the degree to which this is effective likely varied enormously, and the conception of “community” varied enormously also. Regardless, through both governmental and non-governmental policy documents on most of these issues community was a feature of discussion.

Discussion of gender and the impact on women, on the other hand, was quite noticeably absent from much of the documentation. There is some focus (particularly in for example the Climate Action Plan) on the gendered impacts of climate change in other parts of the world (presumably the



Global South) in the context of the Overseas Development Aid budget. But there is very limited focus on the impacts on women in an Irish context. The exceptions to this tended to be the work of the NWC, or a small segment of international literature examined, particularly in the context of care. However, in some of the other topics – most notably Just Transition, energy poverty, food etc. – there was very limited gendered analysis.

This is not to say that there was limited analysis of the impact on marginalised communities, or the differentiated impacts of climate and environmental degradation on specific socio-economic, ethnic, geographic, or cultural groups – but only that gender was rarely a specific factor within such intersectional analyses. There is significant scope for the project to contribute greatly to analysis and campaigning on climate and environment issues, through considering gender to a greater degree within these issues than it currently is; and though of course presumed it is always important to note that any gendered analysis must take into account substantively and holistically the intersecting nature of socio-economic and cultural oppressions of which gender is just one aspect.

In particular, the lack of disaggregated data related to sex or gender for social issues (particularly those related to the household) is something that the NWC and almost all forms of feminism have consistently highlighted, but this data would be demonstrably valuable for understanding the nature of climate impacts – and the solutions that are needed.

There is limited international research within the scope of the current documentation described above. The aspects of international context which are in the current documentation are: 1) Just Transition, and examples of other countries' transitions (NESC study is entirely focused on this, and is very comprehensive; related documentation like the Scottish Just Transition documentation); 2) focused on high-level commitments related to climate change, such as the SDGs, Paris Agreement as a description of policy/structural context; 3) discussion of gender in the context of international development and climate change.

To shape the work of the project, it is suggested to use the first five pillars of the list outlined above as thematic groundings for analysis and campaigning:

## **1. Just Transition**

2. **Energy Poverty (possibly broadened out to include Housing)**
3. **Care**
4. **Transport**
5. **Food, Land Use, Agriculture and Biodiversity**

These cover issues that CWI and NWC have worked on before, as well as some new areas of possible expansion. They cover areas that are relevant to community development, but also areas that have distinctly gendered impacts. And they are all important parts of the policy landscape at the moment – the Just Transition Commission is due to be established soon; energy prices will continue to be one of the primary cost-of-living issues for the foreseeable, as will the housing crisis; the referendum on care will be happening in the autumn; transport is a constant public service issue across the island; food is another huge cost-of-living issue, a Land Use Plan is due under this Government, agriculture is the biggest and most contentious issue in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, and the recent publication of the Citizens' Assembly on Biodiversity Report has again highlighted the range of issues which biodiversity affects.

While access to environmental and climate justice and migration are extremely important issues, and there are many other aspects to climate and environment and the associated socio-economic impacts, the above five pillars cover a broad enough range of topics to present a strong but manageable set of possible focuses for the work of the project.