

# Listening and Learning

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**A case study on engaging active participation by grassroots practitioners at an international conference**



TARA SHINE | Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice  
Article 6 Dialogue, Bonn, 5 June 2014



**Mary Robinson  
Foundation**  
Climate Justice

# Climate Justice

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- Climate justice links human rights and development to achieve a human-centred approach, safeguarding the rights of the most vulnerable and sharing the burdens and benefits of climate change and its resolution equitably and fairly.
- The work of the Mary Robinson Foundation – Climate Justice is informed by the Principles of Climate Justice:
  - Respect and Protect Human Rights
  - Support the Right to Development
  - Share Benefits and Burdens Equitably
  - Ensure that Decisions on Climate Change are Participatory, Transparent and Accountable
  - Highlight Gender Equality and Equity
  - Harness the Transformative Power of Education for Climate Stewardship
  - Use Effective Partnerships to Secure Climate Justice

# Participation – the Climate Justice Approach

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- Principle of Climate Justice:  
Ensure that Decisions on Climate Change are Participatory, Transparent and Accountable.
- The opportunity to participate in decision-making processes which are fair, accountable, open and corruption-free is essential to climate justice.
- The voices of the most vulnerable to climate change must be heard and acted upon.



# Why Participation?

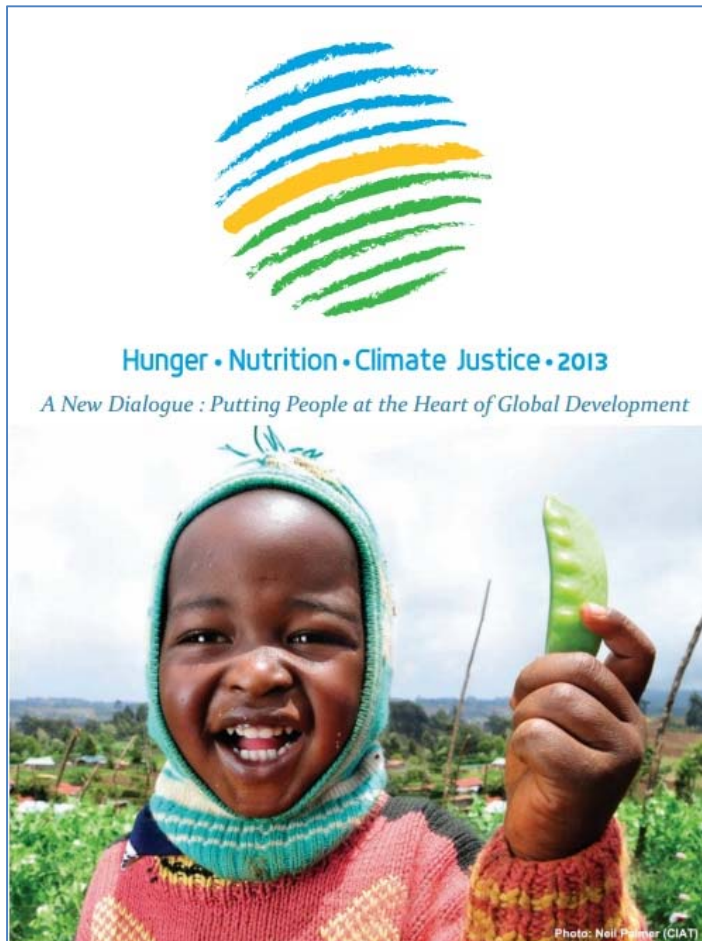
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- Full participation allows all voices to be heard – from key global decision makers to marginalised community members.
- Improving awareness and understanding of climate change is key to winning public support for climate related policies.
- The UNFCCC, through Article 6, calls on governments to educate, empower and engage all stakeholders and major groups on policies relating to climate change.
- Grassroots practitioners and vulnerable communities cannot engage in the global climate negotiations if they don't know about them.
- Widespread participation also allows these policy makers to learn from the people their decisions affect the most.



# Hunger • Nutrition • Climate Justice

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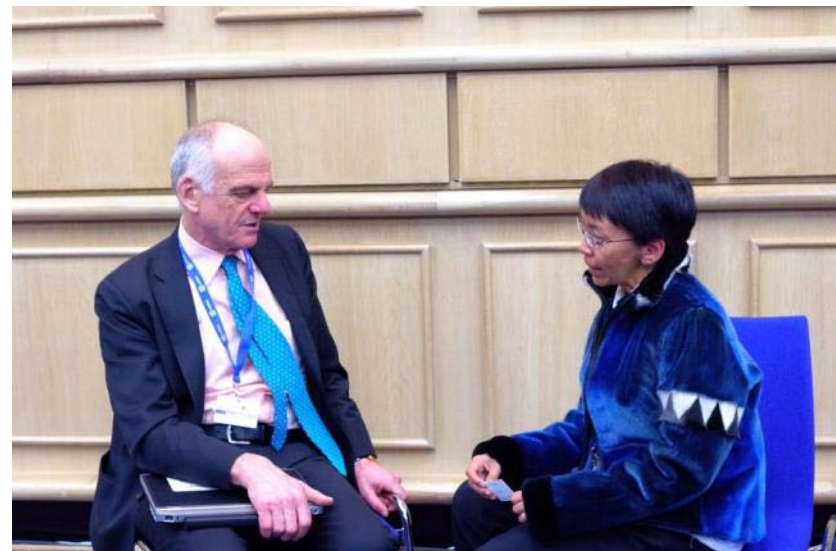
- Held in April 2013, and co-hosted by the Foundation and the Irish Government
- Participation in action
- 300 delegates, 100 of which represented grassroots communities across the world
- The conference sought to amplify the voices of those most affected by climate change – voices which are all too often ignored by global policy makers.

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# Lessons Learned

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- Bringing grassroots practitioners and policy makers together works
  - Grassroots representatives have the knowledge and ability to solve problems relating to climate change in their own areas
  - Bridging between these groups can inform effective climate solutions.



# Lessons Learned

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- The capacity of grassroots representatives needs to be strengthened to enable them to engage.
  - Policy makers need to take the time to ensure grassroots communities are engaged and aware of the processes in train in climate and development negotiations.
  - Grassroots practitioners have knowledge and skills to share.
  - High level policy makers have a responsibility to amplify their voices and empower them to tell their stories.



# Lessons Learned

- Strengthening institutions and establishing platforms for real dialogue among all stakeholders is necessary to catalyse change.
  - Real dialogue achieved using accessible language and innovative means of communication.



- Women are at the heart of effective solutions – there can be no real solutions without women’s involvement.
  - Women made up 46% of conference delegates
  - Equal rights are essential for women’s inclusion in these solutions



# Lessons Learned

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- The negative impact of climate change on the food and nutrition security of vulnerable households is an injustice, as they have done least to cause climate change.
- We should not be afraid to empower people and protect rights. Giving power to another can lead to positive change.
- By placing people at the centre, the clearest picture of the crisis facing the world's most vulnerable emerges.

