



Chapter 7 ..

Getting Active!



GETTING ACTIVE!

Here are four general steps on how to become an active and responsible global citizen and how to start a campaign.

Step 1: Find out, think and reflect!

Find out what is your impact on the world. Follow the news in the world media using quality media channels. Follow everyday news about your own community. Explore how global problems affect the daily lives of each person, the community and the society and how each one of us can influence this world. It is a learning process, which enables us to move from acknowledging problems towards personal responsibility and conscious actions and from there to international cooperation and sustainable human development.

Step 2: Reduce, reuse and recycle!

Reducing, reusing, and recycling can help you, your community and the environment by saving money, energy, and natural resources. Look for ways to produce less garbage in your everyday shopping. For example donate your clothes and other items you don't need in your household. Find out which recycling programs are in place in your community. An effective recycling and reusing community guarantees a more sustainable environment. In everyday shopping study the principles for ethical and modest consumption. While travelling, try to follow the same principles and show respect as a guest to the host culture.

Step 3: Support and build networks!

Support different campaigns and organisations that follow your principles as an active global citizen. Join the campaigns by spreading the word about global injustice and taking an active role in their events. Find out which of your local NGOs are working in development cooperation, sustainable development, global education and humanitarian aid and start volunteering in one of these organisations. You can start to spread the awareness on the challenges of globalisation and to promote tolerance, respect for human rights and solidarity for people living in poorer regions.

Step 4: Take action and start your own campaign!

Campaigning is all about creating change, whether in relation to an issue you personally feel strongly about, or change in your school, local community, nationally or internationally. For something to change, someone somewhere will need to do something different. Campaigning is about putting pressure on the people who need to be doing that different thing. Campaigning helps you make a difference to yourself and others across the globe. We all have a voice and we all have the right for this to be heard – campaigning about an issue is one way of getting your voice heard. We can use our voices and actions to put pressure on people who can make change happen.

Think about the issue you would like to change before starting a campaign. Ask yourself if you already know enough to become an expert on that issue. Before you launch a campaign about an issue you feel strongly about, you should be aware it takes work, some research, time and perseverance.

Invite other activists and people who could help you in launching the campaign and exchange ideas for collaboration. Build up a team for the campaign and start creating your action plan. Listen to what other team members have to say and encourage everyone to contribute their ideas. Don't forget to thank people for the work they do. If people feel valued and included, your team will be happier and more effective.

Try to link your campaign to the work of other NGOs, youth organisations etc. and invite new people to join your activities. This will help sustain the campaign. You should also involve the media in your activities and use your networks to spread the word about your campaign.

Think about your campaign message and the audience. All campaigns should include some basic

campaigning strategies: creating publicity to raise awareness, doing surveys to gauge people's feelings about an issue and gain support, running events to raise the profile of the issue, working with the media, speaking in public meetings, lobbying decision makers, protests and demonstrations, email actions and petitions.

For future campaigns, it is very important to evaluate your campaign after the activities have finished. After the activities, measure your success against what you planned to achieve.

Here are **3 activities** to help you and your team while starting a campaign:

1. Choose a picture!



Every participant chooses one of the 4 pictures and thinks of 5 activities related to the chosen picture. When you have looked through all the pictures ask yourself (and the group) the following questions:

- What methods of influencing people's opinions can I see in the pictures?
- Can I see familiar logos?
- Is it easy to run a campaign in my community and be active on a certain issue?
- What are the advantages of grass root activities and active citizenship?

Describe all the pictures and discuss the themes in a group.

2. Opinion finders

Here are 5 statement cards that you could read and fill in. Discuss the opinions with your group.

1. I would join a Facebook campaign to raise awareness of global poverty

YES	Which one?
NO	

2. I would write and perform a song

YES	What issue would you choose?
NO	

3. I would take part in a radio program

YES	What issue would you choose?
NO	

4. I would join an email campaigning group such as Christian Aid or Friend of the Earth and send occasional emails

YES	Which one?
NO	

5. I would buy a Fairtrade product

YES	What?
NO	

The best action is to put our arguments to (lobby) someone in a powerful position, e.g. write a letter or an email, send a petition or an opinion survey or visit them. It could be your Head Teacher, MP, someone from the council in charge of facilities for young people.	The best action is to find out which organisations can help us, and join their local, national or global campaigns.	The best action is to perform a play on how the issue affects people, e.g. in a school assembly, in primary schools etc.
The best action is to invite a guest speaker into your youth centre to talk about the issue, or to be part of a debate.	The best action is to make a leaflet, poster or collage on the issue and display it to people in your youth centre and in the local community.	The best action is to make different choices about your life based on what you have learnt, e.g. change what you eat, wear and spend money on. Other people will notice and follow your example.
The best action is to make a video, audio or photograph presentation to provide discussion about the issue, and get people to debate it.	The best action is to raise money and donate it to a charity working on the issue.	The best action is to work with the press, eg talk on local radio, invite them to an event.

3. Best Action cards

Put all the 9 action cards into a box, let every participant choose one card, read them out loud and discuss the statements with the entire group. Choose which action suits you the best.

Youth of the World!

The toolkit is specifically developed for non-formal youth settings. It can be used by youth workers, youth leaders, trainers or facilitators to raise awareness of global issues among young people, connecting them to communities across the world.

The present toolkit is the result of the project “Youth of the World! Mainstreaming Global Awareness in Youth Work”, co-funded by European Union. It was developed by a team of experts from six European countries, with a background in youth work and Global Education. The toolkit is based on research exploring attitudes of youth organizations towards global issues in relation to their own area of work. It was developed in close cooperation with young people, youth workers, trainers and other global education experts during two international project events: an International Workshop in Scotland (September, 2013) and an International Summer School for Youth Trainers in Cyprus (April, 2014).