

## **Background Information**

### **What is environmentalism?**

Environmentalism is a movement aiming to protect the quality of our natural environment. By changing human activity that harms the environment in our political, economic, and social spheres, we seek to make neutral our impact on the environment. It argues that living things and the entire environment are worthy of protection.

### **What is climate justice?**

Rather than framing climate change as just a scientific issue, climate justice sees the issue through an ethical or political point of view. This includes aspects of relating climate change to social and environmental justice, for example, in discussing issues relating to the environment that touch on equality and human rights. This is the main framework of ISEC.

### **What is grassroots?**

A grassroots organization or movement is one that is brought to life by a group of like-minded, “ordinary” people, seeking to solve a problem that will affect them—for ISEC, our leaders take on the issue of climate change. Grassroots groups are based on local context and local communities; the leaders are supported by people they come to know who believe in their cause. The power of grassroots organizations come from its people, the “grassroots,” who utilize their collective power to find solutions

## **The #OurPower Campaign**

### **End Fossil Fuel Infrastructure Development**

We must stop the construction of new fossil fuel projects immediately. Keep coal, natural gas, and oil in the ground. Fossil fuel emissions currently endanger millions of people with fatal heatwaves, food insecurity, and displacement from homes, to name a few of the many disastrous impacts. We cannot afford to add new extraction projects if our existing ones are already deadly.

### **Just Transition**

Fossil fuels are ancient history. We need a fast and just transition from dirty fossil fuels to renewable energy that leaves no one behind. We support community-led energy solutions that give the power to the people, not big companies.

### **Building an Inclusive Movement**

Striking is a privileged political action. Participating in strikes is unrealistic for members of underserved communities and illegal or dangerous in many countries in the Global South. While striking is important and supported by #OurPower, we encourage alternative means of action, including community-building, storytelling, art-based activism, and social media advocacy.

## **The Four Systems of Oppression**

Colonialism, racism, capitalism, and patriarchy are the four systems that are the root causes of climate change. Within our activism, we aim to tackle these systems. Without liberation from these four systems, we can never truly solve climate change.

### **Colonialism**

Colonialism can be thought of as control over a piece of land and its people by a more dominant power. Developed countries produce the most CO2 per person, yet the under-developed countries will be the one to face the blunt force of the climate devastation.

### **Racism**

Minorities are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis: the majority of fossil fuel projects are constructed around or near minority neighborhoods, impacting the health and well-being of those communities disproportionately.

### **Capitalism**

Capitalism can be defined as an economic and political system in which a country's trade and industry are controlled by private owners for profit, rather than by the state. Capitalism can lead to unchecked resource depletion for the profit of the few over the many, which does not take into account the destruction of the natural world and human life.

### **Patriarchy**

Women are more affected by the climate crisis than men. UN Gateway on Gender Equality and Empowerment found that 80% of people displaced by climate change are women. Women are more prone to experience poverty and have less socioeconomic power, according to UN Women. This makes it difficult to recover from disasters which affect infrastructure, jobs and housing.

### **Other Terms to Know**

**Anti-Oppression** - the act of working against oppressive structures and breaking down systems that marginalize certain groups of people for the benefit of dominant groups in society.

**Environmental Justice**- is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

**Capacity** - Your ability to do work. Some weeks are less busy than others, so I have more capacity at that time. Sometimes someone asks me to do something that I don't have time for, so I will say I do not currently have capacity.

**Just Transition** - The idea that economic transition is necessary in our communities, but that it alone is not enough. Just transition is an economic transition that is good for people (workers), good for our communities (keeps wealth in our communities) and

**Norms** - Social contracts of how we would like to behave as a group in order to be effective, efficient, and respectful.

**Oppression** - is the use of power to disempower, marginalize, silence or otherwise subordinate one social group or category, often in order to further empower and/or privilege the oppressor.

**Solidarity** - Standing up with communities who are impacted in order to support their initiatives and needs, putting the needs of those most impacted first, and lending our support and power to help them win.