

# WHERE CLIMATE MEETS RACE

**-Theory of Change**



# PROBLEM

A survey by Charity Finance Group (CFG) in 2021 revealed that only 16% of charities had net-zero targets or strategies in place. A third had begun to have conversations on climate with trustees, but there were various challenges around linking climate strategies to existing charitable objectives and understanding the practical changes that could be made. Within the Black and Minoritised Ethnic Voluntary Community Sector (BME VCS), organisations form the fabric of our network and remain a primary source of support and contact for the communities that they serve. Equally, they are having to operate in an increasingly volatile political and funding environment. As such, the environmental agenda has remained unprioritised if not untouched – leaving environmentalism in the voluntary sector and the climate movement as a whole in a state of inequity, and without the means to bring about climate justice in a way that leaves no one behind.



# PROBLEM

The disparities across air pollution, housing, fuel poverty, access to green and blue spaces, climate grief and loss in diaspora communities, a lack of diversity in the environmental sector itself, and persistent barriers into green jobs deepen the structural racism and inequity that minoritised and marginalised communities are subject to. Findings from New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) and the Race

Equality Foundation show that minoritised communities are made more vulnerable to the climate crisis through living in poorly adapted or crowded housing and in areas with greater air pollution and a lack of green space. They are less likely to benefit from policies on electric vehicles and solar panels whilst expressing more interest in green

jobs and active travel. We know that neither individual action nor government-led action alone will be enough to address these complex layers of injustice.



As a second-tier organisation, we recognise that the transformative potential of a green revolution will come from communities demanding and holding government and other decision makers to account for the full social and environmental implications of their actions, and failures to act. As decarbonisation and emission-reducing policies are inevitably rolled out, communicating climate clearly to the most affected communities and engaging them on policy implementation will be crucial.

Our work on climate will focus on putting climate and race on the agenda. This begins with building power from within our Sector and developing a shared vision for climate justice with the communities we work with. Capturing how the climate crisis is understood, experienced, and communicated at community levels will be critical to shaping our wider demands for racial justice and equity that is integral to a just transition that serves everyone. In the initial stages of learning, we hope to inspire hope and enthusiasm for taking positive and integrated action on climate and identify common areas of interest among our members.

# AIMS + PROCESS + IMPACT

## EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

Investing in nature means investing in people and communities to take care of our shared environment. We don't believe that humans are inherently harmful to nature. Instead, it is a false binary separating humans from the non-human world that has contributed to widespread harms to both people and planet. We have a greater chance at building a strong public mandate for climate action when we empower more communities to articulate and advocate for choices that do not favour polluting actors and policies and risk further climate breakdown.



# EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

We aim to do this through:

**Nature for All projects:** Connecting members and BME communities with likeminded groups who focus on creating safe and inclusive spaces for BME folk to get outdoors, get active, and build communities around the joy of being in nature

**Nature-based activities:** Working with environmental and conservation groups to organise activities to share expertise around regenerative food systems, urban greening initiatives, community gardening, bird watching, community-owned renewable energy schemes, nature restoration, and more

**Creative campaigns to centre BME voices on climate:** Bringing together a collection of stories and experiences from our Sector through different mediums on what home, a sense of place, and belonging in the natural world means to them, and making tangible what is at stake if we do not take fair and effective climate measures now





# AIMS + PROCESS + IMPACT

## INSPIRING ACTION AND LEARNING

Inspiring and strengthening community-led climate action starts with shared learning and collaborative efforts that allow communities to communicate climate to one another in ways that make sense to them. The aim is to build the groundwork for deeper engagement, introducing and exploring key concepts and areas around climate and environmental justice with opportunities for our members to share their own expertise, wisdom, and lived experience.



# INSPIRING ACTION AND LEARNING

We aim to create safe and supportive learning environments for our members on all of the following and more:

- Climate literacy and awareness building
- Dispelling climate change myths
- An intersectional and justice-based approach to climate action
- Establishing a holistic organisational environmental strategy
- Engaging with local climate action groups and networks
- Financing and resourcing community climate action
- Conservation, care, and stewardship
- Voting for climate







## INSPIRING ACTION AND LEARNING

We will be encouraging a take up of resources by amplifying the work already being done to bring climate justice to the forefront of discourses and decisions around the environment. Our understanding is that, far from being concerned about duplication, more of everything needs to happen – more conversations around climate, up to date information on policies, decisions, and laws around the environment, and relationship building to meet people where they are at. This is what true equity and engagement means to us.

# AIMS + PROCESS + IMPACT

## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN AND BEYOND THE SECTOR

We want to see our Sector and its beneficiaries better engaged and represented in climate solutions and relevant decision-making processes. This is only possible if we are well informed and harness every opportunity to be more knowledgeable. Over time, we want to see these efforts culminate into a sector-wide voice and commitment towards equitable climate action with organisations, V4CE included, having a greater ability to inform and influence climate policy so that it is as inclusive and equitable as possible.



# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN AND BEYOND THE SECTOR

We want to play a role in creating these opportunities by:

Bringing together traditional conservationist environmental groups and BME VCS Organisations: A convening opportunity to take climate justice further and build a shared understanding on how climate solutions will play out in local communities

Organising Sector-wide climate conventions and roundtable events: To continue enriching our knowledge on the climate crisis, staying accountable as a Sector to our shared commitments on climate, and making the time and space to reflect and respond to a changing climate and political landscape



At the core of it, our work will look to challenge the structure and ideology of racial capitalism that sees land, resources, risks, fatality, and burdens distributed unevenly and unfairly along the lines of race. This means integrating into our existing policy and advocacy work a way of highlighting the effects of the climate crisis that is compounded with existing inequities in employment, income, education, health, housing, fuel poverty, and access to green space and green jobs. We look to emphasise climate solutions that do not leave social inequalities and injustices untouched and further entrenched.

