

Step forward for Equality: Earth Day 2026

Take a step forward if... activity

Through this physical activity, participants will gain an understanding of how climate change affects everyone across the globe. Climate-related questions will be asked one at a time and members will be asked to “take a step forward if” that event has occurred in their lifetime.

Step 1: Have participants line up along one side of the meeting space, shoulder-to-shoulder, facing the moderator on the other side of the room. Modify the movement if someone is unable to stand or step forward with raising hands and keeping a tally. If your club is meeting virtually, have everyone put their cameras on.

Step 2: The moderator will read each of the below statements starting with "Take a step forward if..." If the participant has experienced what is being described in their own life, they take a step forward. It is up to the group which questions they will ask and how many. Your club can add or modify the questions based on their geographical location and demographics. If your club is meeting virtually, each participant can raise their hand to indicate for each item they have experienced in their life.

Step 3: At the end, the moderator will read an impact statement on how every step the participants took during the activity represents how they are impacted by climate change and why climate justice is important for ensuring equality for women and girls.

Take a step forward if...

1. You have ever had to leave your home due to the weather or weather-caused risks to your safety.
2. You have ever had to treat your water to make it drinkable.
3. You cannot work in your garden or exercise outside as you normally would due to heat.
4. Your energy bills have increased without an increase in usage.
5. Your insurance premiums have increased without a change of lifestyle.
6. You have seen more [floods/fires/droughts] in the last 10 years than your whole life.
7. You have experienced more severe storms in the last 10 years than your whole life.
8. Food and water have quickly gotten more scarce or more expensive.
9. Your allergies have become more severe or prolonged.
10. Any existing breathing problems have gotten worse.
11. You have seen animals typically not living in urban or suburban areas within those areas.
12. You are a woman.
13. You are considered a minority in your community.
14. You were alive during the last decade.



Impact Statement:

Please take a moment to reflect on where you are in the room and where others are compared to where we all started from.

From natural disasters to food security, health, access to clean water and migration, our changing climate already has severe implications for women and girls across the globe and in this room. Climate change affects women and men differently due to the gendered division of labor, cultural norms and different societal roles. Girls face discrimination and abuse based on their gender. Poverty, ethnic background and disabilities multiply these challenges.

Within the last decade, the effects and impacts of climate change have multiplied. Understanding the current status of women and girls, unequal structures and unfair cultural norms, and making changes are important in order to tackle inequalities in structures that place the greatest burden of the consequences of climate change on girls and women.

Zonta's role within this issue is best seen within our actions that challenge harmful norms that target women and girls. We strive for climate justice by addressing the needs of women and girls during these crises and encourage them to take decision-making positions so that their voices are included as we build a better world for women and girls.

I ask that you all now form one line and take a step forward, saying "NOW" as we work together to find gender-equal solutions to climate change.