

Intersectional Environmentalism

United Rising (UR) Campaign



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"Empowering a Greater Future, Rising as One"

United Rising (UR) is an organization fostering collaboration toward the well-being of the planet and its inhabitants from a holistic point of view.





Preamble

United Rising (UR) recognises the profound importance of intersectionality and actively promotes the crucial practice of acknowledging our inherent limited beliefs – shaped by our diverse backgrounds, education, culture, sense of identity, and more. It is through this deliberate recognition that we aspire to transcend these limitations and foster a more inclusive system.

Reflecting upon these multifaceted factors and understanding their potential impact on our perspectives is of paramount importance in cultivating a more nuanced and well-informed comprehension of environmental challenges. This is an invitation to question the teachings we have received and to critically look at our biases and privileges – manifested in our collective behaviours, policies, and standards. It is within this exploration that we find the motivation to expand our sense of responsibility and change our response to the challenges our planet faces.

Until we recognise and actively safeguard the fundamental rights of every inhabitant on this planet indiscriminately, our efforts will remain focused on addressing the symptoms of environmental issues rather than effectively tackling their underlying root causes.

With a sincere intention, UR seeks to imbue the term "intersectionality" with a positive connotation, acknowledging the immense potential we have to fully recognise the beauty that lies within our diversities. It is through them that we discover our similarities and humanity. From this recognition stems the opportunity to rise stronger, united as one.



" May this campaign serves us to reinforce our profound commitment, one that reminds us that our apparent disparities reveal shared ties and the interconnectedness of our existence.

Within the intricate fabric of our diversity lies the very essence of our shared humanity, where our similarities not only coexist but become progressively more apparent.

Together, bound by a common purpose, let's unveil our collective strength through acceptance and respect"

Yasmine Rugarli,

Founder and Director of United Rising



"The incorporation of intersectionality is pivotal when addressing contemporary environmental challenges. By acknowledging the interconnection of such issues with diverse forms of oppression, this collective approach will help in fostering a future marked by sustainability and social justice, conferring benefits on the environment and on every individual"

Lucila Abian



"Formulating how intersectionality connects to the association's core values and activities, for me, provides a way of lifting the concept beyond theoretical use towards concrete application. This helps us to harness the full potential of intersectionality as a tool to achieve sustainable, equitable solutions"

Vera Zonneveld



Table of Contents

6	Defining Intersectional Environmentalism	20	UR's Intersectionality campaign objective
9	Intersectionality - A paramount approach to sustainability	28	Concluding Remarks
13	UR's commitment to Intersectionality		



1 - Defining Intersectional Environmentalism

What is intersectional environmentalism?

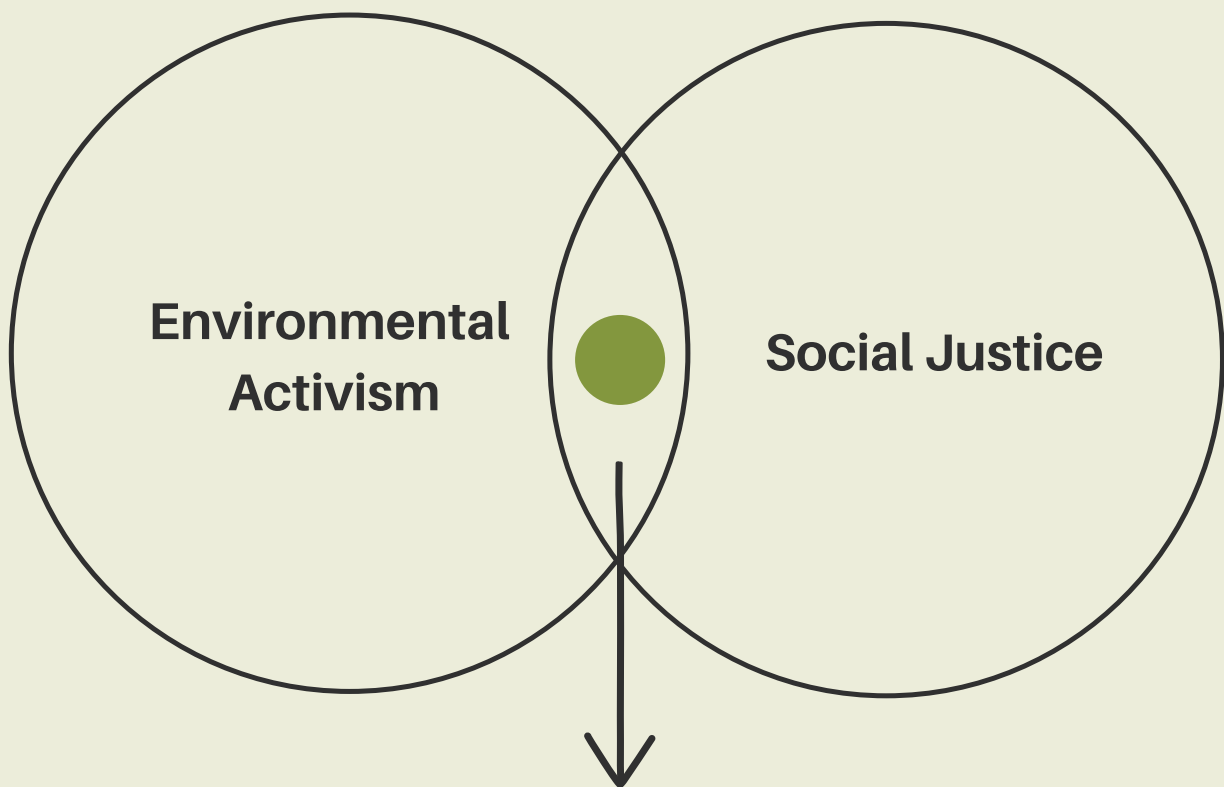
Intersectionality presents a comprehensive framework for addressing the complex challenges of our modern society. By acknowledging the interconnections among social, economic, and environmental issues, it emphasises that these challenges cannot be effectively tackled in isolation.

The term intersectionality recognize that individuals possess multiple intersecting identities, such as class, gender, ethnicity, religion, physical appearance, sexuality, ability, and more. These identities shape their experiences, exposing them to varying forms and layers of oppression or privileges.



In the context of environmental protection, intersectionality is built on this aforementioned premise. It relates to the recognition that such issues are never only about the environment, per se, but are inherently rooted in our power structures and history. These are key factors that shape our decision-making process which, frequently, evaluates only a small portion of the population's needs or side of the globe. Here is where intersectionality comes into play, to mitigate this widespread approach.

ADVOCATING FOR THE PLANET AND PEOPLE



Intersectional Environmentalism

The origins of "intersectionality"

"If you see Inequality as a
"them" problem or
"unfortunate other"
problem, that is the
problem"

-Kimberly Crenshaw-



Kimberly Crenshaw, a prominent scholar of critical race theory, coined the term "intersectionality" in 1991 to describe the unique experiences of African American women who faced multiple forms of oppression within the feminist movement. She highlighted the shortcomings of feminism at that time, pointing out that it failed to incorporate the perspectives of women from diverse backgrounds, including different social classes, ethnicities, sexual orientations, abilities, and more. The feminist movement was predominantly centred around the experiences of white, middle-class, heterosexual, able-bodied women, both consciously and unconsciously, neglecting the realities of other marginalized groups. Crenshaw emphasized that not all forms of inequality are the same, and called for a more inclusive and intersectional approach to address the various layers of oppression faced by different individuals.

Intersectional feminism is a *"prism for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other"*. With this statement Crenshaw recognizes that distinct types of discrimination and privilege do not exist in isolation, but rather interact and overlap, resulting in complex and frequently compounded experiences of oppression and marginalization.

2 - Intersectionality - A paramount approach to Sustainability



Intersectionality in the context of sustainability, advocates for the fulfilment of the present needs without jeopardising the needs of the future generations. Simultaneously, it recognises the interconnectedness of various social identities such as ethnicity, gender, class, ability and their relationship with environmental challenges. More specifically, it takes into account how different forms of oppression, such as racism, sexism, and classism, intersect with environmental degradation. This is an inclusive version of environmentalism that advocates for both the protection of people and the planet. Therefore, it pays attention to particular structures and social power dynamics which are reflected in the effect and management of environmental challenges.

The effects of the environmental crisis are not uniform as they affect proportions of the population differently in terms of the ability to adapt, mitigate and survive. Hence, Intersectionality acknowledges that they should not be treated in the same manner - rather, by framing strategies that apply a variety of ideologies and approaches to promote greater respect for the planet and its inhabitants. As it identifies the ways in which vulnerable groups are often more affected by these issues, it also questions whether the different experiences and needs of the most marginalised are taken into account or silenced in the design of policies and solutions.

One example of this is the effect of climate change on vulnerable communities, such as Indigenous people. These communities have a deep connection to their lands and rely on their traditional practices for sustenance. However, they bear a disproportionate burden of the consequences of climate change, including the loss of biodiversity, the disruption of ecosystems, and the encroachment of extractive industries on their territories. These threats not only endanger their cultural heritage but also undermine their livelihoods and overall well-being.

Therefore, intersectionality fosters solutions that not only address environmental degradation but also work towards social justice, equity and inclusivity.



Fields of Intersectionality

Fields of intersectionality.

Intersectionality is a vast term that can be applied in a myriad of contexts. Within the field of intersectional environmentalism, UR principally focuses on the following topics:

- **Environmental justice**
- **Climate justice**
- **Indigenous Rights and Land Stewardship**
- **Gender and environment**
- **Resource management inefficiencies**
- **Socio-economic inequalities**
- **Water and food accessibility**
- **Intersectional education and advocacy**



Multi-use of Intersectionality for a sustainable future

Analytical tool

Firstly, intersectionality can be used as an analytical approach to problem-solving. Applying an intersectional lens in research allows for identifying problems from different perspectives and analysing who benefits and who loses from proposed solutions.

Policy tool

Second, intersectionality can be used as a policy tool to facilitate the implementation of democratic and inclusive interventions.

Legal tool

Lastly, intersectionality can be used as a legal tool that promotes human-rights-based approaches in environmental justice cases. Examples of intersectionality guidelines are provided under "Policy guidelines and principles" (*page 26*).

3 - UR's commitment to Intersectionality

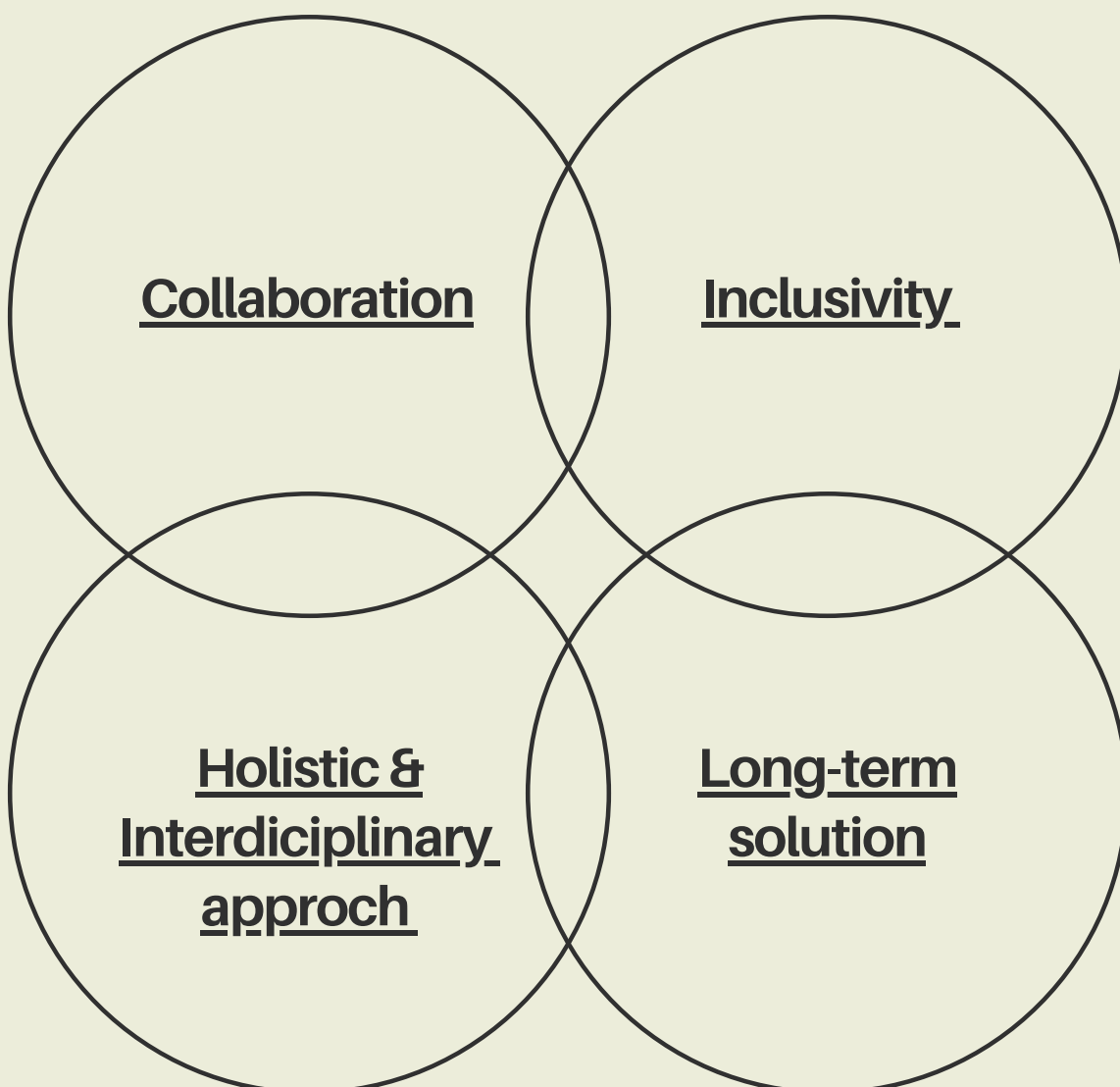
UR's core mission revolves around promoting the overall well-being of the planet and its inhabitants, adopting a comprehensive and holistic perspective. To fulfil this mission, our primary objective is to advocate for long-term and inclusive solutions that cater to our ecological, social, and economic needs.

UR believes that raising awareness about the fundamental importance of intersectionality can contribute to a more holistic and inclusive approach to addressing environmental issues. Recognizing intersectionality is fundamental to understanding and addressing the root causes of such challenges. Reflecting on these elements and acknowledging their potential impact on our viewpoint is essential for cultivating a more nuanced and informed comprehension of environmental issues.



The core role of intersectionality in UR's 4 working pillars

UR is dedicated to the integration of intersectionality within our four working pillars and general approach. By doing so, we endeavour to cultivate impactful and effective solutions that foster reciprocal care for individuals and the environment, all while actively addressing and mitigating inequalities.



1 - Collaboration

UR stands for collective actions towards the promotion of global welfare. From a world where competition overshadows collaboration, UR believes in harmonized actions, worldwide cohesion and cooperation towards common targets. Including intersectionality within our collaboration efforts allows the recognition and incorporation of perspectives of individuals with diverse professional or discipline backgrounds. We believe that working via this collaborative approach can help us tackle complex challenges more effectively, and develop innovative and sustainable solutions for a better tomorrow.

2 - Inclusivity

UR is dedicated to prioritizing inclusivity over marginalization as a significant barrier to achieving a just and efficient world. By adopting an intersectional lens, we aim to foster inclusivity and solidarity within society. Intersectionality emphasizes the importance of amplifying the voices of marginalized communities. It recognizes that inclusive and participatory decision-making processes are essential for developing policies and effective solutions in the long term.

We firmly believe that incorporating intersectionality into our pursuit of inclusivity will strengthen the efforts to address social and environmental issues - while providing equal opportunities for individuals to contribute, prosper, and benefit from inclusive initiatives.

3 - Long-term solutions

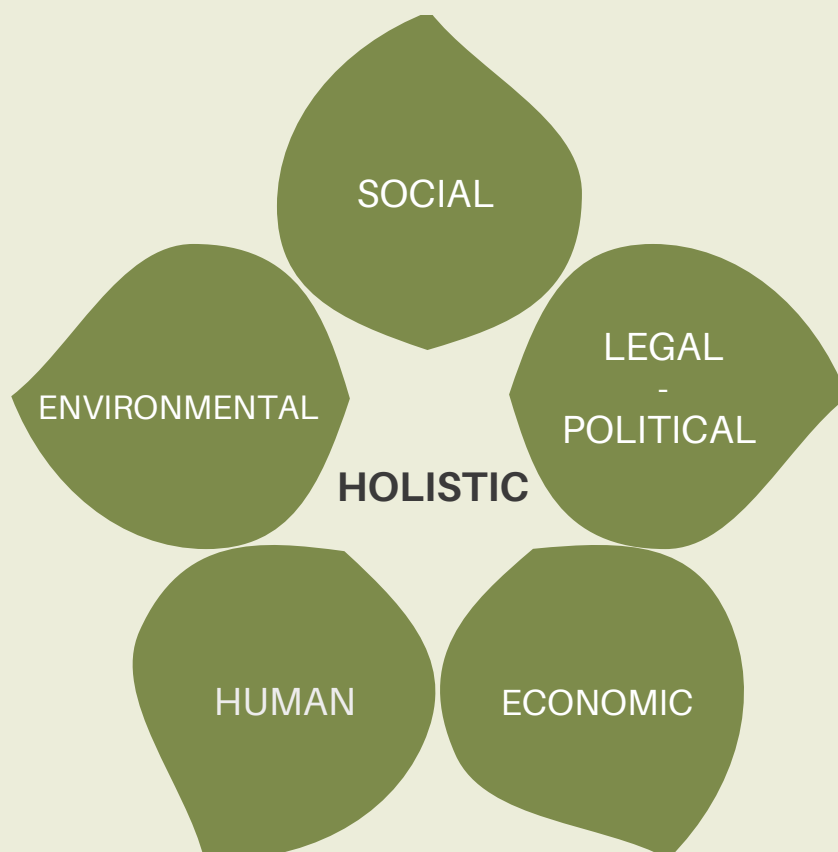
UR strongly advocates for prioritizing long-term solutions over short-term gains - recognizing the need to go beyond mere harm prevention and instead fostering regenerative solutions for the environments and communities. We are committed to shifting from a reactive stance, towards the environment, to a more proactive and responsive approach. Therefore, intersectionality contributes to this regeneration by addressing root inequalities that underlie environmental problems, and by empowering marginalised groups. It encourages a broader range of perspectives and knowledge systems, which are essential for developing comprehensive and innovative solutions that sustain our resources while meeting the needs of present and future generations.



4 - Holistic and interdisciplinary approach

The concept of intersectionality aligns seamlessly with the holistic approach adopted by UR, as it acknowledges and addresses the intricate interdependencies among ecological, social, and economic systems. Therefore, intersectionality allows us to delve deeper into the complex web of relationships that exist within society and the environment. This understanding gives us the opportunity to develop more inclusive and effective strategies, that address the specific needs of different groups and communities.

In order to cultivate sustainable and comprehensive solutions, UR actively promotes an interdisciplinary approach, leveraging the diverse disciplinary backgrounds of our members and engaging external partners with a range of expertise and experience.



The Significance of Intersectionality in UR's working scope

UR uses intersectionality as a framework to achieve concrete goals. UR strives to incorporate an intersectionality lens when working towards the organization's three key objectives.

1 - Fostering more efficient management of our resources

By applying an intersectional approach we seek to understand how various social, economic, and environmental factors intersect and impact resource management. This enables us to develop comprehensive strategies that consider the diverse needs and perspectives of different communities, ensuring equitable access to resources and fostering sustainable practices.



" Our current planetary challenges require a fundamental extension of our sense of belonging and responsibility "

United Rising



2 - Encouraging an inclusive and sustainable model of living.

By acknowledging intersecting identities and experiences, we strive to create inclusive and sustainable solutions that address the unique challenges faced by different groups. This includes prioritizing access to shelter, healthcare, food, and clean water, essential services and the adoption of sustainable lifestyles that respect cultural diversity and social equity.

3 - Promoting a more inclusive and sustainable model of governance

By embracing intersectionality, we aim to enhance the inclusivity, transparency, and effectiveness of governance structures and processes. This involves engaging diverse stakeholders, including marginalized communities and underrepresented groups, in decision-making processes.

4 - UR's Intersectionality campaign objective

UR is committed to fostering intersectionality in our objective of addressing social, economic, and environmental long-term challenges. Therefore, we are proud to launch this intersectionality campaign that includes the following actions:

- **Research Development**
- **Education & Awareness**
- **Community Engagement**
- **Partnership and
Collaboration**
- **Policy Advocacy**



1 - Research development

In order to cultivate a greater understanding of intersectionality within the realm of sustainability, UR is actively engaged in internal research initiatives. These studies delve into the intricate complexities and interconnections of social, economic, and environmental issues, offering valuable insights into how intersectionality can inform and shape sustainable practices and policies. By undertaking these research endeavours, we also aim to foster a culture of continuous improvement, ensuring that our actions and initiatives are constantly evolving and adapting to address the ever-changing landscape of sustainability challenges.

Our research is shared through various platforms, including our website, social media channels, and partnerships with other organizations. We aim to create a knowledge-sharing ecosystem that fosters dialogue, inspires action, and encourages individuals and organizations to incorporate intersectional sustainability into their work.



**United Rising
publications here:**

[United Rising website](#)

**[United Rising social
medias](#)**



2- Education and awareness

Advocating for intersectional sustainability starts with developing further education and awareness. We believe that education empowers communities by equipping them with knowledge. We particularly aim to include marginalized communities in the dialogue, to educate them on their rights and way to mitigate the impacts of environmental degradation. Furthermore, education fosters empathy, understanding and respect for diverse identities, as well as lived experiences. Developing an inclusive society, that values and embraces the contribution of every human being, is the first fundamental step towards a sustainable environment.

Our objective is to organize workshops and webinars to raise awareness and produce more in-depth information and understanding surrounding intersectionality. We aim to organize events which will feature guest speakers such as academics, legislators, organisations/resource persons with different backgrounds, engaging with participants and encouraging them to think critically about sustainability issues.



3 - Community engagement and empowerment

UR is committed to fostering intersectionality for a more sustainable future through community engagement, with a strong focus on amplifying voices, listening and learning.

Through this intersectionality campaign, we aim actively engage with diverse communities, seeking their input and collaboration – uplifting the perspectives, stories, and experiences of individuals from diverse backgrounds. By centring marginalized narratives, UR aims to challenge dominant narratives, raise awareness, and create space for inclusive dialogue.

4 - Partnership and collaboration

UR understands the importance of collaboration and partnerships in promoting intersectionality. We actively seek collaborations with organizations and groups working on issues related to social justice, environmental justice, and intersectionality. By joining forces, we want to leverage collective expertise, resources, and networks to create a more inclusive and sustainable future. Further collaborations will allow us to address systemic inequalities, advocate for inclusive policies, and develop holistic solutions that consider the diverse perspectives and needs of marginalized communities.



Partnership & Collaboration

Collaborating with stakeholders

To maximize our impact, UR is actively seeking further collaboration with the following stakeholders:

- **Academic institutions**
- **Members of academia - students, lecturers, educators and experts**
- **NGOs & Public agencies**
- **Activist groups and Movements**
- **Local communities**
- **Corporations & Businesses**
- **Media outlets**
- **Artists**





5 - Policy advocacy.

In pursuit of UR's long-term vision, the organization is committed to implementing an intersectional approach on a broader scale. UR recognizes the importance of promoting intersectionality in the public arena and at a policy level.

To achieve this, specific actions will be taken to empower marginalized communities and enhance community engagement.

Policy principles and guidelines

Outlined are key principles and guidelines that serve as the foundation for these actions. These principles draw inspiration from existing practices centred around intersectionality and decision-making. UR is dedicated to promoting these principles within organizations, institutions, research initiatives, and among policymakers.



Policy guidelines and principles

Inclusive participation and representation

Encourage the participation of marginalised communities, including women, Indigenous peoples, youth, and other disadvantaged groups, in the development, implementation, and evaluation of environmental policies. This includes the recognition, valuation and openness towards diverse knowledge systems, experiences, and perspectives.

Equity and environmental justice

Incorporate principles of equity and environmental justice into policy frameworks, aiming to address historical and present inequalities regarding the distribution of environmental benefits and burdens. Consider the disproportionate impacts of environmental degradation on marginalised communities and work towards remedying these disparities.

Interdisciplinary collaboration

Foster collaboration and cooperation across disciplines, sectors, and stakeholders. Encourage interdisciplinary research and policymaking processes that integrate environmental science, social sciences, and humanities to develop comprehensive and context-specific solutions.

Gender mainstreaming

Implement gender mainstreaming strategies to address gender inequalities and promote gender-sensitive environmental policies. Consider the different experiences, roles, and needs of women, men, and gender-diverse individuals in relation to environmental issues.

Indigenous Rights and traditional knowledge

Respect and uphold the rights of Indigenous peoples, including their rights to land, resources, and self-determination. Recognise and integrate Indigenous knowledge systems, practices, and perspectives into environmental decision-making processes.

Global partnerships and cooperation

Foster international partnerships and cooperation to address environmental intersectionality effectively. Encourage collaboration between governments, civil society organisations, academia, private sector entities, and international institutions to promote shared responsibility and collective action.





Concluding Remarks

This campaign is driven by our recognition that effective intersectional leadership requires qualities such as curiosity, listening, openness, and creativity. Consequently, we view this campaign as an ever-evolving project, understanding that intersectionality itself is a principle that continually unfolds.

Although our guidelines are grounded in overarching principles, we remain mindful of the dynamic nature of intersectionality. We adapt and refine our approach as we learn and grow – ensuring our efforts align with the changing landscape of social justice.

This campaign is not a standalone project – rather, it is an integral component of United Rising's comprehensive framework, permeating all our projects and practices. It is deeply rooted in our mission to contribute to equitable and sustainable solutions for the planet and its inhabitants.

As an organization, our role is to advocate for heightened awareness of intersectionality at both the individual and public levels. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the possible limitations of our own perspectives, which motivates us to establish an environment conducive to mutual learning and growth. Through open dialogue and collaboration, we strive to foster understanding, inclusivity, and collective growth.

Together, let us unite in our unwavering commitment to foster intersectionality and strive towards a future where diversity is celebrated, voices are amplified, and equitable solutions are actualised to the benefit of all.



United Rising



For ongoing updates, support, and active participation in our collective efforts toward building a more sustainable world, we invite you to visit our website and connect with us on social media.

Click here for:

[United Rising website](#)

[United Rising social media](#)