# Voices for All

## HOW AKIDWA CHAMPIONS INCLUSIVE GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

### Why Global Citizenship Education Matters

In today's rapidly changing world, GCE is more important than ever. As defined by Irish Aid Global Citizenship: Education is a lifelong learning process that seeks to raise public awareness and understanding of the complex, interconnected, and unequal world we live in. It helps people make sense of complex global dynamics; climate change, poverty, inequality and connects these global challenges to personal and local realities.

At its core, GCE is about awareness and responsibility. It empowers individuals to see beyond their own environment, to think critically, and to take intentional action that contributes to a more just, equal, and sustainable world.

Ireland recognized this need in 2021 when the Government launched the Irish Aid Global Citizenship Education Strategy 2021–2025, with the goal of strengthening public understanding of development and global justice issues. But such strategies can only reach their full potential if marginalized communities are included not just as beneficiaries, but as active stakeholders shaping the conversation.

> *"I have never heard of the Sustainable Development Goals before..."*
> *"I have seen it on the TV, but I have other things to care about."*
> *"Isn't that a government or United Nations thing?"*

These are some of the common reactions AkiDwA encounters during the opening sessions of its Global Citizenship Education (GCE) workshops. They highlight a very real challenge: the gap between global aspirations like the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and people's everyday realities. More importantly, they reveal how disconnected individuals often feel from the global justice issues, and the belief that change is someone else's responsibility.

### How AkiDwA Bridges the Gap

This is where AkiDwA steps in. Building on its track record of empowering migrant women, AkiDwA is implementing the Together for a Better World project which began in 2020. At its heart, the project supports migrant women and women from indigenous backgrounds in Ireland to engage in development education, reflect on their roles and responsibilities as global citizens, and take action towards creating a fairer and more sustainable future. The second phase of the project was launched in July 2023, funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs.

To date, the project has:

- Reached over 500 women directly through GCE workshops, creating spaces where indigenous and migrant women engage in dialogue about global justice issues.
- Linked the global with the local, showing how issues like gender inequality and systemic discrimination play out in everyday life.
- Used SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) as entry points to reflect on structural inequalities and the role women can play in shaping a more equal and peaceful society.
- Amplified unheard voices, including designing a project and publishing a report that emerged from the powerful testimonies of migrant women living in emergency accommodation who participated in the program.

Women engaging during GCE training session in LImerick, May 2025

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In *Their Own Words*

The impact of this work is best expressed in the words of the participants themselves:

*“I want to see accelerated action in enforcing laws that protect women and also ensure that vulnerable women know their rights and can take actions against discrimination,” said a participant from Louth.*

*“I have learnt that my voice matters and I will use it to challenge inequality,” said another participant from Limerick.*

*“The training empowered me to confront my fears and step beyond my comfort zone. It taught me that becoming an effective global citizen and advocate for justice begins with personal growth and the courage to engage actively, standing up against all forms of injustice, starting with myself,” Participant, County Louth.*

*“I used to see SDGs as something very distant; I have learnt that everyone has a role in creating the changes we want to see,” said a participant from Limerick..*

These reflections illustrate the shift from disconnection to engagement. What starts as uncertainty transforms into empowerment, confidence, and active participation in global justice initiatives.

## Looking Ahead

Global Citizenship Education is not just about awareness, it's about action and inclusion. When migrant and indigenous women are equipped with knowledge and platforms to engage, they become catalysts for change, linking local realities with global justice.

AkiDwA's Together for a Better World project shows that inclusive GCE fosters agency, leadership, and courage. These women are not passive participants—they are shaping Ireland's path toward achieving the SDGs.

To build a fairer and more sustainable society, migrant and indigenous women must be recognized as key voices, contributing to policies, programs, and community initiatives. Their experiences and insights are essential in addressing inequalities and promoting gender justice.

- AkiDwA is an active member of the Irish Development Education Association (IDEA) and Coalition 2030, which has strengthened its capacity as a Global Citizenship Education organization and provided a platform for joint advocacy on global justice issues.
- Want to get involved? Email dev_edofficer@akidwa.ie or call 083 437 1211 to join AkiDwA's GCE training in your county.

Handing certificate to a training participants in Dundalk, March 2025

Action Day in Dundalk, March 2025

Certificate Handover in Galway for women who completed four sessions of AkiDwA GCE training

AkiDwA represented at the National stakeholders Forum on SDGs in Dublin Sep. 2025

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