



# LITTLE BOOK OF CHANGEMAKERS



**Irish Aid**

An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha agus Trádála  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



**Children  
in Crossfire**

GIVING CHILDREN THE CHANCE TO CHOOSE

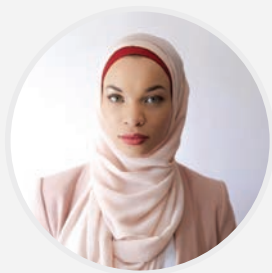


The term 'Changemaker' refers a person who takes action towards creating a fairer, more just and sustainable world for all.

When exploring the Sustainable Development Goals, as these are a universal set of goals, we can all act as changemakers and take action towards their achievement.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), are a set of 17 goals, set up in 2015 with the aim of creating a world free from extreme poverty and hunger, a world with zero inequalities, and a place where all life on land and below water is sustainably managed and protected.

This Little Book of Changemakers has been designed to inform you of a number of different changemakers from around the world, and explore the steps which they have taken towards achieving the SDGs. It also explores ways in which we can all work to help achieve these goals and to inspire us all to take action to create a world which is more compassionate and kind for everyone.



## Blair Imani

### DID YOU KNOW?

Blair Imani is a writer, mental health advocate and historian from the United States and is also the director of Equality for HER, an organisation which campaigns for gender equality across the world and acts as a platform for raising awareness and increasing understanding of marginalised groups within society.

As well as this, Blair Imani is the official ambassador for Muslims

for Progressive Values and is very involved in campaigning to raise support for members of the LGBTQ+ community.

As a public speaker, Blair has been invited to present at various conferences around the world including in Kenya, the UK, and the United States. She has also recently published a book entitled *Modern HERstory: Stories of Women and Nonbinary People Rewriting History*.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Find out more about Equality for Her at <https://equalityforher.com/> and support their campaigns to raise awareness of gender justice issues.



## Mary & Martin Gallagher

### DID YOU KNOW?

Martin Gallagher is an activist from Derry, Ireland, who campaigns for an end to poverty fuel for older people across Northern Ireland. Since the establishment of the NI Pensioners Parliament in 2011, one of the main issues which has arisen every year is that of high energy fuel prices, ensuring that many people cannot heat their homes over the winter period.

Through participating in the Warm Home Discount campaign, Martin lobbies for an increase in pensions, as well as a decrease in the high oil prices in Northern Ireland, to help

ensure that all people have access to heat and energy.

As well as this, Martin and his wife Mary are also great supporters of the work of Children in Crossfire and every year carry out Santa's Big Fundraising Appeal in memory of their son, Christopher, who passed away in 2006 after contracting Malaria. Since beginning, Martin and Mary have raised a massive £70,000 to help support Early Childhood Development programmes in Tanzania and Ethiopia.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Call on the government to legislate for access to heating as a right for all, and get involved in the Warm Home Discount Campaigns:  
<https://www.agesectorplatform.org/news/fuel-poverty-awareness-day-2019>



## Kelvin Doe

### DID YOU KNOW?

Kelvin Doe, also known as DJ Focus, is an engineer from Sierra Leone who is well known for his self-taught engineering style. Following the end of the Civil War in Sierra Leone, at 13 years old, Kelvin began to make his own batteries from tin cups to help provide electricity for people's homes which were affected by the war.

Following on from this, he then created a generator out of homemade spare parts which he used to power a community radio station, which he also built using recycled materials. "They call me DJ Focus because I believe if you focus, you can do an invention

perfectly", he once said in an interview.

In 2012, at the age of 15, Kelvin went on to become the youngest ever visiting practitioner within the MIT International Development Initiative, where he presented his inventions to other students, and assisted with the engineering teaching practices at Harvard University.

Through his work Kelvin has inspired many people around the world to become more creative in their use of energies and resources, and to nurture and spread that creativity to those around them.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Switch to alternative energy sources in your home and help combat the huge issue of fossil fuels which we face globally.



## Katie Eder

### DID YOU KNOW?

Katie Eder is a student activist from Wisconsin, America, who helped organise the **50 Miles More** movement as a means of campaigning for gun reform within the United States. As part of this campaign, she organised a number of marches from her school to Janesville, the hometown of Paul Ryan, who was the former Speaker of the House within the US, to protest his role in blocking and burying gun legislation.

Following on from this, Katie also led in the forging of alliances with other youth-led organisations to create the **Future Coalition**, which acts as a community to support young people to take action to create a safer and more just world for all. This coalition was launched in September 2018 with the **Walkout to Vote** campaign, in which over 500 schools across America walked out of their schools and marched to their local election polls.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Organise a march to support the 50 Miles More Campaign and help campaign for the reformation of gun laws within the United States: <https://50milesmore.org/host-march/>



## Afroz Shah

### DID YOU KNOW?

Afroz Shah is a lawyer from India, who is better known for being the organiser of the world's largest ever beach clean. Versova beach, located in Mumbai, was once seen as one of the world's filthiest beaches; a dumping ground for both tourists and residents to offload their rubbish on to.

In October 2015, Afroz visited Versova beach and began picking up the rubbish, and continued to do so every day for 3 years until the beach was completely cleaned. After a few weeks of beginning this, he soon got recognised for

the work he was doing and more and more people got involved in the clean.

In June 2018, after just under 3 years since the first piece of rubbish was removed, Versova beach clean-up finally came to an end with the re-arrival of sea life to its waters.

As well as this, due to Afroz Shah's campaigning, India has pledged to eliminate all single-use plastic within the country by 2022, which is a great success towards achieving the SDGs.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Become part of the **#cleanseas** movement by organising a beach clean-up at your nearest coastline.



## Sameer Jha

### DID YOU KNOW?

Sameer Jha is a young activist from Fremont, California who campaigns for equality for all people, with a particular focus on those from the LGBTQ+ community. After having experienced bullying himself at school; at the age of 14, Sameer established The Empathy Alliance as a means of supporting young LGBTQ+ people in their schools and communities. Through promoting the creation of safe spaces, stocking his school's library with queer friendly books, and encouraging all youth serving adults to participate in Gender Spectrum training, The Empathy Alliance campaigns for an end to

bullying of LGBTQ+ young people and an increase in awareness and understanding in the communities which they work.

Since its establishment in 2016, The Empathy Alliance has spread its message of compassion and empathy to over 1 million people across the United States. Sameer now works to reach wider audiences through hosting workshops, radio shows and panel events throughout the year. As well as this, he has also collaborated with a number of other LGBTQ+ activist groups such as Gender Spectrum, GLAAD and Frameline Films.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Visit <https://www.theempathyalliance.org/> to find out about the work that the Empathy Alliance do, and get involved in their campaigns.





## Sophie Cruz

### DID YOU KNOW?

Sophie Cruz is a young American activist who campaigns for immigration reform in the United States. Sophie was first recognised for her activism when, at the age of just 6 years old, she wrote and delivered a letter to Pope Francis asking him to advocate for immigration reform for the 11 million undocumented people living within the United States. Within her letter, Sophie said that immigrants “deserve to live with dignity, they

deserve to be respected, they deserve immigration reform, because it would be beneficial to my country, and because they have earned it working very hard”. Since then, Sophie has continued to educate people about immigration reform, through carrying out talks in various spaces such as the White House, the United States Supreme Court and the 2017 Women’s March.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Advocate for equal rights for all people by following the work of Amnesty International, and get involved in their Human Rights campaigns: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/get-involved>



# Xiuhtezcatl Roske-Martinez

## DID YOU KNOW?

Xiuhtezcatl Roske-Martinez (first name pronounced Shoe-Tez-Caht) is an indigenous hip hop artist, climate activist and youth director of Earth Guardians; an environmental campaigning group which uses art, music, storytelling and civic engagement to raise awareness of the climate crisis we are all facing across the world. Beginning his activism when he was just 6 years old, Xiuhtezcatl has since been invited to speak around the world and urged people to take action to help combat climate change. As well as participating in

a number of global events, such as the Rio+20 United Nations Summit and addressing the UN General Assembly in New York, Xiuhtezcatl has also worked with smaller communities to help ban the use of pesticides within local parks, assisted in campaigns to prevent fracking from taking place, and has acted as a lead plaintiff in a youth-led lawsuit against the US government regarding their lack of protection of the world's atmosphere for future generations.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

Download Earth Guardians 'Earth Tracks' app and take steps towards creating a more protected and respected world for all:  
<https://www.earthguardians.org/earthtracks>



## Padmanaban Gopalan

### DID YOU KNOW?

According to the United Nations, 1/3 of the food we produce on a global scale gets wasted every year. Padmanaban Gopalan is a young activist from Coimbatore, India, who advocates for an end to this food waste. Through his establishment of the 'No Food Waste' organisation, Padmanaban encourages people to share their surplus food with others who may be in need of it. Whether it's after a large event such as a wedding, a restaurant, or someone has simply bought more food than they need, the No Food Waste organisation offers to collect your

extra food and drop it off to share with others. As well as this, through the creation of 'Food and Beverage ATMs', Padmanaban creates spaces within restaurants and food shops where people can store and share their excess food without having to pay for it. A food and beverage ATM acts as a 'walk in fridge' which can be installed in a shop or restaurant and can be accessed by anybody. As well as this, those who dine or shop within these spaces receive food and beverage vouchers, which they can share with those who may not have a daily access to food.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Download the 'Olio' app to your phone and share your extra food with others: <https://olioex.com/>



## Greta Thunburg

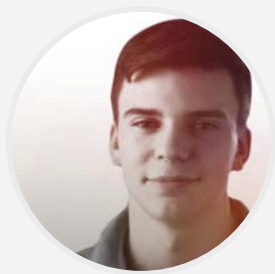
### DID YOU KNOW?

Greta Thunburg is a student activist from Stockholm, Sweden, who has been campaigning for climate justice since August 2018. Beginning when she was only 15, through striking from school and sitting on the steps of the Swedish parliament, Greta has been campaigning for her government officials to review their environmental policies, and to “prioritise the climate question, focus on the climate and treat it like a crisis.”

Since beginning her campaign, Greta has obtained a massive amount of publicity and support across the world. She has since been invited to participate in a number of global environmental gatherings with world leaders at the United Nations and European Union. As well as this, following the example of Greta, thousands of students from all over the world have organised and participated in climate justice strikes, creating a movement now referred to as ‘Fridays for Future’.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Get involved with this movement by organising a climate justice strike within your local community and campaign for change from your local governing body. Share this on social media using the hashtag **#climatestrike**.



## Malcolm Asher

### DID YOU KNOW?

Malcolm Asher is a young activist and co-founder of ArtPass, an organisation which aims to improve children's experiences of being in hospital through the use of art. Through volunteering in his local hospital, Malcolm soon learned about the anxieties which many young children face when being admitted in to hospital. In response to this, Malcolm decided to gather together some art supplies and distribute them to the young people who were being treated within the hospital. After seeing the hugely positive impact this

had on those he interacted with, Malcolm, along with some friends, established the ArtPass organisation, as a means to facilitate the creation and sharing of art amongst children in hospital. Since its creation, ArtPass is now recognised as a global non-profit organisation which *"seeks to change the way kids around the world perceive and experience hospital through the power of art."*

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Become a Global Ambassador for ArtPass and help to spread their message of kindness further: <https://www.artpassinternational.org/global-ambassadors>



## Malala Youszafi

### DID YOU KNOW?

Malala Youszafi is an education advocate from Pakistan, who at the age of 17, became the youngest person to ever win the Nobel Peace Prize. Born on July 12th 1997, in Mingora, Pakistan; from a very young age Malala has advocated for the importance of education for all. During this era in Pakistan, many young girls were denied access to attending school by the Taliban - an extremist political movement from Afghanistan. After an attack on a girls' school in Swat Valley, Pakistan, Malala gave her first public speech to speak out against

these attacks. Many members from the Taliban disagreed with Malala's protesting and saw her as a threat to their movement. Following this, on October 9th 2012, whilst travelling home from school, a masked gunman boarded the school bus which Malala was on, and shot her in the left side of her head. Fortunately, she survived this and has continued to speak out on the importance of education throughout her recovery and beyond. Malala Day is celebrated every year on the 12th July.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

Find out more about the work of the Malala Fund at <https://www.malala.org/join> and explore ways which you can get involved in their campaigns to promote the importance of education for all people.

# STEPS TO BECOMING A CHANGEMAKER



Each and every one of us has the ability to become a changemaker. By following these simple steps, you too can help to create a world which is fairer and more compassionate for all:

## **1. IDENTIFY** the issue you wish to change.

Whether its people, plants or animals that you wish to support, choosing your issue is the first important step in becoming an active changemaker.

## **2. INFORM** yourself and others about the issue.

It is difficult to take action on something which we don't know much about. Another key step in becoming a changemaker is informing ourselves around the issue we wish to tackle. Before taking action, ensure that you and those around you are clued in to the issue that you are working with.

## **3. PLAN** what you want to do.

Making plans are important when taking any action. Why not write a checklist to ensure that you cover all the points you wish to tackle, including which people you are going to work with and what resources you need to do so.

## **4. ACT**

You can't be a changemaker without taking action.

## **5. SPREAD** your learning further.

Following your action, spread your learning further. The more people that are aware of the issue you are tackling, the more support you can build for your campaign.



**“WE LIVE IN A WORLD IN WHICH WE ARE DEPENDENT ON OTHERS;  
WE CANNOT EXPECT TO FULFIL OUR GOALS WHILE  
DISRESPECTING OTHERS’ NEEDS”**

*- His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet*

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