Civil society partner organization presentation

Engaging with local communities in regard to climate change and water
SDCEA?

• The South Durban Community Environmental Alliance (SDCEA) is a non-governmental organisations concerned with environmental justice and sustainable development.

• South Durban is home to approximately half a million people, and is also the location of South Africa’s largest chemical industry cluster as well as the transport infrastructure associated with Africa’s largest port.

• SDCEA seeks to advocate for the sustainable management of resources and stewardship of the environment through changes in public policy and individual behaviour.
• Fresh water in Southern Africa, as a natural resource, is scarce and unevenly distributed. Socio-economic disparity skews this distribution even further, with almost unlimited availability for those who can afford to pay, and daily struggles for those who cannot.

• A rapidly growing poor urban population and increasing climatic uncertainty is placing increasing stress on the availability of government at all levels to both meet needs and ensure sustainable supply.
Communities of south Durban and climate change

• The climate change stressors and challenges that people of communities faced with are as follows: the rural areas rely on bore hole water for their vegetable gardens however due to the change in weather patterns the bore hole water is drying up much faster.

• Looking at urban areas, we are finding that in urban areas the rivers are highly polluted. Mangroves and sand banks are being depleted.

• Drinking water is an expensive commodity due to increased tariffs which are making access to water unaffordable.

• People living in shacks and transit camps are unable to access clean water, so they wash in the rivers resulting in water borne diseases.
• This is where SDCEA comes in. We host several workshops and meetings to educate community members on these issues and to explain the impacts it has.

• These workshops and meetings are targeted at people from all age groups. Schools and adults should be apart of this program to make a difference.

• We cover a wide range of aspects concerning the issues we face everyday in these workshops.

• We include active participation like group activities and presentation to understand other views and educate many on issues they are not aware of.

• What does water shortages mean to them, what is their understanding of climate change. How does it affect us. What are the impacts
The types of action we take:

- Community building-form of workshops and meetings to educate communities and the youth on critical issues that need attention.
- Media activism- writing to the media and getting the opportunity to have our stories and views out there to create awareness on important issues.
• Protests- this is show our commitment and dedication to the cause in speaking out and engaging in these acts to attract attention for stakeholders to make a difference and a change for the better.

• Youth activism-this is crucial because youth are the future and they need to be empowered to take a stand and fight for their rights. They need to be informed and act on these issues.
What do we want to achieve by these actions

• Create hype around the event to interest and involve more local communities in climate change, pollution and other environmental issues and in particular to get ordinary people to realise that climate change is not only of the concern to wealthy countries, but that it is a real threat that will affect poor South Africans First.

• Build a strong united voice for issues e.g. water and sanitation

• Expose decision makers to the reality of their decision on ordinary people particularly in Africa, which will be the continent that will be the most heavily impacted by climate change.
• Highlight the impact that climate change is already having on the livelihoods of local communities, and how this intersects with poverty, and thus the need for assistance in adapting to climate change

• Expose the role of corporations and our own government in contributing to climate change

• Show up the South African governments disingenuous climate change commitments while they continue with business as usual
Is this action making a difference

• Over the years we have found that when we show a dedicated commitment to the cause and speak out in our numbers we attract media and make a statement that then grabs a lot more attention and in that way we see a change.

• When people start to ask questions issues become more known and this creates awareness.

• allow local communities the opportunity to give their views a voice.

The end!

Thank you