



Report on the Student Exchange Programme in Durban, South Africa

22nd August - 4th September 2011

By:

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Acknowledgment

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Introduction

The second Annual Partners' meeting of the Climate Change Adaptation in Africa (CCAA) held between 14th -22nd August 2011 in South Africa and Mozambique. Stephen Otieno and Elizabeth Wamuchiru, graduate students from Kenya remained in Durban to conduct research and work with the Civil Society Organizations involved in the project. The two weeks was nothing short of relevant practical input to our respective research work in Nairobi. This report is a summary of relevant activities which we participated in while in Durban.

Women's month and Climate Change Forum 23rd August, 2011

We were privileged to attend a Women's Month meeting hosted by SASEWA (South African Self-Employed Women's Association) together with StreetNet International. The theme of this meeting was about Women and Climate Change.

This was part of StreetNet's 2011 programme of action leading up to COP17 in partnership with all members of the Committee of 17 including COSATU (Congress Of South African Trade Unions), SAMWU (South African Municipal Workers Union), AbM (Abahlali baseMjondolo) and SDCEA (South Durban Community Environmental Alliance) elected in January 2011 at a Climate Change Conference of civil society organizations in Durban.

The main message was that Women are the ones who are most affected by climate change than anyone else. That is why they were saying No! to climate change, No! to ESKOM, SASOL and other forms of pollution and Yes! to RENEWABLE ENERGY and CLIMATE JOBS. ESKOM and SASOL are major industries in Durban city which have polluted the environment through obnoxious emission of gases into the air thus contributing to climate change.

There were organized programme of action as published by the street net on climate change activism towards COP 17. The main concern was that post flood crisis will cause food prices to rise sharply after heavy floods damaged food crops all over the world which is likely to impact on street vendors who will struggle to keep their prices at levels their customers can afford.

Street Net also supports the demands of the movements of organized waste collectors in India and Latin America to combat climate change through the recycling of waste. Their representatives will be invited to spend some days before the main events of COP17 Meeting. Members of SDCEA in the communities exchanged experiences and organizing strategies as a way of building grassroots international solidarity around the livelihoods struggles of the poor against climate change.

Another notable programme of action included establishment of national alliance of street vendors and a platform against eviction.

About Streetnet International

StreetNet International is an alliance of street vendors. It was launched in Durban, South Africa, in November 2002. Membership-based organizations (unions, co-operatives or associations) directly organizing street vendors, market vendors and/or hawkers among their members, are entitled to affiliate to StreetNet International.

The aim of StreetNet is to promote the exchange of information and ideas on critical issues facing street vendors, market vendors and hawkers (i.e. mobile vendors) and on practical organizing and advocacy strategies.

Streetnet does the following:

- Building and expanding StreetNet International;
- Identifying organizations organizing and/or representing street vendors, market vendors, hawkers (i.e. mobile vendors), vendor leaders, and encouraging them to join StreetNet;
- Involving member organizations in international campaigns to improve the lives of street vendors, market vendors and hawkers;
- Designing and implementing suitable organizational support programmes to strengthen member organizations.

About SASEWA – It is an organisation of working women with no permanent employment, earning their living from their own work in the following ways:

- Working for themselves with no more than three employees or assistants;
- Working as a casual or temporary worker for someone else.

SASEWA aims to do the following for their members:

- Build unity amongst women whose work is not recognized;

- Develop negotiation and leadership skills to enable women to negotiate collectively with municipalities, police, small contractors and other stakeholders.
- Provide legal advice to members;
- Networking with other organizations that provide skills training, credit and loans programmes; legal and health advices and assistance, relief and/or counseling for survivors of domestic violence.



Local women making a presentation at the forum



Participants listen keenly to the invited guests

C17 Preparation Meetings

Earlier on 23rd August, 2011, we went to Diakonia Centre with Prof. Patrick Bond, where we met various groups ranging from youths, civil societies and activists sharing on the activities to be included in the COP 17 meeting. Discussions focused on space preparations, organizing alternative venues and naming of spaces using local Zulu names, global Durban action, national action, mobilization, transition to climate job, talking to schools and churches.

Presentation of a Seminar and Public Lecture by Dr. Kumi Naidoo

On 24 August 2011 we were invited to attend a seminar by Kumi Naidoo Executive Director, Greenpeace International at the Department of Geography in the School of Environmental Sciences. Here we personally interacted with Dr. Naidoo where he presented us with autographed copies of his latest book *Development Dialogue*.

We later attended a public lecture by Dr. Naidoo at the Graduate School Auditorium, Westville Campus. The lecture was on *The Role of South African Higher Education in Greening the Revolution*. He outlined that oil, coal and gas companies and the South African government benefit from billions of dollars in projects. There was need to put pressure on the big companies and to expose their role in preventing the process of comprehensive negotiations on reducing emissions. Instead of having big

companies, have medium companies. He advocated for renewable energy such as wind, solar, to benefit more people especially those in the rural areas by electrification programmes.

The university comes in as the arena for intelligence research and looking at points of vulnerabilities to come up with sustainable solutions. He noted the need for funding to help poor countries to mitigate and adapt to climate change.



Dr. Kumi Naidoo during the public lecture at UKZN



A visit to the School of Environmental Studies at UKZN

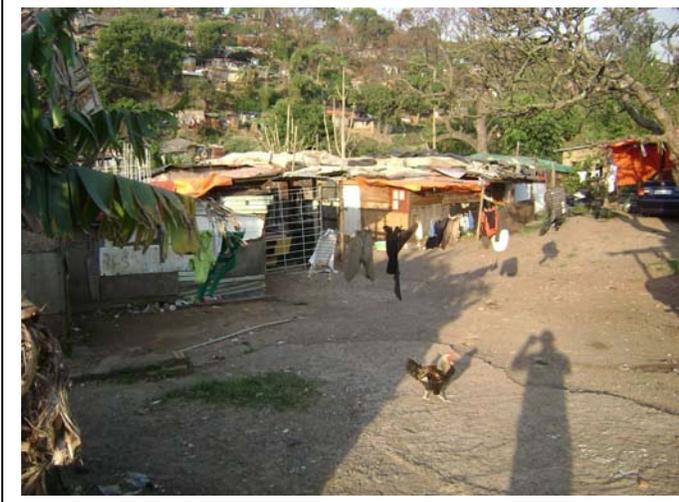
Talk by Dr. Mustafa Barghouti

On 25 August 2011, we attended a seminar entitled "*Will Palestine be free?*" by Dr. Mustapha Barghouti from Palestine. It was hosted by Afro-Middle East Centre (AMEC) and the Centre for Civil Society at Harold Wolpe Lecture at the University of KwaZulu Natal. The theme of the seminar encompassed Human Rights, to Socio-Economic struggles and Climate Justice for the Palestine People. He highlighted the problems of Israel and Palestine and this brought out the effects of bad governance and the role of civil societies in fighting for human rights in the societies. He touched on the issues of equity access to national resources.

Cato Manor Shacks

Prof. Bond and Thando took us to the Cato Manor shacks where we were able to witness the living conditions of the urban poor in Cato Manor. The poor infrastructure and magnitude of environmental degradation was evident. However, the people receive free clean water from the Ethekewini municipality. We were also able to see a slum upgrading programme close to the shacks where the poor are gradually relocated to better houses fitted with solar water heaters to provide warm water during the winter season.

Also worth noting was the flood mitigation strategies practiced where old tyres are used to prevent soil erosion and maintain the stability of the houses built in flood prone areas.



The shack dwellings in Cato Manor



A girl fetching water from a stand pipe in Cato Manor



Improved low-cost houses fitted with solar water heaters



Use of old tyres as a flood mitigation measure

Students Seminar

On 26th August 2011, we had the opportunity to present our research projects alongside our Canadian colleagues; Alex Todd and Beth Lorimer at the Center for Civil Society, Memorial Tower, University of KwaZulu Natal. The theme of the seminar was; *In Hot Water- Climate change and water adaptation in Nairobi and Durban*. There was a rich audience for discussion, opinions and comments. Copies of our presentations are available online on the CCS website.



Stephen making his presentation at CCS



Elizabeth making her presentation at CCS



The Kenyan and Canadian graduate students after the seminar

The Clifton Rainwater harvesting project with Aqua Manzi.

Dr. Mary Galvin of Umphilo WaManzi arranged for us to have an extensive site visit with David Alcock of AquaManzi. David was installing rainwater harvesting equipment in poor neighborhoods in the mountainous areas of Clifton. His organization had also been contracted to monitor and evaluate the water tanks constructed by the Ethekewini municipality. All the installed tanks are mapped by GPS and entered into a municipal database for reference.

We were also able to visit a school which had made maximum use of rainwater harvesting as an adaptation method against future water scarcity. All roofs in the school have been fitted with appropriate gutters and large storage tanks which act as reservoirs. During periods of water shortage, the community downhill can access the clean and safe water.



A communal tap and water tank in remote Clifton



Water supply tanker by Ethekewini Municipality in Clifton



Project notice by Ethekewini Municipality in Clifton



Specialized cylindrical gutters for traditional houses in Clifton



David Alcock of Aqua Manzi installing gutters in Clifton



Ethekwini Municipality employee inspecting the water tanks in Clifton



One of the sanitation blocks installed with RWH system



Flood mitigation using old tyres in the school



Huge water tanks to store rain water to supply the community downhill.

Conclusion

It emerged that the challenges and opportunities in water governance and flood mitigation practices were different in South Africa from those in Kenya. However, there is a lot that can be adopted with slight modification to enhance sound water management practices in both countries. We will expand on these aspects in our respective research project reports.

It also emerged that the two week period was inadequate for us to visit all the areas as we had anticipated. However, we were satisfied with what we had managed to cover within that short period of time and mostly grateful for all the people who assisted us during the entire exchange programme.

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