

WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION 2017 CELEBRATIONS

REPORT



VENUE: CHELETA PRIMARY SCHOOL, RUNDA-NAIROBI

DATE: 17TH JUNE 2017

June 2017

Introduction

The Kenya Organization for Environmental Education (KOE) in collaboration with ICDC, Wrigley Company East Africa, Serena Hotels, Kakuzi Limited and Green Africa Global Foundation organized for the World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD) Celebrations on Saturday 17th June 2017 at Cheleta Primary School in Runda Estate, Nairobi. The event was held under the KOE's Eco-schools and Learning About Forests (LEAF) Programmes.

The WDCD is a UN event under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) of 1994 observed on 17th June annually since 1995; to promote public awareness about international efforts to combat desertification and the effects of drought collectively. The event brought together over 500 students from 20 primary and secondary schools from Nairobi County and its environs. The 2017 World Day to Combat Desertification (#2017WDCD) celebrations marked the power the land holds in giving people an opportunity and a future to stay resilient on their home ground. The 2017 WDCD theme was, "*Our land. Our home. Our Future*", which underlined the central role productive land can play in turning the growing tide of migrants abandoning their unproductive land into communities and nations that are stable, secure and sustainable, into the future. The event came at a time when the Kenya is experiencing a serious drought situation. In fact, only recently, Kenya Red Cross Society issued a drought appeal of Shs2.5 billion to cater for 1 million people across 13 counties, in light of the dramatic increase in the number of people in need of food assistance.

Overview of the Event

The objectives of the event were to create awareness about impacts of climate change and efforts to combat desertification and the effects of drought collectively, promote peace building for sustainable resource use and management and create a platform for networking and partnerships among stakeholders to join hands for sustainable living. Activities of the day included talks on sustainable living, planting of 1,000 indigenous trees by schools and other participants, poems/songs/dance/drama performances by schools and other groups with messages on sustainable environmental management and peace and exhibitions of green innovations/projects by participating schools and institutions.

Speaking during the event held at Cheleta Primary School in Runda, the Executive Director, Kenya Organization for Environmental Education (KOE), Dr. Dorcas Otieno said that drought has eroded the country's natural resources to an extent that they are inadequate for production and support for livelihoods. She pointed out that the event goes a long way in raising awareness among the students and wider community on importance of sustainable environmental management and will also help in conservation of Karura Forest bordering Cheleta Primary School which is a vital ecosystem of the wider Aberdare Water Catchment.

Another speaker at the event was Catherine Mbaisi from the Environment Management Authority who emphasized the need for synergized actions by all stakeholders in efforts to combat desertification and promotion of widespread public awareness for sustainable living. Also speaking at the event, Dr. Winnie Musila, the Director, Ecosystem Assessment, Planning and Audit of Kenya Water Towers Agency (KWTAA) augmented the other speakers by calling for concerted efforts to secure the main water towers in the country. She pointed out that through using schools to promote sustainable natural resource management was the surest way of ensuring long-term management of our natural capital.

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology was represented by Mr. Gwiyo Komora who gave an historical manifestation of desertification in his speech. He narrated how human actions have fueled rapid changes in climatic conditions. He summed up by calling for collective stakeholder action in safe guarding our vital ecosystems. He also lauded the strategy of empowering the young generation to take action in tackling desertification. Mr. Komora's views were echoed by Father Hamman of Mother Earth who also shed light on the need for enhanced value-based education among the youth to secure our natural capital for the present and future generations.

Also at the event was Wrigley Company East Africa Corporate Affairs Manager, Wanja Mwangi who was particular with the need for increased corporate involvement in environmental management for even more sustainable business. Her sentiments were echoed by Anne Ooko of Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation (ICDC). Ms. Ooko also praised the work being done by KOEE in nurturing young minds to take up more active and central role in sustainable development. The chief guest of the event was Saba Bokhari, Education/Programme Specialist UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa. She also stressed the importance of actively involving the youth in sustainability agenda from a tender age in order to ensure longevity. Saba was also particular with increased inclusive stakeholder participation in sustainable development efforts. She also lauded KOEE's efforts in promoting action based learning in schools as it will go a long way in preparing the youth to address day to day challenges.

The event was line with Kenya development blueprint, Vision 2030 social pillar whose one of its main sectors is environmental management. Under the environment pillar, Kenya aims to be a nation living in a clean, secure and sustainable environment by 2030. One of the goals is to increase forest cover from less than 3% at present to 4%. An April 2007 survey by the Kenya Forest Service has revealed that not only is the country's forest cover at 7%, which is less than the 10% global standard, an estimated 25% of the Mau Forest Complex – Kenya's largest water catchment area – has been lost due to human activity. The event also supports global efforts in promoting sustainable development as spelt out by the Sustainable Development Goals of 2015. Goal 13 calls for the need to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts and goal 15 urges us to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss. Goal 17 targets at strengthening the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. Furthermore, the event provided a platform to preach peace, tolerance and cohesion among Kenyans especially as the country is preparing to conduct her general elections in August 2017.

The event convened representatives from Nairobi City County, ministries of Education, Environment and government agencies including National Environmental Management Authority, Kenya Forest Service Karura and Kenya Water Towers Agency among others. Civil society organizations involved included UNEP, UNESCO, German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), Green Africa Global Foundation, Trócaire Kenya, World Student Community for Sustainable Development (WSCSD) and others with private entities including Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation (ICDC), Serena Hotels, Wrigley Company East Africa, Redhouse Public Relations and Kakuzi Limited. Additionally there were also students from local universities including Kenyatta University, University of Nairobi and Technical University of Kenya among others.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of Schools Present

	School	Contact Person	Teachers/ Students Present
1.	Cheleta Primary School (Host)	Paul Wanyaga +254705197336	3 Teachers 200 students
2.	Baba Dogo primary School	Hellen Kaseyi Hkaseyi@yahoo.com +254726856321	1 teacher 30 students
3.	Kariobangi North Primary School	Jane Njoroge Njorogejane08@gmail.com +254719410875	2 Teachers 40 students Exhibition
4.	Juja preparatory School	Joash Otiato siringi2007@yahoo.com +254721754309	2 Teachers 20 students
5.	Makini School	George Waweru Geomwa08@yahoo.com 0721890511	3 teachers 35 students
6.	Martin Luther Primary	Jane Ouko 0702359024 Winfred Ochilo 0727495797 Winnyochilo@gmail.com	2 teachers 10 students
7.	Jogoo Road Primary School	Florence Otieno wanguzack@gmail.com +254705197336	1 Teacher 15 students
8.	Morrison primary school	Virginia Mukuva mumbuav@yahoo.com 0712448790	1 Teacher 10 students
9.	St. Michaels Holy Unity Academy	William Odhiambo 0722-939-737 hushgo@yahoo.com	1 Teacher 20 students
10.	Ruaraka High	Lilian Sayi 0725635044 ; lilian.agola@yahoo.com	1 Teacher 15 students
11.	SCLP Samaj School	Mike Sino odhismike@gmail.com +254723301829	2 teachers 35 students
12.	Githiga Boys High School	Duncan Iregi duncan.iregi@yahoo.com 0722421972	1 teacher 17 students
13.	Braeside High School	Fridah Miriti fridah.miriti@braeside.ac.ke +254721573220	1 Teacher
14.	Mirithu Girls	Evans Otuori eotwori2000@gmail.com +254725057645	1 Teacher

Annex 2: List of Guests Present

	NAME	INSTITUTION/ CONTACT
1.	Saba Bokhari, PhD	Education/Programme Specialist UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa United Nations Avenue UNON, Gigiri Complex, Bureau C-220 P.O. Box 30592-00100 Nairobi, Kenya Office: +254-2076-22352 Mobile: +254-0717722025 s.bokhari@unesco.org
2.	Amber Anderson	Communication Division UN Environment UNEP Telephone: +254 20 762 33948 amber.anderson@unep.org
3.	Anne Ooko	ICDC Senior Business Development Officer ooko@icdc.co.ke , anna.ooko@yahoo.com
4.	Japheth Muli	Trócaire Programme Officer Resilience 0721818812
5.	Ms. Wanja Mwangi and Associates	Wrigley Co. Ltd Nairobi Corporate Affairs Manager Wanja.Mwangi@wrigley.com
6.	Mr. Gwiyo Komora	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology 0729168416 gmkomora@gmail.com
7.	Catherine Mbaisi	National Environment Management Authority CMbaisi@nema.go.ke
8.	Dr. Winfred Musila	Director, Ecosystem Assessment, Planning and Audit, Kenya Water Towers Agency (KwTA), NHIF Building, 15th Floor, Cell: + 254 722 493915, Email: wmusila@yahoo.com / wmusila@kwta.go.ke
9.	Mr. Charles Lukania	Greening Kenya Initiative Trust 0712062393 charles.lukania@gmail.com charles.lukania@yahoo.com
10.	Hamideh Hashemi	Green Africa Global Foundation Chair person hamideh.hashemi@yahoo.com hamideh.hashemi@greenafrica.ngo
11.	Jacob Muworu	Project Officer Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) 0720293037 jacob@pacja.org House No. J13, Kabarnet Road, Off Ngong Road, Nairobi, Kenya P.O. Box 1005-00200
12.	Fr. Hamman	Mother Earth
13.	Nickson Otieno	President, World Student Community for Sustainable Development

		(WSCSD) and WSCSD-Kenya 6 th Floor, Utumishi Co-op House, Mamlaka Road P.O. Box 4892-00100, Nairobi. Tel.: +254 722612841, +254 773135547 Email: nickson.otieno@wscsd.org Skype: otienonickson
14.	Justus Marete	Director Bethany Kids Kijabe justusmarete@bethanykids.org