



A Daily publication of the Sustainable Development Issues Network (SDIN)
at the Twelfth Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development



Youth challenges Ministers

Act on climate change or human settlements will perish!

Youth is saying what we all fear to admit: Our present pattern of consumption and production and our current inability to act cause climate change and destroy our global human settlement. But no one talks about this at CSD!

A well organised and informed youth caucus has been very active during CSD 12. Time and again they have pointed to our guilty conscience and provocatively shown us the way forward – a way most of the “responsible adult UN-delegate world” does not seem willing to go. As people under 25 years make up more than 50% of the world’s population, youth speak for the majority of the world. As this CSD holds the answer to a sustainable future, it is imperative that Ministers listen to this constituency. This is what Youth tells us:

Climate change destroy settlements

We know that the climate is changing. We know that this is currently having an impact on human settlements, and it will continue to affect future human settlements. We have been alerted by scientists worldwide that we will experience massive shifts in rainfall patterns resulting in losses in agricultural production. Rising sea levels will threaten to inundate coastal communities and dramatically increase the frequency and severity of natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, storms, and droughts. These in turn will dramatically increase the migration of entire populations.

Pentagon spells disaster

Pentagon, the formidable Military establishment in Washington recently released a sinister “worst case scenario” report on what may happen to the world if climate change is unchecked. A few excerpts from this report:

— As temperatures rise during this decade, some regions experience severe storms and flooding. In 2007, surging seas break through levees in the Netherlands, making the Hague “unlivable.”

— By 2020, after a decade of cooling, Europe’s climate becomes “more like Siberia’s.”

— “Mega-droughts” hit southern China and northern Europe around 2010 and last 10 years.

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Meeting schedule

WEDNESDAY 28, APRIL 2004

- 9.00 - 10.00, NGO Organising Partners
- 10.00 - 11.00, NGO Steering Committee
- 11.00 - 12.00, Fresh Water
- 12.00 - 1.00, Earth Values
- 1.00 - 2.00, Indigenous Peoples
- 2.00 - 3.00, Youth
- 3.00 - 4.00, Africa
- 4.00 - 5.00, Sust. Product. & Consumpt
- 5.00 - 6.00, Sustainable Communities
- 6.00 - 7.00, Trade Unions
- 6.30 - 8.30, Southern (Church Ctr 11th floor)
- 7.00 - 8.00, Caucus Coordination

All meetings in Conference Room B

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Visit the SDIN morning strategy meetings for reports from working groups, information sharing and strategic discussions. SDIN Morning Meetings are open to all NGOs.

Meetings are held in Conference Room B at the United Nations Building.

Articles reflect the opinions of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SDIN Network

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— In the United States, agricultural areas suffer from soil loss due to higher winds and drier climate, but the country survives the economic disruption without catastrophic losses.

— Widespread famine in China triggers chaos, and “a cold and hungry China peers jealously” at Russia’s energy resources. In the 2020-2030 period, civil war and border wars break out in China.

Options to solve inertia

We are the decision makers of the world, we must realize the seriousness of this situation, we must plan for the future of our people.

There are two options to reduce the impact of climate change on human settlements; we can act reactively or proactively. We are currently acting reactively. We are, for instance fighting droughts with excessive irrigation leading to the salination of prime agricultural lands. However, we have the technological capacity, the organizational potential, the communicative ability, and the resources to act proactively. We can choose to limit the anthropogenic release of green house gasses, stratospheric ozone depleting chemicals and promote sustainable energy and transport systems in human settlements. We can support sustainable land-use planning and management, and construct

industries that use energy saving devises, and we can consciously decrease deforestation.”

Action urgently needed.

As TI spoke to members of the Youth Caucus, it was clear that they do not want to think that adults are ill willed and that this is the reason for their in-action. The feeling was that “responsible adults” are just a bit slower in their actions. But action now is urgently needed. Youth is prepared to shoulder this with the adult world. Together we have the power as they firmly stated.

-Elissa Smith/ The youth caucus

Trade Unions

A WORLD CALLS FOR SUSTAINABLE WORKPLACE ACTIONS

The first International Commemoration Day for Dead and injured Workers was observed on 28 April 1996, during the 4th Annual Session the CSD, at which time a small delegation of trade unionists met in New York to host a candle lighting commemoration. Since then, the level of national and international mobilization by workers to demand workplace change has steadily grown and become more vociferous. A record number of activities will take place this 28 April, as millions of workers join in activities around the world, effectively lending support to the changes that trade unions are calling for at the United Nations.

Trade unions have been active at CSD 2004 to convince country delegates to support the occupational health and safety of workers as the clearest route to addressing public health, sanitation and human settlement issues. Joint engagement of workers and employers

in positive actions, they are saying, should be sought as a matter of priority, particularly to address issues related to chemicals, HIV/AIDS, cancer prevention, sickness compensation and employment transition. They have also worked with other Major Civil Society Groups in a concerted action to oppose the further

privatization and deregulation of water, sanitation and other essential human services.

Trade union representatives have been highly visible in meetings at the United Nations over the past week, debating with and lobbying governments and other stakeholders on the positive pay-offs for sustainable development that can be realized by fostering worker and trade union engagement at the workplace. To symbolically highlight their connection to the mobilization of millions of workers taking place in nearly 100 countries on Wednesday, trade unionists will light a CANDLE OF HOPE at the UN, where they will be joined by the New York City Labour Chorus in a message of harmony for the decade to come.

By Lucien Royer



REMEMBER GOAL 8?

The NGO community feels duty bound to remind CSD 12 participants that the millennium pledge to 'Develop a global partnership for development' is not being adequately addressed in these deliberations.

By Saradha Iyer, Third World Network

If poor nations are to have any chance of realizing the first seven goals, rich countries must deliver promptly and well in advance of 2015 on their commitments in goal 8.

Goal 8 was designed to be the milestone partnership that recognizes the shared responsibility of rich and poor countries alike; it was a solemn promise to jointly address the issues surrounding the hostile global macroeconomic and financial environment.

Goal 8 is therefore the cornerstone of all the trust, hope and faith on which the entire implementation process hinges. Developing countries pledged to strengthen governance, institutions and policies. Developed countries committed to increasing the quality and quantity of and delivering more debt relief and expanding access to trade and technology for poor countries.

Yet, none of goal 8's 7 targets or 17 indicators are on track. It remains the only goal without specific timeframes.

The 2003 World Bank Report to its Development Committee states that the policies and governance structure in poor countries have never been stronger, but that actions of the rich countries do not match their promises. It is time for the developed countries to announce concrete deadlines and specific time frames for delivering on their goal and commitments.

On Aid: Donors must set a date to increase ODA to 0.7% of GNP – a promise made 30 years ago. Aid must



in national plans and budgets, then debt burden must be lifted now.

On Trade: A pro-poor Doha deal can lift 144 million people out of poverty by 2015 and increase global income by as much as \$520 billion. Progress in free and fair trade will lift the current cloud of frustration and lead to more meaningful partnership between the North and the South towards achieving the MDG and JPOI targets.

also be untied from donor interests, target the poorest and respect national interests.

On Debt: If the poor countries are to free up domestic resources and prioritize water, sanitation and human settlements

In neglecting to nurture this partnership, in forgetting to honor the commitments in this goal and crumbling its promises, the global community risks turning the laudable MDGs into laughable gimmicks.

MDG 8: DEVELOP A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

- *Develop further an open trading and financial system* that is rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory.
- *Address the least developed countries' special needs.* This includes tariff- and quota- free access for their exports; enhanced debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries; cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous official development assistance for countries committed to poverty reduction.
- *Address the special needs of landlocked and small island developing States*
- *Deal comprehensively with developing countries' debt problems*
- through national and international measure to make debt sustainable in the long term
- In cooperation with the developing countries develop *decent and productive work for youth*
- In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies provide *access to affordable essential drugs* in developing countries
- In cooperation with the private sector, make available the *benefits of new technologies* – especially information and communication technologies

YOUNG PEOPLE - A PRECIOUS RESOURCE, NOT A BURDEN LAUNCHING OF THE WORLD YOUTH REPORT 2003

Reported by UN-HABITAT

The World Youth Report 2003 was launched on the 27th April, 2004. It identifies ten priority areas of the world program of action for youth. Two of the key areas are youth employment and juvenile delinquency. The ongoing process of urbanisation in developing countries according to the report is contributing to juvenile involvement in criminal behaviour, according to the report.

In developing countries, the importance of youth employment in the lack of social safety nets is crucial to livelihoods. The report also mentions that in the face of disturbing evidence that a rise in the number of urban unemployed youth are turning to street crime/gangsterism/prostitution and armed conflict.

UN-HABITAT's Safer Cities Program is also mentioned in this report. The basic content of the report reflects the UN Secretary General's Statement last year (12 Aug, 2003) "Young people should never be seen as a burden on any society, but as its most precious asset."

Members of the Youth Caucus of the CSD were

involved both prior to and during the launching of the report, which was led by **Sarah Kaye's** impressive performance in rhyme and rhythm at the Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium **Julie Larson**, of **UN DESA** introduced the World Youth Report to an eager audience, while **Johan Scholvinck, Director of UN Division for Social Policy & Development** launched the Report.

"What is youth?" asked Mr Schovinck, who went on to give a graphic account of youth and its problems, highlighting issues like education, unemployment, migration, health, drugs, leisure, participation in decision making and volunteerism as a form of leisure. He went on to elucidate the 5 new youth issues,

Globalisation, Information & Communication technology, HIV/Aids, Young People & Conflict and Intergovernmental Issues which effect youth, in addition to the ten mentioned above.

He also briefly touched on a Review of the World Program of Action for Youth 2005 and asked for more Youth Participation in it. **Mr Olli Saarela, Ministry of Education, Government of Finland**, urged governments to have youth representatives in their delegations, so that that young people can be given the chance to grow into active citizens and participate in decision making. Finnish youth research could serve as a model for global application of youth involvement in world activities, and Finland was ready to invest in cooperation in future.

The **Youth Caucus** representative said the youth should take a more active role to make a sustainable and developed world a better place to live in. "We, as young people can make a difference and can make the world a better place", the Youth speaker said.

Wrapping up the program, Julie Larson once again thanked the Government of Finland for their generosity in sponsoring the program as well as the Book.



FORGING PARTNERSHIPS LESSONS FROM THE EQUATOR INITIATIVE

By Samuel Waweru - ELCI

As bureaucrats and technocrats converge in round table conference rooms at the UN Headquarters in New York at the 12th Session of the CSD to chart the way forward on issues of water, sanitation and human settlements, Patrick Muraguri's mind drifts down memory lane to his bachelor boy days. Muraguri had already set his sights on the village beauty but a hurdle stood in his way – he had to seek clearance from her family. His family had to open discussions with his potential in-laws. When they did, they were tough negotiations on bride price which seemed to drag on indefinitely. All the while, as the wise men of the village deliberated and downed gourds of potent brew, the bride was conspicuously absent from the room. Nobody sought her opinion, and if ever she had any, chances are that it would have made little impact on the final settlement. When finally they stood to shake hands and drink to the new liaison, local maidens were instructed to prepare the bride for the journey to her new home and life. She was not entitled to a share of the generous price that Muraguri's family had paid for her hand.

Today, Muraguri is a delegate at the CSD-12 as a representative of the NGO Major Group. He is here to make contributions on behalf of communities that his NGO, the Africa 21st Century Development Organisation serves. He cannot help but draw parallels between the sessions at the CSD-12 and the bride price ceremony that is



Patrick Muraguri - Africa 21st Century, A member of Environment Liaison Centre International (ELCI)

practiced by most communities in the developing world. While all are striving to realise the same objectives, often times, they work at cross-purposes. Wisdom demands that they strike a working partnership.

The need to forge partnerships was the main theme of the Partnership Fair held by the Equator Initiative at the Dag Hammarskjold Library Auditorium at the CSD-12 on Monday April 26, 2004. The Equator Initiative was started to address gaps that impeded the delivery of services at the grassroots level. It is a partnership that brings together the United Nations, Governments, Civil Society, Businesses and Local Groups to build the capacity and raise the profile of sustainable communities in developing countries within the equatorial belt. The Equator initiative aims to champion and support community-level development projects that link economic improvement with the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity

by sponsoring the biennial Equator Prize awarded to recognize outstanding communities from the developing countries in the tropics that demonstrate practical efforts in conservation of biodiversity. It also offers learning exchange grants so that grassroots practitioners can share best practices with other communities in the tropics and facilitates eco-entrepreneur mentoring to provide business and financial advice for small sustainable businesses. The initiative links community best practice innovations with experts and policy makers and creates public awareness campaigns to raise the profile of sustainable communities in the developing regions.

The panellists at the Partnership Fair were Patrick Muraguri and Mr. Chachu who presented their experiences with the Equator Initiative's pilot project in Africa. With assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) a workshop was held in June 2003, in Nairobi, Kenya, which brought together 140 representatives of grassroots communities from across Africa where participants exchanged best practice experiences in areas of biodiversity, HIV/AIDS, sustainable forestry, and community-based water management systems. The workshop involved citation of case studies and interactive dialogue. According to Muraguri, a member of the steering committee, the workshop was a great success. It was unlike other UN workshops.

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It was hosted by an NGO steering committee with guidance from UN representatives, Governments, Bilateral Donors and International Organisations (IUCN and Heinrich Boell Foundation). The organisers deliberately kept away bureaucrats and technocrats. Only community members could actively participate. Others could only attend as observers.

Interesting issues emerged from the workshop. Community groups realised that they had a lot to learn from each other. It was therefore resolved that inter-Africa exchange visits be promoted among groups with common interests. For example, in Kenya Community Based Ecotourism Project Groups had recorded tremendous successes and groups from Uganda and Tanzania expressed interest to visit them to learn from their experiences. On the other hand,

Uganda had good best practice projects on the use of indigenous trees and herbs to boost immunity in the management of HIV/AIDs that was of great interest to many community groups across the African region.

It also emerged that communities were not aware that the UN and Governments had set targets in the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation aimed at addressing their day-to-day problems. Observers on their part got to know that communities were a repository of important knowledge which they were already using to address their most basic problems. Both groups realised that they had a lot to learn from each other and that there was need to forge a partnership.

The UNDP was happy with the outcomes of the workshop and has set aside resources to facilitate peer-

learning visits beginning in May, 2004. Communities are happy with the initiative as it employs a bottom-up approach and promotes a sense of ownership. There are plans to replicate the Equator Initiative in other regions of the world.

Lessons learned

Muraguri believes that grassroots communities have a lot of experience and knowledge which should be tapped if the world community is to realise the MDGs and the JPOI. He also sees the need to inject direct financial resources to community-based group projects as most of the money obtained by governments from development partners does not necessarily reach these vulnerable groups. Otherwise, communities, like his bride, will never have a voice as their fate is permanently sealed and bureaucrats and technocrats hop from one CSD session to another each year.

SERIOUSLY

Now this is the plan, krrrrrrr..jgt tif gif eps.:ljh vc...rufusvaids;::://- http:// my+hem.commm...:jp[[o[oO] krop...Women... opkp2004tylg][f]fkp[., 23k5t- 'k;**,"nmagsjhkoop CSD d;ml;" smoke ...MDGs...l;kffe;' JPOI .../iojn=++ pdpjgojb;ke-, AMCOW cvm...[l]gf. Jpeg.'l eun./ Settlements jigsfr mshipappWSSDpapap3ap.. yak.. un.....dollaroljije....euro./;maweeiii+)(Water!;khdjcjnewyorkkfp Sanitation-...rrr mnljfecw kakoto<> lk



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