Rural Action for Climate Resilience

Co-funded by the European Union

Hello, Friends!

Welcome to our third Rural Action for Climate Resilience (RACR) newsletter.

In this edition, we will be updating you on the activities that have taken place in the last quarter within the RACR project.

RACR Learning Festival

The RACR Learning Festival took place in Cape Town from 18 to 21 October.

It brought together 62 community-based organisations and faith leaders, mainly women and youth, coming from rural communities in Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, and Western Cape to engage in conversations and activities on climate-related issues in rural communities and what we can do to combat them.

Learning Festival Highlights!

We had a session on how to engage local government on climate change-related issues such as droughts and floods. Participants highlighted the impact of climate change on health, infrastructure, and food security in their various communities.

Candice Mostert from Waste-Ed shared useful tips on how we can manage waste at our homes, schools, work, and the community at large.
We had an opportunity to hear from micro-grant recipients about the work they do in their communities with the micro-grants they have received. It was inspiring to hear about the positive impacts the grantees are making in their communities.

A panel discussion on youth mobilisation on climate change was also held with guests from African Climate Alliance and Feed the Future.
The programme also included a session on water management in rural areas in the event of droughts and floods.

The Tshisimani Centre for Activist Education gave an introductory workshop on ordinary people as activists. We were introduced to ways we can activate change, whether big or small, within our work and communities, highlighting the power we as ordinary people have, to bring about change.

We had a great field visit to the Philippi Horticultural Area (PHA), where we learned about the PHA's farming practices, compost making, and alternative ways to get rid of insects that destroy crops without using pesticides that destroy the soil.

We also shared posters on Climate Change and Government, five steps on engaging your local government on climate change issues. These posters were produced in English, IsiXhosa, and Afrikaans.

Thank you to everyone who made this Learning Festival a success, we hope to see some of the learnings from the festival being implemented in your homes and communities.

5 Lessons In Compost Making with Nazeer Sonday, PHA Campaigner & Farmer

1.Vegetable peelings, fruit waste, teabags, cow dung, plant prunings, and grass cuttings are the safest and most affordable ways of fertilising the soil rather than using manufactured fertilisers.

2.Manufactured fertilisers do not only damage the soil, but they are also costly, they destroy nutrients in food, and they go into water systems, polluting the water that people and animals consume.

3.Pesticides are toxic, they are also potentially hazardous to humans, animals, other organisms, and the environment.

4.To prevent pests without using pesticides, strong-scented herbs can help repel pests when planted among or near vegetables.

5.Compost-making prevents soil erosion, promotes healthier plant growth, and reduces waste.

Youth Citizen Journalism training

A training session for the Youth Citizen Journalist Fellows was held at the Heinrich Böll Foundation premises in Cape Town on 17 and 18 October.

The training provided an opportunity to reflect on previous stories published, and learn from successes and challenges. Time was also dedicated to revisiting journalistic foundations: story structure, identifying angles, and working with media houses.

The training was facilitated by Tunicia Phillips, a seasoned Climate Journalist and Thabo Molelekwa, our Youth Citizen Journalist Coordinator.
To date, the Youth Citizen Journalist Fellows have successfully published 11 stories to different media publications such as Daily Dispatch, Sunday World, IOL, and The Herald.

We look forward to reading more insightful and informative stories from this talented young team!

March for System Change

On 24 September 2022, we joined youth and other members of civil society in Cape Town CBD at the March for System Change, around 2000 people attended, demanding action from the government for the rights and well-being of people and the planet. A memorandum with a list of demands was handed over to Parliament by the organisers.

Western Cape Climate Change Response Strategy: Vision 2050

In September, the RACR project sent its comments on the First Draft Implementation Plan for the Western Cape Climate Change Response Strategy: Vision 2050 to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Development Planning on.

Among other issues, we have noticed that the strategy lacked consideration of overlapping vulnerabilities to climate change and did not actively include rural

voices, lacked commitments and urgency in addressing climate adaptation, and did not prioritise actions for those most vulnerable in informal settlements.

Microgrant Recipients

What is a Micro Grant?

The Micro Grant has a maximum value of R8,000 awarded to community partners to create awareness on the impact of climate change in their respective communities. In total 50 micro grants will be awarded on a rolling basis over the two year project period.
We featured the following micro grant recipients on our social media recently:

The **Flagstaff Community Advice Centre** provides support to the community of Flagstaff and surrounding villages in Ingquza Hill municipality with issues of ukuthwala (forced marriage of young girls to older men), domestic violence, unemployment, injustice, gender equality, human rights, and general issues that affect the livelihoods of people in those communities.

The micro-grant was used to host a Climate change awareness workshop to educate community members about climate change, encourage actions to fight climate change, use natural resources, and share knowledge about food security.

The **Inter-Church Local Development Agency** (ILDA) provides the community of Uitenhage with paralegal support, social justice advocacy, and economic empowerment.

ILDA used their micro grant to conduct two educational workshops on understanding climate change.

By the end of the workshops, the attendees understood what climate change is better, learned how to start food gardens, and how they could work better on reducing carbon footprint.

CARE Alicedale is a local development agency that supports abused women and children through its victim empowerment programme, it is located at KwaNonzwakikazi location, Alicedale. CARE Alicedale runs a weekly feeding scheme using their gardening and poultry project produce. The food security

programme provides income for a dozen locals who grow the vegetables in their gardens.

The micro grant was used to bring awareness to the community about climate change through a workshop. The facilitators encouraged the community to take action to fight climate change and shared food gardening ideas as a way to ensure food security and minimize food costs.

Zanoncedo Empowerment Centre is in Mpongo location, Tsholomnqa. The organisation currently provides HIV and other chronic diseases awareness, home-based care programmes, food gardening projects, after-school programmes, beadwork, and life skills projects.

The micro grant was used to host a series of community gatherings to educate people about climate change, its impact on the environment, and solutions to mitigate droughts and water scarcity.

Community members are now aware of climate change, the importance of planting trees and are actively working towards improving waste management.

The RACR Team

Tara van Ryneveld

Climate Policy Coordinator

Tara van Ryneveld joined our team in September as the new Climate Policy Coordinator. Tara recently completed her Masters in Climate Justice in Sweden.

She is passionate about how colonisation has created barriers to climate action in South Africa, and the need for decolonisation to enable radical climate action. She has worked within the Lund University project “Navigating Justice Claims: Between Riots, Strikes, and Business as Usual”. Prior to that, she worked at the South African National Biodiversity Institute, within the Climate Funds unit.

Amber Julius

Youth Citizen Journalist

Amber is a third-year Bachelor of Education student and a founding member of the Sisterhood Teen Movement where she mentors girls and young women from rural and marginalised communities.

She is an environmental activist and volunteers at various organisations that focus on women empowerment, rural community development, and youth leadership.

“I am an environmental champion and promote climate justice. I completed the 2022 Quaker United Nations Summer School, focusing on Human Rights and Refugees, Peace and Disarmament, Human Impacts of Climate Change, and Sustainable, and Just Economic Systems”, added Amber.

What's Coming Up?

Online session on COP27 - 25 November 2022

Topic of discussion: The relevance of COP 27 events to community-based organisations and in particular what the implications are of the JETP investment plan for South Africa.

Online seminar on Floods and policy engagement - 5 December 2022

More information will be shared in due course but in the meantime please diarise these dates.

Things to Watch

How women in rural communities carry the burden of climate change, service delivery, and political injustices.

How climate change affects rural women.

Thank you!

Thank you for all your support and the amazing work you have done in your communities this year.

Best wishes for a happy and peaceful holiday, and a blessed New Year.

RACR Team.

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