Rural Action for Climate Resilience

Co-funded by the European Union

Hello, Friends!

Welcome to our fourth edition of the Rural Action for Climate Resilience (RACR) newsletter and the first issue for 2023.

2022 was a busy year for all of us and a good year despite all the challenges we faced in our communities. We are happy for the opportunity to work with you, and we look forward to another productive year ahead.

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

Online seminars

On 29 November 2022, we had an online seminar on flooding and policy engagement. The seminar was attended by 31 participants and facilitated by Nkosikhulule Nyembezi. Discussions focused on the relevant disaster management legislature for communities to consider within a broader climate change response strategy.

Nyembezi spoke on the arrangement of government responsibility for responding to floods. The session also highlighted that municipalities must declare an emergency before disaster response measures or resources are activated and must have a disaster management plan or framework.

This was followed by a question and answer session, where participants raised particular instances of flooding, including one example triggered by poor municipal infrastructure maintenance and another where there is unclear responsibility over managing an estuary where informal settling has increased.

On 5 December 2022, we had an online seminar on COP27 that was held in Egypt and the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP). The session was facilitated by SAFCEI Policy Coordinator Tara Nair van Ryneveld and included guest speakers Wendy Pekeur from Ubuntu Rural Women and Youth Movement and Mandla Hadebe from the Economic Justice Network, who both attended COP 27 in Egypt this year.

Discussions focused on why we need international action on climate change, touching on key conversations and outcomes of COP27, focusing on the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) Investment Plan, and the need for South Africa to transition from coal-based energy.

On 15 February 2023, we had an online seminar on droughts, with Dr. Rhoda Malgas from Stellenbosch University. Dr. Malgas spoke about her work with the Environmental Monitoring Group on drought resilience amongst small-scale Rooibos farmers in Nieuwoudtville.

The aim of the seminar was to share lessons that can be learned from other cases to prepare for drought.

Integrated Development Plan (IDP) session

In the last week of January and the first week of February, eight organisations within the RACR project (who are also Climate Champions Core Grant recipients) met with the RACR Policy Coordinator to discuss potential entry points to engage their respective local governments on climate change. These were identified from the relevant Integrated Development Plans of the six local municipalities, six districts municipalities and two metropolitan municipalities (14 in total). These sessions will continue through monthly online meetings, to support their specific engagements with their respective local governments on climate change.

This support may be through assisting the development of context-specific climate change arguments, connecting them with similar organisations to build their network, or facilitating attendance in parliamentary meetings."

Micro Grant 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:

Siyakhana Gender Based Violence Centre is based in Zinyonka location, King William's Town, Eastern Cape. The micro-grant received was used to host a two-day workshop to raise awareness about climate change. With the assistance of the councillor, SAPS, ward committees, and traditional leaders, they were able to educate the community about the climate crisis and the importance of taking care of the environment.

The Department of Agriculture was also invited to the workshop to present ethical and environmentally friendly ways of farming. The community was encouraged to start food gardens to ensure food security and to minimise food costs. By the end of the workshop, all participants were well-educated about climate change and motivated to take small actions to combat climate change.

Core Grant Recipients

We are pleased to announce that the Rural Action for Climate Resilience Project has awarded Climate Champions Core Grants (CCCG) to 8 CBOs for the development and implementation of community-led climate resilience strategies.

Four kinds of actions were considered: a) Implementation of tangible adaptation interventions; b) Political interventions; c) Sustained climate literacy campaigns; and d) a combination of the above.
Congratulations to the Core Grant recipients, we look forward to following the implementation of your grants.

The RACR Team

Siphamandla Mqombothi

Youth Citizen Journalist

Siphamandla Mqomboti is from the Zinyoka location, King Williams Town, Eastern Cape. She has an Education and Development qualification from Buffalo City College and is currently volunteering at the Siyakhana Gender-Based Violence Centre which is part of the Rural Action for Climate Resilience (RACR) project.

Siphamandla loves working with people and is passionate about rural community development. “Joining the RACR team will not only bring positive change in my community in terms of amplifying rural community voices but will also ensure that people understand climate change and actions they can take to fight it”- added Siphamandla.

Welcome to the team Siphamandla!

What's Coming Up?

Online seminar 29 March 2023 - Topic to be confirmed

Western Cape and Northern Cape Regional workshops: 9 - 12 May 2023, Cape Town

Eastern Cape Regional workshop: 23 - 26 May 2023, East London

Please note that the Regional workshops are in-person workshops and the RACR team will be in touch about registration and travel arrangements.

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

Things to Watch/ listen to

Information about the Climate change bill and Public hearings

State of the Nation Address (SONA) highlights

How climate change impacts our health

Northern Cape schools promoting food security through hydroponics while combating climate change

Mystery disease affecting Eastern Cape livestock linked to climate change?

Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter, see you soon!

RACR Team.

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