



DEVELOPING RADIO PARTNERS

Focus: Youths

Climate change affects each and every age group. In the last bulletin we looked at how children are affected.

Today, we look at the group between the ages of 18 and 35. This age group is a major contributor to climate change. It's because most of the people in this age group are not employed and often have to resort to ways to make money to live. It might include cutting down trees or some other activity that might endanger the environment.

While this age group contributes to climate change, it also has the power to change society in terms of fighting activities that may bring about climate change.

It's important to engage this group in the fight against climate change at all levels of planning.

Forums that promote knowledge-sharing should be promoted.

It's encouraging that in Zambia there is growth in youth-led climate change organisations. This way this age group is part of the decision making process.

The Weekly Information Resource Bulletin

The goals of the Weekly Bulletin are:

- Bring listeners in the project area the latest information on natural resources, the environment and agriculture
- Focus on solutions, what works and what people can do
- Encourage listeners to share both their questions and solutions (African solutions for African problems)
- Raise awareness of issues that need to be discussed to affect public policy.
- Bring the latest solutions and practices that have relevance to this region from around the world
- Identify and link other NGOs working in the region share the project interests and goals
- Give the participating journalists guidance and tips on their reporting on these issues

The Problem: Youth and the Environment

Youth in Zambia are major contributors to climate change. This is due to high unemployment. In the last national census in 2010, the population of the country stood at just over 13 million people and the majority of this population were youths. (2010 census of population and housing)

And the majority of these young people are not employed this has forced many youth to look for ways to survive – and one way is cut down trees to make money. The result is that much of the land has been left bare.

Youths are also the major contributors to pollution. This is mainly due to most youth's being engaged in illegal disposal of hazardous waste such as used car fuel.

For instance, most of the car mechanics in Lusaka are young and when they repair a vehicle, they often dump the used oil and other materials into drains that send it into nearby rivers or streams.

In another instance, most of the quarrying happening in Lusaka is done by the young people. This, in the end, leaves lakes that may be toxic. These lakes contain water which may be dangerous to human life and, often times, many people drink and bathe in this water.

In addition to contributing to climate change issues, youth are often most affected by the impact of all these activities. Since they are likely to live longer they will continue to face severe effects of climate change and other problems.

Diseases, food insecurity and change in weather patterns will affect them with increased intensity.

Activities for Journalists

Initiatives have been taken up by youth-led organizations to sensitize young people on the need to plant trees. Such organizations include Youth for the Environment (YEN) and Youth Volunteers for the Environment (YVE).

Another youth-led NGO, known as the Center of Environment Justice has taken up the initiative of educating young people about the need to participate in advocating for proper disposal of mine waste. The NGO has also been urging youths to stand up against mining companies that want to start operations in the game and forest reserve areas.

One recent initiative involved the organization participating in a protest against an Australian mining company that wanted to start work in the lower Zambezi National Park. The youth protesters were taken to the central police station where they were charged with disorderly conduct, but were later released. The issue is now before the courts as activists seek to stop the government from issuing a mining license in the game and forest reserve.

Have a panel discussion with youth from your area.

Ask them how they have been affected by climate change. How do they think they have contributed to climate change and what they think is their role in mitigating climate change effects?

Is there a youth group that is focused on climate change in your community? If not, help organize one – and work with other radio stations to create a network of young people engaged in climate change mitigation.

Invite the Zambia Climate Change Network and the chairperson for the PACJA Media Network - Zambia Chapter to interact with youth on a radio platform aiming at sharing information and how best they can spread the information about slowing and even reversing some aspects of climate change.

Useful Link

Noah Zimba, Chairperson Zambia Climate Change Network.
gbnaturals@gmail.com. 0977873673.

Friday Phiri. Pacja media network. 0969624582

Mr. Boniface Mumba. Center for environment justice 0968 431 093

Mr. Billy Lombe. Youth's environment network bilzdown2@gmail.com Cell: 0977704846

<http://www.zamstats.gov.zm/census/cen.html>