REPORT ON WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (WDCD) 2017

Date of Activity: 17/06/2017

Activity Convener: Centre for Earth Works (CFEW) / UNCCD youth activist
Venue/Location: Gyero Village, Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria.

Slogan: Our Land. Our Home. Our Future!
Activity Background

There is probably no greater issue than land in the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that touches everyone. From the food we eat, to the clothes we wear and the houses we live – it all stems from land resources. In order to “leave no one behind” as proclaimed in the new Sustainable Development Goals, achieving land degradation neutrality needs to be in the forefront to meet our requirement and develop sustainability.

17th of June of every year has been tagged World Day to combat Desertification and Drought (WDCDD). This was set aside by United Nations as a day to raise global awareness through campaigns and eco-friendly activities on how we could collectively and effectively work together in protecting the mother Earth. Its purpose is to highlight ways to prevent desertification and recover from drought.

Losing productive land is driving people to make risky life choices. In rural areas where people depend on scarce productive land resources, land degradation is a driver of forced migration. Africa is particularly susceptible because more than 90% of the economy depends on a climate-sensitive natural resource base such as rain-fed, subsistence agriculture. Unless we change the way we manage our land, in the next 30 years we may leave a billion or more vulnerable people with little choice but to fight or flee.

The 2017 World Day to Combat Desertification (#2017WDCD) examines the important link between land degradation and migration. #2017WDCD looked at specific ways local communities can build resilience against current multi-fold development challenges through sustainable land management (SLM) practices. This day remind everyone of land’s important role in producing food and generating local employment, as well as its ability to add to the sustainability, stability and security of degraded land-affected places.

The slogan “Our Land. Our Home. Our Future” underlines 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.

Objectives

- To celebrate the World Day to Combat Desertification 2017
- To interact and create awareness about the far-reaching impact of Land Degradation educating community members about Sustainable Land management.

Slogan: Our Land. Our Home. Our Future!
Collective and shared initiatives for sustainable development.

- To carry out tree planting and encourage CFEW club members to engage community members people to take action
- Create a short video on the issue of mining and land degradation.

**Methodology**

The activities featured the following:

- Community sensitization
- Presentation
- Interview /Interactive section
- Tree planting exercise
- Making a video for WDCD 2017

The above methodology was adopted all with the aim of educating, engaging community members as well as spurring them to take action.

**Highlights**

The event started 8:00am with opening remark by the Community Leader, who welcomed the CFEW team and club members. The team introduced themselves to the community members. The team lead gave a brief introduction about Centre for Earth Works which has been established as a youth-led environmental non-governmental organization passionate about securing the earth. CFEW works to develop the skills and expertise of communities to develop local solution as well as adopt sustainable strategies of solving environmental challenges.

The aim and objectives of the event was clearly stated. The activity featured interactive sessions on mining practices in the community as well as its impact on the degradation of land resources. Community practice, sustainable land management, food security, migration and health linkage of land was clearly explained to the participants. The team talked about the need to adopt sustainable land management practices. Soil is important for human society as well as for the animal world; it is the medium for growth of food and energy crops, a good source of minerals. Land is a natural reservoir for huge amount of water and a natural seed bank. It is estimated that land degradation affects 38% of the world’s cropland and has reduced water and nutrient availability all influenced by human activities such as mining.
...Collective and shared initiatives for sustainable development.

monoculture and overgrazing. Students also contributed significantly to the success of the activity. The Students who are members of CFEW environmental club in the community made a commitment to further engage community members as well as other young people in the community campaigns. The activity of the day was crowned by tree planting exercise and the recording of the WDCD 2017 video.

The video can be watched using the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZSi_bvmjrE on youtube. Vote of thanks and group photograph was taken to mark the end of the activities at 10;40am.

Results/Achievements

- Through the celebration of WDCD2017, community stakeholders, local miners and farmers were educated on the impact of land degradation and ways to take action.

Slogan: Our Land. Our Home. Our Future!
Collective and shared initiatives for sustainable development.

- The club members from the corner stone academy in Gero actively and happily participated in the community engagement and tree planting exercise.
- The community leader were impressed and promised to support CFEW’s activities in the community.
- The CFEW team successfully recorded and uploaded the 2017WDCD video this is found at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZSi_bvmjrE.

Challenges and Opportunities

- Community stakeholders, farmers and miners were excited about what they have learnt. The requested further engagement to understand how to fully practice sustainable land management and restoring degraded land.
- Information education and communication (IEC) materials was not available. No short flyers or printout was distributed during celebration of the WDCD 2017
- Limited funds was a major challenge.
- Community Leader call for an afforestation project to be implemented by CFEW
- Religious leader are good agents to engage in changing community perspectives on Land management.
- High cost of equipment used for video recording and documentation.

Number and categories of person’s involved/participated/trained in the activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number and categories of persons involved/participated/trained in the activity</th>
<th>Women (aged 18 and above)</th>
<th>Men (aged 18 and above)</th>
<th>Total (aged 18 and above)</th>
<th>Girls (aged &lt;18)</th>
<th>Boys (aged &lt;18)</th>
<th>Total (aged &lt;18)</th>
<th>Total number of persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number and types of organizations involved/participated/trained in the activity</th>
<th>Types of organizations</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ministries /Agencies</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NGOs /FBOs/CSOs</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legal Institutions</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others (specify_______________________________)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Implications for CFEW

- Write proposals to implement community project in Gyero village
- Partner with other like-minded organisation to work towards empowering local community.
- More awareness to be carried out in schools and communities as a response to get more people involved in the fight against land degradation.
- Work towards implementing land restoration project and capacity building of women, farmers and local miners.

Recommendations

- CFEW should carry out resource mobilization to effectively implement project
- Write and apply for capacity building opportunities as well as partnership request with international organisation Like the UNCCD, UNEP etc.
- Create more short videos crafted in local languages to engage more audience.
- Celebration of other world environmental day to create more awareness.
- Carry out online campaign with the support of UNCCD tagged the #Unite4Land or #Stand4Land or #Land4Life campaign to further promote SDG 15.

Conclusion

Adopting sustainable, climate-smart agriculture will help grass root communities fight poverty and achieve land degradation neutrality. This is because Improving yields and land productivity will increase the food security and incomes of the land users including the poorest farmers. This, in turn, could preempt people’s movements in distress, and reduce current and potential conflicts over scarce resources in degrading areas. Sustainable land management offers young people vast opportunities for income generation in sectors such as agriculture, food processing and tourism.
Photo Speak

Group photo with Participants at the 2017 WDCD celebration Gyero village, Jos, Plateau state.

Video Interview with community member

*Slogan:* Our Land. Our Home. Our Future!
Collective and shared initiatives for sustainable development.

Slogan: Our Land. Our Home. Our Future!
...Collective and shared initiatives for sustainable development.

Making of the video and taking a look at the degraded land due to mining activities

Slogan: Our Land. Our Home. Our Future!
Collective and shared initiatives for sustainable development.

Excavation and ponds created due to mining of Tin in the community.

Slogan: Our Land. Our Home. Our Future!