



# NDYS in Action, Newsletter

Natural Disaster Youth Summit Monthly News

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Vol # 29  
March 15, 2009

## The VOICE of YOUTH is NEEDED!

Editor: Daniel Paz,  
Salta, Argentina



### Topics

**Disaster Reduction and Climate Change**

Flash floods in Southern Africa.

## Community-based Adaptation to climate change project

As many researches made in the past years anticipated poor countries will receive the worst impacts of global warming. Something that is an aspiration term called Community-based Adaptation to climate change will describe the universe of adaptation to climate change activities being done by very vulnerable and poor communities over time; according to Mr Saleemul Huq, head of the climate change group at the London based International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). "Even with the best of intentions and lots of money being made available by the international community towards adaptation to climate change, it will only trickle down to the poorest and most vulnerable (as is our experience of development funding in general in the past)," said Mr Saleemul Huq.



Farmers and isolated communities are who ignore many things about climate change.

Many of those activities are taking place in Bangladesh, which is one of the most vulnerable countries to droughts, sea level rise and flooding. People in rural areas are struggling increasing flooding by rising food in floating islands made of straw or aquatic plants.

The distinction between adaptation to climate change and adaptation to climate variation is often blurred. Climate variability refers to the variations in the mean climate statistics, while climate change refers to long-term significant change in average weather, including climate variability.

The focus is now on "clubbing" all community-based adaptation activities under the term "community-based adaptation (CBA) to climate change", said Huq. "So it is still a work-in-progress to define CBA to Climate Change (as opposed to CBA to Climate Variability)." A CBA project looks much like any development project - for example, water harvesting in drought conditions rather than a stand-alone response to climate change - noted an [IIED policy brief](#) written by Huq. CBA to climate change is just another new layer added to other community-driven initiatives.

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During the Third International Workshop on CBA in Dhaka, Bangladesh's capital, the topic was the center for discussion and analysis. This was organized by the IIED, the Bangladesh Centre for Advance Studies (BCAS) and the Ring Alliance. The aim was to promote the concept and share knowledge. The initiative would not only build a support base of information for communities but would also serve the strategic purpose of advocating "specific quotas" for the most vulnerable in any new global funds for adaptation that may be agreed in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change or other global processes, said Huq.

Studies in Vietnam and Malawi have shown that rural communities often sense the climate is changing and start adapting to climate variability by growing new hardy crop varieties, but lack of understanding was greater in areas with poor communication. The IIED brief recommended not only translating scientific texts into local languages but also using traditional means of communication such as art and theatre. One of the papers presented at the workshop highlighted the use of rural radio in the Democratic Republic of Congo to inform small-scale farmers of the challenges posed by climate change. The UK-based Institute for Development Studies has set up a website for exchanging information ([www.cba-exchange.org](http://www.cba-exchange.org)) on CBA to inform NGOs and communities.

Source: [www.irinnews.org](http://www.irinnews.org)

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## Droughts need to be standardized



Droughts are killing more and more animals in African's rural areas. Farmers are disappearing little by little.

Many discussions around the topic of comparing droughts in the past decades and now for example were found in the International Workshop on Drought and Extreme Temperatures which was organized by the China Meteorological Administration (CMA) and the World Meteorological Organization in Johannesburg, South Africa during the first week of March. In there they pondered ways to cope with the unwelcome impact of droughts and extreme temperatures on agriculture, rangelands and forestry.

Robert Stefanski, a WMO scientific officer who works on weather and climate issues related to agriculture said that "Many a time, appropriate indices are not used, as there are no standards or guidelines for the use of drought indices". The workshop has asked the WMO to develop standards for agricultural drought indices.

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Prompted by the need to measure drought intensity and duration for climate-change studies, participants also called for a unified and standardized drought index. Stefanski pointed out that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had used one drought index, the Palmer Index, "which was originally derived for the USA, and these kinds of indices need to be adapted and modified for the whole world."

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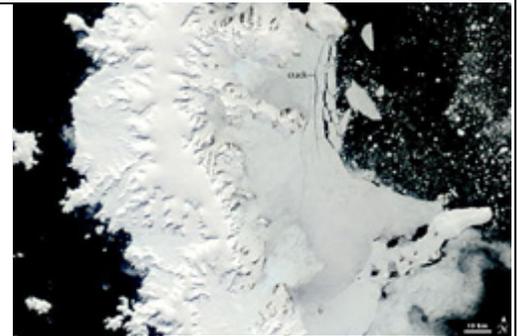
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## The truth is appearing

The evidence shown by the UN Environmental Programme's 2009 Year Book is kind of alarming and shows how the Earth is losing its ice faster than the common way. The Northern Sea Route along the Arctic Siberian coast opened, and the Northwest Passage through the islands of northern Canada was also ice-free, for the second year in a row. These two passages have not been open simultaneously since before the last ice age started, some 100,000 years ago.

The overall declining trend of sea-ice in the Arctic has now lasted 3 decades; the thickness of ice built up over the years is decreasing. The flow into the ocean of the Jakobshavn Isbrae glacier in western Greenland, one of the most important routes of ice loss, has doubled since 1997. The loss of ice from the West Antarctic ice sheet increased by 60% in the decade to 2006



This is a crack in sea ice recorded along the Antarctic Peninsula on 2 January, 2009 by NASA Goddard Space Flight Center's MODIS Rapid Response.

Ice loss from the Antarctic Peninsula, which extends from west Antarctica towards South America, increased by 140%. The atmosphere in the Arctic is warming twice as fast as in most other regions of the world; warming is amplified by the lower reflectivity of the earth's surface as ice and snow melt.

The International Polar Year, a scientific programme that focuses on changing Arctic and Antarctic conditions, has found evidence of large-scale water drainage systems beneath the polar ice sheets, causing renewed concern about ice-sheet stability. The two-year programme, which began in March 2007, will draw to a close in March 2009.

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# Extreme situation in Somalia



Many camels started dying because of the severe drought.

Urgent help is needed in Somalia's central region Mudug, where a shortage of water, caused by a drought, made people fear for their own lives. Mr Mursal Shirwa, who is the commissioner for social affairs of Gal- Mudug state visited the worst affected area and realized that more than 50,000 animals like goats died and that the incredible amount of 33,000 people are needing immediate help.

Many people moved to urban areas searching for help. Mr Shirwa said that people have nowhere to go and they are arriving to the closest towns. Many shepherds agreed the fact that camels started dying in some villages. It is important to note that in this central part of Somalia, rains have been absent since 2007 and boreholes or water points have dried up.

Mr Ibrahim Ahmed who belongs to the Somali Community Development Organization (SCDO) which is a local NGO organized a quick response project in which they delivered water to the affected areas but there are little funds so they couldn't reach the goal of reaching to isolated areas. Shirwa said the Gal-Mudug administration would issue an appeal to international aid agencies to "help mitigate this unfolding catastrophe". He said water, food and shelter for the displaced were a priority, as was restocking some of the lost livestock.



**Comments:** I think the Community Based Adaptation project is a good idea. Sometimes people in general don't know what are the bad effects and what cause global warming. It is o to inform everybody.

As you can see the UN Environmental Programme's 2009 Year Book is showing valuable information about many researchers which tell us what will get worse if we don't stop global warming. So let's try to communicate that kind of information.

A shepherd in Somalia said that once camels start dying, humans are not far behind...think about this phrase. What is next?

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*"Communication saves lives!"*