

TDH - GERMANY MAKING IT POSSIBLE FOR RURAL SCHOOLS IN NKANINI TO PARTICIPATE IN COP 17 ACTIVITIES.

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This is part of **KRCC** Children & Environment project supported by **Tdh**



This is the first of the four children`s dialogues with the learners from schools participating in COP17 activities held at Bishop`s Guest House in ESHOWE on the 4th of November 2011. The event was sponsored by Tdh and Bishop`s Guest House . Under the theme , *Working Together , Save Tomorrow Today*, we saw learners from Bagibile High , Saron , Donsintaba and Mathibelana Primary Schools actively involved in the discussion about children`s role in the upcoming COP17 activities in Durban . Since this was the 1st session with the learners , it was therefore essential to have a rich background for learners to have more informed discussions in future . Hence we had input from essential stakeholders.

This event was blessed by Bishop Kumalo from the Catholic Church of Eshowe Diocese (*sitted on the extreme left*). He was doing a theological reflections focussing on the environment and our responsibility in ensuring that we all take good care it. Teachers , learners ,



government department officials as well as KRCC staff present were happy to be receive the contextual short sermon from Genesis 1 & 2 reminding them about the powers endowed on human beings in taking care of the envirmnet. The Bishop, who is also KRCC board member, reiterated this by qouting Genesis 1:26 where God said, *“ Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”* This was the essence of the message of the day under the theme mentioned earlier.

Ms Ntombifuthi Sibiya (*standing*) from the Department of Environmental Affairs & Rural Development who was speaking on the topic *Caring For Our Environment*, sent a very clear message to learners and teachers present, about the role they have in caring for the environment. In her presentation she touched on ecological rights, water, health and climate change. The



message was well received by 12 learners present. Learners present had been selected by schools to be champions on environmental issues in their respective schools. They were then expected to take the message back to other fellow learners in the schools they come from. When asked by learners and teachers what is COP17 all about, she enriched them on what it is all about and what the conference is meant to achieve. It was through such an input that COP17 was demystified and started to make meaning to the school curriculum.

After Mr Nyuswa (KRCC) had shared the outline of the activities in which learners are going to participate and what the whole project entails, learners expressed their appreciation of this rare opportunity to participate in this project. More exciting for them was the opportunity to mix with learners from other communities as well as the introduction of the project that speaks to water,



which is one of the challenges facing Nkanini village in Eshowe. (*The picture shows champions reflecting on the day that enriched them with information needed for future dialogues with other fellow learners in their schools.*)

As the event came to a close, the principal of Mathibelana Primary School, Mrs Mtshali, was speechless. She stood up and took a long pause. After a deep breathe she said, "We are grateful. Thanks to KRCC and Tdh. Thanks to everybody in the house. We commit ourselves to this project." Her words marked the end of the day and the beginning of a much more informal interactions where we saw learners becoming more relaxed and interacting freely with everyone.

