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The Force and the Fire at COP30

Reclaiming the Commons: A Call for a New Development Story for Africa

Climate Justice - Photography as a Tool for Demanding Justice

Ken Saro-Wiwa, 30 Years After

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HOME RUN

We welcome this 50th edition of the Eco-Instigator with mixed feelings: both of excitement and sobriety. Excitement because our collective voice for ecological justice has continued to grow stronger with every passing season for the past 50 editions; and sobriety because the world continues to drift deeper into the throes of a poly-crisis that demands more honesty, courage, solidarity and action than ever before.

As a milestone edition, this collection assembles a wide range of stories at the heart of the values, ethos and causes that HOMEF embodies and lives for. For instance, we bring you stories from HOMEF's coverage of the November 2025 COP30 in Belém, Brazil. For many, this COP was expected to be different, perhaps even transformative. It was expected to usher in what should have been a moment of global resolve. But having experienced the events and negotiations of COP30, we witnessed the familiar disappointment that has gradually become characteristic of COPs. The spectacle of glossy blue-zone halls, guarded by bureaucratic language and political manoeuvring, reminded us, once again, that those who claim to negotiate our climate future often do so with their eyes fixed firmly on profit margins, not people or the planet.

Earlier, October 2025 marked a profound moment with the annual Right Livelihood Lecture held at the University of Port Harcourt. The lecture brought together students, scholars, environmental defenders, and movement builders to reflect on climate justice in the Niger Delta, and how we can use tools of forensic investigation to combat the climate crisis. It was a sobering reminder that education is not complete until it is connected to the struggles of real people, and that the university remains a crucial space and agent for nurturing critical thought and a sense of responsibility towards our damaged ecosystems.

Our community dialogues continued across coastal and rural communities, each one revealing yet again the depth of wisdom that resides among the people and the enormity of the burdens they carry. Whether in conversations about the loss of livelihoods, poisoned waters, or persistent gas flares, the message remained clear: communities know what they want; they know what they deserve; and they know that justice begins with being heard and included. The outcomes of these dialogues continue to strengthen our resolve to never relent in our mission of amplifying local voices and equipping community members with the tools (knowledge, skills, mindset etc) they need to resist environmental harm and reclaim their dignity.

One of the defining moments of this quarter was the Climate Justice Assemblies in Benin City,

Nigeria, and in Belém, Brazil, where environmental justice comrades, allies, and community leaders gathered to reflect on the state of the climate struggle and to chart a shared path forward. From the powerful testimonies of Ogoni representatives in Benin City to the stirring reflections on global resistance in Belém, the Assemblies were reminders that climate justice goes far beyond carbon metrics. During these meetings, we launched the Yasunize and Ogonize campaign, drawing inspiration from Ecuador's Yasuni referendum and the long-standing Ogoni resistance. Both movements teach us that the statement "leave the oil in the ground" is not just a slogan but a commitment to survival, sovereignty, and intergenerational responsibility. These examples show what is possible when people refuse to be intimidated and choose instead to defend their land, their rights, and their future.

Other significant programmes held in this period have continued to deepen our collective work. Our engagements around agroecology and food sovereignty remain strong as we confront the threats of GMOs, hunger, and corporate capture of food systems. Our Culture and Environment desk has continued to push the boundaries of knowledge through poetry, prose, and film, demonstrating the undeniable truth that art has the power to awaken the imagination and mobilize the spirit in ways that policy papers may never be able to. The expansion of HOMEF's school arm, the Young Environmentalist Network (TYEN) in universities and secondary schools, renews our belief that the next generation is ready, willing, and eager to take the baton of ecological justice and run with it.

As we move through the next quarter, we hold close the memory of the 30th anniversary of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the eight Ogoni martyrs. Their courage continues to guide our steps. They remind us that the struggle for environmental justice is never in vain, and that history is always kind to those who insist on truth.

This edition brings you stories, reflections, and reports that capture the heartbeat of our work. As always, we invite you to read, engage, question, create, and share. Your voices, articles, poems, and images are the threads that strengthen this collective tapestry of resistance.

We look forward to hearing from you. The movement grows stronger through your participation.

We never stop looking forward to receiving your feedback, stories, articles, poems, or photos. Continue to share with us at home@homef.org / editor@homef.org.

Until Victory!

Nnimmo Bassey

Director, Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF)

Colonialism's Nunc Dimittis in Africa

By Nnimmo Bassey

Colonialism is not a civilising process but one of wanton extraction, exploitation, humiliation, and abuse of rights as a key issue . It was characterised by great crimes against humanity, including those perpetrated in Congo, Cameroon, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, Madagascar, and other places.

The African Union's (AU) theme for 2025 is "Justice for Africans and People of African Descent through Reparations." The impetus for this theme comes from the Accra 2023 Reparations Conference. In line with the theme, the government of Algeria and the African Union co-hosted a conference on Crimes of colonialism: Towards Redressing Historical Injustices through the Criminalisation of Colonialism in Algiers, Algeria's capital, on 30th November and 1st December 2025.

Working towards fair reparations for the harms and exploitations suffered by Africans and people of African descent over the past four centuries has been a key concern for the AU and the Organization for African Unity (OAU) before it. The first Pan-African conference on reparations, held in Abuja, Nigeria, in April 1993, resulted in the first collective position of African political leadership as captured in the Abuja Proclamation on Reparations. That declaration stated that that "the issue of reparations is an important question requiring the united action of Africa and its Diaspora…" being "fully persuaded that the damage sustained by the African peoples is not a 'thing of the past' but is painfully manifest in the damaged lives of contemporary Africans from Harlem to Harare, in the damaged economies of the Black World from Guinea to Guyana, from Somalia to Surinam." The Abuja Proclamation also called "upon the international community to recognize that there is a unique and unprecedented moral debt owed to the African peoples which has yet to be paid - the debt of compensation to the Africans as the most humiliated and exploited people of the last four centuries of modern history."

This initial conference has inspired many other conferences on reparations and racism, including the Algiers conference on the Crime of Colonialism. I participated in a panel discussion on the Environmental Impacts of Colonialism at this conference. Delegates included ambassadors, ministers of foreign affairs, and experts drawn from across Africa and the diaspora.

Algeria was praised for hosting the historic and strategic conference aimed at seeking recognition of the crime of colonialism and seeking reparations as the basis for sustained peace and healing. The conference advanced Africa's position on crimes of colonialism as systemic violence and exploitation that, alongside slavery, qualify as crimes against humanity. At the conference, a call was made for a declaration of an African Day for the Remembrance of the Victims of Transatlantic Enslavement and Colonialism. It was also noted that direct colonialism has not ended, as there are still 20 colonies in the Caribbean under some form of direct colonialism by world superpowers besides those in Africa and elsewhere.

My notes from the event indicated that the fact that colonialism was not a civilising process but one of wanton extraction, exploitation, humiliation, and abuse of rights was a key issue discussed at the meeting. It was noted that colonialism was characterised by great crimes against humanity, including those perpetrated in Congo, Cameroon, Namibia, Angola, Mozambique, Madagascar, and other places. References were frequently made to the nuclear tests that the French carried out in Algeria during the colonial era. The contributions of Frantz Fanon, author of The Wretched of the Earth, an internationalist African anti-colonial activist and revolutionary, were acknowledged. The impacts of colonialism on education, economy, and other spheres of life were also stressed, as well as the disruption of African culture, which was highlighted as the destruction of the glue that holds African peoples together.

The high-level ministerial panel on From Recognition to Codification: Criminalising Colonialism in International Law showed that colonialism is a system and not an event, and, therefore, cannot be successfully fought without strategic plans. Such plans and actions must include ways of bringing back African systems of governance through education. Discussions around the human and generational impacts of colonialism underscored the health and genetic effects of nuclear tests as well as the intentional spread of disease, displacements, and other acts of violence.

"We must not be prisoners of our past, but architects of our future."

Permit me to share some points I put across on the panel on Environmental Impacts of Colonialism. The first point was that colonialism, and neocolonialism will not end until coloniality is erased. The persistence of coloniality of power and knowledge reinforces the continuation of colonialism in new forms. These produce extreme and destructive exploitation. And we must not forget, as Kwame Nkrumah stated in his book on Neocolonialism, that the worst form of imperialism is exploitation without responsibility. This mode of rapacious exploitation persists on the continent.

Another key point raised is that colonialism was birthed and nourished by extractivism. It was all about controlling the colonies or sacrifice zones to the benefit of the colonizers' home territories, which were considered sacred and untouchable. Colonialism extracts nearly anything: labour, data, cultures, minerals, finance, and is virtually insatiable. Colonialism's emphasis on land dispossession, resource extraction, and cultural destruction frequently resulted in ecocidal practices as they were extensive, intentional, persistent, and often irreversible. The environmental crimes instituted by colonialism have continued to manifest in the ongoing degradation of the Niger Delta, where oil and gas have been destructively extracted from colonial times to the present. Other locations include Obuasi in Ghana (gold), coal in Witbank in South Africa, oil in the Sudd, South Sudan, gas in Cabo Delgado, Mozambique, colonial extraction of so-called critical minerals in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the notorious extraction of uranium in Niger Republic.

The environmental impacts of colonialism also appear through carbon colonialism, which is also currently manifesting as a continent-scale land grab. The time has come for colonial extraction to be halted in all ramifications and the ecological/climate debt being owed to Africa to be recognised and paid, as part of the needed reparations. In other words, climate finance should be approached from the perspective of ecological and climate debt.

To get out of the rut, the AU should produce a model law for Rights of Nature to be adopted by all African nations. Secondly, the AU should promote the codification and utilisation of African environmentalism built on African philosophies, culture, and cosmology. The AU should also recognize and promote grassroots initiatives for halting the expansion of fossil fuel sacrifice zones and towards resource democracy. Inspiration for this can be drawn from the Ogoni case in Nigeria and the Yasuni experience in Ecuador. Finally, the map of Africa requires urgent review with the abolition and erasure of divisive, thoughtless, colonial boundaries, as those were mere demarcations of zones of ownership, control, and exploitation by the colonialists.

Coming away from the conference, I kept ruminating on the insightful advice offered by Eric Phillips, Vice Chair CARICOM Slavery Reparation Commission. He said, "We must not be prisoners of our past, but architects of our future." It was a call for action for all, but the tasks rest especially on African political leaders. Will they rise to the occasion and show leadership?

(Nnimmo Bassey is an environmental activist and architect, the director of the ecological think tank; Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF))

RECLAIMING THE COMMONS

A call for a New Development Story for Africa.

" For Africa to move forward, it must return to the strength of its people, their values, and their indigenous systems."

At a recent presentation at HOMEF's School of Ecology titled "People Power for Climate Action," scholar and development thinker Dr Roland Nkwain Ngam delivered a powerful message about Africa's future and the need to rewrite the stories that have shaped the continent's development pathways for decades, if not centuries. His central argument was clear: for Africa to move forward, it must return to the strength of its people, their values, and their indigenous systems. Drawing from history, philosophy, and contemporary politics, Ngam challenged the dominant assumptions that have guided development narratives on the continent.

Ngam began by examining what he called "the illusion of development." He argued that after decades of external interventions, Africa continues to face deep-seated challenges that many of the prescribed development models copied from the West have failed to address.

According to him, three problems stand out:

a) development has never been as simple as outsiders imagined,

b) African societies have been unfairly treated as incapable or deficient, and

c) Indigenous cultures and institutions have been wrongly dismissed as backward.

These assumptions, he said, have created development models and policies that are at variance with Africa's realities.

"Colonisation not only brutalised Africans but also "de-civilised the coloniser" by normalising violence and moral decay in Europe as well."

He drew heavily on the reflections of Aimé Césaire to illustrate the long-term damage caused by colonisation. Césaire wrote that colonisation not only brutalised Africans but also "de-civilised the coloniser" by normalising violence and moral decay in Europe as well. Ngam used this to frame the modern global order, noting that many of today's inequalities are direct continuations of this violent history. He argued that from slavery to neoliberal capitalism, Africa has repeatedly been placed on the losing end of global systems.

One of Ngam's most striking sections asked the question: "Who pays the price?"

He described how climate disasters, droughts, floods, cyclones, and fires disproportionately affect Africa's poorest communities. He pointed out that women and children often shoulder the hardest labour during crises, from fetching water during droughts to gathering firewood for cooking.

He also challenged the myth that mining brings prosperity, asking bluntly: "Do you know any mining community in Africa that is wealthy?" Ngam tied these examples to a larger pattern of environmental injustice: metabolic rift, pollution, toxic agriculture, and centuries of extractive exploitation.

People as the Foundation of Sustainable Development

Despite the weight of the problems he described, Ngam's tone shifted when he spoke about African communities. He insisted that development cannot succeed without people and that Africa's peoples are not obstacles to progress. According to him, communities pursue their own wellbeing in ways that reflect their histories and values. Development becomes sustainable only when it strengthens local institutions by aligning with these histories and values. He emphasised that in many African societies, community remains strong, collective responsibility remains central, and primary group loyalty continues to shape social life. These, he argued, are not outdated traditions but living systems with significance that continues to be relevant in today's modern world.

Ngam urged a shift from seeing African systems as "traditional," which he argued often implies outdated or static, to viewing them as

"the illusion of development...after decades of external interventions, Africa continues to face deep-seated challenges that many of the prescribed development models copied from the West have failed to address."

indigenous, meaning contemporary and evolving. He highlighted examples of indigenous strengths: cooperative labour systems such as ilima, letsema, and gayna; communal financial practices like susu, tontine, and stokvel; local knowledge systems that prioritise care, solidarity, and community growth; and participatory decision-making that builds a culture of democracy and tolerance. He argued that these systems offer lessons not just for Africa, but for the world.

The presentation introduced several African philosophies, Osotua, Pulaagu, Ubuntu, Vodun, that centre relationships, respect, and balance with the natural world. Ngam linked these to the idea that societies evolve morally over time. He cited Kwame Anthony Appiah's warning that future generations will one day question many practices we accept today, from environmental destruction to extreme poverty. According to Ngam, these new biocentric ontologies offer a path towards a more honourable world.

Ngam's message ultimately returned to the commons: that is, the shared resources, values, and systems that bind African communities together. Reclaiming the commons, he said, is not a nostalgic return to the past but a necessary step towards a sustainable future.

By grounding development in indigenous knowledge systems, community values, and collective decision-making, Africa can build systems that are resilient, equitable, and modern, yet rooted in dignity. His conclusion was simple but powerful: Africa's future depends not on external models, but on the wisdom and agency of its people.

Report by HOMEF Team

Mapping theRevolution

Reimagining a World Beyond the Poly-crisis

by HOMEF Team

The Omega Resilience Awards Africa (ORA-A) convened its in-person fellows meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, November 2025 under the theme "Reimagining the World Beyond the Poly-Crisis." The gathering brought together six ORA-A fellows (Lindsay, Alieu, Magdalene, Sandra, Monaja, and Sungu) supported by anchors Precious, Odudu, and Nnimmo. The meeting reflected the collective vision and energy of the entire cohort.

The purpose of the retreat was to reflect on the state of the world, especially the intersecting environmental, political, economic, and social crises that shape life in Africa. Rather than focusing only on the challenges, the meeting created space for the fellows to reimagine what a world beyond the poly-crisis could look like. This approach allowed the fellows to connect their individual projects to a larger shared vision of change.

The meeting began by exploring how the fellows understand the poly-crisis in their own contexts. Each fellow presented insights from their work, ranging from climate resilience among rural women to youth inner development, political education, cultural expression, indigenous knowledge, and organizing strategies. It soon became clear that, although their projects differ in focus, they all address the same underlying conditions: fragmentation of movements, weakening of community structures, loss of cultural knowledge, political instability, and climate vulnerability. This shared understanding set the foundation for deeper discussions on collective responses.

A central feature of the retreat was a collaborative process led by Alieu Bah, who guided the fellows in developing a Map of Revolution, which illustrates how meaningful social change begins at the deepest point of human experience and expands outward into society. At the core lies Desire and Aspiration, the internal spark that pushes individuals to imagine a different future. From this spark emerges Rebellion, the first act of saying "no" to injustice.

As resistance grows, individuals and communities develop Critical Resilience, the capacity to question power, analyse systems,

and survive oppression without losing hope. This resilience strengthens into Resistance, where people organize, speak out, protect their rights, and challenge harmful structures collectively.

When these layers build upon one another (personal awakening, organised resilience, and sustained resistance), they create the conditions for Revolution. In this model, revolution is not only a dramatic moment but the outward expression of a long, layered process of inner courage, community strength, and collective action. Every major transformation begins from within and expands outward, and is powered by people who dare to imagine and fight for a different world.

The goal was to map out how African communities can respond to the poly-crisis using existing strengths, cultural knowledge, political organizing, and new forms of collaboration.

Through group discussions and structured activities, the fellows mapped out the forces shaping today's crises, the opportunities for building resilience, the knowledge systems that sustain communities, and the pathways for stronger collective action.

By the end of the retreat, the map had taken shape as a visual and conceptual guide outlining how the fellows and their communities can approach systemic transformation. Since then, the Map of Revolution has remained a living document that will continue to evolve as the work progresses.

Alongside the discussions, the meeting included poetry sessions, musical expressions, and collaborative drawing exercises, activities that helped the group process complex ideas in ways that felt accessible and grounded. They also created a shared atmosphere of trust and openness, making it easier for the fellows to exchange personal experiences and insights. Although creative, these sessions were not treated as artistic performances. Instead, they were used as practical and cultural tools to support reflection, dialogue, and community building.

The Map of Revolution that emerged from the retreat serves as a collective reference point, a guiding framework for fellows' ongoing

work, and a statement of intent for building a more just and resilient future. The meeting demonstrated that meaningful change begins when people come together, share knowledge honestly, and commit to working collectively. The fellows left with renewed clarity, stronger relationships, and a shared vision of what it means to build a world beyond crisis.

These are the comments from the fellows concerning the progress of their projects.

Kalcha Yetu (Our Culture)

Monaja

My album is called “Kalcha Yetu,” which means Our Culture. The main idea behind this project was to show how deep the crisis we’re living through has become. It is no longer just about the environment or human rights; it cuts across everything. Capitalism has seeped into every part of our lives: our spirituality, our environment, our relationships, even the way we value ourselves. So, for me, this is a cultural problem, and I’m using traditional music to respond to it.

Each song on the album deals with a different aspect of this puzzle. Some tracks mention the environment in passing, others talk about how everything in life has been monetized, and others touch on how African spiritual traditions are being eroded. Towards the end of the album, the focus shifts to questions about what a world beyond the current crisis might look like. There’s a song called “Kileleni” where I try to picture what a more equal, humane society could look like, especially for children.

Even though the album isn’t finished yet, the work has already created an impact. Before starting this full project, I released songs like “Alafu,” which ended up becoming a tool for mobilization around the June 25th protests. People used the song to organize, to motivate each other, and to prepare themselves mentally for the streets. During the album launch, many activists who were present said that the songs they heard spoke about their realities. That energy was real.

Part of what I’m trying to do with this project is to challenge the way young people, especially Gen Z, are often described. We’re not some “Protest Punks” out here causing trouble. We’re taking necessary actions to protect our future. I want to humanize that. I want to show that the youths in the streets are real people responding to real threats.

My approach mixes entertainment with a message. Some songs are light and catchy, so you enjoy them without thinking too much. But once I’ve pulled you in, I hit you with something heavier, something that says what needs to be said. I’m careful not to sound preachy, but I also won’t water down the truth.

At one point, after my first show, I faced pressure from the authorities. I had to go underground for a while, not just for safety, but also to keep working. I don’t want to drop one controversial song and disappear. I want people to hear the full project. So even while I was hiding, I kept writing, refining, understanding what this album needs to be.

For me, “Kalcha Yetu (Our Culture)” is more than an album. It’s my way of responding to a crisis that has changed the way we live. It’s culture speaking back to power. It’s a reminder that we’re still here, still resisting, still imagining something better.

Expanding Political Education in The Gambia

Alieu Bah

I've always been very clear about what I want to do with my work. For almost 19 years now, my focus has been on expanding the political education space in The Gambia by building a kind of popular pedagogy among the small leftist circles that exist in the country. This project is really just a continuation of that long journey, but now, with a bit of funding, I'm able to bring in more people and deepen the process.

Right now, what we've built are political education cells. We started in the urban areas, but over time, new ones have formed, and now we have about five, including some in semi-urban communities. These cells are places where people come together to learn, reflect, and debate their reality.

One of the big questions we've been exploring lately is Africanism, especially in the context of this new wave of nationalism happening in The Gambia. Suddenly, a lot of people are becoming very patriotic, but no one really knows where that patriotism is headed. It's producing all kinds of outcomes, some inspiring, some dangerous. The ground feels uneven, almost experimental, when you try to understand what this patriotism means.

For me, one of the most powerful moments in this work happened during a recent protest, where some of our members were arrested. When they came out, there was a marked difference in the way they articulated the contradictions in society. They weren't just talking about high prices or hardship as isolated Gambian problems. They understood that these issues were part of a wider neo-colonial system affecting the entire continent. Watching them break out of that siloed, atomized way of thinking was humbling. It showed me that the work we're doing was beginning to take root.

Of course, as expected, this kind of political work brings tension. You're always on edge with the state, because the state doesn't want people to understand the structures that oppress them or how they can liberate themselves. Arrests, harassment, intimidation, and the like, characterise our engagements with the government.

But even beyond the state, there's community resistance too. For example, we're building a political education centre in an area that strongly supports the ruling party. People can't openly tell us not to be there, but you can feel the discomfort. It's not a welcoming environment. And that's one of the hardest parts of this work: navigating hostile geographies and demographies, both inside and outside the activist space.

But despite all these, we are matching on. This phase of the project is allowing more people to join the conversation, to understand their place in these global structures, and to think critically about what liberation really looks like. And for me, after nearly two decades, that's still the goal: strengthening political consciousness, one space at

a time.

Documenting Rural Women's Experiences and Adaptation to Climate Change

Sandra

My project documents the lived experiences of rural women and the strategies they adopt to cope with climate change. Women carry the greatest burden of the climate change crisis: fetching water, securing food, and managing households, especially in communities where men work in mines.

We've held four dialogues with women from Bindura and Chilli. Although participants clearly recognized changes in rainfall, seasons, and crop performance, many did not understand the term "climate change." This revealed an important gap: while women experience climate impacts daily, the concept itself is not widely understood, especially among elderly or illiterate groups. Realizing this, I shifted from simply collecting stories to explaining climate change using familiar examples, such as how rainfall patterns and crop growth have changed over time. Once women connected their experiences to climate change, it helped them better describe their adaptation strategies. This has become a core innovative approach of the project.

Women face the harshest climate pressures because they provide water, food, and household stability. So their perspectives are essential for understanding community resilience. My background as a primary school teacher helps me start "from simple to complex" Issues. Our experience shows that using everyday examples builds trust and makes climate concepts accessible.

Rural communities often expect external support. To manage this, we first engage traditional leaders, who then guide us to appropriate participants and help set clear expectations.

The project shows that rural women understand climate impacts on their everyday

realities, but might not understand the terminology. By combining explanation with the documentation of concrete examples, the project strengthens climate awareness and ensures women's voices are accurately represented and valued.

Inner Development for Sustainable Development through Youth Education

Lindsay

My project is about telling the story of inner development for sustainable development. The message I'm trying to share is that real change starts from within, from the individual, before it grows outward into the family, the community, the environment around us, and eventually the wider world. That's the whole idea that guides the work we do.

In terms of how we're doing this, the main approaches we use are Global Citizenship Education (GCED) and Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Since the start of the year, we've been running workshops with young people that help them understand themselves better, reflect on their actions, and think about the impact they have on their environment and on others. We move from the individual to family, community, environment, and even beyond the human world into how we relate with nature. Our workshops are very interactive. We use methods like Tree of Life drawings, physical activities, writing exercises, and poetry to drive our message home. These methods make it easier for young people to open up, express themselves, and really reflect on what's going on inside. We want the learning to be engaging, not just theoretical.

After the workshops, we create a virtual extension programme for participants who completed the sessions. This space allows them to keep engaging with each other, plan community projects, and support one another. They learn how to mobilize resources, go through the right channels, and actually put their ideas into action. They also do weekly reflections, using poems from some of our previous compilations, Poetry for Peace, Ubuntu pieces, etc. This approach keeps participants grounded and connected to the inner work. We also run women's circles, which are spaces for women to gather, reflect, support each other, and grow.

Social Laboratories and Collective Movement Building

Sungu Oyoo

My project centres on creating social laboratory spaces where people come together to analyse the problems they face in their communities (environmental, political,

or social), and then think collectively about solutions. We also use a tool called narrative mapping, where we look at the dominant narratives in society and develop counter-narratives that reflect our lived realities. The main message of my project is raise awareness about the need for us to act collectively. Our movements (whether environmental, social, or political) are often splintered, which weakens us. So, a big part of our work has been bringing people and organizations together to synergise.

After the protests this year, we formed the National People's Council, which is a structure running from village councils all the way to the national level. Although it's still evolving, it's a big step towards building unified community power.

I'm also part of Kongamano la Mageuzi and the Kenya Left Alliance, where we've been debating the root causes of our challenges and how best to respond. With the recent laws passed in Kenya giving the police more powers, affecting community land, and even allowing the government to shut down the internet, it became clear that our problems are political and therefore need political solutions.

We agreed that one mistake most movements made in the past was refusing to contest for political power. So now we've decided to run in the next election under the Kenya Left Alliance. Different comrades are already preparing themselves for this call. We've also developed a Minimum Programme outlining our positions on key issues like the ecological crisis, sovereignty, the debt crisis, and more. It pulls together insights from the social labs and all the movements involved.

So, in short, the project is about building collective analysis, counter-narratives, unity among movements, and a political pathway forward.

Documenting Indigenous Knowledge for Climate and Poly-crisis Resistance

Magdalene

My project centres on Ifiök, which refers to the knowledge of our people, the wisdom that exists in our cultures, and how these can help us resist the polycrisis we are facing today. The word Ifiok, which is an Ibibio word meaning knowledge, inspired me to think deeply about how what we already know as a people can guide us moving forward. What I am trying to explore is: What knowledge do we have, both from the older generations and the younger ones, that can help us confront the many intersecting crises around us? We often talk about climate change, capitalism, imperialism, or environmental degradation as if their solutions must come from outside. But my interest is in what already exists within our own communities.

For example, what the world calls agroecological practices are our traditional farming practices, which we have used for generations. These systems cool the planet, preserve the soil, and protect biodiversity. Yet today, when African delegations go to global climate spaces like COP and push for agroecology, they struggle because the Global North refuses to recognize it. They dismiss our solutions even though they caused the crisis. So, my work is about collecting this kind of knowledge, agricultural knowledge, technological practices, and cultural wisdom, and presenting them as legitimate narrative tools for environmental and social resistance. One of the most powerful moments in this project has been seeing how much resilience is embedded in the everyday solutions of our people. Strength, creativity, and determination are all there. But they are ignored in global discussions on climate change. So, part of what I'm doing is not only gathering these knowledge systems but also challenging the false narratives that dominate environmental conversations on the global stage. This helps us interrogate those narratives that erase African solutions and promote Western ideas as the only "valid" form of knowledge.

Another important piece of the project is language, because the way we describe things shapes how people understand them. I was at a Wisdom gathering with Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF), and during our gatherings, we spent time discussing what words best describe our struggles. For example, when we say, "climate change," it doesn't actually reflect the seriousness of what communities are experiencing. "Change" sounds gentle, something that just happens, since change is inevitable. But what we are facing is not gentle; it is a crisis. One speaker helped us see this more clearly. They asked: Why not call it what it is? Words like "climate crisis" or "climate emergency" communicate urgency, danger, and the need for action. These language choices matter, especially as we try to push for climate justice in spaces where our voices are often minimized or ignored. In essence, my project is about discovering and elevating climate justice insights that already exist within our people's traditional knowledge systems, practices, struggles, and movements, and then using them to resist the polycrisis. It's about reframing the conversation, reclaiming our narratives, and ensuring that African knowledge systems are not only documented but also recognized as powerful tools for climate justice and social transformation.

Pan-Africanist Political Education Programme in Mozambique.

Ebube

At a critical time when youth and the working masses across the African continent are rising to demand an end to neo-colonialism and imperialist exploitation of our natural and human resources, I decided to organise this Pan-Africanist Political Education Programme in partnership with Alternactiva, a Mozambican grassroots organisation focused on popular political education.

We had nearly 400 youth from across Mozambique and other lusophone African countries sign up to participate in the Pan-Africanist Political Education Programme within four days of advertising the programme, which speaks to the urgency of the times in which we live. However, due to the resources available and our focus on Mozambique, we could only admit 50 students. Participating in the programme were students, academics, workers, activists, organisers, stay-at-home mothers, etc. from all over the country with us studying and debating how we can move to organise for and build the future we want our continent to exist and thrive in. Students were provided with data each week to ensure that they could actively participate in the online classes and access all the assigned reading/viewing materials.

In this 12-week-long programme, we engaged the works of key figures in Africa's revolutionary history, like Kwame Nkrumah, Amílcar Cabral and Josina Machel, and studied both historical and contemporary anti-imperialist movements. We challenged patriarchy and capitalism and rethought our understanding of socialism. Beyond study, this programme was a call to action. We worked so that students could come out of the Pan-Africanist Political Education Programme understanding that only through mass organisation can we achieve our objectives.

In each of our sessions, the students' passion was obvious. Students came in having done the readings, ready to engage the presenters and debate their ideas. Almost every week, we invited organisers from across the African world to present, facilitate lessons, share their transformative work and foster Pan-African solidarity.

Though I would rate the programme as a massive success overall, some challenges I faced in the organising and executing of this programme included finding Portuguese translations of critical texts by key figures in Africa's revolutionary history, communicating with and responding to inquiries of all 50 students alone, organising translation for presenters who did not speak Portuguese, teaching a programme this long in Portuguese for the first time, reading all 50 students' weekly reflections, creating assignments, etc. But it was all worth it in the end. The students' glowing reviews of the programme have motivated me to ensure that this programme is not the last of its kind. Now, I am moving into the next phase of my project, which is collecting and organising the Portuguese-language materials we used during the programme so that others who aspire to organise a similar programme in lusophone Africa and/or the wider lusophone world have an easier time doing so.

Infinite Love

By Sonali Narang

Infinite love is a gift rare to find Not every heart can hold its kind.

Its depth no measure can define, Like endless sky, serene, divine.

It is a love beyond all bounds, Where truth and grace in silence sound.

The love of God flows pure and free, A timeless, selfless melody.

He gives us all without demand, A gentle touch, a guiding hand.In every act His care is known.

In every breath, His grace is shown. He placed a soul in every form—

To live, to feel, to rise, to transform. To seek, to strive, to wander far, And find its light in His own star.

Through infinite love, the heart will see The world's pure truth, its mystery.

And one who feels this boundless flame Becomes with God forever the same.

Infinite love—so vast, so true—

The universe is shaped by You. A quiet force, yet strong enough To make all life sacred with love

(Dr. Sonali Narang, Researcher on Climate Change and Human Migration

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The Force and the Fire at COP30

By Nnimmo Bassey

The opening and closing of COP30 were marked by momentous events. These generally unplanned events were not about the usual climate ambition or high-sounding speeches used to open or close such events. First was the determined entry into the COP venue by indigenous protesters who felt excluded from the conference and needed to be heard.

They charged through the security and raised the critical question about who was really at the table and whose cause they were negotiating on. Among other things, they demanded that their lands should be ***"free from agribusiness, oil exploration, illegal miners, and illegal loggers."***

Photo Credit : Babawale Obayanju // TellThatStory

The second event was the fire outbreak at one of the pavilions within the Blue Zone in the morning of 20 November, a day before the scheduled closure of the conference. As the flames leapt through the fabric of the ceiling, delegates and observers scrambled for the exits.

While the forced entry of unbadged persons into the COP venue was met with a high level of militarization of the conference premises, it was not clear if the fire in the conference venue would make the negotiators and politicians recognize the climate emergency for what it is. Nothing could be more poignant than lapping flames at a climate conference.

As the flames leapt and teams of volunteers fought the fire, the temperature in the already hot venue literally leapt through the roof. More than a dozen individuals were treated for smoke inhalation from the fire that lasted only a few minutes.

COP30 formally opened on 10 November but was preceded by a leaders' conference on the 6th of November. At the leaders' conference, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil laid out his key ideas and hopes regarding CO-30. Two of these were the TFFF, or the Tropical Forest Forever Facility, and the need for the COP to get serious about phasing out fossil fuels. \

While the TFFF sounded inviting, it is nothing more than another example of carbon deals and false climate solution mechanisms. There is evidence that it will not tackle the root causes of deforestation. Instead, it will serve as a tool for the financialization of Nature, which will be more beneficial to carbon speculators than forest-dependent communities or even highly forested nations. It sounded new and attractive, but its antecedents, which have been fiercely opposed by many, date back more than a decade.

" COP30 had 1,600 fossil fuel lobbyists in its halls and lobbies, with one clear objective: erasing any mention of fossil fuels in outcome documents or any attempt to demand that fossil fuel is phased out as an energy source".

For thirty years, the Conference of the Parties (COP) has failed to recognize the fact that the burning of fossil fuels is the major driver of the climate crisis. Call it wilful denial, you would be right. Petrostates have regularly hosted the COPs, with fossil lobbyists literally swarming COP venues. Competing with the 1773 fossil fuel lobbyists that were at the COP29 in Baku, COP30 had 1,600 fossil fuel lobbyists in its halls and lobbies, with one clear objective: erasing any mention of fossil fuels in outcome documents or any attempt to demand that fossil fuel is phased out as an energy source. When fossil fuels were highlighted in the books at COP26 in Glasgow, the reference was restricted to phasing down unabated coal. When it was mentioned again at COP28 in the UAE, the reference was to "transitioning from fossil fuels" in energy. A more determined effort to push for a phase-out of fossil fuels got some life from President Lula's candle, even though he is reportedly keen on extending the frontiers of fossil fuels in his country. As

“ The political correctness of climate negotiations, the deference to power, and the sheer lethargy that engulfs every session are alarming, considering that the voluntary actions of nations and other entities are driving the world to a heating of more than 3 degrees above the emergence of capitalism”.

COP29 progressed, more than 80 countries joined the call for transitioning from fossil fuels, while almost 30 others strongly opposed it. While this could make or mar the COP outcome, a global conference on this subject will be hosted by Colombia in April 2026.

The draft outcome of COP30 was framed in a 9-page document titled Muritao Text. It recognized and celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Paris Agreement and pushed for a new season of implementation beyond wordsmithing. Suggested focus areas for implementation in the draft text got interestingly spiced with options, and even blank ones at places.

The text appeared to have carefully crafted so as not to ruffle the fathers of those who hold the purse strings and power. And so rather than denouncing the slow pace of raising climate finance and condemning the lack of readiness to meet agreed targets, the text sought to accommodate everyone and even left blank options for those who care to fill.

The political correctness of climate negotiations, the deference to power, and the sheer lethargy that engulfs every session are alarming, considering that the voluntary actions of nations and other entities are driving the world to a heating of more than 3 degrees above the emergence of capitalism. Even if humans can survive such a level of furnace, should we not realize there are billions of other beings that we share the planet with?

It is not surprising that funding adaptation remains sidelined, while more funding goes to mitigation efforts. Adaptation mostly concerns helping the vulnerable to cope with a crisis they did not create, while mitigation often offers options of investing in ideas and infrastructure that maintain current polluting paradigms and allow polluters to keep plying their trade as usual. The rich and powerful nations spend up to 2.7 trillion dollars on warfare annually. A fraction of that amount, coupled with a little shift towards peaceful coexistence, would definitely reduce the impacts of the climate crisis and move the world towards resilience built on solidarity. Will the petro-military complex allow this sensible path?

While negotiators inside the conference venues dithered, the outside spaces raised serious and fundamental solutions to the climate crisis. Such outputs include A New Pledge For Mother Nature by the Global Alliance door the Rights of Nature (GARN) and the Declaration by the People’s Summit Towards COP30, which had up to 70,000 participants in attendance.

As COP30 drew towards its conclusion, the issues that would have marked it as an “implementation” COP, and as a conference demonstrating greater seriousness about far-reaching decisions, remained unresolved: a) agreement on phasing out fossil fuels; b) adequate finance for adaptation; c) a genuinely just energy transition; and d) climate finance mechanisms that do not rely on loans or other instruments that deepen debt burdens on vulnerable countries and further exacerbate existing geopolitical imbalances.

(Nnimmo Bassey is an environmental activist and architect, the director of the ecological think tank; Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF))

A COP of Truth:

What Article 6 Reveals about Power, Politics, and Climate Justice

Mfoniso Xael

COP30 in Belém was widely framed as the "COP of Truth," a moment when the global community would finally align climate ambition with scientific reality. Instead of delivering decisive breakthroughs, the negotiations revealed something deeper and more uncomfortable: the extent to which global climate governance remains shaped by power, profit, and the persistent avoidance of responsibility by high-emitting nations. For countries of the Global South, Belém reinforced a long-held reality: that the climate crisis is not primarily a technical failure, but a justice failure. This reality was most visible in the negotiations around Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, the provision governing international carbon markets.

Article 6 has increasingly become a fault line in global climate negotiations. Designed to facilitate cooperation through carbon trading, it has instead exposed deep disagreements over credibility, accountability, and equity. At COP30, negotiators raised serious concerns about loopholes, double counting of emissions reductions, and the continued circulation of carbon credits with questionable mitigation value.

While these concerns are not new, the level of skepticism expressed in Belém marked a shift. Several countries openly questioned whether carbon markets, as currently structured, can deliver real emissions reductions at the scale required. Despite this, high-emitting nations have continued to promote carbon markets as cost-effective solutions.

Photo Credit : Babawale Obayanju // TellThatStory

This framing obscures a central political truth. Carbon markets function less as tools for transformation and more as mechanisms of delay. They allow wealthy economies to postpone domestic emissions cuts while shifting the burden of mitigation onto the victims in the Global South. Land, forests, and livelihoods in developing countries are reduced to tradable assets, turning communities into instruments of compliance rather than rights holders. Belém made it clear that the world remains divided between those who need immediate structural emissions reductions to survive and those who need markets to maintain existing economic models.

Article 6 debates were part of a broader pattern at COP30: the continued elevation of false solutions under the banner of climate ambition. Nature-based solutions were repeatedly promoted without adequate safeguards, raising concerns about land grabs and the erosion of community land rights. Carbon capture and storage (CCS) was discussed as a future pathway despite its unproven effectiveness at scale. Even geoengineering, once considered politically unviable, has quietly crept into conversations as a potential option. These approaches persist not because they are safe or effective, but because they protect corporate interests and allow fossil fuel-dependent systems to endure. They offer the appearance of action while avoiding the hard political choices required to confront overconsumption, inequality, and fossil fuel expansion.

"Carbon markets function less as tools for transformation and more as mechanisms of delay".

The language of Just Transition was highly visible throughout COP30, yet its meaning remained deeply contested. For many wealthy nations, transition was framed through technology deployment, mineral supply chains, and new extraction frontiers. Within this narrative, Africa was positioned primarily as a source of raw materials rather than as a continent of communities with rights, agency, and knowledge.

A genuinely just transition cannot be reduced to a shift in input while power relations remain unchanged. It requires a deliberate move away from fossil fuels, not their extension through new infrastructures. It demands energy democracy, public participation, and community control, rather than corporate-driven extraction. Without the redistribution of power, transition becomes a pretext for exploitation.

Finance was the truth that no negotiation room in Belém could evade. However, commitments to Loss and Damage funding remained far below what climate-vulnerable countries require. Adaptation finance continued to lag behind escalating impacts. Mitigation funding largely favored projects aligned with corporate interests rather than community-led solutions. Climate finance is often treated as a technical issue of accounting and delivery. In reality, it is where justice begins. Without acknowledging and addressing climate debt, historical responsibility, and unequal development pathways, discussions of fairness remain hollow and performative.

Africa's Voice and the Fight Ahead

African countries arrived in Belém with moral clarity and left with it intact. The continent resisted attempts to frame it as a global offset hub and continued to demand real finance, adaptation support, and solutions rooted in community priorities. Africa's future cannot be shaped by donor agendas or by new forms of green extraction imposed in the name of transition. It must be defined by people, Indigenous knowledge systems, and social movements working towards ecological integrity and political sovereignty.

COP30 forced a fundamental choice into the open. The world can continue attempting to manage the climate crisis through markets and speculative technologies, or it can commit to addressing it through justice, responsibility, and structural transformation. Carbon offsets will not deliver the emissions reductions science demands. Geoengineering remains a high-risk distraction rather than a solution. Carbon markets will not protect communities or ecosystems. The only credible pathway forward is one grounded in climate justice, equity, and a willingness to confront power. If Belém was indeed the COP of Truth, then the truth is unmistakable: the struggle for climate justice is inseparable from the struggle for our collective future.

(Mfoniso Xael is an Environmental Scientist cum Climate Justice Advocate – She holds a PhD in Environmental Toxicology and works with Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF) as a Programmes Manager and the Project Lead, overseeing HOMEF's learning spaces (Ikike))

Eco-Warriors of the Delta

By Gift Esele Ojeanelo

Eco-warriors of the Niger Delta
Unseen and unheard
sitting at the frontlines of the struggles for resource control
Plagued by poverty, environmental degradation, and unflinching neglect
They carry the weight of writhing pain

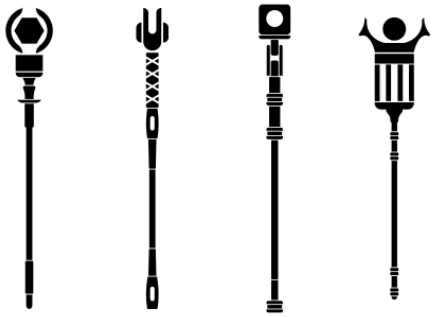
Washing the oil off the fish for food
A mother sees with instinct
The pain of the child from the bad air
The satisfaction of hydration from polluted waters
The discolouration of her babe's skin

Married with the joyous expectation of reproducing her kind
She is forced to abort a pregnancy
Formed outside nature's designated cocoon
Diagnosed with infertility, whose source is unknown
but certainly not genetic

Stepping above her pain
She demands a seat in the room
So petite that you cannot see her
So, she stands on the table
armed, ready for war for her babe's survival and the preservation of her children's inheritance to give them a FUTURE!

A standing ovation for the mothers who suffer yet still stand!
A round of applause for the women whose voices call for Justice!!
A soldier's salute for the women whose courage and fight make room for the future of the Delta!!!

(Gift Esele Ojeanelo is a gender and climate justice advocate leading the gender desk at Health of Mother Earth Foundation.)



WORDS ON THE STREETS OF COP 30

Climate discussions are too often restricted to air-conditioned conference halls and expert-driven policy documents. HOMEF TV has distinguished itself by reversing the lens, bringing the voices of everyday people directly into the heart of global climate discourse. Over the past year, the media team has worked to amplify grassroots perspectives, but one of these initiatives stood out at COP30 in

Belém, Brazil: “Words on the Street.”

For the past 3 years, during the United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP), HOMEF TV steps outside the formal negotiation rooms and into the streets to capture the thoughts, concerns, and hopes of ordinary citizens. While diplomats and negotiators debate behind closed doors, HOMEF TV engages the people whose lives are most shaped by climate impacts, but who rarely have access to global platforms and opportunities.

In Belém, this initiative reached an impressive new level. Across markets, neighbourhoods, riverfronts, and public squares, the media team collected “on the street” reflections on climate change, survival, and justice. From fisherfolk to students, from vendors to activists, the diversity of voices painted a visceral portrait of how international climate policy ripples through the lives of everyday people.

Each day, the media team went to the streets to speak to community people about the topics discussed behind the closed doors of COP30, including energy, trade and industry, unified climate justice march, forest, ocean and biodiversity, traditional communities, youths, small businesses, agriculture, food, family farming, women, gender equality, and tourism.

The strength of Words on the Street lies in its authenticity. These are not polished soundbites or rehearsed, scripted speeches; they are unfiltered, real-life stories of those living through floods, heatwaves, polluted water, and shrinking livelihoods. By placing these voices side-by-side with the high-level conversations occurring inside the COP venue, HOMEF TV democratizes climate dialogue and reminds the world that climate justice is not abstract. It is about food on the table, water to drink, air to breathe, and communities struggling to survive.

The media team’s commitment and craft were on full display in Brazil. Their ability to capture, edit, and broadcast these messages with empathy and clarity made Words on the Street not just a media segment but a movement. It bridges the gap between policymakers and citizens, reminding all stakeholders that “street knowledge” is as essential as the expertise of the negotiating room, if not more.

Ultimately, Words on the Street is about the connection between local realities and global debates, between those inside COP and those outside, and between the urgency of climate change and the everyday people most affected. HOMEF TV’s work in Belém reaffirmed its place as a champion of grassroots perspectives and a compelling storyteller for climate justice.

Does Anybody Really care about Climate Change?

Precious Ucheawaji

It was my first time at the UN Climate Conference of the Parties (COP30), and my conclusion from the meeting is that nobody really cares about climate change, or at least, not in the way the glossy conferences and blue zone negotiations pretend they do. Going to the COP for the first time felt like a dream come true. I arrived with genuine excitement, ready to witness global leaders unite around climate action, ready to feel the energy of a world finally taking the climate crisis seriously. COP30 was supposed to be historic, a turning point, a gathering where the world would confront the poly-crisis with honesty and urgency. But my excitement was short-lived.

Inside the glossy halls and heavily securitized blue zone, the atmosphere felt nothing like a climate emergency. Instead of urgency, I saw deal-making. Instead of solidarity, I saw competition. Instead of climate justice, I saw exotic suits and business cards. COP looked and felt less like a rescue mission for the planet and more like a global trade fair. Air-conditioned rooms filled with profit-driven delegates discussing markets, offsets, and investments while the world outside burns. And then the fire outbreak happened, a literal symbol of a world in crisis, yet even that failed to shake the negotiations into meaningful action. The contrast was bewilderingly painful: flames outside, complacency inside. I had arrived with hope, expecting honesty, courage, and commitment. What I found instead was a well-decorated stage where the planet served as the backdrop, not the priority.

But here's a more disturbing paradox: while the COP stage feels indifferent, ordinary people care deeply because climate change is not an abstract debate for them. It is their lived reality.

The Obolo people care when elephants no longer wander near their mangrove forests. A single sighting becomes headline news on socials, a bittersweet reminder of what is slipping away. To them, climate change is not about carbon markets; it's about the silence of forests that were once alive with giants. Mangroves, once thriving, now struggle against rising seas and pollution. The Obolo people

know that when the elephants disappear, the balance of their ecosystem falters. They care because their identity is tied to the land, and the land is changing before their eyes.

The Igbo farmer cares when his crops take longer to mature, when the soil dries and breaks in the heat, and when erosion cuts deep marks into the land. He doesn't call it "climate change." He calls it hunger, delay, and uncertainty. He notices the rains no longer follow ancestral rhythms. He sees yam harvests shrinking, cassava wilting, and palm trees yielding less oil. He wonders why the ground betrays him, why the sky feels unfamiliar. For him, climate change is not a policy paper; it is the difference between abundance and scarcity, survival and despair.

The Orashi man cares when floods sweep away homes, when families are forced into crowded camps stripped of dignity. He worries about what his children will eat, how women will survive displacement, and how life can be rebuilt after water devours everything. Floods are not just water; they are trauma. They erase memories, scatter communities, and leave scars that last for generations. The Orashi people care because they know that every flood is a reminder of how fragile human existence has become

in the face of a shifting climate.

Ugandans and Kenyans care deeply about Lake Victoria because it is more than a body of water. It is their lifeline, their heritage. Families depend on it for drinking water, fishing, farming, and transportation. Communities have built their cultures, histories, and economies around the lake for generations. Today, that lifeline is under threat from the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP). People care because they see what is at stake: contaminated water, disappearing fish species, and the loss of livelihood for thousands of fishers and farmers. They care because oil developments bring displacement, land grabs, and the violation of human rights.

Most importantly, they care because protecting Lake Victoria means protecting their future, their children, and the ecosystems that sustain them.

The Yasuni people have consistently shown deep care for the environment by demanding that oil be left in the ground to protect their forests, wildlife, and way of life. Their historic push for a national referendum where the majority voted to stop oil drilling proves their commitment to safeguarding nature for present and future generations. These people care about climate change.

Banks and governments may gamble on fossil fuels, but communities know the cost: human lives, fragile ecosystems, and futures stranded in oil. Fishermen care because their nets return empty. Mothers care because their children drink contaminated water. Youth care because their future is being mortgaged for short-term profit.

Climate change disproportionately affects African women, yet their voices are absent at negotiation tables. Women walk longer distances for water, struggle more with food insecurity, and bear the heavier burden of displacement. Youth, too, are sidelined, watching from outside the blue zone while decisions about their future are being made without them. The irony is sharp: those who bear the brunt of climate change are excluded from shaping its solutions. The halls of power echo with speeches, but the voices of women and youth remain unheard.

It's not just Africa. Across the globe, climate change is dismissed until it knocks on the door. In Europe, heatwaves scorch cities. In Asia, typhoons displace millions of people. In the Americas, wildfires consume forests and homes. Yet, leaders gather in conferences where profit outweighs people.

The truth is, climate change is not a distant storm; it is the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink, the dignity we fight to preserve.

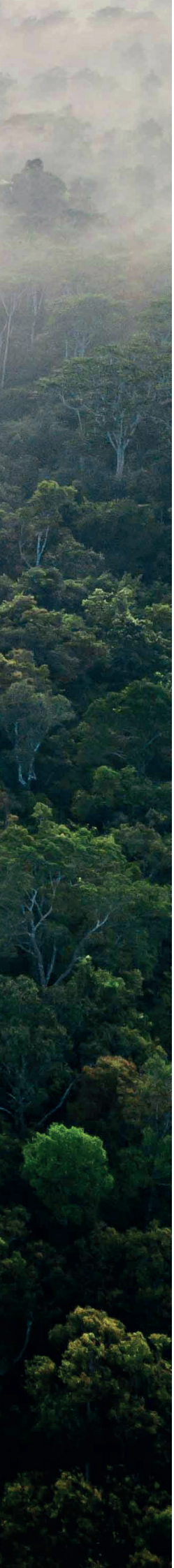
So maybe nobody cares in the polished halls of COP30. But the Obolo care. The Igbo care. The Orashi care. The Yasuni people care. Ugandans and Kenyans care. African women care. Youth care. And when you add it all up, it becomes clear: one way or another, we all care about climate change because it is not a headline; it is our daily story.

Climate change is not optional. It is not tomorrow's problem. It is today's reality. And whether the world admits it or not, caring is no longer a choice; it is survival. At the end of the day, one way or the other, we all care about climate change. The question is whether we will care enough, soon enough, to act.

Because elephants cannot march back into mangroves once they are gone. Farmers cannot harvest from soil that has turned to dust. Children cannot drink from rivers poisoned by oil. And women cannot rebuild dignity in camps that should never have existed. We care. We must care because we are all stewards of the Earth.

(Precious Ucheawaji is an Eco-feminist, poet and climate justice activist, working as the executive assistant at Health of Mother Earth Foundation)

Photo Credit : Filippo Cesarini // unsplash.com



The Forest COP that Sold Forests

OduduAbasi Asuquo

COP30 was hugely anticipated to be special, not just because 30 is considered a significant number, but also because of its unique location, Belem, Brazil, literally the heart of the Amazon. The importance of the Amazon, which is home to the largest untouched forest on the planet, is key to the literal balance of the planet's survival and has been an epicenter of conversations in global negotiations for Ecological Justice. African forests, which are home to many indigenous communities, have also not been left out, as they are also considered an indispensable instrument of global carbon markets and offset schemes, especially since the introduction of Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) in 2007, which made REDD+ become the dominant forest policy around the world. Now, 18 years after, research and engagements with indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities have shown an overwhelming record of REDD's catastrophic failure to address deforestation and forest degradation.

And worse: it has also intensified the climate crisis and left the causes of deforestation untouched. REDD, in fact, has been identified as the most pronounced and underlying cause of deforestation and climate change itself. This is not a surprise because the logic at the core of this scheme is rotten. For years, REDD+ has helped to conceal crimes of carbon offset projects through 'creative' carbon accounting, 'green' propaganda, and endless climate commitments that companies and governments make based on largely unfounded, misleading, and false promises. Indigenous Peoples and other communities living in and around REDD projects have been consistently denied access and sovereignty over their ancestral forests.

This was the key message carried by NRAN to The Forest COP, aka COP30.

“ Indigenous Peoples,... insights, rooted in lived experience and indigenous knowledge, are essential for equitable, just, and effective climate solutions”

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NRAN hoped to build on the yearlong advocacy to continue to sound the alarm as a vocal and critical opposition to REDD+ and all other carbon credit mechanisms at the global platform. Seeing that spaces such as the Conference of the Parties (COP) under the UNFCCC are pivotal for shaping international climate policies, it is imperative that community voices are not only represented but also consulted and included in these dialogues.

However, after 29 sessions of the COP, communities most affected — Indigenous Peoples, local communities, youth, women, and other marginalized groups — often face structural barriers to full and effective participation. Their insights, rooted in lived experience and indigenous knowledge, are essential for equitable, just, and effective climate solutions. However, community voices are often underrepresented and largely tokenized at these forums. In response to this strategic exclusion, NRAN developed an intentional strategy and engagement plan in collaboration with other like-minded civil societies to help ensure that community voices are not only represented but also heard and included in policy-making. Our message was clear, direct, and simple: Carbon markets are false solutions, Nature is not a commodity for exploitative financial merchandizing. Forests are ecosystems and do better in the hands of Indigenous knowledge holders. This would have changed the direction of COP30 from being a disaster, especially with talks about a probable “Amazon Legitimation”

However, after two weeks of unprecedented heat with long hours of negotiations, indigenous protests, a flood, and a fire, COP30 came to an anti-climactic end with an 8-page Global Mutirao with no mention of fossil fuels.

At an event held along the sidelines of COP30 at the People’s Summit, NRAN, in collaboration with Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF), Carbon Market Watch, CENSAT Agua Viva, CIMI, Fastenaktion, Inesc, Opan, Planète Amazone, and Tohu Indigenous Analytics, held a thoroughly engaging dialogue captioned Carbon markets as a false solution to the climate crisis during which we discussed carbon markets as false solutions from the different perspectives of Latin America, the Pacific, Africa, and Europe.

The event, which brought together over 150 grassroots activists, community leaders, academics, students, and civil society actors to critically examine the impacts of carbon offsetting, forest exploitation, and false climate solutions on communities was an enlightening session. The primary objective of the session was to a) increase visibility and establish NRAN as a key movement for ecological justice and dignity of indigenous people especially forest communities in the global south/majority; b) highlight and emphasize the falsehoods and consequences of REDD+ on Indigenous communities

and establish pathways for community knowledge and priorities to be reflected in COP official negotiations and outcomes; c) enhance the representation of forest community voices in global decision-making spaces, particularly within COP processes; d) strengthen the capacities of grassroots actors to engage effectively in global policy forums, thereby promoting Equity and Justice in climate governance; e) build and foster alliances, networks, and global south environmental justice movements, and strengthen advocacy strategies; f) explore Legal and Environmental Rights and strengthen pathways for accountability, focusing on cases of environmental injustice and the rights of indigenous peoples under national and international frameworks; and f) advocate for real solutions and promote grassroots indigenous knowledge.

During the profoundly fascinating discussions, it was obvious from what was shared that the fundamental principles on which carbon markets were formed were based on imperialistic, exploitative, and patriarchal models that intrinsically promote dispossession, oppression, and subservience. Research conducted by NRAN showed that in countries where REDD and other false solutions are implemented, it was noticed that there was a significant rise in new-age carbon slavery and neo-colonialism. Emissions keep increasing while the same drivers of the crisis falsely claim to be 'carbon neutral while lining their pockets at the expense of indigenous peoples.'

At the close of the over 120 minutes' discussion, a consensus was reached: that REDD should be obliterated alongside all forms of carbon offsets, markets, and pricing systems. The newly proposed Tropical Forest Forever Facility, TFFF, or T triple F as casually called, was greatly criticised as it was regarded as a pretext for the REDD scheme, which means it is still rife with all the exploitative models inherent in the globally discredited REDD schemes. Although the TFFF proposed by the Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva has been hailed as a historic breakthrough for tropical forests worldwide, for Climate justice activists, it is already a failure from the start because it has the Tropical Forest Investment Fund (TFIF) as the financial heart of the whole idea.

There was a unanimous call for the unity of oppressed communities across the Global South/Majority, emphasizing that the fight for land, water, and sovereignty is universal. Participants were also urged to protect their territories as a path to reclaiming their dignity. The dialogue came to a climactic close with powerful resolutions: that "We are not apart from Nature, hence we must protect our forests, lands, and Nature with everything we have" against every and all oppressive economic order." Participants affirmed that carbon offsetting is not a solution but a license for the Global North to continue polluting. They condemned the complicity of NGOs backed by oil companies and governments that push these false climate solutions.

(Odudu-Abasi Asuquo is an enthusiastic climate justice activist and works with Health of Mother Earth Foundation as the programme manager alliances and network.)

Planting on Concrete

by Adera Morgan

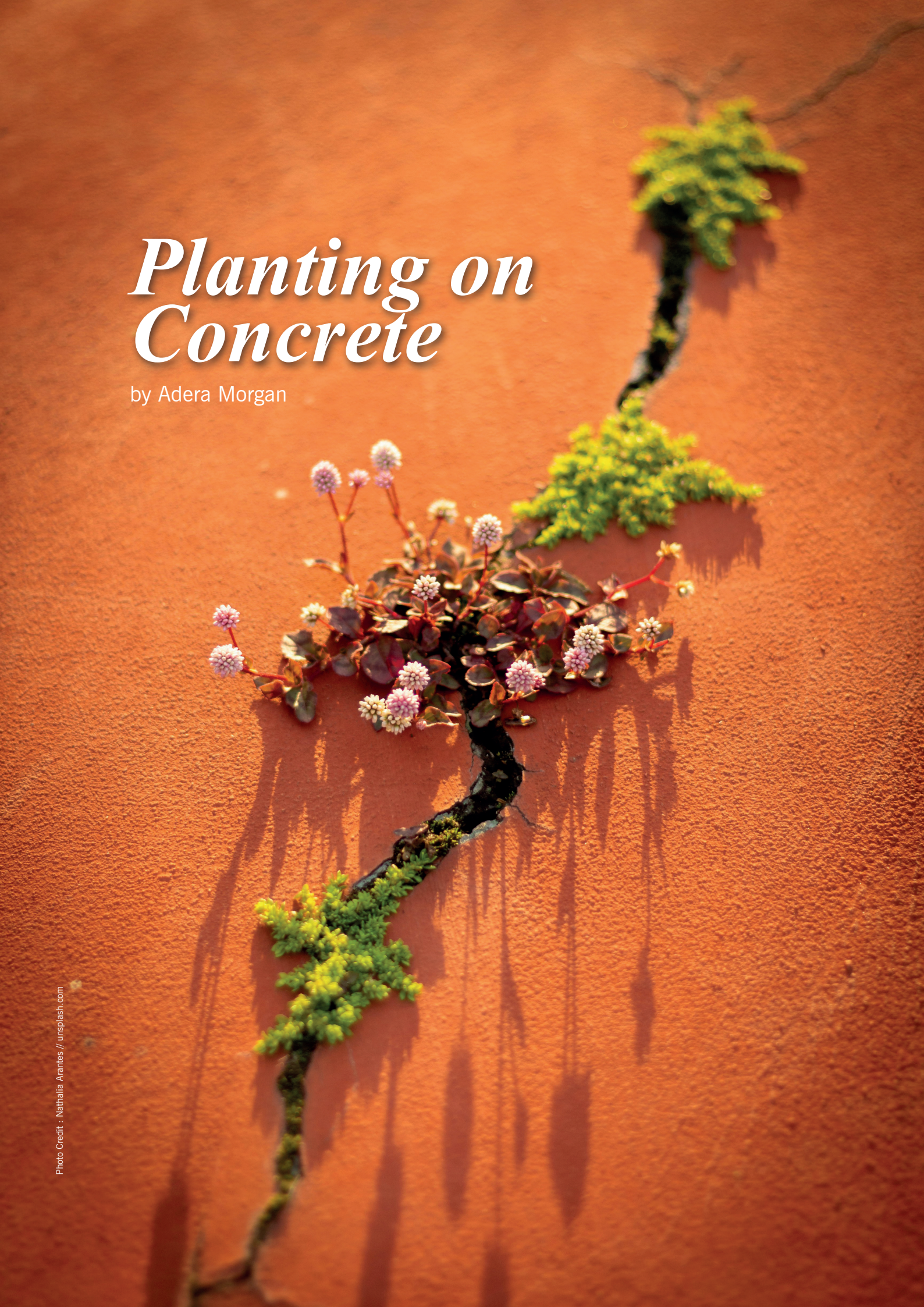


Photo Credit : Nathalia Arantes // unsplash.com

"Even in concrete, a seed can grow, and so can our hope for the planet."

Einstein once said that our sense of separation from nature is an optical delusion. Looking at the state of the planet today, those words truly feel like a warning we've ignored for too long.

If you are a Christian like me, you understand that we are mandated by the Bible to care and cater for our environment. And if you are not, at least at some point in your life, teachings about conserving and protecting our earth might have been passed down to you either orally or through teaching in a given institution or organization.

So, it begs the question: why are we so oblivious to what is happening currently in our own surroundings and the world as a whole? It seems that the majority of the world has become tone deaf to the most critical climate issues that the world is facing right now. We have to pass through a battalion of naysayers, along with disinformation and misinformation, to relay information regarding the truth and everything linked with climate change and saving our planet.

It is crucial for us who are working at the forefront and the grassroots level to tackle these adversities that not only come from external factors but also from internal ones. The denial of climate change has struck a hard blow against us and against everyone working to solve the climate crisis, which is not a stand-alone crisis.

Climate denial is the outright rejection of the scientific consensus on climate change. Climate deniers usually argue that change is not happening, or that if it is, the proposed solutions are too costly or ineffective. They engage in the topic of climate change with the aim of undermining the established steps already in place.

In Kibera, Kenya, there is a state of indifference or a lack of concern. Some may not deny that climate change is real, but they feel disconnected, overwhelmed, or powerless to do something about it. Their inaction is not a result of disbelief, but rather a feeling that they have more pressing, immediate concerns in their daily life. They are already dealing with systemic issues such as widespread poverty and unemployment, which overshadow the need to participate in climate conversations.

Our work in Kibera and in informal settlements mainly consists of making communication simpler through our actions. As the common saying goes, action speaks louder than words.

Most activities are twofold, sometimes even threefold. For instance, community clean-ups create awareness among the members of the community and, at the same time, clean the community. The same applies to community gardening, or using VR as a tool for education, among other methods.

We, the young generation, have been advocating for the use of simple language not only in informal settlements but also at national and global levels. This problem is not only prevalent among the common folk but also within huge organizations such as the UN. Their documents are written by experts, for experts, and yet they wonder why it's so hard for the average person to relate to, let alone young people, to go through them.

It is imperative that activists, educators, policy-makers, institutions, and those of us working at the intersection of climate change, youth, and other pressing social issues commit to understanding the effective use of appropriate vocabulary for our causes to resonate with more people. We must also show how all these social problems are interconnected, and how each institution plays

a critical role from the bottom to the top.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. Even learned people, who are able to grasp these terms often considered difficult for the common folk (Mwanainchi), are the biggest doubters and propagandists campaigning against climate change. Some of them are pseudo-intellectuals: they pretend to have a grasp and expertise on the topic, but in hindsight, they don't.

The fact that even educated people fall into denial is clear proof that there is still extensive work to be done. If planting dreams in concrete sounds impossible, so does reversing climate change. But both begin with a seed, and the courage to believe it can grow.

(Morgan Adera is a community development practitioner and founder of Voices of Tomorrow , a youth led organization in Kibera Nairobi which works closely with youth , children ,women and local communities to build capacity , strengthen climate resilience and drive inclusive , locally led solutions.)

Photo Credit : Silvestre Leon // unsplash.com

Climate Justice - Photography as a tool for demanding justice

By Babawale Obayanju

Climate scientists the world over who have studied the Earth's climate system, analysing weather patterns over long periods in a quest to understand past, present, and future climate conditions, have repeatedly proven that our climate has indeed changed over the last 30 years.

Long before global scientific institutions confirmed these shifts, our local scientists had already been speaking about them. The farmers, the fisherfolk, and community members have observed that rains are becoming unpredictable, the soil responding differently, and the waters behaving in troubling ways. Their lived experience has echoed what the data now loudly confirms: the climate is changing, and it is changing fast.

Beyond Science: The Layers of fairness, equity, and equality

Climate change, as commonly defined, speaks to the changes in average weather conditions of a place over a long period of time, resulting from natural aactivities but made dangerous by the burning of fossil fuels, which releases and accumulates harmful greenhouse gases at levels beyond Earth's holding threshold. The consequences, like sea-level rise, extreme weather, and biodiversity loss, have become increasingly commonplace.

Concerned with the issues of fairness, equity, and equality, which are occasioned by climate change, this piece opens the conversation about representation, visibility, and justice, especially those of the Global South in comparison to the Global North.

First, the question of representation is key because it pertains to people who are impacted negatively and need to be seen, heard, and offered lasting solutions. Also, visibility is key because the issue of injustice thrives in silence, and lastly, justice, because all beings have a right to a satisfactory environment favourable to their development in accordance with Article 24 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Today, I speak about climate justice, the place of photography, and why photography is not just art, but a tool of resistance, documentation, and demand.

As Nyombi Morris once said, "to demand climate justice, we must first witness the injustice, and photography is the world's most honest witness. Nothing is truer than this quote; the world has come to trust man's eyes, his mind, and his tool called the camera to make tangible the intangible.

Climate Justice, a broad social and ethical term, seeks to highlight who suffers the most, who causes the most harm, and who gets protected from the impact of climate change. It is amplifying the call that climate change is not only about carbon emissions but an interplay of people, power, and fairness.

As the world evolved, technology and industrialization were powered first by coal, and then by crude oil, hinging on the exploitative capitalist system that places profit before people to build wealth and economic power.

Nations in the Global North (as classified by UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD based on their socioeconomic and political power) have achieved their development in large part through these extractive practices, including colonialism, by enriching themselves while undermining the development of the Global South, which makes the Global North historically responsible for the bulk of global greenhouse gas emissions. On the other hand, the Global South, contributing less to the global greenhouse emissions, having less development, and being highly colonised have had to bear the consequences of the impact of changes in the earth's climate.

Research confirms this imbalance: as of 2015, the Global North was responsible for 92 percent of excess historical emissions beyond a fair share, with the USA and EU being major contributors.

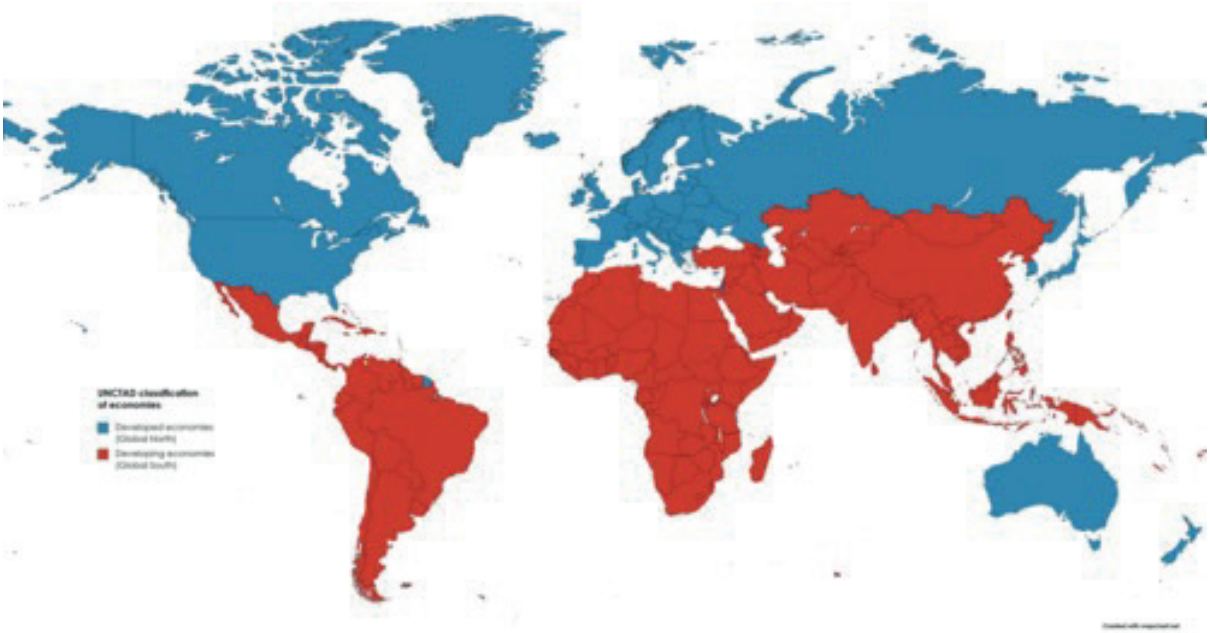


Image 1: Economic classification of the world's countries and territories by the UNCTAD in 2023: the Global North (i.e., developed countries) is highlighted in blue and the Global South (i.e., developing countries and least developed countries) is highlighted in red.

It is this glaring reality that forms the basis of climate justice and makes it clear why the North must lead meaningful climate action and provide climate finance to support the South, not as an act of charity, but as a responsibility and a debt.

Image 2 - A photograph of a submerged village reveals who is losing their home.

Photography, More Than Art

Climate justice acknowledges the unequal impacts, distribution of benefits, and burdens resulting from climate change that the Global South (frontline communities) have had to adapt to. This distinction sets up why photography matters. Photography has the potential to make these invisible injustices visible.

Scientific data/reports, as important as they may be, are not enough to buttress the need for climate justice and the lived realities of climate change. As the saying goes, “seeing is believing.” Data can inform, but creating images confronts. So, the quest for climate justice would require both data and evidential visuals to offer the required justice for people and planet.

The art of drawing with light - Photography gives a microphone to the least heard as a means to seek climate justice. Photography helps to humanize statistics, mobilize emotions, and empower people, as well as challenge narratives, preserve memory, thereby giving proof for accountability that is required for advocacy and policy work.

Not everyone can read a scientific paper, but almost everyone can feel what they see. Photography has become the universal language people understand; an immediate connection point between distant realities and global audiences.

The pursuit of climate justice requires telling the truth. It requires witnessing. It requires the world to see who and what has too often been ignored. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, established at the Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro in 1992 and carried through three decades of global climate negotiations, remains a cornerstone: those who contributed most to the climate crisis must do the most to solve it. They must lead in cutting down emissions at source while

" with power comes responsibility. In this age of self-publishing, digital manipulations, and artificial intelligence applications comes the important call for ethical balance in our visual storytelling quest for justice. We have a responsibility not just to take photos, but to tell the truth through them".

Photo Credit : Babawale Obayanju // TellThatStory

providing the needed finance to help adapt and pay for losses and damages incurred by the Global South as a debt owed, not a loan or charity!

The Ethics of Witnessing

But with power comes responsibility. In this age of self-publishing, digital manipulations, and artificial intelligence applications comes the important call for ethical balance in our visual storytelling quest for justice. We have a responsibility not just to take photos, but to tell the truth through them.

Amongst all our senses, vision stands as the most fundamental;

our reliance on sight is crucial for interpreting and surviving in this world. Photography, as an extension of this dominant sense, plays a significant role in our decision-making process. When confronted with conflicting information from our other senses - touch, smell, and hearing- our brain invariably prioritizes what it sees as the reference point for decision-making. If we lose our trust in visual evidence, if we can no longer believe what we see, we risk losing our ability to make sound decisions altogether. So let this guide us as we document our impact stories.

Photographers, therefore, must work with integrity.

Our call is to guide people's cognitive ability to perceive the true interpretation of what those images we have created mean. People trust people. People do not trust photography per se or cameras; they trust YOU, the photographer; they trust your intentions, honesty, respect for the communities whose stories you tell. Our responsibility thus is not just to take photographs but to tell the truth through them.

Do Not Betray This Trust!

Climate justice is about fairness. We must use this tool wisely and with care. Your role as a photographer is to help people see the inequality, need for fairness, feel, and ultimately act.

When raising the camera, one must always consider: What am I trying to show? What truth am I trying to honour? Does this image reflect the tone, mood, and dignity of the story?

In a time defined by misinformation and disinformation, photography remains one of the few media with the power to build trust, document history, and move hearts. Truth must be our signature. Let it be visible.

Honouring the Story

As photographers who should honour the original idea for which you want to document stories, do not overshadow it with other unnecessary visual elements. Preserve the essence in the photo, maintain a focus on your vision, and establish a solid foundation for any post-production work. The key is to only add anything that will either strengthen or complement the original idea.

Let empathy guide you - stand in the shoes of the people we photograph in our fast-paced world; learn to slow down, as good stories are told when we learn to listen, and listening requires being present and allowing the stories to unfold. So slow down!

Lastly, every time you pick up your camera or phone to document a story, always ask: What am I really trying to show, or say? What truth does this story/image honour? Does this image reflect the mood, tone, and dignity of the story?

In a time of misinformation and disinformation, photography has the power to build trust, record history, and move hearts. But truth must be our signature. Make it visible.

(This was a presentation delivered by Babawale Obayanju at Benin Art and Book Festival, BAABFEST on 28th of December 2025. Babawale Obayanju is a Campaign Strategist with Oil Change International and a communicator based in Nigeria).

Change Takes Courage

by Alsanosi Adam

Today, I stand here on behalf of the Emergency Response Rooms of Sudan. And with me, I carry the voices of thousands of volunteers who cannot be in this room because they are still on the ground saving lives.

This award does not honour just an organisation. It honours the people. It honours Sudanese communities who, in the absence of safety, institutions, and protection, built their own.It honours young women and men who turned homes into clinics, neighbourhoods into lifelines, and grief into a responsibility to one another.

For us, this award is both an honour and a shield.

In Sudan today, volunteering is an act of courage and, too often, an act of risk. Our volunteers face shelling, hunger, sieges, and the collapse of every basic service. They work without protection, without insurance, without any guarantee that they will return home. And yet, every day, they continue fighting.

This recognition gives us something we urgently need: visibility and, with it, a measure of protection.It amplifies our efforts to safeguard civilian volunteers and reinforces our message to the international community that grassroots responders are not temporary substitutes but indispensable partners who deserve direct, flexible, and trusted support.

The Right Livelihood Award is often called the “Alternative Nobel.” For us, it is something deeper. It is proof that the world sees Sudan. The quiet courage of our volunteers carrying water across frontlines, delivering medicine by bicycle, and evacuating families under fire is not invisible.

We dedicate this award to every Emergency Response Room across Sudan: to those working under bombardment in Darfurs, Kordofans, Blue Nile, Sennar, Kassala, in Khartoum, River Nile, and Elgazerah, the northern state, Gadarif, White Nile, and the Red Sea.

To the women ERRs keeping displaced families alive and providing support to victims and survivors, this is your award. And to those we have lost, your names are not forgotten. Your work is not forgotten. And tonight, the world stands with you.

We owe you a debt that can never be repaid. To my fellow volunteers, this award strengthens our solidarity, expands our protection, and deepens our coammitment to do what we have always done: stand with our communities, no matter the cost.

It inspires us for real change. Change takes courage that is ‘stained’ with hope and supported by solidarity and action. On behalf of all ERRs across Sudan, we thank you. And we hope this recognition marks not an ending but a beginning of real partnership, real solidarity, and real protection for the volunteers who carry the weight of Sudan’s survival. Thanks.

(This was a Speech by Alsanosi Adam (Emergency Response Rooms, Sudan) At the 2025 Right Livelihood Awards Ceremony.)

“ volunteering is an act of courage and, too often, an act of risk

Wisdom Gatherings

by HOMEF Team

Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF) convened two Wisdom Gatherings in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, and Benin City. This unique event brought together a diverse group of activists, community leaders, scholars and advocates to deliberate on an issue that has becoming increasing pertinent to the work of HOMEF: exploring the power of language in socioecological struggles in terms of how words can impede or propel movements, how they can be reclaimed when misused, and how new words can be created to strengthen campaigns for environmental and climate justice.

Participants spoke about the need to center women's perspectives in the process of birthing words and ideas, to reclaim words that have been misappropriated, and to ensure that new terms are accessible and translatable into local languages. The conversation linked the role of words in sparking revolutions to broader philosophical and historical contexts, including colonial legacies and African knowledge systems. There was a strong emphasis on how words could fuel social media trends, shape youth activism, and ultimately transform public discourse.

In a welcome address, it was emphasized that words are never neutral; they condition how people think, feel, and act. Language can be twisted by polluters to mask harm, as seen in the manipulation of terms like "sustainability." In light of this, a call was made to reject and reinterpret such words, reclaim their true meaning, and birth new terms that reflect justice and liberation.

The keynote presentation by Kingsley Ugwuanyi (SOAS University of London) deepened this exploration by highlighting that words are actions in themselves. They do not simply describe reality; they actively shape it. Drawing examples from global struggles, he showed how certain terms (such as “boycott” and “suffragette”) were birthed by social movements. In climate discourse, terms such as “net zero” and “carbon neutrality” were identified as misleading because they obscure injustice while enabling destructive practices to continue. The presentation urged activists to interrogate the origins and uses of words, coin alternatives that reflect truth, and embed them in chants, songs, poetry, and campaigns. New verbs such as “Yasunize” and “Ogonize,” inspired by struggles in Ecuador and the Niger Delta, were presented as examples of how stories of resistance can be condensed into powerful action words.

Following this, participants engaged in open discussions and a lively question-and-answer session. Concerns were raised about how to protect newly coined words from being co-opted while affirming that language will always be a contested space. The importance of working with academics, integrating new terms into cultural expressions like poetry and music, and introducing them into global platforms such as Climate Week and UN climate negotiations was underlined.

Brainstorming sessions produced striking alternatives to dominant climate terms. “Depollute” was offered in place of “decarbonize,” “Not Zero” in place of “net zero,” and “Carbon Crazy” in place of “carbon credits.” Expressions like “Detoxify the Niger Delta” replaced “clean up,” while genetically modified foods were reframed as “toxic foods.” New coinages included “Wiwaism” (from Ken Saro-Wiwa), which means honouring legacies of resistance, alongside many other coinages from local languages that emphasized food sovereignty, women’s mobilization, and ecological renewal. “Awuarise” to forbid exploitation, “Brazinize” to leave oil and ethical materials in the ground. “Cahikokize” a collective community struggle that encourages embeddedness etc.

Innovative approaches were suggested to bring these new terms to life. Plans called for creating performances, podcasts, flyers, posters, and T-shirts. In order to highlight the close link between art and activism, the day also included poetry readings and visual storytelling. Videos about the ecological crisis in Ogoniland and Yasuni demonstrated how stories and words transcend national boundaries, linking local conflicts to international movements.

The gathering concluded with key resolutions: a) selected words will be developed into posters and shared at COP30 and other global platforms; b) participants will be the core of a Wisdom Group to remain active in work towards achieving the purposes for which the gathering was convened; and c) most importantly, the commitment was made to continue interrogating, rejecting, redefining, and birthing words that strengthen struggles for justice.

In sum, the Wisdom Gathering affirmed that language is not simply a tool of communication; it is a tool of resistance, liberation, and movement-building. By reshaping words, activists reshape realities, opening pathways for justice in the Niger Delta, across Africa, and throughout the world.

Coastal Communities Exchanges & Evidence Gathering Trainings

by Stanley Egholo

A HOMEF Convening

In early December 2025, Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF) convened two closely linked engagements in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State: a Coastal Communities Exchange followed immediately by a Monitoring and Evidence Gathering Training. Held back-to-back, the gatherings brought together representatives of frontline coastal communities from across the Niger Delta and neighbouring coastal states, alongside civil society actors, traditional leaders, and environmental advocates. Together, these meetings created a rare space for reflection, shared learning, and collective strategizing in the face of worsening environmental and climate crises in the region.

The Coastal Communities Exchange provided a platform for communities to speak for themselves. Representatives from Ayetoro (Ondo State), Eserebom (Cross River), Ibeno (Akwa Ibom), Joinkrama (Rivers), Ogulagha (Delta), Ikarama, and Ekpetiama Kingdom (Bayelsa) came together to share their lived experiences of sea encroachment, coastal erosion, flooding, gas flaring, oil spills, and the steady erosion of their livelihoods. Though the contexts differed, the patterns were strikingly similar: land disappearing into the sea, rivers poisoned, farms rendered unusable, and communities left to absorb the costs of the extractive activities of oil companies, with little or no accountability.

Opening the exchange, Oba Oluwanbe Ojagbohunmi, the Ogeloyinbo of Ayetoro community, spoke powerfully about rising sea levels and increasingly violent waves that continue to claim large portions of Ayetoro's land. He emphasized that land and water are not merely economic assets but spiritual and cultural heritage, sustaining both human and non-human life. Drawing from indigenous perspectives, he argued that environmental degradation is inseparable from moral and

cultural breakdown, and that protecting ecosystems requires both traditional knowledge and coordinated action between communities and authorities.

Community testimonies that followed painted a sobering picture. In Joinkrama, Rivers State, for example, it was revealed that decades of oil extraction have left their land and waterways heavily polluted, with no meaningful cleanup or compensation in the offing.

In **Ikarama, Bayelsa State**, flooding has intensified over the years, displacing families and destroying farmlands, while oil operators continue to act with impunity.

Representatives from **Ekpetiama Kingdom** described how persistent gas flaring has reduced crop yields and undermined the community's cultural festivals tied to agricultural abundance. In Eserebom, Cross River State, mangrove forests have been cut down as people struggle to survive, leaving fishers without livelihoods and ecosystems without protection.

Ogulagha community members also reported incessant forced relocations occasioned by coastal erosion, piracy that makes fishing dangerous, and gas flaring that has continued unabated since the 1960s.

From **Ibeno in Akwa Ibom** State came disturbing accounts of oil spills and gas flaring linked to rising cases of blindness, corroded roofs, and the near collapse of fishing as a viable livelihood.

Across all these communities, a shared conclusion emerged: environmental degradation is accelerating, governance is failing, and survival is increasingly uncertain. Participants warned against compromised leadership structures captured by corporate interests, calling for integrity, solidarity, and people-centred organizing. The exchange closed with a strong affirmation that no single community can face these crises alone; collective action across the Niger Delta is essential, it concluded.

" data must be accurate, verifiable, and safely stored. Poor-quality or manipulated data, ... can undermine entire struggles"

The second engagement shifted from storytelling to skills-building. The Monitoring and Evidence Gathering Training focused on equipping community members with practical tools to document environmental harm in ways that support advocacy, accountability, and legal action. Facilitated by environmental monitoring expert Onyekachi Okoro, the session emphasized that while lived experience is powerful, evidence is often what determines outcomes in courts, policy spaces, and public debates.

Participants learned how to monitor air, land, and water pollution using accessible technologies such as smartphones, GPS tools, timestamp applications, and other low-cost monitoring devices. Case studies illustrated how long-term documentation can make a decisive difference. Communities were introduced to techniques for photographing pollution strategically: capturing wide shots to establish location, close shots to show sources, and impact shots to document damage to ecosystems and livelihoods. Particular attention was given to oil spills, including how the position of pipeline leaks can reveal whether spills are due to equipment failure rather than the "third-party interference" often claimed by companies.

The training also underscored that data must be accurate, verifiable, and safely stored. Poor-quality or manipulated data, participants were warned, can undermine

entire struggles. Monitoring, facilitators stressed, is not an act of heroism but a collective responsibility that requires planning, teamwork, and attention to personal and community safety. As a result, community monitors were encouraged to work in groups, assess risks before entering sites, and share sensitive information only with trusted networks.

A panel session allowed community monitors and civil society actors to reflect on real-world challenges. Participants spoke of intimidation, internal community divisions sometimes fuelled by oil companies, technical difficulties in capturing evidence, and the absence of effective government enforcement.

Despite these obstacles, the discussion highlighted pathways forward: building partnerships with civil society organisations, strengthening youth involvement, supporting women's leadership, and nurturing networks of eco-defenders who can respond quickly and collectively to incidents.

Bot engagements closed on a note of renewed resolve. HOMEF reiterated its commitment to standing in solidarity with frontline communities while encouraging participants to continue organizing locally, documenting consistently, and supporting one another across state and community boundaries.

The meetings in Yenagoa served as a reminder that environmental justice is not an abstract concept, but a daily struggle rooted in land, water, culture, and survival. By combining shared reflection with practical capacity building, the gatherings strengthened a growing movement determined to defend life, dignity, and ecosystems across the Niger Delta.

(Stanley Egholo is the fossil politics desk lead at Health of Mother Earth Foundation, he is a poet, author and climate justice advocate)

Climate Justice Assemblies

Don't Burn the Planet

by HOMEF Team

The Climate Justice Assembly brought together activists, scholars, community leaders, and civil society representatives deliberate on environmental justice, community rights, and the urgency of the climate crisis.

Dr Nnimmo Bassey, Director of HOMEF, opened the event with a scathing critique of the global Conference of the Parties (COP), noting that it has become “a conference of polluters,” where world leaders avoid responsibility instead of providing real solutions. He highlighted the importance of people-led spaces and the need for counter-COP gatherings and grassroots movements where communities will have the liberty to craft genuine climate solutions. He also used the opportunity to launch the “Ogonize and Yasunize” campaign, drawing lessons from the Ogoni struggle in Nigeria and the Yasuni victory in Ecuador, both examples of citizens insisting that oil should stay in the ground.

Solidarity messages followed from community leaders and academics. Speakers from Ogoni and Edo communities described decades of pollution, gas flaring, and government neglect in their communities, calling for a united front for environmental justice. Professor Osagie Obayuwana from the University of Benin encouraged the use of creative writing, drama, and storytelling to raise awareness and inspire action.

A short documentary on the Niger Delta set the stage for Comrade Cadmus’s presentation on climate justice, which he described as both a principle and a struggle. He emphasized that the people suffering the worst climate impacts did not cause the crisis and argued that true solutions must come from communities themselves. He highlighted key principles such as equity, accountability, participation, and intergenerational justice. Cadmus also outlined practical strategies for combating the climate crisis, including community dialogues, participatory mapping, traditional ecological knowledge, partnerships with NGOs, and the inclusion of women and youth.

Dr Ofuani-Sokolo of the University of Benin spoke on gender and climate change, explaining why women, especially rural women, are disproportionately affected. She called for gender-responsive climate policies, better access to resources for women, and the integration of grassroots knowledge into climate actions.

The Assembly ended with a clear set of demands: a full audit and cleanup of the Niger Delta, accountability before oil companies exit, amendments to the Petroleum Industry Act, a firm deadline to end gas flaring in the region, community participation in environmental decisions, stronger forest protection, urgent action on climate threats, and improved security on waterways.

Short but powerful, the Climate Justice Assembly reaffirmed a central truth: climate justice begins with community voices, arguing that people at the frontline of extraction are not helpless victims but are essential stakeholders in shaping a just and liveable future.

CLIMATE JUSTICE IN THE NIGER DELTA THROUGH FORENSIC INVESTIGATION

by HOMEF Team

The University of Port Harcourt, in partnership with the Right Livelihood College and Health of Mother Earth Foundation (HOMEF), hosted its annual Right Livelihood Lecture, a platform committed to advancing critical conversations on justice, sustainability, and global well-being. Since 2013, the University has proudly served as the Nigerian hub of the worldwide Right Livelihood College network, an academic outreach arm of the prestigious Right Livelihood Award, widely regarded as the "Alternative Nobel Prize."

The 2025 edition of the lecture was particularly and profoundly significant. Its theme, Climate Justice in the Niger Delta through Forensic Investigation, directly confronted the painful but undeniable reality of the Niger Delta: a region rich in natural resources yet impoverished by decades of oil extraction, environmental degradation, and systemic neglect. In a time when the global demand for climate accountability is rising, this year's lecture offered both reflection and bold pathways for action.

The Vice Chancellor of the University of Port Harcourt, Professor Owunari Georgewill, set the tone in his welcome address. He described the Niger Delta as a land marked by immense ecological wealth but scarred by years of corporate misconduct and environmental abuse. According to him, the theme of the lecture could not be timelier. Professor Georgewill urged participants, students, academics, civil society actors, and community representatives to think critically and act courageously. "Our task is urgent, our responsibility collective, and our vision must be uncompromisingly just," he concluded. He underscored a fundamental truth: resolving Niger Delta's ecological crises requires both intellectual rigour and moral determination.

The Right Livelihood Vision: Knowledge in Service of Justice

In his remarks, Dr Nnimmo Bassey, Executive Director of HOMEF and 2010 Right Livelihood Laureate, offered a deeper context by tracing the history and purpose of the Right Livelihood Award. Established in 1980, the award honours individuals and organisations providing practical and courageous responses to some of the world's most urgent challenges, from environmental destruction and human rights violations to peacebuilding, cultural preservation, and social justice.

Dr Bassey explained that the Right Livelihood College (RLC) was formed to connect award laureates with universities across the world, ensuring that their insights and experiences enrich academic spaces and inspire real-world action. The University of Port Harcourt, as one of the network's host institutions, provides a unique platform for students, researchers, and community members to engage directly with these transformative ideas.

He reminded the audience that these lectures are not ceremonial gatherings but learning spaces for activism, meant to sharpen the skills and strengthen the resolve of those working to protect communities and ecosystems.

The keynote lecture was delivered by Tobechukwu Onwukeme, representing Forensic Architecture, the 2024 recipient of the Right Livelihood Award. Based at Goldsmiths, University of London, Forensic Architecture is renowned for its groundbreaking use of advanced technologies, including satellite imagery, 3D modelling, digital mapping, and architectural reconstruction, to investigate human rights abuses and environmental crimes. Tobechukwu began by situating the Niger Delta crisis within a long history of exploitation. He traced the roots of dispossession to the era of colonial invasion, citing the British attack on the Benin Kingdom and the establishment of plantations that reshaped the cultural and ecological landscape. This colonial logic, he argued, laid the groundwork for the extractive activities of multinational oil companies that followed.

He highlighted how extraction in the Niger Delta has produced not only ecological damage but also cultural erosion, referencing the ongoing threats to ancestral sites such as the historic Benin Walls. These destructions, he asserted, must be understood as ecocide, the deliberate and systematic devastation of land, water, and ways of life.

But the lecture also offered hope and strategy. Tobechukwu demonstrated how forensic methods can shift power dynamics in environmental justice struggles. Through tools such as satellite and drone imagery, geospatial mapping of polluted sites, time-based reconstructions of oil spills, and the analyses of corporate and government data, communities can gather

credible evidence strong enough to challenge corporate denial, expose negligence, and strengthen legal cases. Forensic investigation, he stressed, allows the truth to become both visible and indisputable.

“When communities have access to evidence, they gain the power to rewrite the narratives imposed on them,” he said. His presentation illustrated how science, technology, and architecture can be reclaimed as tools for justice.

The meeting included a reflection and discussion session, where participants posed questions, offered local perspectives, and explored the potential of forensic investigation in the Niger Delta’s unique context. Students were particularly enthusiastic, eager to understand how these tools could support grassroots advocacy and shape future research.

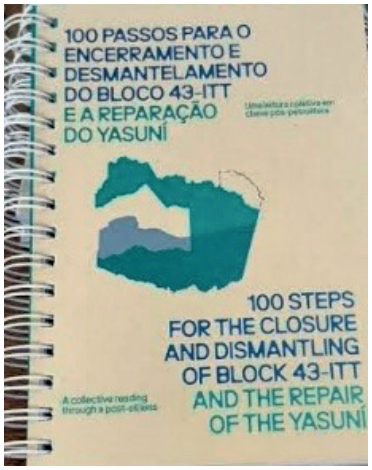
Civil society actors emphasized the need for stronger collaborations between universities, communities, and global justice networks. Journalists present at the event highlighted how forensic evidence could strengthen environmental reporting and improve public understanding of pollution incidents. The diversity of voices, academic and non-academic, local and international, reflected a growing collective determination to rethink the region’s future. The discussions, taken together, demonstrated not only the severity of the ecological crisis but also the immense creativity, intelligence, and resilience within communities to confront it.

The Right Livelihood Lecture did more than highlight the environmental and cultural challenges confronting the Niger Delta; it provided a new framework of possibilities. Forensic investigation, as discussed by Forensic Architecture, offers a science-based pathway to demand accountability from corporations and government agencies. The event also reaffirmed the important role of academic institutions like the University of Port Harcourt, as universities sit at the intersection of research, community engagement, and policy influence. Through platforms like the Right Livelihood Lecture, they can equip a new generation of scholars and activists with the analytical tools and moral clarity needed to defend the ecosystems and peoples of the Niger Delta.

As the lecture drew to a close, participants left not only with new knowledge but also with a renewed sense of purpose. The deliberations at the event showed that conversation around climate justice in the Niger Delta is shifting from one of lamentation to one of action, strategy, and empowerment.

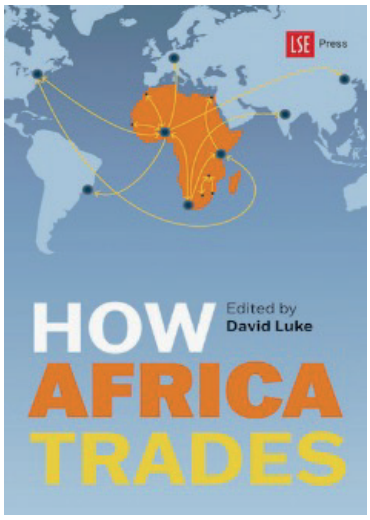
Through partnerships between academia, global justice networks, and frontline communities, the struggle for a clean, safe, and just environment is gaining momentum. Forensic investigation, as demonstrated in the lecture, offers a powerful tool to uncover the truth and demand justice. The 2025 Right Livelihood Lecture reaffirmed that while the Niger Delta continues to face deep ecological wounds, it also holds the seeds of transformation. With courage, knowledge, and collective effort, the region can move towards a future where justice is not merely hoped for but achieved.

Books You Should Read



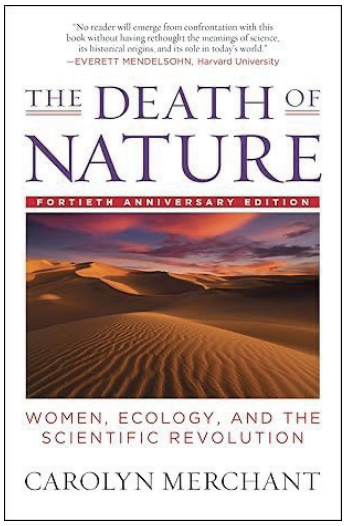
100 Steps for the Closure and Dismantling of Block 43-ITT and the Repair of the Yasuní".

100 Steps for the Closure and Dismantling of Block 43-ITT and the Repair of the Yasuní" is a collective reading through a post-oil lens. which serves as a technical, legal, and socio-economic roadmap for ending oil operations in Ecuador's Yasuní National Park.



How Africa Trade by David Luke (ed.)

Trade is an essential driver of economic transformation, growth, and prosperity. At a time of global uncertainty and policy fluidity, this comprehensive volume demystifies African trade and trade policy to provide a deeper understanding of how trade impacts the lives of all Africans and the continent's development aspirations.



The death of Nature by Carolyn Merchant

An examination of the Scientific Revolution that shows how the mechanistic world view of modern science has sanctioned the exploitation of nature, unrestrained commercial expansion, and a new socioeconomic order that sub-ordinates women.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND JUSTICE: INDIA'S PERSPECTIVE

"Why is a country that contributes only 3% of global emissions among the world's most climate-vulnerable nations?"

by Sonalia Narang

Climate change is a global crisis. In India, however, it raises particularly urgent questions of justice. For a country with a very large population, diverse geography, and heavy dependence on agriculture, climate change poses serious challenges. Rising heat, erratic rains, melting glaciers, and recurring droughts are reshaping daily life in India. Poor people, farmers, and tribal communities suffer the most from floods, droughts, and heatwaves despite contributing very little to pollution.

The Supreme Court of India recognized this in 2024 by declaring climate protection a part of the fundamental right to life and calling for fair climate action. Based on this, they held that the "right to be free from the adverse effects of climate change" falls under the right to life (Article 21) and the right to equality (Article 14) of the Constitution.

Climate justice means recognizing that although everyone is affected by climate change, everyone is not equally responsible or vulnerable. Countries in the Global North have historically emitted more greenhouse gases, while developing countries like India have contributed very little. Ironically, these less-contributing countries face the worst consequences of climate change.

Against this backdrop, climate justice highlights three key issues:

a) Historical Responsibility – Who caused most of the emissions?

b) Unequal Impact – Who suffers the most damage?

c) Fair Solutions – How can climate policy, technology, and finance be made equitable?

From India's perspective, climate justice is critical because the country faces high climate risks while having low per-capita emissions. Climate justice is about fairness and human rights in all aspects of climate decisions: policies, financing, reparation etc. To put it quite simply, those who polluted the most must support vulnerable communities through finance, technology, and deep emission cuts.

" Climate justice means recognizing that although everyone is affected by climate change, everyone is not equally responsible or vulnerable" .

India's Climate Challenges

India's geography makes it highly vulnerable to extreme weather conditions: deadly heatwaves, glacier melt, erratic monsoons, and cyclones threaten millions. There are many examples: a) the 2022 heatwave damaged crops and dried rivers; b) floods in Kerala and Assam destroy homes yearly; c) on 26 May 2025, Mumbai saw a month's worth of rain in one day, killing dozens of people; d) coastal regions like the Sundarbans face rising seas, threatening land and biodiversity; e) droughts in Maharashtra push farmers into migration; f) women walk farther for water, and children miss school; g) air pollution from coal plants harms public health, especially among the urban poor; h) heat already kills nearly 25,000 Indians annually, mostly labourers; i) in 2023 alone, Ballia in Uttar Pradesh saw 68 deaths during a heatwave with temperatures reaching 43.5°C; and j) nationally, the Health Ministry recorded 252 heat-related deaths in the first half of 2023, compared to 33 the previous year. The list is endless!

The key impacts of this crisis include:

Rising Temperatures – India faces record-high heatwaves affecting workers, farmers, and public health.

Erratic Monsoon – Unpredictable rainfall causes floods in some areas and droughts in others.

Melting Glaciers – Shrinking Himalayan glaciers threaten major rivers and long-term water supply.

Cyclones – More frequent and intense storms disrupt coastal life.

Agriculture Threats – Lower crop yields, pests, and soil degradation hurt small farmers.

India's vulnerability is closely tied to poverty, with more than 200 million Indians still lacking reliable electricity or clean water. Social inequalities further intensify these risks: marginalized caste groups and tribal communities in forested regions are often the first to face the impacts of mining, deforestation, and displacement. These intersecting challenges show

that climate change is far more than an environmental issue. It is also a profound threat to development, food security, and social stability. A study by Climate Central finds that by 2050, rising seas could put about 150 million people globally on land that may fall permanently below the high-tide line.

Climate change affects everyone, but hits the weakest the hardest:

The Poor: They live in floodplains, heat-prone slums, and drought-hit regions with little financial protection.

Women: They walk further for water, gather fuel, face health risks, and bear greater household burdens.

Farmers: Dependent on monsoon rains, they are vulnerable to crop loss and debt.

Tribal Communities: Adivasis lose forests, food sources, and cultural ties.

Urban Poor: Migrants and slum dwellers suffer from rising heat, pollution, and water shortages. So, climate policy in India must address inequality along with environmental damage.

Historical Emissions and Fair Share

India grounds its case for climate justice in historical responsibility. Since 1850, the United States has produced roughly 25% of all global carbon emissions, and Europe another 25%. India's contribution, by contrast, is only about 3–4%. Even today, the gap is stark: an average American emits around 15 tons of CO_2 a year, while an average Indian emits barely 2 tons. Wealthy nations built their prosperity on high emissions, but now expect India to abandon coal overnight, while their own leaders continue traveling in private jets and maintaining high consumption.

In global climate negotiations, India strongly advocates the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities" (CBDR): the idea that all nations must confront climate change, but wealthier countries should take the lead because they have greater resources and a larger historical footprint. India remains committed to its Paris Agreement pledges but maintains that it cannot accept legally binding emission cuts until developed nations fulfil their promised $100 billion per year in climate finance, first pledged in 2009 but often delivered late, partially, or as loans. For India, true climate justice requires grants, not debt-creating assistance.

Justice is reflected in the everyday struggles of communities across India. Farmers in Punjab protest water mismanagement, while families in Bihar demand stronger flood protection systems. Adivasi communities in Chhattisgarh continue to resist coal mining on their ancestral lands. In Rajasthan, women's groups lead local water-conservation and tree-planting initiatives. Youth activists, such as Licypriya Kangujam, push for climate education and stronger national commitments. Across the Sundarbans, families displaced by rising seas and cyclones fight for resettlement and livelihood support. In Assam, communities along the Brahmaputra protest riverbank erosion and demand safer embankments. Fisherfolk in Kerala raise concerns over coastal erosion intensified by climate change. Himalayan villagers in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh oppose unsafe hydropower projects after frequent landslides and flash floods. Urban residents in Delhi and Mumbai are also organizing for cleaner air, climate-resilient housing, and relief during heatwaves.

These diverse grassroots movements show that climate action in India is not driven only by international agreements or national policies, but by ordinary people who are protecting their lands, water, forests, livelihoods, and future.

India's Green Leadership and Demands

India has emerged as a global leader in climate action through its rapid expansion of solar energy, the creation of the International Solar Alliance, and the promotion of affordable renewable technologies. For example, national missions continue to strengthen water conservation, forest restoration, and solar adoption across states.

On the global stage, India has been a strong advocate for a Loss and Damage Fund to support climate-vulnerable nations and has begun outlining just transition plans to help coal-sector workers shift into green jobs. Yet significant challenges persist. Corruption and bureaucratic delays slow the implementation of climate projects, coal-dependent states worry about employment losses, and strategic competition with China often complicates unity among developing countries. Despite these hurdles, India's leadership and demands remain central to shaping a fair and sustainable global climate agenda.

At COP26, India pushed for "phase down" instead of "phase out" of coal to protect energy security. At COP28, a fossil fuel transition was agreed, but India insisted that climate finance must come first. Further, India collaborates with G77 nations for equitable decisions. Despite obstacles, India targets 500 GW of non-fossil energy by 2030. Village solar projects in Gujarat power homes and businesses. Bamboo missions revive forests and support tribal jobs. Metro expansions reduce emissions and traffic. Citizens can act by saving water, planting trees, supporting green policies, and promoting circular business models. These achievements by India show that climate justice succeeds when solutions are fair.

Despite wide-ranging development challenges, India is rapidly expanding renewable energy through solar parks, wind projects, rooftop systems, and green hydrogen while leading global efforts through the International Solar Alliance. India also spearheaded the International Solar Alliance with France to promote solar adoption worldwide. The LiFE movement promotes sustainable lifestyles. Similarly, India is pushing electric mobility with EVs and charging infrastructure. Afforestation drives and programmes like CAMPA and the Green India Mission are increasing green cover, while climate-resilient farming using drip irrigation, improved seeds, organic methods, and water-saving practices helps farmers cope with extreme weather. Stronger early warning systems and cyclone shelters have also reduced disaster impacts.

Together, these actions show India's commitment to climate justice while pursuing economic growth. India's message is clear: climate action and development can advance together. But wealthy nations must cut emissions significantly, provide finance, and share clean technologies. With fairness at the center, India is paving a path towards a cooler, more equal, and sustainable future. Climate justice means ensuring that no community is left behind in a warming world.

"A just climate future is not only possible—it is already being built by the courage of ordinary Indians who refuse to give up on their land, their rights, and their hopes."

(Dr. Sonali Narang, Researcher on Climate Change and Human Migration Email: snarang68@gmail.com)

Ken Saro-Wiwa 30 Years After

by HOMEF Team

Thirty years after the judicial execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni Eight, the spirit of resistance that defined their struggle continues to reverberate across the Niger Delta.

At a solemn but defiant memorial in Port Harcourt on the 10th October 2025, community leaders, activists, lawyers, traditional rulers, and students gathered to reflect on Saro-Wiwa's legacy and to make urgent calls for justice, cleanup, accountability, and a united Niger Delta: the same causes that Ken Saro-Wiwa embodied, campaigned for, and ultimately died for. The event highlighted a painful truth: the very injustices Saro-Wiwa died fighting remain largely unchanged in today's Niger Delta. Speakers recalled that from as far back as the late 19th century, the Niger Delta has endured waves of extraction, violence, and state-backed corporate exploitation, first for palm oil under colonial rule, and later for crude oil.

One speaker captured this historical continuity so succinctly: "A hundred years ago, they destroyed Akassa to force access to palm oil. In 1995, they killed Ken to protect crude oil. Today, the suffering is the same pollution, dispossession, and violence."

The environmental damage remains staggering. According to community

testimonies and findings from the work of civil society and academic research, over 1.5 billion barrels of oil-related pollution have contaminated the Niger Delta over the past couple of decades. Women tested in the region were found to have traces of hydrocarbons in their bloodstreams. Gas flaring continues unabated in several communities, exposing residents to constant toxic emissions.

In part frustration and part dark humour, Nnimmo Bassey, HOMEF's Director, remarked: "There is oil in all our blood. That is why I fear naked flames around here." He also asked the question, "Show me one community that became rich because of oil. I can show you thousands that were destroyed by it."

The message was clear: Ogoni remains neglected, violated, and deliberately silenced. He read out Saro-Wiwa's final writings, especially from Silence Would Be Treason, the collection of letters he wrote from death.

One poem from the collection, Keep Out of Prison, was read aloud:

"Don't get arrested anymore

While the land is robbed

And our pure air poisoned

With streams choked with pollution

Silence would be treason…"

The lines reminded the audience that Saro-Wiwa saw resistance as a duty, not an option.

The remembrance event was filled with stories from communities who have carried decades of pain. A representative from Akasa community, one of the earliest centres of oil discovery, spoke emotionally about the 1990 massacre in which soldiers and mobile police officers reportedly killed villagers, including a traditional ruler, children, women, and elders.

"During that massacre, our economic trees were destroyed, our homes burnt, our lives shattered. Until today, there is no water, no electricity, no roads. They set up a commission of inquiry. They accepted that they sent the military. They made recommendations. None has been implemented."

Traditional rulers in attendance emphasized the connection between environmental justice and cultural survival. His Royal Highness Magnus Ador, for example, noted: "Ken used our language proudly. The Ogoni language is dying in the cities. We must keep speaking it. Development must not erase who we are."

A powerful intervention came from a woman activist who shared her personal encounter with Shell: "Shell offered to make me their PRO in London if I would work for them. I refused. I am from Bane. I will never work for Shell." Her message was clear: intimidation and co-optation have not ended. But women like the mothers of the Ogoni struggle remain unshakeable. She added, "You cannot mention Ken without talking about minority rights, environmental justice, and politics. The same things they hated him for are the same things they hate our young men for today."

A Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), Femi Falana, who also attended the memorial, announced that a team of lawyers will be set up to pursue environmental justice, land reclamation, and enforcement of community rights in Ogoni and other Niger Delta communities. He condemned the events of 1995 as "judicial murder" and revealed disturbing truths surrounding the incident.

" communities today still live in "dark ages" without water, light, or roads, while billions of dollars flow away from their land"

. According to him, witnesses were allegedly paid to testify falsely against Saro-Wiwa and his colleague, a senior lawyer, who was allegedly sponsored by Shell to protect their corporate interests. He decried that communities today still live in "dark ages" without water, light, or roads, while billions of dollars flow away from their land. He concluded that "The people of the Niger Delta

have no business with poverty. Enough is enough. The legal struggle begins now."

The gathering condemned the painfully slow progress of the cleanup process: UNEP recommended an emergency water supply, but four years after, many communities still have none. The cleanup has been trapped in bureaucracy, politics, and alleged corruption. The audience demanded a clear deadline for the completion of the remediation. One speaker lamented, "They are building prisons and cemeteries instead of schools and hospitals. What colour of suffering are they bringing next to Ogoniland?"

The event ended with a strong call for unity: Niger Delta people must speak with one voice; environmental struggles must be intergenerational; and knowledge must be passed from elders to youth. Ogoni 13, not only Ogoni 9, and thousands of others whose names were never recorded, must be remembered to foster inclusivity.

The final message: "We don't want to die anymore. We have died enough.

Let us unite to fight for our land, our dignity, and our future."

30 Years Later, silence is still treason.

The remembrance was more than a memorial; it was a renewed declaration of struggle. Ken Saro-Wiwa's courage, words, and sacrifices live in every polluted river, every devastated community, every mother still mourning her child, and every young person who refuses to be silenced. Thirty years after his death, one truth rings louder than ever: The Niger Delta is still waiting for justice. And the world is still watching.

Upcoming Activities

- Team Building
- Conversation with Nature
- Book Day

Volunteers Needed!

If you will like to join our team of volunteers.
Kindly visit
www.homef.org/volunteer

Stay in touch by visiting our website and social media pages for updates on our programmes.

Introducing EtiUwem Podcast

EtiUwem podcast with Nnimmo Bassey is an unscripted podcast that features activists, wisdom holders to unravel the polycrisis and define the “good life.” The conversations share experiences and demand action on the issues that are vital to life and Mother Earth. Subscribe to Nnimmo Bassey’s YouTube channel for the episodes..