

African youth takes stand at first ever WCC Eco-School



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03 August 2017

“It is imperative for churches to invest in the youth of Africa so they can take leadership in addressing these issues in the timeframe of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals”, said Prof. Dr Isabel Phiri, World Council of Churches (WCC) deputy general secretary for Diakonia and Public Witness as she spoke to young people attending the first-ever WCC Eco-School in Blantyre, Malawi.

The “Eco-School on Water, Food, Health and Climate Justice,” a 10-day capacity building workshop held from 24 July – 3 August was co-organized by two WCC initiatives, the Ecumenical Water Network and Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance.

Vulnerable communities in Africa are some of the most affected by climate change, often suffering disproportionately from lack of food and water as well as illness.

It is vital for all of us to see these challenges through the lenses of justice and human dignity, but perhaps most vital is for the youth of Africa to lead the way toward a future in which all people can lead full lives.

The Eco-School reflects the WCC’s commitment to helping youth fulfill a defining role in building resilient and transformative communities.

Thirty young people from 16 countries gathered for comprehensive and intensive study involving inputs from various disciplines, experiential learning, community interactions and field visits.

Fourteen experts and faculty members representing 10 different countries, including WCC staff, guided the school, which was hosted by the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian – Blantyre Synod, at its Grace Bandawe Conference Centre, which provided a lively campus setting. Young people had the opportunity to study and reflect on local, regional, and international manifestations and causes of the water crisis, food insecurity, health challenges and the impacts of climate change.

The eco-school's commitment to including spiritual life deepened the students' understanding of ecological issues, with particular emphasis on climate change, water, food and health, in the context of their faith and profoundly influenced the proceedings and deliberations.

Apart from participating in Bible studies, the students offered devotions and prayers focusing and reaffirming their studies. Students also preached on eco-justice in three Blantyre congregations.

Participants were given certificates of recognition for successfully completing the course.

[WCC's Ecumenical Water Network](#)

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