

JuniorCare Awareness Week

The Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development hosted the JuniorCare Awareness Week from 4 to 9 October 2015 at Riverton in Kimberly, in the Northern Cape province. The event was attended by 220 participants, which largely comprised of learners from the John Taolo District, the Frances Baard district, the Namaqua district, the Pixley district and officials from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the Department of Land Reform and Rural Development, the Northern Cape Department of Agriculture, the Northern Cape Department of Land Reform and Rural Development and the Department of Water and Sanitation and representatives from Solar Renewable Energy. The purpose of the event was to raise awareness and educate learners about JuniorCare initiatives.

The Department of Agriculture is providing R2000000 million for bursaries in the fields of agriculture and environmental studies and there are various opportunities in agriculture the learners can follow. The land is facing challenges because people do not take care of the land. Climate change is human kind and survival, we are inflicting our generation from generation to irreplaceable damage to our environment. At the Cop17 Conference all parties from the countries committed to reduce carbon emissions. These climate changes destroy our environment and that is why we have floods and affected weather patterns and that is why LandCare came up with initiatives to ensure that we care for our land. The environmental studies should be incorporated into the school curriculum.

We are the change that can make a difference in terms of land degradation. We need to have champions in JuniorCare. The environment provides us with food and there is no life without LandCare. The Northern Cape is an extensive area that is being overgrazed. We are losing fertile top soil and 13 million people depend on top soil for food security and the responding mechanism is to take care of the land. The National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC)

programme started in 2010 and the purpose of this programme was mainly to recruit rural youth in the rural wards, for youth to serve their own communities and focusing on developing the rural areas. The skills are identified according to local economic needs. The youth are encouraged follow the skills needed in their respect areas, for example, we will train them as artisans in a mining area. These programmes increase the level of literacy. After completion of these studies they will be required to serve their community for a period of seven months. He mentioned the requirements which are needed to be admitted to this programme. This programme is 24 months. For the first four months the learner will be for induction and military base training.

Salinity indicates the salt levels in the soil and the cause of salinity is chemical leakages. In 2008, 305 ha of soil were taken out from production and billions of rands were lost to rehabilitate the soil's condition and there is no vegetation due to waterlogging conditions. To have sustainable soil we need soil which has oxygen and earth worms to live in it. We have developed an irrigation scheme to have good quality water for farmers.



Project visit at Wildeklawer farm – food production



The learners were exposed to different practical demonstrations on how to check the water quality during the JuniorCare Awareness Week.



Project visit at Majeng CPA - Control of bush encroachment and Nguni project

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