

CFS Website: cfs.uonbi.ac.ke, Twitter: @CFS_UON

In further advancement of the greater work being done under the CFS- ADHR project, our Chair Ms. Lyla Latif participated as a guest speaker in a conference organised by **AKINA MAMA WA AFRIKA** under the theme: **FEMINISM & CLIMATE JUSTICE** held at **Four Points, Sheraton, Nairobi, Kenya** on the **11th July 2023**.

The number of persons in attendance was 30 people from different work backgrounds, including lawyers, civil society, the media amongst other. The meeting was physical.

Note: The methodology for this reporting is descriptive. Dr. Lyla's presentation will be of key significance in this report. Overall, key action points will be bulleted at the end of this report. Enclosed to the report is the program for the conference and the paper presented by our Dr. Lyla Latif, Chair CFS.

Opening remarks:

In scene setting and centering our energies, the participants were asked to introduce themselves personally, politically, and professionally

- What is your political inclination? Political inclinations drew a lot of left-centered wingers. Many people were aligned to the left with a few who had no political stand.
- Using the first letter of your second name, tell us how you are feeling. Some of the responses got were: Fantastic, excited, energized, joyous, judicious, wonderful et al. These feelings and energies in the room propelled us into the next session which was the discussions.
- If you are an animal today, which one would you be?

Cats, eagles, horses, dolphins, dogs, rabbits, tortoises, dragons, a hen, butterflies, a fly, bees, a bear, and penguins. Cats took the day.

Objectives of the workshop:

The conference was organised to evaluate the position of women in climate justice and how women centered solutions can be achieved. To this end, participants agreed:

- to foster an understanding of the connections between the climate crisis, economic systems, and gender justice;
- to facilitate the development of critical thinking skills for the application of principles of ecofeminism, intersectionality, decolonisation, anti-capitalism, anti-colonialism, anti-neoliberalism, among others;
- to develop the skills, language, and conviction for climate justice with the full understanding that a structural transformation in global architecture is the cornerstone to achieving a just climate transition;
- to explore the false, dominant narratives presented to us by those in power as solutions, which if implemented, would only exacerbate deep injustices and human rights violations; and
- To network and establish linkages with the various stakeholders in the space of climate justice.

Key Points:

Session 1:

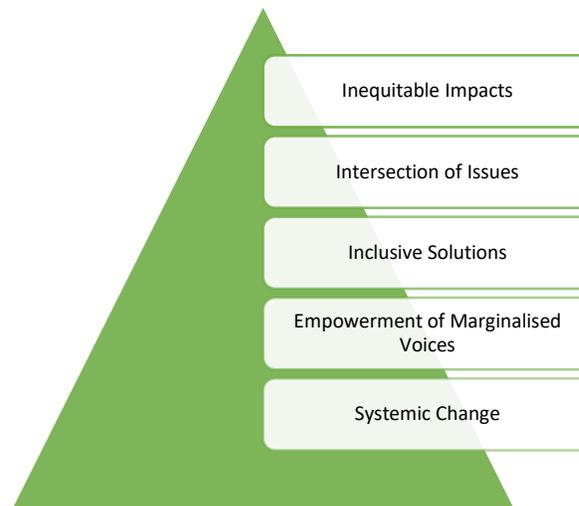
1. Afro-feminist Chants on Climate Crisis- Dr. Lyla Latif; Committee on Fiscal Studies

Dr. Lyla used the participants' introductions to start her discussions. A few people had no political inclinations "*I am not political,*" "*I am not into politics*" they said. This prompted her to ask the question, "*What is politics?*" Everyone must be political in today's world because if we do not have a stand, then the entire feminist movement and its approach towards addressing climate justice would be meaningless, she said. From the start, she captivated the audience and got them engaged.

These were the answers elicited from the participants: Politics is an ideology, politics is about power and negotiating for your interests, and she added to this governance. How do we govern society, law, the economy, and financial institutions? She asked and how do we demonstrate power relations when it comes to interactions? Further elaborating on the issue, it could be individual to individual, individual and institutions, institutions and institutions et al. Then she introduced the aspect of ideologies (what people think). Then she asked the participants, whose thoughts? Whose thoughts inform the ideologies that represent how we understand power and how we govern our societies, economy, and institutions amongst others?

Whereafter Dr. Lyla proceeded to deconstruct ideologies starting from patriarchal tendencies to colonialism and then current capitalist ideologies. She used a very interesting table-based dissemination of information that captures:

- Understanding the climate crisis scientifically, and its general framework which comprises- understanding the atmospheric, oceanographic, and geological science of climate change and further looking to the indicators like the Greenhouse effect due to increased burning of fossil fuels and the impact of these on women; this she argues leads to frequent and severe weather events such as floods, hurricanes and droughts and further impacts on agriculture where women are the majority so it affects their livelihoods, income, and food security. The country examples are Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and India: these countries have higher female mortality in natural disasters. The feminist perspective is including nuanced social variables in climate models to predict gender-differentiated impacts.
- The same method employed in the scientific analysis is applied in dissecting the economic framework- which deals with the cost-benefit analysis, the social and political framework, and technological frameworks. These were all explained with examples and pictorials (the actual paper is attached).
- She further used the same analysis to simplify the information about women and indigenous approaches to exclusion.
- Dr. Lyla then demonstrated why the feminist perspective on the climate crisis is critical. She stressed that the impact of climate change is not experienced uniformly but rather disproportionately and affects the marginalised and oppressed communities. The same is depicted below.



(Source: Dr. Lyla)

Further depicted in the picture below:



(Source: Dr. Lyla)

- She also came up with creative ideas like ecofeminist activism as a storytelling tool, establishing community resilience hubs, feminist climate funds, and climate storytelling circles amongst others. A good one she shared is the picture below.



- At the end of the session, Dr. Lyla and the participants came up with some key points and they include:
 - i. the need to contextualise matters of climate justice;
 - ii. innovative financing to support women in climate change decision making;
 - iii. clarity on African definition of feminism;
 - iv. agenda setting. Who are the agenda setters? In this we shall be able to debunk path dependency;
 - v. the need to have accountability mechanisms at different levels of governance;
 - vi. legal support to communities in a bid to access justice; and
 - vii. Enforcements of environmental laws.

It was truly a mind and eye-opening session for the participants.

Session 2:

2. False Promises v Real Solutions: Debunking the 'greening' agenda by Ms. Nyambura

- Ecofeminism
- African women should theorise/figure out their own feminism
- We have to decolonise knowledge
- Marxist feminist- anti-capitalism
- Kitchen table conversations

She began her discussion by giving her ideological leaning as listed above and proceeded to discuss her topic.

- The assertion is that the climate crisis is deepening across the world and false solutions are being promoted i.e., giving us a false paradise yet embedded in the same system./far-fetched goals that we may not be able to achieve.
- These false hopes she stated are being pushed by transnational corporations and Global North governments, with the help of some Global South governments. Their corporate strategies are to allow polluters to keep polluting while grabbing more land and resources from communities in the Global South.
- The promises are not gender-neutral because they impact women in many different ways. These false solutions individualise systemic problems. Taking for instance Land markets, seed, and trade laws (food sovereignty). Indigenous seeds in Africa. Africa's biodiversity is very wide and laws do not pay attention to this.
- Can we talk about climate smart Agriculture without the requisite technology?
- The politics of financing (including debt). Cost of energy transitions is very huge and would greatly affect the women
- The Issues of arable land in Africa
- Marsabit- wind power project- are the solutions short-term verses their negative effects?
- Unfair trade practices- Global trade. Aid becoming a tool of neocolonialism. WTO
- She noted that a lot of these false solutions come from the UN. Unless we change the entire economic structure, we shall continue to be at the mercy of foreign powers.

Thus to fight for climate justice, we need to fight the problematic push for these false solutions to the climate crisis which include Geo-engineering, Nature-based solutions, net-zero targets, bioenergy with carbon capture and storage, REDD, carbon markets and offsets, tree plantations and others.

Afternoon session:

Session 3:

MC Development Initiatives- Violet Mutiri

- She shared the plight of the great women of Athi River who need help in fighting the big Multinationals in some of the community cases. Issues of their health, compensation for their land, and provision of other public services to ensure their welfare.
- The call for the return to indigenous foods and how to cook them by the Herbalists of the day. They insisted that the preservation of these indigenous foods and the knowledge around it is everything.
- The fighting story of the Ogiek community was also shared

Concluding Remarks

We reckon the words of Akina Mama was Afrika that, *“while we are not to blame for the multiple and intersecting crises of our times, yet it is us- working within social movements across the globe- who are trying to put out the flames. All these crises we face reveal the possibility that the world can change. Together and from the ground up we can build the world we want and deserve. African women do inspirational work every day yet their voices miss in discussions around climate justice.”* The narrative must change and it begins with us.

Last Session: Proposals for future engagements (all participants)

- Continue training and working in the greater area of climate crisis, economic systems, and gender justice
- To have a circle of critical thinkers in these areas who apply principles of ecofeminism, intersectionality, decolonisation, anti-capitalism, anti-colonialism, anti-neoliberalism, among others to tackle climate justice.
- To network and establish linkages with the various stakeholders in the space of climate justice and further deepen conversations in the area.
- To run campaigns in the area of climate justice to ensure just transitions while keeping our leaders accountable and transparent in their approach to energy transitions.
- Getting women on the table and making our voices heard in the climate justice movement. Having solutions that take into account the woman and these transitions will affect “the woman.”

Prepared by:

The Rapporteur for the Conference



Joan A. Atim