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**Community Engagement
School of Education (UKZN)**
has a partner
**Community Engagement and
Development Directorate (MUT)**

..... Together we present



CREATIVE NETWORK

MAGAZINE

ABOUT THIS MAGAZINE

Students and Staff from ALL universities and members of the general public were invited to: 'Write about their current experiences in a creative way - a story, lyrics, poem, drawing etc... including how learning can take place during this time'.

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INTERESTED IN SUBMITTING A CREATIVE PIECE

Submit your piece to any team member by e-mail or WhatsApp by Monday of every week.

SUBMIT - PERMISSION IS GRANTED TO THE EDITORS TO PUBLISH MY CREATIVE WORK IN THE MAGAZINE.

The world stood...

by

Phakamile Mazibuko

(Master of Education Candidate: University of KwaZulu-Natal, Edgewood Campus)

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The world stood,
As an announced visitor
Came to sweep our
Dear beloveds, leaving us
Baffled and heart wrenched.

Dust to dust, we declared,
As our loved ones perished
Like flies before our eyes;
The world stood...

The world stood as man
Became hopeless and helpless,
Watching this calamitous epidemic
Raid the global streets, leaving us
Broken and bare.

No skin, colour or creed was
Left at mercy when this by-passer
Toiled the earth, but those who
Eat crumbs, felt this heftiness
As livelihoods tumbled, the world
Stood...

Here lies the remains of untold
Stories, gone are humans who thrived
To see tomorrow, now lie motionless
And bound. One day, we shall tell a story.

Of how the world stood as an unannounced
Visitor came and claimed mother earth
And things were never the same again.
The world stood....

AN ABODE OF HOPE
by
Desan Iyer
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2

The world as we see it will never be the same,
Fresh air and freedom a normalcy no more,
Droplets of terror spreading like a raging storm,
Tears of poison muzzling quarrelsome leaders and strong nations,
We shield our faces yet expose our minds,
Fearing to breathe, paradoxes now rule,
Clocks have stopped, time suddenly stands still,
Doors firmly bolted, resolutely trapped in our thoughts,
It is time to reflect on a world at fault,
No better way than gradually peeling inhibitions away,
The world works in cryptic and mysterious ways,
Locked in an abode of hope to reflect on every second of life,
Help after all came from a devastating source,
Egos destroyed, equality restored,
The time has come to save the dying soul,
An ambience of hope brightens the early sky,
Slowly breathing the morning dews,
I finally learn to appreciate the symphonies of nature's tunes,
To listen, to share, to love and rejoice,
At glancing moments so often missed in the past
A dark cloud shimmering a ray in the horizon,
Worldly means no longer the order of the day,
I scan the horizon with lens no longer tainted,
I see beautiful flowers sprouting with renewed courage and hope,
The patter of raindrops on the ground cleansing a once comatose soul,
I count my blessings as I navigate through life's crossroad,
Who would have thought a crisis so pitiable and impalpable,
Could pen countless full-stops on chapters untold.
I see beautiful flowers sprouting with renewed courage and hope,
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I count my blessings as I navigate through life's crossroad,
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'New Deal' for Africa's Sahel region needs entrepreneurs to transform land and water resources

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Article by ScienceLink

More than 99% of the Sahel's groundwater resources remain untapped, ready to irrigate lands suited to farming with crops and timber. According to [Prof Cheikh Mbow](#), land-use expert and Director of [Future Africa at the University of Pretoria](#), the rich natural resources in Sahel countries like Chad, Senegal and Niger could transform the lives of their populations, especially women and the youth.



[Prof Cheikh Mbow](#)

In a [recent publication](#), [Prof Mbow and his co-authors state](#): 'The Sahel for more than 40 years, has been seen as a place of hunger, persistent droughts and climate extremes; a place where farmers struggle to produce the crops and livestock needed to sustain the growing population. The foundation of a new rhetoric is to see the Sahel as having the human capital and the natural resources to generate quality products and create massive green jobs.'

This could require, for example, using solar power to extract water from large transboundary groundwater reservoirs such as Iullemeden and Taoudeni, which have the potential to fully meet the current and future needs of West Africa.

'Groundwater resources exist both as the superficial water tables recharged during the rainy season and the fossil water reserves, including the deep-water tables of sedimentary basins. Considerable reserves of fresh water are stored in these deep-water tables, on a scale of thousands of billions of cubic metres,' Prof Mbow explained. The potential also exists for the development of farms, forests, and pastoral resources by using better technology and establishing public-private partnerships and cross-border cooperation.

With reference to United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt's infamous public works and financial reforms of the 1930s, Prof Mbow said that this could be the Sahel's 'New Deal'. However, he cautions that its success will depend on the participation of the youth and women entrepreneurs, and on the improvement of infrastructure, the more effective management of threats like land grabs and a rethinking of funding in terms of investments and capital flow. Mbow stated that if the Sahel's natural resource management is transformed, he is confident that the region can change its image and write a new story of prosperity. For more information, please refer to the links below: <https://www.futureafrica.science/index.php/profile/cheikh-mbow-746>

https://www.up.ac.za/faculty-of-natural-agricultural-sciences/news/post_2970877-new-deal-for-africas-sahel-region-needs-entrepreneurs-to-transform-land-water-resources

I am Grateful

by

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I started writing poems, dramas and short stories when I was in grade 7. All those pages would get lost though because I guess I was still a child and carelessness played its role. I have written many poems before. I always found comfort in writing and befriending the pen and a paper. Those two friends brought peace and comfort in my life.

I once wrote a novel. I think I was still doing grade 11 back then. I used to type it in my cell phone which I used to have back then. I think I was in chapter 5 of my book. Unfortunately, the cell phone died, and my father had to take it to people who could repair it. There was no money at home so my father could no longer pay for it. I lost my work and that pained my heart.

When I was doing my first year in university. Late in 2018, I regained my muse and I started writing again. A short story. My wish was to publish a book before I get my degree. I would sometimes stop writing due to lack of motivation and natural fatigue. Sometimes due to the enemy of creation- the writers' block. I have managed to write five short stories and am hoping that before the end of this year, I will be able to publish.

I have had people steal my work under the pretence that they want to help me since I was just a nobody. Just a young naïve girl who could do anything to succeed. They took advantage of that and stole my work. That is something I do not like to dwell on because it breaks my heart, but I hope, for their sakes, karma gets lost on their way to their respective addresses. I know the Lord Will answer on my behalf.

I am very grateful to Doctor James for advising me to talk to the man who will help publish my work and talked me out of giving it to a stranger I had never even met. She is the true definition of a woman and a mother of the nation and all the naked, cold and lost souls. May the good Lord bless her for all that she does.

I have managed to raise money for the publishing company which is going to publish for me even though it is not enough, but I know that God will make a way. He always does. I feel so optimistic and cannot wait to see my book published. The future seems promising indeed! All my hard work will finally pay off. He is indeed a Wonderful God!



Progress on Gardening project of All Saints and St Mark's Church, Bellair, Durban.

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Last year the church reported in the article that it was planning a collaboration with other community stakeholders to expand its initiatives on Farming Godsway. It is pleasing to report that a collaboration has been established with Bellair Primary School to create a vegetable garden to cater for those who are unemployed and in need for support.

This project also aims at creating an opportunity for children to learn about the relationship humankind has with mother earth and to preserve her accordingly for future generations.

Lastly the other objective was to create an organic vegetable garden to share with the community members.

The benefit for the school is that the surroundings will be kept clean and clear of bushes for the safety of the children. The school extends its relationship with its community as it contributes to supporting others.

This project is a vehicle to provide support to those who are unemployed and their families to have food on the table without begging.

The area is estimated to 1050 sq/m

It used to be an ignored zone as it could not be maintained due to shortage of funds.

A group of dedicated individuals of the church are leading this initiative with no budget but trusting in God for His miracles and guidance.

An action plan on how to deliver on the created vision, was completed and work had to commence.

Garden Management

Currently there are about 10 people who are often there to work on Saturdays due to COVID 19 precautions having to be maintained. Because most of these people are unemployed, the team leader organizes from her side what she can afford so that they can return home with something to eat. This is insufficient to maintain the momentum.

>>>>



Work in Progress

The project team is appealing for the following support:

1st Milestone: Clearing the area

This is a challenge due to area being vast and manual manpower is insufficient. Some heavy equipment is required to pull some trees and garden rubble away. The team is looking for equipment to fast track the process.

2nd Garden Maintenance: The garden needs maintenance to yield desired outcomes.

[] Soil nourishing inputs like manure, compost, bone meal, are needed.

[] Purchase of seedlings or seeds needs to be done and all these are only possible with God with no budget.

[] Additional manpower for tilling the soil, planting, mulching, watering and possibly harvesting

[] Availability of working time suited for Saturdays due to the challenge of COVID protocols and for children's safety. The garden is situated close to the drop off zone where children are.

[] Supply of implements for the garden. Hoes, rakes, spades, forks, irrigation equipment etc.

[] Refreshments for workers whilst at the garden as the work is still very labour intensive.

Some families and children's homes in the locality have already been supported by similar initiative established within the church's premises. There has been an all year round supply of vegetables to those who were in need.

Engaging in this venture is a way to expand the initiative and to reach out to more. Whoever wishes to lend a hand in this project will be greatly appreciated.

Any contributions are welcome. All the funds will be managed from the church for responsible and accountable governance.

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or

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YEARS OF FIRE AND ASH – SOUTH AFRICAN POEMS OF DECOLONISATION
Edited by WAMUWI MBAO

Reviewed by
Dr. Betty Govinden
(University of KwaZulu-Natal)
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*Imaginations are colourful canvases:
How you write sing speak dance
brushstrokes of creativity;* [Lebohang Masango]

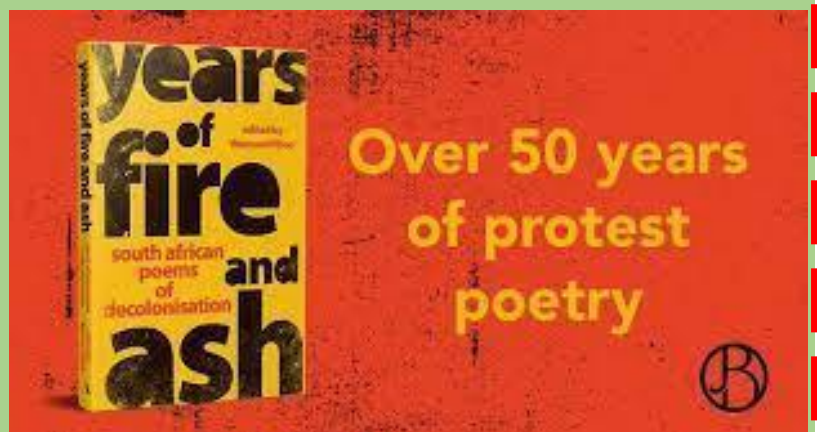
Although calls for 'Decolonisation' have gained increasing momentum in recent times, the new book, *YEARS OF FIRE AND ASH*, reminds us that they have been with us for a long time. This anthology spans over a century of poems – from 1890 to the present time – which are part of the wonderful history of intellectual thought in South Africa.

It contains established voices such as HIE Dhlomo, Oswald Myuyiseni Mtshali, Mafika Gwala, Mongane Wally Serote, Siphon Sepamla, Es'kia Mphahlele, and Shabbir Banoobhai. There are also many new voices on 'Decolonisation', such as Vangile Gantsho, Lebohang Masango and Sihle Ntuli.

This collection has been compiled by the award-winning literary critic, WAMUWI MBAO, and published in 2021, by AD DONKER PUBLISHERS. In the Introduction, Mbao observes that the poems "yield a richly textured picture of the workings of decoloniality in the 20th and 21st centuries" [p20].

*And what can never be denied,
we are the very best thing that can happen
when imagination dares to fly.
To every birth, its blood: we are the pots of gold
finally realised beneath South Africa's rainbow sign.
We are the ones;
we are the fire this time.*

[Lebohang Masango, pp.115-117]]



Q&A: The need to remove development's 'stark distinctions' [PART – 1]

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Interview by DEVEX funded by UNDP

Belinda Reyers attending an event on sustainable development in New York City in April 2015

According to Belinda Reyers, professor and research chair in sustainability science at the [University of Pretoria's](#) Future Africa institute and senior adviser at the [Stockholm Resilience Centre](#), an urgent need exists to eliminate the 'stark distinctions' between people and nature, and between the environment and development. Their interconnected nature means that one cannot be addressed without the other.

'It is now abundantly clear that things like climate change, extinctions, pollution and deforestation that are labelled environmental risks really aren't just risks to the environment anymore. They are very clearly now some of the largest development risks, economic risks, health risks and security risks the world faces', she said.

The [United Nations Development Programme's latest "Human Development Report"](#), in which Reyers was involved, calls for a shift in thinking to ensure that any development action, policy or project is good for both people and the planet. Reyers urged the development sector to more thoroughly consider the interdependencies between environment and development.

She said: 'Too often, we think about development and environmental challenges as a set of targets that we need to achieve, and this blinds us to their interdependencies.'

She further explained: 'As the Human Development Report shows, when we start to view development from the perspective of 'expanding human freedoms' and open up more choices for people to chart their own development paths, we get to do away with these distinctions between people and planet and move to more diverse visions of development, in collaboration with the planet, rather than in competition with it.'

Speaking to Devex, Reyers discussed how people and the planet can influence one another's development, the obstacles to simultaneously addressing both, and how these can be overcome. This conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

How do you see social and planetary challenges overlapping and being interlinked?

The Human Development Report clearly states that societal and environmental challenges are not only linked, but actually reinforce one another. For example, climate change and inequality can interact to the detriment of both.

We often talk about the impact of climate change as if it belongs to the future and will be a concern for future generations, but this impact is already being felt— mostly by marginalised and vulnerable groups who actually contribute very little to the quantity of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and who have little power to halt climate change.

The report shows that in our lifetime the world's richest countries—and biggest emitters—could experience up to 18 fewer days of extreme weather events each year, while the poorest countries face up to 100 extra days of extreme weather due to the climate crisis. It is on this very unlevel playing field that social and planetary challenges come together and reinforce one another.

>>>>

These planetary challenges mentioned in the Human Development Report— climate change, extinctions, pollution and deforestation—are often portrayed in quite simplistic terms as being the result of the actions of humanity, as if humanity is a single homogeneous force.

In fact, the Anthropocene conditions in which we find ourselves are the result of an extraordinary inequality in the human populations of a handful of regions, countries, or people who have caused and profited from changes, while many other regions and individuals are on the receiving end of the negative impacts of those changes.

The term Anthropocene - the age of humans— seeks to recognise the fact that over the past few decades the impacts of the human enterprise on the planet have become so extensive, large and deep that humans are now one of the largest forces shaping the planet: its climate, biosphere, water cycle and even the chemicals in its soil and water.



RESEARCH BYTES

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Words written and spoken; actions taken in these current times

PEACE, VIOLENCE, UNREST, TRUST, KILLINGS, LOOTINGS, MOBS, INSURRECTION, WE, THEY, I, ME, THEM, US.

HOW DO WE CHANGE OUR LANGUAGE AND ACTIONS?

Organisations in South Africa that are concerned with peace and conflict resolution.

Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD),

The Centre for Conflict Resolution

The Institute for Justice & Reconciliation (IJR),

The Institute for Security Studies (ISS),

The South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA)

The organisations are research and knowledge-based non-governmental organisations (NGOs). They have different but often overlapping areas of operation; each of them

engages with government, academia and civil society in the countries where they are active. Each is supported by a number of international donors

As think-tanks and peace practitioners, the five organisations act as service providers to regional organisations, to governments and to the general public by offering expert knowledge and practice regarding issues of utmost importance for stability, peace and human security.

The creation of greater participatory community engagement is recommended.

A UKZN Community-based PEACE Organisation

Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) workshops for both youth and older adults.

We have teams of facilitators in KZN, Western Cape and Free State who could offer these.

We have three levels of AVP (Basic, Advanced and Training of Facilitators) for both groups at each site.

Bongi Zondi (a current UKZN MED student) who is the local coordinator of the AVP-KZN Network and Marie Odendaal (Chair of Board of AVP-KZN).

Contact Bongiwe Zondi

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The plate by MUT Art Club
by

Sandile Ndlovu

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9

Children wash their little bodies early in the morning with water warm soft as love.
The clothes they wear clean and old.
Pride and love speaks to them every morning before they wash.
"DO WITH WHAT YOU HAVE! MAKE SOMETHING OUT OF NOTHING!"
Religiously they wash their little bodies twice a day.
The last wash of the day is hard but necessary like watering plants in the garden.
The last wash of the day washes away the oily mud like negative attitude.
The last wash keeps hope shining like a window reflecting sunlight in some distance away.

They play their hearts out.
They sing their lungs out.
Religiously they give their all whenever they do something.
Pride and love is their parents, they speak to them every night before they sleep.
"YOU WILL NEVER KNOW WHEN, WHERE AND WHAT TIME OPPORTUNITY WILL COME SO DO EVERYTHING WITH ALL YOU HAVE, YOUR LIFE DEPENDS ON IT!"
They rest their little bodies on stones
Their beds just bones
Covered with pieces of cloth for little comfort.



***What can we do in respect to building reconciliation, trust
and care in our communities?***

by

Lungelo Mdluli

School of Education Alumni: University of KwaZulu-Natal

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The past few weeks has been the most cruel unforeseen era in South Africa. Majority of South Africans revealed how much they are victims to their own lives, their own country and children through what they did during looting. The evident social unrests and immoral behavior has uncovered huge spaces that needs to be professionally filled as a means to empower reconciliation, care and trust.

The foundation of these social unrests is rooted in the societies in which the young future leaders, the innocents and potential pillars. In saving South Africa from all the social catastrophes it is facing, the younger generation is so vulnerable to social learning. Hence whatever that happens around their cycle of growth becomes their social models and it is what molds them into becoming what they watch. Whatever that happens in the society, they learn it and integrate it in their lives and it becomes part of what they grow and become in future. It is so heart-breaking that through these social unrests, some school children were counted as mortals because that is what they did, looking at adults looting and saw the need to do the same. I feel like reasoning that looting was for the reason of hunger, employment and corruptive governance is just a cruel means of masquerading behind lack of morality, conscience and care for our fellows. Did we even take time to think of how the world will become if we are to be this superficial towards crisis such as the COVID 19 pandemic? A time that really condemns us to be collaborative, caring and trusting, adults have indeed created very lethal social images for these young children.

What I am trying to say is that looting showed that there is so much that negatively contaminates the minds of the younger generations which is being incubated in societies they live in. For instance, children in our days are highly addicted to social networks which are in as much as they are important sources of modern learning, they keep on rejuvenating social strata, violence, discrimination and more destructive social trends that hits mostly the already disadvantaged majority south African children. And it seems social media is here to stay.

Now the question is: what can be done to save these children from what I believe are "social monsters?" I feel like there is an important role that life orientation subject can play in these children. Instead of phasing it out, why not modify it? Why don't we integrate community engagement into life orientation and make it a rehabilitation subject? By rehabilitation I mean children come to school with personal problems from their homes and sometimes issues they cannot discuss with anyone at home or cannot be easily recognized. Things that learners bottle up and end up committing suicide and accepting being docile or inferior. In addition to social media, these problems highly affect education and lack of reconciliation, trust and care seen through looting.

However, I believe that in Life Orientation that is where they could strengthen their confidence to discuss these issues and collaborate solutions to them. That is where they will gain professional ethics and save the world because anything that is instilled professionally becomes the strongest instinct in a person. That is how they will become strong leaders instead of following the wrong lead created a few weeks ago. There is also an important role played by researchers and community engagements done by academic students at universities. For instance, Biology 420 students do community engagement, which exposes hidden realities within social institutions. These truths are discovered first hand as opposed to making speculations and creating theories to analyse the societies. However, I feel like these discoveries do not access all the right eyes and ears. I feel like these researches should be presented or on television so that even those who cannot reach journals and even social leaders could access this information. By this way I think there will be construction and solid solutions to problems in societies. This strategy could also invite international academics and leaders for support. And indeed the fallen image of a good South Africa will be raised.



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CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES

Youth Excel is seeking concept notes from local youth-led and youth-serving organizations to strengthen mental health for marginalized youth in East Africa and Southern Africa.

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#YEMentalHealth



youth
venture



SEARCH
COMMON
GROUND

أبعاد
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IMPORTANT NOTICES TO ALL AUTHORS

NOTICE 1

Dear Authors

Thank you so much to everyone who submitted their great creative piece(s) which were published in Volumes 1 - 50 and to those whose pieces are in the current publication, we are grateful for your amazing work.

Creative pieces in any language are welcome.

Kindly please note that we **ONLY** publish **8-10** "creative pieces" each week.

If your piece is not in the current publication, it will be published the following week.

Kind regards,
Creative Network Magazine Team

NOTICE 2

Dear Authors

Whenever you submit your creative piece to Dr. James, we kindly and warmly request you to please also send the following note with your submission:

I (Full name and Surname) hereby grant permission for the Creative Network Magazine to publish my submission (creative piece).

Kind regards,
Creative Network Magazine Team