



# INYANDA national land movement community news

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## NO TO XENOPHOBIA

**T**he Inyanda National Land Movement and its affiliates have come out strongly to condemn the violence and attacks on foreign nationals, specifically our African brothers and sisters, which have occurred in Gauteng province earlier in September.

"We say emphatically no to Xeno-

phobia and the brutalization of especially those living alongside us in South Africa. Inyanda stands in the defence of all human life," the movement said in a statement.

The movement also condemned the African National Congress (ANC)-led government, specifically the police, for failing to protect the lives of fellow Africans, even

though the government had for years given lip service support to the dream of reviving and advancing the power of Africa in the World.

"The violence we are seeing is a response to a capitalist system that is failing. The share of wealth and businesses which African foreign nationals own and operate in South Africa is but a fraction of the wealth extracted by European and Chinese investors from this country," said Inyanda.

"Our fellow Africans are mainly in our country due to deepening poverty, inequality and failing capitalism, where there nations have long since been striped bare by Western Countries, and driven into the ground by capitalist ruling elites. We, South Africans, need to find it in our hearts to live in harmony with our African brothers and sisters, and stop being lazy in trying to find shortcuts to our welfare and prosperity," the statement added.

Inyanda called on the government to strengthen the documentation of all foreigners and to implement urgent and vigorous measures "to ensure the safety of our fellow African brothers and sisters in this country".

# Nothing for women to celebrate

**N**ational Women's Day and National Women's Month was no reason to celebrate for women.

By September, South Africa was reeling amid reports of several vicious murders, attacks and rapes of women in various parts of the country.

Anger boiled over in spontaneous protests in the streets of Cape Town, where African leaders were meeting for the World Economic Forum on Africa. The protesters were met with tear-gas, water cannons and stun grenades. A few were also arrested.

"Deepening poverty, unemployment and inequality drives the loss of our humanity and violence is being unleashed in our homes, our schools, our workplaces, communities and villages. Fighting violence against women requires a major challenge to unequal power relations," the Rural Women's Assembly (RWA) said in statement in response to the shocking number of incidents of violence against women.

"The fight against gender-based violence, sexual violence, patriarchy and misogyny must be one of our biggest political priorities. Awareness raising, marches, protests, appropriate legislation...all these have been conducted in South Africa, yet every minute a woman is killed or raped. The 16 Days of Activism campaign can no longer be a solution for highlighting gender-based violence,

when this is a daily phenomenon," the RWA statement said.

But it was even before the seething anger of women boiled over into the streets in September, that the RWA observed there was nothing for women to celebrate.

On National Women's Day, August 8th, over 300 women from movements and rural structures around the country converged on King William's Town in the Eastern Cape for a seminar and speak out on critical issues confronting them.

"Women in rural areas in particular are suffering under the oppression of traditional leadership. This event today on National Women's day was for us a way to say we have nothing to celebrate," said Nomonde Phindane, regional co-ordinator of the RWA, and who is based with Ilizwi Lamafama in the Eastern Cape.

The women first took to the streets of the Town in a mass demonstration against patriarchy, before heading to the King Theatre Hall for a seminar speak out.

The hundreds of women who gathered in King William's Town came to relate their own experiences around oppression in traditional rural regions of the country.

The event was part of the national campaign where women are advocating for the President not to sign into law both the Traditional and Khoisan Leadership Bill (TKLB) and the

## Traditional Courts Bill (TCB)

Clause 24 of the TKLB give powers to traditional leaders to enter into agreements/business deals with big corporations (such as construction, mining, manufacturing companies) and which could involve the sale or use of communal land, but without the consent of the larger community being required.

"Women are negatively affected by this law as they are largely dependent on the land for survival in rural areas. Women depend on nature, forests, rivers, sea shores and land for basic food and well being. If it happens that communal land is being sold this could well be their source of water, fire wood, agriculture, or even medicines from which they sustain their lives and that of their families," said Sis Nomonde.

The Traditional Courts Bill gives power to Traditional leaders to preside over cases in a local village, which means it is another leg of the judicial system but one that discriminates against people from urban/metro areas and people from the villages.

"We believe that there should be one judicial system meant for everyone regardless of whether they are living in the city or village," said Sis Nomonde.

This Bill also implies that women have no voice and cannot take part in the proceedings of a traditional court as they cannot stand before men and present their cases, instead they have to be represented by a male figure.

Among the testimonies heard at the speak out was of women who were denied the right to inherit from their husband after his death.

The gathering also heard from women who were denied the

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right to bury their children in the village because they had not paid certain monies due to the traditional leader.

There were loud moans of opposition when a woman reported how their traditional leader had blocked them from getting land for their agricultural project and were ordered to bring men to represent them.

**M**arginalized rural farm dwellers and farm workers in the Eastern Cape province took to the streets of Port Elizabeth in July to voice their concern about the lack of rural development and agrarian transformation in many of their areas.

Under the banner of Inyanda affiliates, Makukhanye Rural Movement and Rural Women's Assembly, the protesters were demanding the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform follow through on its critical promises with respect to rural agrarian transformation. These include the Department's stated commitment to, "Provide comprehensive farm development support to smallholder farmers and land reform beneficiaries for agrarian transformation".

Makukhanye is a collective of marginalized black small scale farmers, women and youth across the Kouga and Sundays River Valley Municipalities.

"We are also demanding urgent action and investigation into violations of farm worker rights specif-

ically in the localities of Langboss, Westbank and Thornhill," said Phumla Runeli, Chairperson of the Makukhanye Women's Forum.

In a memorandum handed to Department officials, movements said that in Langboss, residents were without electricity thus increasing the risk of rape and robbery.

"Residents cannot even charge their phones to contact emergency services and this is a violation of their human rights," the memorandum added.

In West Bank, the memorandum said there were reported instances where farm workers were not given protective gears when working on citrus farms, thus impacting their health severely.

And in the area of Thornhill, residents were without proper sanitary infrastructure in the informal area called Parkers Kamp.

"The Women's Forum has for a long time been engaging with the Department on critical issues, but without any changes. Our members conduct farm visits and receive reports from particularly

women who live and work on farms about their conditions and struggles," says Runeli.

Other demands of the organisation include greater fairness and openness in monitoring remuneration in farm equity schemes, and greater financial disclosure to farm beneficiaries.

"Working class residents in rural areas remain the forgotten people in South Africa's so-called freedom. From poor infrastructure, to poor service delivery and a failing land reform policy, the black poor majority living and working on farms are feeling the rot of this system," says Runeli.

"And it is especially women that this affects the most, since women are not only pillars of society but are providers of households too."

Among other demands in the memorandum was that commercial farmers and farm owners who illegally evict workers and dwellers on farms must be arrested and compelled to pay a hefty fine. The Department must also ensure that reported cases of illegal evictions be followed up and that those displaced must return to the land.

# Forward to rural development and agrarian transformation





# Small victory in big fight against share equity farmers



**K**hanyisa Project, one of the TCOE partner organisations, along with Inyanda affiliate Makukhanye Rural Movement, are among the organisations and individuals who have been interdicted from campaigning and protesting against several farmers around Hankie and Patensie in the Eastern Cape.

The controversial interdict was granted by the High Court in April. It effectively bars Khanyisa, its director, Simphiwe Dada; the Kouga Farm Workers Reunion; and individual farm workers Buyelwa Kota, Freddie Grootboom, Amelia van Rhyner, Msingathi Mbanda, Granwell Abby James, Lephalo Pentse and Rencia van Sensie from, as the interdict states, “Intimidating the farmers or speaking about them to anyone”.

The interdict, which is now an order of the court, is controversial as it unjustifiably limits the farm workers’ constitutional right to speak out against alleged poor treatment. In effect it will criminalise social justice activism and muzzle the voices of a working-class community.

The farmers — Pieter Ferreira, Jannie van Niekerk, Elwin Damons, Tommie Kraai, Riana van Niekerk, Romeo Kurat and William Melville, who represent Galactic Deals and Enduluni Sundays River Fruit — applied for an interdict against being assaulted even though there was no indication that they had ever been assaulted.

In their founding affidavit, the farmers said they needed an interdict to prevent the NGOs and farm worker groups from “publishing injurious falsehoods about them” and stop them from potentially contacting the buyers of their citrus fruit, which they said would damage the brand’s good name.

The interdict prohibits the respondents from causing “unlawful damage to the reputation and/or good name and/or business interests” of the farmer group. The interdicted group was also barred from coming within 100m of any residential or business premises of the farmers’ group without prior written consent.

It also bars the respondents from “writing to or communicating with

any person, including but not limited to the purchasers or prospective purchasers of the [farms’] products, or their customers, in any manner whatsoever about, or in connection with the applicants or their business interest.”

The court action by the farmers came after farm workers with the support of Khanyisa and Makukhanye rose up in protest against working conditions and concerns about the company’s share scheme for workers. In late last year, workers marched on the farm demanding among others a higher hourly wage and protesting the farm share scheme for workers.

The Enduluni farmers entered into a share scheme with a few workers in 2000. However, workers claim this was conveniently done in order for the farmers to get land from government at a discount, purporting to be promoting black empowerment. The property acquired by the farm owner was developed into prime agricultural land.

Among the allegations against

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the farmers is that workers whose names had been used to get that land and water rights were living in poverty. They didn't even know what their dividends were because they have no access to the company's financial statements.

Meanwhile, in a second case involving a different farmer, Inyanda activists scored a victory when a similar interdict trying to stop them from mobilising against injustices at the farm, was dismissed by the High Court.

Arthur Rudman, owner of the Blaauwkrantz Farm, brought the interdict against several farm workers as well as Kanyisa and Comrade Simphiwe Dada, to try and muzzle them from protesting about the share equity scheme that has left workers with a crippling debt.

The 16 workers who were targeted in the interdict are the beneficia-

ries of Blaauwkrantz Share Equity, a failed land reform project at Prentice Kraal, a farm that borders Rudman's mammoth trophy-hunting farm.

The victory was a small step in a much larger battle, as Rudman moves now to liquidate his farm, saying the share equity scheme had in fact bankrupted him.

The farm workers are filed responding affidavits with the Court contesting the liquidation.

In 2004, Rudman paid R3.5 million for Prentice Kraal. Towards the end of 2005, the farm was transferred to Blaauwkrantz Share Equity (Pty) Ltd, in which the workers acquired a 49% stake. The joint venture was envisaged as a business for hunting and selling game.

About R950 000 of the workers' contribution was funded by a

grant from the then Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs (now the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform), and the remaining R766 073 was fronted in the form of a loan from Rudman himself.

Blaauwkrantz Share Equity's financial records show that the workers now owe the Arthur Rudman Family Trust, which owns the remaining 51% of the business, more than R4 million – an amount more than 4.5 times greater than the principal – due to interest accruing on the loan.

The workers, who now maintain a herd of their own goats at Prentice Kraal, claim they neither understood the terms of the initial loan nor the increases to it, let alone agreed to them.

No date has been set yet for the liquidation hearing.

## “Akukho ngathi, ngaphandle kwethu”

I ntlangano yabantu abangasebenziyo inyanzelisa ukusekwa kweyure ezingamashumi amathathu anesihlanu e-yure yokusebenza ngeveki, kungekho kwaphuka kwentlawulo oko kwenzela ukudala imisebenzi kwizigidi ezingaphezulu kweshumi lwabemi beli abangenamisebenzi.

Umbutho i- AoU – owasekwa ngo-2017 – uquka imibutho eyahlukeneyo eqhubekayo kunye ne-NGO's okwinqingo yayo ikukudibanisa ukuze kuliwe ilungelo lokusebenza, umvuzo kunye nendlela yokusekwa kwemisebenzi kude kube ngoku, uRhulumente akazange ayithathele ngqalelo lonto.

Ingxelo eyayiphume kulonyulo ngo-May, umbutho i-AoU uthi uRhulumente kufuneka enze indlela yokungenisa imivuzo ukuba akakwazi ukufezekisa ukunikeza imisebenzi

ephucukileyo kumntu wonke.

“Sigxekwa kukungabinamdla ku-kaRhulumente ukwenza alungise nendlela yaseMzantsi-Afrika yokungasebenzi kunye nologyo lwendlala eninzi, ukungalingani kunye nokungasebenzi jikelele. Izintloni kwilizwe elinobutyebi obuninzi elithi uMzantsi-Afrika lelinye lamazwe akwinqanaba eliphezulu lentwelo-misebenzi elizweni, itsho ingxelo.

“sinyanzelisa izithuthi zikawonke-wonke ezisimahla kwabo mangenayo indlela, ukutya kwenzelwe umntu wonke, nentshukumo kwicala lemisebenzi, neenkonzo ezisimahla, kuphele nokulahlekelwa yimisebenzi, kucinywe naamatyala kubantu abangathathi ntweni, nemfundo ephucukileyo esimahla, nendlela yonxibelelwano ibesimahla kunye nenkqubo kaRhulumente

yomsebenzi kawonke-wonke (EPWP) kunye nabasebenzi be-EPWP abathunyelwa kwabanye oMasipala apho kunendlela ephucukileyo yokusebenza.

Ngokwengxelo yamanani oMzantsi-Afrika, izinga labantu abangaphangeliyo eMzantsi-Afrika liku-25%. Ngokunje amalungu eSigqeba se-AoU jikelele iQabane u-Motsi Khokhoma uthi lamanani akalunganga kwaye inani labantu abangaphangeli likumgangatho oyi-42%.

Ngokutsho kweQabane uMotsi, ulwandle lokungasebenzi lulo olubangela kubekho ubundlobongela esijongene nabo ekuhlaleni. Phantsi komlinganiselo wokungaphangeli imizi yezemveliso ekuhlaleni iyaphelela kwaye unocalulo kumanina, kumaqembu obundlobongela kunye nokusetyenziswa kweziyo-



bisi, utsho uQabane uMotsi.

Umbutho i-AoU uthi uRhulumente ulawula imisebenzi, nenkqubo zemveliso, ejonge ekwakheni izindlu zabantu enokwenza umdla kwimizi yemveliso kunye nokwakha imisebenzi kuhlale abantu abangasebenziyo. Yongeze ngelithi uRhulumente ayinguye yedwa ekufuneka enze inguqu.

“AmaBhunga abucala kufuneka amangalelwe aphelise ukuhlukumeza abasebenzi, lutsho ushicilelo. Eyona nto apha efunwa ngumbutho i-AoU kukuhliswa kweveki yokusebenza.

Kwiminyaka yakutsha nje uRhulumente woMzantsi Afrika uthathe imithetho emininzi yokuqinisekisa ilungelo ukuphawula ilungelo

lokusebenza ngokuthi avumele imibutho yamanye amzwe. I-AoU yayiqaphela lendllela intsha kaRhulumente yokwanelisa lamalungelo, kodwa yalumkiswa ukuba njengokuba izinto zinje, lento ayizukwanelisa phantsi kophuhliso lwangoku lwelizwe.

Okwakuthemba kukhulu koMzantsi Afrika kumafutha nakwimisebenzi enemivuzo ephantsi ibizezinye zeziphazamisi kulenyewe.

“URhulumente kufuneka asuke kwezinkqubo ezifana ne-One Million Climate Jobs ngonyaka ukufezekisa iinjongo, sitsho isiGqeba.

Umbutho i-AoU uyavuma ukuba awuboni mdla weZopolotiko kuRhulumente ngokwezinyanzeliso zawo eziya phambili, kwaye bazakufaka uxinezelelo kuRhulu-

mente ngendlela yokuququzela engenye.

“ngengombutho i-AoU sizimisele ukuthatha oluxanduva siluqhubele phambili ezingxaki zingaphezulu kwe-37% yabemi boMzantsi Afrika abangenamisebenzi okanye indlela yokuphila. njengemibutho yasekuhlaleni equka abantu abangasebenziyo kunye nabantu abasebenzayo kodwa ngokwenqanaba elisezantsi sikholelwa ukuba akuzubakho into ngathi ngaphandle kwethu.

Umbutho i-AoU ume ngabahlali baseMjondolo, isiGqeba se-Amadiba, Amandla Botshabelo umbutho wabasebenzi, nombutho ogqubekayo wabantu abatsha, neBhunga lo kunye nombutho wabantu abangasebenziyo.

# Die ontwikkeling van ‘n groter prentjie van die toekoms om huidige strategieë te vorm

**D**ie Inyanda Gronddialog, wat in Desember in King Williams Town gehou is, het die ruimte geskep vir deelnemers om in diepte te gaan met vrae oor onteining van grond sonder vergoeding, insluitend ‘n visie vir ‘n getransformeerde grond- en agrariese sektor.

Hierdie visie sou ‘n groter prentjie wees wat waarskynlik die strategie vir die werking van individuele voetsoolvlakorganisasies inlig

Nagenoeg 100 afgevaardigdes het die historiese Oos-Kaap besoek vir twee dae van gevallestudie-aanbiedings, en intense debat en bespreking. Afgevaardigdes het verenigings en gemeenskapsorganisasies van plaaswerkers, plaasbewoners, plattelandse inwoners, vissersgenote, vroue, jeug, persone sonder grond, en werkloses verteenwoordig.

Vyf self-georganiseerde groepe het na vore gekom en ‘n stel vrae behandel. Onder die vrae waar-

mee hulle geworstel het, was watter grond onteien moet word en vir wie; wie moet hierdie stryd voer; hoe moet ons te werk gaan om die situasie te verander en; wat moet die rol van die regering wees?

Afgevaardigdes was dit eens dat plattelanders self die transformasie van die platteland moet organiseer en lei, met die regering of die staat wat ‘n ondersteunende rol sou speel deur hulpbronne en toegang tot markte moontlik te maak. Hulle het gewaarsku teen leierskap van tradisionele leiers en munisipaliteite en gesê dat hul rol eerder as ‘n gelyke vennoot gesien moet wees en nie meer as ander belanghebbendes verhef of bemagtig moet word nie.

Om die situasie werklik te verander, het hulle die behoefte erken om gemeenskappe rondom wetgewing te organiseer en te mobiliseer, sowel as om alternatiewe beleid, planne en aktiwiteite vir die mediumtermyn te ontwikkel oor watter alternatiewe voorgestel word. Die ondersteuning van kleinboere staan sentraal.

Om voort te bou op plaaslike oorwinnings soos die oorwinning van

‘die reg om nee te sê’, is ook as belangrik beskou. In veral kusgebiede het hulle aanbeveel dat die sake teen die regering ‘n sentrale organisatoriese strategie moet wees en dat ingrypings geïdentifiseer moet word om die owerhede aanspreeklik te hou en hierdie oorwinnings sinvol en transformatief te maak.

Om voort te bou op plaaslike oorwinnings soos die oorwinning

van ‘die reg om nee te sê’, is ook as belangrik beskou. In veral kusgebiede het hulle aanbeveel dat die sake wat teen die regering gewen is, ‘n sentrale organisatoriese strategie moet wees en dat ingrypings geïdentifiseer moet word om die owerhede aanspreeklik te hou en hierdie oorwinnings sinvol en transformatief te maak.

Afgevaardigdes in die kommis-

sies het aanbeveel dat een van die maniere om anders te organiseer, was om huishoudelike vergaderings en kleingroepaktiwiteite te gebruik, wat die effektiwiteit van Inyanda kon verhoog. In ooreenstemming hiermee het hulle gesê dat stryd en solidariteit ook gekoppel moet word en dat funksionele verhoudings tussen georganiseerde gemeenskapseenhede en groter bewegings gevestig moet word.

## West Coast activists face lawsuits from mining company

At least three community activists speaking out against mining on the Cape West Coast have been slapped with a lawsuit by the multi-national corporation conducting mining operations along long stretches of beach and coastal lands.

Davine Cloete, the Chairperson of the West Coast Food Sovereignty and Solidarity Forum, along with two environmental lawyers, Tracy Davis and Christene Riddel, are being sued for defamation by mining company Mineral Sands Resources (MSR) – the South African subsidiary of Australian company Mineral Commodities Resources (MCR). This is the same company which is making a bid to mine the coast along Xolobeni in the Eastern Cape.

The case against the three came after they made a presentation at the University of Cape Town’s summer school last year, where they exposed numerous environmental infringements by MSR at its Tormin mineral sands mine situated on the West Coast. The company is demanding R250 000 in damag-

es from each of the lawyers, and a further R750 000 from Davine.

Inyanda News interviewed Cloete on the side of the Alternative Mining Indaba (AMI), which was held in Cape Town earlier this year. For the past ten years the AMI has annually brought together mining-affected communities and faith leadership to discuss the impacts of mining in their communities.

“The charges against us are clearly meant to scare us into silence. At the moment there are a total of eight people, including activists from Xolobeni, who are facing similar cases brought on by the company,” said Davine.

Inyanda News asked Davine more about the MSR mining operations and her struggles around extractivism in her community, in the rural towns of Lutzville and Koekenaap.

MSR owns and operates the 120-hectare Tormin Mineral Sands Mines in the vicinity of these towns, with the nearest big town being Vredenburg more than 200km away. The company processes, by

digging up, the beach sand and sand from the coastal plain. From this they extract extremely rich concentrations of mineral such as zircon, ilmenite, rutile, magnetite and garnet from below the high-water mark.

The people conducting the mining operation, MSR, are at the cutting edge of technology and very importantly for mining, heavy machinery too. It is an international organisation which one can say is efficient and highly successful in prospecting (identifying) its mining area and processing the naturally occurring sand and extracting the minerals. They are ruthless capitalists who have absolutely no regard for the environment they are altering; the communities who are living there; nor of the impact of their operations on future Earth.

Last year, the sea cliff along the Olifants River-mouth coastal region collapsed in four more places. The cliff-fall followed the catastrophic 2015 collapse directly in front of a mine processing plant. There is another plant further inland. The company blamed storm surge and natural erosion for the first collapse.

“The company started operations here on the coast around 2013, but it was mainly after that first cliff collapse by 2015, that the community started to mobilise actions. We didn’t oppose the mine initially because we believed it was development that will benefit us and the youth. Even then, it was really about the jobs we complained about,” says Davine.



“The people were unhappy as so few of us were being employed by the company. There were many outsiders coming in and working there. We marched on the plant then, and with that protest they arrested 28 people,” says Davine.

“More locals started being employed but then even today we still have problems with the company when they fired some local workers after they joined the union. Many have not been reinstated. So there’s problems on that level with the company and with their engagement with community. They don’t engage with us the local community, and there’s very little they invest in developing Lutzville and Koekenaap,” says Davine.



The multi-national MSR operates in the context of rampant extractivism around the world within a neo-liberal global order that is demanding ever-more quantities of these obscure minerals for the production of ever-more consumer and technical goods to be sold as part of the reproduction of capitalist society. Ruthless capitalists are the order of the day in this context. They will mine wherever they can; as quickly as they can; as deep as they can and; for as long as they can.

Within the six years the company has been mining, it’s been found guilty of twice expanding its operations without the required envi-

ronmental authorisation and in contravention of its mining licence. The two transgressions involved clearing a 3.9 hectare area for stockpiling material, and the construction of a dam in a cleared area of 4.1 hectares.

Government fined them R1.2-million for these transgressions, which some environmental activists described as a “complete joke” and hopelessly too low. In 2017, over two million tons of sand produced minerals netting revenues of R830 million for MSR’s Australian parent company, Mineral Commodities Ltd (MRC).

According to its annual report, Tormin mine on the West Coast exceeded both its 2017 budget and

previous year’s operational performance, helping MRC to achieve a record operational and financial performance with total revenue of \$62.6-million (about R855-million) and a net after-tax profit of \$9.9-million (about R135-million).

In the ensuing years too the community has come to realise the greater harm and destruction the mining has caused in the area. In the meantime, MSR has applied to extend its mining operations to another ten beaches north of the existing mine.

“Apart from the cliffs, they also dump the sands after processing, making huge sand dumps. To get

the minerals out of the sand they use harmful chemicals and operations. The sand dumps give off radiation so radiation levels in the area have also spiked and who knows what effect this will have on us and future generations,” says Davine.

Surrounding fishing communities have reported that they are no longer able to find any fish on the coastline. The mining operations have also blocked off access to certain beach and fishing areas, for many years considered a remote holiday paradise for particularly Afrikaner Whites.

“Then there is the case of the water and seepage from their dams or plants in the Olifants river or surrounding farm lands. Our water sources can be seriously contaminated affecting people, animals and crops,” warns Davine.

The West Coast mining is a case example of challenges facing mining communities and also, much like every other case, raises critical questions about the very principle of mining in the first place; the manner of its operation and; the nature of ownership and revenue from the mineral wealth. It was critical questions such as these that activists grappled with at the Thematic Social Forum held in Johannesburg last year.

On the one hand there is the practice of artisanal mining, which has been coming on for centuries and involves rudimentary equipment to extract precious minerals from the earth. Then there is extractivism, which involves vast investment in heavy machinery and industrial operations to dig up the earth and process it for extracting minerals.

The minerals found and being sought on the West Coast cannot be mined artisanally. It requires the high tech and industrialised processing plants. Our government has a duty to expand development, advance the discovery and exploitation of our mineral wealth, as well as generally facilitate avenues for



investment and industrialisation. Government is the key facilitator in establishing and expanding mining operations in the country.

We do not have and continue mining operations in the country simply because our country and government are openly capitalist and committed to the free market neo-liberal order. Whether we are a socialist, communist or a plain fascist country we'd still be mining because if there is mineral wealth in our country we'd need to extract it to bolster the wealth and income of our nation. Even Venezuela and the Chavista revolution, the poster-boy story for a people's revolution opposing the neo-liberal order, is tied to extractivism, in that case oil and gas.

The point is, a position calling for a universal ban on all and any mining extractive activities is neither progressive, practical nor logical. But it's

the combination of extractivism and capitalism that is lethal. Within this context you have the unrestrained pillaging of a country's wealth.

At the outset the wealth itself is removed from the owners (citizens) and handed to corporations. Citizens, those living on the land and impacted by mining activities, are completely removed from decisions around the extent and nature of operations. They are left to fight over pittance such as more jobs for locals or perhaps funding for a local project or school. The actual wealth revenue is for the books of the corporation.

Moreover, the West Coast example demonstrates some of the consequences of having ruthless capitalists at the helm, with limited or no community input or involvement in operations. Where those in control have no affinity to the area, have no links to the communities and

have no truck with environmental preservation, they have no qualms to destroy locations or endanger the health of people in pursuit of mineral wealth.

The West Coast example also shows some of the checks we can put in place, even if some only come after hard battles, to monitor and restrain mining activities. These checks include building a community voice and engaging in activism.

South Africa, like many countries in Africa, is mineral rich. Mining and extractivism happens across the length and breadth of the country, and still new opportunities for extractivism emerges, such as at Xolobeni and recent talks of gas deposits off our coast. At this point in time, given all the cases of harm and environmental destruction arising from mining activities, can we still afford to conduct this within a model of ruthless capitalism?

# Building capacity of women in agro-ecology

By Moipone Jwayi

**T**he Free State Rural Women's Assembly (FSRWA) marked Women's Day this year with no big fan fair and dressing up and speeches, but by dressing down and getting dirty in the ground.

We opened our long discussed Agro-ecology Training Site and offered training to member and non-member woman involved in food production.

For us, it was the most relevant thing to do. In deciding on this we recognised the harsh conditions our members find themselves in, the poverty level which is rising everyday resulting in many social ills women

face in society, the unemployment rate which has also recently risen by 19%, adding to the dire state of poverty in our communities.

The FSRWA agreed it is only through providing alternatives to the current system that is failing them, that we can be able to survive this as we, women, are the ones at the forefront of hardship.

We are supposed to care for the ailing society without any resources at our disposal. Women have lost faith in the state and its institutions that they can provide any immediate solution to our problems. Women are tired of having their



hopes being hung dry by the politicians and left to be vulnerable to the vultures who will take advantage of their suffering.

With this in mind the Sisters agreed to engage in the training event, targeting 100 participants. These were mainly woman working in agricultural cooperatives, women interested in backyard gardens and woman who want the knowledge on healthy chemical-free food production. An on-going, Agro ecology Training School for members, that will be sustained by the members themselves, we are hoping to grow from this event. Such a school will be for the benefit of the community of Botshabelo and as time proceeds could encompass the entire

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province of Free State. The training site for the event was kindly offered temporarily to the organisation by a local agricultural cooperative.

### Preparing the soil for planting

The event opened with a hiccup when the tractor we had requested earlier failed to pitch. The intention was to have a tractor turn the soil for the women to make planting beds. The exercise was to show how to make beds that save space,



water retention during rainy season, how to work with soil and preparing it for organic fertilization. But then by working on a smaller space and manually tilling, participants still managed to learn how to start planting on untouched land.

### Bukashi (fermented organic matter)

Bukashi is the quickest way of composting organic matter and safe for the environment. It can be used as liquid manure, which is also safe to prepare in a kitchen space and it doesn't emit bad odour. The liquid manure will be then be added to the heap compost to speed up the process of natural compost.

### Preparing Organic Pesticides and Purifying Grey Water

Participants engaged in the process of learning how to make organic pesticides, using herbs and some common household ingredients. The point is there are a number of pesticides you can make yourself from readily available herbs in your garden or home and that won't harm you and the environment.

### Grey Water purification

Sometimes women retain grey water to irrigate their small backyard

vegetable garden, when there is not enough water due to climate change. Participants were shown how to use Schinus Molle (pepperboom), Eucalyptus Gum Tree and ash, to purify grey water/soapy water.

### Preparing liquid manure and seedling transplanting.

This was the last activity of the program were Mme Zoniwe Pethu and Mme Dimakatso Melupe facilitated the demonstration on the benefits of worms in the soil and how to farm them in order to use their waste (poop) as organic fertilizer for vegetables and the entire garden. Participants were also shown how to plant seeds, transplanting them from seed trays to the containers.

At the end of the training participants agreed to go back and implement what they had learned. They also established an Agro-ecology team to assist different groups for monitoring of the program that will be led by the Deputy chair of the FSRWA, Mme Ntswaki Mekgoe.

## Suurbraak advances with aquaponics farm

The agroecology activists in Inyanda and Mawubuye have received a major boost with the launch of the Suurbraak Aquaponic Farming Project.

This is an innovative and sustainable water farming system combining hydroponics and aqua-culture.

Launched on the 19 March, the project is funded by the Breede-Gouritz Catchment Management Centre (BG-CMC), and was developed and is being managed by the Trust for Community Outreach and Education (TCOE) and Mawubuye Land Rights Forum.

Hydroponics involves growing crops with their roots only in water and not in soil. Aqua-culture is the growing and farming of fish.

When the two are combined into an aquaponics project, fish is used to fertilize the water and replenish nutrients for the crops. The method uses 90 percent less water than traditional farming

"In conventional farming systems the use of water is extensive. Water is needed to irrigate crops and it will then run-off and dissipate into the soil, requiring new water for ir-

rigation every time," says Robert Andrews whose been involved as a consultant on the project

"With aquaponics you have a recirculating water system. You have one water source that fills the system. This water is cleaned and re-used. The only input required is new water to occasionally top-up due to water loss resulting from plant growth. Aquaponics is thus a sustainable water farming system," says Andrews, who completed a Master's degree in sustainable agriculture and succeeded in a similar project using waste water.





Mawubuye land activist and Suurbraak resident, Reinette Heunis, says the initiative has taken two years to develop into a sustainable farming method that can generate income.

“We are six women from the community running this project. We are still in the learning process, but we hope to grow this further in our community and help our neighbours and friends to put bread on the table,” she says.

The project is located next to a nursery, that was also set up by Mawubuye several ago, and which provides seedlings for a variety of

vegetables. The project has taken seven months to physically build and the community will be trained to manage the farm so they can sell and supply fresh produce to local businesses and supermarkets.

During its pilot stages the project will concentrate on growing salad vegetables such as lettuces, rocket and spinach, tomatoes and cucumber.

“In this project we are using irrigation water from the Suurbraak dam,” says Andrews.

“Some produce may take more time than others to develop, like toma-

atoes, but our lettuce heads should be ready with three weeks,” he adds.



Andrews says that if things develop as envisioned, the yield for lettuce can be around 700 heads.

## Sand mining – blind spot in extractivism

**D**id you know that sand and gravel are the highest volume of raw material used on earth after water?

Eighty percent of everything built on our planet is built with concrete, and 80 percent of concrete is made up of sand and gravel. Sand also makes up 90 percent of asphalt on roads; it is used for land reclamation in places like Singapore and Dubai and; it is needed for many products such as glass and even micro-processors.

The demand for sand is rising exponentially and it's having a devastating impact on the earth.



Did you know that to satisfy this demand, sand and gravel must be mined, much like minerals such as gold, diamonds and coal?

Sand mining is the world's largest mining endeavour, responsible for 85 percent of all mineral extraction. It is also the least regulated, and quite possibly the most corrupt and environmentally destructive. Africa has by no means escaped the ravages of sand mining.

Kgosi Oscar Mosielele, a traditional leader in the Moshupa, Botswana, says the scourge of illegal sand mining “has reached catastrophic levels” in his area.

“Illegal sand mining led to the deaths of three people in the district last year alone. The loss of livestock which are trapped in the gaping pits after falling in there accidentally is even greater,” said Mosielele.

In rural villages near Hammanskraal in the Northwest Province, communities are literally living in

the shadow of death around massive open pits left by illegal sand miners.

“Children risk their lives daily, walking to school past the pits that fill up with water during the rainy season. Farmers constantly lose their goats and cattle which accidentally fall into the pits,” said local community activist Moipone Tabi.

Mosielele and Tabi were speaking during a session of the 10th Alternative Mining Indaba (AMI) held in Cape Town in February this year.

The indaba was established by NGOs, civil society and community groups in response to the African Mining Indaba, which is a platform for captains of the mining industry to discuss ways of maximising profits and growing their businesses.

The AMI, on the other hand, gives communities affected by mining the opportunity to share their experiences and build solidarity against mining companies.



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Around 60 percent of sand use worldwide is in China, which is estimated to consume more sand in three years than the U.S. consumed in the entire 20th century. Yet despite the vast scale, ubiquity, and environmental footprint of sand mining, licensing is often delegated to local authorities; environmental impact assessments are rare; laws are routinely flouted; and there are no global treaties governing its extraction, use or trade, or even to promote good practice.

Private companies, foreign individuals (specifically Chinese), members of the police, Ministry of Mines officials, politicians, and community collaborators were identified by Mosielele as key players in the illegal sand mining in Moshupa. The effects are widespread.

“Animals have limited to access water from the traditional points because some have become so steep and inaccessible,” said Mosielele.

“It damages infrastructure such as roads, water pipes, fences for fields and the veld in general. It causes soil erosion leading to the destruction of vegetation and loosening of soils,” he added.

Sand and gravel occur on land, oceans, rivers, streams, flood plains or hills. The rampant extraction of these resources is bound to have a considerable negative effect on the places where this happens.

The UN Environmental Programme (UNEP) in a 2014 study warned that the resources were now being extracted at a rate far greater than their renewal and that “the volume of extraction is having a major impact on rivers, deltas, and coastal and marine ecosystems”.



Impacts of sand mining can be broadly classified into three categories viz, physical, water quality and ecological.

In coastal areas, the key physical damages are surface loss and shore retreat. These cause erosion and enable waves and storm surges to threaten inland and low-lying areas. A more glaring effect is the destruction of beaches.

Along rivers, instream mining lowers the river bottom, which may lead to the collapse of river banks, the loss of adjacent land and structures, and a change in river flow. The depletion of sand in the streambed and along coastal areas causes the deepening of rivers and estuaries, and the enlargement of river mouths and coastal inlets. This may also lead to salt water intrusion from the nearby sea.

Water quality is affected through uncontrolled dumping, and chemical/fuel spills. It affects downstream water users, and can poison aquatic life.

Ecological impacts of sand mining, particularly in rivers, include the direct loss of river habitat, disturbances of species attached to river bed deposits, reduced light penetration, reduced primary production, and reduced feeding opportunities.

Sand mining generates extra vehicle traffic, which negatively impairs the environment and the social conditions of people around. Trucks, fumes, noise, dust, loose sand and a horrible sight to look at. Where access roads further cross ecological areas of fauna and wildlife, even more damage is done. In the case of Moshupa in Botswana, the mining, which is mainly done at night, is dominated by foreigners.

“It’s a lucrative business, and corruption is rife to ensure authorities turn a blind eye. There is great demand for the sand in the cities and towns, and we the local communities get no benefit. We are locked out,” said Mosielele.

The main challenges involve ambiguous legislation coupled with poor enforcement.

“There’s little hope for the government acting without sustained pressure from communities,” said Mosielele.

“We need to build the Botswana Alternative Mining Indaba and extend the alternative mining campaign. In this way we can build capacity of local communities in the district to put on the pressure through advocacy and lobbying with policy makers.”

## INYANDA national land movement community news

### VISION

Working towards an egalitarian countryside of productive, food secure, self-reliant and active citizens that know and protect their rights

### 4. MISSION

Inyanda is the voice of the poor that exerts pressure for policy changes and transformation of the countryside in order to improve the socio-economic conditions of its members and of rural people in general.

### 5. VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

The movement shall be based on the following values:

- » Egalitarianism
- » Gender equality
- » Ant-racism and antiethnicism
- » Non-sectarianism: tolerance and encouragement of sober debates of different views
- » Participatory democracy
- » Co-operation as opposed to competition
- » Anti-capitalism
- » Non-party political aligned