

Child tears

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Global climate change has various effects on different communities (1). While environmental threats are harder to see in some parts of the world, they are obvious in other parts. Particular many developing countries carry a disproportionate burden.

Jabulani Arts is a social enterprise founded by a group of talented young artists in Fort-Portal, Uganda, teaming up with development organizations including the Kabarole Research and Resource Centre and the private sector (Figures 1,2) (2). Rarely do artists in this part of the world use art as a tool for communication about issues facing their communities, and this group is taking an innovative step by addressing, among other topics, the complex subject of climate change. Collaborating with researchers and scientists, the goal is to tap into the talent of artist to find solutions for the global challenge of climate change.

The activities of Jabulani Arts include art fairs in local communities, and art shows at a local gallery in Fort-Portal, a town located at the foot of Mount Rwenzori in Western

Uganda. The gallery is a vital space to reflect about the artistic nature of the environment and how we can take care of it. The art fairs, hosted together by the artists and development organizations, rally local communities in the Rwenzori Mountain ranges (3) to address the changes associated with climate change and preserve this precious resource.

Recent research shows recession of glaciers on Mountain Rwenzori due to increased temperature levels. The recession of glaciers could have long lasting impact on the environment and the communities depending on it. While research has been able to predict some of the climatic changes already felt in the form of unpredictable planting seasons and droughts, scientific presentations often remain too abstract for local communities to understand. In utilizing art to convey the concepts of climate change, Jabulani Arts together with other development practitioners hope to facilitate understanding in local communities and lead to local action to mitigate the effect of climate change.



Figure 1 “Child tears” reflects about how human activities affect the environment and the future for the young generation (Dimensions 4×4 feet, Acrylics on Canvas, painting by Wamala Joseph Kyeyune).



Figure 2 “Nature’s edge” symbolizes the young generation pondering about their future in the world of the changing climate (Dimensions 4×4 feet, Acrylics on Canvas, painting by Sadat Kiwanuka).

Through this type of art work (2), the planet's future is presented, offering a tangible glimpse into how local environments might change.

In the last three years over 1,500 citizens in Fort-Portal town have participated and contributed in art fairs discussing causes, effects and solutions to climate changes. The resulting large number of images will be distributed in different part of the region and could result into community action to mitigate and prevent effects of climate change.

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