

--- Sorry for cross-posting ---



**Newsletter of the
Ecumenical Water Network
Number 2 - January 2007**

Dear colleagues and friends,

A happy New Year to all of you!

As promised in December we are sending you the 2nd newsletter of the Ecumenical Water Network (EWN) just as the **World Social Forum in Nairobi**, Kenya, is about to start. We hope that you have enjoyed the holidays and that you have started into the new year with refreshed energy and motivation!

This is not only our first newsletter of the year - it is also the first that is being sent to you by the newly established **EWN Secretariat** from Geneva, Switzerland. At the moment, we are preparing the events and meetings of the EWN at the World Social Forum, on which you will find information in the second part of the newsletter.

Once the Forum is over, we will provide you with more diverse information on on the EWN itself, local water initiatives, new developments concerning the human right to water, and international water politics.

We would like to call your special attention to the **website of the Ecumenical Water Network** at <http://water.oikoumene.org> which has just been launched. With some time and with your help, we hope to make the website really inform about and reflect the work of the network. So, please, send us your contributions, comments and suggestions to water@wcc-coe.org .

Looking forward to working with you,

your team from the EWN Secretariat,
Maïke Gorsboth and Guillermo Kerber.

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1. The EWN Secretariat takes off

In October 2006, the water campaign of **Bread for the World**, the development organisation of the Protestant and Free Churches in Germany, came to its end. Four successful years of campaigning for the human right to water at the national and international level were completed with a closing conference and an inspiring church service in Hamburg, Germany.

That the work would be carried on was expressed in a small ceremony. German **bishop Bärbel Wartenberg-Potter handed over the steering wheel**, symbol of the water campaign, to Fernando Enns from the World Council of Churches. Two months later, Fernando Enns brought it to Geneva. **Samuel Kobia**, General Secretary of the WCC, gladly received the steering wheel as a symbol of the ecumenical engagement for water through the Ecumenical Water Network (EWN).



Now, since the beginning of January, the steering wheel has found a new home. After two years of continuous development and growth, the Ecumenical Water Network has now established its **Secretariat at the WCC** with Ms. Maike Gorsboth and Dr. Guillermo Kerber as staff. The Secretariat's main task will be to co-ordinate the EWN's activities, to encourage and channel its internal communications via the newsletter and the EWN website, as well as to increase the EWN's external visibility.

Further information:

- German water rights campaign hands steering wheel over to WCC, WCC news 12.12.06 at <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/news-management/all-news-english/display-single-english-news/article/1637/german-water-rights-campa.html>
- Website of the Bread for the World campaign: www.menschenrecht-wasser.de (in German, English and Spanish)
- Website of the Ecumenical Water Network: <http://water.oikoumene.org>

2. Karibu! Welcome! - The World Social Forum 2007 in Kenya

On the 20th, the World Social Forum 2007 will be opened in Nairobi, Kenya. Thousands of activities are registered, more than 100.000 visitors are expected to participate. Given the enormous gravity and urgency of the water crisis, it does not surprise that many events will focus on water and related problems.

The EWN itself will be involved in the organisation of two public events:

Water and climate in Africa

January 22th (Monday) / 9.00 - 11.00 / WSF Main Arena

The event will focus on the growing problem of climate change and water scarcity that many

African and other communities are facing. Instead of addressing a need for high-level government action the presentations will deliberately focus on regional and community-based initiatives that can help to mitigate the effects of climate change on people's water supply - such as rainwater harvesting, re-forestation etc. Confirmed speakers are Mrs. Danuta Sacher, Prof. Jesse Mugambi, Mrs. Grace Akumu.

Promoting the human right to water.

!NEW DATE!: January 21st (Sunday) / 11.30 – 14.30 / Human Rights Caucus tent

A strategic workshop for ecumenic and other civil society activists who are interested in exploring the possibilities of addressing the water crisis by promoting the human right to water.

The EWN Reference Group will also use the opportunity to come together and discuss the plans and activities of the EWN for 2007.

Links and further information:

- Mugambi, Jesse N.K & Gaim Kebreab: Fresh water to eradicate poverty. A publication by Norwegian Church Aid. <http://english.nca.no/filemanager/download/794/Fresh%20water.pdf>
- You can also listen to Prof. Jesse Mugambi as he talks about "The Impact of Global Warming on Populations in East and Central Africa" and to many more experts on climate change who participated in the Climate Forum 2002.
<http://www.climateforum2002.org/programme.cfm>
- For information on the World Social Forum visit the website www.wsf2007.org

This newsletter has been sent to you by the Secretariat of the Ecumenical Water Network (EWN). If you do not wish to receive the newsletter from the Ecumenical Water Network any more, just send a short message to water@wcc-coe.org.

If you want to stay informed about the EWN, just stay on our list. The EWN Newsletter will reach you about four times a year with information on the EWN itself, new developments concerning the human right to water, international water politics, and local water initiatives. We might also provide additional information by e-mail on special occasions.

You can contact us via e-mail at: water@wcc-coe.org

For more information, please also visit our website at <http://water.oikoumene.org>