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| Nakkazi Annet | UGCS-2020-835 | Oxford Region | Oxford University |

While striving to survive, we forget that destroying is easier than re-building. Our survival relies on environments that support ecosystems, the dynamic interactions that are destroyed/altered by us and/or natural catastrophes. Major threats to our earth include changes in temperatures, causing issues like global warming, which is mainly induced by greenhouse gas emissions. Emissions are fuelled by a complex web of factors like excessive manufacturing, poor leadership, and uneven resource distribution. With distinct forms of leadership values/cultures in varying nations, restoring our earth may take years, however, there are some things we can do to promote environmental protection through action.

One of the effective solutions to combating climate crisis is promoting “quality education” that establishes/builds societies with a core value of “us” but not “me”. Quality education brings-up better leadership (most educated nationals tend to know what is better for the society/nation), better population control (especially when more women are educated, together with the presence of vaccines and safe birth control methods) and mindful consumption of resources. In my capacity, I organize fundraisings to support education in poor village schools (Uganda), where we build/renovate classrooms and toilets, donate trees and water tanks, sewing machines for girls to make their own pads (so that they don’t miss school), and introduce basic school-based agriculture projects that teach pupils how soil and air environments feed us.

Another problem to tackle is poverty, which leaves people with limited survival options. Genuinely, I initially understood the importance of the environment for our survival when doing my undergraduate studies at Tsukuba University, Japan. When I went back to my village, I met people cutting down all trees. “Why are you cutting them”, I asked? “We need to sell charcoal and send kids to school” they answered. Then, I started a tree-planting project (at my village) where we plant trees, and then cut the over-grown ones (that are no-longer efficient at absorbing CO2) into timber, charcoal, and husks, to generate income for the participants. Additionally, I donate coffee trees to absorb more CO2 while generating additional income for them.

That community work above is little compared to what is needed to save our earth. The climate crisis is getting out of hand and if we don’t act quickly, it’s unlikely anyone will be alive in next few decades. There is a dire need to immediately work on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, DISTRIBUTING recourses more EVENLY, and controlling our populations, all of which require collective global efforts.

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| Fredrick Opiyo | KESS-2020-292 | London Region | University College London |

MY PLAN FOR ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

To maintain our living standards, we release tonnes of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, into the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels in factories, vehicles, and other places. The scientific community agrees that human-caused greenhouse gas emissions have resulted in rising temperatures and climate change. Meanwhile, developing countries such as Kenya have increased their investments in industrial infrastructure, with numerous factories being built in these countries. Electrical energy, which currently is mainly generated from crude energy sources such as coal, is used heavily in these factories. It is also worth noting that these regions' urban centres are flooded with gasoline cars and that the practice of felling trees for firewood is widespread. These practices are damaging to our environment. Over the next five years, I plan to contribute to the creation of alternative strategies for mitigating the effects of climate change as follows, as a CSC scholar:

I expect to participate in environmental clean-up programmes and inform society about the benefits of participating in climate mitigation initiatives and mobilising them to increase tree-planting efforts. Also, I plan to advocate for climate change policies. To do this, I would need to enter active platforms, such as My Leader Kenya sector for Environment and Climate, a vibrant youth group, to reach out to many people. I will be able to provide consultations to the group and mobilise a formidable voice that will get the attention of the government policy-making organs, using the technical expertise that I will have acquired from my MSc Materials for Energy and Environment. I will advocate for ambitious climate change policies that encourage clean and sustainable energy production at the policy-making table. Incentives, such as a low tax rate, would be prioritised as part of the programme to enable private investors to invest in renewable energy generating sources.

Again, considering the current insufficient electrical energy storage devices, such as a good battery for large electrical energy storage, I intend to engage in battery research to improve electrical energy storage from intermittent sources, such as wind and solar. Since lithium-ion is in limited supply and its source is marred with politics, the research would focus on alternative materials such as potassium and sodium ions that could make batteries instead of lithium-ion.

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| Nazam Laila | BDCA-2020-1 | London | SOAS University of London |

The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration has declared that the earthlings have only a decade to fix the current environmental crisis. If utilised properly, these next years will serve as a crucial factor to revert the impact of climates change and the lives of millions of species will be saved. The leaders from the Global North and South need to work together to avert this crisis. As an emerging academician and CSC scholar from Bangladesh, I would like to use my research skills to start a global movement that will celebrate a culture of restoration that will motivate the future generation too to maintain this too.

The climate problem is not just a headache of the natural scientists only as it affects and triggered by various socio-political factors too. Therefore, we will be needing researchers from different disciplines to collaborate to further explore all the causes and effects of this issue. Thus, it will be possible to come up with the most effective measurements to tackle this problem. I am an interdisciplinary research enthusiast who had her BA and MA in multidisciplinary English literature from BRAC University, Bangladesh, with a special focus on history and a minor in Biotechnology. While gaining knowledge through this variation of disciplines, I noticed that nature and culture have always been interrelated. Poor policymaking practices, unethical capitalism and the exploitation of natural resources were the primary reasons for climate disasters which destroyed many previous societies too. Later, while pursuing my MSc in Gender, Development, Globalisation from the London School of Economics and Political Science, I observed that this climate disaster is experienced differently by various people based on their race, class, age and gender. For example, disabled women from the Global South are the most vulnerable to climate disasters. Currently, in my PhD research project, I am examining how the abuse of AI technology further strengthens the disparity between the Global North and South. My research indicates that the increase in the use of technology also promotes high carbon emission and the Global South is the ultimate sufferer of this. Therefore, with my interdisciplinary research skills, I want to contribute to the global research committee which is working on the issue of tackling climate change in a more comprehensive manner. Furthermore, I work as a university teacher in Bangladesh and also have been involved with various international leadership organisations. Therefore, by serving as a bridge between the leaders of this and the future generation, both from the Global North and South, I want to promote the cultural celebration of environmental restoration. Behavioural change is one of the most important conditions to restore our ecosystem and that could be achieved when academic knowledge would be successfully transmitted to mass people in a language understood by them. For my association with various, research and development works, I will be able to do that.

All three of these activities have been recommended by the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration to reinstate our ecosystem. Therefore, I believe as a CSC scholar, I will be able to contribute to a great extent to implementing sustainable climate action policies by practising these activities.

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| WONAH MARTIN ODEY | SS-2020-619 | SCOTLAND | UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING |

MY PLAN TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE
(odeymarts@gmail.com)

When I was 6 years old, my family had unsuccessfully tried to resettle in more than 7 villages in Kaduna, Northern Nigeria. Being hunted by desertification from village to village, my realization of the fury of the earth dawned on me faster than my parents had time to explain. The chances of accessing opportunities, especially for farmers were slim. After another 6 long years of resettlement in the outskirts of the state, I began to search for my identity. Nobody knew us in this new location, only the earth did. My identity had vanished into thin air and I would sit under the moonlight, talking to mother-earth and asking if she still remembered us.

A day the earth remembered me came. It was in school on a bright morning when the principal addressed everyone in his usual baritone voice: “who amongst you can tell why he or she has come to study in school?” A graveyard silence swept across everywhere. He repeated the question in anger. All students stood still, with heads bowed and faces avoiding contact. But as I stood with a bowed head watching the dry ground, it was as if the earth asked me to speak for her.

After tapping my right foot three times, the earth borrowed me her voice and I began with a pitched tone mixed with an initial lack of confidence: “I am in school to save the earth. Yes! This is why I would like to draw our attention to what geography tells us about bush burning, deforestation and other dangerous practices that has left or mother-earth sick” Resounding applauses accompanied this first bold move and my momentum soared.

I concluded the speech with calls to action and the principal ordered that 50 trees be planted in the school to check desertification. This is how as a Commonwealth Scholar I plan to restore the earth back to her ecosystem in the next few years; by encouraging actual survivors to share their stories on how harmful environmental practices are hurting not only the earth but our lives and calling for actions geared towards local solutions. At Dneo Foundation (https://www.dneo-foundation.org/), we have taken conscious commitment towards planting 500 trees every year for the next 9 years. Join me to save the earth!