

# If we don't get involved, we haven't a chance

## VIASEN SOOBRAMONEY

FORMER political activist Kumi Naidoo has called for more 'practical awareness' at grassroots level on issues affecting the environment.

Naidoo, now executive director of environmental body Greenpeace, was addressing a large gathering of youth at the Hindu Youth Network's (HYN), Youth Climate Change programme held at Dawnridge Primary School in Chatsworth on Saturday.

In a stirring address, Naidoo stressed the importance of a unified stance on climate change.

"If we don't have our community leaders and society getting involved, then we don't stand a chance against climate change.

"We all have the capability to make the world a better place.

"Never doubt that your contribu-

tion can make a difference," said Naidoo.

The programme featured several aspects of educational training on issues such as recycling, subsistence farming and environmental awareness.

Speaking to **POST**, Naidoo said it was extremely important that more events of this nature occurred in communities across the country.

"Programmes like this create a practical awareness at local level which is exceptionally important.

"We need to find global and local solutions to issues that affect the environment.

"In the lead-up to COP17 it becomes even more important because the decisions taken at the conference still have to be implemented at grassroots level," said Naidoo.

HYN spokesperson, Pragasen Pillay, said the network would look to expand

projects of this nature throughout the city.

"Our main objective is to create awareness among youth on matters concerning the environment.

"This programme was just the start of our broader vision of rolling these programmes out on a larger scale.

"It is vitally important to generate great interest in these matters at local level because ultimately, these communities will be directly responsible for implementing changes," said Pillay.

He added that having a high-profile guest like Naidoo attending the programme motivated everyone to tackle climate change with more enthusiasm.

"I am certain that he has motivated every youngster here to understand that they have the ability to make a positive difference to the environment," added Pillay.



Kumi Naidoo enlightens pupils at Dawnridge Primary School on the effects of climate change.