



Global Ecovillage Summit Dakar December 2014

GEN Africa General Assembly

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The Global Ecovillage Network is a registered charity: SC043796 and has consultative status in the UN-ECOSOC

www.aen.ecovillae.org

GEN-Africa General Annual Meeting Dec 2014
Venue: L'Ocean Hotel, Dakar Senegal



GES Group Photo: Leila Dregger

Main points on Agenda:

- Membership guidelines
- Re-election of council members
- Code of Conduct
- Financial Report

Due to the fact that the Senegalese Government responded so positively to the GES, the GEN-Africa GA was cut short in order to accommodate and welcome national politicians.

Update:

- The General Annual meeting provided a space for much needed face to face dialogue between GEN-Africa Network members, GEN-Africa council members and GEN-Africa staff. Feedback on membership guidelines and other points such as physical GEN-Africa Office spaces, paid staff etc were noted and taken forward to a smaller GEN-Africa consolidation meeting in March 2015. This meeting also involved staff, members, and council representatives but on a smaller scale in Msauli, RSA. The outcomes were the finalization of the Membership Guidelines (Appendix A) and the Strategic Goals and Target for 2015 (Appendix B).



GEN-Africa consolidation Meeting Photo: GEN-Africa archives

- At the GA, nominations were handed in for new council members. 3 council members remained from the previous years Mugove Nyika (Zimbabwe), Ousmane Pame (Senegal) and Karambu Ringera (Kenya) and 4 new council members joined Niveen Adel (Egypt), Joshua Konkonah (Cameroon) of which 2 are NextGEN – Africa representatives Sonita Mbah (Cameroon) and Simon Gibba (the Gambia).
- The Code of conduct was adopted and blessed (Appendix C)
- The 2014 financial report was blessed & approved



The Evening of the GA - welcoming Mr Youssou Ndour Photo: Leila Dregger

Appendix:

Vision and Mission of GEN-Africa

Vision

We envision the re-emergence of a sustainable and abundant Africa growing out of an alliance of self-empowered and resilient communities.

Mission

As a solution based alliance, GEN-Africa: makes visible examples of best practices, empowers existing ecovillages, supports the emergence of new ecovillages and develops educational tools to inspire societal transition to resilience.

Introduction

The Global Ecovillage Network (GEN), set up in 1995, is an umbrella organisation working to support the experimental creation and preservation of low impact lifestyles across the globe. GEN encompasses actors working in multiple sectors, including: individuals, communities, businesses, NGO's, educational institutions and even government. GEN works through regional organisations.

On the 16th-19th of December 2012, around 60 activists from GEN-Africa networks came together in Sekem, Egypt for a GEN-Africa Symposium. During the Symposium, best practices in ecovillage strategies were exchanged, the GEN-Africa Council, Advisory Board and NextGEN-Africa Council were elected, and this GEN-Africa Strategy Document was written.

On 10th-16th of December 2013, 120 GEN-Africa activists met at SACDEP (Sustainable Agriculture Community Development Programme) in Thika, Kenya for the annual GEN-Africa Conference. Together we reviewed and edited the GEN-Africa Strategy Document to better reflect the diversity of nations that form the Continent and added two thematic areas: Journalism & Public Relations and Communications & Information Technology. *During the conference GEN Africa values were revised and consolidated by conducting an extensive interviews of over 50 participants.*

In December 2014, Senegal was chosen to host the first International Ecovillage Summit sponsored by the German Foreign Ministry that GEN- Africa co-organized with GEN International and a dedicated Senegalese team. During the summit 120 people from 40 countries assembled and hosted the Prime Minister, Mohammed Dionne, as well as members of the Ministry for the Environment and Sustainability, and the National Agency for Ecovillages

(ANEV), which has established effective political support for ecovillages in Senegal.

In March/April 2015, GEN-Africa had its first constructive executive meeting at its newly registered office in Msauli Mpumalanga/South Africa. This meeting aimed to strengthen and consolidate GEN-Africa. The following overall goals, specific goals and targets were identified:

1) Overall Goals

1. To develop and implement Internal capacity building in order to support and strengthen existing and potential/upcoming national chapters. This will ensure internal sustainability and effectiveness.
2. To advance the holistic education of individuals from all walks of life by sharing experiences and best practices gained from the networks of ecovillages and sustainable communities across Africa.

2) Specific Goals

- 1.1 Resourcing human personnel and other resources
- 1.2 Organisational development processes
- 1.3 Financial stability (fundraising, consulting)
- 1.4 Trust, care and friendship
- 1.5 Facilitate conflict resolution
- 1.6 Responsible for meeting the Needs/rights of staff and volunteers
- 1.7 Decision making process and quorum
- 1.8 Bylaws and constitution
- 1.9 Admin capacity
- 2.1 Database of trainers and facilitators
- 2.2 Database of tools/curriculum (EDE, ABCD, T2R, PD)
- 2.3 Small dedicated and functioning working group
- 2.4 Focused attention given to identified upcoming EDE's and other relevant workshops in Africa for 2015

3) Targets

- 25 full members by GEN+20 summit (6–10 July 2015).
- 5 national networks consolidated by December 2015
- Identify 2 Emerging national networks by December 2015.

- Basic economic sustainability to run the office and operate the Network by December 2015
- Identify next possible annual assembly/conference by October 2015

Appendix:

How to become a member of GEN

GEN creates a space in which people and communities can follow their hearts calling. Together, we create new possibilities. Many who respond to GEN have a sense of deeply coming home to their own love for community and the earth that they haven't been able to express fully before. Communities and ecovillage projects have emerged all over the planet from the hard work of thousands of individuals, together creating a rich repository of experience and knowledge. GEN offers an opportunity for all these communities to realise they are not alone. In fact, they are part of a worldwide movement that is creating the low-impact, high-quality lives that we need to open doorways into a sustainable future.

What is an Ecovillage

An ecovillage is an intentional or traditional community that is consciously designed through locally owned, participatory processes to regenerate their social, cultural, economic and natural environments.

An ecovillage can develop from the integration of best practices and innovative solutions and the honouring of deep rooted traditional knowledge and local cultures. With ecovillages around the world, we are creating a pool of wisdom for sustainable living on a global scale.

Guidelines for 'ecovillage' recognition

The following are a set of guidelines drafted by the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) to assist in the process of recognition of ecovillages. If you feel that your project or village shares these values and strives to implement these practices, you might like to consider becoming a member of our global network of mutual support and exchange.

Growing from our shared vision and values, we - the people – choose to:

- *Design* our own villages and our own lifestyles in community
- *Live* in harmony with nature
- *Become guardians* of the nature around us once again
- *Celebrate* our cultural identity and diversity
- *Uphold* human rights for all

- Support oneness and solidarity, while helping each individual to find his or her unique way of serving the whole
- Educate, train and empower all to contribute to sustainable living

We strive to integrate the five dimensions of sustainability by aiming for:

□ **Best Integral Design Practices**

- Create design in an inclusive and participatory way, making sure that all stakeholders are engaging and owning the process
- Utilise best design frameworks and practices from the collective wisdom of our network
- making connections between various elements on the land
- integrating social, economic, cultural and ecological practices
- Honour traditional local wisdom while integrating positive change through innovative methods and appropriate technologies

□ **Best cultural practices**

- Connecting to a higher purpose in life/spiritual practice
- Growing awareness about the impacts of modernisation
- Honouring traditions that are good for the people and eradicating practices that harm human dignity
- Political activism for peace and justice for all
- Celebrating life through people's arts

□ **Best social practices:**

- Strengthening community and embracing diversity
- Participatory decision making processes
- Conflict facilitation and peace-building skills
- o Recognising and empowering leadership of those willing to serve the community
- Building networks and alliances

□ **Best ecological practices:**

- Sustainable resource management of water, land, air, energy
- Organic agriculture and food sovereignty
- Natural and traditional healing methods for humans and animals
- Natural and traditional building methods
- Conservation and restoration of ecosystems

□ **Best economic practices**

- Significant collective ownership of land, water and other resources
- Strengthen local economy through alternative practices such as community banks, barter systems, local
- currencies, diverse income streams and social enterprise
- Work towards economic justice and reconstruct the concept of wealth

Engage in ethical and transparent fair trade

- Develop appropriate legal forms and transparent administration for our organisations

GEN- Africa Membership

Eligibility

GEN criteria for full membership:

- Communities, organisations or projects that aim to implement the Ecovillage Guidelines and that adhere to the GEN-Africa Values
- Should have a common purpose and vision
- Should have a community of people (at least 8) living together

- **Eligible for full membership:**

- National Ecovillage Networks (incorporating at least three ecovillage projects, please see Guidelines for setting up National Network).
- Ecovillage projects
- Traditional villages
- Permaculture projects
- Eco-schools, eco-farms and eco co-operatives
- Women and youth eco-advocacy forums

- **If any of the above are still in stage of formation they are eligible for Aspiring membership**

- **Eligible Associate membership**

- Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that holistically advance the discourse

- Academic institutions that can add value to the discourse by engaging in research and development projects and education & training among other things
- Like minded individuals and organizations -inclusive of the arts and cultural heritage sectors -who are contributing various skills and knowledge
- Like minded national, regional and international networks
- Ethical businesses that advances the call for a green economy
- Fair trade networks
- **Potential Stakeholders**
 - Government departments
 - Local, metropolitan & district municipalities
 - Funders/donors
 - Like minded organizations
 - Communities
 - Bodies from the Academia

A partnership agreement can be made with any of the above, which would make them into a Partner of GEN.

Responsibilities and Benefits:

We share knowledge and skills to support each other in making this journey personally and together.

Full members:

- The joining fee will be 100 ZAR which is due every 30th of April of the year. The annual membership fee is 200 – 8000 ZAR (sliding scale), proportionally to the size and economic stability of the ecovillage project/organisation/individual (on the principle of giving as much as you can afford). Until full membership is granted ecovillages and national networks can join us as aspiring members.
- As a full member you
 - Become part of an international network which has consultative status with ECOSOC.
 - Will have voting right in the general assembly and all the benefits of being a member which includes:
 - Be able to use the GEN-logo to add political recognition to your project

- Gain opportunities to participate in trainings, exchange and conferences organised by GEN
- Gain publicity for your project
- Be visible on GEN- Africa website and linked to other regional and international GEN sites
- Possible assistance in project fundraising and management
- Access to wide number of ecovillage tools and solutions

Associate members:

- The joining fee is 100 ZAR. The yearly membership fee is ZAR 100 - ZAR 5000 (sliding scale)
- As an associate member you will
 - Be invited to the general assembly but do not have rights to vote
 - Publicity for your project

Ecovillage projects can become members of GEN-Africa. Once a national network is started in their country, it should still be open to each project to choose if they want to join only the national network, or become a member of both the national and continental network as this also affects voting rights.

Strong projects should be responsible to also support national networks.

Both the full and associative membership will be renewed automatically annually unless explicitly requested by the member one month before renewal due date or unless membership is suspended by the council.

Both the full and associative membership may be asked by the council to assess a new member candidate

Process on how to become a member:

- 1) Signing up:** To join, please return the application form below to the GEN-Africa office
 - a. by **post to:** GEN-Africa, XXXXXXXXXXX, Msauli, South Africa, or
 - b. by **email to:** secretariat@gen-africa.org.
 - c. If you want to become a full member please also enrol your project to the GEN database at XXXXXXXXXXX. You then automatically become an aspiring members until you are fully assessed.

- 2) Assessment of projects:** The project will be assessed by the council or by somebody the council has appointed. You will be invited to the next GEN-Africa event in your region to present your project. If you are already well known to the GEN-Africa council, and/or you have participated and presented yourselves at a GEN Africa conference, the assessment will be deemed unnecessary.
- 3) Who makes the final decision:** The council's recommendation is then finalised at the next General Assembly or via e-mail consensus.

Individual:

Name:

Email:

Organisation:

Name of organization:

Email:

Street and post code:

City:

Country:

Telephone:

Website:

What is your expectation in becoming a member of GEN?

What is your previous connection to GEN (if any)?

Attach your Cv

Referee from GEN Africa (if any)



CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS OF THE GLOBAL ECOVILLAGE NETWORK (GEN)

Commitment to Ethical Action

1. Principles – I will act according to the principles of care, loyalty and commitment

- The duty of care for the organisation is to oversee that the mission is being accomplished, monitor activities and guard the financial and other resources.
- The duty of loyalty is to avoid conflicts of personal interest, declare when there is such a conflict and withdraw from discussion and decisions when such conflict exists.
- The duty of commitment is to carry out the purposes of the organisation and comply with the Constitution, by-laws, policies, procedures and all applicable laws.

2. Members Regular Duties – I will:

- Attend ideally the annual general meeting unless I have a valid reason for non-attendance and will inform the President of the inability to attend.
- Review the agenda and supporting materials prior to the meeting to be prepared to participate in decision making the relevant on the budget and other proceedings.
- Be willing to serve on committees or working groups and take on special assignments related to my availability.
- Remain informed about all aspects of the organisation and promote the organisation as determined by the voices of GEN.
- Participate in succession planning by identifying and recruiting potential Members from my Regional Member Network.

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3. Agreement- As a Member I agree to:

- Always act for the good of the organisation and the people served.
- Communicate to the Regional Networks that I represent.
- Act with honesty, integrity and ethical values according to the principles of care, loyalty and commitment.
- Support in a positive manner all decisions and actions taken at Annual General Meetings.
- Participate within my availability in education and evaluation programs that enhance my skills and improve the functioning of the organisation.
- Although GEN is committed to transparency there may be instances when it becomes necessary to protect the interests of the organisation by keeping confidential information confidential.
- Work collaboratively with and respect the opinions of all Members.
- Represent the organisation in a positive and supportive manner.
- Observe the decision making process and procedures of the Annual General Meetings.
- Abide by this code of conduct, the Constitution, by-laws, policies and procedures of the organisation.

4. **Sanction:** If a Member fails to live up to or breaks any part of this Code of Conduct, the Member is liable to be excluded from the Membership or face any other sanctions, the Council may apply.

5. Attestation:

Name:

Place:

Signature:

Date: