

act:onaid

Stories of Change
2014 Zimbabwe

Who We Are

OUR VISION

A Zimbabwe without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys their right to a life of dignity.

OUR MISSION

To work with people living in poverty to eradicate poverty and injustice.

OUR VALUES

Mutual Respect: requiring us to recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of diversity.

Equity and Justice: requiring us to work to ensure equal opportunity to everyone, irrespective of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, HIV status, colour, class, ethnicity, disability, location and religion.

Honesty and Transparency: being accountable at all levels for the effectiveness of our actions and open in our judgements and communications with others.

Solidarity with the poor: powerless and excluded will be the only bias in our commitment to the fight against poverty.

Courage of Conviction: requiring us to be creative and radical, bold and innovative - without fear of failure - in pursuit of making the greatest possible impact on the causes of poverty.

Independence: from any religious or party-political affiliation.

Humility: in our presentation and behaviour, recognising that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty.

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ACRONYMS

AAI	ActionAid International
AAZ	ActionAid Zimbabwe
ACT	AIDS Counselling Trust
BCC	Bulawayo City Council
BPRA	Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association
CP	Country Programme
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	Country Strategy Plan
DOMCCP	Diocese of Mutare Community Care
EESCR	Economic, Environmental Social and Cultural rights
FACT	Family Aids Caring Trust
FGG	Fair, Green and Global
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HEFO	Health Education and Food Programme
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
LGDA	Lower Guruve Development Association
MURRA	Masvingo Residents Rate Payers Association
NYDT	National Youth Development Trust
SDC	School Development Committee
SRHR	Sexual Reproductive Health Rights
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
WILD	Women Institute in Leadership & Development
ZELA	Zimbabwe Environmental Lawyers Association
ZESA	Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority
ZINWA	Zimbabwe National Water Authority

1.0 Background and Context of Impact Stories



Unidentified girls from Nyanga share happy moments as friends. ActionAid supports over 20 000 children countrywide under various programmes

This Report is a collection of impact stories and forms part of the ActionAid Zimbabwe (AAZ) Annual Report 2014. In this Report we are illustrating the cumulative impact of the Country Programme's strategy and interventions through the most significant and powerful changes achieved in 2014. The changes are mainly as a result of interlinked interventions implemented over the past 4-5 years. The impact stories are organised around some of the current ActionAid Strategic Objectives in relation to the AAZ's Country Strategy Plan for 2014-2018 as follows:



Strategic Objective 1

Promote improved livelihoods and enhanced rights to land and natural resources for at least 40,000 rural smallholder producers (25,000 being women and 15,000 being men) and their households.



Strategic Objective 2

Support people living in poverty being 153,000 adult women, young women and men, children to engage the government and corporates for improved social service delivery



Strategic Objective 3

Ensure that 300,000 women and girls can break the cycle of poverty and violence, build economic alternatives and claim control over their bodies.

The impact stories would be useful to ActionAid and its partners as they seek to deepen our understanding of the relevance and effectiveness of AAI strategies and tools such as the Human Rights Based Approach (HBRA) whose focus is to see communities taking lead in issues concerning them.

Under Strategic Objective 1, ActionAid, in partnership with the Lower Guruve Development Association, implemented a livelihoods project entitled Mbire Livestock Programme that has seen women taking central role in contributing to the food security for their families in Mbire District. ActionAid and partner interventions in Mbire have enabled communities to respond to floods that hit the area with vulnerable groups receiving seed and managing to escape hunger in the process. Under Strategic

Objective 2, we see communities engaging with local authorities in Masvingo and Bulawayo to ensure they access quality services such as water. In mining areas, in Mutoko and Mutare, women, devastated by the effects of mining, are lobbying the local authorities and corporate sector to make sure communities benefit from the mining proceeds. Children in Nyanga are spearheading the work around children's rights with some of them working with the school development committees (SDCs) using their own structures such as the Junior School Development Committees (SDCs). Under Strategic Objective 3 we read of a man from the apostolic sect in Nyazura taking lead in pushing for promotion of women's rights while women in Dzivarasekwa are the driving force in a Safe Cities Campaign, whose focus is fighting against the violence against women especially happening in the public sphere.

The stories were jointly written by partner staff and ActionAid teams.

In 2014, the ActionAid programme and partnerships activities were implemented during a period when there was a stabilised political environment following the July 2013 general elections. This kind of situation and a progressive Constitution that was adopted through the referendum in May 2013 gave opportunities for Civil Society (including ActionAid and its partners) to scale up engagement and advocacy work on the expanded Bill of human rights. Overall, the maintenance of the multi-currency policy and pursuit of other economic stabilisation and growth policies have ensured macro-economic stability.



Tendai standing in front of her herd of cattle.

2.0 Strategic Objective 1

Promote improved livelihoods and enhanced rights to land and natural resources for at least 40,000 rural smallholder producers (25,000 being women and 15,000 being men) and their households.

2.1 Woman makes strides in livestock programme

Twenty five year old Tendai Dambudzo lost both her parents in 2006 when she was just 16 years old. At a young and impressionable age, she was initiated into adulthood much earlier, dropped out of school and became the family breadwinner at 16.

Juggling that role whilst fighting the temptations of adolescence was such a test that she ended up in an ill-fated marriage that ended in her crawling back to her late parents' home with three children. As she found refuge again, she found herself with the responsibility of seven mouths to feed including herself. As she fought these difficulties, she had the wisdom to hold onto one strand that her late parents left her: cattle.

She sold one of the nine cattle left by her parents, paid school fees for her three siblings and for the moment tried to regain her breath while utilising her few remaining resources to ensure there was food on the family table. The relief she got from the livestock at this critical point taught her then that she could not allow this source of livelihood to scatter. Recently, we made a return visit to her homestead but she was not at home when we got there. We were told by a neighbour that she had gone to a nearby shopping centre where she also runs an open air second hand clothes boutique. Having been touched by her story, we were determined to find out how she was coping. We tracked and found her. Her youngest child was safely strapped on its mother's back and as we drove the short distance back to her homestead, she filled us in on how life has been since the last time we met her. When we last talked to her, the number of cattle in her kraal was 21 and she told us then that each year for the past five years, she had been selling about four or five to pay for the household's upkeep.

"The number of cattle in the family kraal has now risen to 23 but at the beginning of the last school term (early January 2014), I sold some. If it was not for that, we would be adding two more," she said, adding that the sales she made had funded her siblings' required school and examination fees.

She said the cattle that fetched the most money was sold for USD\$250 and the other was sold for USD\$200. Of the 10 sheep she had, five had been sold at USD\$50 each, also to cover the basic needs of her family. The

remaining five will still put up for sale if she encounters financial difficulties. In the meantime, she says although the cattle have increased in number, she has not been able to store enough supplementary feeds for them. She had cut some grass to make hay, and left it under trees in the nearby veld so that the moisture content reduces. However, she says a “jealous” fellow villager had torched the grass before she had the opportunity to cart it to her homestead to make hay bales.

This may not necessarily have been someone who was specifically out to frustrate her as indiscriminate forest fires are raised in much of the country as winter approaches, often by hunters. Sometimes even children do this as they play with lighters, oblivious of the heightened fire danger ratings over this period when grass turns brown from the rainy season green. Either way, this is hardly a happy story but Tendai has learnt something from it. “I really did not think someone could do this,” she says, adding that her unquestioning trust of people has since ended and the next season, she would cut the grass, guard it and ensure that it is carried to the family home as soon as possible to ensure that it is safely stored.



Tendai prepares a hole for the storage of the cattle feed

“As a member of the Ward Livestock Project Committee, I have become a campaigner for stricter enforcement of Environmental Management Agency (EMA) by-laws, especially regarding the indiscriminate starting of forest fires because I know how destructive they are,” she says. She also says the grazing of pastures in her ward has come under a lot of pressure because cattle were crossing the border from villages in Mozambique, which is a stone’s throw away from where Tendai’s homestead is located.



Priscilla Ndarubva from Mbire holds one of the hay bales she produced as a result of the training under the Mbire Livestock Programme

Even as Tendai relates the problems she has faced as a livestock owner and head of household, she was able to show us the first part of a three phase cattle kraal whose construction she supervised. This was recently built at a cost of USD\$30 although she paid a little extra for the transportation of the timber. The kraal is much stronger than the older one, can hold more cattle and she believes it will last longer.

ActionAid implemented the Mbire Livestock Production Programme in partnership with Lower Guruve Development Association with the support from the Best Seller Foundation. Tendai is one of the 9 000 beneficiaries of the Mbire Livestock Programme in Mbire.



Fenisa Muzeza of Monozi Village, Ward 15 of Mbire whose crops were razed by the floods in 2014 was one of the beneficiaries of the ActionAid Mbire floods response programme.

2.2 Mbire floods affected communities dodge hunger

When a raging flood hit Mbire District, Mashonaland Central Province of Zimbabwe early 2014, women, children, the aged and the widowed were some of the most affected people.

Revai Phiri was one of the people worst hit by the flooding situation in Mbire in 2014. No criteria of beneficiary identification could have missed Revai when ActionAid Zimbabwe and its partner Lower Guruve Development Association (LGDA) made a flood response in Mbire. At that point, the nation's entire disaster response resources were largely concentrated at a more publicized and bigger Tokwe-Mukorsi flood disaster that had occurred further south of the country in Mwenezi District, in Masvingo Province.

Revai, whose husband is chronically ill, received maize seed and other provisions in March 2014. Clearly fighting against fate and time, Revai immediately set to work. She planted a maize field at her home in Mbire District in March 2014. Two months later, the field was her pride. It was now thriving and she produced about eight maize bags. These were enough to pull her and her family comprising her husband and two children through to the next agricultural season. In mid-June 2014, her crop was ready for consumption.



Phiri standing in her thriving maize field. She is one of the beneficiaries of the ActionAid Mbire floods response in 2014.

Incessant and heavy rains experienced in most parts of Zimbabwe from mid-January to mid-February 2014, hit Mbire District resulting in the floods which caused loss of lives and livelihoods. Over 7000 households were affected. On 25 March ActionAid Zimbabwe made available 7.5 tonnes of early maturing maize seed benefitting 750 households to avert potential hunger in the area.

In addition, ActionAid distributed livestock chemicals in the form of veterinary kits benefitting 15 wards in Mbire where there is a large population of cattle. The chemicals were used for dipping and dosing cattle and prevented them from contracting waterborne diseases that might have occurred as a result of the floods.



Maria standing close to her seedbank

2.3 Female councillor takes lead in livelihoods programme

A female councillor for Ward 20, Nkayi, in the Matebeleland North Province of Zimbabwe has taken the lead in making her community a better place.

A married mother of two children, Maria Ndlovu has done a lot in developing her community by encouraging fellow women in her ward to take charge and be responsible for their lives especially in livestock production which many thought women cannot manage.

Maria who attended workshops organised by Health Education for Food Organisation (HEFO) in partnership with ActionAid Zimbabwe in 2014 says that her life has never been the same again since her exposure with the two organisations.

“I attended workshops organised by HEFO in 2014 and I learnt a lot in terms of how to improve the production of my agricultural produce. I learnt how to practise crop diversification and how to manage my livestock. My goats used to die unceremoniously and I did not know how to treat them but with the knowledge I got from HEFO, I can manage so well now,” she said.

When Maria came back from the workshops organised by HEFO she started practising what she had learnt. She had three goats prior to attending the HEFO workshops. Now she highlights how she had become not only a farmer but a manager and a nurse at her homestead because she can now treat her livestock on her own.

Maria also takes advantage of her community post as Councillor to encourage other women in her community to practice crop diversification and livestock rearing in their homesteads.

“I usually take advantage of community meetings and gatherings to reach out to my other fellow women and I pass the information I would have learnt from the workshops and trainings facilitated by HEFO here in Nkayi,” said Maria.

As a councillor, Maria has been able to sustain her community relations as she once was able to support one of her local schools’ Prize giving days by providing stationery for the school from the money she got from selling some of her goats.

“I have lost count of the number of the women that I have been able to influence because they are so many. I want women to be empowered and be able to do things for themselves. I have even managed to intervene and get some women have their husbands give them their own pieces of land so that they can practise crop diversification,” she said.

Ownership of land in Zimbabwe for women has been a great challenge especially in rural areas. Mary as a councillor has been able to assist many women within her community to have access and control of land. The women have asked their husbands to give them their own pieces of land and produce what they want. More than ten women in the community have benefitted from her interventions and are proud owners of pieces of land on which they can practise various methods of farming.

Besides livestock rearing and practising crop diversification, Maria also has her own seed bank at her homestead. Instead of worrying about where to get seedlings for the next farming season, Maria has resorted to keeping a seedbank where she keeps various seed for the next farming season. This is one of the lessons she learnt from the various workshops and trainings she has attended organised by HEFO.

In Nkayi 1 339 people have managed to benefit from the Strategic Livelihoods Programme and of this number 827 are women. Of the total number of women 511 women have proven to be productive in terms of practising what they had learnt under the strategic livelihoods programme.

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3.0 Strategic Objective 2

Support people living in poverty being 153,000 adult women, young women and men, children to engage the government and corporates for improved social service delivery

3.1 Ray of Hope for residents of Umzingwane

By Silethemba Mathe Women's Institute for Leadership Development (WILD)

Water is life. The scenario is however different for the peri-urban residents of Habane, Esigodini in Umzingwane District, Matabeleland North Province of Zimbabwe who have endured water woes since the Zimbabwe National Water Authority (ZINWA) took over the administration of water in the area from the Municipality of Bulawayo.

For almost a decade now, the residents of Habane sometimes go for a week without running water. They pay a US\$7 fixed water charge per month despite the unavailability of the resource. They also pay up to US\$20 water reconnection fee when they fail to pay for the water which is not there.

Habane residents have only been accessing water during the wee hours of the morning, from 3am to 5am. Such developments have prompted public facilities such as community beer halls to shut down toilet facilities and users of these amenities have resorted to using the bush. It is ironic that all these water problems are a result of lack of capacity by ZINWA to harness adequate water from the abundant Bulawayo City Council reservoirs.

For a long time, nothing has been done concerning the devastating conditions of Habane residents. The water woes affect women more than men as they do most of the house care work. However, residents are signalling a sigh of relieve after attending a training on how to engage the ZINWA provided by the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (WILD), an partner to ActionAid.

Part of WILD's advocacy work is to assist women residents to engage with duty bearers on social service delivery. WILD has facilitated communities in conducting duty bearer engagements such as the '*Where Is My Public Servant (WIMPS)*' workshop held in Habane Community Hall in December 2014. WILD also facilitated a dialogue meeting attended by ZINWA officials and Habane. The meeting saw fruitful deliberations which culminated in the clarification of the water problems. In addition WILD was expected to facilitate the writing of a position paper which was presented to the local Member of Parliament and relevant authorities as the residents continue to push for improved water supply. The MP has since taken the debate to Parliament.

The Habane community engagements with the local authorities and ultimately the mainstreaming of the issues to national level (reaching Parliament) have given the Habane residents, a ray of hope.

3.2 Bulawayo community campaign against pre-paid water meters

By Zibusiso Dube, BPRA

Patricia Tshabalala believes that the year 2014 marked a milestone in efforts by the Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association (BPRA) to empower the residents of Bulawayo to claim their rights from the relevant authorities, especially the Bulawayo City Council (BCC). She argues that residents were finally



Patricia Tshabalala (in green T-Shirt) participating in the demonstration against prepaid water meters that was held in Bulawayo on 14 November 2014. The demonstration was organised by various civil society organisations in Bulawayo, led by Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association.

stirred from their state of apathy and made to realise the importance of participating in public debate concerning service delivery following trainings from BPRD.

Patricia is a member of BPRD's executive council which is the body that essentially governs the operations of the association and ensures the execution of activities in line with the organisation's vision and mission. BPRD is one of ActionAid partners undertaking a an accountability project aimed at empowering residents in the areas of budget formulation and monitoring, enabling citizens to have a say in local authority budget allocations, empowering them to influence service delivery and giving them a conduit to air their views in matters pertaining to their livelihoods.

As part of the project, BPRD held numerous activities in 2014 which included township meetings, women's indabas, budget tracking fora, gender budgeting and social accountability workshops, and training workshops.

The activities were designed to provide platforms for residents to hold elected leaders and service providers to account for their conduct, ensure that residents have access to critical information on issues affecting their lives and empower residents to claim their rights from the relevant duty-bearers as rights holders.

For Patricia Tshabalala, women's indabas and township meetings were key in ensuring that residents critically engage in critical discussions on service delivery with the Bulawayo City Council (BCC), especially on the question of the move by the Bulawayo City Council to introduce prepaid water meters in the city.

The local authority mooted the idea of prepaid water meters in 2013, with councillors passing a motion to introduce the devices in December 2013. Residents were particularly concerned that BCC intended to undertake the prepaid metering project without consulting them. They also raised concerns that prepaid water meters would not be suitable as a water management system due to the country's harsh economic climate. The argument was that use of the devices would lead to poor people having their right to water being flouted as they would not always have the money to purchase water upfront.

"The activities that we held during the course of the year 2014, particularly the women's indabas and township meetings played a key role in conscientising residents on the issue of prepaid water meters and in mobilising residents to take a stand against the decision by the Bulawayo City Council to impose a prepaid water metering system on residents," Tshabalala said.

"The women's indaba's made women in the city realise that major problems with service delivery affect them more than their male counterparts because it is them who would be tasked with finding alternative sources of water if prepaid water meters lead to lack of water as women are the ones tasked with cooking, cleaning and taking care of the household," Tshabalala said.

The argument was that use of the devices would lead to **poor people (who happen to be the majority under Zimbabwe's economic climate) having their right to water being flouted...**

Of these activities, it was the demonstration that was held in November 2014 that caught the attention of the nation. Over 1000 residents participated in the peaceful march, calling upon BCC to rescind its unilateral decision to introduce prepaid water meters in the city. In a city previously known for apathy, with residents not participating in critical discussions on service delivery, this was a mammoth turnout. Waving placards in hand and singing songs, residents called upon BCC to heed their calls to abandon the prepaid metering project, arguing that the timing was not right owing to the state of the country's economy.

Residents have been empowered to demand their rights, in a peaceful manner.

While BCC has not said anything to the effect that it will be rescinding the decision against prepaid water meters, the first step towards demanding accountability in service delivery has been achieved. Residents have been empowered to demand their rights, in a peaceful manner.

Patricia Tshabalala says this has been a refreshing experience, an experience that will motivate her to work harder towards promoting the welfare of the residents of Bulawayo going into 2015 and beyond.

3.3 Masvingo residents in service delivery breakthrough

By Brenda Muronda, Masvingo Resident Ratepayers Association (MURRA)

Residents from Ward 4, Mucheke high density suburb in Masvingo city celebrated the sweet taste of victory after successfully challenging the estimate meter readings which they were being billed by City Council employees for over 2 years. In addition they have received restitution.

The determination displayed by some of the Masvingo Resident Ratepayers Association (MURRA) members cannot go unnoticed. There was and there still is a



Masvingo residents during the demonstrations against estimate meter reading

tendency of taking estimations rather than the actual meter readings and hence leading to overbilling much to the dismay of the residents of Masvingo.

A group of residents from Ward 4 of Masvingo engaged the Masvingo City Council and exposed the problem that had haunted them since 2012 up to November 2013. Notably, Christina Gwenzi, a MURRA member, ran around her neighbourhood to check if her neighbours were facing the same problem. A number of other people in the area were being affected by the same problem. Christina took the opportunity to enlighten others that the problem befalling them needed action otherwise they would continue suffering.

A group of around 12 residents gathered and decided to visit the City Council Offices with the problem. Upon reporting their issue the City Council responded by sending someone to verify and found out that the residents had well documented records of the actual meter readings and the estimations. The council admitted that they had been overbilling residents and promised to rectify the anomaly. However, the residents went for another two months without further

The council admitted that they had been **overbilling** residents and promised to rectify the anomaly.

action from the council and they decided to stand for their rights.

“We threatened to take legal action and pushed the City Council to take action in order to achieve our goal. Council agreed to put the money residents had been overpaid as our advance. We were excused from paying charges until our money was used up”, said Christina.

Credit was also rendered to MURRA, an ActionAid partner for enlightening the residents on issues affecting their day to day lives. MURRA had engaged the residents through capacity building training workshops on human rights, accountability and transparency in local governance which opened up their minds.

“We attended some MURRA training workshops in leadership and advocacy which have helped us in addressing some of our day to day problems as we realised that the solutions are within us,” said the 55-year-old Christina.

Christina further said that the council workers responsible for meter readings were now performing their duties in a straightforward way by taking actual meter readings instead of using estimates and skipping some of the houses in the area. She also urged those still facing the same problem to stand up for their rights and acquire justice.

3.4 Mining community woman becomes a voice for other women

By Darlington Muyambwa, Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association

Myness Matanda (38), is one of the Chiadzwa residents who were forced off their land when diamonds were discovered in her area in 2010.

...council workers responsible for meter readings were **now performing their duties in a straightforward way by taking actual meter readings** instead of using estimates and skipping some of the houses in the area.



Myness Matanda at a demonstration during the Alternative Mining Indaba in Cape Town

Ever since the relocation, Myness has been on the forefront in pushing forward for safe and conducive living conditions for her community.

Originally from Chiadzwa, Myness was forced to relocate along with 600 other families following the commencement of mining operations in December 2010 in the area. These families were moved to Arda Transau by a mining company called Anjin.

Earning a living by selling firewood by the roadside, Myness, a mother of 5 children laments of how the community's cultural rights were violated by the mining companies who cared less of their ancestral land. She bemoans the existence of poverty among a people whose area was lauded for one of the biggest diamond finds of our time four years after being displaced.

"Before the mining spree in our community we lived quite well, had water from wells and survived from our farming produce. Since the displacement our lives were never the same, our agriculture produce is pathetic and we cannot sustain our lives as we used to. The one hectare piece of land that we were given is not enough to plough crops that will sustain our families talk less of surplus that we can sell. The situation we are in is devastating for community members who once could afford living out of their own means." said an emotional Myness.

Access to water is one big problem for the community members who after being relocated to Arda are now expected to pay water bills when they are in a rural setting. Paying for water is not just new for the community members but it is also impossible given that they cannot afford paying for what they think is a "God given resource" and in rural areas people do not pay for water. The Zimbabwe National Water Authority, which was established to manage the country's water resources, has since shut water supply to the community over failure by people to pay their bills.

The march was designed to express concerns of communities so that they get attention from business corporations and governments who gather alone to discuss issues about mining investments in Africa without putting enough attention on the community's Plight.

At the backdrop of these challenges, women in Arda Transau are taking care of their families by merely selling firewood along the Mutare highway. Deforestation is creeping in and the community is faced by the double tragedy of diminished livelihoods as well as the negative impacts of deforestation.

Myness's wish is that the mining companies should take responsibility for their actions and at least intervene in ensuring that they get some form of employment or money to start income generating projects and ensure the provision of adequate social services.

"My life's journey is dedicated in ensuring that as women our rights are respected and that our status is restored," said Myness who besides having been victimised and threatened to be arrested, is still determined to ensure that her community enjoys environmental, economic, social and cultural rights which include benefiting from the natural resources.

Myness is one of the over 400 women who have participated in the different trainings under the Fair, Green and Global (FGG) project. ZELA with the support of ActionAid has been implementing the FGG project, which among other focus areas seeks to empower women in knowing their social, cultural, economic and environmental rights and becoming active in defending these rights.

In the past Myness participated in Alternative Mining Indabas, organised by ZELA. Mining Indabas are attended by various stakeholders in the mining sector and discuss issues affecting communities. Mayness participated at a Regional Mining Indaba held in South Africa recently and it was a life changing chance for Myness who had an opportunity to sit in a panel and narrate her ordeal being an activist in a community where rights violations especially for women are the order of the day.



Myness Matanda sharing experiences on relocation during a panel at the Alternative Mining Indaba in Cape Town

At the Regional Indaba Myness spoke passionately about how she has developed into an activist of community rights as a result of the capacity she gained from the various programmes and trainings. She shared how life in Arda continues to be a challenge for a woman and how she would want such regional platforms such as the Alternative Indaba to push governments and mining companies to start prioritising the rights of communities.

She also took part in a march organised during the Alternative Mining Indaba. The march was designed to express concerns of communities so that they get attention from business corporations and governments who gather alone to discuss issues about mining investments in Africa without putting enough attention on the community's Plight.

3.5 The forgotten “Black Diamond” community of Mutoko

By Darlington Muyambwa, ZELA

Mined in certain areas for over 24 years, the black granite of Mutoko has not yielded meaningful benefits for the community. If one visits Mutoko area on any typical day, it is impossible to fail to take note of the many trucks transporting black granite to Harare and beyond. Mutoko is in Mashonaland East Province of Zimbabwe.

Off the Harare-Nyamapanda highway headed towards the black granite mining sites, one is greeted by a heavily damaged gravel road that has been left in a deplorable state due to years of movement of heavy haulage trucks transporting black granite from the mining sites.

Mr. Kind, a villager explained how mining companies only grade the roads in a manner that allows easy mobility of their trucks and not for other normal cars.

In the loud cadence of indigenization, beneficiation and community share ownership schemes, **black granite for some reason has completely been left out of such conversations** within our narrow **focus on areas where diamond and platinum** mining is taking place.



Dangerous open pits created by black granite mining in Mutoko

In some areas, the trucks transporting granite establish new paths to avoid the damaged roads for purposes of continuity of their business.

In the loud cadence of indigenization, beneficiation and community share ownership schemes, black granite for some reason has completely been left out of such conversations within our narrow focus on areas where diamond and platinum mining is taking place. “Where are these community share ownership trusts that we hear government talk about?” laments one villager. He went on to say “With black granite mining having gone on for years and practically taking away our mountains, we are yet to see any meaningful development to our community”.

The same sentiments were echoed by another community member who felt strongly about employment opportunities and said: “Women are not employed by the mining companies whilst the sour relations between communities and the mining

...granite mining has brought nothing but more problems from road damages, cracking of homes, unbearable dust and violations of sacred places...

companies mean that they cannot even benefit from simple things like fetching water from the mines' boreholes or even sell their produce to the mines. The men employed by the mining companies are not from Mutoko and they are impregnating women and later dump them with children to take care of. They are also infected with HIV."

With over seven companies mining granite in the Mutoko area the community is at pains and feels betrayed that no development has come their way. For them granite mining has brought nothing but more problems from road damages, cracking of homes, unbearable dust and violations of sacred places without due respect of local leadership.

"We have gone for years trying to get into a relationship with them (mining companies) but they seem not to care for anything that has to do with our welfare issues including the effects that their operations are causing," said a visibly angry villager Mr. Kowo.

A tour around the different villages showed one prominent effect of the mining activities, which is the cracking of houses and school blocks as a result of the quarry blasting. This situation poses a risk to dwellers as they live in constant fear of buildings falling on them any time.

"I am afraid that the cracks on my house will continue and eventually pose a danger to my family. All I want is for the company to take responsibility and remediate the damage", said a 79-year-old Jefta Karimazondo who is a retired teacher.

Loss of human life is one of the biggest issues that the community has had to grapple with as a result of the mining operations. A visibly heartbroken Leonard Karimazondo explained the ordeal that befell him following the death of his eight-year old daughter Thelma who on her way from seeing her

At least six people have died since 1998 through drowning in open and unprotected pits/dams following blasting. ... Loss of life saw people getting a paltry **US\$100 only for funeral expenses.**

mother (Revai Kanyandura) fell in a pool of water that resulted from an open pit that was left unattended following mining activities. At least six people have died since 1998 through drowning in open and unprotected pits/dams following blasting. Some mine workers died through blasting accidents at the various mining sites. From the people interviewed during an ActionAid and Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association (ZELA) tour of Mutoko mining areas in March 2014, no compensation was received from the mining companies that are there. Loss of life saw people getting a paltry US\$100 only for funeral expenses.

ZELA, in partnership with ActionAid has since 2011, conducted various programmes in mining communities as part of the efforts of ensuring that marginalized communities assert and claim their environmental, economic, social and cultural rights. So far ZELA has conducted trainings at community level in Mutoko, done researches on impacts of mining to guide their advocacy work with parliamentarians and other mining sector stakeholders. ZELA has worked with members of the Portfolio Committees on mining, members of the mainstream media in their bid to promote environmental justice.

3.6 The sky is the limit for female youth councillor

By Thandolewonkosi Sibindi National Youth Development Trust (NYDT)

Jacqueline Ndlovu (30) is the youth Councillor of Ward 9, Mpopoma, in Bulawayo the second largest city of Zimbabwe. She is one of the 29 youth councillors who have benefitted from ActionAid and National Youth Development Trust's (NYDT) leadership and capacity building trainings. NYDT is a partner to ActionAid.

Ndlovu's leadership journey did not begin at NYDT but at the tender age of 16, when her parents left Zimbabwe for South Africa. As the eldest child she was left to look after



Jacqueline Ndlovu voicing her opinion at one of NYDT's platforms

her siblings, and became the head of the family. Such a huge responsibility resulted in her taking part in burial society meetings as well as community meetings. The then ward councillor for Mpopoma, Elmon Mpofu, saw Ndlovu's leadership potential through such meetings and then introduced her to NYDT in 2011.

At NYDT, Ndlovu underwent two Leadership trainings in 2012 where young people were taught about the fundamentals of leadership. The first training was done when she was an ordinary member of NYDT. The second training was done in 2013, when she was elected to become the youth councillor for her ward. However, Ndlovu attributes her growth and confidence

to the Young Women's Study circles she attended. She says these platforms motivated her and gave her a chance to lead a group of young women in her ward. In July 2012, she became aware of problems faced by young women in her community leading to the birth of her brain child "Usizo lwamakhosikazi" (*Help for the girl child*).

"Usizo lwamakhosikazi' is a women's development initiative formed to help young women in the community to be financially independent as well as to alleviate hunger in their homes. It offers skills trainings to young women and gives them capital to venture into different projects such as the production of floor polish, candles, peanut butter and poultry," she said.

Ndlovu continues to use the skills acquired from the leadership trainings facilitated by NYDT. However her leadership journey has not been without challenges. Her participation and enthusiasm in community development has had her being labeled as a woman of loose morals.

"Being active in development work sometimes entails being away from home for certain periods of time and this was sometimes viewed as being a loose woman. Good women were said to be those who spend time at home playing domestic roles. I had to interact with the local leadership such as the councillor and people from political parties and this was sometimes viewed in bad light," she said.

Jacqueline also plays different leadership roles in other organisations. In February 2013 she became the Ward 9, Bulawayo Secretary for Transparency International Zimbabwe's Accountability monitoring Committee and in August the same year she became the Youth representative for the Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association. On the 20th of January 2015 Jacqueline was voted in as the School Development Committee Chairperson at Mpumelelo Primary school where her son is in Grade 0.

Her dream to be an agent of change has kept her going despite the challenges she has encountered. She attributes her success to NYDT and Senator Michael Carter who she says made Usizo Iwamakhosikazi a reality. She says although she has limited funds she will continue striving to ensure that the lives of several women are changed. Her greatest desire is to see young women breaking away from the cycle of poverty in their communities. ActionAid in partnership with NYDT and other partners targeting the youth have managed to reach out to 2 432 female and 2000 male youth of the ages between 15 and 30 in year 2014 in Bulawayo.

3.7 Nyanga “Roaring lion” exposes child rights violations

By Noreen Bindura and Olivia Muza, Simukai Child Protection

The sound of the ‘roaring lion’ is louder and clear at Nyabeze Primary School, found in Ward 17, Nyanga District, in the Manicaland Province of Zimbabwe.



Members of the child rights club during one of their meetings

Something is unique about this ‘roaring lion’ which does not only roar but unearth violations usually swept under the carpet in schools.

The “roaring lion” is a child rights club for Nyabeze Primary School which was formed in November 2013. It provides a platform where children can speak out freely through a suggestion box. The suggestion box initiative was introduced following incidents of child rights violations experienced at the school and the failure to speak out by students who were not being heard and unable to participate in decision making processes at school.

Through the help of Nyabeze school staff, the suggestion box was launched in January 2014. The aim is to stop abuses, in homes, schools and the community and to create safe and conducive learning environments for children. The anonymity of the box also protects the children from further victimisation. In the suggestion box, children highlight the child rights violations happening in their community as well as identifying the perpetrators without disclosing their names.

One of the Nyabeze school students Fadzai (12) expresses relief in knowing that this initiative will help them confront their problems and being able to be heard,

“My step mother told me to never speak out in the presence of visitors. When I want to speak she interferes and tells me, *‘wakangwarisa kunge pfambi’* ‘you behave like a prostitute’ so the suggestion box will help me speak out on issues that I once was not allowed to participate in.” she said.

Among the critical issues exposed by the Roaring lion suggestion box initiative was the issue of the girls being denied the right to education by their parents or guardians from the Apostolic Sect religion. Some children reported being forced to participate in

The suggestion box initiative was introduced following **incidents of child rights violations experienced at the school and the failure to speak out by students who were not being heard** and unable to participate in decision making processes.

domestic work activities during school time; tending cattle, working in fields, taking care of siblings and ill relatives.

The suggestion box has so far revealed five cases of bullying, stealing, absenteeism and exposure to sexual activities. Cases reported through the suggestion box are dealt with at the school level by teachers and school heads and community level by parents, teachers and village committees and heads. Cases beyond the jurisdiction of the school and the community are referred to relevant stakeholders through the Police. A team (including child rights representatives and their Patron) trained on confidentiality opens the suggestion box every day and collects new cases. The suggestion box has not only exposed rights violations, but has also revived community participation, networking and associations centred on child rights protection.

The child rights capacity building on the right to education was delivered by Simukai Child Protection Programme, an ActionAid partner.

The 'roaring lion' seeks to scale-up its child rights campaign in Nyabeze and requires educational materials including t-shirts, flyers, posters and magazines with child rights messages to enable it to reach out to many. There are also plans to start income generation activities, to enable the 'roaring lion' to assist children who drop out of school due to failure to pay fees.

3.8 Junior school development committees a force to reckon with

*By Richard Musarara, Diocese of Mutare
Community Care Program*

Regina Coeli junior School Development Committee (SDC) is a true testimony of a blooming flower that beautifies the coming future. Located in Ward 13 of

The suggestion box has so far **revealed 5 cases** of bullying, stealing, absenteeism and exposure to sexual activities.



Child led School Development Committee proudly fetching water from the new water pipe which they advocated for

Nyanga District in Manicaland Province, the school enrolment is about 230 children. Due to limited facilities the school has one classroom for each stream from grade 1-7 which means fewer students are enrolled.

The junior School Development Committee (SDC) was formed in 2013 when it was noticed that school pupils were not participating in decision making concerning the running of school activities. The junior SDC explores the concerns of other children, encourages cleanliness as well as scout for orphans who are not able to pay their school fees so that the responsible authorities can help them.

Diocese of Mutare Community Care Program, (DOMCCP) in partnership with ActionAid capacitated the school on the formation of junior SDC. The senior SDC found it necessary for the school to have a child led committee which mainly focuses on the children's needs, thoughts and wishes without the senior SDC imposing decisions on the children.

Some of the notable achievements that the junior SDC had managed to facilitate include the school roof repainting, toilets repairs, the school yard fencing and development flower beds at the school to make it attractive. Having realized the students' needs highlighted by the junior SDC, the senior SDC organised the painting of classroom blocks and the roofs.

"We realised the need for our school to be fenced because there were a lot of stray animals coming into our school yard and they were disturbing us," said Panashe a member of the junior SDC.

Regina Coeli Primary School Junior SDC furthermore approached the senior SDC over the payment of some of the less fortunate schoolmates' fees. The senior SDC then discussed the issue with DOMCCP representatives and the school fees were paid.

The Junior SDC promises to work very hard to develop their school. "We need a national flag for our school because some of the students here at Regina do not even have a single idea of what it looks like and the meaning of the different colours. It is our hope as the junior SDC that the school will buy the flag soon," says Tsitsi, a member of the Junior SDC.

The students are responsible for selecting whom they want to represent them. The **committee explores the concerns of other children, encourages cleanliness as well as scout for orphans** who are not able to pay their school fees



Alice Kasinamunda reflecting on traumatic past experiences caused by poor service delivery

4.0 Strategic Objective 3

Ensure that 300,000 women and girls can break the cycle of poverty and violence, build economic alternatives and claim control over their bodies.

4.1 Dreams of brighter days for women and girls in the city

By Tsaurai Kambunda, ActionAid and Peter Kamusiya, AIDS Counselling Trust (ACT)

Alice Kasinamunda, aged 47 from Ward 39, Dzivaresekwa, Harare Province in Zimbabwe, has survived some traumatic experiences due to poor water and electricity supply in the high density suburb. In May 2013 her 16

year old daughter was molested while fetching water at night at a nearby borehole which is close to a beer hall in the community.

The Harare City Council has for a long time been failing to provide consistent water supplies due to a budget crunch facing Zimbabwe. Communities have resorted to fetching water at boreholes installed by non-governmental organisations in liaison with the City Council. Unfortunately the boreholes are limited and this has forced women and girls to fetch water even at night due to queues, exposing them to all forms of public violence.

Alice has reported the matter (her daughter's case) to the police whom she suspects did not do thorough investigations resulting in the perpetrator being given an entirely suspended sentence. To this day, her daughter who is now 18 is afraid to be outside their home after 7 pm. Alice said: "I felt so hopeless; I thought if I reported the case to the police I would get justice for my daughter. The police let me down".

Alice's other ordeal came in July 2014 when she left the house to buy a candle at 9pm and was arrested for being suspected to be a prostitute and loitering at night. She was detained overnight and released in the morning without any charges leveled against her. The Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) has failed to provide consistent power supplies in Dzivarasekwa and nationally. For many years the company has failed to produce enough energy to meet demands. Zimbabwe's difficult economic situation causes part of the problems, as coal for power stations is not be produced in sufficient amounts.

According to a baseline study conducted by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development in 2013, 68% of women in Zimbabwe have reported that they had experienced some form of violence during their life time. Zimbabwe has a population of 13 million and of this 52% are women.

Another study conducted by ActionAid Zimbabwe in Epworth (a peri-urban area) in 2014, indicated that in poor peri-urban areas close to Harare women and girls suffer a lot of violence in public spaces and there is a close linkage between the level of violence and the state of infrastructure in the area and service delivery.

Dzivarasekwa, is a high density area experiencing extreme poverty levels. The township was created in the colonial Zimbabwe as an area to accommodate maids and gardeners who worked in nearby low density suburbs. These houses were not meant for families but single domestic workers. However, they now house huge families. Facilities are inadequate, and violence against women and girls is rife.

ActionAid Zimbabwe conducted a Safe Cities Campaign community sensitization meeting in December 2014 in Dzivarasekwa in which Alice attended along with 300 other women and girls. Issues regarding women's sexual health and gender based violence in public spaces were discussed. The sensitization meeting enabled her to analyze her environment with regards to gender based violence in public spaces.

Alice said "I have been jeered for dressing improperly by unemployed youth sitting by the road side as well as touts at the bus terminus." Most girls and women are subjected to gender based violence in high density suburbs like Dzivarasekwa due to a number of factors. Firstly the erratic supply of municipal water has forced women and girls to queue for hours to get a turn to fetch water. Some succumb to sexual advances from men in exchange for first preference to fetch water. Some girls are raped when they go to fetch water at night. There are no street lights making women and girls more vulnerable especially when walking at night.

Alice has volunteered to become a peer educator for the AIDS Counseling Trust (ACT), an ActionAid Zimbabwe partner along with 29 other women and

"I have been
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four men as part of her efforts to contribute change to her situation under the Safe Cities Campaign. She hopes that through participation on community watch groups for violation of women rights, she will learn to defend her rights and also bring peace of mind to women and girls in her community. She hopes that women will feel free to walk after hours in public spaces with no fear of harassment from touts. Her vision is that water sources will be safe to access at any time of the day, ZESA will provide consistent power supplies and the police will be more responsive to issues that affect women and girls in Dzivaresekwa.

4.2 Girls claim their rights in sexual reproductive health programmes

By Winnet Kaugare Jowa, FACT Nyanga

Reports from the Ministry of Health and Child welfare and District AIDS council indicate that teenage pregnancies in the Nyanga are alarmingly increasing. An average of five girls dropped out of school per term as a result of teenage pregnancy in 2014 in Nyanga according to the Ministry's District Office. These teenagers experience birth delivery complications which put their lives and that of their babies at risk.

Sexually transmitted infections are also high among the teenage girls. The teenage girls end up in these risky situations because they lack information on their sexual reproductive health rights. It is generally taboo to discuss sexuality issues with children at most homes in Nyanga due to social and cultural norms which are conservative. Hence parents do not freely discuss with their children and this exposes children in particular girls to all sorts risks such as contracting sexually transmitted diseases and teen pregnancies.

An iceberg was melted in 2014 when a total of 847 girls from Nyanga attended sexual reproductive

Two days after the SRHR training, some of the trained girls reported a case to the police of a teenage girl who had been forced into a marriage.

health programmes, a first for the Nyanga community. The programme in form of a sexual reproductive health rights (SRHR) awareness workshop for adolescent girls in schools, was organised by ActionAid partner, Family AIDS Caring Trust (FACT) Nyanga in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Child Welfare. The teenage girls who attended the workshop were from Wards 6, 7, 19 and 21 of Nyanga District.

The girls were educated about their sexual reproductive health rights, sensitised on the effects of teenage pregnancies such as delivery complication that lead to death, dropping out of school and unsafe and unlawful abortions that put their health at risk as well as suicide. Discussions also covered topics on sexually transmitted infections, signs and symptoms. The young girls were encouraged to guard their sexual reproductive rights jealously and report any cases of abuse.

The workshops saw five girls coming out and getting treated of sexually transmitted infections. "I was living with an infection for about a year now. I never knew that it was a sexually transmitted infection. I thought the rash and itching on my private part would go on its own. I am grateful for your training because it enlightened me. I am very happy because I am free from this infection" said Fadzai (not her real name for confidentiality) after she was treated of a sexually transmitted infection.

Two days after the SRHR training, some of the trained girls reported a case to the police of a teenage girl who had been forced into a marriage. The perpetrator was arrested and sentenced to jail for 24 months for statutory rape.

4.3 Apostolic sect man advocates for women's rights

By Linda Chimboza, Batsiranayi Programme

Magume Richard (48) is a husband to two wives and a father to ten children (6 girls and 4 boys). He is from the

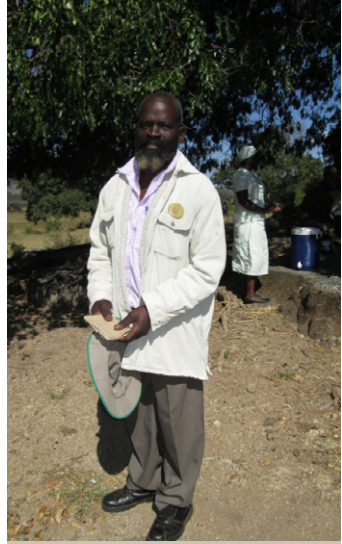
Apostolic sect residing in Magume village, Ward 28 in Nyazura, Manicaland province in Zimbabwe. He provides for his family through farming.

The Apostolic sect is an indigenous religion prevalent in Zimbabwe and has allegedly been associated with violating women and children's rights. Those who believe in this religion have been accused of "illegally" preventing their children and women from accessing health care and education. They have also been associated with the promotion of early girl child marriages.

In late 2013, Richard attended a meeting on creation of awareness on the Domestic Violence Act which if used helps men and women to deal with gender based violence (GBV). The meeting was organised by Batsiranayi Programme, a partner to ActionAid.

"After attending the meeting, I started thinking about GBV issues in my community and within my family. I then decided to allocate portions of my land to my wives for gardening. They now grow their own vegetables for sale and use the money for their own needs," said Richard. Men control the land under the Apostolic sect religion.

"I am working hard in my community to raise awareness on domestic violence issues. I have assisted women affected by GBV. My support to survivors of GBV has resulted in my popularity in the community and I was elected a treasurer for a health committee at our local clinic. When you are a health worker you work with children and women. This has been a challenging post for me since my church doctrine (Apostolic sect) does not allow our members to seek medical treatment from clinics. "However, I decided to accept the post. Because of the respect within the community as the health worker, I became a village head and member of the ward development committee," said Richard.



Magume Richard

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