

ActionAid Zimbabwe | NEWSLETTER  
MARCH - APRIL  
2020

## A Call For Government

To Prioritise  
Women's Rights  
As Covid-19  
Takes Its Toll  
In Zimbabwe





**Joy Mabenge**  
**ActionAid Zimbabwe**  
**Country Director**

ActionAid Zimbabwe (AAZ) acknowledges the actions taken by the Government of Zimbabwe to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 Pandemic (Coronavirus). However, we believe that more could be done with regards women's rights, said ActionAid Country Director Joy Mabenge in a press statement.

Mr. Mabenge acknowledged that the current lockdown imposed by government has reduced transmission but remains a cause of concern as it risks compounding already existing gender inequalities and exacerbating Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Unpaid Care Work (UCW). For instance, the Herald of 13 April 2020 reported an increase in the cases of GBV in Zimbabwe as a direct result of the lockdown. It is good that families are spending more time together in confined spaces, however women now face the burden of unpaid care work such as cooking, fetching water and taking care of children, the elderly and sick. This has made working from home virtually impossible for most working women.

ActionAid Zimbabwe is therefore calling upon the Government of Zimbabwe (GoZ) to prioritize the protection and promotion of the rights of women and girls by instituting comprehensive mechanisms that prevent and address abuse and discrimination in the national COVID-19 response strategies. One of AAZ recommendations is that in the same manner the government has setup a toll-free number to report COVID-19 cases, it should also effectively use a similar toll-free number to report GBV and provide referrals to survivors seeking immediate assistance.

**Click the following link for more on the AAZ statement**

<https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/news/2020/call-government-prioritise-womens-rights-covid-19-takes-toll-zimbabwe>





## FOOD DISTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITIES FACING STARVATION IN THE FACE OF COVID-19

AAZ staff members braved COVID-19 during the months of March and April 2020 to distribute food to 92 000 people in Nyanga and Makoni. This was part of the organisation's response to the food crisis that has crippled Zimbabwe and the rest of Southern Africa amid the Novel Coronavirus pandemic. Staff and communities observe the COVID-19 prevention measures such as social distancing, wearing of face masks and washing of hands regularly with alcohol-based sanitizers.

More than seven million people in Zimbabwe are facing food shortages emanating from the worst drought the Southern African Region experienced since the last 35 years. This figure is projected to increase to 8.8 million as the food crisis continues to deteriorate according to an AAZ Food Crisis 2020 Policy Brief. The outbreak of the COVID-19 in Zimbabwe with 34 cases and four deaths as at 30 April 2020, entails the exacerbation of poverty of vulnerable communities. An increase of people with COVID-19 means the vulnerability of people living in poverty will continue to deepen as some of the protection measures cannot apply to communities concerned with finding food on the table for the families. Women, people living in poverty and the most marginalised groups will be hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more details about the food crisis and the effects of COVID-19 on vulnerable groups in Zimbabwe, **open the following link with the AAZ Food Crisis 2020 Policy Brief**

<https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/publications/2020/zimbabwe-food-crisis-2020-policy-brief>



**Maintaining social distance during food distribution in Nyanga to reduce the spread of COVID-19 as part of the Lean Season Assistance Implemented by AAZ with support from the World Food Programme**





# POST COVID-19, GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCTS SHOULD SUBSIDE AS GOVERNMENTS ARE CALLED TO PRIORITISE WOMEN AND GIRLS

BY ANDREW KARAMAGI  
YOUTH ADVISOR  
ACTIONAID ZIMBABWE/ZAMBIA



“War is the midwife of an old society, pregnant with a new one”. This is the lens that can be suggested to view the runaway virus that has upended life as we know it. The pathogen has wrought staggering death tolls and wrecked untold destruction of livelihoods. But the most searing indictment that the contagion has issued can be viewed against the dominant capitalist mode of production which now wants to eat its cake and have it.

Through its high priests in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and robber barons in the corporate sector, capitalism has over the years emasculated the state but is now demanding the intervention of the same hapless state to save it (from itself). National treasuries, ministries and departments are under pressure to conduct bailouts, provide stimulus packages and tax rebates for the notorious “too big to fail.” As ActionAid, we are saying there is need to support women and girls who suffer the most because of

structural causes of economic exclusion. The same goes with the small and medium scale enterprises and smallholder farmers run by young women who are the engines of any developing economy should therefore be prioritised by policy makers and governments.

**Click the following link on more about the article**

<https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/stories/2020/after-covid-19-gross-domestic-product-should-subside>



# OUR CANDLES ARE BURNING ON BOTH ENDS COVID-19 AND UNEMPLOYMENT

BY FUTURE KARICHI  
ACTIVISTA ZIMBABWE



Twenty-one days of lockdown appear to be a logical step to stop the spread of COVID-19. For young people, women, and girls though; the effects of the lockdown have made survival both precarious and unbearable! Precarious because so much fear abounds and unbearable because our livelihoods have been disrupted. The streets from which we eke a living are out-of-bounds just like our customers who are in their homes. As such, we cannot vend our wares or foods and have no immediate feasible alternatives.

With little or no savings, the consequent commodity price hikes which were triggered by the lockdown have condemned us to a bleak future. For those whose businesses rely on the internet to advertise, communicate with suppliers and customers, the soaring cost of internet bundles means we cannot thrive. Given that some young people are breadwinners of our families, we are at our wits end. Moreover, in patriarchal settings like in our

society, the responsibility to shoulder care work in the home only becomes heavier during crises like this one.

**Read more here**

[https://zimbabwe.  
actionaid.org/  
stories/2020/  
our-candles-are-  
burning-both-ends](https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/stories/2020/our-candles-are-burning-both-ends)



# COVID-19

COUGH OR SNEEZE INTO A TISSUE OR YOUR ELBOW. IF YOU USE A TISSUE, THROW IT IN THE BIN RIGHT AWAY. KEEP YOUR HANDS OUT OF YOUR MOUTH, NOSE, AND EYES TO AVOID SPREAD OF THE VIRUS



Wet your hands with clean running water



Apply enough soap to cover wet hands



Scrub all surfaces of the hands – including backs of hands, between fingers and under nails – for at least 20 seconds



Rinse thoroughly with running water



Dry hands with a clean, dry cloth or a single-use towel.



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# ACTIVISTA UTILIZE DIGITAL ALTERNATIVE DURING THE LOCKDOWN PERIOD

MEET, LEARN AND SHARE PODCAST WITH JULIANA MAKONISE E01  
A CLOSER LOOK INTO THE LIFE OF JOY MABENGE, ACTIONAID ZIMBABWE

**MEET  
LEARN &  
SHARE**

WITH JULIANA MAKONISE

A GLOBAL PLATFORM ZIMBABWE PODCAST

**GLOBAL PLATFORMS**  
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com/gpzim/  
meet-share-and-  
learn-podcast-  
episode-01-with-  
joy-mabenge](https://soundcloud.com/gpzim/meet-share-and-learn-podcast-episode-01-with-joy-mabenge)

The Meet, Share and Learn Podcast is a Global Platform Zimbabwe youth-led monthly podcast hosted by Juliana Makonise, a member of Activista Zimbabwe. It seeks to challenge shrinking civic space by creating a platform where young people can learn from the lives of leading experts in different fields and sectors, to inspire them to act on common causes. Covid-19 disabled people to meet face to face. Therefore the podcast, which is digital, made it possible for them to meet through the Face to Face, Share and Learn Global Platform Youth Hub activity. It is recorded on Ringr, an online platform which enables people in different locations to record podcasts in studio quality, as if they were in the same room, and is published on the Global Platform Zimbabwe SoundCloud account.

During the first episode, Juliana Makonise interviewed Joy Mabenge, affectionately known as Kule, which is a local slang meaning Uncle. Joy is an activist in his own right and the Country Director of ActionAid Zimbabwe. Kule Joy gave a narrative of his activism journey, the obstacles he faced and challenged young people not to sit and wait for change to happen as an accident. He emotionally challenged young people to recognise that they are the drivers of change and that they need to take action on issues that affect them as change will never come on a silver platter. This episode was released on the 3rd of April 2020 and is available on the Global Platform Zimbabwe SoundCloud account.





## WOMEN AND THE BURDEN OF UNPAID CARE WORK DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC



**The C-19 Show** **EPISODE 2**

A GLOBAL PLATFORM ZIMBABWE PODCAST

**GLOBAL PLATFORMS**  
NETWORK FOR YOUTH-LED ACTIVISM **act:onaid**

For more details, listen here

<https://soundcloud.com/gpzim/the-c-19-show-e02-women-and-the-burden-of-unpaid-care-work-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>

The Second Episode of the COVID-19 (C -19) youth-led fortnight podcast by Global Platform Zimbabwe and supported by AAZ focused on women and the burden of unpaid care work in the face of lockdowns. Published on the Global Platform Zimbabwe SoundCloud account, the episode was released on 11 April 2020. This discussion was hosted by Happymore Chibvura, the Youth Hub Coordinator for AAZ who interviewed three guests on the show. These included Fadzai Traquino, the National Director of Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), Alfred Towo, AAZ Digital Programming Inspirator and Melissa Museka, a member of Activista Zimbabwe. This episode of the C-19 show explored what unpaid care work is in the context of COVID-19 lockdowns and proposed recommendations on how the burden

of women on unpaid care work can be dealt with by governments and the general populace. Major highlights in this episode are the facts from the World Health Organisation representing women as the majority of workers in the health and social sectors fighting to curb the pandemic. There is also a personal experience shared by Alfred Towo.

### Also read more

<http://kubatana.net/2020/04/10/covid-19-zim-lockdown-gendered-impacts-implications-and-effects-on-women-and-girls-as-primary-caregivers/>





## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY COMMEMORATIONS AS AAZ JOINS WOMEN'S GLOBAL STRIKE



**AAZ Women's Forum members showing a symbol of climbing up through raising their hands, as part of celebrations of the international Women's Day (IWD) in March 2020**

As part of the AAZ Women's Forum vision to create an empowered group of female staff at AAZ who believe in sisterhood, the forum joined other ActionAid International (AAI) sister organizations and 100 other organizations across the world in participating in a Women's Global Strike on 12 March 2020. This was a collective action globally to commemorate the International Women's Day (IWD) 2020 organized annually in March.

Women from AAZ joined AAI solidarity actions by downing their tools to mark the AAZ fundamental commitment to women's rights and feminist movements across the world. The Women's Global Strike marks 25 years since the Fourth World Conference for Women and the Beijing Platform for Action. It is a response to the promises made by our governments to advance equality, development and peace for all women whose rights 25 years ago were not recognised. Twenty five years on, we are reminded that women and girls continue to suffer discrimination and violence in every part of the world, the workplace included.

The global strike also aimed to highlight the importance of women's roles within the workplace as AAZ male staff were seen taking on fellow

female counterparts' work roles on this day. Women staff also shared their experiences on the strike on twitter in a bid to raise awareness on "Decent work and living wages for all". This is a build up on the International Labour Organization (ILO 190) which is pushing for the right of everyone to a world of work free from gender-based violence and harassment.



**AAZ Country Director, Joy Mabenge sitting at the reception desk, performing duties on behalf of Blessing Mutanga (AAZ Administration Intern and member of the Women's Forum) who took part in the Global AAI Strike to commemorate IWD 2020**





# MAINSTREAMING DISABILITY IN SOCIAL JUSTICE WORK

MEET TSEPANG NARE, A BEACON OF  
HOPE AND INSPIRATION



**Tsepang Nare (at the centre) with (from left) Buhle Benkosi, Lorraine Ndlovu both from Activista Zimbabwe and Farisai Madhaka (AAZ Gender and Advocacy Officer in white)**



**Tsepang Nare**

He is Tsepang Thembanani Nare (25) from Emakandeni, Bulawayo. He operates just like any able-bodied person does despite using a wheelchair all his life. He exercises a compelling charm which inspires dedication, hope and inspiration in other young persons. Tsepang, the Activista Zimbabwe Disability Coordinator and passionate human rights activist, has challenged the Parliament of Zimbabwe, the government and civic society organisations to come up with disability policies to ensure the inclusion of people with disability in mainstream development. Tsepang is a certified Christian counsellor, a motivational speaker and writer. He exudes energy and is known in the Activista circles as "Tsepang the Legend". He is

popular for his dedication in promoting social justice for excluded people among them, those with disability and women.

**For more details about Tsepang's story click the link below**

<https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/stories/2020/mainstreaming-disability-social-justice-work>

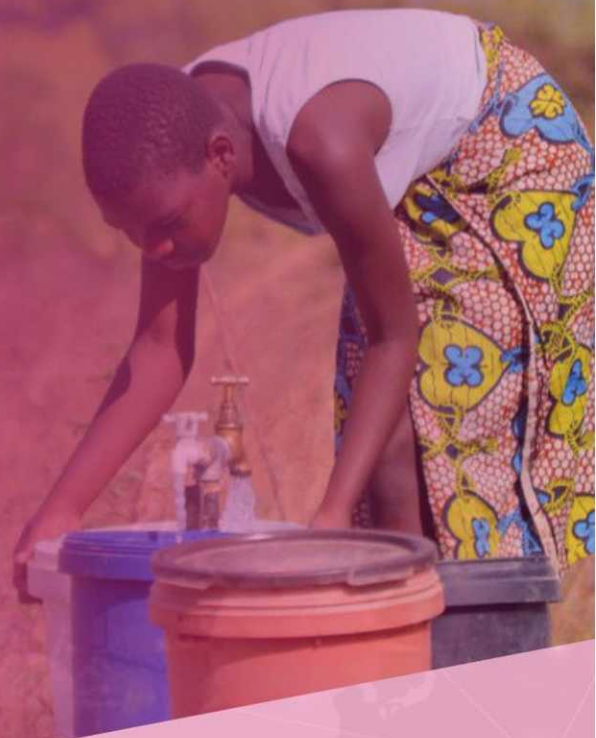




# COVID-19

## REALITIES: WATER AND SANITATION HYGIENE

Water and Sanitation Hygiene are a prerequisite in the fight against the spread of the novel Coronavirus. The government is implored to urgently provide consistent supply of clean, potable and safe water in all residential areas.



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# ACCESS TO WATER REDUCES UNPAID CARE WORK ON RURAL WOMEN

BY OBERT MHLANGA  
SIMUKAI CHILD PROTECTION  
PROGRAMME

**Eneta Nyamakwere from Mapako Nyanga filling her buckets at a borehole supported by Simukai Child Protection, an ActionAid partner**



“Water is life”, a common expression that we use to value water for human survival. People from Dzoko Village, Mapako Ward 18 in Nyanga District, have been failing to access water for a long time. Their community borehole sunk in 1987, which they have heavily depended on all along had not been properly working for five years. The borehole served both the community of 40 households and Tamunesa Primary School, a nearby school that has an enrolment of 284 pupils (150 female and 139 male) and 11 staff members (6 female and 5 male).

With no adjacent rivers flowing to provide water, the community has had to rely on the borehole for portable household use, gardening and livestock. Simukai Child Protection Programme with the support from AAZ secured materials for the rehabilitation of the borehole. The community provided pump minders and labour towards the

rehabilitation of the borehole. The community now has access to clean water and are securing their livelihoods such as nutritional gardens.

Eneta Nyamakwere (31) from Dzokoto Village said the rehabilitation of the borehole has reduced the burden of unpaid care work on women, since they had to walk for over four kilometers to and from to fetch water. However, now that the borehole is functioning, the women no longer face the brunt of spending time searching for water, thus focusing on more productive work.

The availability of water has made it possible for community members to resume the school feeding programme at Tamunesa Primary School. The programme had been stopped because of poor hygiene due to the unavailability of water to use for cooking porridge.





# WHEELCHAIR GIVES GIRL RIGHT TO EDUCATION

BY MARTIN KANENGONI  
DIOCESE OF MUTARE COMMUNITY  
CARE PROGRAMME

**Ruvarashe in the wheelchair and her friends  
(from left) Gertrude (15) and Nomatter (16).**



Ruvarashe (15) from Kambudzai area is living with a special disability. She is crippled and requires a wheelchair for mobility. She stays with her parents who are small holder farmers. Born in a family of two, Ruvarashe completed her primary education and came out with 18 units in her grade seven and was enrolled for her secondary education at Kambudzi secondary. Eighteen units means she is an average child in line with Zimbabwe primary education standards.

Ruvarashe could not interact with others at school since she had to be carried from one point to the other by her friends due to lack of a wheelchair. Ruvarashe is brought to and from school by her father who uses a bicycle. Sometimes she is carried by her mother or her friends on their backs. Ruvarashe does not want to miss school.

Ruvarashe's insistence to go to school has paid off. She was identified by her school Child

Protection Committee, comprising other school pupils. Ruvarashe also caught the attention of some teachers at her school through her membership of a Guidance and Counselling Group on Comprehensive Sexuality Education at her school. The Child Protection Committee and the Guidance and Counselling groups are initiatives supported under the Empowering Girls to Overcome Barriers to Education Programme being implemented in Nyanga by three AAZ partners, one of them being the Dioceses of Community Care Programme (DOMCCP). The two groups are supported through trainings on children's rights as part of the Empowering Girls to Overcome Barriers to Education Programme.

The Guidance and Counselling and the Child Protection Committee members teamed up and approached officials from the Ministry of Health and Child Care, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and the Department of Social Welfare.



They requested that Ruvarashe be provided with a wheelchair. This resulted in the Ministry of Health and Child Care organizing a wheelchair for her.

The wheelchair has enabled Ruvarashe to freely navigate around the school and can now attend the school assembly which she could not do before. This has reduced the burden of care work on Ruvarashe's friends who used to carry her around at school. However, at present the wheelchair is being kept at the school because it has small wheels to navigate the terrain going to her home.

*"I am very happy I now have a wheelchair to move around school. I was feeling I was burdening my friends who used to carry me on their back at school,"*

*said Ruvarashe*

## VALUE CONSORTIUM IMPORTS TOP QUALITY PIG BREEDS FROM SOUTH AFRICA








The Value Chain Alliance for Livestock Upgrading and Empowerment (VALUE) completed the importation of 245 pig breeding stock consisting grandparent and parent stock of Duroc, Landrace and Large white breeds. The breeding stock was delivered on 5 April 2020 and went into quarantine for 21 days at the Pig Industry Board (PIB). VALUE is a project under the European Union funded Zimbabwe Agricultural Growth Programme running for four years between 2019 and 2023 led by ActionAid Zimbabwe in partnership with COSV and Mercy Corps. Under the Pork Value Chain, the project works with private sector players namely Braford and Shamiso farms as integrators to support small and medium producers. “We are grateful to the Government of Zimbabwe and the European Union for supporting this noble initiative. The top-quality genetics are coming in at a time the majority of small-scale farmers have expressed interest in accessing improved genetics” said

VALUE Team Leader, Newton Chari, in a press statement.

**To read more about the story click the following link**



<https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/news/2020/value-consortium-imports-top-quality-pig-breeds-south-africa>

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