

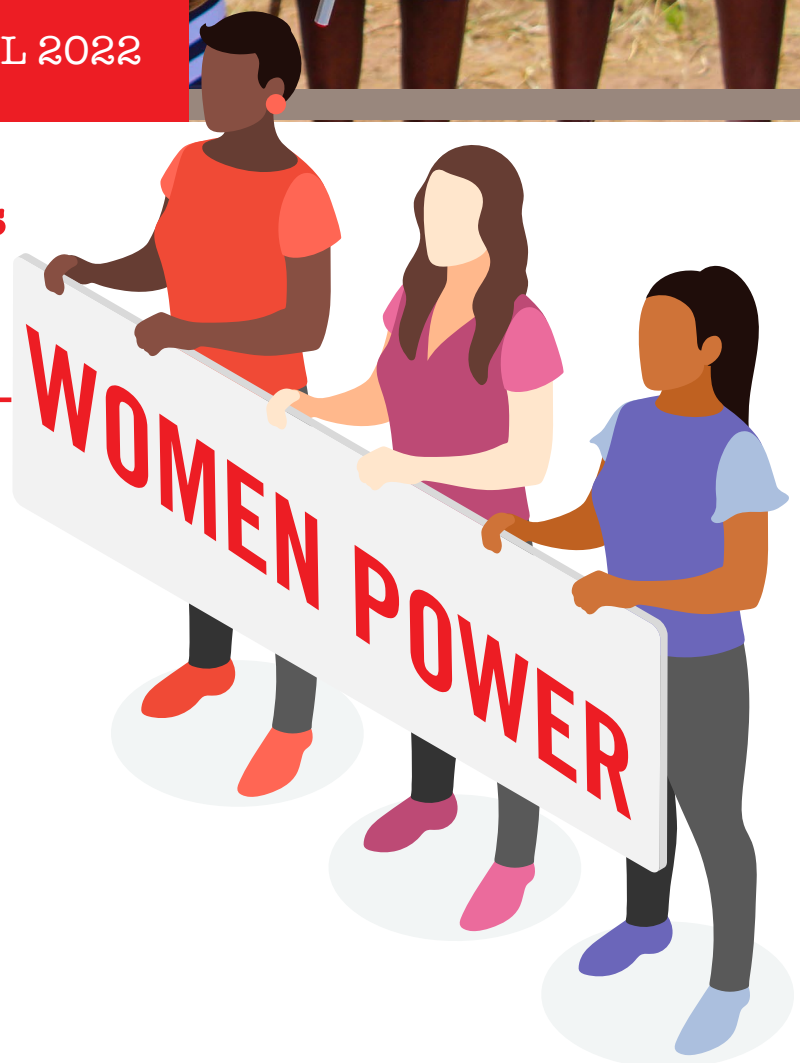


## ActionAid Zimbabwe

NEWSLETTER MARCH - APRIL 2022

### International Women's Day Commemorations 2022

Celebrating women leading the charge on climate change adaptation, mitigation, and response. "Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow"



## THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S WELCOME NOTE

Joy Mabenge, ActionAid Zimbabwe Country Director



Greetings from the Country Director's desk! It is my utmost pleasure, to welcome you to this edition of our newsletter. In this issue, we focus on our work around women's rights and climate justice. This is in line with the just ended International Women's Day (IWD) commemorations which we, for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic, co-hosted with one of our community rooted Local Rights Programme (LRP) Partner in Nkayi, Health Education and Food Organisation (HEFO) on the 17th of March 2022.

For ActionAid Zimbabwe (AAZ), the International Women's Day is no longer any commemorative day, instead, the whole month of March and our entire development programming remains focused on celebrating and appreciating the important role that women play in development (productive, reproductive, and unpaid care work responsibilities) world over.

The IWD is about celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women and at ActionAid we embrace the uniqueness of women and side with them to take up leadership and decision-making positions in all spheres of life. This is evidenced by our strategic direction in supporting women-led humanitarian responses, the adoption of feminist, green and just economic alternatives, and advancing the provision of gender responsive public services by the government.

The theme for this year's IWD was **"Gender Equality Today for a Sustainable Tomorrow: #BreakTheBias"**. Globally, women are increasingly being recognized as more vulnerable to climate

change impacts than men because they constitute the majority of the world's population, whilst most of them live in poverty and are dependent on the natural resources which climate change threatens the most. Zimbabwe has not been exonerated from these challenges, where the country has faced severe humanitarian crises over the past 5 years, including the devastating Cyclone Idai which affected the Eastern parts of the country in 2019. This was followed by recurrent droughts and floods in the eastern and western parts of the country caused by climate change and compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic which further exacerbated the challenges of accessing basic goods and services by the marginalized and those living in poverty. Women, as the primary caregivers in the home are by far more affected by the adverse effects of the humanitarian catastrophes that the country has encountered over the past three years. This calls for urgent action in strengthening women's resilience to shocks through the promotion of agro-ecological practices and women-led humanitarian response to disasters.

As such, AAZ continues to recognize the contributions women and girls in Zimbabwe play in leading the transitions on climate change adaptation, mitigation, and response to build a more sustainable future for all.

AAZ will continue to closely work with policy makers in government, parliamentarians, and other key stakeholders to influence policies that advance climate financing, agroecological practices, and the provision of gender responsive service delivery. Enjoy reading!



## CALLS FOR MORE CLIMATE FINANCING AT NKAYI IWD COMMEMORATIONS

Hilda Shumbahuru, Gender Champion from Chigondo Village Hwedza, speaking during the IWD celebrations in Nkayi while other women look on



AAZ in partnership with HEFO commemorated the International Women's Day in Nkayi, Matabeleland North Province of Zimbabwe. This commemoration meant to recognise the contribution of women and girls in Zimbabwe leading the charge towards climate change, adaptation, mitigation and response to build a more sustainable future for all.

Themed "Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow", the commemorations were graced by representatives from relevant government ministries that included the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Small and Medium Enterprises, Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Water, Climate and Rural Resettlement and the Zimbabwe Gender Commission. They came together in solidarity with women from across the national divide to speak with an amplified voice.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs, Small and Medium Enterprises, represented by the Matabeleland North Provincial Development Coordinator Masauso Phiri

called for gender equality and equal representation in decision making bodies as women are not actively involved in decision making processes on climate change issues.

**"During extreme weather such as droughts, cyclones and floods, women tend to work more to restore and secure household livelihoods. This will leave less time for women to access training and education, develop skills or participate in the economic mainstream, thus gender equality remains low,"**

Phiri said.

Members of Rural Women's Assemblies from Nkayi, Rusape and Mutoko serenaded delegates with key messages on the need to address the effects of climate change through drama, poems, songs, and dance. For more details on this story please open link: <https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/stories/2022/calls-more-climate-financing-nkayi-iwd-commemorations>.

# ENVISIONING A SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW THROUGH GENDERED LENSES

By Loverage Nhamoyebonde - From the Forum for African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe Chapter Information and Communication's Desk

FAWEZI Zimbabwe staff members demonstrating the #BreakTheBias pose



The Forum for African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe Chapter (FAWEZI) joined the world in commemorating International Women's Day (IWD) on the 8th of March 2022.

The IWD 2022 theme resonated well with the interventions implemented by FAWEZI and its partners in Shamva, Chitungwiza and Nyanga Districts with support from AAZ. FAWEZI has taken a giant step in empowering women and girls through the implementation of a project, together with AAZ

entitled "Towards Resilient Communities with Health, Equity and Safety for all (TORCHES) project".

FAWEZI amalgamated the IWD commemoration with the "#BreakTheBias Campaign" which was meant to break biases and achieve a world free of stereotypes, inequalities, and discrimination.

Read more on this article here: <https://fawezi.wordpress.com/2022/04/26/envisioning-a-sustainable-tomorrow-through-gendered-lenses/>.

## FROM THE #FEMINIST MOVEMENT BUILDING BROWN BAG WEBINAR

The Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre Network (ZWRCN) in partnership with AAZ and the Zimbabwe Gender Commission conducted an online seminar to celebrate the International Women's Day as illustrated to the right.

The seminar sought to advocate for more financing for women as they are the most affected by climate change, "Women and girls are the most vulnerable groups bearing the brunt of the shocks and impacts of climate change as they are disproportionately affected" said Charity Denhere, Climate Change Adaptation Officer under the Climate Change Management Department.

**ZWRCN**  
Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre & Network  
Making A Difference (MAD) for Women

**7 Mar 2022**  
Mon: 10-11am

**FEMINIST MOVEMENT BUILDING Brown Bag Webinar**  
#BREAKINGTHEBIAS #IWD2022

Host: Dorothy Hove  
Executive Director ZWRCN

Panelist: Chandirekera Sarah Mutubuki-Makuyana  
PFAN Zimbabwe Country Coordinator

Panelist: Charity Denhere  
Climate Change Adaptation Officer,  
Climate Change Management Dept

International Women's Day Webinar  
Moderator: Bella Matambanadzo  
LIVE on the Zimbabwe Women's Resource Center and Network Facebook Page

Meeting ID: 830 1309 6336  
Passcode: 294422

Zimbabwe Gender Commission  
actionaid  
Ministry of Environment, Climate, Public Health and Disaster Relief  
Climate Change Management Department





## NYANGA IWD COMMEMORATIONS: NEED FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE ALTERNATIVES TO REDUCE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Nyanga district government officials and community members displaying the “BreakTheBias” stance which is the ActionAid IWD commemoration pose for 2022.

Family Aids Caring Trust (FACT) in partnership with AAZ also commemorated the IWD commemoration together with women and district stakeholders. Women at the event urged the government to support climate justice alternatives such as agroecology to help reduce gender-based violence (GBV) caused by hunger.

Here is what the women from Nyanga said: “The major contributor to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) against women is hunger caused by climate induced droughts hence the need for government to provide climate justice alternatives to reduce Gender Based Violence.”

**“Women and girls are effective and powerful leaders and change-makers of climate adaptation and mitigation.”**

## GOVERNMENT URGED TO ADDRESS CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE EXTRACTIVE SECTOR

One of the participants at the Mutoko symposium stressing a point during deliberations



The government of Zimbabwe has been urged to enact policies and laws that ensure a climate resilient natural resource sector, that is responsive to the needs of women and girls in the mining sector. The sentiments came out from the 6th Edition of the Gender And Extractives Symposium held by the Gender and Extractives Platform comprising AAZ and its partners, Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association (ZELA), The Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD), Centre for Natural Resources Governance (CNRG) and the Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) held in Mutoko on 23 March 2022.

Participants from communities affected by mining activities noted that revenue generated from taxation must be channeled towards initiatives that will improve the lives of women and young girls through gender transformative public service delivery.

Issues of tax justice were discussed intensively with participants recommending the enactment of laws that provide for a redistributive Wealth Tax, viewed as an important vehicle towards the attainment of tax justice. Read more from this link: <https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/stories/2022/government-urged-address-challenges-faced-women-and-girls-extractive-sector>.



# COMMEMORATING WOMEN'S MONTH: APPLAUDING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP ROLE IN HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTIONS

By Caroline Mutimbanyoka and Nyasha Chidembo, Activista Zimbabwe members

An unidentified food distribution committee member carrying a box of food items to be distributed to vulnerable groups under the LSA at Ward 11, Mutare

A trend of decades apart 1982, 1992, 2002, 2012 and 2022 aggravated droughts is setting precedence in Zimbabwe. Consequently, a huge proportion of the population faces serious food insecurity. The latest drought that the country is facing (2021-2022 season) is being intensified by the combined effects of an economic crisis and lack of clear agricultural policies, corruption, consecutive poor agricultural seasons, the aftermath of Cyclone Idai, the COVID-19 pandemic, and dry spells.



Through the World Food Programme (WFP), AAZ is using feminist lenses in implementing the Lean Season Assistance (LSA) to complement government efforts in tackling food insecurity. The LSA was being implemented in the Mutare, Zimunya and Marange communities between October 2021 and March 2022. As we commemorate the women's month, it is crucial to appraise the role of women in the successful implementation of the LSA.

With a target of 104 654 persons per month in 14 wards mainly in the Zimunya and Marange area of

Mutare Rural District, the LSA targeted communities whose agriculture activities were affected by dry spells. The LSA programme, addressed the urgent food needs of the most vulnerable Zimbabweans with beneficiaries receiving cereals, pulses, and vegetable oil to increase lifesaving food and nutrition support. Read more through this link: <https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/stories/2022/commemorating-womens-month-applauding-womens-leadership-role-humanitarian>.

## OTHER AAZ UPDATES



## AAZ HOSTS THE ACTIONAID INTERNATIONAL BOARD

**AAZ staff posing for a photo with the ActionAid International Governance Committee Board members and outgoing Board Chairperson Dr. Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda**

In March, AAZ hosted the ActionAid International (AAI) Board members for the first time in the history of the country programme who visited on a solidarity mission. The Board members who were from the Governance and Development Committee comprised Hellen Grace Akwii, the incoming board chairperson, other members namely Azaveli Lwaitama, Steen Folk, Irene Mutuku, Arthur Laro, Acting Secretary General for AAI and Dr. Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, the outgoing AAI board chairperson.

It was an emotional moment as Dr. Gumbonzvanda met the incoming board chairperson, Grace Akwii, and the other members. She took the opportunity to bid farewell to the AAI family and expressed gratitude for the support received during her tenure.

She said she will always cherish ActionAid for its work around resilience building, for pushing boundaries for people living in poverty and the emphasis on promoting a vision of shared power within communities benefitting women and the youth.

The board members visited AAZ projects in Chiendambuya district, Manicaland Province where they had an appreciation of some of the climate justice work spearheaded by women, supported by AAZ. They met rural women groups practicing agroecology as one of the alternatives to deal with climate change. At a community event hosted at one of the women, Mrs. Chapu (next page), a shining example and current National Agroecology champion, the board members were received amid fun and pomp fare.



Addressing the scores of people gathered at her homestead, Mrs. Chapu said that her family is now food secure because of the agroecology practices she embraced. She added that the family now earns money from the sale of cash crops like sesame and maize.

Speaking during the visit, AAI Board Chair Helen Grace Akwii (pictured below right whilst Streen Folk, pictured sitting looks on) applauded the women for their rootedness and resilience in the face of climate change.

**“I am very impressed by the display of courage and resilience demonstrated by the women gathered here today. The show of individual and collective strength in tackling poverty and improving household nutrition and food security is marvellous. It is very clear to me that AAZ has catalysed the agency in these women and the fruits are there for all to see,”**  
said Helen.



Mrs. Chapu



Helen Grace Akwii



## PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT 2 LAUNCH: RENEWED ATTENTION TO YOUTH, WOMEN, AND GREEN SOLUTION

Some of the stakeholders during the SPA 2 Launch in Harare



AAZ supported by ActionAid Denmark and in partnership with three community-based organisations, namely Basilwizi Trust, Fambidzanayi Permaculture Centre and Green Governance Zimbabwe Trust, has launched a Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) 2 programme. It focuses on youth agency in influencing an enabling environment for the implementation of feminism and green economic alternatives. This is an action that will consequently improve youth's livelihoods and resilience to climate change induced shocks and stresses. This four-year programme is starting from 2022 and will be ending in 2025.

SPA 2 attention to green solutions stems from experiences in Southern Africa, including Zimbabwe of disaster patterns of droughts, floods, epidemics, pandemics and cyclones, the bulk of which are climate change induced which have been occurring in recent years.

Building on the successes of SPA1 which focused on youth participation in leadership with a particular entry on provision of gender responsive public services, SPA2 will complement the work of local governments to support the districts of Binga, Chimanimani, Chipinge and Mbire. These districts are considered fragile contexts as they experience the worst climate change effects and host a considerable number of internally displaced peoples (IDPs).

AAZ is proposing that the green solutions proposed in SPA2 should be scalable on a national level and thus bringing about change that involves youth. Ultimately this will enable the government to provide citizens' access to public services and building a community resilient to shocks. Read more from this link: <https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/stories/2022/strategic-partnership-agreement-2-launch-renewed-attention-youth-women-and-green>.



## BUILDING A UNITED AAZ FAMILY THROUGH TEAM BUILDING

In early April 2022, AAZ held a three-day team building exercise which was facilitated by Team Xtreme Consultants. The team building was aimed at strengthening cohesion among team members and setting the tone for the attainment of the country programme's objectives. The activities done during the exercise were aimed at developing effective

and efficient ways of working as a team, building on the strengths and skills of each member by fostering innovation and creativity. The team building programme, which comprised indoor and outdoor exercises was held at Montclair Hotel in the resort town of Nyanga.



**TOP: Group staff picture.**

**BELOW: AAZ Country Management Team during a hot seat session to address staff questions**







**On your marks, get set go! The outdoor activities during the team building exercise**



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