

July - August
2025

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NEWSLETTER



ActionAid Zimbabwe

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ZHRC, ACTIONAID ZIMBABWE PARTNERSHIP TO BOOST ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES

By Theseus Shambare

Marginalized communities in Zimbabwe are set to benefit from improved access to justice and human rights services following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) and ActionAid Zimbabwe.

The agreement, signed in Harare, will see the two organizations intensify collaboration on programmes targeting vulnerable groups, particularly in remote and mining communities where legal and human rights services are often scarce.

ZHRC chairperson Ms Jessie Majome said the MoU formalizes years of cooperation and will enable the commission to extend its reach both geographically and thematically.

“We will be exchanging information better and using our respective strengths to strengthen each other,” she said. “ActionAid has been an extremely valued

partner, providing technical and financial support that allows us to uplift the livelihoods, dignity and rights of Zimbabweans.”

ActionAid Zimbabwe interim country director Dr Selina Pasirayi said the partnership would support ongoing initiatives such as mobile legal clinics and the development of a national action plan on business and human rights.

“Our work is built on a human rights-based approach aimed at reducing poverty and increasing people’s access to social justice,” Dr Pasirayi said. “We believe ZHRC is well placed to help us deliver on our mandate, particularly in climate justice, women’s rights, economic justice, and humanitarian systems change.”

The two organizations say the alliance will help address systemic barriers to justice, amplify advocacy for rights protection and ensure that no community is left behind.

ACTIONAID ZIMBABWE LAUNCHES ZIMACE PROJECT TO ENHANCE ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE IN THE MINING SECTOR

ActionAid Zimbabwe (AAZ) officially launched the ZIMACE project, “Fostering Effective Environmental Governance and Management in Zimbabwe’s Mining Sector for Global Impact.” This initiative marked a strategic move aimed at supporting the country’s national development priorities, particularly in line with the National Development Strategy 1 (NDS1).

With a keen focus on environmental sustainability within the mining sector, the project aligns itself with key pillars of the NDS1, emphasizing sustainable economic transformation, good governance, and environmental stewardship. By addressing critical issues in the mining industry, AAZ aims to contribute significantly to Zimbabwe’s long-term vision and economic growth trajectory.

The project’s importance is further underscored by its alignment with the 2013 Constitution of Zimbabwe, which guarantees the right of every individual to a safe and healthy environment, emphasizing the protection of natural resources for present and future generations. Through integrating these constitutional provisions, the ZIMACE project advocates for inclusive principles of intergenerational equity in natural resource management and environmental sustainability.

Goromonzi District, a key area near the capital city with significant lithium developments, stands as a focal point for the project. The region symbolizes both the potential for economic prosperity and the complex environmental challenges associated with Zimbabwe’s mining activities. Through an evidence-based, multi-





stakeholder approach, the ZIMACE project aims to address these dynamics by promoting responsible mining practices and environmental sustainability in the district.

During a compelling overview of the project ActionAid Zimbabwe Project Officer, Vimbai Musikavanhu highlighted the essential activities planned for Goromonzi, drawing important lessons from Bikita.

“Goromonzi, much like Bikita, faces significant challenges regarding voluntary ESG compliance, especially among private, non-listed mining companies. To tackle this issue, ZIMACE will convene dialogue platforms that bring together corporates, communities, local authorities, and government departments” she said. These platforms aim to foster mutual accountability and influence corporate social investments to align with actual community priorities.

She shared a pivotal lesson from the Bikita experience, where a CSR dispute over a dam versus boreholes was resolved through participatory dialogue. Building on this, ZIMACE will promote the negotiation of community-specific MOUs between mining companies

and Rural District Councils. These agreements will guide CSR planning, encourage transparency, and ensure that development levies are directed toward clearly articulated local needs.

This approach not only enhances trust and responsiveness but also lays the groundwork for a localized accountability framework aligned with national ESG expectations.

As we move forward, the focus will remain on empowering communities and fostering collaboration for sustainable development in Goromonzi.

AAZ is grateful to the funding partners for the ZIMACE project, the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) and the Development Alternative Initiative (DAI). The collaboration between these partners and AAZ sets the stage for a collective effort towards advancing environmental governance in Zimbabwe’s mining sector in a just, inclusive, and sustainable manner. As the project embarks on its journey, AAZ urges various sectors to engage, collaborate, and actively participate in shaping a more transparent and sustainable future for Zimbabwe’s mining governance.

GIRLS' CLUB INITIATIVE EMPOWER YOUNG WOMEN IN HOPLEY

The Girls' Clubs initiative, designed to empower girls and young women aged 15 to 23, kicked off at the AAZ Waterfalls Youth Hub in Hopely in July. This program aims to address the unique challenges faced by young women in the area, providing them with the tools and resources needed to become confident leaders and active participants in their communities.

The initiative focuses on four key pillars which include Leadership Training, Advocacy and Engagement, Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), and Reusable Pad Making. Over the next six months, participants will meet monthly for interactive sessions, with the first gathering serving as an inception meeting for volunteers and community partners.

The opening session, facilitated by AAZ's Programmes Graduate Intern Annita Mutubuki, emphasized the importance of understanding various leadership styles and how young women can embrace roles as change-makers in their communities. Mutubuki, drawing from her experiences as a feminist and youth leader, inspired participants by highlighting that leadership can emerge from everyday community engagement. Her session encouraged attendees to reflect on their potential roles, fostering self-awareness and clarity about their capabilities as agents of change.

Following this, the second session, led by guest facilitator Thandeka Chiramba, focused on building public speaking skills and enhancing civic participation. Participants engaged in various activities, including icebreakers and role-playing exercises, designed to boost their confidence in public speaking and understanding of local governance.

"Creating a safe space was crucial for fostering open dialogue and engagement," noted Chiramba, as participants practiced skills in a supportive environment.

Feedback from participants highlighted the program's success in achieving its objectives. Many attendees reported a clearer understanding of leadership and civic engagement, with tangible outputs in the form of personal action steps. The Dream Wall activity, where participants shared their aspirations, revealed



a collective vision for community development and empowerment, showcasing shared goals among the group.

As the Girls' Clubs initiative progresses, organizers remain committed to creating a supportive environment where young women can develop their leadership abilities and engage meaningfully in community

issues. This program not only aims to empower participants but also seeks to create a ripple effect of change throughout the Hopely community. The launch of the Girls' Clubs initiative marks a significant step toward nurturing the next generation of female leaders, ensuring their voices are heard and their aspirations realized.

ACTIONAID ZIMBABWE SHOWCASES LOCALIZATION STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS AT NANGO EXPO 2025



AAZ took center stage at the NANGO Annual Regional NGO Expo 2025 in Harare. Under the theme "Localization as a Game Changer: CSOs Advancing Local Solutions for Development Effectiveness," the organization showcased its dedication to empowering local communities and driving sustainable change.

AAZ, Interim Country Director Dr Selina Pasirayi made a resounding statement during the expo's official opening.

Dr. Pasirayi emphasized the pivotal role of localization in repositioning agencies and fostering new forms of solidarity within the development sector.

The expo served as a platform for collaboration and knowledge-sharing, with ActionAid Zimbabwe actively engaging with fellow NGOs, stakeholders, and participants to promote the principles of community-led initiatives and inclusive practices. The organization's



presence underscored its unwavering commitment to advancing development effectiveness through localized solutions.

As discussions unfolded and partnerships were forged at the expo, ActionAid Zimbabwe's proactive approach to driving positive change through grassroots empowerment resonated with attendees. The event highlighted the urgent need for collective action and innovative strategies to address societal challenges and amplify the voices of marginalized communities.

Amidst the buzz of the expo, AAZ's participation stood out as a testament to its dedication to creating lasting impact and effecting meaningful change. The organization's emphasis on collaborative efforts and localized solutions underscored a shared vision for a more inclusive and sustainable future for Zimbabwe.

The NANGO Annual Regional NGO Expo 2025 provided a platform for AAZ to assert its leadership in the development sector and showcase a model of effective engagement that prioritizes community-driven solutions. As the organization continues to champion localization as a game changer, its presence at the expo serves as a beacon of hope and inspiration for a brighter tomorrow shaped by unity, partnership, and progress.



EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION: YOUTH FORUM CHAMPIONS LOCALIZATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

AAZ participated in the Youth Forum organized by the National Association of Youth Organizations (NAYO), Youth Empowerment and Transformation Trust (YETT), National Youth Development Trust (NYDT), Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYoF), and various development partners on July 16th and 17th, 2025. Themed "Addressing Shifts in Development Cooperation, Mental Health Challenges & Sustainable Action for Youth in Zimbabwe," this forum provided critical platform for youth voices, aiming to confront pressing issues that affected young people in Zimbabwe.

The forum brought together youth organizations across governance, economic growth, humanitarian, and health sectors to share experiences and discuss the implications of funding cuts. It also fostered collaboration among organizations to enhance their capacity for sustainability and developed actionable recommendations to mitigate the impact of funding constraints on youth services and youth-led initiatives. In recent months leading up to the forum, a significant shift in the development cooperation trajectory emerged, marked by leading donor countries announcing cuts to

aid flows to the Global South. This development had immediate implications for the sustainability of NGO work and the livelihoods of those reliant on development aid.

Concerns grew regarding the viability of organizations and initiatives that addressed humanitarian crises, fostered economic growth through skill-building and entrepreneurship, enhanced education systems, and supported health and community development. To address these challenges and offer alternatives to young leaders and organizations, NAYO, YETT, NYDT, and SAYoF, in collaboration with other youth platforms and development partners, convened the Youth Forum in Harare.

Addressing the delegates at the forum, Hon. Christabel Mhiribidi, clerk of the Southern Africa Youth Forum (SAYoF), urged young leaders to actively shape policies that address their realities. She pointed out the critical issues of funding gaps and mental health, stressing the need for youth to lead the way in Africa's transformation. "It is essential for young people to be at the forefront of Africa's transformation. Their voices must be heard in policymaking, particularly regarding the pressing challenges of funding and mental health that directly impact their futures," she said.

The session on "Connecting Youth with the Localization Agenda" highlighted the crucial role of localization in the current context, guiding youth actors to understand its significance. Nyasha Chidzero from the European Union (GiZ) emphasized, "Let us empower local youth leaders to drive change by shifting power, resources, and decision-making to those who know their communities best." This approach aimed to equip youth with the tools to actively shape localization efforts and promote sustainable development initiatives that directly benefit their communities.

Speaking at The Forum Dr. Vere urged stakeholders to harness their strengths, embrace bold risks, and cultivate networks that drive sustainable impact for youth.

"To truly transform the landscape for our youth, we must not only recognize and leverage our collective



strengths but also dare to take bold risks. Building strong, collaborative networks is essential; together, we can create sustainable change that empowers the next generation and uplifts our communities."

The discussions at the youth forum underscored the vital role of localization in empowering young leaders to effect meaningful change in their communities. By embracing bold ideas and fostering collaboration, stakeholders can create an environment where youth are equipped to drive sustainable development initiatives. Harnessing local strengths and building networks will be essential to ensuring that the voices of young people are not only heard but actively shape the future.

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE ADDRESSES GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AGAINST YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS WITH DISABILITIES IN HOPLEY



In a proactive effort to shed light on the intersection of disability and gender-based violence (GBV), AAZ convened a community dialogue at Tariro Clinic Youth Centre in Hopley on the 28th of August 2025. The one-day event brought together a diverse group of participants, including women with disabilities, caregivers, community leaders, service providers, and disability rights advocates.

The dialogue, organized by the AAZ Women's Rights and Economic Justice team (WREJ) in collaboration with local partners, Learnard Cheshire aimed to create a safe and inclusive space for discussions around the heightened risks faced by persons with disabilities, particularly women and girls, in relation to GBV.

Ruvimbo Nhunhama, WREJ manager, emphasized that the main aim of the event was to establish safe and inclusive environments for discussions regarding the connection between disability and gender-based violence. "Our primary goal today is to create safe,

inclusive spaces for dialogue on the nexus between disability and GBV impacts. We also aim to raise awareness on the rights, needs, and lived experiences of women with disabilities affected by GBV, facilitate community-driven solutions to strengthen protection and response mechanisms, and enhance collaboration between local leaders, caregivers, service providers, and disability rights advocates," she stated.

Martin James from Learnard Cheshire Disability of Zimbabwe stressed that despite facing multiple vulnerabilities such as social exclusion, communication barriers, and limited mobility, their experiences often go unnoticed in mainstream GBV programming.

The dialogue delved into topics such as prevalent disabilities in Zimbabwe, strategies for preventing abuse of persons with disabilities, and the nexus between GBV and disability. Key achievements and strengths of the dialogue included the successful awareness-raising on the rights and needs of persons with disabilities, active

participation from all stakeholders, and the development of community-driven solutions to strengthen protection mechanisms.

The dialogue highlighted the urgent need for support services that are currently inaccessible to many women

with disabilities in Hopley. Moving forward, the findings and recommendations from the community dialogue are expected to inform ongoing programming, advocacy efforts, and the development of disability-inclusive GBV response strategies.



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