



ActionAid Zimbabwe

NEWSLETTER

November-December 2023

- Celebrating 20 Years of Fighting Poverty and Injustices in Zimbabwe
- Climate Justice Launch



THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR'S WELCOME REMARKS

Joy Mabenge, ActionAid Zimbabwe Country
Director.

Greetings!

I am happy to extend a warm welcome to each of you as we dive into the pages of our November to December 2023 Newsletter—a special edition commemorating our 20th anniversary and the launch of our climate justice campaign.

As we celebrate two decades of combating poverty and injustice here in Zimbabwe, we recognize that our journey, though challenging, has been marked by resilience and commitment. This year, the specter of the climate crisis looms larger than ever. Alarming and record-breaking levels of global warming have manifested in extreme weather events, such as Cyclone Freddy, and the impending El Nino-induced weather conditions in Southern Africa, threatening severe impacts on crop yields. These indicators point to heightened poverty levels across the country, emphasizing the urgency to redouble our efforts in fighting poverty within our communities.

Poverty wears many faces in our communities, compelling us to be unapologetic in our fight against it. We've witnessed its impact on school dropouts, increased cases of gender-based violence, and other societal ills. This is the impetus

behind our recently launched climate justice campaign, which, among its goals, aims to prevent disproportionate harm caused by climate change on vulnerable groups.

Those living in poverty never choose their circumstances; often, these are imposed upon them, pushing them into that space. Whether addressing climate change, economic justice, or humanitarian preparedness, our work centers around systems change. This shift underscores our commitment to becoming an advocacy and campaigns organization, unapologetically representing those living in poverty.

Reaching the milestone of 20 years since our formation in 2003, including the subsequent merger with Mellempfolkeligt Samvirke (MS-Denmark) in 2010, fills me with immense pride. Our commitment remains unwavering, and our energy is only growing as we reflect on the achievements we have made together.

Let me pause here for now, refraining from disclosing too much of what the newsletter has in store for you. Wishing you a prosperous 2024.

Happy reading!

CELEBRATING TWO DECADES OF ACTIONAID IN ZIMBABWE AND LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

Amidst both national and global challenges, ActionAid Zimbabwe proudly stands at the crossroads of two decades of unwavering dedication to combatting poverty and injustices. Mr Joy Mabenge, the Country Director of ActionAid Zimbabwe, recently delivered a speech filled with humor, laughter, and song, reflecting the organization's journey and impact over the past 20 years.

Excerpts from Mr Joy Mabenge's speech, during commemorations to mark ActionAid Zimbabwe's 20th anniversary".

2003: The Journey Begins

While ActionAid globally boasts 50 years, our impact spans two decades in Zimbabwe. Officially registered as a PVO in 2003, ActionAid Zimbabwe's journey included a significant merger with Mellefolkeligt Samvirke (MS-Denmark) in 2010. As the saying goes, "the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

The Journey So Far

In the past two decades, we expanded our footprint to collaborate with 34 out of 64 districts in Zimbabwe, supporting those living in poverty and exclusion, with a particular focus on women, young people, and children. We unapologetically stand with those affected by patriarchy and various forms of injustice and oppression. Rather than labeling them as "the poor," we prefer the term "people living in poverty" because no one chooses poverty—circumstances often force people into that space.

Promoting Gender Equality and Women's Rights

Rooted in the belief that poverty is a consequence of systemic injustices, we prioritize gender equality and place women's rights at the heart of our work. Through capacity-building workshops, advocacy campaigns, and community dialogues, we've witnessed women emerge as leaders, advocates, and agents for community development.

Empowering Young People for a Sustainable Future

Recognizing the vital role of young people in shaping the future, we are dedicated to empowering

them through targeted initiatives. In playing our part in the struggle for social justice, over the past 20 years, we forged partnerships that have made us identify with young people's struggles and the search for long-lasting solutions. Our engagement with young people involves mentorship programs and creating platforms for their voices to be heard.

Empowering Affected Populations

Addressing multiple crises affecting people living in poverty requires a proactive response. Over the years, our focus has been on women-led emergency preparedness, response, and prevention, aiming to shift power and accountability to affected populations. This process promotes the leadership of women and young people.

Systems Change for Climate Justice

Facing the ramifications of a worsening climate crisis, our response acknowledges the disproportionate impact on marginalized groups. As extreme weather events escalate, our systems change for climate approach advocates for redirecting finances toward feminist, green, and just alternatives such as agroecology and renewable energy.

Looking Ahead: The Pursuit of Social Justice

Our unwavering commitment to solidarity with people living in poverty remains resolute. The passion driving our pursuit of justice, equality, and fairness positions us for greater achievements in the next two decades. Together, we can build a Zimbabwe where every individual has the opportunity to thrive and fulfill their potential.

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS BY ACTIONAID ZIMBABWE



Annually reaching over **250,000** rights holders.



Cumulatively reached approximately **2,500,000** over the past **10 years**.



60% female (150,000) and **40% male** (100,000) annually.



Rooted in **30 districts** across Zimbabwe with 9 Local Rights Programmes (LRPs).



Mobilized an estimated **\$25** million over the past 5 years.



Currently collaborating with **30 local partners** across various projects.



Influencing human rights work using a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA).



Focused on influencing evidence-based policy in extractives, climate implementation of the revised Gender Policy.



Reached **53 195 rights holders** in **3 districts** under the Zimbabwe Resilience Building Fund (ZRBF), with a total expenditure of **\$7,000,000**.



Currently supporting **7,884 active children** under sponsorship (up from 1,277 in 2006).



Building a youth movement through Activista platform and social movements in the country reaching out to more than 10 000 youths across the country.



ACTIONAID INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY GENERAL LAUNCHES ZIMBABWE'S CLIMATE JUSTICE CAMPAIGN

Mr Arthur Larok, Secretary General of
ActionAid International.

On November 3rd, Mr Arthur Larok, Secretary General of ActionAid International launched ActionAid Zimbabwe's national Climate Justice Campaign.

Expressing gratitude during the launch, Mr Arthur Larok commended the Zimbabwean team for their global collaboration in advocating for social justice.

"I am happy to be part of this moment, especially during a time when the world grapples with numerous challenges. Zimbabwe's commitment to addressing global injustices is evident, considering the severe consequences faced by countries in the Global South due to a crisis they contributed the least to creating," he said.

Mr Arthur Larok highlighted that Zimbabwe's emphasis on agroecology as an alternative to industrial agriculture, aligns with the global campaign strategy.

"Zimbabwe's focus is in line with ActionAid's FundOurFuture global climate justice campaign. Climate justice demands our attention, aiming to prevent disproportionate harm to vulnerable groups and provide the necessary resources to adapt to its effects. It also involves holding corporations accountable for their role in climate change and urging them to take action to reduce emissions."

In his address, Mr Arthur Larok stressed the importance of a shift towards agroecology, advocating for increased investment that

guarantees food security, reduces deforestation, limits land grabs, and supports local and national economies.

The impact of the climate crisis on Zimbabwe, as evidenced by the devastating Cyclone Idai in the eastern parts of the country, was acknowledged. Mr Arthur Larok, however, lamented the tragic irony that these countries, least responsible for the crisis, bear the brunt of its impacts. Meanwhile, he pointed out that industrialized nations in the global north, major contributors to the climate crisis, often engage in practices exacerbating the issue.

"In September, we launched the 'Fund Our Future' campaign, urging divestment into just, green, and feminist alternatives," he explained. He shed light on the report's findings, exposing the significant financing of fossils and industrial agriculture, revealing a stark contrast between rhetoric and action among economic powers.

At the launch, Mr. Samuriwo, representing the Ministry of Environment, Climate, and Tourism Hospitality, emphasized the Ministry's commitment to combatting the climate crisis. He assured the audience of policies and schemes to build resilient communities and decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

The campaign launch stands as a testament to Zimbabwe's commitment in the search for climate justice.

Onance Mutanda, Rural Women Ward Champion, Makoni District: Solidarity Message During ActionAid's 20th Anniversary Commemorations



HOW THE FINANCE FLOWS, THE BANKS FUELLING THE CLIMATE CRISIS

On the 4th of September, ActionAid International launched a new groundbreaking report titled ***How the Finance Flows, the banks fueling the climate crisis*** during the Africa Climate Week in Kenya Nairobi. The launch marked a journey towards advocating for a just, green, and feminist energy transition under a campaign dubbed the #FundOurFuture campaign.

The report casts the spotlight on the role of the burning of fossil fuels and industrialised agriculture as the two largest contributors of the climate crisis. It established that the industrial agriculture approach to farming aggressively markets agrochemicals that lead to large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions, drives deforestation, and undermines billions of smallholder farmers and their agroecological farming systems which could otherwise feed the world while cooling the planet.

Click on the following link to get more insights into our findings:

<https://actionaid.org/sites/default/files/publications/How%20The%20Finance%20Flows%20Full%20Report.pdf>

CLIMATE JUSTICE CARAVAN: JOURNEY TOWARDS COP28 AND BEYOND



Following the successful launch of the climate justice campaign, ActionAid Zimbabwe held a Climate Justice Caravan in Chipinge under the Strategic Partnerships Agreement (SPA) II project.*

This event, organized by Young Volunteers for the Environment in collaboration with the Green Institute and with support from ActionAid Zimbabwe and World Wildlife Foundation (WWF), served not only as a reflection on the challenges faced by the Chipinge community post-Cyclone Idai and Cyclone Freddy but also as a rallying point for global climate action leading up to COP28 and beyond.

The 2023 Climate Justice Caravan, building upon the momentum of the previous year's movement, sought to amplify the voices of those affected by climate change. It commenced with a workshop designed to empower young people from across Zimbabwe, setting the tone for a journey that aimed to mobilize, engage, and connect diverse

perspectives—from indigenous communities to farmers, grassroots movements to youths.

A highlight of the two-day caravan was a Climate Justice March through the heart of Chipinge Town, where young activists, armed with both handmade and printed placards, demanded climate justice.

The Climate Justice Caravan in Chipinge went beyond a mere demonstration; it was a strategic mobilization of local communities, especially youth movements, calling for increased commitment from African governments at COP28. Moreover, it served as an educational platform, disseminating information on climate justice, establishing inter-community learning networks, and highlighting the symbiosis between indigenous knowledge systems and scientific interventions in the face of climate change. This event stands as a testament to the collective efforts driving the journey toward COP28 and shaping a sustainable, climate-resilient future.

*** AAZ is working with four partners in implementing Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) II project namely Fambidzanai Permaculture Centre (Mbire district), Basilwizi Trust (Binga district), Green Governance Zimbabwe Trust (Chimanimani and Chipinge districts), and Women & Law in Southern Africa. The project aims for Just, Feminist, Resilient and green societies through young people's, especially young women actions.**

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LAUNCH



AAZ PAST EVENTS PICTURE COLLAGE



ActionAid Zimbabwe Activista Conference in 2018



ActionAid Zimbabwe staff during a Safe Cities March in Harare CBD in 2019



Country Director Joy Mabenge giving a speech during the launch of the AAZ Youth Hub in 2019



AAZ Danish Television Project Youth conducting a drug and substance abuse roadshow in 2022



AAZ participating at the Zimbabwe Alternative Mining Indaba in 2021



AAZ female staff members celebrating International Women's Day in 2020

ABOUT ACTIONAID ZIMBABWE

ActionAid Zimbabwe (AAZ) works to strengthen the capacity and active agency of people living in poverty and exclusion, especially women and girls to assert their rights. It prioritises the leadership of women and young people effective participation in leadership and decision-making processes. The organisation works in partnership with Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), National and International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs), Civic Society Organisations (CSOs) and like-minded organisations in and outside Zimbabwe.

NATIONAL OFFICE

26 Divine Road, Milton Park, Harare

+263-242-788123/5, 776127,

+263-772164449

info.zimbabwe@actionaid.org

zimbabwe.actionaid.org

www.facebook.com/ActionAidZimbabwe

www.twitter.com/ActionAidZim

ActionAid Zimbabwe



REGIONAL OFFICE

281 Chimurenga Street, Rusape

+263-25-3537,

+263-772395967