

HARNESSING THE SYNERGIES FOR THE ZIMBABWE WE WANT WITH PARLIAMENT OF ZIMBABWE



Members of Parliament and ActionAid Zimbabwe staff during the capacity building workshop on African Charter on Democracy and Elections (ACDEG) in September 2020



Joy Mabenge, ActionAid Zimbabwe (AAZ) Country Director

WELCOME NOTE FROM THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR

As we wind up 2020, I am happy to say that the country programme has managed to soldier on during this protracted period of dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic around the globe. Despite all restrictions imposed by the Pandemic, we have found new ways of working and adapting including using virtual platforms. Where necessary we have held face to face engagements under strict adherence to the World Health Organisation guidelines and the Government of Zimbabwe's regulations.

AAZ is broadening its fundraising thrust to include the corporate sector for, example our recent partnership with Econet Wireless will support our online social justice campaign work. However, the prime duty on ensuring communities

achieve social justice lies with the government which remains our key stakeholder in the attainment of socio-political and economic rights for people living in poverty especially women, girls and the youth. In this last quarter of the year, we are busy with the 2021 planning as we consolidate our work under our current 2018-2023 strategy entitled Citizens' Collective Actions for Social Justice.

In this issue we focus on our Priority 2 of the strategy entitled: Ensure increased civic participation and state accountability for the redistribution of resources and delivery of quality gender responsive public services as we endeavour to amplify our work in different priority areas.

FOCUS ON AAZ PRIORITY 2 AS WE ENGAGE PARLIAMENT TO PUSH FOR ACDEG RATIFICATION



Member of Parliament Honourable Lisa Singo (left) and The Speaker of Parliament (right) Honorable Advocate Jacob Francis Mudenda during the capacity building workshop at Kariba ACDEG in September 2020

One of Priority 2's outcomes is increased participation and influence of women and young people in decision making at community, local and international level. This outcome was reflected in our work in the past two months.

The third quarter of 2020 was a very busy one for the Civic participation unit with key milestones such as the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Parliament of Zimbabwe. This will allow ActionAid Zimbabwe to work seamlessly in all our advocacy efforts with the August House. This paved the way for a training on the African Charter on Democracy Elections and Governance (ACDEG). The training was held under the theme, "Harnessing our Synergies for the #ZimbabweWeWant" and equipped 93 Parliamentarians and 25 Parliament staff with the necessary knowledge and advocacy tools for pushing for the implementation of the Charter.

We might need some quotable quotes from MPs and staff who attended.



Onence Mutanda, one of the GRPS Champions from Makoni during the meeting with local leaders on 23 October 2020 in Rusape in Makoni District

The unit also started community strengthening for the Global Campaign - Recognising, Reducing and Redistributing Women's Unpaid Care and Domestic Work through Gender Responsive Public Services (GRPS). Forty-Five GRPS champions and forty-seven local leaders and MPs were trained

on the importance of GRPS and its nexus with ACDEG. The training was followed by the presentation of position papers on GRPS to the respective councils.



Onence Mutanda handing over a Makoni women position paper focusing on lack of access to water to Members of Parliament, local councillors and representatives from the Makoni District Office

The national budget season kicked off in October and AAZ is supporting participation of women and young people in the budget consultations. Guided by the ACDEG document and lived realities in the communities we work in, AAZ partners, Activista Zimbabwe and Local Rights Programme (LRP) communities are making their input in the current national budget consultations. It is envisioned that traces

of this influence will be apparent in the final National budget.

For more about the AAZ work on ACDEG was the following video on You tube of Sabhuku Vharazipi as we use comic media to advocate for the implementation of ACDEG: https://youtu.be/ZdsS6_I19fA

INAUGURAL ACDEG JOURNALISTS AWARDS HELD



AAZ team Andrew Chikwore (extreme right), Takaitei Bote (in red shirt) with the winning journalists.

AAZ hosted its first ever Zimbabwe Journalist Awards on the ACDEG on the 23rd of September 2020. The awards recognised and honoured journalists who have been working on critical analytical reports, news articles and broadcast news that advance the course of ACDEG and the African Governance

Architecture (AGA) over the last two years. The three eventual winners were selected from a pool of 23 who had submitted two stories each published between 1 April 2018 and 30 August 2020.



Veneranda Langa of Newsday the ultimate winner walked away with a certificate and a cash prize of USD 500
Winning entry: "Zim missed ACDEG opportunity to promote human rights," published in Newsday 20 July 2019
<https://www.newsday.co.zw/2019>



Daphne Machiri of Kwayedza 2nd prize winner walked away with a certificate and USD 300
Winning entry: "Women's participation in politics crucial," published in The Herald 1 October 2019.
<https://www.herald.co.zw/womens>



Lovejoy Mutongwiza of 263 Chat (an online publication) was the 3rd prize winner walking away with a certificate and USD 150
Winning entry: "Zim Urged to quickly adopt regional elections guidelines to avoid disputed polls" published on 263 Chat 5 August 2019. <https://263chat.com/zim-urged-to-quickly-adopt-regional-election-guidelines-to-avoid>

WOMEN LIVING IN MINERAL RICH ZIMBABWE CALL ON GOVERNMENT TO HOLD MINING COMPANIES TO ACCOUNT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AFFECTING WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THEIR AREAS



Rose Jena from Chimanimani confronting the panelists on human rights violations by mining companies in Chiadzwa



From Left: Headman Oscar Nyakabau (Mutoko Traditional Leader), Royce Midzi (ZHRC), Hon Edmund Mukaratigwa addressing the participants (Chair of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Mines)

Women human rights defenders living in various mineral rich areas expressed their concern over growing and unending human rights violations still experienced mostly by women and children living in mining areas.

Speaking at an AAZ organised side session on corporate accountability, during the 9th edition of the Zimbabwe Alternative Mining Indaba (ZAMI) which was held from 29 September to 2 October in Bulawayo, women miners said they were appalled by the levels of recurring human rights violations by mining companies 7 years after Zimbabwe adopted the new constitution which enshrined human rights. They lamented how the out-of-date mining legislation still fails to protect mining communities from mining companies.

Their concerns were addressed at the Chair of the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Mines, Hon Edmund Mukaratigwa, the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) and a traditional leader from Mutoko during a panel discussion at the side session. Hon Mukaratigwa responded to

these concerns by stating the role of parliament in mining. He said, "The role of parliament has been more pronounced by the reliance of the country on mining, to ensure compliance and holding the executive to account. Further, it is parliament duty to push for enactment and amendment of laws to reflect the world's best practices in terms of corporate accountability." He concluded by highlighting that Parliament had scheduled a visit to Chiadzwa before the end of year 2020 to ascertain issues such as the ones that had been deliberated on at the side session through the documentary, the research and discussions and that the side session had been an eye opener as he was now clear of what to expect as he leads the delegation to address mining related issues in Chiadzwa.

Mr. Royce Midzi representing the ZHRC highlighted that they recently completed drafting of a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights and emphasized the need for support for Zimbabwe to be part of the growing calls for the negotiations of a binding treaty on Business and Human Rights, a call that AAZ sought through convening this side session.

AAZ dissected issues through launching of a documentary that unearthed various human rights violations by corporates in the mining sector focusing on black granite in Mutoko District and diamond mining in Chiadzwa entitled 'Community Voices in the mining sector'. View the documentary here: https://youtu.be/8CGSjSjF_tw.

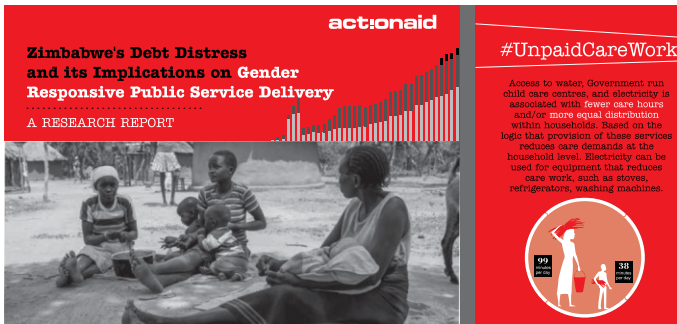


In addition, AAZ shared and launched a research it recently published entitled 'Resist, Engage, Change - Women-led lobby & advocacy for improved corporate conduct' a report that delves into ways in which women and their communities, supported by ActionAid and its partner the Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association (ZELA) have addressed corporate human rights violations.

Here is the report: <https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/publications/2020/resist-engage-change>

The 2020 ZAMI was running under the theme "Towards an inclusive and equitable US\$12 billion mining industry anchored on sustainable mineral resource management" and is a part initiative of the Alternative Mining Indaba (AMI) platforms that have been facilitated by various organisations across the globe seeking practical community led solutions into mineral resources extraction and governance.

ESTABLISHING THE UTILIZATION OF BORROWED FUNDS IN ZIMBABWE AND THE IMPACT THAT DEBT DISTRESS HAS ON GENDER RESPONSIVE PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY



ActionAid Zimbabwe is part of the federation-wide global campaign on GRPS. With support from OSISA, a desk review was conducted in 2020 to establish the utilization of borrowed funds and its impact on the delivery of Gender Responsive Public

Services - especially water. Entitled Zimbabwe's Debt Distress and its Implications on Gender Responsive Public Service Delivery, the research demonstrated how public indebtedness over the past three decades has led to a significant increase in the burden of care and unpaid work for women.

DEBT DISTRESS IN ZIMBABWE AND IMPLICATIONS

The external debt to GDP ratio for Zimbabwe shows that if Zimbabwe were to clear its debt, then about 40% of GDP would no longer be available to meet the needs of Zimbabweans, including gender responsive programming. The debt service to total expenditure ratio shows that over the period of high debt accumulation, especially between 1991 and 1999, debt servicing constituted about 20% of total revenue on average.

WATER AND SANITATION

Due to low budget allocation towards water, urban areas are facing serious health risks. Non-revenue water accounts for 43% of all water reticulated to Harare and surrounding areas. The maintenance record of water infrastructure is very poor, as only 4.2% of infrastructure is maintained. Water supply continuity is low at an average 12 hours a day. In rural resettlement area, about 74% of the people lack access to safe water. In addition to being the primary users of water, women and girls suffer an increased burden of care work during pandemics such as the COVID 19 as they are primary care givers in the home.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE RESEARCH

Government should urgently resolve the historic debt challenge. In the context of COVID 19 government should lobby international financial institutions to suspend debt payments so that the country can channel resources to responding to the pandemic.

Government should strive to ensure that it has the capacity to finance water and sanitation by increasing their revenue through progressive taxation.

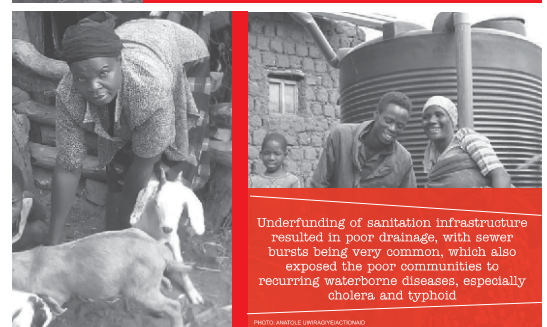
As much as possible, government needs to pursue other financing methods outside debt, especially in response to emergencies and crises. High interest debt from private and bilateral creditors has only compounded the country's economic woes;

Government should facilitate access to land and water for productive use by women, who are denied income enhancing time as they concentrate more on bearing the brunt of the outcomes of underfunding of public service delivery.

Read more here about the research: <https://zimbabwe.actionaid.org/publications/2020/zimbabwes-debt-distress-and-its-implications-gender-responsive-public-service>



Government should facilitate access to land and water for productive use by women, who are denied income enhancing time as they concentrate more on bearing the brunt of the outcomes of underfunding of public service delivery.



Underfunding of sanitation infrastructure resulted in poor drainage, with sewer bursts being very common, which also exposed the poor communities to recurring waterborne diseases, especially cholera and typhoid

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES FOR AAZ IN THE NEXT TWO MONTHS

- Activista Annual Reflection Meeting
- Global Platform Zambia Social Audits and Budget Processes Training under DANIDA.
- Inception activities for Towards Resilient Communities with Health, Equality and Safety for all (TORCHES) programme
- Development of a Safeguarding policy
- Engagements with local and national leadership on GRPS
- 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence
- Private partner engagement for financial inclusion
- Research institutions for technical backstopping
- Documentation of human wildlife conflict mitigation strategies
- Social services charters as basis for community accountability
- Capacity building of key stakeholders on agroecology
- Farmer Field Schools organized with support from agricultural extension officers
- Support to other projects on key Resilience Issues
- Sharing critical resources and amodels for adoption across AAZ project and partners.

AAZ IN PICTURES FOR THE PAST TWO MONTHS

Candice Mwakalyelye Director of the Ceremony for the ACDEG Journalism Awards with Rumbidzayi Makoni, AAZ Women's Rights & Economic Justice Programme and Projects Manager.



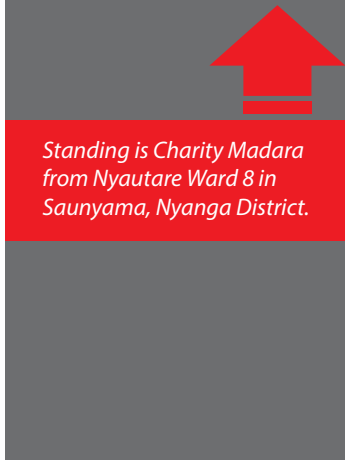
Kariba Parliament Training on ACDEG



MOBILIZING
PARLIAMENTARY
SUPPORT FOR THE
RATIFICATION &
DOMESTICATION
OF ACDEG



GRPS Champion Training in Nyanga and Makoni



Standing is Charity Madara from Nyautare Ward 8 in Saunyama, Nyanga District.



Kensia Dzapasi from Mapako Ward 18 in Saunyama, Nyanga District.

ActionAid Zimbabwe

National Office
 26 Divine Road, Milton Park, Harare
 Tel: +263-04-788123/5, 776127,
 Mobile: +263-772164449
 Email Address: info.zimbabwe@actionaid.org
 Website Address: zimbabwe.actionaid.org
 Facebook Address: www.facebook/ActionAidZimbabwe
 Twitter: www.twitter.com/ActionAidZim
 You tube ActionAid Zimbabwe

ActionAid Zimbabwe

Regional Office
 281 Chimurenga Street, Rusape
 Tel: +26325-3537,
 Mobile: +263-772395967