



**ActionAid Zimbabwe**

# NEWSLETTER JAN-FEB 2021

Transformative  
women-led  
emergency  
preparedness,  
response, and  
prevention



## Country Director's Welcome Note

**Joy Mabenge,**  
ActionAid Zimbabwe  
Country Director.



Complements of the new year to you all. I would like to welcome you to the inaugural issue of the ActionAid Zimbabwe (AAZ) Newsletter for 2021. In this first issue, we are focusing on our Cross-Cutting Intervention which advances transformative women-led emergency preparedness, response, and prevention.

The year 2021 started with Zimbabwe battling surging cases and deaths from COVID-19, amid fears of a new variant of the pandemic. As of 9 February 2021, the country had recorded 34781 cases, 29289 recoveries and 1353 deaths, which resulted in the government imposing a 30-day nationwide lockdown from the 5th of January up to the 3rd of February. The lockdown was further extended to 15 February 2021.

Furthermore, Chimanimani and Chipinge districts were affected by Cyclones Chalane and Eloise, which disrupted the lives of communities who were trying to rebuild after the devastating effects of Cyclone Idai.

As a result of the COVID-19 restrictions which limit face to face interactions with the communities, AAZ and partners are working through district authorities to

ensure the implementation of life saving interventions like the Cyclone Chalane and COVID-19-response.

AAZ with support from the Start Fund and the International Humanitarian and Resilience Team (IHART) is responding to the effects of Cyclone Chalane. In partnership with Jekesa Pfungwa Vuliqondo and Simukai Child Protection, the Cyclone Chalane Response is aimed to reach about 5000 individuals who will be supported through different interventions with assistance in form of cash, water and sanitation and women protection interventions in Chimanimani and Chipinge. AAZ will also distribute Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to various communities as part of the interventions to help fight COVID-19.

With COVID-19 widening the gap between the poor and the rich, AAZ joined other members of the Fight Inequality Alliance in Zimbabwe in a Global Week of Action Against Inequality Online Campaign from 23-30 January 2021. This issue is also covering stories on Activista Zimbabwe lifesaving interventions in various communities.

**Enjoy reading!**

## ActionAid Zimbabwe responds to Cyclone Chalane

**Martha Mahonye (39)**  
Cyclone Chalane survivor.



AAZ is currently responding to the effects of Cyclone Chalane which hit Chipinge and Chimanimani between December 2020 and January 2021. The cyclone destroyed properties, and crops. Some residents of Chipinge and Chimanimani were left homeless because of the devastating effects of the cyclone. Martha Mahonye (pictured above) from Chipinge is one of the survivors who were affected by Cyclone Chalane.

Martha (39) is a resident of Mutema in Ward 3 of Chipinge rural. She is a widow with an intellectual disability and a mother of two. Following the cyclone, Martha and her two children, one male aged 21 and a 16-year-old girl were left in a dilapidated one roomed

structure built with stones, which forms part of the house that collapsed. The house withstood the test of time in the previous storms that hit the area but gave in to the might of Chalane.

Their roof was blown away by the storm and the house side walls collapsed due to the heavy rains. In addition to the destruction of the property, their blankets and food stuffs were soaked in water. Martha and her family were left with nothing.

“I fear that the remaining parts of the house which we are using will also collapse. We are desperately in need of food and I wish to get assistance so that I can rebuilt my house,” said a tearful Martha.



**Damage done by the heavy rains and winds to the front wall of a one room that served as a kitchen and Martha's bedroom.**



“We are now leaving everything in the hands of God”, added the overwhelmed Martha. Currently she is sharing a room with her two children. She feels uncomfortable sharing the room with the adult 21 year old son.

No cases of death were recorded when Cyclone Chalane hit, however a fiercer Cyclone Eloise claimed three lives from people who tried to cross flooded rivers at the end of January 2021 in Manicaland.

In response to the Cyclone Chalane devastation, AAZ is distributing cash handouts to at least 1000

households with everyone in a household receiving 10USD. In addition, dignity kits are to be distributed to 900 women and girls. AAZ is also setting up five water tanks at public places so that the people affected can access safe and clean water. Martha is one of the persons to be assisted under the Chalane Response. As part of promoting the ActionAid Humanitarian Signature, AAZ will continue supporting the partners on the ground to ensure women protection and accountability to stakeholders’ mechanisms are promoted during the implementation of the Cyclone Chalane Response programme.

## Activista Manicaland leads in campaign for improved service delivery in Mutare

By Kudawashe Chidziya,  
Activista Manicaland.



Houses affected by floods in Chikanga 3 suburbs in Mutare.

On the 15th of January 2021, Mutare City Council issued a press statement committing to carry out emergency works and drainage construction following the flash floods that destroyed infrastructure in some parts of Mutare urban on the 9th of January. Here is the link to the full press statement: <http://bit.ly/3iveyppg>.

The release of the press statement came after Activista Manicaland engaged the City Council through a petition requesting for an improvement in delivery of public services in Mutare after the flash floods that affected some parts of the city. The media was awash with documentation of complaints on poor service delivery with Activista Manicaland taking the lead in putting the issue into the limelight and


pushing the Mutare City Council to respond through the press statement.

In the press statement, the council: “committed \$US10 000 towards emergency works, drainage construction and opening are currently being carried out in the area. The Council requires \$US15 000 to complete the temporary emergency repair works but the national lockdown measures have affected resources mobilization negatively.”

The Activista members who led the documentation and mobilized Mutare residents to sign the petition were part of the participants who participated in a Human Rights Based Approach Documentation training organised by AAZ and the Global Platform


Zimbabwe, in November 2020. The training equipped participants with knowledge and skills on how to carry out citizen journalism (which include how to engage local authorities using documentation), participatory photography and videography. The trained Activista Manicaland members went on to put into practice the skills and knowledge gained through producing

a video of the Cyclone Chalane disaster. The video went viral on social media and residents supported the initiative leading to the drafting of the petition with demands on improving service delivery in the community being issued to the Mutare Council. The following is the link to the position paper <http://bit.ly/38Xxo5i>.



**CITY OF MUTARE**

**OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK**



**PRESS RELEASE - ZIMTA FLOODS**

To our valued customers and stakeholders:

There have been reports circulating in and around Mutare concerning Councils position on the above. As City of Mutare we would like to inform our Beloved Residents and Stakeholders of our current position concerning the recent flash floods which destroyed infrastructure in Zimta, Dream House and part of Chikanga 3.

It is very unfortunate that houses and properties were flooded and most affected people lost valuables, food and clothes.

However some people out of ignorance and lack of proper information are blaming Council for lack of services in the above mentioned suburbs, yet the issue of uncompleted services for Zimta and Dream House falls within the purview of the private land developer as part of the land sale agreement condition.

We wish to give background information about the projects so that grey areas are clarified.

**ZIMTA** is an area in Chikanga 3, the area was sold to ZIMTA (Zimbabwe Teachers Association) by the City of Mutare and the purchasers engaged KMP as a Private Developer who was involved in servicing the area as from 2002.

The Development was done in two phases with phase one done to completion and handed over to Council. The second phase which is the area with storm water challenges was not done to completion (roads and drains were not completed).

Although the ZIMTA 2 scheme is occupied, it does not have a Certificate of Compliance. (However, seeing no prospects of completing the project by the Developer), Council, in 2020 passed a resolution to take over this project on a funding model to be agreed upon with beneficiaries in 2021.

The floods then hit the area before an engagement meeting was convened and with the lock down measures it became difficult to bring the affected residents to a round table.

**Dream house** is a housing scheme in Chikanga 3. A committee called Dream house had the responsibility of servicing the scheme around 2008 but technically disbanded before sewers, roads and storm water drains were completed.

This housing scheme has no Certificate of Compliance.

Adding to the uncompleted services, the uncontrolled urban agriculture which is very prevalent in the areas stretching from Mountainrise to Datvest area. The areas have been exposed to extensive deforestation resulting in massive siltation, erosion and the undersized little drainage pipes were clogged.

A number of property owners in the area also constructed durawalls without taking into consideration urban resilience measures. as most of the residents did not create water openings on their durawalls. This resulted in many houses being affected with flood waters finding its way into most houses, others had to destroy their durawalls to provide water free passage.

Because the two suburbs have no certificate of compliance as the private land developer is yet to complete servicing the outstanding works, the project has not been handed over to Council.

What it means is that the project remains the custody of the Private land developer and any repair works on the service infrastructure will be carried out by the private land developer, in this case KMP via Zimta.

However for Zimta Scheme, Council passed a resolution to adopt the suburb and in line with that resolution the local authority has already started implementing emergency measures to address the problem in the area.

**The press release issued by Mutare City Council after Cyclone Chalane caused flash floods in Mutare and an outcry by Activista Manicaland and citizens on the need for government to improve service delivery in the area.**



# Civil society in Zimbabwe commemorates the Global Protest to fight inequality

some of the infographics used to raise awareness during a fight inequality campaign where AAZ and other partners participated.



From the 23rd to the 30th of January 2021, AAZ joined other members of the Inequality Alliance in Zimbabwe in participating in an online global protest to fight inequality. The thrust of the campaign was to counter the excessive concentration of power and wealth in the hands of the elite and achieve a just, equal, and sustainable world.

This Fight Inequality Campaign ran parallel to the Davos meetings of the World Economic Forum which took place on 25 January 2021 as an alternative people driven process. This year's initiatives to address inequality were under the theme "People's Solutions Are #BetterThanDavos". It was convened by the Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD) and Fight Inequality Alliance in Zimbabwe members. The fight inequality members include AAZ, Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association, Poverty Reduction Forum Trust, National Association of Non-Governmental Organisations, Transparency International Zimbabwe, Centre for Disability and Development, Combined Harare Residents Association, Zimbabwe National Students Union and Women and Law in Southern Africa Zimbabwe.

The Fight Inequality Alliance members said in a press statement: "The COVID-19 pandemic has widened the inequality gap across gender, disability, regional, class, racial, generational and other divides. It has laid bare the disproportionate impacts of the pandemic on different groups leaving the majority of the poor worse off in a context of austerity, over taxation, weak social protection mechanisms and rampant corruption in the distribution of resources. Lockdown restrictions constrain the informal

**FIGHT INEQUALITY**

#FIGHTINEQUALITY  
#BETTERTHANDAVOS  
#PASINENHAFU  
#PHANSINGOBURWABA

**ABOUT 95% OF ZIMBABWEANS ARE INFORMAL TRADERS.**  
VENDORS ARE LOCKED DOWN. HUNGER IS STRIKING.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS FAILED TO PROVIDE SOCIAL SAFETY NETS FOR THE SECTOR  
A SEGMENT OF THE SECTOR MUST BE ALLOWED TO OPERATE BECAUSE THAT'S THE MAJORITY'S LIVELIHOOD.

**ZIMCODD**  
ZIMBABWE COALITION ON DEBT & DEVELOPMENT

Twitter: @zimcodd1 Facebook: Zimcodd Website: zimcodd.org

actionaid Women and Law in Southern Africa Zimbabwe UNICEF CIDA INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP AFRICA CLEAN

**FIGHT INEQUALITY**

**COVID-19 KILLS BOTH THE RICH AND THE POOR BUT HUNGER KILLS ONLY THE POOR.**

The government must provide Adequate and Timely Social Safety Nets for the poor and marginalised.

#FORTHEMANYNOTTHEFEW  
#BETTERTHANDAVOS  
#PASINENHAFU  
#PHANSINGOBURWABA

**ZIMCODD**  
ZIMBABWE COALITION ON DEBT & DEVELOPMENT

Twitter: @zimcodd1 Facebook: Zimcodd Website: zimcodd.org

actionaid Women and Law in Southern Africa Zimbabwe UNICEF CIDA INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP AFRICA CLEAN

economy which provides livelihoods for the working poor. Marginalised communities have struggled not only to protect themselves from infection but also to meet their livelihoods."

This year's campaign called for Equity in access and distribution of COVID vaccines, an end to austerity measures; debt and tax justice; gender and climate justice.

## ActionAid Zimbabwe Partner Basilwizi wins COVID-19 response award

**Basilwizi representatives during a handover of PPEs to district school representatives.**



AAZ partner Basilwizi Trust has been recognised as one of the best organisations making an impact in Matabeleland North Province in implementing COVID-19 Response. Basilwizi came out tops in the 2020 Responsible Business and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Network Awards for Matabeleland North. CSR network is an NGO which is aimed at raising awareness, building capacity, promoting, and supporting the development and implementation of best Corporate Social Responsibility practises in the public and private sectors in Zimbabwe.

The award came after Basilwizi's outstanding work in the response to COVID-19 in Binga District situated in Matabeleland North Province. In 2020, Basilwizi supported the District Civil Protection Unit (DCPU) and Binga Hospital with Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs). Some of the PPEs were distributed to six primary and three secondary schools and to the District Ministry of Education Office in Binga.

In addition to the distribution of PPEs, Basilwizi Trust has been raising awareness on the pandemic through the distribution



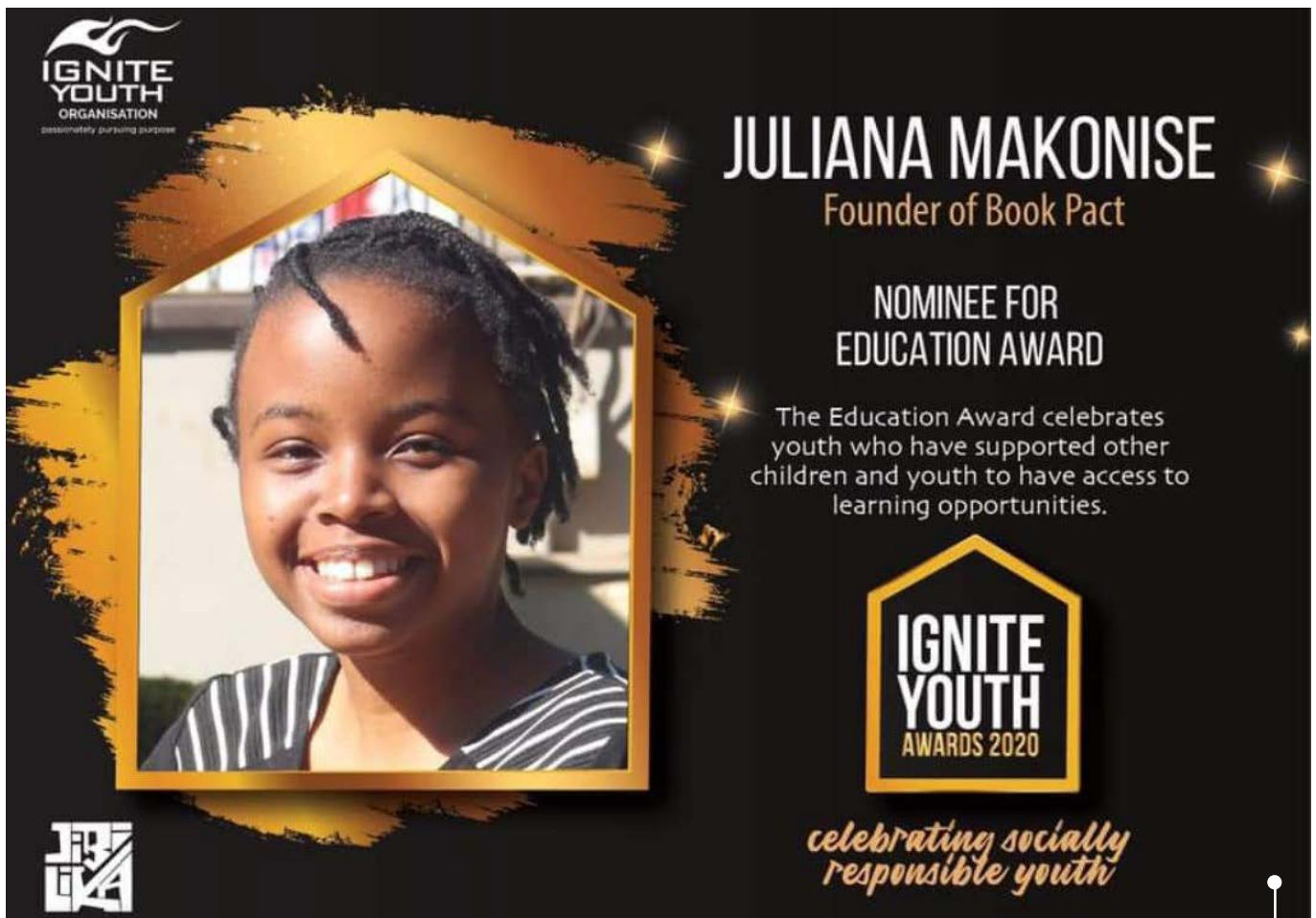
**Some of the PPEs distributed to the communities of Binga by Basilwizi.**

of posters in operational communities in Binga. It has also produced short informative videos circulated on social media in local languages.

As part of the COVID-19 Response, Basilwizi has distributed food hampers to 200 families in Luunga, Sizemba and Njobola areas in Bingjba to cushion them during the COVID-19 induced lockdown in 2020.

To strengthen the fight against the pandemic, Basilwizi reached out to hard-to-reach areas like fishing camps which are about 160 km away from Binga town where the Basilwizi offices are.





**IGNITE YOUTH ORGANISATION**  
responsibly pursuing purpose

**JULIANA MAKONISE**  
Founder of Book Pact

**NOMINEE FOR EDUCATION AWARD**

The Education Award celebrates youth who have supported other children and youth to have access to learning opportunities.

**IGNITE YOUTH AWARDS 2020**

*celebrating socially responsible youth*

**AAZ**

A flier circulated online to announce the Nominee for Education Award for Juliana Makonise (20) above.

## ActionAid Zimbabwe shifting power to young people

AAZ is shifting power to marginalised groups including women and young people through various interventions. This can be evidenced with youths who did exceptionally well in 2020 through the support, empowerment and platforms created by AAZ. Here is one of the success stories of Juliana Makonise, an AAZ volunteer under the Activista Zimbabwe movement.

“It is over a year since my first engagement with ActionAid. What I thought would be a one-time participation in one of AAZ’s numerous youth training programmes turned out to be the start of my journey as a youth activist. It took a one-week feminist leadership training to ignite my passion towards gender-inclusivity and youth leadership. I realized that age and gender were nothing more than social

identifiers. With support from AAZ and the Global Platform Zimbabwe, my dream of influencing positive societal change was fast-tracked into reality.

In 2020, I had the privilege to represent Activista Zimbabwe at the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (ARFSD). I was amazed by the commitment young people have towards creating sustainable solutions to Africa’s challenges. Having participated in discussions on civic processes, the advancement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and implementation of the ‘Africa We Want’ charter, I realized the importance of youth engagement in present and future societal development issues. I am a firm believer of youth empowerment and inclusivity for a sustainable future for all.





**Juliana Makonise during the African Regional Forum for Sustainable Development Goals conference in 2020 held in Victoria Falls.**

I also had the opportunity to moderate various webinars, including the Southern African Development Community Youth COVID-19 webinar organized by Global Platform Tanzania and Global Platform Zimbabwe.

With the outbreak of the Coronavirus and countries experiencing high levels of human rights violations, it was crucial to engage and strategize on how young people could help mitigate this crisis. The solution: Stand Up and Speak Out. As a public speaker, I vowed to use my voice to educate, inspire, and advocate for change. When social injustice and human rights transgressions increased, I inevitably had to speak out. I was honoured to represent Activista Zimbabwe at a United Nations (UN) General Assembly (UNGA) high-level side-event themed 'Building Back Better for Everyone & with Everyone.' This was part of a joint effort to ensure inclusive, meaningful participation in response to the shrinking of civic space during the COVID-19 pandemic. My

main contribution was on the importance of human life and how everyone, despite their gender, financial, or geographical location, should not be maltreated for any reason. I was beyond ecstatic to be listed as one of the six Momentous Voices at the 2020 United Nations General Assembly. All thanks to ActionAid for investing in my potential.

Through Global Platform Zimbabwe, I initiated the Meet, Share, and Learn (MSL) podcast which has stemmed into monthly webinars for youths to engage with community leaders on social, economic, and political issues.

At 20, I am the founder of a youth-led organization, Book Pact, which strives to improve the educational experience of people in marginalized communities. The Book Pact 'Build A Library Project' has helped provide over 1200 textbooks and novels for students across Zimbabwe's rural communities during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a literacy advocate, I am



**Juliana Makonise (right), Chido Kaponda, Sarah Mademutsa and Farisayi Madhaka (far left) at a feminist leadership training in Zambia supported by AAZ and the Global Platform.**

working to ensure quality education for all, especially for people in underserved communities. I am humbled by the honorary recognition I have received for my work towards equal access to education. In 2020, I was

- Selected as an ambassador for the World Literacy Foundation.
- Named one of the Junior Chamber International Ten Outstanding Young Persons in Zimbabwe for contributions to children, world peace, and human rights.
- Listed as one of the Gumiguru 50 under 30 emerging leaders in Zimbabwe.
- Nominated for the 4-H Zimbabwe Foundation and Ministry of Youth, Sports, Arts, and Recreation award for Children's Rights.
- Nominated for the Ignite Youth Organization Education Award.

I am grateful for ActionAid's tremendous contribution in fuelling my passion for activism. I have learnt that with a strong support system, passion, and dedication, positive societal change can be achieved. I hope to make more collective contributions with young people in the fight against poverty, gender inequality, and social injustice.



## Stay tuned on radio programmes slated for February and March 2021

Radio listeners in Harare, start your weekend by tuning in to our radio drama series focusing on COVID-19 awareness and good practices among various topics. These series will be aired from early February to mid-March. Other radio shows will be on:



- Gender Based Violence during COVID-19 Lockdowns
- Southern African Food Crisis Response

**actionaid** sovereign trust **Canada**

**WOMEN AND COVID**

**Radio**  
DRAMA

SATURDAY 6 FEB @ 10:30AM - 11:00AM  
SUNDAY 7 FEB @ 10:30AM - 11:00AM

**LIVE BROADCAST ON  
CAPITALK 100.4FM**

**Capitalk**  
100.4 fm

**MASK UP, SANITIZE AND MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING**

# actionaid

### NATIONAL OFFICE

- 📍 26 Divine Road, Milton Park, Harare
- ☎ +263-04-788123/5, 776127,
- 📞 +263-772164449
- ✉ info.zimbabwe@actionaid.org
- 🌐 zimbabwe.actionaid.org
- 📘 www.facebook/ActionAidZimbabwe
- 🐦 www.twitter.com/ActionAidZim
- 📺 ActionAid Zimbabwe

### REGIONAL OFFICE

- 📍 281 Chimurenga Street, Rusape
- ☎ +26325-3537,
- 📞 +263-772395967