

# POWER **in** PEOPLE

Newsletter July - December 2020



**ACTIONAID RWANDA COVID-19 RESPONSE**

**act:onaid**



# INSIDE

Foreword .....	1
AAR current areas of intervention.....	2
ActionAid Rwanda’s intervention improves Ernestine’s life amid COVID-19.....	3
Summary of ActionAid Rwanda COVID-19 responses, April – December 2020.....	6
ActionAid Rwanda COVID-19 response.....	7
ActionAid Rwanda supports schools and selling points with 17 handwashing stations of 235 taps to combat COVID-19 .....	8
15 couples from Karongi District pledge to restore love and relationships after AAR training on positive masculinity and GBV laws .....	10
ActionAid Rwanda through POWER Project provides livestock and energy-saving cooking stoves to communities.....	12
ActionAid Rwanda donates goats to foster 55 children graduating from ActionAid’s Sponsorship Program in Gisagara District.....	15
280 women from Nyanza and Gisagara hope for prosperity due to ActionAid Rwanda’s livestock donation.....	17
AAR trains 144 girls on making reusable sanitary pads in Karongi and Nyanza Districts .....	19
“My voice, my rights” campaign against sexual and child abuse.....	21
AAR joined other Rwanda’s YouLead consortium members in preparation of youlead summit 2020.....	23
Actionaid Rwanda supports young enterprise innovators to promote the creation of innovative solutions to the most challenging issues of our time .....	25
ActionAid Rwanda partners with FVA in fighting against malnutrition and GBV in Nyaruguru District.....	27
AAR supports 19 Child Care Centers in Nyanza District with basic materials to ensure children’s effective nutrition, learning and play environment .....	28
ActionAid Rwanda, a new member of ActionAid Federation.....	30
Research on the status of Unpaid Care Work in Rwanda, a new tool for women advocacy.....	34
AAR marks International Rural Women’s Day 2020.....	37
International Rural Women’s Day: ActionAid donates cassava seeds to women farmers from Murundi Sector, Karongi District, to improve cassava production.....	39
AAR joins ActionAid Federation and the world in the Walk for Survival and 16 Days of Activism 2020.....	41
Karongi: 16 Days of Activism and Walk For Survival kick off with the focus of ending teen pregnancies and child defilement.....	45
Tips to prevent the spread of COVID-19 .....	48

## FOREWORD

Our dear Readers,

Welcome to the issue of ActionAid Rwanda Newsletter for July – December 2020 and greetings to you all our esteemed supporters, partners, and stakeholders.

First and foremost, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to you all for your good cooperation in the fruitful year 2020, which ended on a high note with celebrations of many achievements you have all contributed to in various ways, mainly the achievement of ActionAid Rwanda becoming an Affiliate Member of ActionAid Federation. This is a historic milestone for ActionAid Rwanda as it allows it to fully participate in decision-making and direction of ActionAid Federation at an international level. In this issue, you will read more about this historic moment for ActionAid Rwanda.

In this Newsletter, you will also find many interesting stories from our work to respond to COVID-19 pandemic, address structural causes of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), strengthen Resilient Livelihoods and Secure Climate Justice. You will also find stories about different community sensitization campaigns that we have undertaken in the period between July and December 2020, which increased community awareness on COVID-19 prevention, VAWG prevention and response as well as child defilement prevention. These include campaigns which were conducted in line with the



**Josephine Irene Uwamariya**  
**Country Director**



**Françoise Kayitare Tengera**  
**Board Vice Chair**

International Rural Women's Day celebrations, the 16 Days of Activism and Walk For Survival Mobilization, among many others.

We are indebted to all our supporters, partners and stakeholders for their support and collaboration without which our work would not be such a success. We look forward to a continued collaboration to overcome COVID-19 pandemic, contribute to national development and achieve social justice for all!

Enjoy reading the stories from our work in empowering Rwandan communities, with a focus on women and girls, with knowledge and support to secure livelihoods and enjoy a life of dignity free from any form of violence.

Your Comments and feedback are very much valued, therefore, please feel free to share them with us.

We wish you a Happy and Prosperous New Year 2021.

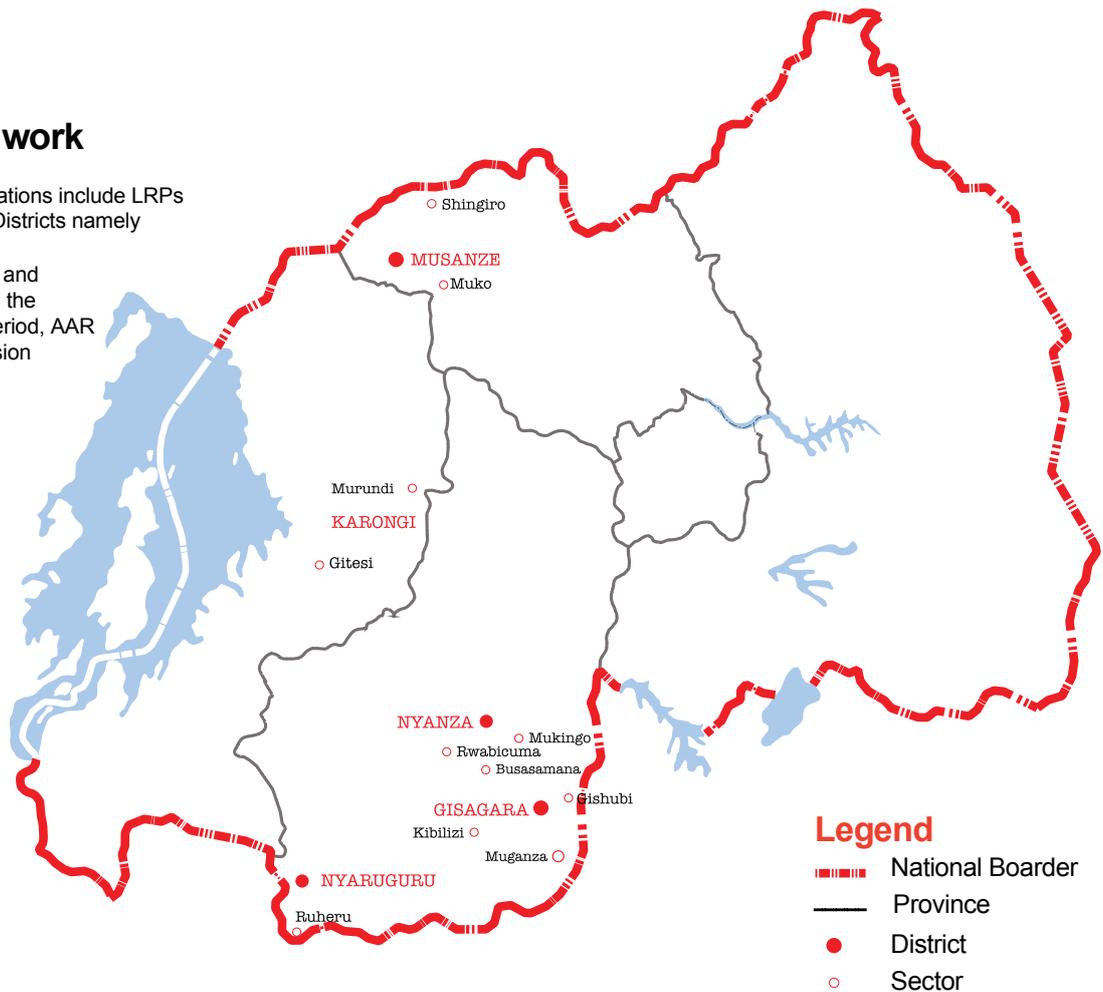
Have a pleasant read.

*In solidarity,*

# WHERE WE WORK

## Where we work

Current AAR operations include LRPs and Projects in 5 Districts namely Gisagara, Karongi, Musanze, Nyanza and Nyaruguru. During the current strategy period, AAR anticipates expansion of coverage within Districts as well moving into new locations of need.



## EMPOWERMENT

### **ACTIONAID RWANDA'S INTERVENTION IMPROVES ERNESTINE'S LIFE AMID COVID-19**

*Written by Clarisse Kawera, AAR*

Ernestine Mukandoli, 39 years, is a single mother of two, living in Mukingo Sector, Nyanza District of Southern Province, Rwanda.

Before COVID-19 outbreak in Rwanda, Ernestine was a vendor of fruits to clients at a prison located near her home. She used to buy avocados and retail them to the prison's canteen, making about 1,000 Rwandan Francs (approx. 1\$) per day as a profit. The secured daily income helped Ernestine to ensure her two daughters to not go to bed hungry. She has also been able to buy the basic needs for her family, like soap, and pay for school materials for her 10 years old daughter studying in primary, grade 5.

Life for Ernestine's family has become harder when the first case of COVID-19 was registered in Rwanda back in March 2020, when the Government instructed new measures limiting movement of people countrywide, to limit the wide spread of COVID-19. Small businesses, like fruits selling that Ernestine's family was depending on were halted, thus putting her children at a high risk.

"Since COVID-19 outbreak in Rwanda, the prison's administration limited the number of visitors and instructed a suspension of individuals selling fruits to the prison's canteen until further notice" says Ernestine.

The COVID-19 related restriction of movement has forced Ernestine to seek casual works at the neighboring farmers, earning irregularly 800 Rwandan Francs (approx. 0.8 \$) every day of work.

Supply chain has been disrupted in the country, making it harder for smallholder farmers to get hands on cash which has limited the farmers' employment capacity. Therefore, like many in her area, Ernestine is sometimes paid in-kind of food such as beans, maize, cassava, depending on what the employer has, to ensure food on her family's table.

For the first time in her life, Ernestine and her two daughters of 10 and 1.7 years old respectively, have experienced one meal or none per day, as she says.

*"From March to August 2020, it has been 4 months now that I am prohibited from selling avocados, I impatiently look forward to the permission to resume my small business," Ernestine adds*

## Relief support to Ernestine's family



Ernestine Mukandoli, sitting in her Backyard (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

In July 2020, about 1,200 selected most vulnerable families across Rwanda were reached with food relief support by ActionAid Rwanda to the Country's efforts in the fight against COVID-19 effects. Ernestine's family was one of the 377 recipients of the food support in her District of Nyanza and she is thankful for having been enabled to afford two meals per day again. Like each of the assisted families,

Ernestine and her two daughters received a one-off distribution of 15 kg of food (10kg of rice and 5 kg of maize flour) and 3 bars of soap to ensure regular and effective handwashing to reduce risks of catching COVID-19. It was the Government of Rwanda's strategy that intervention should be limited to the basic needs but get to all who are vulnerable.

*"You can't imagine how relieved I felt to be able to have at least two meals per day for my daughters. ActionAid Rwanda's food assistance has helped me to save my wage from the casual work and I've been able to lend a small land where I grow my own potatoes and vegetables that my family is now relying on, as the Government steps into reopening businesses," says Ernestine.*

*"The only challenge I'm facing now is that we are in the dry season and farming activities are limited, so it is very hard to find a casual work on someone's farm. I can spend a whole week without getting someone to hire me," Ernestine adds.*



Ernestine preparing meal for her family's lunch (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda 2020)



Ernestine and her two daughters having their lunch (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

Ernestine who says to be very familiar with messages about COVID-19 symptoms and prevention measures, fears for the future.

*“We thought that COVID-19 would be over soon for us to go back to normalcy. I now fear that it will stay longer than expected. I do not really know how our life will look like if it takes long, because it is very hard to live in these bad conditions,”*

Ernestine says as she refers to messages she heard from local radios and the megaphones regularly being circulated across her sector of Mukingo to raise community awareness on COVID-19 prevention, with support from ActionAid Rwanda.

However, Ernestine says that even if she does not know what the future holds for her family if COVID-19 stays longer, she strongly hopes that God will make a way, like He did in the few past months.

## SUMMARY OF ACTIONAID RWANDA COVID-19 RESPONSES, APRIL – DECEMBER 2020

### FOOD KITS

**26**  
Tons  
Delivered to  
1,253 families



### SOAPS

**1,348**  
Boxes  
Delivered to  
2573 families



### SANITARY PADS

**11,560**  
Pads  
Delivered to  
1,240 Women



### PROTECTIVE MASKS

**18,950**  
Masks  
Delivered to  
18,950 individuals



### HAND-WASHING FACILITIES

**81**  
64 hand washing stations delivered to 64 Women's Saving Groups.  
17 hand washing stations  
Delivered to 8 schools, 4 ECD centers and 3 selling points.



### CASH TRANSFERS

**2,472,000**  
Rwandan Francs  
Delivered to  
240 teen mothers



### ROADSHOWS ON GBV & COVID-19 PREVENTION VIA MEGAPHONES

**5**  
Tours  
Delivered to  
Communities in 5 LRPs



### TV TALK SHOW ON GBV & COVID-19 PREVENTION

**1**  
TV talkshow  
Reached  
Communities in 7 LRPs



### RADIO TALK SHOWS ON GBV & COVID-19 PREVENTION

**8**  
Radio talk shows on GBV & COVID-19 prevention  
Reached  
Communities in 7 LRPs



### RADIO SPOTS ON GBV & COVID-19 PREVENTION, UCV & SRHRENTION

**2**  
Radio spots per 5 radio stations in 45 days  
Reached  
Communities in 7 LRPs



### TV SPOT ON GBV & COVID-19 PREVENTION

**1**  
Spot, in 30 days  
Reached  
Communities in 7 LRPs



### BANNERS AND POSTERS ON COVID-19 PREVENTION

**117**  
Banners and posters  
Delivered to  
Communities in 7 LRPs



### STUDENTS AND YOUNG GIRLS' RADIO SESSIONS ON SRHR

**2**  
Radio sessions  
Reached Students and young girls in 7 LRPs



### COVID-19 PREVENTION KITS PROVIDED TO AAR STAFF

**96** Masks, **35L** of hand sanitizers, **1** handwashing station & **1** thermometer  
Provided to  
32 ActionAid Rwanda staff



## PARTNERS AND DONORS FOR AAR COVID-19 RESPONSES

- **Donors:** UKAID, Amplify Change and AAR Child Sponsors
- **Local Implementing Partners:** Faith Victory Association, Rwanda Girl Guides Association and Rwanda Religious Leaders Initiative
- **Other Partners and Stakeholders:** WICECEKA Network (comprised of 15 local Women's Rights Organisations), Rwanda's Ministry of Health, Rwandan citizens (with focus on women and children in 5 Districts where AAR operates) as well as local Women's Rights Organisations, Rwanda's Ministry of Health, Rwandan citizens (with focus on women and children in 5 Districts where AAR operates) as well as local administration in Nyanza, Gisagara, Nyaruguru, Musanze and Karongi Districts.

## ACTIONAID RWANDA COVID-19 RESPONSE

To curb the spread of COVID-19, Rwanda implemented lockdown measures that have brought much of socio-economic activities to a halt.

Due to the 40 days of total Country lockdown in Rwanda from 21st March to 2nd May 2020, many businesses were heavily impacted. Though the Country eased the restrictions, still a good number of small businesses are to resume yet. As a result of Covid-19 effects on the labor market, the unemployment rate in Rwanda increased from 13.1 percent in February to 22.1 percent in May 2020, according to a survey of the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda, with 25 percent of women and 19.6 percent of men being unemployed in May 2020.

The lockdown has also compromised households that depended on daily income to survive, like Ernestine's family.

The Government of Rwanda, in collaboration with its development partners, has initiated a support to the most vulnerable families with basic needs like food and hygienic materials. As support to the efforts of the people and the Government of Rwanda, ActionAid Rwanda has distributed over 26 tons of food items made of rice, beans and maize flour to the most vulnerable families affected by COVID -19 in the City of Kigali, Murundi and Gitesi sectors of Karongi District as well as Mukingo, Busasamana and Rwabicuma sectors of Nyanza District.

Furthermore, ActionAid Rwanda has supported 1 273 families with soaps, 1 240 women with sanitary pads, 17 650 individuals with face masks, 64 women's

saving groups with handwashing facilities, schools

and selling points with 17 handwashing stations of 235 taps to support their efforts in limiting the spread of COVID-19. 240 teen mothers were also supported with cash transfers to help them meet daily subsistence during the COVID-19 pandemic. Recipients of the hygienic and handwashing kits are mainly from ActionAid operations areas namely Karongi, Musanze, Nyaruguru, Nyanza and Gisagara Districts.

ActionAid Rwanda in partnership with Rwanda Religious Leaders Initiative (RRLI) supported 1300 households from 8 districts (Musanze, Karongi, Nyanza, Gisagara, Nyaruguru Kicukiro, Bugesera and Rwamagana with 8000 face masks and 800 bar soaps for hygiene and sanitation to protect against Covid-19.

ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) also conducted community awareness raising activities on COVID-19 prevention, Gender Based Violence (GBV), Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) as well as effects of Unpaid Care and Domestic Work (UCDW) to women and girls through radio and TV spots, Radio and TV talk shows, live debates and megaphones in the five Districts where ActionAid operates in Rwanda.

ActionAid Rwanda will continue to support the people of Rwanda to fight against COVID-19 and recover better.

# ACTIONAID RWANDA SUPPORTS SCHOOLS AND SELLING POINTS WITH 17 HANDWASHING STATIONS OF 235 TAPS TO COMBAT COVID-19



A child washing hands at the handwashing station established by AAR at Groupe Scolaire Muko, Musanze District (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

*Written by Jean Paul Niyitanga, AAR*

With the aim of preventing COVID-19 in schools and selling points, ActionAid Rwanda is establishing handwashing stations in different schools, selling points and Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers from different Districts.

A big part of the handwashing stations construction works has been completed while some others are ongoing.

In Group Scolaire Shingiro and Group Scolaire Muko in Musanze District, ActionAid Rwanda constructed one handwashing station at each school with 20 taps each.



Children washing hands at the handwashing station established by AAR at Groupe Scolaire Shingiro, Musanze District (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

A handwashing station of 20 taps has also been completed at Gitesi ECD center and another same handwashing station was established at Murundi ECD Center, Karongi District.

Different handwashing stations have also been established in different sectors of Gisagara District which consist of a 20 taps handwashing station at Group Scolaire Gishubi, a 10 taps handwashing station at Kibilizi ECD Center, a 20 taps handwashing station at Group Scolaire Kibilizi and a 10 taps handwashing station at Group Scolaire Muyira.



**A handwashing station established by AAR at GS Kibilizi, in Gisagara District (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

In Nyanza District, construction works for 4 handwashing stations funded by AAR are ongoing in Busasamana and Rwabicuma Early Childhood Development Centers as well as Cyerezo and Kigogo selling points. Those handwashing stations have 20 taps each.



**A handwashing station established by AAR in GS Mubuga in Rwabicuma Sector, Nyanza District (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**



**UMUTESI Divine, a S2 student at GS MUBUGA washing her hands using a handwashing station established by AAR at GS Mubuga in Rwabicuma Sector, Nyanza District (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

ActionAid Rwanda in partnership with Faith Victory Association (FVA) has also established 5 handwashing stations of 3 taps each at four schools and one selling point in Nyaruguru District.

Hand washing remains one of the best defenses against COVID-19 contamination, along with other public health measures such as maintaining physical distance, avoiding crowded places and wearing a mask wherever recommended, among others.



**Students from Ecole Primaire Kavumu Adventiste located at Busasamana Sector, Nyanza District washing their hands using AAR supported handwashing station (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

## 15 COUPLES FROM KARONGI DISTRICT PLEDGE TO RESTORE LOVE AND RELATIONSHIPS AFTER TRAINING ON POSITIVE MASCULINITY AND GBV LAWS



Participants to the training session on Gender Based Violence and GBV law

(Photo / Tubibe Amahoro 2020)

*Written by Jean Paul Niyitanga, AAR*

Under the support of ActionAid Rwanda, through Speak Out Project, TUBIBE AMAHORO Organization, the implementing partner, conducted a four-day training for 15 couples from Murundi and Gitesi Sectors of Karongi District, Western Province.

The training took place from 25<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> August 2020. Trained couples were identified in close collaboration with National Women's Council (CNF) at Sector level based upon their reputation in their respective communities.

The training aimed at increasing awareness and knowledge of 30 participants on their legal rights and

GBV law, assisting them in finding strategies to end their conflicts, encouraging them to become actively involved in protecting women and girls against GBV in their families and to increase awareness of men about how to support their wives and to allow them to participate fully in decisions that are affecting their households.

This training focused on different topics, including but not limited to the notion of a family, complementarity between wife and husband, causes of marriage termination and preventive measures, Gender Based Violence & GBV law, positive masculinity, cause of family conflicts and how to handle them, among others.



**Ms. INGABIRE Brigitte, training facilitator, facilitating the session on Gender Based Violence & GBV law (Photo / Tubibe Amahoro 2020)**

“It was found that out of 15 couples who participated in the training sessions, 8 couples experience physical violence whereby mostly women get beaten and kicked out of their homes by their husbands. 15 couples reported about cases related to insulting, degrading, demanding and engagement in humiliating acts by one of the partners.” Ingabire Brigitte, the training facilitator said.

As noted by Ingabire, 98% of participants did report to have at least experienced sexual violence ten times over the last two months where in most cases, women and men in Murundi and Gitesi Sectors get

sexually violated through forcing a spouse into Sexual intercourses without that spouse’s consent, by way of force, intimidation, prices and others.

The lack of complementarity between spouses, torture by one of the couples, distorting tranquility of one’s spouse, forced sexual intercourse, exclusion of household property, lack of communication between couples, cheating between spouses, harassment, poor hygiene for one of the spouses, permanent irritations, not clothing one’s wife and domestic violence are other major problems faced by some of participants.



**Mr. MPAYIMANA Fulgence, training facilitator, facilitating the session on Family conflicts, causes & their consequences (Photo / Tubibe Amahoro 2020)**

Couples shared their experiences vis a vis Gender based violence, how they normally behave once they find themselves in the GBV situation. Couples also were given time to reflect on their marriage, manners of communication and behaviors at household level and were asked to mediate, restore their love and conjugal relationships where they found shortfalls.

“We use to live in harmony until a few months ago, when we started quarrelling due to the fact that I used to see my wife talking with men coming in her small bar and felt jealous of her and started to treat ill of her. Now after this training sessions, we are committed to stop arguing and quarrelling and strive to live in harmony again, we are growing old and becoming grandparents, so we need to be role models to our children and grandchildren, as well as be exemplary to others. What we were doing basically was due to miscommunication and could not have happened if we had communicated better to each other,” One couple from Murundi Sector testified.

“We used to humiliate one another, quarrel and hide our incomes to each other, but now thanks to this training, we have decided to change our behaviors

and planned to set a specific time for a dialogue as a couple. We have also decided to revisit the way our household property is managed, and stop having forced and/or unconsented conjugal intercourse,” another couple from Gitesi Sector testified.

All participants decided to approach their fellow neighbors who have conflicts within their households and encourage them to change their minds and behaviors and teach them about how to sort out conflicts with their household hence living in harmony.

All trained couples agreed to establish GBV clubs to keep supporting other neighbors who are passing through the same situation. All trained couples decided to change the way their households were managed especially in terms of management of their family incomes.

Tubibe Amahoro organization with support from ActionAid Rwanda, continuously follow up on the progress of conflicts resolution at household levels, in close collaboration with trained couples. Tubibe Amahoro will also assist other couples with high conflict levels to settle and regulate their conflicts via dialogues and experience sharing.

## **ACTIONAID RWANDA THROUGH POWER PROJECT SUPPORTS WOMEN SMALLHOLDER FARMERS WITH LIVESTOCK AND ENERGY-SAVING COOKING STOVES**



A member of women groups supported with livestock feeding chicken in Karongi District.  
(Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

*Written by Jean Paul Niyitanga, AAR*

During the fourth quarter of 2020, ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) through POWER Project in partnership with local implementing partners namely Faith Victory Association (FVA), Duhozanye Association and Tubibe Amahoro Association supported the project right holders with energy-saving cooking stoves and livestock to ease the Unpaid Care Work burden for them and help them increase agricultural production.

The chicken provided to women's groups will produce eggs which women can sell or use to improve the nutritional status of household members, especially

children, and provide organic manure to fertilize their farms, hence increasing agricultural production.

In Gitesi and Murundi Sectors of Karongi District, AAR in partnership with Tubibe amahoro Association provided 320 chickens and 126 energy-saving cooking stoves to women farmers, while Gisagara District right holders were provided with 608 chickens and 188 energy-saving cooking stoves in partnership with Duhozanye Association.

ActionAid Rwanda has also partnered with FVA in supporting women farmers with 185 energy-saving cooking stoves in Nyanza District, 123 in Musanze District, and 70 in Nyaruguru District.



**POWER Project right holders are happy with energy-saving cooking stoves which eased the cooking task  
(Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

“These energy-saving cooking stoves we received helped me to improve hygiene in my family and reduced the time for cooking and quantity of firewood,” Uwamahoro Beltide, a POWER Project right holder in Muko Sector, Musanze District testified.

“As it is easy to cook by using these stoves, now men are also enjoying cooking, this resulted in mindset change for men,” Said Kanakuze Erriane from Dushyigikirane group located in Musanze District.

Mukacyubahiro Bonifrida from Ruheru Sector,

Nyaruguru District said, “using energy-cooking stove enables me to save over 4 hours per day”.

“Cooking stoves have been distributed along with the supplementary cooking gadget called “wonder box” which helps safely keep cooked food as this wonder box is able to retain maximum heat for about three hours. The use of energy-saving stoves is important as it increases women's opportunities of saving time to participate in income-generating activities while preserving the environment.” said Anatole Uwiragiye, the POWER Project Manager at ActionAid Rwanda.



Cooking stoves have been distributed along with the supplementary cooking gadget called “wonder box”  
(Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

Uwiragiye added that the support of energy-saving cooking stoves and chicken recently provided to women smallholder farmers aimed to help them secure the necessities of life. Specifically, the provision of small livestock (chickens) to women farmers’ groups was intended to help them invest in economically productive activities like poultry farming while supporting agroecological practices under promotion.

POWER Project is a Multi-Country Project funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and stands for

Promoting Opportunities for Women Empowerment and Rights. It aims at increasing women’s income through practicing Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture techniques (agroecology technologies), better access to markets and reduce unpaid care work burden for women. This project which started in 2016 and is closing by January 2021, has been serving the community, especially women smallholder farmers, to reduce unpaid care work burden and to improve their livelihoods conditions and their socio-economic stand.

# ACTIONAID RWANDA DONATES GOATS TO FOSTER 55 CHILDREN GRADUATED FROM ACTIONAID'S SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM IN GISAGARA DISTRICT



Graduates posing in a group photo holding AAR gift of T shirts (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

*Written by Jean Paul Niyitanga, AAR*

55 children from Gisagara District have graduated from ActionAid's Sponsorship Program on December 3, 2020 in the ceremony that took place in Muganza Sector.

During the graduation ceremony, ActionAid Rwanda provided one goat per each graduate to foster them

and one T-Shirt as a sign of appreciation for their role in the community and the long journey they have been with ActionAid Rwanda.

These children were supported by ActionAid Rwanda since 2008 when they were around 5 years old.



Graduates posing in a group photo holding AAR gift of goats (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)



**Butoyi Christine, is happy for the goat she has been given by ActionAid Rwanda on her graduation day.**

**(Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

ActionAid Rwanda's Sponsorship Program targets different children from 5 Districts of Rwanda where it operates namely Gisagara, Nyaruguru, Nyanza, Musanze and Karongi Districts. The sponsorship is done through linking those children with sponsors when they are too young (between 3-6 years).

The support from Sponsors contribute to the children's quality education through the provision of school materials, establishment of classrooms and playgrounds to improve children 's learning environment, among other benefits.

When those children reach the age of 18 years, they are considered adults and that is when they graduate out of the sponsorship program, since most of them are no longer living in ActionAid communities of interventions as they move out of their communities to look for jobs or schools outside their communities.

Butoyi Christine is now 20 years old, she lives in Muganza Sector, Gisagara District. She is one of the graduates and she is grateful for ActionAid Rwanda's sponsorship. She pledges to take care of the goat she was given on the graduation day.

"ActionAid Rwanda has been giving me different support in my education like giving me school materials. I thank them for this goat they gave me, I will take care of it until it produces other offspring

and then I will sell all the goats and buy a cow," said Christine.

Parents of the graduates were also present at the graduation event that took place at the Office of Muganza Sector. They appreciated the support of ActionAid to their children and the community in general.

Mukagaju Seraphine is one of the parents, she is thankful for ActionAid's support to her son Barayavuga Daniel and appreciated ActionAid's interventions in Gisagara community.

"ActionAid Rwanda has supported my son in his education; they have been giving him school materials and he is now in senior six. He is at school now, but he will appreciate this goat since it will prosper him as he likes rearing domestic animals. ActionAid Rwanda established Early Childhood Development Centers (childcare centers) that help our young children in education, they have provided water tanks and cooking stoves to women," said Seraphine.

Parfaite Irene Uwonkunda, ActionAid Rwanda Local Right Program Manager in Gisagara District thanked the graduates for their role in the community and urged them and their parents to take care of the livestock they were given so that it will be a source of their prosperity in the future.

## 280 WOMEN FROM NYANZA AND GISAGARA HOPE FOR PROSPERITY DUE TO ACTIONAID RWANDA'S LIVESTOCK SUPPORT



District officials and AAR Representative during the distribution of goats to women in Nyanza District

(Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

*Written by Jean Paul Niyitanga, AAR*

ActionAid Rwanda has recently supported 100 women from Nyanza and 180 women from Gisagara Districts who are members of different women groups with goats to help them get organic manure, hence increasing agricultural production and income.

This support was provided on 2nd and 3rd December 2020 in Gisagara and Nyanza Districts respectively. It aims at increasing women economic empowerment since it will facilitate them to have enough organic manure to be used in their agricultural activities in order to increase agricultural production and access to market. Through selling the goats' offspring, the beneficiaries will also increase income, hence improve their financial sustainability.

Right holders of this donation hope for the increase of their agricultural production since they are going to

start using organic manure from the livestock given by ActionAid Rwanda.

Mukamana Yunisse, 43, is a mother of 6 children living in Nyanza District. She is happy for ActionAid Rwanda's contribution in her development and pledged to care for the given goat.

"ActionAid Rwanda has supported us in forming women cooperatives. We are now able to save money and get loans from those cooperatives while also doing other activities like farming. Now that we are given goats, the livestock will help us to get organic manure to be used in our fields, so we hope for development due to increased production." Said Mukamana, adding that women cooperative helps her in getting money to pay Community Based Health Insurance Subscription (Mutuelle de Santé) for the whole family of 8 people.



**Right holders with their goats donated by ActionAid Rwanda in Gisagara District posing for a photo with their livestock (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

Mukangwije Bernadette is a member of Tsindubukene Women group and she is another right holder of ActionAid Rwanda's donation of goats in Gisagara District, Kibilizi Sector. She considers the goat from ActionAid Rwanda as a blessing to her family.

"I am very happy for this ActionAid Rwanda's support, this goat they gave me in a few days will be very big, this goat is a blessing to my family, I will sell its offspring and buy a cow and meanwhile I will be getting fertilizers." Mukangwije said.

Nyanza District Mayor, Ntazinda Erasme, who was present in the event, appreciated ActionAid Rwanda's interventions in the development of Nyanza District residents.

"We thank our partners like ActionAid Rwanda due to their daily support to the residents of Nyanza District, we thank them for their contribution to the fulfillment of the District's pledges (Imihigo) in last year, they always have tangible interventions which improves livelihoods of our community members. Today, ActionAid's donation of goats to women is a beginning of development." Said Ntazinda.

Parfaite Irene Uwonkunda, ActionAid Rwanda Local Right Program Manager in Nyanza and Gisagara Districts, urged the right holders to take care of their livestock for their economic empowerment.

"If you take care of these livestock ActionAid Rwanda has given you, it will help you in developing your families through using organic fertilizers in your agriculture. Avoid selling these goats, rear them until they produce offspring." Parfaite urged them.

Agriculture is the main economic activity in Rwanda especially for rural areas. Women represent a crucial resource in agriculture and the rural economy through their role as farmers and entrepreneurs although they face more severe limitations in access to productive resources such as land, organic manure and credit facilities. Giving livestock to women will solve a big part of their challenges.

## AAR TRAINS OVER 144 GIRLS ON MAKING REUSABLE SANITARY PADS IN KARONGI AND NYANZA DISTRICTS



Participants to the training on making reusable pads from pieces of cloth, in Nyanza District (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

*Written by Jean Paul Niyitanga, AAR*

From 9th to 16th December 2020, ActionAid Rwanda has conducted a training on making reusable sanitary pads for 104 teen mothers, 36 mentors and 4 safe house counsellors from Karongi and Nyanza Districts, for the purpose of addressing the challenges faced by girls from poor families who can't afford buying single-use sanitary pads.

Despite the Government of Rwanda's decision to add sanitary pads to a list of goods that are tax exempted in order to ease their affordability, women and girls from poor households claim that single-use sanitary pads remain expensive and much is needed to ensure their availability and affordability for women and girls from low-income households.

According to the World Bank, at least 20 percent of schoolgirls in Rwanda, mainly in rural areas, miss school up to 50 days per year because they cannot afford buying sanitary pads and do not have safe spaces to change and rest when they are in the menstrual period.

For all women and girls to have access to menstruation hygiene materials regardless of their economic status, sanitary pads should not only be cheap but also free and that's why AAR through Speak Out Project has conducted a training on making reusable sanitary pads from cotton pieces of cloth for 104 teen mothers, 36 mentors and 4 safe house counsellors in Gitesi and Murundi Sectors of Karongi District and Busasamana, Rwabicuma and Mukingo Sectors of Nyanza District.



**Participants to the training in Busasamana Sector, Nyanza District practicing how to make reusable pads from pieces of cloth (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

Right holders of this training testified that this initiative will help poor women and girls to access cheaper or even free reusable sanitary pads.

“Today’s training is so important for us because they taught us how to make pads in cloth so that women or girls who don’t have money to buy a single-use pad can make a reusable pad in cloth, hence manage her menstrual period with dignity. This is important because when a woman or girl misses a pad while menstruating, she can’t go anywhere, some girls from poor families miss school due to lack of pads,” Alice Mukeshimana, one of Speak Out Project’s mentors for schoolgirls said, adding that they are going to share knowledge gained from the training to other community members.

“I have got new knowledge, I didn’t think it’s possible for anyone to make sanitary pads by using pieces of cloth,” said Nishimwe Marceline, a teen mother from Murundi Sector, Karongi District.

“Due to poverty, it’s sometimes very hard for poor women and girls to get money to buy sanitary pads. This is a challenge for girls to manage their menstruation periods, so these reusable pads are cheap to make and can be used for a year since they are washable,” said Robinah Najjingo, Speak Out Project Manager.



**Participants to the training in Gitesi Sector, Karongi District practicing how to make reusable pads from pieces of cloth (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

Beneficiaries of the training are teen mothers and mentors. Teen mothers are selected from self-help groups and those trained will train their colleagues. Mentors will also train schoolgirls who are in school’s safe spaces established by ActionAid Rwanda across different districts.

## SOLIDARITY

### “MY VOICE, MY RIGHTS” CAMPAIGN AGAINST SEXUAL AND CHILD ABUSE



Panel discussion between GBV Service Providers and teen mothers during the Teen Mothers Workshop organized by GMO and partners as part of the Gender Accountability Day (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

*Written by Clarisse K. & Jean Paul N, AAR*

In line with “My Voice, My rights against Sexual Child Abuse” Campaign and the Gender Accountability Day in Rwanda which falls on October 26, 2020, ActionAid Rwanda joined the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) and other partners in a dialogue with teen mothers to assess their needs and explore how to collectively respond to their economic, health, legal and social reintegration needs. The dialogue took place in Gatsibo District, Eastern province.

As part of the teen mothers’ dialogue, representatives from ActionAid Rwanda, Government authorities and different GBV service providers interacted with teen mothers on Sexual Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and Gender Based Violence (GBV) reporting channels, and trained teen mothers on how to prevent child defilement and report GBV cases.

During this teen mothers’ workshop, ActionAid Rwanda supported teen mothers from Gatsibo District with hygienic materials to increase their efforts in sanitation and in limiting the spread of COVID-19. The hygienic materials donated by ActionAid Rwanda include soaps and sanitary pads worth 3,696, 000 Frw (approx 3,700 USD).

Jeanne from Gatsibo District is one of the supported teen mothers. She was raped and impregnated by an old man in 2017 while she was 17 years old. She accepted to be married by that man, but the marriage was followed by violence against her, she reported the violence, and the perpetrator was taken to court and judged guilty. Now Jeanne is struggling alone in her small-rented house since she was abandoned by her parents.

“These materials provided by ActionAid Rwanda will help me in my daily life, I usually search for everything for my life, but now this is a help that will support me in my daily hygiene.” Said Jeanne



**Jeanne holding ActionAid Rwanda's donation of soaps and pads (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

Immaculée from Gatsibo District got pregnant while she was 18 years old after being raped. The perpetrator negotiated with her mother and decided to live together as husband and wife, but the husband left her in a rented house after few days and went away. She appreciated ActionAid Rwanda's support.

“These materials are so important; soaps will help me in hygiene activities and these pads will help me in my menstrual period since it sometimes become difficult to find money to buy pads.” Said Immaculée .



**Immaculée holding ActionAid donation of soaps and pads (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

Minister of Gender and Family Promotion in Rwanda, Prof. Jeannette Bayisenge urged parents not to abandon their children because they are pregnant and asked teenagers to say no to deceivers who want to impregnate them.

“We need the involvement of local authorities in ending this issue through helping us to find out suspects of child abuse and the role of each citizen in providing timely information about sexual violence.” Added Minister Bayisenge.

Annet Kakibibi, the representative from ActionAid Rwanda in this event said that “ActionAid Rwanda in its priority of addressing gender-based violence is collaborating with different partners in supporting teen mothers and working hard in addressing sexual violence and child defilement. It is in that regard that ActionAid Rwanda provided this hygienic material to support the efforts of Karongi teen mothers in sanitation and in limiting the spread of COVID-19.”

Teen pregnancy cases in Gatsibo District was 687 within first 10 months of the year 2020. Among 175 suspects who were taken to court, 142 of them was in prosecution while 33 of them had been released due to the lack of facts while 511 suspects were being sought for justice.

## AAR JOINED OTHER RWANDA'S YOULEAD CONSORTIUM MEMBERS IN PREPARATION OF YOULEAD SUMMIT 2020



**Participants of YouLead Summit 2020 pausing for a group photo (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

*Written by Jean Paul Niyitanga, AAR*

ActionAid Rwanda joined the rest of YOULEAD consortium members in Rwanda to prepare the 2020 East African Community Youth Leadership (YouLead) Summit that took place from 23rd to 27th November 2020 under the theme “Development Is People -Youth at the center of peace and development Agenda”.

YouLead is an East Africa’s Flagship Youth Leadership Development Program seeking to unlock youth Leadership potentials for a prosperous Region.

It is a collective action program hosted by MS Training center for Development Cooperation (MSTCDC) AND THE East African Community (EAC) in Arusha, Co-owned and supported by the Youlead Consortium of State and Non State Partners across all the 6 East African community member states in the spirit of the United Nations Agenda 2030-“Leaving no one behind” and the African Union Agenda 2063-“The Africa we want”.

This year, the usual face to face gatherings in Arusha has been annulled due to COVID-19 pandemic mitigation measures and travel restrictions and

therefore, each EAC member state was requested to host the annual event with different focus areas as assigned by YouLead Arusha Secretariat team, to ensure Youth Voice, participation and engagement in this year’s annual event.

ActionAid Rwanda as one of Youlead Consortium members in Rwanda was nominated by YouLead to coordinate and facilitate the preparation of Youlead summit event that took place on the 25th November 2020, with relevant Agencies and Government Ministries and Institutions such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (EAC Affairs Department) together with The Pan African Movement Rwanda Chapter.

Rwanda and Burundi were given a topic of Youth in Business and Enterprise-East Africa Under 40 Business Leaders Forum: “Accelerating Economic Opportunities and Decent Work for Youth” which ended with the East African Youth Enterprise Awards to 3 Rwandan young business Entrepreneurs supported by Actionaid Rwanda.

Various guest speakers in this year’s summit called on the young generation to embrace inclusive

governance, be innovative and live a purpose driven life through using existing opportunities.

Josephine Uwamariya, the Country Director of ActionAid Rwanda which heads organizations behind YouLead Summit 2020 in Rwanda explained that capacitating the youth is an investment for the better future of the world.

“Youth are the leaders of today and tomorrow not only in Rwanda but also in EAC, Africa and across the world. The youth’s role is highly needed to act as the backbone to attain Sustainable Development Goals.” She stressed.



**Josephine Irene Uwamariya, AAR Country Director, delivering her speech during YouLead Summit 2020 (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

Fredrick Kamusiime, the Division Manager for EAC and Eastern African Affairs at Rwanda’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs highlighted that Rwanda’s youth needs to push themselves to global market by creating outstanding innovations.

“You should put much effort in markets study. Apparently, there won’t be gun wars anymore. The remaining struggle is to liberate our market thrusting forward to make own cars and other technology gadgets, it is within your capacity to come up with new ideas and strive to take the lead.” said Kamusiime adding that security should be taken as a huge opportunity for youth to build on to achieve their goals.



**Josephine Uwamariya, AAR Country Director urged youth to maximize all the chances and opportunities they have today (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**



**Fredrick Kamusiime, the Division Manager for EAC and Eastern African Affairs at Rwanda’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs speaking in YouLead Summit 2020 (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

YouLead summit takes place every year in November since 2017 as an annual climax event and East Africa’s largest forum of young leaders, mentors, Government officials and Youth Organizations representatives from all the EAC member states to craft responses to the region’s rapidly growing youth population, their challenges and opportunities, while enjoying the spirit of Regional Integration.

## ACTIONAID RWANDA SUPPORTS YOUNG ENTERPRISE INNOVATORS TO PROMOTE THE CREATION OF INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO THE MOST CHALLENGING ISSUES OF OUR TIME



The Representative of Solve It Ltd receiving the cash prize from AAR Country Director and the representative of the Rwandan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

*Written by Clarisse Kawera, AAR*

As part of YouLead Summit 2020, an East African Youth enterprise Award (YEA) Competition was organized by YouLead, East Africa's flagship Youth Leadership Development Program to recognize outstanding cross-border business ideas by young entrepreneurs. Through the YEA, young entrepreneurs from EAC Member States, especially young social enterprise innovators that are building social enterprises creating solutions to the most challenging issues of our time, competed for Cash Enterprise Awards and other opportunities.

In Rwanda, 16 contestants participated to the YEA competition but 4 of them reached the final stage. These include Kwaanda Ltd (Kwbot) which produced a mobile warehouse robot, Solve IT Ltd (SOMABOX)

which promote the use of technology in education, Tech Adopter which does hardware manufacturing of small sized Agricultural tools and machines, and Moilla Ltd (GOCOOK), a company that provide on demand meals and chefs through a website called gocook.rw.

ActionAid Rwanda as a member and lead organization for the YouLead Consortium in Rwanda supported the final 3 best Social Enterprise Innovators in Rwanda with cash prizes to enable them to foster their businesses to a higher level, hence providing innovative solutions to the most challenging issues of our time.

This was made on November 25th, 2020, 3rd day of the YouLead Summit, during the Youth Enterprise Award Ceremony in which the winners of the YEA in

Rwanda were announced and awarded. The 3 best Social Enterprise Innovators from Rwanda that were awarded cash prizes by ActionAid Rwanda are:

Solve IT Ltd which emerged the winner won a 2 million Frw (approx 2,000 \$) cash prize. Solve IT Ltd created SOMABOX, a portable digital file distribution tool based on inexpensive hardware that enables delivery of educational content and other vital information to individuals/schools off the grid.

Kwaanda Ltd which emerged the runner-up won a cash prize of 1,500,000 Frw (approx. 1,500 USD). Kwaanda Ltd made KwBot, an autonomous robot that can efficiently pick and replace things from an industry to warehouses hence reducing the production cost.



**The representative of Kwaanda Ltd receiving the cash prize (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

Moilla Ltd that won the 3rd place received a 1,000,000 Frw (approx 1,000 USD) Cash Prize. Moilla Ltd is a company that provide on demand meals and chefs through a website called gocook.rw



**The Representative of Moilla Ltd receiving the cash prize from AAR Country Director and the representative of ASPIRE Rwanda (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

The YEA ceremony that took place in Kigali on November 25th, 2020 was attended by representatives from the Rwandan Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINAFFET), YouLead Consortium Members in Rwanda, youths, among others.

Speaking on behalf of the award winners, Joseph Semafara, representative of Solve It Ltd appreciated the Government of Rwanda and ActionAid Rwanda for their support to youth entrepreneurs and pledged to use well the opportunity and trust given to them.

The Country Director of ActionAid Rwanda, Josephine Uwamariya urged the awarded Social Enterprise Innovators to further their innovation and create more solutions to the most challenging issues of our time including Climate Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture, Quality Education through digitalization, Gender-Based Violence reporting channels, among others.

She also called upon private organizations working with the youth to join the Consortium members in Rwanda to help the youth achieve their dreams and contribute to the country's development.

“We call upon youth-led organizations and private organizations working with the youth to join us, so we work together as a consortium to support the youth and help them to contribute to our country's development,” Josephine said.

YouLead Consortium members in Rwanda are ActionAid Rwanda, Never Again Rwanda, Aspire Rwanda, Governance for Africa and Rwanda Youth Organization for Sustainable Development (RYOSD).

### About YouLead Summit

YouLead Summit is an annual EAC Youth Leadership Summit organized by the EAC Secretariat in collaboration with partner states to discuss important and key development aspects specifically focusing on the role of the youth in national, regional and global governance.

Besides, YouLead Summit is one of the East Africa's biggest gathering for youth leaders, which helps them to network with different professionals, experts, and prominent leaders across the region and beyond,

while sharing experience and knowledge that motivates them in the process of career development as well as setting the agenda for their future.

This year's EAC Youth Leadership Summit took place from 23rd – 27th November 2020 under the theme “Development Is People - Youth at the center of peace and development Agenda”. Various guest speakers in this year's summit called on the young generation to

embrace inclusive governance, be innovative and live a purpose driven life. Young people were also urged to build networks, chose to flourish, search for new opportunities, advance their skills and innovations for a better, safe and pleasant future.

YouLead Summit was organized since 2017 in search for implementation of the provisions of the East Africa Youth Policy (2016).

## ACTIONAID RWANDA PARTNERS WITH FVA IN FIGHTING AGAINST MALNUTRITION AND GBV IN NYARUGURU DISTRICT



Training participants practicing kitchen garden construction (Photo: FVA 2020)

*Written by Jean Paul N., AAR*

ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) in partnership with Faith Victory Association (FVA) is using participatory trainings as an approach to change the community members’ perceptions, attitudes, behaviors and practices.

From July to September 2020, communities from Ruheru sector of Nyaruguru District in Rwanda's Southern Province were one of the targets for this kind of trainings.

In this context, AAR and FVA trained 20 households from Ruheru sector, Nyaruguru District on kitchen garden construction and balanced diet with the objective of simplifying access to vegetables in order to eradicate malnutrition especially for children under 5 years and to increase skills of constructing modern kitchen gardens.

Through that training, participants have raised their knowledge on the preparation of a balance diet and construction of kitchen gardens. This was evidenced by 5 exemplary model kitchen gardens constructed

by training participants by using 7 techniques learnt during the training.

After acquiring new skills in the training, participants pledged to train other community members and to be agents of change in the community.

To address all structural causes of Gender-Based Violence, AAR in partnership with FVA conducted a 3 day training of 20 couples (10 men and 10 women) living in conflicts in Ruheru sector, Nyaruguru District on conflict management where couples were selected from cooperative members who were living in conflict.



Participants to the training on family conflict resolution (Photo: FVA 2020)

After the training, couples have understood the source of conflict in household and ways of conflicts resolution. They have improved their knowledge on women and child rights and pledged to be trendsetters in the community and to promote gender equality in their households.

Providing citizens with trainings allow community members to acquire new skills, sharpen existing ones, perform better, increase productivity and be better citizens who can be productive and useful to the society they are living in.

## AAR SUPPORTS 19 CHILD CARE CENTERS IN NYANZA DISTRICT WITH BASIC MATERIALS FOR EFFECTIVE NUTRITION, LEARNING AND PLAY ENVIRONMENT



The representative of ActionAid Rwanda in Nyanza District handing a roll of jags over to Nyanza District officials and ECD representatives (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

*Written by Clarisse K and Jean Paul N., AAR*

Recently, ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) supported 19 Home Based Early Childhood Development Centers (Home Based ECDs) established at village level in Nyanza District with basic materials to facilitate 500 children enrolled in the village ECDs to have adequate materials to improve their nutrition, as well as learn and play during the time they spend at these ECD centers .

These materials worth 2,038,750 Rwandan Francs were handed over to Nyanza District on 4th December 2020. They include 190 reading books, over 800 kitchen utensils, 38 mats, 19 handwashing facilities, 38 big buckets, among others.

The supported ECD Centers are from Mukingo, Busasamana and Rwabicuma sectors of Nyanza district.



Samples of materials handed over to different ECD centers in Nyanza District (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

“While every child needs effective early childhood education, children from disadvantaged environments are least likely to get them, these children are unlikely to benefit from early developmental stimulation, good health, adequate nutrition, and safety. Therefore, ActionAid Rwanda supports Community- Based ECD centers to have the needed materials to be able to welcome children in those village ECDs, this will help children in those communities to have quality basic education at early age to become drivers of change in their communities.” Said Parfaite Irene Uwongkunda, Representative of ActionAid Rwanda in Nyanza District.

“We thank partners such as ActionAid. We are happy and we appreciate these tools you donated to the ECD Centers designed for our children so that they can live well, grow well without stunting and dirt. This leads to good health for our children.” Said Ntazinda Erasme, Nyanza District mayor.

ECD Centers facilitate early child development in terms of health, reasoning capacity, language development, emotional and social skills which helps them to achieve their full potential in life while contributing to the reduction of Unpaid Care Works that affect women economic empowerment.

## AFFILIATION

### ACTIONAID RWANDA, A NEW MEMBER OF ACTIONAID FEDERATION



Josephine Irene Uwamariya speaking during the AAR Affiliation celebration held in October 2020  
(Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

*Written by Clarisse Kawera, AAR*

Recently, ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) became an Affiliate Member of ActionAid International (AAI) Federation. The approval of AAR Affiliation status was made on October 07th, 2020 by the ActionAid Annual General Assembly Meeting which took place from 7 to 9 October 2020.

The affiliation status allows ActionAid Rwanda to have a dual citizenship (national & international), have a National Identity to improve its relationship with the Rwandan Government, be able to make own strategic orientations and have open financial sources (internal fundraising).

*“This is a historic achievement for ActionAid Rwanda as it allows it to fully participate in decision-making and direction of ActionAid Federation at an international level. The status also permits ActionAid Rwanda to be fully governed by a National Board and make own strategic orientations,”* Josephine Irene Uwamariya, ActionAid Rwanda Country Director remarked during the celebration of AAR Affiliation.

### CELEBRATION OF AAR AFFILIATION

To celebrate this historic milestone, ActionAid Rwanda recently organized a light festivity which was attended by different partners and friends of ActionAid Rwanda including the former AAI CEO Chris Kinyanjui, the former Country Director of ActionAid Zimbabwe Ronnie Murungu, AAR General Assembly (GA) members, Board Members, staff and friends.



Participants to AAR Affiliation celebration posing for a group photo (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)



**AAR GA Convener, Board Chair, Country Director and Chris Kinyanjui cutting the celebration's cake**  
(Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

While addressing the gathering, AAR General Assembly Convener Ibrahim Ndagijimana as well as the Vice Chair of AAR Board, Francoise Kayitare Tengera, extended their appreciation for the support from different people who made this achievement possible including the former AAI CEO Chris Kinyanjui, former ActionAid Regional Director Olutayo Bankole Olujide, AAR General Assembly (GA) and Board

*"This achievement is a result of hard work and commitment of AAR staff and Management to successfully implement ActionAid interventions in Rwanda and register a big impact in the lives of communities. We are also grateful to the support from the former AAI CEO Chris Kinyanjui, former ActionAid Regional Director Oltayo, GA and Board members who made a great contribution to make this happen," Francoise remarked.*

Members as well as AAR staff for their hard work and commitment for the successful implementation of AAR work over the past years.



**AAR GA Convener Mr. Ibrahim Ndagijimana speaking during the celebration event**  
(Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)



**AAR Board Vice Chair Francoise K. Tengera addressing participants to the celebration event**  
(Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

In his remarks, Chris Kinyanjui congratulated ActionAid Rwanda for this historic milestone and noted that the Affiliation Status should be a starting point for ActionAid Rwanda to devise new and more impactful ways of working to register more impacts in Rwanda as well as be an influential member of ActionAid Federation.

*“This is the start of the journey for ActionAid Rwanda to work harder than before to build a strong brand at national and international levels and become an influential member of ActionAid Federation. Therefore, the big task ahead requires AAR Management and staff more efforts and commitment to continue registering impact and prevent the Country Office from slowing down,” Chris Kinyanjui said.*



**AAR GA Convener handing over a gift to Chris Kinyanjui as a sign of AAR appreciation for his support throughout AAR Affiliation process (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

While addressing participants to the celebration event, Ronnie Murungu, former Country Director of ActionAid Zimbabwe expressed his congratulations to AAR Team and appreciated its hard work to achieve the Affiliation status.

*He said “It’s been 3 years since I left ActionAid and from my good memory it’s not an easy task to be an Associate and less alone an Affiliate. It is a process that requires robust system transformation and an environment that facilitates. Achieving the affiliate role is not a one-person game but requires a progressive team. It is not an easy task, so proud of you Josephine, your team, your board and the support from Chris.”*



**AAR Board Vice Chair and Country Director handing a gift to Ronnie Murungu, as a sign of appreciation for his contribution to AAR Affiliation process (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

ActionAid Federation is an anti-poverty agency working with the poor, voiceless people, communities and similar-minded partners worldwide, to eradicate poverty & injustice.

ActionAid has been working in Rwanda since 1982 and its work has been contributing towards national development agenda while tackling the root causes of poverty and injustice and promoting social justice with a focus on women and girls’ rights.

## **FEEDBACK FROM PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS ABOUT AAR AFFILIATION**

Through social media and audio-visual messages, different people and organisations congratulated ActionAid Rwanda for becoming a Full Member of ActionAid International Federation.

These include ActionAid International Federation, ActionAid Nigeria, Senegal, Ghana and Cambodia. They also include Loreen Maseno, AAI representative at the AAR Board, Isaac Nyarwaya former AAR Board Chair and James Butare, former AAR Head of Programmes.

Loreen, Isaac and James appreciated AAR staff, Board and General Assembly members for their hard work, resilience and total commitment to achieve this milestone in the history of ActionAid Country Programme.



**ActionAid Nigeria** @ActionAidNG · Oct 26, 2020  
Congratulations @actionaidrwanda



**ActionAid Rwanda** @actionaidrwanda · Oct 25, 2020

Today is a day of celebrations & joy. Join us as we celebrate our new status of being an #Affiliate member of @ActionAid Int'l Federation. This is a historic milestone for us @actionaidrwanda as it allows us to fully participate in decision-making of @ActionAid at an int'l level.

[Show this thread](#)



**ActionAidCambodia** @ActionAidCambod · Oct 27, 2020  
Congratulation @actionaidrwanda



**ActionAid Rwanda** @actionaidrwanda · Oct 25, 2020  
Today is a day of celebrations & joy. Join us as we celebrate our new status of being an #Affiliate member of @ActionAid Int'l Federation. This is a historic milestone for us @actionaidrwanda as it allows us to fully participate in decision-making of @ActionAid at an int'l level.

[Show this thread](#)



**ActionAidSN** @ActionaidSN · Oct 27, 2020  
Congratulations to @actionaidrwanda...



**ActionAid Rwanda** @actionaidrwanda · Oct 25, 2020  
Today is a day of celebrations & joy. Join us as we celebrate our new status of being an #Affiliate member of @ActionAid Int'l Federation. This is a historic milestone for us @actionaidrwanda as it allows us to fully participate in decision-making of @ActionAid at an int'l level.

[Show this thread](#)



**ActionAid** @ActionAid · Oct 26, 2020  
Congratulations @actionaidrwanda on becoming an affiliate member of the #ActionAid federation 🎉



We're grateful to have your knowledge and leadership in livelihoods, good governance and the fight against gender-based violence.



**ActionAid Rwanda** @actionaidrwanda · Oct 25, 2020  
Today is a day of celebrations & joy. Join us as we celebrate our new status of being an #Affiliate member of @ActionAid Int'l Federation. This is a historic milestone for us @actionaidrwanda as it allows us to fully participate in decision-making of @ActionAid at an int'l level.

[Show this thread](#)



**Samantha Diouf** @SamanthaDiouf · Oct 26, 2020  
Huge congrats to @actionaidrwanda this is a big achievement to be celebrated. All the best as you bring your experience and voice to global decision making!



**ActionAid Rwanda** @actionaidrwanda · Oct 25, 2020  
Today is a day of celebrations & joy. Join us as we celebrate our new status of being an #Affiliate member of @ActionAid Int'l Federation. This is a historic milestone for us @actionaidrwanda as it allows us to fully participate in decision-making of @ActionAid at an int'l level.

[Show this thread](#)



## POLICY ENGAGEMENTS

### RESEARCH ON THE STATUS OF UNPAID CARE WORK IN RWANDA, A NEW TOOL FOR WOMEN ADVOCACY



Participants to AAR stakeholders' meeting to validate the final Unpaid Care Work Research Finding, held on 09 December 2020 (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

*Written by Jean Paul Niyitanga, AAR*

Through the ActionAid Rwanda -funded research on the status on Unpaid Care Work and its effects on women economic empowerment that was conducted in 9 districts of Rwanda, it was found that the Unpaid Care Work carried out by women and girls often goes unrecognized and unvalued in the calculations of the country's economy. Therefore, the research recommended that women's Unpaid

Care Work need to be recognized, reduced, rewarded and redistributed to allow women engagement in different economic development activities.

Unpaid Care Work (UCW) refers to all unpaid services provided within a household for its members, they are considered work because one could pay a third person to perform them.

Across the globe and with no exception, women dedicate more time than men to UCW which leads to consequences including inequalities in labor force participation between men and women thus gender-based violence and property-based violence against women.

Although the Government of Rwanda has made great strides in developing policies and strategies to support

women's empowerment and the advancement of gender equality, the longstanding culture still takes a woman as a mother of the house, one who needs to care for the whole household members, as the research revealed.

Unpaid Care Works assigned to girls and women are merely taken as cultural and natural assignment to be compulsorily done by females in Rwanda. Women therefore have less time to engage in paid work, to network and participate in activities for societal change, or even to rest and this situation fosters financial dependence and limits women's options for decent work.

"The Unpaid Care and Domestic Work we do at home is for the benefit of all members of our household, when they are well done, it benefits all of us. However, women carry the big part of the Unpaid Care Work burden than men. We are not asking for payment for what women do at home, but at least men should join us and help us in those works, recognize and value what we have done." said Nyirahabiyambere Esperance, resident of Karongi District.

"This study has shown that this problem of allocating UCW to women only is caused by a variety of reasons, especially culture. This result in gender-based violence, we are campaigning for Unpaid Care Work redistribution and reduction to ease the women's workload at home, we want to address imbalances between men and women towards Unpaid Care Work". said Josephine Uwamariya, the Country Director of ActionAid Rwanda.



**AAR Country Director, Josephine Irene Uwamariya, addressing participants to the above-mentioned stakeholders meeting (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

"We are not asking for women to be paid in cash for doing domestic work, what we want is the recognition that these Unpaid Care Work are valuable. Men should not say that their wives do nothing at home. Some women also accept and believe that they do nothing at home, yet they do the work that should have been done by someone else and be paid for. That's the value we are talking about, we're not talking about signing a cheque for them, but let it be known that household chores are also valuable". Josephine concluded.

Sarah Mukantaganda, Ag. Director for Women Empowerment in the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF) appreciated the research since its results will be useful for the Government's interventions in addressing Women's Unpaid Care Work burden.

"I am happy for this research because the results from it are very useful. Unpaid Care Work should be given value like any other decent work and this will contribute to the country's economy. Allocating Unpaid Care Work for only women is another form of psychological violence since they are considered useless, yet they work without rest all days". said Sarah.



**Sarah Mukantaganda speaking during the stakeholders meeting (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

This research also shows that the situation of Unpaid Care Work in Rwanda is amplified by the lack of some essential physical infrastructures such as water, energy (electricity & cooking gas) and women literacy rates which remains lower than men's (65% as compared to 72%).

According to this research, women spend 6 hours doing Unpaid Care Work (UCW) as compared to 2 hours for men. In sub-urban areas, women spend five hours in UCW as compared to one hour for men in the same household, while in urban areas women spend 2 hours compared to one hour for men. This difference in time spent in UCW hinders women towards engaging in any other economic activity.

This study estimated an average monthly cost of 93,960 RWF and 1,127,520 RWF per annum for women's unpaid care work, referring to available information on minimum wage for unskilled labor in Rwanda.

“The basis of this estimation is basically for unskilled labor, which means that the cost could be much higher as qualifications of women increases. Therefore, the value of Unpaid Care Work in family development and country in general should be recognized,” said Madeleine Mukeshimana, the researcher commissioned by AAR to conduct this study.

### DISSEMINATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

In an effort to disseminate the findings of this study and advocate for strategies to address UCW burden on women, ActionAid Rwanda organized a live talk shows on Radio Rwanda and Rwanda Television which focused on discussing about the research findings and recommendations from the research. During the interactive talk shows, recommendations were provided to the government, community members, private and non-governmental institutions towards addressing the challenges of women's Unpaid Care Work burden and its effects on women empowerment in Rwanda.

Rose Rwabuhiri, the Chief Gender Monitor in the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO), was one of the guest speakers. She said that men and women should share unpaid care and domestic work in

their respective households to enhance women's development.

“This study shows us that we still have a gap in gender equality, it shows us that we still have a lot of work to do to teach household members to share household tasks and in looking at what should be done to reduce time spent on the Unpaid Care Work especially through access to Gender Responsive Public Services,” said Rwabuhiri.



**Chief Gender Monitor, Rose Rwabuhiri (right), AAR Country Director (in the middle) and Rwanda TV Journalist during the talk show to disseminate the above-mentioned research findings (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**



**Dr. Marie Madeleine MUKESHIMANA, consultant (right) and Rwanda TV Journalist (Left) during the talk show (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

ActionAid Rwanda also used local media engagement (online media and broadcast media) and different social media sites in sharing findings from this study. Those social media platforms include twitter, Facebook and YouTube.

## AAR MARKS INTERNATIONAL RURAL WOMEN'S DAY 2020

*A CALL FOR PUTTING RURAL WOMEN AT THE CENTRE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE AND COVID-19 RESPONSE*



From right to left, Honorable Izabiriza Mediatrice - Parliamentarian, RBA Journalist and Josephine Irene Uwamariya - ActionAid Rwanda Country Director during the live talk show on Rwanda TV and Radio (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)



Alexis Nkurunziza, Executive Director of Rwanda Religious Leaders Initiative during the talk show on IRWD 2020 (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

- In Musanze District, AAR joined the National Women Council in an interactive community radio talk show held on Musanze Community Radio, to discuss with communities the role of rural women in the country’s economic and social development, their challenges and solutions to overcome them.



**Michel Ndayambaje, AAR representative in Musanze District with the National Women Council Representative during the community radio talk show on IRWD 2020 theme via RC Musanze (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)**

- In Gisagara District, ActionAid Rwanda through Promoting Opportunities for Women’s Empowerment and Rights (POWER) Project supported women smallholder farmers with 608 chickens to increase women economic development and 3 freezers for Kibilizi, Muganza and Gishubi Selling Points to help women store well their vegetables.
- In Karongi District, Murundi Sector, AAR supported 60 women cooperatives with 100,000 of high- yielding cassava seedlings to be planted on 10 hectares to improve cassava production in Murundi Sector.

IRWD 2020 celebrations are an opportunity for ActionAid Rwanda to commend the role of women in the transformational change and socio-economic development of the country and identify the challenges they face as well as strategies to overcome them.

The first International Day of Rural Women was observed on October 15, 2008. This day recognizes the role of rural women, including indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty.

- In Nyaruguru District, AAR in partnership with Faith Victory Association (FVA) organized a TV talk show on a local TV (BTN) highlighting achievements and challenges of rural women in Nyaruguru District.
- In Nyanza District, AAR supported 10 vulnerable families with household materials worth 1 million Rwandan Francs including bed sheets, clothes, mattresses, mats, basins, buckets, kitchen utensils, among other household and sanitary materials.



**District officials and ActionAid Representative in Nyanza District handing a mattress over to one of the beneficiarie (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda)**

## INTERNATIONAL RURAL WOMEN’S DAY: ACTIONAID DONATES CASSAVA SEEDS TO WOMEN FARMERS FROM KARONGI DISTRICT, TO IMPROVE CASSAVA PRODUCTION



Women smallholder farmers groups in Murundi Sector were provided with 100,000 cassava seedlings (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

*Written by Clarisse Kawera, AAR*

ActionAid Rwanda in collaboration with Karongi District Administration has distributed high-yielding cassava seedlings to women cooperatives in Murundi Sector, an event that coincided with the celebration of International Rural Women’s Day, on October 15th, 2020.

Farmers in this sector did not have cassava seeds at least five years ago as what they used to plant before, disappeared following the cassava seeds diseases. Maize, cassava, and beans are the prioritized crops in Murundi Sector in favor of land use consolidation programme.

The seedling provided to women farmers by AAR is named NASE 14, from the Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB), and is productive after one year.

The distribution consists of 100,000 pieces to be planted on 10 hectares. The seedlings were given

mostly to women smallholder farmers from 60 groups and cooperatives.



Karongi District Officials, AAR representatives and community members supporting one of the cassava seedlings’ beneficiaries to plant the seedlings in her plot, as part of the event. (Photo: ActionAid Rwanda 2020)

Beneficiaries said they had raised the issue of the lack of cassava seeds to the District administration and that now they are happy to have been settled.

Mukasine Therese, President of Isangano women farmer cooperative, said: “Among the selected crops in Murundi were cassava but we had no seeds. So, now is the time we received it, we are going to plant it hoping that next year we will supply to other sectors.”

The Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) Officer at Karongi District, Rose Niwemwana, urged the beneficiaries to care for the seeds properly so that they would benefit from them while at the same time share with colleagues.

“As the district administration, we have found that farmers from Murundi Sector did not have cassava seeds; the seeds that they had were getting unproductive and sometimes were not developing, so we advocated for them and ActionAid Rwanda supported us by enabling us to get seeds from RAB so that they could restore the cassava farming. We urge them to cultivate them properly, to fertilize them, and we hope that the new seeds will be productive and beneficial”. said Rose.

### **HINDRANCES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL WOMEN**

The seeds distribution coincided with the celebration of International Rural Women’s Day; however, ceremonies were not conducted as usual due to COVID 19 mitigation measures.

This year’s theme revolves around “the role of rural women in the country’s development and in fighting against COVID19 and its impact”.

Rural women’s development activities include agriculture, which is why they were given seeds, according to Kakibibi Annet, ActionAid Rwanda representative in Karongi District.

“We have given them seeds that can produce more yields and faster so that women can grow their cassava farming and cope with the impact of COVID19 on their economy,” she said.

However, a rural woman, particularly in Murundi Sector, still has obstacles to her development among them are family conflicts, Gender-Based Violence, misunderstandings of gender, teen pregnancies, poverty among others according to Kampire Donatille, the Coordinator of the National Women Council in Murundi Sector.

“The campaigns to uplift women’s mindset and abilities will eventually solve these problems and promote gender equality in the whole family.” Kakibibi added.

ActionAid Rwanda operates in two Sectors of Karongi District, namely Murundi and Gitesi sectors where it supports activities related to sustainable agriculture, education and more.

ActionAid Rwanda empowers women farmers and helps them to boost their income through best agriculture practices, enhancing food security and social justice.

More than 10,000 women farmers supported by ActionAid Rwanda are working collectively in 330 farming groups.

With ActionAid Rwanda’s support of time saving interventions like energy saving cooking stoves, tap water at household level or water kiosks near homes and Early Childhood Development Centres, the women’s burden of Unpaid Care and Domestic Work reduced.

## ACTIONAID RWANDA JOINS THE WALK FOR SURVIVAL MOBILIZATION FOR A JUST AND FAIRER WORLD



Peaceful march against GBV and child defilement, as part of the Launch of 16 Days of Activism and Walk For Survival in Murundi Sector, Karongi District on November 25th, 2020 (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda)

*Written by Clarisse Kawera, AAR*

Like other ActionAid Federation members, ActionAid Rwanda joined the Walk For Survival mobilization. ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) maximized the 16 Days of Activism 2020 (November 25th, - December 10th, 2020) with the “Walk For Survival” mobilization, focusing on promoting Child Rights while Fighting Child Defilement and Teen Pregnancies due to the high incidences of teen pregnancies in Rwanda, and in line with “My Voice, My Right Against Sexual Abuse Campaign” already underway in Rwanda.

To launch the Walk For Survival activities and 16 Days of Activism 2020, AAR worked with communities (including women and young people), the Local Administration in the districts where we work as well as National-level partners including the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), the National Women Council (NWC), the Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) for peaceful walks against child defilement across AAR operation areas and the City of Kigali.

As part of the 16 Days of Activism 2020 and Walk For Survival launch on November 25th, 2020, AAR and partners conducted peaceful marches in Murundi Sector of Karongi District, Kibilizi Sector of Gisagara District as well as Nyanza District aimed at community awareness on the community's role to end teen pregnancies in Rwanda.

AAR also joined the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, the National Women Council, and partners in a walk to denounce Gender-Based Violence in Gasabo District. In addition, AAR also conducted a hike on November 27th, 2020 on Mount Kigali in the City of Kigali, as well as on Mount Nyamuremure located in Musanze District.



AAR Team in a hike on Mount Kigali to launch the Walk For Survival in Kigali on November 27th, 2020  
(Photo / ActionAid Rwanda)



AAR Team in a hike on Mount Kigali to launch the Walk For Survival in Kigali on November 27th, 2020  
(Photo / ActionAid Rwanda)



**AAR staff in Musanze District hiking on Mount Nyamuremure, as part of the Walk For Survival launch in Musanze District. (Photo ActionAid Rwanda)**

As of December 10th, 2020, AAR had mobilized 608 people to participate in the 16 Days of Activism 2020 and Walk For Survival activities, walking 1847.8 kilometers which surpasses AAR target distance of 1,000 kilometers.

After the peaceful marches, ActionAid Rwanda and partners held discussions with communities from across the above-mentioned Districts on mechanisms to halt GBV and child defilement, including GBV prevention and reporting channels.



**Uwonkunda Parfaite, ActionAid Rwanda, facilitating discussions on GBV and Child Defilement after the peaceful march to launch the 16 DoA and Walk For Survival in Kibilizi Sector, Gisagara District. She sensitized communities on GBV and child defilement prevention and reporting channels. (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda)**

The theme for the 16 Days of Activism 2020 at National level was “Let us build a family free of Gender-Based Violence (GBV)”. Therefore, our Walk For Survival and 16 Days of Activism 2020 was focusing on advocating for innovative strategies to end teenage pregnancies and raise community awareness on their role to end teen pregnancies in Rwanda.

*“We are proud to be part of this global march for change and the fight against GBV and Child Abuse. We are committed to collective engagements for a violence-free society through ActionAid’s Walk For Survival. Through the Walk for Survival launch across different districts of Rwanda, we raised community awareness on the need to put more efforts in prevention of GBV and child defilement. Together we can fight GBV and child abuse. Together for Social Justice, we can Orange the World,”* said Josephine Irene Uwamariya, Country Director, ActionAid Rwanda.

As part of the 16 Days of Activism 2020 and Walk For Survival close out on December 10th, 2020, AAR

### CLOSE OF THE WALK FOR SURVIVAL AND 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM 2020

staff conducted peaceful walks in Musanze District and Kicukiro District of Kigali City to denounce child defilement and teen pregnancies. Through

social media engagements, we also advocated for innovative strategies to halt child defilement and teen pregnancies in Rwanda.



AAR Team in a walk in Kicukiro District, Kigali City to close the Walk For Survival in Kigali on December 10th, 2020 (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda)



AAR Team in a walk in Kicukiro District, Kigali City to close the Walk For Survival in Kigali on December 10th, 2020 (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda)

## KARONGI: 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AND WALK FOR SURVIVAL KICK OFF WITH THE FOCUS OF ENDING TEEN PREGNANCIES AND CHILD DEFILEMENT



Murundi community demonstration with messages calling for ending GBV and child defilement on November 25th, 2020 (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda)

*Written by Jean Paul Niyitanga, AAR*

From November 25th to December 10th, 2020 ActionAid Rwanda joined the world in series of activities to mark the 16 Days of Activism 2020. ActionAid Rwanda conducted the 16 Days of Activism 2020 along with the Walk For Survival Global mobilization initiated by ActionAid Federation on October 15th, 2020 to advocate for a Fair and Inclusive Recovery from COVID-19 that takes into consideration the most vulnerable groups including women and children.

In Karongi District, the launch of the 16 Days of Activism 2020 and Walk For Survival took place in Murundi Sector, Nyamushishi Cell where more than 300 people with 70% of women including Murundi Sector Communities, representatives from Karongi District local authorities, representatives from ActionAid Rwanda, among others walked more than three kilometers holding placards and banners and having a megaphone spreading messages that focus on fighting against child defilement and teen pregnancies.

During this event, ActionAid Rwanda mobilized the community on fighting against child defilement and

teen pregnancies with the theme “Let us build a family free from Gender-Based Violence” which is also in line with “My Voice, My Right Against Sexual Abuse” campaign already going on in Rwanda aiming at ending teen pregnancies and child defilement.

Different leaders called upon the community members to increase their efforts in fighting against child defilement and teen pregnancies at community level through reporting and responding to all cases of child defilement and teen pregnancies together with supporting the victims.

Mukase Valentine, Karongi District Vice Mayor in charge of Social Affairs also urged community members to timely report and respond to sexual violence and children defilement which will help in holding accountable all perpetrators.

“Teen pregnancies is a big issue in Karongi District, we have so far counted 343 cases of teen pregnancies, we are now advocating for those teenagers to get justice and supporting them in taking care of their kids and encouraging them to go back to school. Up to now, 35 perpetrators of sexual Violence have been taken to Court while 26 of them have been convicted and sentenced.” Said Valentine.

“We still have a challenge of teenagers who don’t report those who abuse them and sometimes abusers agree with families of victims and give them money to silence them. What we have also seen is that there are perpetrators who intimidate victims that once they report them they will endanger their lives and then victims choose to remain silent which is why we are campaigning for these victims, their parents and local authorities to provide accurate timely information about violence.” Valentine added.

Mukase appreciated ActionAid Rwanda’s work saying “ActionAid helps us in combating sexual violence in the sectors where they work, they have counted all teen mothers in Murundi and Gitesi sectors and now teen mothers have been trained and reunited with their abandoned parents. ActionAid Rwanda helped us in grouping them in small groups where they meet and receive various advice and teach them how to save money and start projects that help them thrive. ActionAid also helps us in educating women about their rights and their role in development.”

ActionAid Rwanda’s representative in Karongi District, Annet Kakibibi, said that ActionAid Rwanda will continue its work in empowering women and girls in different ways.

“ActionAid Rwanda will continue to advocate for the rights of women and girls and opposes any form of violence against women and girls. We do this by empowering women and educating them on their rights and how to claim their rights. Because we know that girls are future women, we empower them through school clubs and safe spaces where we teach them reproductive health and how to avoid violence and encourage them to report any form of violence against them. We help teen mothers to save money, know their rights and regain confidence that they have lost.” Said Annet.



**Annet Kakibibi, ActionAid Rwanda, facilitating community discussions on GBV and child defilement, after the peaceful march in Murundi Sector, Karongi District on 25 November 2020 (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda)**

During the 16 Day of Activism period, ActionAid Rwanda focused on advocating for innovative strategies to end teen pregnancies and raising community awareness on their role to end teen pregnancies and children defilement in Rwanda.

As part of the launch of the 16 Days of Activism 2020 and Walk for Survival in Murundi Sector, Karongi District, ActionAid Rwanda supported 20 families with 640 iron sheets for roofing their houses, 100 teen mothers with health insurance subscription (Mutuel de Sante) and 2 vulnerable families were supported with food, cleaning materials and mattresses.

The event was started by a community work organized by the sector administration where ActionAid Rwanda’s staffs took part in building the house for the needy family in Nyamushishi cell.

# SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT ABOUT THE WALK FOR SURVIVAL IN RWANDA

**ActionAid Rwanda** @actionaidrwanda · Nov 29, 2020

This week, @actionaidrwanda launched the #WalkForSurvival & #16DaysOfActivism2020 in @CityofKigali, @KarongiDistr, @NyanzaDistrict, @GisagaraDistr and @MusanzeDistrict. We are calling for Ending Violence Against Women and Girls in #Rwanda. #TogetherWeCan #TogetherForSocialJustice

ActionAid and 9 others

**ActionAid Rwanda** @actionaidrwanda · Nov 27, 2020

Governments must put in place innovative strategies to end teenage pregnancies.

It is everyone's responsibility to #PreventChildDefilement and #EndTeenPregnancies.

We are walking to #SayNoToTeenPregnancies! Together We can!

#WalkForSurvival

[walkforsurvival.org](http://walkforsurvival.org)

**ActionAid Rwanda** @actionaidrwanda · Nov 29, 2020

A glimpse to our hike on Mount #Kigali on 27/11/2020, as part of @ActionAid #WalkForSurvival.

We're walking in solidarity with all victims of Gender-Based Violence & Child Sexual Abuse.

Join the #WalkForSurvival. Together we can fight GBV & Child Abuse

[walkforsurvival.org](http://walkforsurvival.org)

**ActionAid Rwanda** @actionaidrwanda · Nov 27, 2020

There is no excuse to #ChildAbuse. We're walking to break the Silence on #ChildDefilement and #EndTeenPregnancies.

Join the #WalkForSurvival at [walkforsurvival.org](http://walkforsurvival.org).

#StopChildDefilement.

ActionAid and 9 others

## TIPS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

# act:onaid

### PROPER USE OF A MASK

#### The Do's



Wear your mask when in public to prevent the spread of COVID-19



Wear your mask for a period not exceeding 6 hours



Wash your mask with warm soapy water and iron when dry



Cover your face with a mask from the nose, mouth to the chin



Do have at least 2 masks so that one can be worn when the other being washed

#### The Don'ts



Do not remove or lower your mask within speaking, coughing or sneezing



Do not touch your nose or mouth within wearing your mask



Do not buy your mask from uncertified places. They are only sold in pharmacies, supermarkets and any other places approved by Rwanda FDA



Masks are sold in sealed packages from the manufacturer. Do not try them before purchasing



Do not share your mask with anyone else

