

Newsletter April-June 2023

Soft Launch of the Climate Justice Campaign



AAR's soft launch of the Climate Justice Campaign featured women local farmers in Nyanza sharing best practices in creating a compost pit as part of agroecology practices

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RWANDA

Newsletter April-June 2023

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Foreword

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the latest edition of ActionAid Rwanda's Newsletter, covering the events and accomplishments of April to June 2023.

As we delve into the pages of this newsletter, we invite you to join us in celebrating the successes and lasting impact that have shaped the lives of individuals and communities. During this period, we embarked on a journey filled with purpose, highlighted by the soft launch of our Climate Justice campaign and a multitude of other initiatives that unfolded between April and June.

Our commitment to fostering positive change remains unwavering. With every endeavor we undertake, our primary focus is to champion the cause of social justice, amplify the voices of marginalized individuals, promote gender equality, and lay down the foundation for eradicating poverty. Through our efforts, we extend our hand to the most vulnerable members of Rwandan society, empowering them with the tools to exercise their rights and equipping them with the capacity to actively engage in shaping decisions that directly impact their lives.

This newsletter stands as a testament to the dedicated work of our team, our partners, and the communities we serve. It's a platform to share stories of resilience and collaboration that have defined these past months. As we narrate the journey of our interventions, we aim to inspire you to continue supporting and engaging with our mission.



Ines Mwangavu, Interim Executive Director, AAR

With every page turned, you will witness the positive ripples we've set in motion and the remarkable transformation that has unfolded, one step at a time. Through our collective efforts, we endeavor to create a brighter, more equitable future for all.

So, we invite you to immerse yourself in the stories that unfold within these pages. Explore the impact of our interventions, feel the energy of our campaigns, and be inspired by the unwavering spirit of those who are striving for change. As you read on, may you discover the profound difference that solidarity, compassion, and determination can make in the lives of individuals and communities.

Thank you for being a part of this journey, and for your continued support. Together, we can create a world where every person's rights are respected, where opportunities are equitable, and where hope shines brightly.

Enjoy reading!

Thank You

1. Celebration of Day of African (DAC) Child 2023

On the 16th of June 2023, ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) joined the rest of Africa in celebrating the Day of the African Child with the focused objective of raising awareness about the protection and promotion of children's rights in the digital era. The DAC celebration took place in all AAR seven of its Local Right Programs.

2. ActionAid Rwanda's soft launch of the Climate Justice Campaign

On 5th June 2023, AAR celebrated World Environment Day in Musanze District and conducted a soft launch of climate campaign from 5th to 9th June 2023. This followed the devastating floods and landslides that affected 12,000 households, with the majority being women and children, resulting in a tragic loss of 130 lives, 79 individuals injured, and extensive property damage.

3. ActionAid Rwanda's Response to Deadly Floods and Landslides in Rwanda's Northern & Western Province.

From the beginning of the year 2023, Rwanda has faced a barrage of heavy rains across its regions. Reports from the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) have revealed that this weather pattern has persisted since January 2023, affecting around 12,000 households. The worst-hit districts include Musanze, Burera, Gakenke in the Northern Province, and Nyabihu, Rubavu, Karongi, and Ngororero in the Western Province. The vulnerable sections of society, especially women and children, have borne the brunt of these calamities.

4. AAR & FVA's Campaign on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights in Gitesi, Karongi District

ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) in partnership with Faith Victory Association (FVA) conducted an impactful awareness-raising campaign on May 12th, 2023. The campaign, centered in Gitesi, Karongi District, aimed to shed light on the critical issues surrounding young people's sexual and reproductive health rights.

5. AAR supported Shingiro community with playground and Murundi community with a carpentry workshop

AAR supported the establishment of playgrounds for basketball and volleyball and a Carpentry workshop at Murundi Technical Secondary School (TSS), offering a hands-on learning platform for skill development.

6. AAR empowered 41 families living in poverty with 41 cows to boost agricultural production

With the aim of empowering vulnerable women, AAR supported 41 women with 41 cows to transform the lives of these families through increased agricultural production and improved livelihoods.

7. AAR's End line Evaluation of its Country Strategy 2018-2023

AAR is evaluating its 5 years Country Strategy Plan 2018 - 2023 (CSP II) with the aim to assess the extent to which its interventions contributed to improving the livelihoods of Rights Holders in the intervention areas.

8. ActionAid Rwanda Commemorated #Kwibuka29

On May 19th, 2023, ActionAid Rwanda staff gathered to mark #Kwibuka29, an event dedicated to remembering the victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and honoring the memory of 12 former staff members who were killed during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

9. ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) participated in the CSO's Exhibition week 2023

With the aim of fostering collaboration, accountability, and knowledge sharing within the development sector, AAR participated in the Civil Society Organization's Exhibition Week 2023, which took place from May 7th to May 12th, 2023.

All the Best,



Ines MWANGAVU

1. ActionAid conducted a campaign on children's rights through a Celebration of Day of African (DAC) Child in All LRPs



AAR Photo: School youth participate in DAC in Ruheru, June 2023.

On the 16th of June 2023, ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) joined the rest of Africa in celebrating the Day of the African Child with the focused objective of raising awareness about the protection and promotion of children's rights in the digital era. The DAC celebration took place in all AAR seven of its Local Right Programs.

DAC was first initiated by the OAU (Organisation of African Unity) and is celebrated every year in memory of the African children who were killed on June 16, 1976, during the Soweto Uprising in South Africa after marching to protest the poor quality of education they received. Hence, DAC celebrates the children of Africa and calls for serious introspection and commitment towards addressing the numerous challenges facing children across the continent.

In Nyanza, ActionAid Rwanda joined youth, families, educators, and community members gathered at Nyanza Stadium in Busasamana Sector to celebrate the Day of the African Child and recognize the importance of standing together to uplift the voices and rights of the younger generation. With the core aim of raising awareness about the rights of children in the digital environment, the celebration held particular significance in an era characterized by rapid technological advancements.



AAR Photo: School youth participate in DAC in Ruheru, June 2023.

The event was attended by 3,000 people (1,550 females and 1,450 males) who were urged to foster an environment where children can thrive in the digital age. The event was graced by the presence of local officials, community leaders, and stakeholders who emphasized the importance of collective action in safeguarding children's rights in the digital realm. Kayitesi Nadine, the Vice Mayor in charge of Social Affairs of Nyanza District, acknowledged that "the internet provides great opportunities but also presents risks for the infringement of children's rights and urged all partners to ensure the protection of children's rights in the digital environment."

Janet Umurungi, ActionAid Rwanda representative, shared valuable insights into the potential risks and rewards of technology, urging parents, educators, and community members to take an active role in guiding children's digital experience. She emphasized that "the digital environment comes with a bigger risk of online child sexual exploitation, sexual extortion, online grooming, exposure of children to adult pornography, compromising children's privacy, etc."

Various activities were organized to cater to different age groups and interests. Radio and TV programs, informative games, and thought-provoking performances were orchestrated to resonate with participants of all ages.

A highlight of the event was the children's performances, which encapsulated the potential benefits and pitfalls of the digital world. The youth drama group raised awareness of the public through poems and drama and “encouraged parents, educators, and other relevant stakeholders to commit to the realization of children's rights in the digital environment. Those performances also served as a reminder of the transformative power of technology, portraying its ability to connect, educate, and inspire, as well as its potential to pose challenges and risks.”

In Ruheru LRP, the Day of the African Child (DAC) was attended by 10,258 (5,218 males and 5,040 females from nine schools) and celebrated with a special focus on safeguarding children's rights in the digital era, addressing issues such as gender-based violence, online exploitation, and abuse, etc.

ActionAid Rwanda, local authorities, and other partners were present at the event and raised awareness among the public, vowing to hold accountable those responsible for crimes against children, especially those committed through digital spaces. Kayiranga Jean Bosco, the Executive Secretary of Ruheru Sector, emphasized that “the future of children in the digital age relies on joint efforts from society, stakeholders, and children themselves to protect them, promote education, and foster responsible technology use.”



AAR Photo: School youth participate in DAC in Ruheru, June 2023.

DAC was also celebrated in other LRPs, in Shingirio LRP in Misanze District, was attended by 2,008 (1,060 female and 948 male students), in Murundi by 1,305 (634 females and 671 males) and in Gisagara (241 female and 168 male). ActionAid Rwanda and partners also supported children with school materials and families with milk, foodstuffs, and chickens for local farming to fight malnutrition.



AAR Photo: School youth participate in DAC in Ruheru, June 2023.



Local leaders joined AAR in celebrating DAC in Ruheru, June 2023.

Children actively participated in the event, using dances, songs, drama, and poems to advocate for their digital rights and encourage leaders to support their cause. The celebration provided a platform for children to voice concerns about various community issues and showcased their role as change agents.

The 2023 celebration was more than a commemorative event; it was a call to action, an invitation for all members of the community to collaborate and ensure that children's rights in the digital environment are upheld. As the celebrations concluded, the echoes of this call to action were spread through all LRPs by local leaders and partners, serving as a reminder that the journey towards a safe and empowering digital world for children is a collective responsibility.

The Day of the African Child celebration was a resounding success, reflecting the community's dedication to uplifting the voices and rights of its youth. With a keen focus on the rights of children in the digital era, the event not only raised awareness but also fostered important conversations among parents, educators, and community leaders. As the echoes of the celebration lingered, they served as a testament to the power of unity, collaboration, and commitment in creating a better future for children in the digital age.

2.ActionAid Rwanda's soft launch of the Climate Justice Campaign



AAR soft launch of the climate justice campaign featured women in Nyanza creating a compost pit as part of agroecology practices.

On 5th June 2023, AAR celebrated World Environment Day in Musanze District and conducted a soft launch of its climate campaign from 5th to 9th June 2023. This followed the devastating floods and landslides that affected 12,000 households, with the majority being women and children, resulting in a tragic loss of 130 lives, 79 individuals injured, and extensive property damage.



AAR Photo: Soft launch of the climate justice campaign in Cyogo Cell, Muko Sector of Musanze District, June 2023

To be effective, AAR had to engage various stakeholders and showcase its commitment to fostering a collaborative approach to tackling climate challenges. Firstly, in Cyogo Cell, Muko Sector of Musanze District, where the campaign was launched, AAR's representative, Michel Ndayambaje, addressed a gathering of 958 residents, partners, and other stakeholders, emphasizing the urgency of combating plastic

pollution due to its adverse effects on habitats, ecosystems, and the ability to adapt to climate change. He also encouraged residents to adopt agroecology practices, which not only mitigate climate change but also promote sustainable and resilient farming methods.

Secondly, AAR engaged local leaders in all LRPs and built their capacities through information sharing sessions. Thereafter, they played a crucial role in transmitting climate justice messages to their respective communities, thereby initiating grassroots networks that can drive change from the ground up. The involvement of these leaders not only amplified the campaign's message but also ensured that it resonated with the local context.

Thirdly, AAR's engagement with schools, particularly through environmental clubs (in Gisagara and Ruheru), demonstrated the power of education in shaping attitudes and behaviors towards the environment. With over 3,476 students and 84 teachers participating from five schools, AAR's campaign core messages were disseminated. By instilling an understanding of climate justice at an early age, they laid the foundation for a generation that will prioritize sustainable practices and advocate for change.



Soft launch of the climate justice campaign in Gisagara: AAR engagement with school leaders

Fourthly, AAR worked 130 women small holder farmers in Nyanza and equipped them with the skills and knowledge to implement agroecology practices. These practices not only contribute to climate resilience but also empower women as agents of change in their communities. Their success stories, which include erosion control, irrigation, organic compost making, agroforestry, and carbon sequestration, demonstrate the tangible impact of sustainable agricultural practices.

By building capacity and providing a platform for these women to share their experiences, AAR has demonstrated the potential of harnessing local knowledge to address global challenges. These women not only serve as role models but also as champions instrumental in driving the campaign forward.



AAR Engagement with School Leaders and Environmental Clubs

Fifthly, during the soft launch, AAR also visited its Rights Holders in Karongi, raised their awareness of the effect of climate change, and witnessed their remarkable efforts towards climate change mitigation and resilience. These women established a thriving forest designated as a carbon sink, effectively contributing to carbon sequestration and reducing their community's carbon footprint. Through dedication and hard work, these women exemplified the transformative impact that local communities can achieve in the face of climate challenges, highlighting the importance of grassroots initiatives in building a more sustainable future.

The insights gained from the soft launch have provided valuable guidance for AAR's upcoming main campaign launch in September 2023. The enthusiasm displayed by community members underscores the urgency of the climate crisis and the readiness of these communities to take action. AAR will continue to provide them with training and support to confidently advocate for their rights to ensure the forthcoming campaign's success.

AAR's involvement with school environmental clubs aims to cultivate a lasting impact. Again, the firsthand experiences shared by community members affected by climate change reinforce the urgency of the campaign's objectives and the need for immediate action. Moreover, AAR's promotion of agroecology practices will not only contribute to the campaign but also serve as a practical solution for climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods.



A women smallholder farmers supported by AAR, own & manage two forests as carbon sinks



AAR Engagement with School Leaders and Environmental Clubs

ActionAid Rwanda's soft launch of the climate justice campaign represented a beacon of hope in a world grappling with the consequences of climate change. The successful soft launch demonstrated the importance of mobilizing diverse stakeholders, empowering women, and harnessing education to create lasting change.

3. ActionAid Rwanda's Response to Deadly Floods and Landslides in Rwanda's Northern & Western Provinces

From the beginning of the year 2023, Rwanda has faced a barrage of heavy rains across its regions. Reports from the Ministry in charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA) have revealed that this weather pattern has persisted since January 2023, affecting around 12,000 households. The worst-hit districts include Musanze, Burera, Gakenke in the Northern Province, and Nyabihu, Rubavu, Karongi, and Ngororero in the Western Province. The vulnerable sections of society, especially women and children, have borne the brunt of these calamities.



AAR Photo: Flood and and landslides of May 2023 affected communities in Western Province

In early May 2023, a deluge of rainfall brought unparalleled devastation to the nation. Tragically, 130 lives were lost, 77 people were injured, and over 5,100 houses were swept away by the torrential waters. Not only were residential areas affected, but also critical infrastructure such as roads, schools, health centers, and administrative offices suffered extensive damage.

ActionAid Rwanda (AAR), a member of the National Disaster Risk Reduction platform and an organization committed to promoting human rights in humanitarian efforts, has rallied to address the crisis. Collaborating with various stakeholders and in coordination with the Ministry in Charge of Emergency, AAR swiftly launched a comprehensive response plan. Their immediate priority has been to assess the needs of the affected population and provide essential support.

The initial assessment by AAR has highlighted significant gaps in areas such as shelter, food, non-food items (NFIs), and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sectors. The organization's response will extend beyond emergency relief, encompassing rehabilitation and reconstruction of damaged properties and even the relocation of families living in high-risk zones.

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One significant aspect of AAR's response is the emphasis on women's leadership and locally-led initiatives. The collaboration with Women-Led Community Protection Committees showcases the critical role that women play in disaster response and recovery. These committees have been instrumental in identifying needs and allocating resources to vulnerable families, particularly in areas like Gitesi.

AAR's ongoing efforts have been bolstered by financial support. The organization has received a total funding of 20,000GB from donors, which has enabled them to execute immediate relief operations and set in motion plans for sustainable recovery.

While Rwanda continues to grapple with the aftermath of these devastating events, it is evident that the consequences of climate change are far-reaching and profound.

The urgency to address climate-related vulnerabilities, invest in disaster preparedness, and prioritize sustainable development has never been greater. As ActionAid Rwanda continues to stand by the affected communities, their commitment serves as a beacon of hope, resilience, and unity in the face of adversity. The path ahead is undoubtedly challenging, but with collaborative efforts and a steadfast commitment to building resilience, Rwanda can navigate through these trials and emerge stronger on the other side.

4. Empowering Youth: AAR & FVA's Campaign on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights in Gitesi, Karongi District

In a steadfast effort to foster positive change and empower young people, ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) and the Family Voices Association (FVA) united to conduct an impactful awareness-raising campaign on May 12th, 2023. The campaign, centered in Gitesi, Karongi District, aimed to shed light on the critical issues surrounding young people's sexual and reproductive health rights. An essential component of this initiative was also emphasizing the pivotal role parents and guardians play in providing comprehensive sexual education to their children.

The collaborative campaign is part of AAR's ongoing commitment to addressing teenage pregnancies and sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) through a multi-faceted approach that targets not only the symptoms but also the structural causes of these issues. By tackling deep-rooted societal norms, promoting education, and empowering communities, AAR seeks to create a future where the youth can thrive without facing the shadows of these challenges.



SRHR Awareness campaign with youth in Rusororo

Awareness is the first step towards change, and the campaign organized by AAR and FVA exemplified this principle. In Gitesi, Karongi District, the two organizations came together to provide young people with a platform to understand and assert their sexual and reproductive health rights. The event included informative sessions, discussions, and engaging activities designed to break down barriers and misconceptions surrounding these topics.



SRHR Awareness campaign with youth in Karongi

Through candid conversations and interactive presentations, participants were encouraged to voice their concerns, seek clarifications, and access accurate information. A key takeaway was the empowerment of young individuals to make informed choices about their bodies and lives, reducing the vulnerabilities they might face due to inadequate knowledge.

Recognizing the essential role that parents and guardians play in shaping young minds, the campaign placed special emphasis on their involvement in providing sexual education. AAR and FVA understand that the foundation for healthy attitudes and behaviors can often be laid at home. Therefore, the campaign underscored the significance of open and non-judgmental conversations between parents, guardians, and their children about sexual health.

By promoting dialogue within families, AAR and FVA aim to bridge the gap between generations, address taboos, and promote understanding. Encouraging parents and guardians to engage in discussions around sexual and reproductive health helps in nurturing a safe environment where young individuals feel comfortable seeking guidance and information.

This campaign is just one facet of AAR's commitment to fostering positive change. In addition to awareness-raising events, the organization also implements comprehensive sexuality education programs within schools and through community-based training and outreach. By utilizing both formal and informal channels, AAR ensures that young people receive accurate and age-appropriate information about sexual health.

AAR's advocacy efforts extend beyond awareness campaigns. The organization is dedicated to pushing for policies that endorse sexual education programs that align with internationally agreed-upon standards. By advocating for the integration of comprehensive sexuality education into formal education systems, AAR aims to create a future where young people are equipped with the knowledge and tools they need to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.

The collaborative awareness-raising campaign conducted by AAR and FVA on May 12th, 2023, in Gitesi, Karongi District, stands as a beacon of hope and empowerment. By addressing young people's sexual and reproductive health rights and emphasizing the critical role of parents and guardians, the initiative takes significant strides towards breaking down the barriers that perpetuate teenage pregnancies and SGBV.

Through comprehensive sexuality education, open dialogue, and unwavering advocacy efforts, ActionAid Rwanda is actively working towards a brighter future for the youth of Rwanda. As AAR continues to champion change, it paves the way for a society where every individual can make informed choices, live free from harm, and contribute positively to their communities.

5. AAR supported women smallholder farmer cooperatives with essential irrigation materials.



AAR supported women farmers with 114 watering cans and 114 pressure sprayers to address the far-reaching impacts of climate change

In an effort to address the far-reaching impacts of climate change and enhance the resilience of the Ruheru community, ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) provided support to women smallholder farmer cooperatives and groups with essential irrigation materials.

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The event witnessed significant participation, with 225 females and 9 males in attendance, underscoring the collective concern for addressing the challenges posed by climate change. The primary objective of the activity was to collaborate on agricultural endeavors and enhance production. Women smallholder farmers were equipped with essential tools for irrigating crops and combating crop diseases, thereby reinforcing their efforts against the impacts of climate change.

The collaboration between AAR and Nyaruguru District culminated in the provision of irrigation materials to 38 Women Small Holder Farmers groups. This support included 114 watering cans and 114 pressure sprayers, facilitating efficient irrigation practices and enhancing crop health.

During the event, Ruheru Executive Secretary Kayiranga Jean Bosco emphasized the significance of responsible stewardship over the received materials. He highlighted that these resources would serve the entire community and act as pivotal instruments in minimizing the adverse effects of climate change in Ruheru

It is anticipated that this support will yield the following outcomes: Boosting food security and enhancing agricultural productivity: With access to appropriate irrigation tools, farmers are better equipped to navigate the challenges presented by shifting weather patterns, ultimately leading to improved yields and a more secure food supply.

Ensuring pest control: A key benefit of efficient irrigation practices is the ability to regulate moisture levels effectively. This, in turn, aids in controlling pests and diseases that thrive in waterlogged or drought-prone conditions. By managing irrigation more precisely, farmers can reduce the susceptibility of their crops to various pests and pathogens.

Empowering Teen Mothers Groups: The initiative has extended its impact to even the most vulnerable sections of the community. Teen Mothers groups, such as Bezamwiterambere, Twigirehotuganaheza, and Twikomeze, will be able to contribute to their families' well-being through improved agricultural productivity.

In view of the successful collaboration and its anticipated significant impact, Nyaruguru District commends AAR for its impactful activities within the Ruheru community. The District pledges to sustain the support provided by AAR, underscoring the importance of continued efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of families. Women Small Holder Farmers express profound gratitude for the support they have received. They pledge to actively participate in the fight against climate change and collaborate with AAR on further initiatives.



AAR supported women farmers with 114 watering cans and 114 pressure sprayers to address the far-reaching impacts of climate change

AAR's provision of irrigation materials stands as a testament to the organization's dedication to climate justice and resilient livelihoods. By empowering women smallholder farmers and equipping them with essential tools, this initiative not only bolsters agricultural productivity but also fosters community engagement and empowerment. The support also points towards a brighter and more sustainable future for the Ruheru community in the face of challenges posed by climate change.

6. AAR supported Shingiro community with playground and Murundi community with a carpentry workshop



AAR supported Murundi and Shingiro Communities with playgrounds to empower Girls and boys Through Sports and Education

In a world where gender equality and women's rights have become paramount, initiatives that promote boys and girls' rights and education are crucial for creating a brighter and more equitable future.

The collaboration between ActionAid Rwanda and the communities of Murundi and Shingiro stands as an example of how sports and education can work hand in hand to foster an environment of empowerment, learning, and growth.



AAR supported Murundi & Shingiro Communities with playgrounds to empower Girls and boys Through Sports & Education

In Shingiro LRP, AAR supported the establishment of playgrounds dedicated to basketball and volleyball. These spaces are not only arenas for physical activities but also powerful platforms for promoting boys and girls' rights and education.

Specifically, girls' participation in sports has been historically undervalued, with limited opportunities for them to engage in physical activities that foster teamwork, leadership, and self-confidence. However, the installation of basketball and volleyball courts in Muhingo School has breathed new life into the community. These playgrounds provide a safe space where girls can not only improve their physical health but also develop girls' life skills .

By participating in sports, boys and girls in Murundi and Shingiro are breaking down traditional gender barriers. They are learning to be assertive, to collaborate with their fellow students of all ages, and to navigate challenges with resilience. The playgrounds have become symbols of empowerment, helping girls and boys realize their potential and recognize that their dreams are as valid and attainable as anyone else's.

In GS Ngoma, Murundi, another chapter of empowerment is unfolding thanks to AAR's commitment to fostering education. A Carpentry Workshop has been established at Murundi TSS, providing a platform for hands-on learning and skill development. The skills acquired in this workshop go beyond crafting wood; they represent an opportunity especially for girls to break free from traditional roles and aspire to professions that have been historically dominated by men.

Education is often heralded as the key to unlocking opportunities and achieving equality. The addition of the Carpentry Workshop at Murundi TSS not only equips youth with practical skills but also sends a powerful message:

education knows no boundaries. Girls and boys are now exposed to a field that not only broadens their horizons but also encourages them to challenge societal norms and reach for their goals.

The connection between sports and education is a profound one. Sports teach girls and boys to be confident, resilient, and goal-oriented, while education provides the knowledge and tools they need to make informed decisions and shape their own destinies. When these elements come together, as seen in AAR's initiatives in Murundi and Shingiro, the result is a holistic approach to empowerment that transcends physical boundaries and social norms.

Promoting boys and girls' rights and education is not a solitary effort; it requires the collaboration of communities, organizations, and individuals who understand the transformative power of these initiatives. AAR's support in creating spaces for girls to participate in sports and acquire skills that defy traditional roles is a testament to their dedication to more equitable communities.

As the playgrounds and the Carpentry Workshop in Murundi TSS inspire hope create, and the true impact of AAR's efforts are becoming clearer, AAR's intent to support those communities with those infrastructure is to construct bridges to a future where every girl and boy can thrive, learn, and become driving forces for positive change in their communities.

In Murundi and Shingiro, the partnership between AAR and the local communities stands as a beacon of hope and progress. By embracing sports, education, and empowerment, these initiatives are creating a legacy that will inspire generations of girls and boys to rise above limitations and pursue their dreams with unwavering determination.



AAR empowered 41 poor families with 41 cows to boost agricultural production in Gisagara

With the aim of empowering vulnerable communities, AAR supported 41 poor families with 41 cows to transform the lives of these families through increased agricultural production and improved livelihoods.

The significance of this initiative lies in its multi-dimensional impact. The provision of cows to these families is a strategic move aimed at fostering agricultural productivity. Cows, being a valuable source of organic manure, offer a sustainable solution to enriching soil quality. This translates to enhanced yields for crops, contributing to a more bountiful harvest and subsequently, improved food security. This step is not only a means to tackle immediate hunger but also a catalyst for long-term sustainability.

By equipping these families with cows, AAR is not merely offering a source of sustenance, but an opportunity for economic growth. With the surplus agricultural produce generated, these families can tap into local and regional markets, generating income and breaking the cycle of poverty. This not only empowers them economically but also instills a sense of dignity in their ability to contribute to their household and community.

One of the often-overlooked aspects is the positive impact on environmental sustainability. With increased organic manure usage, the dependency on chemical fertilizers decreases. This translates into reduced pollution and soil degradation, contributing to a healthier ecosystem for both flora and fauna. Moreover, the engagement of these families in agriculture promotes a more balanced relationship with nature, fostering practices that are harmonious with the environment.

Another noteworthy consequence of this initiative is the potential reduction in malnutrition among children. Improved agricultural productivity directly translates to a greater availability of diverse and nutritious food options for families. This, in turn, has the potential to mitigate the prevalence of malnutrition and related health issues among children.



AAR empowered 41 families living in poverty with 41 cows to boost agricultural production in Gisagara

Ultimately, AAR's efforts in supporting these 41 poor families with cows are a testament to the organization's commitment to sustainable development. By tackling poverty at its roots and empowering communities to be self-reliant, AAR is contributing to the creation of a brighter future for all involved. The transformed livelihoods of these families serve as a reminder of the profound impact that thoughtful and strategic interventions can have on marginalized communities.

In conclusion, AAR's decision to support 41 vulnerable families with cows stands as a beacon of hope and progress. Through enhanced agricultural production, economic empowerment, improved food security, and environmental sustainability, this initiative paints a promising picture of a more resilient and thriving community. As these families embark on a journey towards self-sufficiency, they pave the way for a stronger, more prosperous society for generations to come.

8. ActionAid Rwanda's CSP II Final Evaluation: Assessing Transformative Development and Future Directions



AAR supported women with women farmers with seeds which boosted their agricultural production in Ruheru

After the conclusion of its first Country Strategic Paper (CSP I) in 2017, ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) embarked on its second Country Strategy Paper (CSP II) titled "Transformative Development Based on Rights and Dignity - Together for Social Justice."

This strategic plan was formulated with ambitious goals, aiming to achieve social justice, gender equality, and poverty eradication through the redistribution of resources, empowerment of marginalized communities, and the enforcement of the rights of those living in poverty and exclusion.

AAR's primary objective in implementing its programs and projects was to promote women's rights and facilitate the creation of resilient, sustainable livelihoods free from gender-based violence and other injustices. Operating in five districts – Nyanza, Gisagara, Nyaruguru in the South, Karongi in the West, and Musanze in the North – AAR set out to address the root causes of poverty and contribute to the National Strategy for Transformation (NST) and Vision 2050 targets, aligning its efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other global frameworks.

To ensure the success of CSP II, AAR recognized the need for a functional Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system, with a significant milestone being the final evaluation at the end of the five-year period in 2023. The external evaluation aimed to assess the results achieved, changes in the program environment, program efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability beyond the CSP II period. This final evaluation is an essential part of the CSP II implementation plan.

The overall purpose of the final evaluation was to comprehensively assess the performance, impact, challenges, and lessons learned from the conclusion of CSP II (2018 – 2023). It sought to generate key insights that would inform the development of AAR's next Country Strategy Paper, CSP III.

Specifically, the evaluation had the following objectives:

1. Assess AAR's overall performance in achieving CSP objectives and its alignment with its Theory of Change.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of CSP interventions concerning strategic objectives and outcomes.
3. Analyze the organizational performance, including the utilization of human and financial resources, systems, and processes, and make recommendations for the next strategy.
4. Identify challenges and derive lessons that can shape the priorities and strategies of AAR affiliates, taking into account emerging trends and issues.
4. Identify opportunities and risks for AAR's future strategy.
5. Offer recommendations for strategic choices that will serve as the foundation for the future

AAR strategy, considering current national, regional, and global trends and their implications for AAR programming.

AAR's efforts align with the National Strategy for Transformation (NST) and Vision 2050 targets, as well as the SDGs and other global frameworks. The development and implementation of the AA Rwanda Country Strategy (2018-2023) are in harmony with the ActionAid Global Strategy "Action for Global Justice (2016-2028)" and the NST1 (2018-2024).

The implementation of CSP II began on January 1, 2018, and is expected to conclude on December 31, 2023. The final evaluation employed a robust methodology, relying on data triangulation and the disaggregation of data by location and gender whenever possible. A combination of primary and secondary data collection methods was used. Secondary data was gathered through desk reviews, while primary data was obtained through both qualitative and quantitative means.

Quantitative data from surveys and the Results Monitoring Framework (RMF) was complemented by qualitative data acquired through key informant interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), observations, human interest stories, and testimonies collected from Local Rights Programs (LRPs).

The evaluation focused on AAR's intervention areas spanning three provinces and five districts: Karongi, Musanze, Nyanza, Gisagara, and Nyaruguru, with a particular emphasis on seven LRPs where community members benefited from CSP II interventions.

The evaluation adhered to international standards, including the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria and AAR's own evaluation principles and guidelines as outlined in the terms of reference and strategic documents. Additionally, principles of Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (GEEW) were integrated into the methodology, tools, data analysis, and reporting techniques to ensure the participation, protection, and privacy of rights holders. Tools such as survey questionnaires, FGDs, and KII guides were utilized.

In conclusion, the final evaluation of CSP II represents a crucial step in AAR's commitment to transformative development and social justice. It not only assesses past achievements and challenges but also paves the way for informed, strategic choices that will shape the organization's future direction and its continued contribution to the fight against poverty and injustices in Rwanda.

9. ActionAid Rwanda Commemorated #Kwibuka29



ActionAid Rwanda staff gathered to mark #Kwibuka29, an event dedicated to remembering the victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi

On May 19th, 2023, ActionAid Rwanda staff gathered to mark #Kwibuka29, an event dedicated to remembering the victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi and honoring the memory of 12 former staff members who were killed during the genocide.

The event took place at the Kigali Genocide Memorial and was attended by a representative of the AAR General Assembly, current and former AAR staff, as well as family members of the former staff of Aide et Action who were killed in the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

The objectives of AAR in organizing #Kwibuka29 were as follows:

Remembering the Victims: The first objective was to remember the victims of the 1994 Genocide and keep their memory alive. By recalling the past, we strive to prevent history from repeating itself and reaffirm our commitment to the principle of "Never Again."

Reflecting on the Repercussions: The second objective was to reflect on the far-reaching repercussions of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. The aftermath of the genocide continues to shape Rwanda's social, political, and cultural landscape. By contemplating these consequences, ActionAid Rwanda contributes to a deeper understanding of the enduring impact of this tragic event.

Uniting Against Genocide Ideology: The third objective was to unite against genocide ideology. Unity stands as one of the most potent tools in preventing future atrocities. By standing together, acknowledging the past, and rejecting all forms of genocide ideology, participants of #Kwibuka29 actively work towards fostering an inclusive, peaceful, and hate-resistant society.

Committing to Justice and Accountability: The final objective was to commit to justice and accountability. Justice serves as a foundational principle in preventing impunity and ensuring a just and peaceful society. Through this event, ActionAid Rwanda and its partners collectively affirm their dedication to pursuing justice for the genocide victims and holding those responsible for the atrocities accountable.

#Kwibuka29 served as a poignant reminder of the atrocities that unfolded in 1994 and the lives that were tragically lost due to their ethnic affiliations. However, beyond remembrance, #Kwibuka29 also encourages reflection, unity, and a commitment to justice.

The theme for this year's commemoration, "Remember-Unite-Renew," encapsulated the multifaceted purpose of the event. ActionAid Rwanda staff visited the Kigali Genocide Memorial as a powerful gesture of acknowledging the past.

By remembering, uniting, and committing to justice, ActionAid Rwanda and its partners are not merely honoring the memory of those who were lost but are actively contributing to a brighter, more inclusive future for Rwanda and the world.

Quote

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood," Article I, UDHR.

10. ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) participated in the CSO's Exhibition week 2023



ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) participated in the CSO's Exhibition week 2023

With the aim of fostering collaboration, accountability, and knowledge sharing within the development sector, AAR participated in the Civil Society Organization's Exhibition Week 2023, which took place from May 7th to May 12th, 2023.

This event was organized by the Rwanda Governance Board in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Rwanda Civil Society Platform (RCSP), and the Network of International Non-Government Organizations (NINGOs).

The event also brought together key stakeholders, including representatives of foreign missions in Kigali, Heads of Development Agencies, Ministries, representatives of the Private Sector, NGOs, and many of the general public.

AAR showcased its efforts and achievements that stimulated positive change in eradicating poverty and injustice, including programs of raising awareness and empowering community-based structures to combat gender-based violence (GBV), addressing the issue of unpaid care work that disproportionately affects women and girls, and advocating for girls' education.

ActionAid Rwanda also highlighted its role in promoting agroecology as a pathway to sustainable development and food security. During the event, women smallholder farmers showcased organic produce from their practice of agroecology.

Community members who benefited from the RGB project and other AAR programs shared their success stories while showcasing the impact of AAR's contributions within their communities. RGB funded AAR to implement a project on "Strengthening Community-Based Structures to Address Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Nyanza."

All of these accomplishments add to AAR's recent achievements in supporting the communities, including but not limited to supporting the communities with 21 model Early Child Development Centers, 258 classrooms, 24 hand washing stations, 460 toilets, 17 basketball and volleyball playgrounds, 2 TVET schools, 62 girls' rooms, 10 selling points, and 24 water kiosks, among others.

AAR commends RGB for the good partnership, the opportunity to showcase its achievements in the exhibition, finance the Project on 'Strengthening community-based structures to address sexual and gender-based violence' that was implemented by AAR and minimized SGBV in Nyanza District.

"AAR showcased its efforts and achievements that stimulated positive change in eradicating poverty and injustice, including programs of raising awareness and empowering community-based structures to combat gender-based violence (GBV), addressing the issue of unpaid care work that disproportionately affects women and girls, and advocating for girls' education "

Gratitude for Partnerships

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to our invaluable partners and funders. In our mission to combat poverty and injustice, we understand that partnership is key. Together with communities, women's movements, and like-minded organizations, we stand strong. AAR's unwavering commitment to uplift those in need, particularly vulnerable women, girls, youth, and children, is made possible through your support. Our partnerships, networks, and collaborations with various stakeholders, including communities, NGOs, civil society organizations, international development partners, corporates, media, research and academic institutions, and the Government of Rwanda, are the pillars of our success. Your trust and support empower us to create a brighter future for those we serve. With Much Gratitude!

Our Funders



Our Implementing partners



ACTIONAID RWANDA SAFEGUARDING POLICY FRAMEWORK

We commit to uphold human rights and promote social Justice while we safeguard and protect the dignity of All by ensuring confidentiality in Response, Prevention, Reporting and Access to adequate support



Rwanda National Police
Emergency: 112
Child help line: 116
Fire Brigade: 111
Anti - GBV: 3512
Isange One Stop Centre: 3029

Gender Monitoring Office: 5798
MIGEPROF Toll Free line: 2560
Office of the Ombudsman: 199

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Where ActionAid Rwanda works

- District of ActionAid operations
- XX Sector of ActionAid operations



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