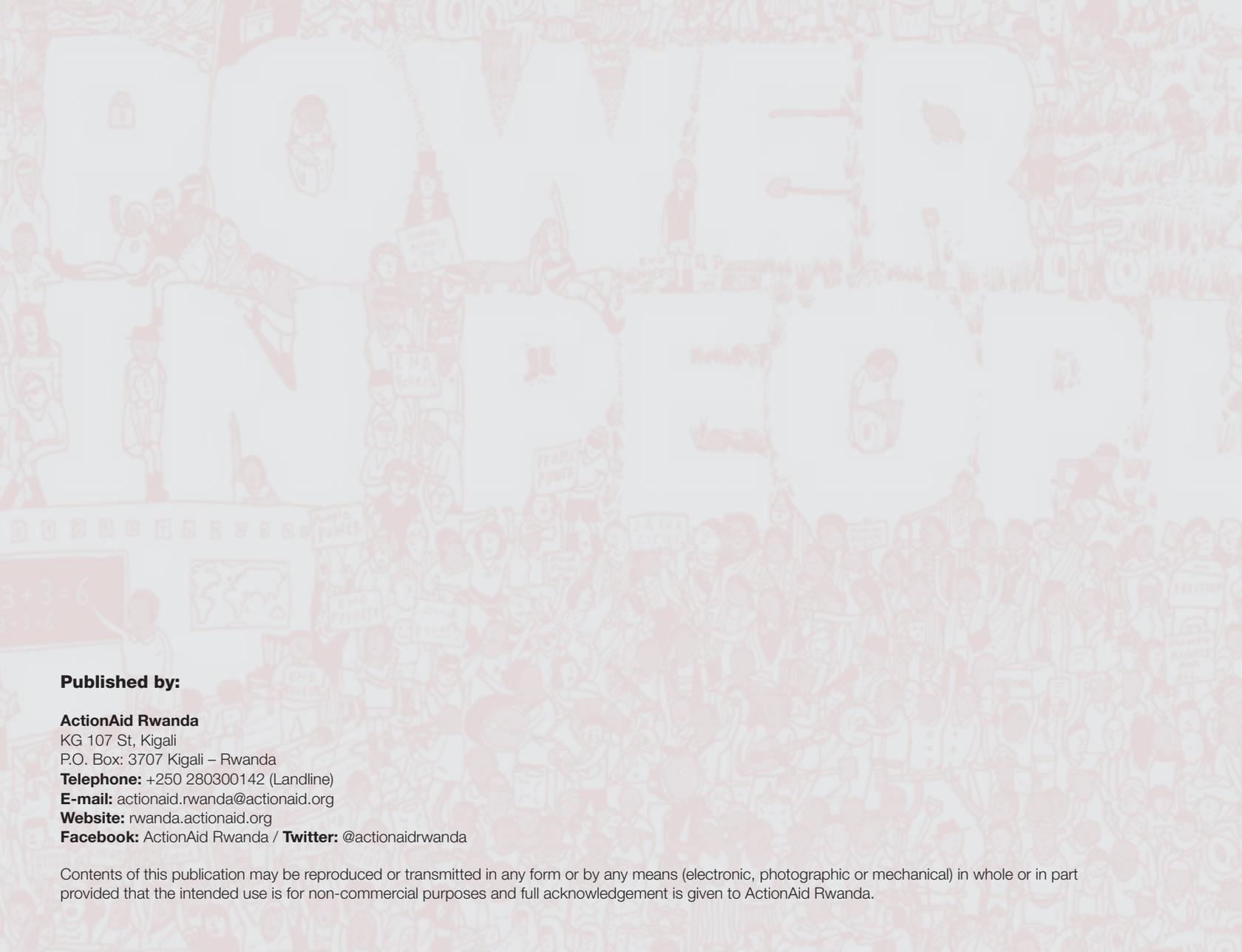


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ANNUAL REPORT 2019



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**ActionAid Rwanda**  
Annual Report 2019

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# Acronyms

<b>AA:</b>	ActionAid	<b>POWER:</b>	Promoting Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Rights
<b>AAR:</b>	ActionAid Rwanda	<b>VAWG:</b>	Violence Against Women and Girls
<b>FLOW:</b>	Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women	<b>VSL:</b>	Voluntary Saving and Loaning
<b>CD:</b>	Country Director	<b>UCW:</b>	Unpaid Care Work
<b>CSP:</b>	Country Strategic Paper	<b>UN:</b>	United Nations
<b>CRSA:</b>	Climate Resilient Sustainable Agriculture	<b>WROs:</b>	Women Rights Organizations
<b>ECD:</b>	Early Childhood Development	<b>NINGO:</b>	Network of Non-Governmental Organizations
<b>GBP:</b>	British Pound	<b>RWN:</b>	Rwanda Women Network
<b>GBV:</b>	Gender Based Violence	<b>SDGs:</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>HRBA:</b>	Human Right Based Approach	<b>NST1:</b>	National Strategy for Transformation
<b>LGBTQ:</b>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning	<b>CSP II:</b>	AAR Country Strategic Paper II
<b>LRP:</b>	Local Right Program	<b>GIMAC:</b>	Gender is My Agenda Campaign
<b>SGBV:</b>	Sexual and Gender Based Violence	<b>CSW:</b>	Commission on the Status of Women
<b>SRHR:</b>	Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights	<b>CAADP:</b>	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
<b>SWA:</b>	Strengthening Women Rights Advocacy	<b>IWD:</b>	International Women's Day
<b>SCAB:</b>	Strengthening CSOs in Agriculture Policy and participatory Budgeting	<b>IRWD:</b>	International Rural Women's Day

# 1. Foreword from the Board Vice Chair and Country Director

Dear Esteemed Stakeholders,

It is our pleasure to present to you AAR Annual Report for 2019.

This annual report is an opportunity to share and describe the distinctive traits of ActionAid Rwanda's work, its activities and the results achieved in 2019.

AAR interventions are implemented under AAR Country Strategic Paper II (CSP II) which has two priorities; Addressing structural causes of VAWG with the following Specific Focus areas; Structural causes of VAWG, Unpaid Care and Productive Work for women's economic justice and Women and girls' participation in leadership and decision-making positions and policy influence. The second priority entails Strengthening Resilient Livelihoods and securing climate justice and it has 3 Specific

Focus areas of Access to land, resilient livelihoods and food Security, Agro-Ecology & Sustainable Environment as well as Access to market and financial services.

As far as the Priority 1: "addressing the structural causes of violence against women and girls and securing women's economic justice" is concerned, in this reporting year 2019, women groups' representatives were trained on how to report VAWG cases using digital tool with handset that helps women to report VAWG cases with full privacy to address silence regarding VAWG reporting. This technology also facilitates VAWG service providers to timely get information on VAWG incidences and provide response.

AAR also trained community members on GBV prevention and response, family laws, land laws,

matrimonial regimes, inheritance laws and family planning to fights against Violence Against Women.

Regarding the Priority 2 of "Strengthening Resilient Livelihoods and secure climate Justice", AAR contributed to the promotion of agroecology in Rwanda, engaging duty bearers for agricultural policy influence and shaping on various occasions. Besides, through existing structures and platforms, AAR modeled and shared best practices that can be replicated and scaled up.

In this context, ActionAid Rwanda through FLOW II Project empowered 245 women smallholder farmers' groups in networking and alliance building, advocacy, planning and campaigning skills and have

established Rwanda Rural Women Farmer Network (RWFN) that is under official registration as a legal network to formally advocate for increased public financing for agroecology and access to markets.

ActionAid Rwanda also organized a national policy dialogue jointly with other agroecology promoters that discussed findings on the linkage between agroecology and women economic empowerment. This meeting recommended collective advocacy in country to call for increased public financing to ensure a sustainable development process that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Besides, ActionAid Rwanda also established 7 women-owned community selling points and each selling point is equipped with a cooling room and hermetic storage equipments to facilitate women farmers reduce post-harvest losses

of their produce, hence increasing income. As a result, women highly appreciated the support of selling points and storage facilities.

We appreciate the enormous contribution made by our sponsors, partners and all our stakeholders towards these achievements.

In 2020, ActionAid Rwanda expects to increase its supporters because it is only thanks to the support and solidarity of the people who choose to stand side by side with the poorest and the excluded on a daily basis, that ActionAid can play an important role in achieving greater overall justice.

Finally, we would like to thank all our supporters, donors, partners, staff, volunteers, and campaigners for their contributions. We invite you to reflect on the huge range of AAR interventions, through its emergency response work, campaigning, and development programs, to help people lift

themselves out of poverty and social injustice to find greater equality. As we celebrate this important milestone together, we are keen to see what is in store for ActionAid in the new decade.

In solidarity,



**Josephine Irene Uwamariya**

Country Director



**Francoise Kayitare Tengera**

Board Vice Chair

## 2. About the report

**O**ur Annual Report provides an overview of the work of ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) from January 2019–December 2019.

The report covers the work of AAR, details the joint work of the organization and its partners. Financial and figures are also provided to inform our stakeholders our financial performance.



# 3. Identity

**A**ctionAid Rwanda is an Associate member of ActionAid International federation, an anti-poverty agency giving assistance to poor people and communities.

ActionAid is a non-partisan, non-religious development organization that has been working in Rwanda since 1982 to eradicate poverty with focus on tackling the root causes of poverty rather than just meeting people's immediate needs. ActionAid Rwanda intervenes in domains of rights that include: Right to Education; Women's Rights and Right to Food.



## Vision

***A country without poverty and injustice where every person enjoys the right to life with dignity.***



## Mission

***We work with people living in poverty and the marginalized to eradicate poverty by overcoming injustice and inequity that cause it.***

# Our values

## Courage of conviction:

We are committed to be open, creative, and constructively engage without fear

## Independence:

Independence from any religious or political affiliation  
Humility In all our actions and behavior.

## Mutual respect:

We recognize and appreciate the inherent value of each human being and the significance of diversity.

## Honesty & transparency:

We are committed to being accountable at all levels for the effectiveness of our actions and open in judgments and communication with others.

## Equity & justice:

We work to ensure that all people have fair and equal opportunities.

## Solidarity:

In the fight against poverty we align ourselves with the powerless, marginalized and excluded to empower them to be the drivers of change.

# Our Theory of Change

## Problem:

Change is possible, and it is rooted in the individual and collective empowerment of those most affected to know, claim and defend their rights over the long term through coalitions, alliances, cooperatives, and associations.



# Our Approach

## Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA)

We incorporate the Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) in all of our operations. HRBA is made up of three pillars which include Empowerment, Solidarity, Advocacy and Campaigns.

### Empowerment

Through capacity building, we empower women, girls and other marginalized people to assert for their basic needs and fundamental rights, modelling sustainable service delivery alternatives that strengthen their rights while holding duty bearers to account.

### Solidarity

Through building networks of rural women farmers and building of coalitions at different levels to enable effective lobby and advocacy for policy change.

### Advocacy and campaigns

This is done through engagement with policy decision makers at local, national, regional and international levels.

## Feminist Leadership Principles

In addition to HRBA, Feminist and participatory Approaches are applied as AAR continues to build power from below as we mobilize women, girls and socially marginalized to organize themselves into cooperatives, networks and social movements in solidarity and collective strengthened voice, to engage and challenge deeply entrenched inequalities informing adequate policies at local, national and international levels while supporting equitable practices in favour of people living in poverty and exclusion upholding their rights to effectively graduate from poverty and drive transformational change.





## 5. Programmes and projects implemented in 2019

- **ActionAid's Sponsorship Program** supported by ActionAid UK, Greece and Italia
- **POWER Project** funded by the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **SCAB Project** funded by EU
- **SWA Project** funded by Amplify Change
- **PPL Project** by the People's Post Code Lottery
- **Speak Out! Project** funded by UK Aid

## 6. Partnerships

We recognize that fighting poverty and injustice requires collective participation of all communities, women movements, and other likeminded organizations.

AAR primarily works with people living in poverty and the marginalized, especially vulnerable women, girls, youth and children; while reinforcing strong partnerships, networking, and other working relations with various key strategic stakeholders and partners including communities, Community-Based Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, International Development Partners, Corporates, Media, Research and Academic Institutions in addition to other key duty bearers including the Government of Rwanda.

### 6.a. Our Implementing Partners in 2019

To achieve our mission, we work with local implementing partners including:



## 6.b. Our Allies

ActionAid Rwanda is partnering and networking with various partner organizations and supporters through networks, coalitions and alliances for broadening support, voice and actions to strengthen the power of people living in poverty and the marginalized. Our allies include the following:

### The Government of Rwanda



- Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
- National Women Council
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Agriculture & Animal Husbandry



### Civil Society Organizations



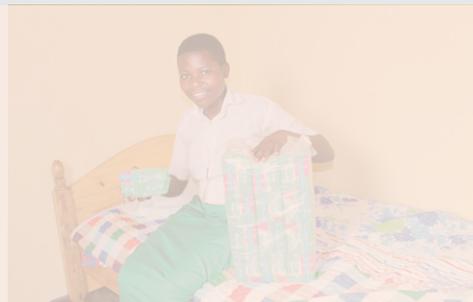
### Academia and Research Institutions



## 6.C. Our Donors



We are grateful to our supporters from UK, Italy and Greece, as well as different donors including the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the UK Aid, Amplify Change and the European Union, for their support without which our work would not be a success.

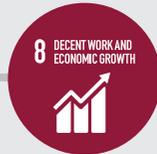


# 7. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



# A. Brief of quantitative achievements

## CSP II PRIORITY 1



### Empowerment

- 2600 boys, 5486 girls, 60 teenage mothers, 29,786 community members & 245 Women's groups representatives trained on VAWG, SRHR, women's rights, UCW, etc.
- 16 classrooms established to increase girls' enrollment rate.
- 2,085 women supported with energy saving cooking stoves, 180 families connected to clean tap water & 3 childcare centres established to reduce women's UCW burden.

### Solidarity

- 5 MoUs signed with key institutions, for strengthened partnerships to address VAWG.
- 1 Rural Women Farmer Network made of 245 women farmers' groups was created.
- 1 WRO Network comprised of 15 WROs and 10 cooperatives of groups vulnerable to GBV & SRHR violation was built.

### Policy engagements, Advocacy & Campaigns

- AAR conducted time diary surveys and disseminated survey reports to advocate for UCW reduction & recognition.
- Countrywide research on UCW, for evidence-based advocacy on UCW.
- Campaigns & Awareness raising activities on women's rights, UCW, GBV, child defilement, children's rights, etc; through IWD, IRWD, National dialogues, etc.
- AAR participation in GIMAC34, CSW63 & YouLead Summit to advocate for women's rights.

**CSP II Priority 1:**  
**Address the Structural Causes of Violence Against Women and Girls and Secure Women's Economic Justice**

**NST1 Pillar2:**  
**Social Transformation**

**NST1 Pillar3:**  
**Transformational Governance**

**CSP II PRIORITY 2** >>

**Strengthen resilient livelihoods and secure climate justice ensuring women smallholder farmers' access to market and credit for increased agricultural production and food security.**



**Empowerment**

- Seven (7) community women selling points established to enable women have a safe space to sell their products.
- 220 vulnerable families supported with livestock including 213 goats, 100 sheep, 22 pigs, 726 poultry, 275 rabbits and 20 cows, for increased manure and income diversification
- Women farmers supported with 39,445 agroforestry seedlings ( Calliandra & Leucaena) for soil management and animal fodder.
- 160 families supported with 12,540 fruit trees to fight malnutrition.
- Women groups provided with seeds including 1.6 tons of Irish Potato seeds and 133,000 cassava cuttings planted on 14 hectares.
- Through women farmers' collective money savings scheme, in 2019 women savings amounted to 323, 205,274 Rwandan Francs (approx. 352,844 USD)
  - Trainings on Voluntary Saving and Lending Association provided to 120 teen mothers and 750 women by AAR through Speak Out Project.
  - In 2019, 22 women have accessed loans which contributed to their economic development

**Solidarity**

- In 2019, ActionAid Rwanda worked with 750 women VSL groups and has 222 women working with SACCOs) and 22 women that have loans in SACCOs.
- 23,238,388 Frw (approx.2,472,169 USD) of women savings were shared out by members of women VSL groups in the year 2019.

**Policy engagements, Advocacy & Campaigns**

Various policy engagements & advocacy activities conducted in 2019: Participation in CAADP, the Global Food Security Summit, GIMAC 34, CSW63, IWD, IRWD, 16 Days of Activism, national policy dialogues and TV/Radio talkshows to influence policy actions towards addressing climate change, promoting quality social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure.

**NST1 Pillar1:**  
Economic Transformation

**NST1 Pillar3:**  
Transformational Governance

## B. Delivering on our mission and its linkage to SDGs and NST1

AAR works are implemented under AAR Country Strategic Paper II (CSP II) which has two priorities; Addressing structural causes of VAWG with the following Specific Focus areas; Structural causes of VAWG, Unpaid Care and Productive Work for women's economic justice and Women and girls' participation in leadership and decision-making positions and policy influence. The second priority entails Strengthening Resilient Livelihoods and securing climate justice and it has 3 Specific Focus areas of Access to land, resilient livelihoods and food Security, Agro-Ecology & Sustainable Environment and Access to market and financial services.

Achieved results and impacts	Related SDGs	Related NST1 Pillars
<b>CSP II Priority1: Address the Structural Causes of Violence Against Women and Girls and Secure Women's Economic Justice</b>		
<i>Violence against women and girls is not inevitable. By empowering women and girls and transforming harmful social norms, we are leading long-term, sustainable change. Every day, we are making progress towards ending violence against women and girls.</i>		
<b>Empowerment</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2600 boys, 5486 girls and 60 teenage mothers are now aware of the procedures to follow in case of violence due to trainings they received on SRHR and VAWG prevention and reporting from Safe Spaces and School clubs established by ActionAid Rwanda.</li> </ul>	<b>SDG5:</b> Gender equality	<b>NST1 Pillar 2:</b> Social transformation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>245 Women groups' representatives were trained on how to report VAWG cases using digital tool with a handset and web-based application. They were also provided with 245 handsets to help them report VAWG cases with full privacy to address silence regarding VAWG reporting within REFLECT meetings. This technology will also facilitate VAWG service providers to timely get VAWG incidences and provide response.</li> </ul>	<b>SDG5:</b> Gender equality	<b>NST1 Pillar 2:</b> Social transformation

- Thanks to trainings and sensitization received from AAR, 1644 community members are now informed about family laws, land laws, matrimonial regimes, inheritance laws, family planning and GBV prevention & response to fight against violence against women
- 28,142 community members and local leaders have increased knowledge and understanding of the whole concept of UCW burden because of AAR sensitizations and engagements.
- 16 classrooms were established to improve girls school environment, increase girls' enrollment rate, increase the quality of public education for girls and boys equally and support children and youth to become drivers of change in their communities.
- 2,085 women were supported with energy saving cooking stoves which helped women to reduce firewood amount at 80%, 180 families were connected to clean tap water in their families and 3 childcare centres established to support parents doing economic activities. This has reduced approximately four hours previously spent on water and firewood collection a day.
- 3 SRHR District networks of 15 Women Rights Organizations in Gisagara, Musanze and Karongi Districts have been trained in collecting evidence, analyzing findings and using evidences from community scorecards. As a result of this training, SRHR network members have started implementing lessons learnt from the trainings through meetings with community members and service providers in the three Districts.

**SDG5:** Gender equality

**SDG 8:** Decent work and economic growth

**SDG5:** Gender Equality

**SDG4:** Quality Education

**SDG 1:** No poverty

**SDG 7:** Affordable & Clean Energy

**SDG 6:** Clean water and sanitation

**SDG8:** Decent work and economic growth

**SDG5:** Gender equality

**NST1 Pillar 2:** Social transformation

**NST1 Pillar1:** Economic Transformation

**NST1 Pillar 2:** Social transformation

**NST1 Pillar1:** Economic Transformation

**NST1 Pillar2:** Social Transformation





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 Women Rights Organizations and 10 cooperatives/organizations of groups vulnerable to GBV and SRHR violation were supported to build a strong network of women’s organizations to engage on SRHR and GBV through campaigning and policy dialogue.</li> <li>• 2 Learning Forums were held leading to concrete agreements and collaborations between networks and non-traditional SRHR allies.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG5:</b> Gender equality</p> <p><b>SDG5:</b> Gender equality</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar 2:</b> Social Transformation</p> <p><b>NST1 Pillar 2:</b> Social Transformation</p>
<p><b>Policy engagements, advocacy and campaigns</b></p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 SRHR District networks comprised of 15 Women Rights Organizations were facilitated in the process of collecting evidence using community scorecards, improving communication for advocacy, and conducting advocacy actions with decision-makers and the media on issues related to GBV and SRHR. As a result of this support, SRHR network members have started using community scorecards and conducting advocacy actions through meetings with community members and GBV service providers in their respective Districts.</li> <li>• Three WROs’ district networks supported by AAR conducted community scorecards that allowed WROs to improve their advocacy &amp; campaign plans and engage with the media for reaching out to a wider audience on alarming issues related to GBV and SRHR.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG5:</b> Gender equality</p> <p><b>SDG5:</b> Gender equality</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar 2:</b> Social Transformation</p> <p><b>NST1 Pillar 3:</b> Transformational Governance</p> <p><b>NST1 Pillar 2:</b> Social Transformation</p> <p><b>NST1 Pillar 3:</b> Transformational Governance</p>

## Policy engagements, advocacy and campaigns

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAR conducted time diary surveys and disseminated survey reports that show the time women spend on Unpaid Care Work (UCW) compared to men, which affects Women's participation in economic and decision-making aspects. Disseminating the survey reports both at local and national level resulted in increased community awareness and advocacy on the women's Unpaid Care Work burden.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG5:</b> Gender equality</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar 2:</b> Social Transformation <b>NST1 Pillar 3:</b> Transformational Governance</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAR organized local and national dialogues on UCW and engaged policy makers to hear from Women farmers themselves on the issue of UCW. This made Unpaid Care Work more visible and influenced the increase of gender-sensitive public services that address the burden of Unpaid Care Work to ensure women participate equally as men in economic and leadership opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG5:</b> Gender equality</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar 2:</b> Social Transformation <b>NST1 Pillar 3:</b> Transformational Governance</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAR conducted a countrywide research on Unpaid Care Work (UCW) to generate credible evidence on UCW status in rural, suburbs and urban areas and its effects on Women's Economic participation in Rwanda. Research findings confirmed that UCW is unevenly shared, whereby women spend 6 hours in rural, 5 hours in semi-urbans and 2 hours in cities daily while men spend 2 hours in rural, 1 hour in suburbs and towns daily; thus hampering women's economic and leadership participation. Findings from this research were shared with concerned stakeholders working on Women's issues, for advocacy on increased efforts to address women's Unpaid Care Work burden.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG5:</b> Gender equality</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar 2:</b> Social Transformation <b>NST1 Pillar 3:</b> Transformational Governance</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AAR through FLOW II Project organized a National Press Conference on effects of women’s UCW on women’s economic empowerment. The event was attended by 85 participants from various media houses, government, and civil society institutions. Reflecting on project time diary findings, the press conference came up with a common understanding that Unpaid Care and Domestic Workloads that are often unevenly distributed continue to keep Rwandan women in perpetual poverty, undermines the economic autonomy of women and makes women more vulnerable to Gender-Based Violence. The conference also recommended the increase of public awareness on UCW, increased investment in gender sensitive public infrastructures that reduce and redistribute women’s Unpaid Care Work; continuous advocacy for increased recognition and representation to address effect of Unpaid Care Work on women’s economic participation.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG5:</b> Gender equality</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar 2:</b> Social Transformation  <b>NST1 Pillar 3:</b> Transformational Governance</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Various awareness raising activities and campaigns were conducted on different topics and issues including women’s rights, Unpaid Care Work, GBV prevention and response, child defilement prevention and response, children’s rights, etc. The campaigns were done through interschool competitions (200 parents, 120 children &amp; 150 youth reached), International Women’s Day (IWD) 2019 celebrations, International Rural Women’s Day (IRWD) Celebrations, Weekly Campaigns done via social media, among others.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG5:</b> Gender equality</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar 2:</b> Social Transformation  <b>NST1 Pillar 3:</b> Transformational Governance</p>



- AAR staff, partners and rights holders participated in international advocacy platforms such as *GIMAC34 Meetings*, *CSW63*, *YouLead Summit*, and worked with Media to advocate for women's rights, make Unpaid Care Work more visible and influence gender-sensitive public services that address women's Unpaid Care Work burden. CSW 63 was an opportunity for ActionAid Rwanda to face to face discuss the issue of Unpaid Care Work with Rwanda government CSW63 delegates where the Head of Rwanda delegates, Chief Gender Monitor (CGM) of Gender Monitoring Office, could better understand how Unpaid Care Work affects women's rights and requested ActionAid Rwanda to share UCW concept paper that the Ministry of Gender based on to include Unpaid Care Work in the National Gender and Family Policy under review.

**SDG5:** Gender equality

**NST1 Pillar 2:** Social Transformation

**NST1 Pillar 3:** Transformational Governance

**Priority 2: Strengthen resilient livelihoods and secure climate justice ensuring women smallholder farmers' access to market and credit for increased agricultural production and food security.**

**Empowerment**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAR established seven (7) community women-controlled selling points to enable women have a safe space to sell their products. These community selling points are safe and strategic for target women farmers to increase bargaining power and income with their products. Among the seven, one was equipped with eco-friendly storage technologies including hermetic storage materials and a solar-powered cooling chamber which help women to keep safe their harvest and reduce postharvest losses.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG1:</b> No Poverty  <b>SDG 2:</b> Zero Hunger  <b>SDG8:</b> Decent work and economic growth</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar1:</b>  Economic Transformation</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>220 vulnerable families were supported with livestock including 213 goats, 100 sheep, 22 pigs, 726 poultry, 275 rabbits and 20 cows, for increased manure and income diversification. Furthermore, 160 families were supported with 12,540 fruit trees to fight malnutrition. This led them to having resilient livelihoods as well as food Security.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG1:</b> No poverty  <b>SDG2:</b> Zero Hunger</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar1:</b>  Economic Transformation</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AAR through FLOWII Project supported women farmers from AAR operations areas with 39, 445 agroforestry seedlings especially Calliandra and Leucaena for soil management and animal fodder. Regarding access to seeds, AAR also provided seeds for women groups including 1.6 tons of Irish Potato and 133,000 cassava cuttings planted on fourteen (14) hectares of a consolidated land as a cassava production model farm.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG1:</b> No poverty  <b>SDG2:</b> Zero Hunger</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar1:</b>  Economic Transformation</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a result of AAR empowerment programs, women groups supported by AAR through FLOWII Project have built strong relationship with local financial institutions (Savings and Credits Cooperatives_ SACCO) that operate at community level (Sector) across the country through their collective money savings scheme. Data collection on women savings initiative showed that in 2019 women savings amounted to 323, 205,274 Rwandan Francs equivalent to 352,844 USD. This access to finance helps women groups' members to respond to their families' needs including medical insurance and school fees for their children as well as purchase collective cropland.</li> <li>Trainings on Voluntary Saving and Lending Association provided to 120 teen mothers and 750 women by AAR through Speak Out Project enabled them to work with Savings and Credits Cooperatives (SACCOs). As a result, in 2019, 22 women have accessed loans which contributed to their economic development.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG1:</b> No poverty <b>SDG2:</b> Zero Hunger</p> <p><b>SDG1:</b> No poverty <b>SDG2:</b> Zero Hunger</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar1:</b> Economic Transformation</p> <p><b>NST1 Pillar1:</b> Economic Transformation</p>
<h3>Solidarity</h3>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2019, ActionAid Rwanda worked with 750 women in VSL (Voluntary Saving and Loaning) groups and has 222 women working with the Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs) and 22 women that have loans in SACCOs. The women savings have led the women VSL groups to share out 23,238,388 Rwandan Francs (2,472,169 USD) in the year 2019. This shows that women in rural areas have stepped up for the economic empowerment and are still growing financially and socially.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SDG1:</b> No poverty <b>SDG2:</b> Zero Hunger</p>	<p><b>NST1 Pillar1:</b> Economic Transformation</p>

## Policy engagements, advocacy and campaigns

- ActionAid Rwanda through FLOW II project organized a national policy dialogue jointly with other agroecology promoters that discussed findings on the linkage between agroecology and women economic empowerment. This event was preceded by a field visit on agroecology best practices in Rwanda to collect more evidence for agroecology policy dialogue. The meeting recommended collective advocacy in country to call for increased public financing to ensure a sustainable development process that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- In 2019, AAR conducted various policy engagements and advocacy activities from local to global levels through participation mainly in CAADP, the Global Food Security Summit, GIMAC 34, AU pre-summits conferences, CSW63 and key national-level advocacy moments including IWD, IRWD and 16 Days of Activism as well as national policy dialogues and TV/Radio live talkshows to particularly influence policy actions towards addressing climate change that mostly affect rural women smallholder farmers, promoting quality social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

**SDG1:** No poverty  
**SDG2:** Zero Hunger  
**SDG13:** Climate Action

**NST1 Pillar1:**  
 Economic Transformation  
**NST1 Pillar 3:**  
 Transformational Governance

**SDG1:** No poverty  
**SDG2:** Zero Hunger  
**SDG 5:** Gender Equality  
**SDG13:** Climate Action

**NST1 Pillar1:**  
 Economic Transformation  
**NST1 Pillar 3:**  
 Transformational Governance

## Photo Highlights



### CSP II Priority1: Address the Structural Causes of Violence Against Women and Girls and Secure Women's Economic Justice



Gisagara District Police Commander handing over a feature Phone to Usabyeyezu Leoncie From Abanyamurava Women's group/Muganza Sector to support and cultivate community VAWG/GBV Reporting culture.



District Staff handing over a feature Phone to Nyirantezirayo Claudine From Twuzuzanye Women's group/Gishubi Sector to support and cultivate community VAWG/GBV Reporting culture.



66 Women's groups' representatives from Gisagara District during a training on how to report VAWG digitally using a feature phone.



Official launching of Gishubi Child Care Centre established by AAR in Gisagara District



External view and compound of the Gishubi Child Care Centre established by AAR in Gisagara District



Tour of Gishubi Child Care Centre by AAR and its stakeholders, as part of the launch of the centre



Children drinking milk at the Gishubi Child Care Centre established by AAR in Gisagara District



Peaceful match to fight against Teen Pregnancies and GBV in Gitesi Sector, organised by AAR as part of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign



Peaceful match to fight against GBV in Nyanza LRP, organised by AAR as part of the 16 Days of Activism 2019.



AAR, Government institutions & partners in a peaceful match during the opening of the 16 Days of Activism at National level.



Participants to a Teen Mothers Camp organised by AAR in Gitesi and Murundi sectors, as part of the 16 Days of Activism 2019.



Provision of certificates after completion of training on matrimonial regime, inheritance and liberation law to 56 participants from Gisagara District.



Girls having a session on building self- confidence with their mentor in a safe space organized by AAR through Speak Out! Project.



Girls from the safe space visiting Isange One Stop Centre as one of the GBV service providers where AAR refers GBV survivors for both legal and medical support.



Participants to a training on the use of community scorecards evaluating GBV advocacy services



**Priority 2: Strengthen resilient livelihoods and secure climate justice ensuring women smallholder farmers' access to market and credit for increased agricultural production and food security.**



AAR Country Director delivering opening remarks during the national dialogue on agroecology.



Participants to the National Agroecology Dialogue during a field visit to a member of Tuzamurane Cooperative to learn how the pineapple organic farming is done.



Families from Ruheru Sector, Nyaruguru District receiving goats from AAR



Munganyinka Rosalie, One of Women's group facilitator decided to engage in paid works after receiving different trainings on economic development. She is currently a retailer of fruits and Vegetables in Murundi selling point supported by AAR through FLOW II Project.



Women supported by ActionAid Rwanda in Musanze District after harvesting irish potatoes from their collective farm.

## 8. Success stories

### Rural Women joined efforts for success

Led by the spirit of working together, 22 women groups comprised of 660 members in Gisagara District combined efforts to form one cooperative KOABIKIGI. They wrote an official letter to the Mayor of Gisagara District with a copy to the District's council who has authority regarding land in the District and requested the wetland of Duwane so they can grow vegetables.

The District granted this land and each group among the 22, has got its own plot of land to grow vegetables which are collected and sold at the selling and aggregated point established in the area by ActionAid Rwanda with full control by women smallholder farmer s' groups. The District also supported them with irrigation facilities with women co-funding of 25%.



Liberata Nyirantaganira, member of Tuganzubunebwe Women Group (also Member of KOABIKIGI cooperative) supported by ActionAid Rwanda in Gisagara District harvesting the women group's eggplants.

District's authorities furthermore decided to make this wetland a place for promoting vegetables in the District. Moreover, the District accepted the project of small-scale irrigation in this wetland amounted to \$ 26,813 with its contribution of 75%.

"We could not believe that cabbages could be cash-crops until we experienced it. We invested 7,500 Rwandan francs (approx. 8 \$) in growing these cabbages and now we count 65,000 Rwandan francs (approx. 70 \$) of benefits in this small plot and each group member have had her share for family feeding," said Bampire Beata, member of the cooperative.

In collaboration with District authorities and implementing partners a Farmer Field School has been established in this place, a modern vegetable green-house was set to facilitate women to grow tomatoes and as a result of working together and saving, KOABIKIGI has now established its own seed bank and each cooperative member pay health insurance for herself and family members

“Our vision is to be a strong and reputable Cooperative promoting horticulture in our District then in the whole country,” said KANTETERE Annick, the Chairperson of Cooperative.



Liberata Nyirantaganira, member of Tuganzubunewe Women Group (also Member of KOABIKIGI Cooperative) supported by ActionAid Rwanda in Gisagara District, using an irrigation machine to water the women group's eggplants plantation.

## 8. Stories of change

### Economic empowerment

ActionAid Rwanda works with women for opportunities and public services that equally benefit men and women and for a fairer division of Unpaid Care Work. ActionAid Rwanda also supports women farmers to start up and lead collectives so they can be empowered and earn a better living. ActionAid Rwanda also helps women and girls to tackle violence and stand up for their rights. We provide services and demand justice for survivors of violence, and support programmes to empower women.

#### 1. Nirere Ancille is getting money due to capacity building and financial support from AAR

*“ I became a widow in 1998. My husband left me with 2 boys. I struggled to have them educated though it was not easy, but I am happy that they grew up. Now, I earn my living thanks to the agricultural produce from my own land and from the cooperative. I managed to buy 3 pieces of land, where I extended my farming activities. When you are alone at home, you are never updated about any development processes. This is where ActionAid moved us out of isolation, by providing capacity building and financial support,”* Ancille said.

Ancille is now a smallholder farmer and a chairperson of KOTWIBU Cooperative.

*“I am an empowered woman, I have electricity in my house, I also have tap water in the compound. Besides working in the cooperative garden, I grow vegetables in my garden,”* Ancille added.



Nirere Ancille is harvesting potatoes

## 2. Philomene's free life after being in conflict for 8 years

Philomene Nyirasafari is a 37-year-old mother of three children. Philomene and her husband, Kanyamugenge, are farmers based in Musanze District. The couple could hardly go a week without a fight in their home. Violence was more like a trademark for their home. They were known for that.

*"We were famous in our neighborhood for mainly one thing-violence. I spent eight years of my marriage being beaten & bruised and I started retaliating by hurling insults back at my husband. Our home was like a war zone where my husband and I were always fighting over anything. My husband would beat me up and*

*even call me useless several times. Gender Based Violence was a big issue in our home that nearly ended our marriage. We would fight and even both refuse to do our farming activities yet that's what our livelihoods & daily meals depended on,"* Philomene explains.

Philomene and her husband continued to live in a marriage characterized by abuse and violence for over eight years. She was tired of the situation and would at times pack her bags and return to her parents' home but as a mother, guilt would eat her up for leaving her children behind and she would return to her abusive marriage, for the sake of her children.

His husband would never let her join other women for developmental engagements and meetings. He would beat her up and she would hurl insults back at him too. Their children were always sad, and it felt like joy was something they would only hear about but never experience.

When Amplify Change project started working in Rwanda, they offered trainings for women on Gender Based Violence & rights. Philomene gradually started passing the lessons onto her husband who later became a changed man until there was no more abuse in her home.



Philomene Nyirasafari and her husband Kanyamugenge happily working together in their garden

*“My husband changed. Our home is no longer faced with issues of abuse. The people in our neighbourhood think I used sorcery or witchcraft for him to be a changed man. My husband now respects and loves me. He does not beat me up or hurl insults at me anymore. I have even added weight because of the peace I have in my heart. We*

*now have a happy and peaceful home. Our children are happy too. I am so glad to have taken part in the trainings organized by ActionAid Rwanda through Amplify Change Project. I was able to learn about my rights, and to be supported to end the violence that had ruined my marriage,”* said Philomene.



Philomene and her husband Kanyamugenge posing for a photo together

## 9. Lessons learned

### i. **Selling points increase women access to markets:**

Community selling points increased women access to markets that enable women producers to increase money income with their produce and handcraft products that highly contributes towards achieving overall goal of AAR FLOW II project of increasing economic income for target groups.

- ii. The implementation of the Amplify Change funded project helped to learn that greater collaboration between Women Rights Organisations (WROs) and vulnerable groups is key to successful advocacy on women's rights, GBV and SRHR. WROs have reported

increased involvement in advocating for GBV victims after the latter and their families have understood the importance of breaking the silence around GBV and SRHR violation. This has contributed to an increased number of victims seeking timely assistance and justice although many victims of GBV remain reluctant to pursue legal remedies. WROs have started working on supporting right holders to build confidence for freely expressing their views on rights violations considering cultural sensitivity, applicability, and relevance.

- iii. The availability and use of community score cards constituted a powerful

strategy to advocate for GBV and SRHR issues. Using this tool, WROs have started to engage services' providers to enhance the delivery of services particularly the SRHR and GBV related services.

- iv. Marginalized groups have clarified the need for stakeholders to understand more about safeguarding issues involved in working with groups vulnerable to GBV and SRHR violation, in the context of HRBA principles and local cultural mindsets (especially towards LGBTs). To understand their experience of the AmplifyChange funded project, and to avoid any risk of harm to these groups and

organizations supporting them, the AmplifyChange funded project conducted a safeguarding assessment with LGBT groups involved in the project which revealed the existence of real issues of stigma, limited SRHR services and lack of advocacy for their needs within a homophobic context.

- v. Through funding and training women cooperatives, they are economically empowered, however, there is still a lot of work to be done to give the cooperatives capacity to access appropriate services and have a voice at local level and national level.
- vi. There is need to increase the number of cooperatives that

we work with in agriculture as it is one of the key sectors in rural community for better women's economic empowerment.

- vii. School Clubs with well-trained mentors, with strong learning materials and which hold exciting and interesting activities (such as competitions involving poetry, singing, football and dancing) and trainings (such as Life Skills training) for children will attract them to stay in school.
- viii. Activities organized by School Clubs are not only channels through which mentors and peers can disseminate information on SRHR and VAWG but are also ways of developing and enhancing children's talents

through designing poems, songs and sketches to showcase what they learn.

- ix. It is useful to hold more sessions with parents and school Head Teachers to ensure they communicate with children and advise them to continue to attend School Clubs and safe spaces during the holidays.
- x. Training men and boys on positive masculinities, gender equality and GBV is a way of eradicating social norms that are rooted in the patriarchal system.

## 10. Organizational Shifts Achievements

### Strategic Shift 1: To be a more agile, unified and networked Federation

1

- AAR rolled out the Contract Management System and Global Finance System and staff are ready to embrace any new Global system
- Promoted use of technology and digital tools to support increased networking and open communication pathways

### Strategic Shift 2: To build a culture of learning and quality M&E that generates knowledge, evidence-based alternatives and communicates impact

2

- Capacity building of AAR staff and Partners on HRBA Programming, Transformative Feminist Leadership & POWER Tools in line with the CSP 2 Priorities
- Organized annual media awards on issues of Unpaid Care work aligned with AAR priorities.
- Publication and visibility of AAR's work through quarterly media field visits to all LRPs, exhibitions and newsletter
- Child Sponsorship and Fundraising team shared success Communications reports and stories on AAR work
- Participated actively in all EAGLES learning face to face and webinar sessions

### Strategic Shift 3: To collectively prioritise securing resources from diverse sources aligned to our vision and values to meet strategic funding needs and build a culture of fundraising innovation

3

- Capacity building of sponsorship/program staff on new changes in Child sponsorship
- Organized sensitization meetings in the communities on child sponsorship and engaged children, parents and teachers in the preparations of children fun events during CM collection and photo updates
- Conduct trainings of staff on new and existing systems of sponsorship
- Revised fundraising strategy and donor scoping was developed
- Community issues informed our proposal development

### Strategic Shift 4: To embrace a culture of innovation and actively undertake digital transformations that revolutionise our ways of work throughout the Federation

4

- Organized Staff training on use of new systems
- Meetings and trainings were mainly held online. This reduced on costs and increased communications including reporting and increased customer satisfaction, gaining compliance
- Establishment of an offsite server that servers as data backup.
- Secured Skype Virtual Meetings, Video conferencing and Webinar
- Updated all staff laptops to Windows 10 Enterprise to ensure Hard Drive Encryption, Data security measures are in place.
- Established use of share point online and one driver
- Office Wireless Access points was updated to Meraki access point for security and device management
- Established Microsoft teams/zoom that helped in cyber security and cost reduction to meeting reduction

# 11. AAR Governance

- Staff capacity building was held to enable them to effectively deliver on organizational objectives.

- Organized Board Members participation in engagements with the community. AAR Board Vice chair with ActionAid Hellas General Assembly Members visited Gitesi & Murundi sectors in Karongi district.

- Board and Staff capacity development on Feminist Leadership was conducted to enhance their skills in designing/planning, implementing and effectively supporting AAR programmes

- A team of Board members went for learning visit with AA Ghana Board members

- Board monitors and ensures compliance of AAR to existing policies.

- Recruitment of AAR General Assembly was done considering of the community representation, gender, skills and other factors for diversified purposes.



- Conducted annual Board self -assessment for ensure that the momentum of the organization is maintained

- Risk register is reviewed on quarterly basis by the finance, risk and Audit committee and Board to assess potential and set mitigation strategies

- Organized quarterly Board meetings to provide guidance and strategic orientation to the management

- Board Committees meetings were planned on quarterly basis to prepare and review documents to be discussed in Board meetings

- Organized Governance review, recruitment and appointment of assembly members in order to deepen accountability to the citizens of the Country through having various people being represented

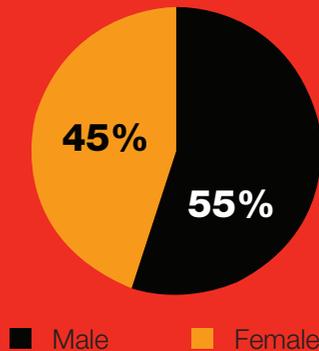
- Affiliation plan was developed and approved and it is in progress

- Governance and staff have been Familiarized with Membership Development Plan (MDP)

## General Assembly (GA)

The General Assembly (GA) is a supreme organ of ActionAid Rwanda. The GA is composed by 22 Members (12 (55%) male and 10 (45%) female). They have been inducted in February 2019 to know their roles and responsibilities as provided by the AAR Constitution and Governance manual. The 1<sup>st</sup> GA Meeting was held in June 2019.

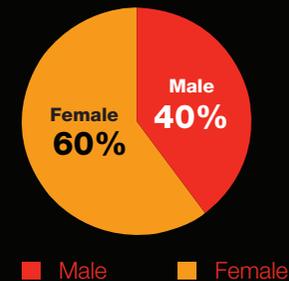
### Gender disaggregated- AAR GA



## Board of Directors

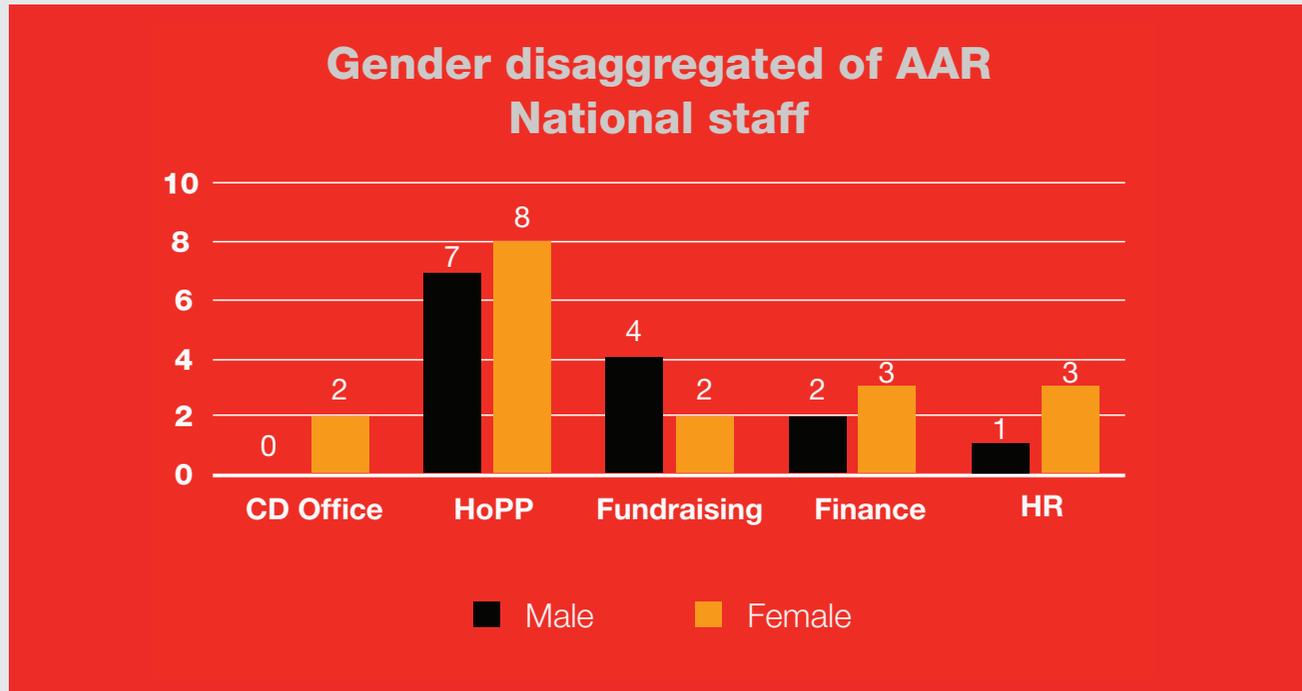
In this reporting period, the Vice Chair of the AAR Board attended the Global GA meeting in the purpose of voting and have a voice in the Federation's decisions. Also, as part of learning, a team of 2 Board Members paid a visit in Ghana to hear from AA Ghana and its community about the implementation of their programs as well as their projects. AAR has 10 board members from which 4 (40%) are male and 6 (60%) are female as shown in chart below:

### AAR Board members per gender disaggregated data



## AAR staff

In 2019, AAR staff were in total 32, whereby 15 (47%) were men and 17 (53%) were female. The figure below shows gender disaggregated of AAR national staff per Office/units.



## 12. AAR Funding

AAR is indebted to individual donors and Institutions who contributed with their resources to achieve AAR targets in 2019. AAR has got 2 majors of income: Sponsorship and partnership incomes.

### Sponsorship Income

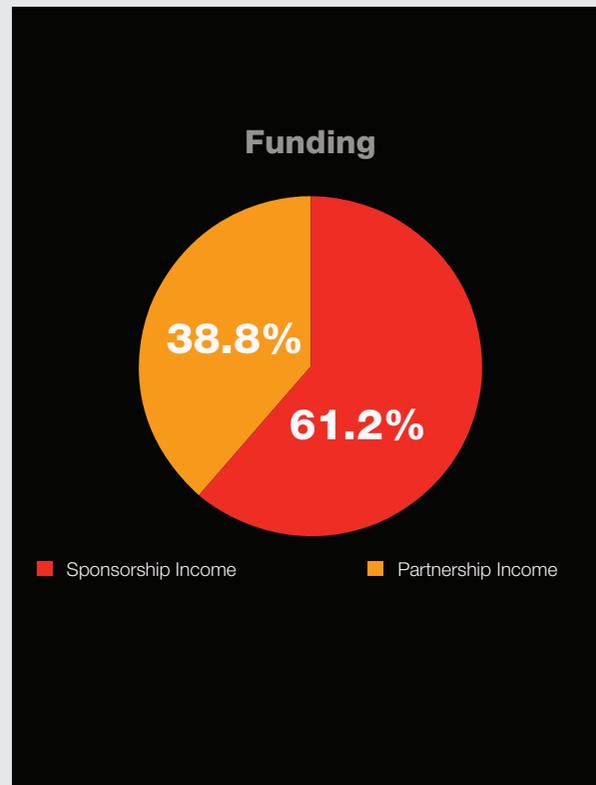
Child sponsorship contributed 38.8% of the total income for the CP. Sponsorship funds are raised through linking children in LRPs with sponsors in the northern countries. AAR's funding affiliates under sponsorship income are as follows:

- ActionAid UK
- ActionAid Greece
- ActionAid Italy

### Partnership income

About 61.2% of AAR resources are derived from institutional and high value donors, and individuals. Main donors are:

- Dutch Government
- Department for International Development (DFID)
- Various donors for Amplify Change



## 13. AAR 2019 Financials

### 1. Income performance.

2019 total Income is 2,710,000GBP, made of:

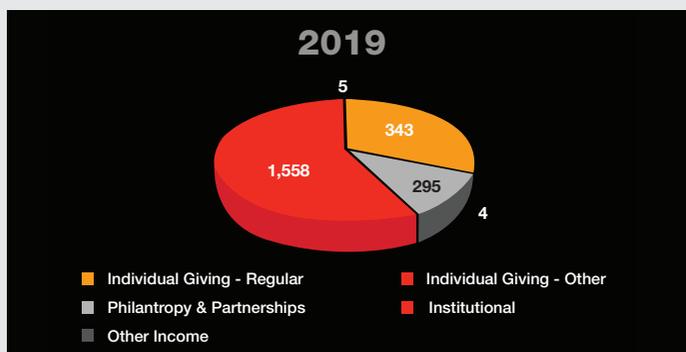
- 852,000 GBP Individual giving or regular giving or Child sponsorship income,
- Partnership income of 295,000GBP:
- The People's Post Code Lottery for the project of "Strengthening civil society in governance, accountability and democratic processes and Institutional income of 1,558,000GBP
- The POWER project 1,002,000GBP.
- Strengthen civil society in governance, accountability and democratic processes 48,000GBP.
- Speak out! project - Addressing sexual and reproductive health rights and gender-based violence in Rwanda 248,000 GBP.
- Strengthening the effectiveness of women organizations' advocacy to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights and to fight gender-based violence (SWA)- Amplify Change project of 239,000GBP.
- Empowerment of Women in Agriculture 16,000 GBP.
- Gender Climate Change NEPAD project 5,000GBP and
- Other income of 5,000GBP.

The total income has increased by 13% from last year income, but some of the component of the income have reduced from previous year like regular giving income which have reduced from last year by 6% due to the reduced flexible fund, partnership income reduced by 42% from the previous year due to some projects that have been closed in 2018;PPL income received in 2018 to co-finance EU funded project that ended in March 2019 , 91K from UK to construct ECD Gishubi in Gisagara LRP and 61k from Italy to construct ECD in Ruheru LRP

2019 Institutional income have increased from last year by 62%, due to additional POWER project income received from AA Pakistan worth 451k due to closure of all activities in Pakistan.



INCOME PERFORMANCE 000GBP	2019		2018		Variance	
	Actual YTD	Plan YTD	Actual YTD	Actual vs Plan	Actual vs 2018	
Individual Giving - Regular	848	966	902	-12%	-6%	
Individual Giving - Other	4	-	-	0%	0%	
Philanthropy & Partnerships	295	281	501	5%	-41%	
Institutional	1,558	1,033	964	51%	62%	
Other Income	5	-	21	0%	-76%	
<b>Total External Income</b>	<b>2,710</b>	<b>2,280</b>	<b>2,388</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12%</b>	



## 2. Expenditure performance

EXPENDITURE PERFORMANCE in 000 GBP	2019		2018		Variance	
	Actual YTD	Plan YTD	Actual YTD	Actual vs Plan	Actual vs 2018	
Programme	2,418	1,953	2,062	24%	17%	
Fundraising	109	127	118	-14%	-8%	
Governance	31	29	23	7%	35%	
Support	179	123	190	46%	-6%	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>2,737</b>	<b>2,232</b>	<b>2,393</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	

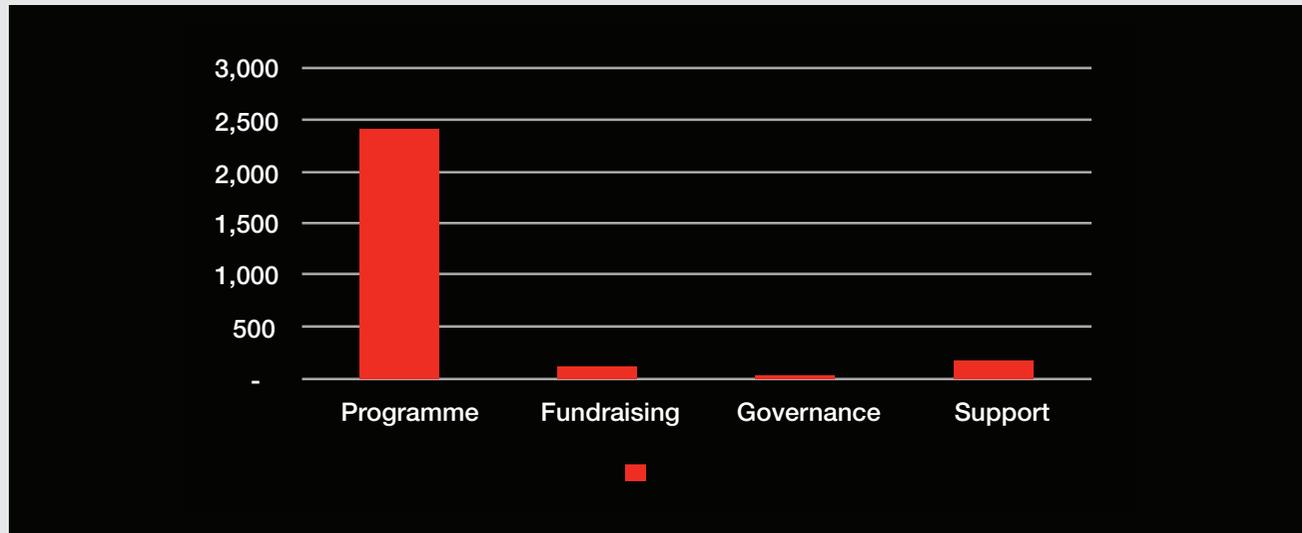
2019 Total expenditure is 2,737,000 GBP, made of program expenditure of 2,418,000GBP, funds spent while incurring program activities, Fundraising expenditure of 109,000GBP, costs of raising funds or resource mobilization, Governance costs of 31,000GBP (those are costs which relates to the governance body like board of directors and general assembly) and audit costs and Support costs (those are overheads costs of 179,000GBP).

2019 total expenditure have increased from last year expenditure by 14% due to the increased program costs by 17% in 2018 due to increased program budget due to the unplanned received income 451k from Pakistan as additional income to implement POWER project.

The fundraising costs decreased by 8% from last year due to the use of technology in servicing supporters

and NK Training and Sponsorship Annual Meetings (SAM) which was not held during the reporting period.

The governance costs increased by 35% from 23,000 in 2018 to 31,000 in 2019. This is due to costs related to General Assembly members recruitment as the Associate aspires to become Affiliate by 2020. Support costs have reduced from last year due to the reduced costs incurred in IT and HR units.



### 3. Reserve

RESERVES IN 000 GBP	2019		2018	Variance	
	Actual YTD	Plan YTD	Actual YTD	Actual vs Plan	Actual vs 2018
Reserves restricted at LRP level	188	188	216	0%	-13%
Reserves restricted at National level	62	58	46	7%	35%
Unrestricted Reserves				0%	0%
Total Country Reserves	250	246	262	2%	-5%
<b>Unspent donor project Balances</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>290</b>		<b>- 0</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Fund Balances</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>536</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Total reserve is 536,000GBP made of LRP reserve of 188,000GBP, 62,000GBP of National reserve and 286,000GBP of project report. LRP reserve have reduced by 13% from last year, increased by 35% national reserve. This is due to contributions of two new projects secured in 2019 and there is a cost recovery to support costs and additional income from AA Pakistan for POWER project.

## 14. AAR CELEBRATIONS FOR THE YEAR 2019

- 2019 was a blessing year to AAR. It is in this year that God blessed 6 AAR staff with babies
- 4 staff left the Organization to other growth opportunities and this created learning opportunities to the existing staff who stepped in for acting roles.
- 5 News staff joined the organization.

## 15. AAR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER FEDERATION MEMBERS

### a. Visit of ActionAid UK CEO and Senior Leadership Team Members

From 13th - 18th October 2019, ActionAid Rwanda hosted three members of ActionAid UK (AAUK), namely the Chief Executive Officer of AAUK Mr. Girish Kumar Narayanan Menon, the AAUK Director for Policy, Advocacy and Programmes Ms. Jillian Emma Popkins as well as the AAUK Board Chair Ms. Marie Rita Staunton.

Their visit aimed at gaining more understanding of the existing partnership between ActionAid Rwanda (AAR) and AAUK as one of the funding affiliates for AAR. The visit was also intended to learn more about AAR's work in promoting women's rights as well as deepen their understanding on how AAR works with the wider ActionAid Federation.

Girish, Jillian and Marie Rita visited the Busasamana Child Care Centre located in Nyanza District and a Girls Room at a primary school located in the same District, both supported by ActionAid Rwanda with funding from ActionAid UK.

They also joined communities in Mukingo Sector, Nyanza District in the International Rural Women's Day celebration and participated in the inauguration of Kigogo Selling Point built in Nyanza District with support from ActionAid Rwanda. The selling point is a secure marketplace for members of the local women's cooperative to sell their agriculture produce.

The trio also visited Hugukirwa Muko Cooperative, a women's cooperative supported by ActionAid Rwanda which produces handcrafts in Muko Sector, Musanze District as well as a women's savings group under ActionAid Rwanda programme supported by FLOW II Project.

At the end of the 6 Days visit to different AAR activities, members of AAUK appreciated the work

being done by ActionAid Rwanda to promote women's rights and improve livelihoods. "Great to see the amazing work done by ActionAid Rwanda with the support from ActionAid UK. We learnt a lot and one thing I really liked about ActionAid Rwanda's offices is the Accountability Boards that clearly display what AAR commitments are to the local community! Mr. Girish said.



AAUK CEO and board members visiting AAR Musanze Office to learn more about AAR work in Muko and Shingiro Sectors of Musanze District.



AAUK CEO and board members visiting Hugukirwa Muko Cooperative – A women farmers' cooperative, supported by AAR to engage in modern farming and handcraft production.

## b. Visit of ActionAid Hellas General Assembly Members

In 2019, ActionAid Rwanda hosted two members of the ActionAid Hellas General Assembly and a staff member from ActionAid Hellas. Dimitra, Nefeli and Nikos visited Muko sector in Musanze district where they met and interacted with several community members. The trio visited a Child Care Centre, a Girls' Club and two Women farmers' cooperatives, all supported by ActionAid Rwanda.

The ActionAid Hellas General Assembly Members also visited Gitesi & Murundi sectors in Karongi district. During the community visit, they were able to see a few cooperatives and schools that are financially supported by Greece. Among those they visited, included Tuzamur'agaseke, Ter'imbere, Tujijurane and Duhagurukir'amajyambere cooperatives.

They also visited Gitega and Muvungu schools, which were supported by Greece through building more classrooms, girls' rooms & latrines at the respective schools.

During the visit, the Greece team interacted with the rightholders who shared their stories of their journey with ActionAid.

Dimitra, one of the visitors from Greece applauded the community for their resilience and great achievements.

"It's so great to hear all your wonderful stories and how you have been empowered. You have inspired us so much too and we want to share these stories and lessons when we get back home," Dimitra told community members.



ActionAid Hellas General Assembly members visiting Gitesi Sector Office (Photo / ActionAid Rwanda)



Rightholders in Muko Sector cheerfully posing for a photo moment with ActionAid Hellas Team

Nikos, the team leader for the Greece team said” “We have witnessed first-hand, the great work these communities do, how they have been empowered and been able to transform their lives and communities. We want to come back and see the cooperatives expand even further with more achievements,” Nikos noted.

Josephine Irene Uwamariya, ActionAid Rwanda’s Country Director appreciated the Greece team for their contribution to changing lives in Rwanda.



Members of Tuzamur’Agaseke Cooperative based in Karongi District presenting gifts to ActionAid Hellas Members  
(Photo / ActionAid Rwanda)

### c. AAR Board members’ learning visit to AA Ghana

In a bid to acquire further knowledge and skills about how other ActionAid Members do their businesses as well as get exposed to the work that they do, from 28th June – 3rd July

2019, members of AAR Board of Directors together with AAR Country Director conducted a learning visit to ActionAid Ghana as an older and strong Affiliate of ActionAid International Federation in Africa.

As noted by ActionAid Rwanda Board members, their engagement with ActionAid Ghana Board, GA and Senior Management Team (SMT) was a good opportunity for them to

learn from them especially on the following best practices:

- Regular meeting, strict measures for absenteeism where 3 absences lead to loss of board membership.
- The built trust and engagement between board, SMT and GA
- Improved communication to enhance transparency
- Inclusion of GA members in committees for succession planning
- Strong monitoring of compliance to financial policies
- Succession planning, working with each other to ensure that there is successful succession to avoid leadership crisis

Speaking about this learning visit, AAR Country Director, Josephine

Irene Uwamariya said “ *This study visit gave us an opportunity of learning from different countries’ experience through discussions on issues, challenges encountered and ways of addressing them. The explored areas were mainly the risks facing governance related to frequency of turnover of workers and board members, Fraud, corruption and procurement process.*”



Sylvie Muteteli, AAR Board member engaging with women from Tamale, Ghana supported by ActionAid



Josephine Irene Uwamariya, AAR Country Director speaking to women from Tamale, Ghana supported by ActionAid



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