

Monthly News

ActionAid Tanzania

Jan-March 2020

Community groups take lead in COVID-19 fight in rural areas



Community members using available local means to wash their hands to protect themselves

With COVID-19 popularly known as corona virus continuing to spread throughout the world unabated, Tanzania is among African countries in which cases of the novel Corona virus have been reported and confirmed.

According to the recent information from the Ministry of health, Tanzania has recorded 25 cases of COVID-19 patients and one confirmed death.

The government has continued to take actions to contain and prevent more spread of the virus in the country as well as ensuring treatment to the patients. Some of the initiatives include: Awareness to citizens on how to protect themselves and others from contamination, issuing of a hotline number for people to report, shutting down all primary, secondary schools, tertiary and higher learning institutions for 30 days to eliminate congestion in these areas and to protect themselves from coronavirus, discouraging public gathering and calling all people to stay at home.

Other measures include issuing a guideline for mandatory quarantine for all travelers entering the country through airports, ports and ground crossings, ensuring strengthening of public hygiene where most of institutions, business places, public places have placed sanitizers and buckets of chlorine-treated water and soap for washing hands at entrances and instituted travel measures to limit the spread of virus to the general public.

In rural communities where Actionaid Tanzania operates, members of women and youth platforms/networks are taking initiatives to raise awareness in their communities about the pandemic and importance of following government and experts' instructions to protect themselves and reducing spread of the virus.

Janet Nyamahasi from Msanga Village (JUWWACHA Chairperson), explains that after the government announcement on the presence of the pandemic in the country,

she has started to share information to members of the district women network on the problem and how to respond.

"Because we can't use meetings, I have been using different ways to reach and sensitize women and community members about the pandemic. For members of JUWWACHA (District Women Network), I use the phone, meeting and them individually. I directed everyone to put buckets of water and soap at their households and business areas for washing hands regularly. We also agreed that every member must sensitize people in her area and inspire other community members." Explained Janeth.

Said Mkoba, chairperson of Kilwa Youth Development Initiative, Mitole ward, Kilwa District, explained that they are currently sensitizing communities on commended measures to prevent them from contamination.

"We visit households, markets, and other places which bring many villagers together. We talk to them about the disease, and encourage them to report any person with COVID 19 symptoms and follow the government instructions. We also visit offices/places where community members get services such as village offices, dispensaries etc, just to see if they are adhering to instructions and measures to control and contain spread of the disease, people's behavior and attitudes on the disease and identify risk and areas which needs further interventions." says Mkoba

Concerning awareness, they said that, despite the government efforts in public awareness on the pandemic, most people in the rural areas have not changed behavior to ensure proper protection and prevention of spread of the disease. Thus, they are recommending further awareness programs to be initiated and reach the wider population.

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"The major challenge with our rural communities is that most of them still believe that they are too far off, so the virus cannot reach them in their areas. They believe that it affects only people in towns. There is need to take awareness to the people using appropriate and relevant mechanisms to their context (people in remote areas)," advised Janeth.

Rehema from Ilongero Village, Singida District advised that higher authorities should give directives to local leaders to ensure awareness to the community through various means as appropriate.

"For example, COVID 19 publications should be distributed up to household level and posted on doors, trees along the way as people pass by to help disseminate the knowledge," advised Rehema.

On social distancing, they said that even though community members are struggling to accept the directives, there are still those social activities that force them to work in groups/bring many people together.

"In our area, we are farmers and we are now in the harvesting season. To harvest nuts, you must have many people to make the job easier. In this case how can we avoid this?" asked Maria from Msanga. In this case what I advise them is to ensure proper distance while working in groups"

Mkoba also added that activities like funerals still attract many people in villages.

"What we do as youth network members, when we hear any tragedy and funeral in a certain place we immediately go and meet the

family and discuss with them what needs to be done to minimise the risks of having so many people in place in relation to the spread of COVID 19.

"Generally, we are happy with government initiatives and actions towards the pandemic, but at local level, we think there is need to use available mechanism in specific areas for effective awareness raising," insisted Pili Kulwa from Kivinje in Kilwa.

Through its interventions, ActionAid Tanzania has been empowering community members and their networks to be able to take lead on various awareness raising initiatives and bring change to their communities while considering prevention measures.

As cases of coronavirus continue to increase globally, ActionAid stands in solidarity with all those affected by the crisis.

ActionAid Tanzania Announces New Country Director



Bavon Christopher- AATZ Country Director

Bavon has been working for AATZ as Head of Finance and a member of Senior Management Team (SMT) for five years. He is a holder of a master's degree in Business Administration, bachelor's degree in Commerce and Management and is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). His academic background and the 5-year work experience with AATZ have facilitated his deepened understanding of the overall operations of AATZ, including ActionAid programming philosophy, and its Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA). Moreover, Bavon has demonstrated a strong belief in and embraces the principles of feminist leadership.

Bavon comes in with 14 years of progressive professional and leadership experience in organizational strategic management for both corporate and NGO sector in Tanzania, with advanced expertise in financial and programme management and organizational development; demonstrable experience in developing policies, designing and implementing controls and organizational restructuring and reorganization with excellent knowledge in operation modals.

He is also well acquainted with shared leadership toward resource mobilization and project management in line with AATZ's Country Strategy Paper, Human Rights Based Approach to development and the AATZ theory of Change including devising and integrating effective sup-

porting services in support of programme implementation. He has experience in conducting training courses and capacity building for local, national and international levels.

Furthermore, Bavon is seen as an outstanding leader, who has demonstrated knowledge, strong commitment and passion for the AAI mission and has demonstrated sound understanding of relevant global issues. On top of his finance background, he has demonstrated remarkable familiarity and deep appreciation of all aspects around programming, women's rights, resource mobilisation and influencing donors, leading organisational change, performance and people management, risk and financial management among others and above all, he has shown that he is ready to learn with great potential for growth.

I kindly urge all of you to join me in congratulating and wishing Bavon well in his new role and providing him with the necessary support for him to perform well.

I wish him all the best as he takes on the new role as Country Director.

Mary Nsemwa

Board Chairperson, ActionAid Tanzania

Stakeholders urge AATZ to promote use of friendly technologies



Joram Wimmo, PFA project coordinator explaining about AATZ work during the PRRP event galary walk

Sharing their testimonies about ActionAid's work, representatives of the community commended AATZ for empowering them to be change agents in their communities.

"As a result of AATZ's work, women platforms in our areas have helped us to create a collective force as women which we are using in influencing the increase of the agricultural budget through meeting with councillors, legislators and agricultural committees. These efforts have helped some of our demands as women to be accepted by the government such as increased lending to women." narrated Sophia Bhoke from Chamwino.

Stakeholders have called upon ActionAid Tanzania to consider promoting the use of simple and friendly technologies, for women and youth to reduce workload and increase productivity in agriculture.

The call was made on Thursday 12 March, 2020, in Dar-es-Salaam during the National Participatory and Review Process (PRRP) organised by ActionAid Tanzania and brought together all staff, representatives from the community, Board members, partners and representatives from the government.

The aim of the process was to create a forum to capture the voices of communities, partners and stakeholders on the organisation's performance and trends as an input for future programming.

Other objectives of the process were: Promoting downward accountability to communities and stakeholders, and deepening their understanding on the way ActionAid operates, promoting transparency in sharing information on resources and how they are used for the intended purpose; create platform for community participation in analysing and providing feedback on key issues that relate to ActionAid's development work and enable learning from practices and improve efficiency going forward.

As part of her presentation, the Interim Country Director, Jovina Nawenzake, gave the background and objects of the PRRP process in a nutshell.

"We believe in participatory approaches. We receive issues from the community, we analyse and then we work on them. The process has so far involved 1,041 people from the village, district and national levels," explained Jovina.

She also used the opportunity to provide feedback to participants on the implementation of last year's PRRP recommendations, and reminded participants about ActionAid's profile, working approaches and priorities.

In the discussion, participants were interested to learn how ActionAid involves youths in agriculture, why the organisation focuses on agroecology and any available initiatives towards people living with disabilities.

Mbaruku from Unguja added, *"Previously, there was no youth empowerment from the government. But after participating in various ActionAid trainings, we are now knowledgeable on our rights as well as how to address our needs. Currently there has been an increase in the participation and involvement of young people in various aspects of development."*

In winding up the annual event, Dr Azaveli Lwaitama (board member) who represented the board chair, appreciated ActionAid staff for their good work, particularly in supporting women and excluded groups. He also insisted that AATZ work is guided by available resources, its mission and vision.



AATZ staff listening feedback from partners who took part in the PRRP



AATZ Women staff in a group photo during IWD commemoration

International Women's Day Commemoration

Members of the AATZ Women forum recently joined the rest of ActionAid Federation in commemorating the International Women's Day. The event, which was held on the 9th of March 2020, was organised as part of solidarity actions to mark ActionAid's fundamental commitment to women's rights and solidarity with feminist movements across the world.

As part of the celebrations, all women staff members held a session on decent work which was facilitated by Advocate Suzanne Ndomba-Doran, Head of Legal Services at ATE(Association of Tanzania Employers). The aim of the session was to raise awareness on decent work issues and its linkage to the International Women's Day theme.

In her presentation, Suzanne said it is almost 25 years since the Beijing declaration, but still the inequality gap between men and women is so huge and adds numerous difficulties and challenges in implementing the decent work agenda.

According to Suzanne, areas of insufficient progress include: access to decent work, closing gender pay gap, rebalancing of care workload and participation of women in power and decision making.

She also insisted that awareness on decent work is very important because when it comes to formal and informal economy;

many women are in the informal economy.

"When you look at women, they are engaged in various economic activities and are not in the formal system. The problem is that when you work in the informal system, you lose your regulatory benefits such as social security entitlements. How many people working under informal sector such as food vending and small scale farming are not getting any social security benefit?" explained Suzanne.

On the other hand, she challenged women on the fact that decent work is not only to

be provided at the offices, but we all have a responsibility of providing decent work even at our homes. *"Think of our domestic workers, the guards etc. Do they enjoy decent working?"*

The talk was relevant to the day and AATZ's mission as an organisation is, "focusing on prevention of violence against women and promoting women's economic justice."

After the talk session, the female staff members had a joyous luncheon with their male counterparts that was coloured by cake cutting and popping of champagne to make the day memorable.

Along with almost 100 organisations across the world, ActionAid endorsed the Women's Global Strike as a main collective action for International Women's Day on March 8, this year.



Suzanne Ndomba(Adv) talking to AATZ Women Forum members during IWD celebrations



Food distribution at Njinjo Village

ActionAid Supports Kilwa Flood Victims

By Stephen Bernard, Kilwa LRP

ActionAid Tanzania has supported villagers in Njinjo Ward, Kilwa District who were left wanting after floods ravaged their area recently by providing food items, to mitigate hunger and starvation.

Njinjo is among several wards in Kilwa District in the Southern part of Tanzania that were hit by heavy rains which caused floods in most parts of the district in January, this year. Two affected wards namely Njinjo and Matandu fall into AATZ's LRP. Other wards affected by the floods were Nanjilinj, Kiranjeranje, Mandawa, Kikole, Kivinje and mitole.

More than 9,860 people were reported to have been affected by the flood, Njinjo ward being the most affected area whereby more than 6,440 people have been displaced from their area and housed in schools.

Responding to the situation, ActionAid chipped in to help Njinjo villagers by providing 2,000 bags of Maize flour, 3,200 litres of cooking oil, 500 kilogrammes of beans and 1,400

kilogrammes of rice.

The support was handed to district authorities by representatives of the AATZ Senior Management team; Jovina Nawenzake and Daniel Mwakitalima.

The food items were distributed to 367 households with priority being children, women and elders.

The flood swept about 3,969h of cultivated area that had maize, banana and other cereal related crops. It also destroyed about 13,750 domestic animals like chicken, goats, cattle, donkeys and sheep. On the side of infrastructure, the flood caused damages to bridges, school buildings, roads and houses.

Women in particular have been affected; with those

engaging in small businesses and those agricultural activities (crops and livestock) as economic activities for food and income were left hopeless. Their crops and livestock have been destroyed or affected by the floods.

In the camps set after the floods, there were pregnant women, children and elderly people which increased burden of care work to women and families.

ActionAid's emergency response is aimed at saving lives and protect rights .

In its programmes, Actionaid has been working with the communities at Njinjo and Matandu villages by empowering the communities in addressing structural causes of violence against women, promote gender equality and secure economic

justice to women and girls, enhancing civic participation and State accountability for democratic governance and redistribution of public resources for the delivery of quality, gender responsive public services as well as advancing the rights of young people.



Kilwa District Commissioner, Hon Christopher Ngubiagai (2nd right) and District Executive Director, Renatus Mshau (1st left) receiving the food items contributed by AATZ.

AATZ Family Bids Metena Fare Well

A AATZ family, in January this year, bid farewell to the outgoing Country Director, Mr Yaekob Metena, during a colourful event attended by staff, representatives of the board and AGM members, and representatives from CSOs and other partners.

Speaking at the event, Metena expressed his joy and satisfaction in serving ActionAid Tanzania for six years. He thanked the staff, board and AGM members for their support during his tenure and requested full support to the incoming CD.

He also explained about his commitment and passion to the development work during his employment.

“As time went on, since my very days of employment, my passion and commitment to the organisation increased significantly. That was not because of the pay I earned only, but the cause of advancing human rights and aligning with the poor and marginalized people in their struggle against poverty and injustices. I am grateful that I am leaving at a time when the organisation is prospering,” said Metena.

Speaking on behalf of the staff, the Head of Programmes and Policy, Jovina Nawenzake, said everyone who worked under Yaekob’s leadership is a witness of his quality leadership.

“For the time you have been at ActionAid Tanzania, you have been a mentor, coach and a trainer to all of us,” said Jovina.



Women Forum Members presenting a trophy to Mr. Yaekob to acknowledge his efforts toward women rights issues at the work place

On the other hand, the Agriculture Non-State Actors Forum (ANSAF) Director, Mr Audax Rukonge, appreciated Yaekob’s contribution to the ANSAF board.

“Having Yaekob in our board was a great treasure to us. His ideas and advisory inputs will always be remembered and missed. His wealthy of experience is still needed and his de-

parture is so premature to ANSAF,” explained Rukonge.

The AATZ Board Chair, Mary Nsemwa, attested to the great work done by Metena including moving the organisation from almost falling in the ditch to where it is now.

“We were indeed privileged to have Yaekob as part of AATZ team. As a board, we have learnt a lot and we have grown by working with him. He has been a great and exemplary leader.

“For us who are remaining, I urge everybody to remain committed, focused and supportive going forward,” she added.

It was a day of mixed feelings as people did not only share how they will miss Metena, but also testified the good work done by him.

“I will remain extremely proud of being part of this wonderful family. I would like to thank you all for the support you accorded me in one way or another and hereby say Goodbye! This marks the end my almost 18 years of service with ActionAid,” concluded Metena

Metena served Actionaid Tanzania as Country director for six years and he has returned to his home country, Ethiopia.



AATZ Board Chair, Mary Nsemwa(1st right) and other representatives of Board and AGM presenting their gifts to Yaekob during the farewell.

Youth Call for Actions to Address Decent Work Challenges



Discussion in progress during the National Youth forum event

the government has a lot of programmes and information, but youth seeking this information are very few. Likewise, the government also needs information but unfortunately people giving this information are also very few,” she commented.

Participants also advised that the service of labour officers is very crucial at this moment and the need for having them at district level cannot be undervalued.

“In the past, the government was the only employer, but nowadays we have the private sector providing employment. Therefore, the service of labour officers should match with the new employment trend.”

Youth in the country have called upon the government and other stakeholders to address issues related to decent work.

The call was made by youth during a national youth dialogue on decent work, which brought together youth from different districts, representatives from the government, parliament as well as private sector, and took place in Dar-es-Salaam, in December 2019.

The dialogue, organised by ActionAid Tanzania, was aimed at generating key issues and concerns from youth that will inform strategic planning, for advocacy work and create awareness on decent work and economic growth for youth, government and key stakeholders in the private sector for actions.

In her opening speech, Jovina Nawenzake, the AATZ Head of Programmes and Policy, told participants that the event is a result of ActionAid’s passion and commitment to youth welfare, and was organized in order to provide youth with a forum to discuss and engage in a conversation on issues affecting their lives, and decent work in particular.

“Youth are not tomorrow’s nation; they are today’s nation. It is good for them to be fully involved in development agendas. That’s why we have organised this discussion so that young people can talk,” insisted Nawenzake.

During the event, youth presented their challenges related to decent work, using different approaches including drama.

Presenting on behalf of young women, MS Fransisca said there are many setbacks facing women at workplaces including lack of/or weak contracts, sexual harassment, lack of information about social security, lack of maternity leave and so on.

“Women and girls entering the job market either lack contracts or the contracts provided are not written in friendly language, and all copies are kept by employer hence denying the contract holder a personal reference. We propose employees signing the contracts, and these contracts should be reviewed and verified by Labour Officers at district levels to make sure they are in line with the country’s labour laws,” explained Fransisca.

Youth also cautioned that the available policies are not in line with the current context. They gave an example that, the 2008 Employment Policy and the Youth Development Policy 2007 are more than ten years old, hence they will no longer be relevant in addressing the current challenges and hence the need for periodic review.

Ms Fatuma Urari, Deputy Head of Planning, Employment Department from the Prime Minister’s office, expressed her sincere appreciation to ActionAid for organizing such a dialogue and especially for inviting representatives from the government. She assured participants that the government is always very supportive of impactful initiatives like this.

She revealed to participants that the government is implementing several initiatives aimed at supporting the creation of decent jobs for young people.

“Young people, should develop and cultivate a culture of seeking and giving information because

Participants also called for the need for different approaches in disseminating information to the general public, as currently, the information on available opportunities is reaching graduates looking for formal employment, but we are not sure if youth of different interests are equally reached.

Hon Fred Mwakibete (MP) Busokelo Constituency and General Secretary of Young Parliamentarians, advised youth to be aggressive in looking for and sharing information because information is power.

AATZ is committed to advance youth development through the Youth Empowerment and Influence project. This is Strategic Partnership Agreement project which runs from 2018 to 2021. At national level the project is implemented by national partners namely YPC, TYVA and Policy Forum while at local level, it is implemented in four districts namely Kilwa, Mafia, Pemba and Unguja.



Msafiri Shabani, a Bodaboda rider contributing during the dialogue

AATZ & UMATI Partner on Sexual & Reproductive Health Rights

ActionAid Tanzania (AATZ), last year, started implementing Strengthening Social Accountability & Oversight in Health and Agriculture in Southern Africa project phase two. In this round, AATZ will partner with Chama cha Uzazi na Malezi Bora Tanzania (UMATI) on implementation of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR).

The project will target Parliamentary Committees, media, small-holder women farmers, adolescents and youth, government institutions and Issue- Based Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

At district level, the project will be implemented in Kilosa and Mbozi districts. The focus will be on Sexual & Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) for adolescent girls. All stakeholders at district levels related to SRHR will be

engaged. UMATI will coordinate this intervention with MVIWATA Ngazi ya Kati Morogoro for Kilosa, and MIICO for Mbozi.

As part of pre-implementation and preparatory initiative, AATZ conducted familiarisation meeting with UMATI team, where overview of the project, implementation modality,

proposed activities, PSA Result Matrix, AATZ country strategy and the Human rights-based approach and documentation were presented.



UMATI&AATZ Team in a familiarisation meeting

Pictorial - National PRRP Event



Tandahimba LRP coordinator, Dinno Celestin explaining to participants about their work at the community



Community representatives sharing their testimonies during the PRRP event

Pictorial



AATZ Board Chair, Mary Nsema speaking during the farewell event



Finance team presenting their gifts to Yaekob



Women forum members in a group photo with Yaekob during the farewell



Moments.....during IWD commemoration event



Women forum members cutting cake during IWD commemoration event