



act:onaid



Advancing Global Justice
in the face of Covid-19

2020

ActionAid International
GLOBAL ANNUAL REPORT

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بالشراكة مع جمعية وفاق ترابية المرأة والتفكير ومركز ال

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**Front Cover: ActionAid Palestine Volunteers
get food items ready for distribution.**

Photo: Rushdi Saraj/ActionAid

June 2021

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FOREWORD

by AAI Board Chair and Secretary General

We are delighted to present to you our 2020 Annual Report, a record of our collective experience in an unprecedented year of disruption but also opportunity to adapt and learn.

The Covid-19 pandemic in many ways exposed and exacerbated already existing deep-seated inequalities rooted in an unfair and broken global development system. First detected in Wuhan - Hubei, China in November 2019, in less than six months, by March 2020 the World Health Organisation (WHO) had declared it a global pandemic. The exponential spread of this virus disrespecting national and international borders was a timely reminder that the problems we face today require an international system that is agile and responsive to a diverse world community and not a system of growing nationalisms. The overstretch and in some cases total collapse of health systems was a timely reminder that the widespread disinvestment in public health in most countries, sometimes caused by financing conditionalities was a wrong path.

Inequalities were deepened with a virus that divided humanity as it spread. While technology was handy for some and many businesses adapted, many others could simply not cope.

Millions of children could not access school because they were either not connected to power grids or could not afford internet. Thousands of workers in schools' lost jobs and millions around the world have fallen back into poverty. Many governments around the world, used lock-down measures to disproportionately restrict fundamental freedoms of association, assembly, and speech.

ActionAid, like many development organisations, was affected by the disruptions caused by the pandemic. But unlike many of our partners around the world, we were able to adapt and maintain some aspects of our mission. Through our innovation around a Coronavirus Engagement Surge Team (CREST) programme, we repurposed our programmes around the world and worked with our allies and partners to initiate public campaigning for access to finance for developing countries to respond to the pandemic. We joined hands with others to launch the People's Vaccine Alliance that continues to advocate for vaccine equity and access.

We invested a bit more in our digital capacity to continue working in the face of travel restrictions. All around the world, we saw our countries adapt to the crisis and repurpose programmes to respond to the needs of communities affected by Covid-19.

We held our first virtual General Assembly online and executed our governance obligations which included approval of a Long-term Finance and Funding Strategy (LTFFS) as well as our second Strategy Implementation Framework (SIF2), launched an in-depth review of our governance model and successfully managed leadership transitions within management as well as transition of some members within the International Board and election of new office bearers.

The stories (sampled from many) and updates presented in this annual report therefore reflect ActionAid's agility, resilience, and adaptation in the face of an unprecedented global pandemic.

We remain hopeful that the difficulties the world community went through in 2020 will inspire collective action for a world in which our common humanity become the driving force for transformative change.



Dr. Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda
Chairperson



Julia Sanchez
Secretary General

INTRODUCTION

Our Resilience in a Tumultuous Economic and Political Context

For ActionAid and many international, national and local organisations, the year 2020 was unprecedented in large part because of the widespread of Covid-19 and the devastating impact this has had on the global economy, livelihoods, politics, and ways of working. Declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2020, the global impact of Covid-19 was devastating with 46 million registered cases, and 1.2 million deaths by October.

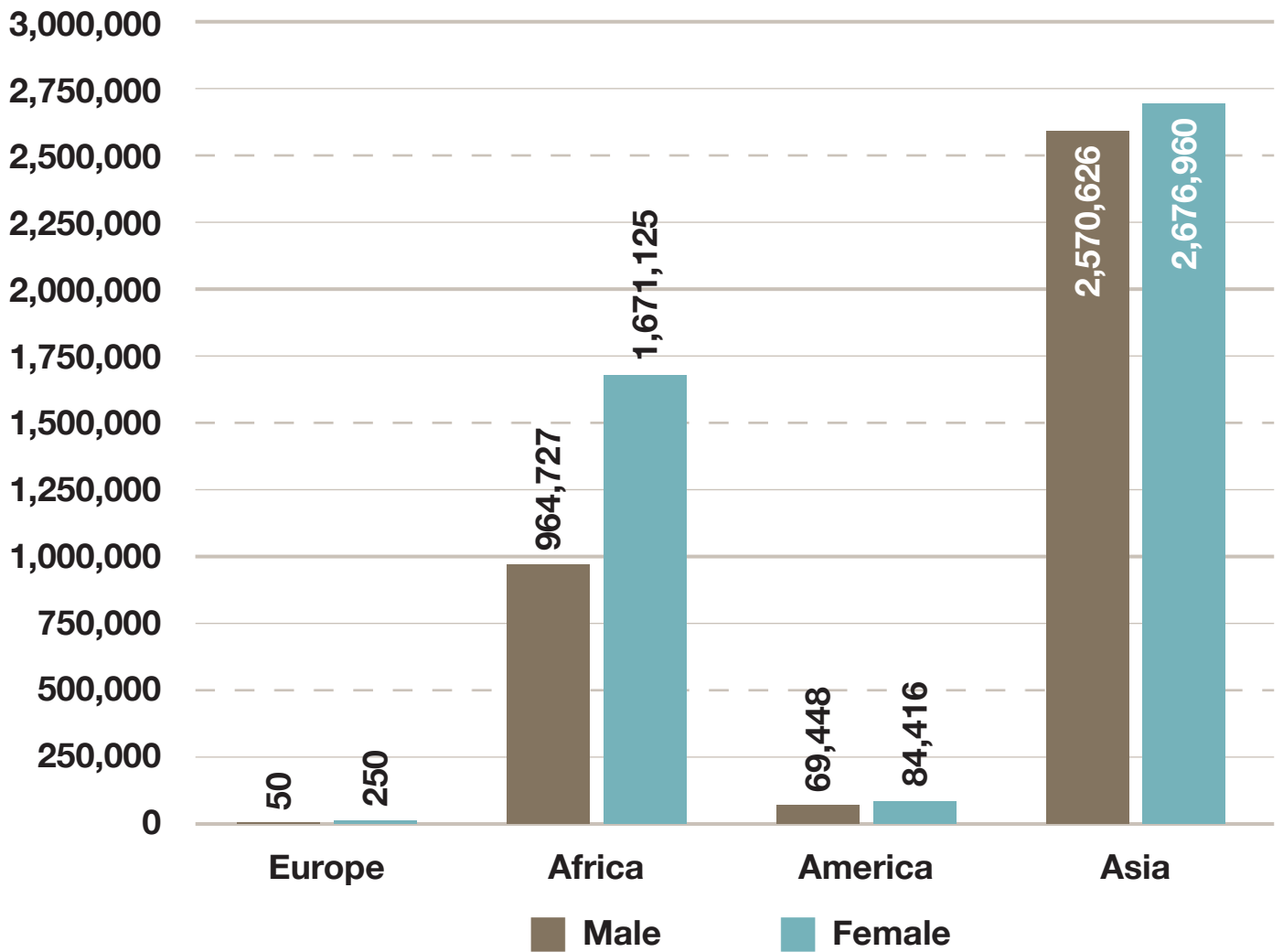
We connected communities and countries to global level agenda-setting, targeting power shifts through research-informed positions to influence legislation and structures. In Australia and Vietnam with the Asia-Pacific Forum on Women, Law, and Development and the trade justice and union movements we campaigned for establishment of minimum labour standards and protection of women's rights. As a result, a recommendation in Australia's parliament to undertake gender impact assessments for negotiating trade agreements was endorsed.

Many undemocratic governments used the pandemic to reduce civil liberties in the pretext of managing the spread of the virus. Some countries such as India developed new legislation to introduce changes in legislative frameworks that affect how civil society organisations can work. We also witnessed major shifts in global politics with the elections in the US. However, it was not all doom and gloom. As a learning organisation, we adapted and increased digital footprint and virtual engagement, including participation of local communities in online spaces, and a reduction in our carbon footprint due to travel restrictions and working from home.

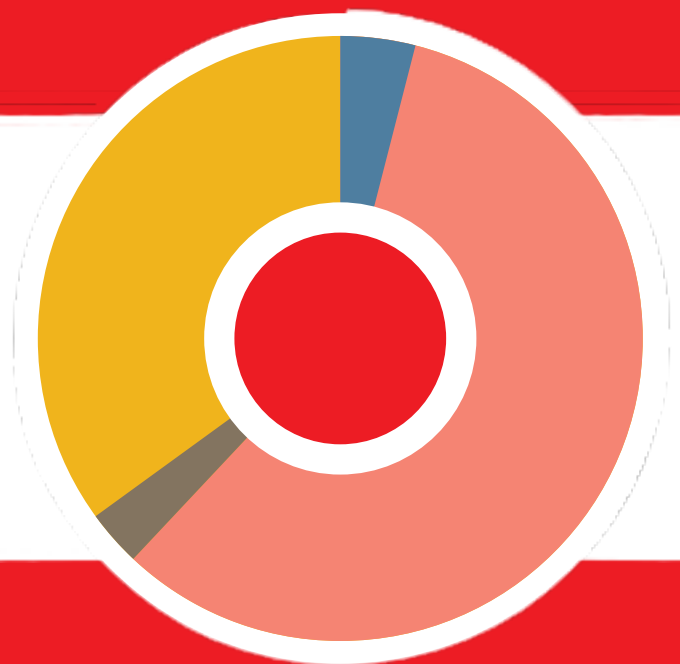
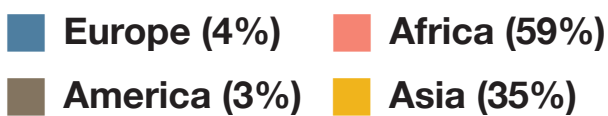
The first phase of our Covid-19 response aimed to reach 14.9 million vulnerable and marginalised communities in 40 countries, especially women and girls. By September, we had helped 9.6 million (64% of target) disaster-affected people through Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) (2.6m), food (4m), shelter (33,800), protection (70,500), cash (52,000), livelihoods support (24,200), strengthened DRR projects (145), awareness campaigns (21.9m) and PPE distribution (508,000).

Another celebration point for ActionAid despite the agonies of Covid-19 was the successful recruitment of our new Secretary General, Julia Sanchez who took over the leadership of the federation in March, just before the WHO declared the global pandemic. Under her leadership ActionAid has demonstrated resilience and advanced several important processes, including developing our 2nd Strategy Implementation Framework (SIF2), a Long-term Finance and Funding Strategy (LTFFS), both approved by the AAI General Assembly in October 2020. We were also able to repurpose and adapt our programmes and maintained a stable income across various streams - we raised €232 million in 2020, a 3% increase from 2019. Overall ActionAid demonstrated commendable resilience.

of intended beneficiaries reached by ActionAid activities, disaggregated by sex



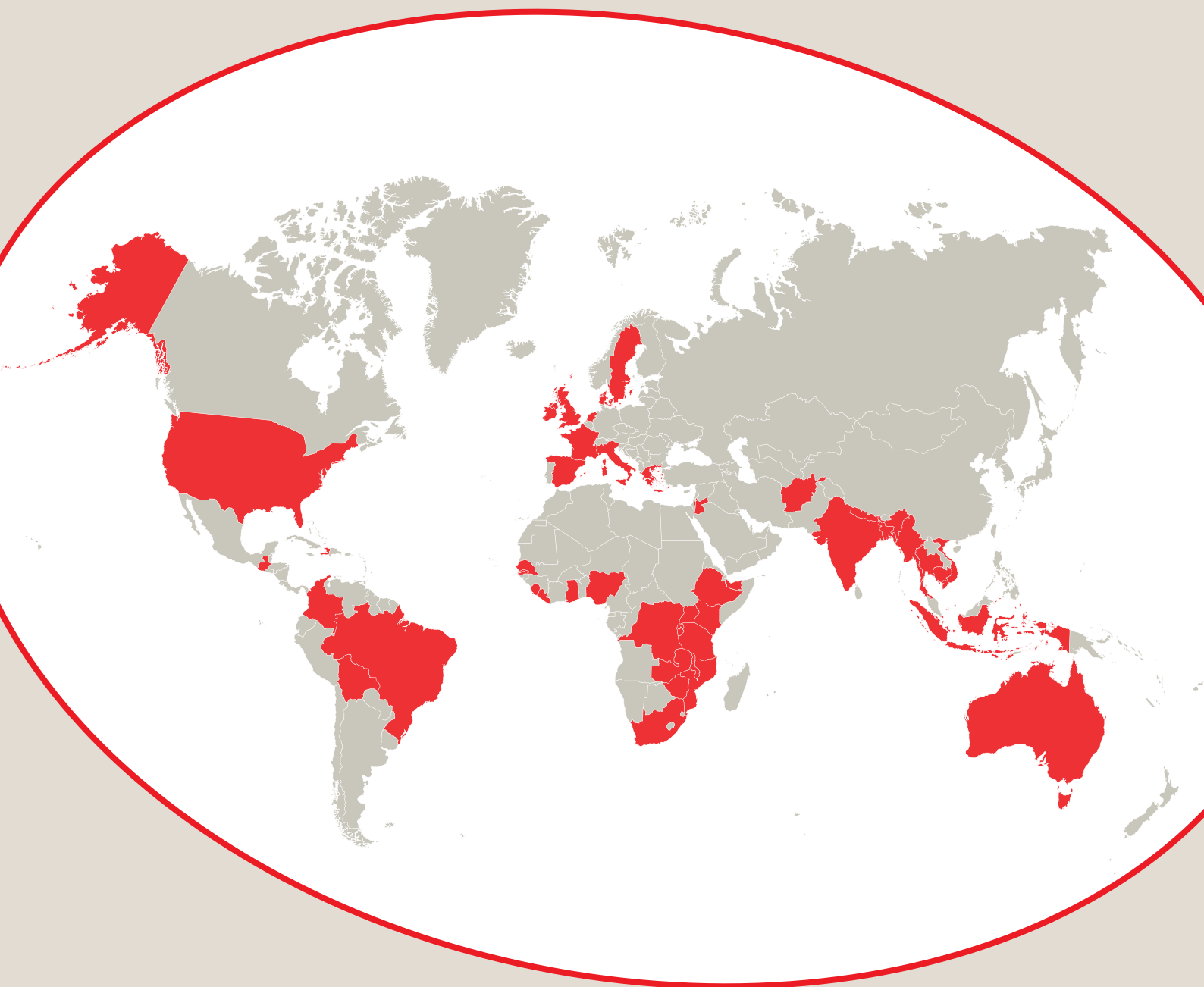
of intended beneficiaries reached by ActionAid activities, Total



ActionAid In Brief

Our People, Footprint and Partnerships

Our global federation exists to harness individual and collective work to achieve social justice and gender equality and eradicate poverty. Central in our drive to achieve our mission in 2020 were 3,166 staff (1,645 women and 1,521 men) in 47 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and The Americas, and 2,004 volunteers (1,019 women and 985 men). In 2020, for the whole federation, women held 51% of the senior leadership roles. In the global secretariat, 66% of senior leadership roles are held by women.



AFFILIATES

Full members, legally registered as national organisations, autonomous and self-governed

Following the approval of three more Affiliates at the 2020 Assembly, we currently have 25 Affiliate Members – Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Denmark, France, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nepal, The Netherlands, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sweden, Tanzania, The Gambia, Uganda, UK, and USA.

ASSOCIATES

Members in transition to Affiliates

The transition of three members from Associate to Affiliate status in 2020 means we currently have five associate members - Indonesia, Zambia, Spain, Thailand, and Vietnam.

COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

Programmes with managerial oversight provided by the Global Secretariat while governance oversight is provided by the International Board

With the formal recognition of Colombia as a Country Programme, ActionAid currently has 15 country programmes – Afghanistan, Burundi, Cambodia, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Liberia, Myanmar, Palestine (Occupied Palestinian Territories), Senegal, Somaliland, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and the Arab Regional Initiative (ARI) based in Jordan with outreaches in Lebanon and Syria.

We also have a presence in Switzerland (cross-border fundraising initiative), and Brussels (EU Office) as well as AAI Global Secretariat Hubs in Bangkok, Johannesburg, London, and Nairobi.

Community during hand washing session led by Adama, Sierra Leone. Photo: Desmond Kanneh/ActionAid





Evolution of our Global Strategy

Transition from 1st Strategy Implementation Framework to the 2nd - Achievements and Influences

ActionAid International's global strategy, 'Action for Global Justice' approved in December 2016 adopted 3-year cycles for its implementation. These 3-year cycles are guided by Strategy Implementation Frameworks (SIF) and SIF 1 covered the period 2017 to 2020. The year 2020 was thus a milestone to document the first cycle of implementing our global strategy as we transitioned to SIF 2. Below we present some highlights of this period in the form of our prouds/achievements, our challenges and what we learnt.

We harnessed people power!

In building the collective power of the most excluded, we mobilised global solidarity to campaign and influence a range of issues, from feminist macroeconomics in Malawi with labour unions and the African Women's Development and Communication Network (FEMNET) to mobilizing over 37,000 people to promote women's economic autonomy with Spain's Co-responsibility

Campaign. We facilitated representatives of over 19,500 women in the Promoting Opportunities for Women's Empowerment and Rights (POWER) project to engage directly with presidents and government ministries in national, regional, and international meetings, including creating space women to engage in an African Union Panel and Commission on the Status of Women.



Sharmin is helping her children to wash their hands. Bangladesh.
Photo: Mahmuda Akter Beauty/ActionAid ▲

Over 4,100 young women in Kenya campaigned for Gender Responsive Public Services (GRPS) and in Ghana, the Young Urban Women's Movement (YUWM) was formally registered as an independent non-profit organization forming a national advocacy alliance to increase their power to influence. Young Urban Women (a multi-country project) leaders took part in the World Urban Forum (WUF) in Malaysia, European Development Day (EDD) in Belgium, and YUW program staff from South Africa attended the IMF/World Bank civil society space in Indonesia.

In Bangladesh nearly 700 local women leaders joined key decision-making platforms and committees such as Market Committees, Stop Violence Against Women Committees and School

Management Committees, to ensure functional and transparent services to all marginalized people, especially women.

Strong resilience champions of women-led network from Myanmar, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe grew to a global resilience advocacy initiative across 38 countries influencing the United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction's 2019 co-chair statement and Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction's new strategy. We contributed to gender inclusion in the Grand Bargain and localisation in the Call to Action, thanks to national level efforts like those of Yappika - ActionAid Indonesia, through their feminist approach research, now a point of reference in the region.



▲ Duongdav – CWDC “small classroom, small teacher” volunteer, Cambodia.
Photo: ActionAid Cambodia

We shifted visible power and exposed hidden power!

We connected communities and countries to global level agenda-setting targeting power shifts through research informed positions to influence legislation and structures. In Australia and

▼ Maria Delma – Covid Response, Brazil.
Photo: CMTR



Vietnam with the Asia-Pacific Forum on Women, Law, and Development and the trade justice and union movements we campaigned for establishment of minimum labour standards and protection of women's rights. As a result, a recommendation in Australia's parliament to undertake gender impact assessments for negotiating trade agreements was endorsed.

We embedded tax as a priority in the Covid-19 response – both internally in CREST and externally through our engagement with the IMF (Who Cares report below), G20, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and others. Our work to highlight tax that could be raised from Google, Facebook and Microsoft helped us engage a wider public, with an estimated **media reach** of 184 million.



The **Who Cares for the Future: finance gender-responsive public services!** global report informed 21 national reports and attracted key offices, in Sierra Leone, the President’s Office in Sierra Leone and several Ministries of Finance across Africa acknowledged the report. The report boosted our global status as lead actors on public sector wage bills, including ActionAid being asked to speak in key webinars at the last IMF annual meetings.

Our education work retained a global leadership role including chairing the strategy committee of the \$2.3bn **Global Partnership for Education**. We were the global CSO spokespeople on domestic financing issues, convened a **Call to Action** with 190 organisations, and were a key member of the Global Advisory Committee of the United Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI). Our progressive agenda on education financing, **built around 4Ss** (size, share, sensitivity and scrutiny) was endorsed by **African Ministers of Education** in 2018.

Dolores Chiquin, Guatemala.
Photo: Oscar Caal



We pushed for greater and sustainable access to rights, resources, and services!

With long term gains for marginalised communities in mind we targeted different global spaces including: Commission on the Status of Women, World Urban Forum IX, and African Union meetings; for example, our #AllWomenWork global campaign on women's labour and decent work was instrumental to International Labour Organisation Convention C190 on violence and harassment in the world of work; our input the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report on Land and Climate (August 2019) informed a key shift from industrial agriculture to agroecology.

We established a formal relationship with Gender is My Agenda Campaign (GIMAC) and participated in the development of the AU Gender strategy, an opportunity for us to establish a successful GRPS, specifically water and sanitation access advocacy at the African Union.

In Ethiopia, women and girls Reflection-Action-Circles (RAC) transformed into community structures of Women Watch Groups (WWGs) and Women Saving and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOs), women-led water management committees, and multi-purpose cooperatives of ActionAid Ethiopia (AAE)'s women's rights interventions to shape decision making. Government, traditional and religious structures recognized them as focal points

▼ **Emergency Response to Covid-19, Cambodia.**
Photo: Sar Pisey, Krong Chanthou/ActionAid



in referral pathways for women and girls' rights protection, promotion, and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) prevention. In Spain we coordinated nearly 20 women organisations, national and regional feminists' networks to guarantee over 500 migrant women access to services and protection of their rights to work.

In India, in the old Hyderabad, young women leaders secured 1,000 new CCTV cameras from local government to reduce gender-based violence, and successfully lobbied to get two representatives into local government sanitation committees.

Through the Public Financing for Agriculture and the Partnerships for Social Accountability projects we pushed for the implementation of the Malabo declaration for 10% budgetary allocation to agriculture in Africa, with significant shifts in the amounts allocated and disbursed to support rural women farmers in Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania, and Zambia.

ActionAid carried out successful humanitarian interventions over this period. They included the Ebola response, Rohingya refugee crisis, Indonesia earthquake and tsunami, Cyclone Idai, Covid-19 pandemic, and localized responses in affected countries such as military attacks, drought, and floods, Southern Africa Food crisis, Sierra Leone landslides, Beirut blast, flood responses, local level emergencies and more.

Internally, the Accountability delegation led the establishment of the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) ActionAid group of 16 federation members (the first of its kind in the CHS Alliance). The group approved by the International board in 2018 went through an external audit by Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative (HQAI) which highlighted many positives - a strong and rooted community engagement, but also areas to improve, such as safety and security.



Emergency Response to Covid-19, Cambodia.
Photo: Krong Chanthou/ActionAid ▲

Two years on from the start of #MeToo campaign we have rolled out policies and built a strong and sustainable SHEA and Safeguarding approach based on challenging injustice, creating a working environment free from harm, and building on our feminist approach to support survivors and hold those responsible to account. ActionAid brought SHEA and safeguarding into all its structures including governance; a separate reporting line to a named SHEA and safeguarding lead on the ActionAid International Board alongside a SHEA and safeguarding focal point network across the federation.

We developed AA's learning approach and facilitated e-learning by managing a platform that in 2020 had 1,364 registered users, 256 courses taken with a 79.8% completion.

Lessons learned

Although ActionAid has implemented emergency responses in many countries in this period, it still needs to strengthen its capacity to respond at country and partner level. This includes the need to invest more in preparedness and longer-term resilience work and further analyse the burden potentially being put on women's rights

organisations. We must ensure that they are properly resourced and supported and link to our work on reducing/redistributing unpaid care work.

Emergency preparedness and early warning systems, although present in some areas of work, was seen as a gap and an area for improvement. This would help to fully connect our humanitarian and resilience and longer-term development focused work hence addressing the humanitarian – development nexus.

And most recently critical influencing opportunities in 2020 were drastically affected and moved online due to Covid-19. The pandemic slowed down implementation of programmes while other initiatives were put on hold in different countries during different stages of the crisis and restrictions. The Covid pandemic made many markets for smallholder farmers inaccessible and disrupted livelihoods, food security and nutrition. There was a missed opportunity to explore the potential of scaling up of digital markets as a viable alternative.

Our SHEA & Safeguarding work needs to look beyond compliance to safer programming, including how we can balance our role in communities where our safeguarding protocols become critical for reporting.

What made the difference – Key Success Influencers for SIF2

Rootedness as part of our DNA –

ActionAid's priorities must remain focused on areas of strength such as its rootedness in communities, women's rights, and agriculture, rather than follow funding trends. This position will strengthen accountability to communities and a sense of commitment from donors for long-term funding.

The strength of women and young people's leadership – we need to explore ways to better integrate the political agenda of women's rights and connect this with leadership. Increased engagement in external spaces and

bringing countries into these spaces over the past three years is good for us, especially for strengthening future engagement with the feminist movement. SIF2 needs to improve cross-border initiatives and focus on resourcing more of our joint work for greater impact. SIF2 must articulate working with young people more clearly in our signature because it is important that they define and drive this agenda. We need to make the new Inter-Agency Standing Committee Youth programming guidelines our own so that they suit our identity. This is a balancing act involving localisation, women's leadership, and young people.

▼ Soap making enterprise, Democratic Republic of Congo.
Photo: HDV Media/ActionAid



Better integration of programmes and public engagement – we have excellent programme and policy work but need to promote more public/media engagement with wider communication rooted in strong programme engagement, sound policy analysis and reflect the importance of building trust with our allies and influencing policymakers directly. We need to better document what we do, in a way that is understandable and accessible to everyone. Further investments in knowledge management including storage and knowledge sharing will build institutional memory, prevent knowledge loss, and generate evidence, and build narratives that amplify community voices.

Focus on connections – In SIF 2 we must keep focus on the connections between issues, such as progressive tax and progressive spending or the connections between public space, public resources, and public services. We define our niche most powerfully at the intersections, such as how unpaid care connects to public services and strategic financing issues. We need to connect our tax justice work with wider fiscal justice to offer effective comprehensive solutions or alternatives, so the framing of system change for economic justice in SIF2 works well.

Covid-19 awareness, preparedness and prevention activities, Ghana. Photo: Geoffrey Buta





HARNESSING LEARNING and the COLLECTIVE POWER of our FEDERATION

Strategic work that brought us together

This Global Annual Report aims to showcase the collective strategic work of the federation to share, learn and improve. Below we feature three of the top federation events that brought together countries, partners and the global secretariat and were led by the global secretariat Teams from various clusters. They include the ActionAid Virtual Learning Expo and the CREST intervention - #WalkForSurvival, and the festival of learning.

1 A Celebration of ActionAid's Impact - ActionAid's Virtual Learning Expo

The November 2020 ActionAid Virtual Learning Expo was organised collaboratively by the Programmes Quality and learning team, the Evaluation and Accountability Global Leaders (EAGLES), Learning and Knowledge Functional Network (LKFN), and the Programmes and Global Engagement (PAGE) cluster units. The Expo aimed to share learning across the federation and to communicate and celebrate the closing impact of the first Strategic Implementation Framework (SIF1)¹. It registered 868 delegates with around 60 attendees per sessions.

¹ ActionAid's Strategic Implementation Framework 1 is a three-year (2018-2020) document developed to help unpack and implement ActionAid's global strategy Action For Global Justice 2028.



Key insights:

- ▶ In understanding and working with social movements, we noted how critical contexts where there is a rise of right-wing politics and conservative movements were and identified the urgent need to increase public engagement efforts and amplify the voices of peoples' movements. This presents opportunities to invest in digital transformation for networking, increasing reach and scale, attracting digitally savvy young people, strengthening solidarity actions and visibility. Future ActionAid plans for advocacy actions need to be guided by social movements and 'they must see us (ActionAid) as their go-to-ally'.²
- ▶ Understanding the bigger macro and global picture - our engagement efforts revealed that effective demands for Gender Responsive Public Services and Social Protection at national level require understanding economics at the local and macro level and the influence of International Financial Institutions such as the IMF and World Bank in determining economic imperatives and austerity measures such as debt and wider financing on countries' economic policies and spending.
- ▶ Invest more in the leadership of women and young people - leadership of women, young people and their organisations in the humanitarian emergency response, recovery and resilience ensures its rootedness and effectiveness and is key for advancing local agenda and sustainability, and challenging rigid and conservative top-down humanitarian architecture.
- ▶ Challenging false solutions and generating alternatives to the climate crisis.



◀ Feza, 5 years old. Rwanda.
Photo: Jean Bizimana/ActionAid

² Keynote address by ActionAid's International Secretary General, Julia Sanchez.



▲ Women Farmers in Buzi, Mozambique.
Photo: Daniel Jukes/ActionAid

2 The Global Walk for Survival: Going Round the World Twice

In response to the global Covid-19 pandemic, ActionAid creatively set up a Coronavirus Engagement Surge Team (CREST) to coordinate and plan ActionAid's emergency response. Many of the communities we work with were just emerging from previous and ongoing crises. The pandemic exposed gaps in public service provision and health systems almost crashed in many countries due to the surge in Covid-19 cases. While the WHO recommended preventive measures, governments introduced stringent measures including restricted movements, and curfews to control the spread of the virus.

Restricted movement in the form of lock-downs and working from home policies affected many businesses and particularly poor communities and especially women who depend on daily wage for subsistence. Unable to move, they faced the risk of starvation. Closing schools seriously disrupted education, with some children missing school for months and increasing dropouts, especially girls.

CREST coordinated ActionAid's emergency response and recovery efforts to link the crisis and its impact to our tax work on public financing for gender responsive public services through taxation. We grasped the opportunity to increase our advocacy work with women and jointly established an action to walk 40,000 km -the earth's circumference -and call on world leaders to deliver and provide gender responsive public services.

More than 4,000 people in 44 countries took part in the #WalkForSurvival, walking long distances to join millions of women across the world who must do so to gather the basics of water and firewood

to survive, make money or get an education. The collective movement of community members, staff and other stakeholders walked a combined total distance of 103,781km, more than double the earth's circumference to demand world leaders to:

- ▶ **Cancel the debt** that wealthier countries claim from the poorest to allow them to recover from the crisis. Many developing countries are spending up to five times as much on debt repayments than on health and education combined.
- ▶ **Make big corporations pay their fair share of tax** to fund education, health care, and social safety nets for all.
- ▶ **Defund big polluters** and invest in green alternatives.
- ▶ **Fight violence against women** which soared during Covid-19, and promote vital but underfunded support services.

Key insights:

- ▶ Ending this pandemic and having effective vaccination programmes is impossible without adequate health workers and infrastructure. ActionAid's Who Cares report showed that public health systems have been underfunded for a generation due to unfair austerity policies and tax rules that allow big companies to avoid paying their fair share; this is unacceptable. In a pandemic, it is unimaginable.
- ▶ Tax reform and debt cancellation are urgently needed to refinance the public health systems of the world's poorest countries and provide the investment needed to support the distribution of vaccines and treatment. In our globalised world, no country will be safe from Covid-19 until all countries and all people are protected. To end this devastating pandemic, we must put the interests of humanity ahead of corporate profits.



3 The Festival of Learning: Unleashing the Power of our People

ActionAid's Festival of Learning went beyond traditional skill sharing to explore a wide range of topics, think about how to become better leaders, focus our purpose and new ways of collaborating with others.

The September 7-11 festival was organised and led by the Fundraising Team in the Resources Mobilisation and Innovation (RMI) Cluster and invited more than 500 participants to workshops and an online platform with the aim of facilitating the global community to learn and connect with other global change-makers, explore new methods, ideas and how to solve challenges, act with clear actionable plans and steps and play by providing fun and creativity.

The festival of learning discussed storytelling as a key feature of impacting others with lived experiences and how this leads to change; how to

harness skills innovation and ensure continuous improvement in our work, recognising that communities are our strength and are at the centre of all our fundraising and change efforts. Through the festival, we heard of the experiences of young people and women-led activist groups in Palestine who took on the huge and difficult tasks of leading emergency relief interventions, a demonstration of how new strategies can be used to build new relationships and maintain those that we already have with our various resource partners. Australia, Greece, Haiti, Italy and the USA shared great lessons from embracing innovative fundraising.



▲ Learnmore Ndarera, 42, is the chairperson of Duri Safehouse. Seen here speaking to the community's women and men. Zimbabwe. Photo: Takaitei Bote/ActionAid

The festival underscored the important purpose of ensuring that our work raises, joins, and amplifies the voices of the people we work with and their issues.

Key insights:

- ▶ Emphasised the importance of our participatory methodologies such as Reflection–Action–Reflection where the aim is to always learn from our work, learn from the communities we work with by listening more and therefore strengthen our efficiency.
- ▶ The festival of learning underscored the significance of staying connected to our common purpose and pursuing it, to inspire others to find their voice and create a safe space to help people to acquire 'soft skills'. The community from the festival of learning agreed that activating inner strength and building people power for collective success especially with our social movements / community groups from whom we learn a great deal is of paramount importance.

STORIES FROM ACROSS THE FEDERATION

How we are changing lives and livelihoods across the Federation

1 A walk for safety: Everyne's story, Kenya

Everyne took the bold step of trekking almost 100 kilometres to escape an abusive arranged marriage to avoid becoming a statistic of women facing extreme partner violence. She ran away after being forced to marry a stranger at age 11 in Baringo County, Kenya, and enduring cruelty over 10 years in a union that was arranged by the parents. She had been regularly beaten by her husband.

Everyne got help from the Women Network in Tangelbei. "I had run away from my matrimonial home to my parents, but my estranged husband followed me," said Everyne. "He came with 12 of his friends, abducted me and took me to a forest where they physically assaulted me until I became unconscious. They later took my almost lifeless

body to a local health facility and disappeared," she said. After being discharged from the clinic, Everyne walked for three days under the scorching sun until she reached Tangelbei, in Tiaty East Sub-County, hungry and exhausted. She met a relative who took her to a hospital, where she was admitted for another week.

Everyne Kiemy of Tangelbei women's Network.
Photo: ActionAid Kenya



“Once I was discharged from hospital, my relative introduced me to a woman who is a member of Tangelbei Women’s Network, a local partner organisation funded by ActionAid,” she explained.

At their office, Everyen learned that all the violence she had been subjected to was a violation of her human rights.

“My relatives and neighbours, mainly women, had made me believe that girls and women are not supposed to raise a voice when they are

subjected to any form of violence, including child marriage, female genital mutilation, and wife battering.” Through the ActionAid project, Everyne has gained economic empowerment, is fully aware of her rights and is actively campaigning for women rights through Village Savings and Lending Association (VSLA) groups.

“In the last two years, my life has been transformed tremendously. I now have a business in the market, and I managed to get all my children from my parents’ home, and they are all in school,” she said.

The 28-year-old speaks boldly about her traumatizing experience but is bitter about the cultural norms that subject women and girls to such cruelty. In her campaigns she encourages women to speak out and lobby the government to enforce and implement policies and regulations enshrined in Kenya’s constitution.

Everyne is a member of a network of more than 2,800 women in Tiaty East Sub-County who are advocating for the protection of women and girls. They do this by raising awareness about women’s rights in schools through the boys’ and girls’ forums, training community members on agro-ecology, increasing financial inclusion through village savings and lending associations, and lobbying the government to use policies and regulations to protect women’s rights.

Everyne Kiemy of Tangelbei women’s Network.

[Link to Video](#)

Photo: ActionAid Kenya



2 Women champion the fight against COVID-19 in Sierra Leone

The outbreak of Covid-19 in Sierra Leone in March 2020 brought back memories of the Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak that had ended just three years earlier. Women-led neighbourhood watch groups that ActionAid Sierra Leone had established and trained resurfaced to fight Covid-19 and made a significant contribution to keeping their communities safe.

“I had a bitter experience during the Ebola outbreak,” says Mariama, 31, a neighbourhood watch volunteer. “I lost five members of my family and I am an Ebola survivor; hence I was scared and could not go out when the government announced the first case of Covid-19. As false information on Covid-19 flowed into our community, I knew I had to do something to ensure my neighbourhood had access to the correct information so that it would not reach my community and affect the remainder of my family. I volunteered to join the neighbourhood watch group to lead awareness raising in my community and other surrounding communities.”

In Kuntoloh community, a group that ActionAid had trained during the EVD outbreak quickly reactivated. With only one microphone, three women went door-to-door raising awareness about Covid-19 prevention. The group worked with local authorities to set up hand-washing stations in strategic locations in their community and made it mandatory for anyone entering the community to wash their hands with soap and water.

“We are determined to fight against Covid-19 from entering our community,” said group member Adama. “We monitor strangers and make sure house-to-house movement is limited.”

Adama and the other women taught community how to wash hands properly using Covid-19 posters provided by ActionAid. This played a big role in addressing people’s doubts, fears, and



Adama Deen Kamara, 22 in ? Kuntoloh Community
Photo: Suffiatu R Allieu-Moigboi ▲

false messages, and helped them to operate while adhering to safety protocols and government restrictions.

Many women in rural communities where ActionAid Sierra Leone works are caregivers and breadwinners in their families. With the many Covid-19 related restrictions, food production was restricted and access to food was a challenge for many families. The Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) became a lifeline, with members given loans to address immediate needs. The loans provided a buffer during this tough period for livelihoods, and communities showed resilience to the effects of the pandemic. Kuntoloh and its surrounding communities recorded zero cases of Covid-19.

“Indeed, we learnt our lessons from the past so Covid met us prepared,” concluded Adama.

3 Recreational kits bring joy and hope to Brazil's children during the pandemic

In some parts of Brazil, Covid-19 directly affected the well-being of girls and boys, as many parents whose children depend on school meals were unable to feed them properly during school closures. In addition, difficulties accessing the internet made it impossible to monitor distance learning for many families in disadvantaged communities.

In Recife, in north-eastern Brazil, ActionAid and a partner organisation through the Ciranda Project were providing community libraries, reading spaces, playgrounds, and community gardens. Since the start of the pandemic, resources were redirected to providing food baskets, protective masks, and hygiene kits to 40 families with children aged under 6. In the second half of 2020, 240 baskets containing rice, beans, milk, hand gel and several other essential items were distributed, providing many families their only source of food.

Recreational kits were also distributed to families and children not going to school. The kits contained coloured pencils, colouring books and activity books, brushes, canvases, and paints. Receiving these materials brought relief and hope to parents and children confined to their homes.

“The kits were really helpful. The kids could do the activities, move, and express themselves. Because sometimes they do not express their feelings to us, but through a drawing they can express what they feel, right?” said Aldésia Monteiro, whose children Anthony (14), Artur (12), João (9) and Jaqueline (6) received recreational kits. In Recife, families received recreational kits, food baskets, as a way to stimulate the development of boys and girls.



Families received recreational kits, food baskets, as a way to stimulate the development of boys and girls in Recife Brazil. Photo: ETAPAS ▶▶

4 Women with disability strengthen their power and leadership in Vietnam

“I believe that people with disabilities have abilities and capacities as many ordinary people, they have dreams, ambitions, and passions to rise in life and contribute to society, but many of them do not know how to realise their dreams and ambitions,” said 43-year-old Dinh Thi Yen, who lives in Ninh Binh province in Vietnam.

She has mobility impairment and has sewing skills, but it was very difficult for her to get a job. Undeterred, Ms Yen bought sewing machines and opened a small home-sewing shop to provide income for her family. She joined an ActionAid-supported project in 2017 to promote inclusive development of people with disabilities and build local capacity to adapt to natural disasters and climate change. Thanks to the project, Yen, and other women with disabilities in the community learned about disability inclusive natural disaster prevention, and how to create climate-change adaptable livelihood models.

In 2019, the project organized a field visit for women with disabilities to see the work of a garment sewing group in Thach Binh commune. After seeing many women with disabilities with

stable jobs, Yen returned and held a meeting with her group members in Cuc Phuong commune. She gathered women wishing to improve their lives by sewing and mobilised the local authority to provide funding to establish a sewing cooperative. After 12 months the Cuc Phuong Garment Cooperative was up and running, creating jobs for 17 women with disabilities and poor women in the area. After participating in training courses by ActionAid on product promotion skills through social networking sites, the cooperative has many orders from retail customers. The average income per person is between VND 150,000 and 180,000 VND (€6-8) a day, whereas before joining the cooperative, most of the women had no income at all.

Yen is now an inspiration for women with disabilities. “We are trying to get more orders and to expand the cooperative so that women in difficult circumstances have the opportunity to develop themselves and live a better life,” she said. “Thanks to the project for helping us build more strength and a better path for our life. It is important that we work together collectively. We are grateful for this exposure to a new way of seeing life – although we are disabled, but we are powerful.”



◀◀ Dinh Thi Yen on the right with one of her sewing group members. Photo: ActionAid Vietnam

5 Responsible business is a step closer in The Netherlands

This year governments and parliaments worldwide started to develop legislation on responsible business conduct in global supply chains. Several Dutch companies have been linked to stark human rights violations in supply chains, ranging from land grabbing to gender-based violence and labour rights violations. In 2020, ActionAid Netherlands' campaigning pushed the Dutch government and the European Union, to commit to introducing binding legislation for businesses to respect human rights and the environment in their supply chains.

In March 2020, our *We mean business: protecting women's rights in global supply chains* report was published, exposing the impact of corporate abuse on women's rights. ActionAid Netherlands also launched a later report with ActionAid Guatemala called *Women's rights violations in Dutch palm oil supply chains: The case of Guatemala*, which showed that palm oil production in Guatemala, destined for the Dutch market, is impacting women disproportionately. Women are experiencing worse living conditions, increased workloads, destroyed livelihoods and also increased levels of gender-based and sexual violence. The research found five Netherlands-based companies linked to these violations through their palm oil supply chains.

Both reports led to awareness of the need for a gender-responsive due diligence obligation for

businesses. CSO networks in the Netherlands and the EU included gender recommendations in their main advocacy tools on legislation. Our advocacy efforts led to the European Commission report on mandatory due diligence including the need for a gender perspective. In May 2020, the European Commission announced the development of a mandatory human rights due diligence legislation proposal in the EU.

And in October 2020, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs published its new Responsible Business Conduct (RBC) policy, which commits to pursuing binding legislation for businesses. As this policy was largely gender blind, ActionAid's lobbying efforts led to a rectification. A motion, based on our palm oil research in Guatemala, was passed in parliament calling on the Dutch government to include a gender perspective in its RBC policy.

Modest Growth in a Difficult Year

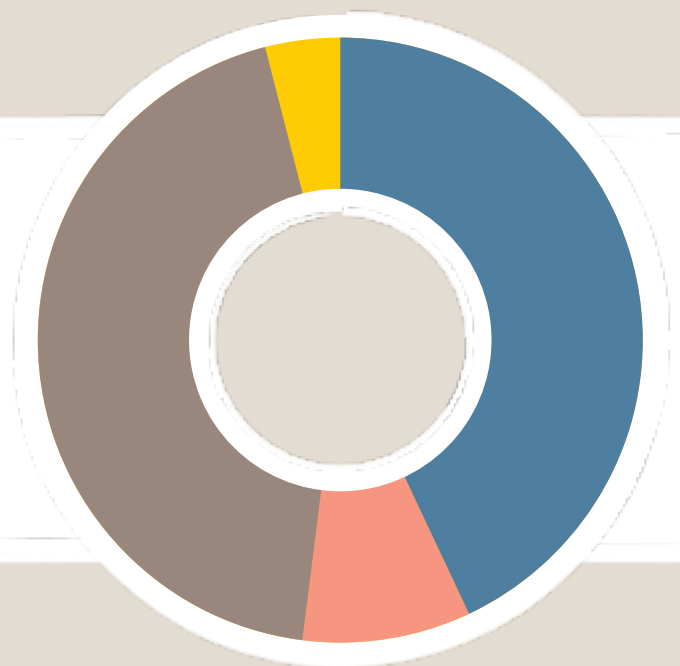
Summary of our Finance and Funding Situation

Income

ActionAid's total income in 2020 was €232 million (2019: €225 million), which represents an increase of 3% on 2019. There was a 14% increase in funding from Philanthropy & Partnerships from 2019, and 12% increase in Institutional income. These increases are partially offset by a 1% fall in Individual Giving and 33% drop in other income. Total unrestricted income rose by 6% to €76 million (2019: €72 million).

ActionAid income split by major category

- Individual giving (43%)
- Philanthropy & Partnerships (9%)
- Institutional (43%)
- Other (4%)

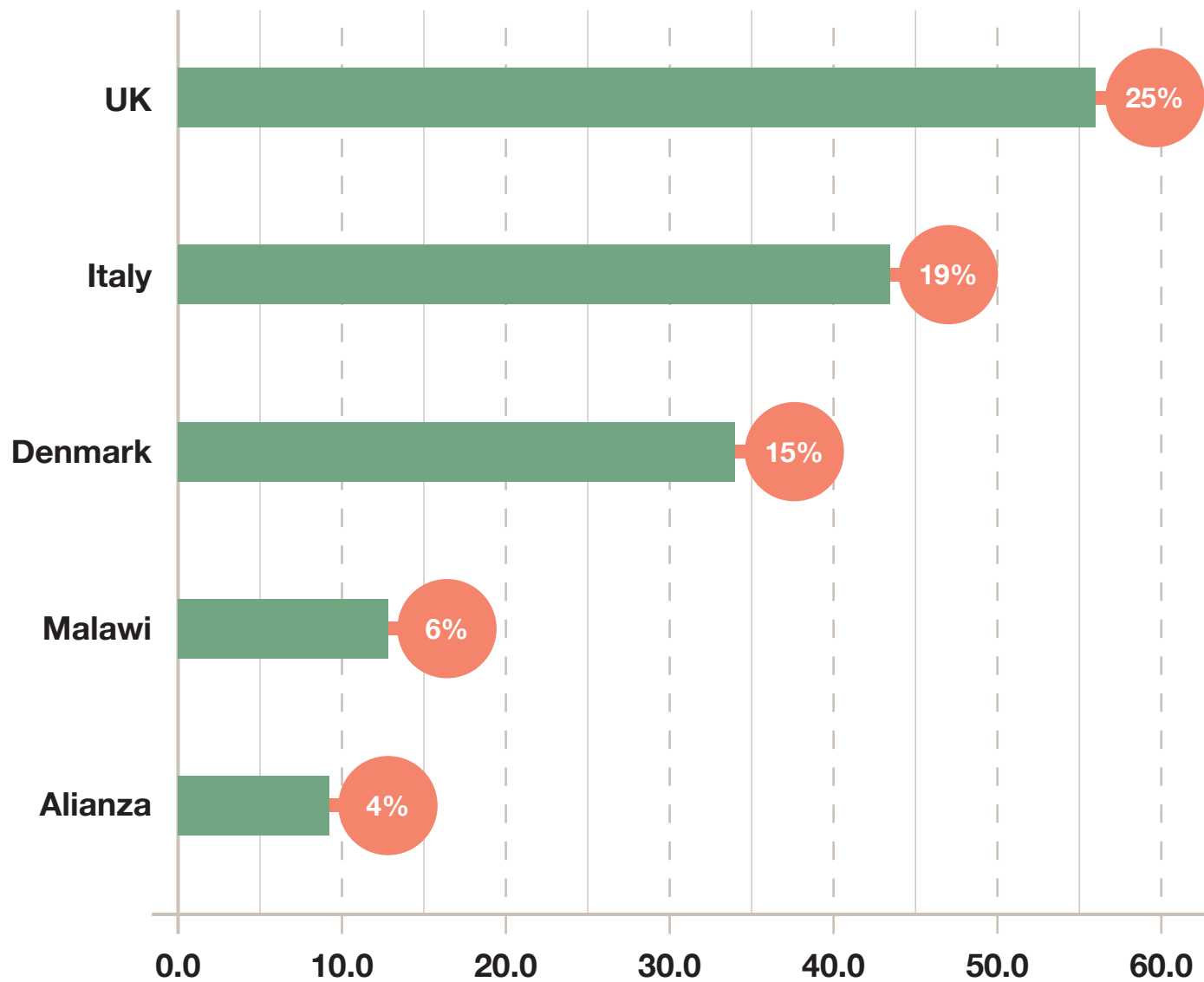


ActionAid's number of Regular Giving supporters grew during the Covid-19 crisis, and we are grateful for the strong loyalty shown by existing supporters that kept our attrition rate lower than 2019's. However, long lockdowns stopping in-person fundraising heavily impacted Regular Giving income in many markets. While innovative digital and other alternative approaches helped to fill the gap, unfortunately much of this income was one-off giving, which is less sustainable than Regular Giving. There was a significant increase in the number of Global South countries raising more than 50% of their income locally, powered by strong growth in local institutional and corporate fundraising efforts. Globally, 52% of countries now raise more than half of their resources locally, compared to 41% in 2019.

Largest country incomes (€ millions and % of total)

Just under 70% of the Federation's total external income is generated by the five countries set out in the table below. Malawi, Denmark and Alianza's income is overwhelmingly from institutional sources, whereas Italy and the UK are each a mix of income types weighted towards Individual Giving.

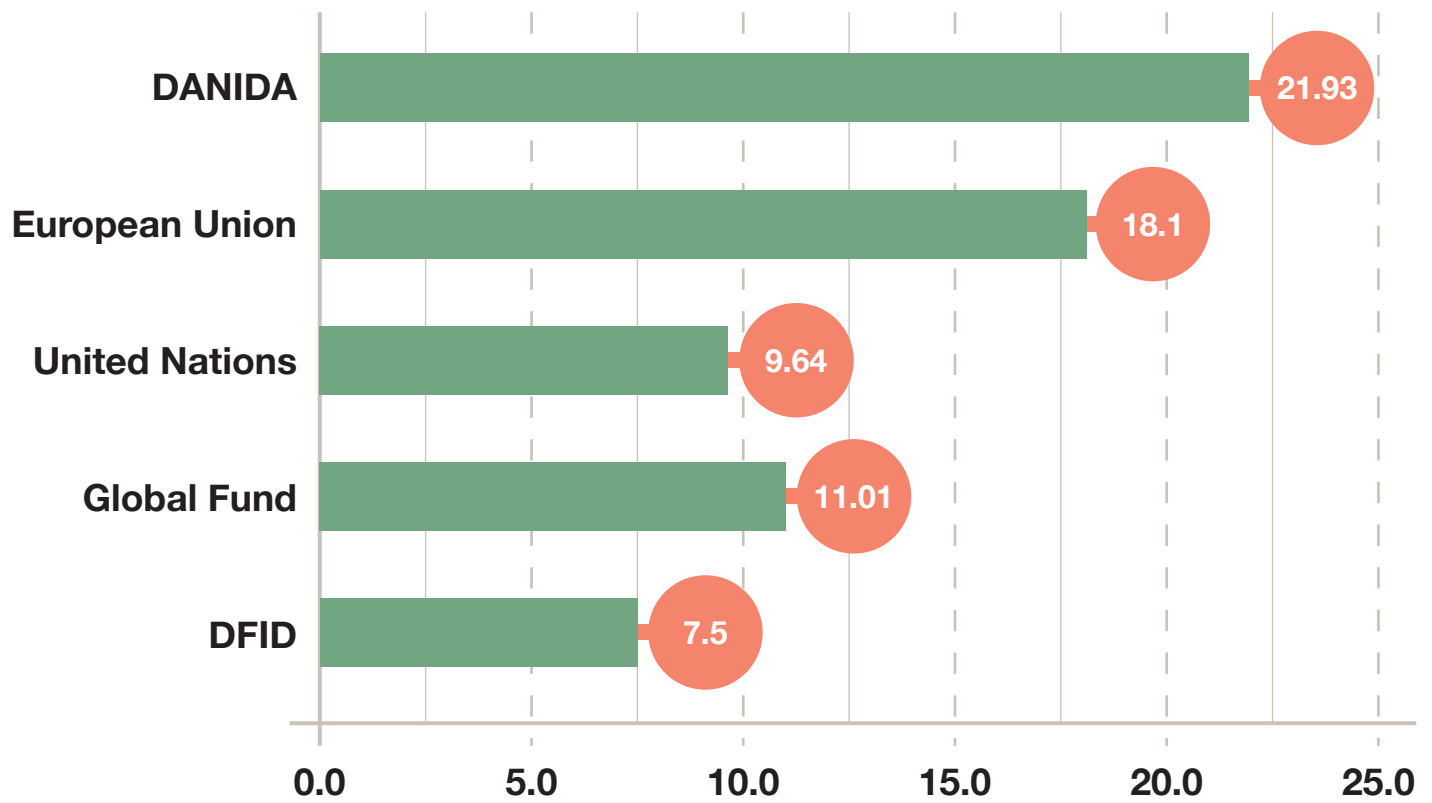
Largest countries' incomes €m and %



Largest donors (€ millions)

DANIDA (Danish International Development Agency) was the largest institutional donor in 2020 and 2019, contributing approximately €21 million (2019: €20 million). A large majority of funding from the Global Fund went to Malawi.

Largest donors (€'m)

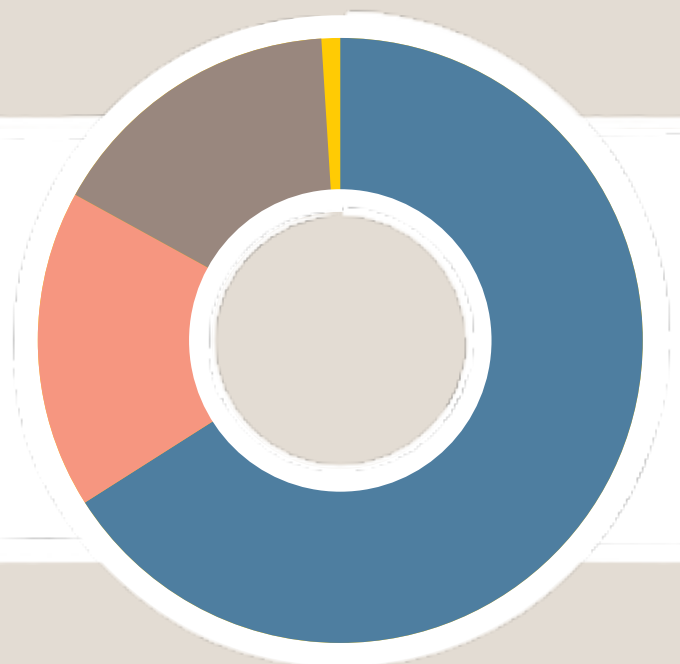


Expenditure

ActionAid's total expenditure in 2020 was €218 million (2019 €229 million). The decrease in expenditure was due to movement restrictions caused by Covid-19. Programme and Fundraising costs had the biggest cuts in monetary value at €6m and €2m respectively. The percentage of total 2020 expenditure on Programme decreased by 1% and Fundraising costs decreased by 5% from 2019. The split is:

ActionAid expenditure split by major category

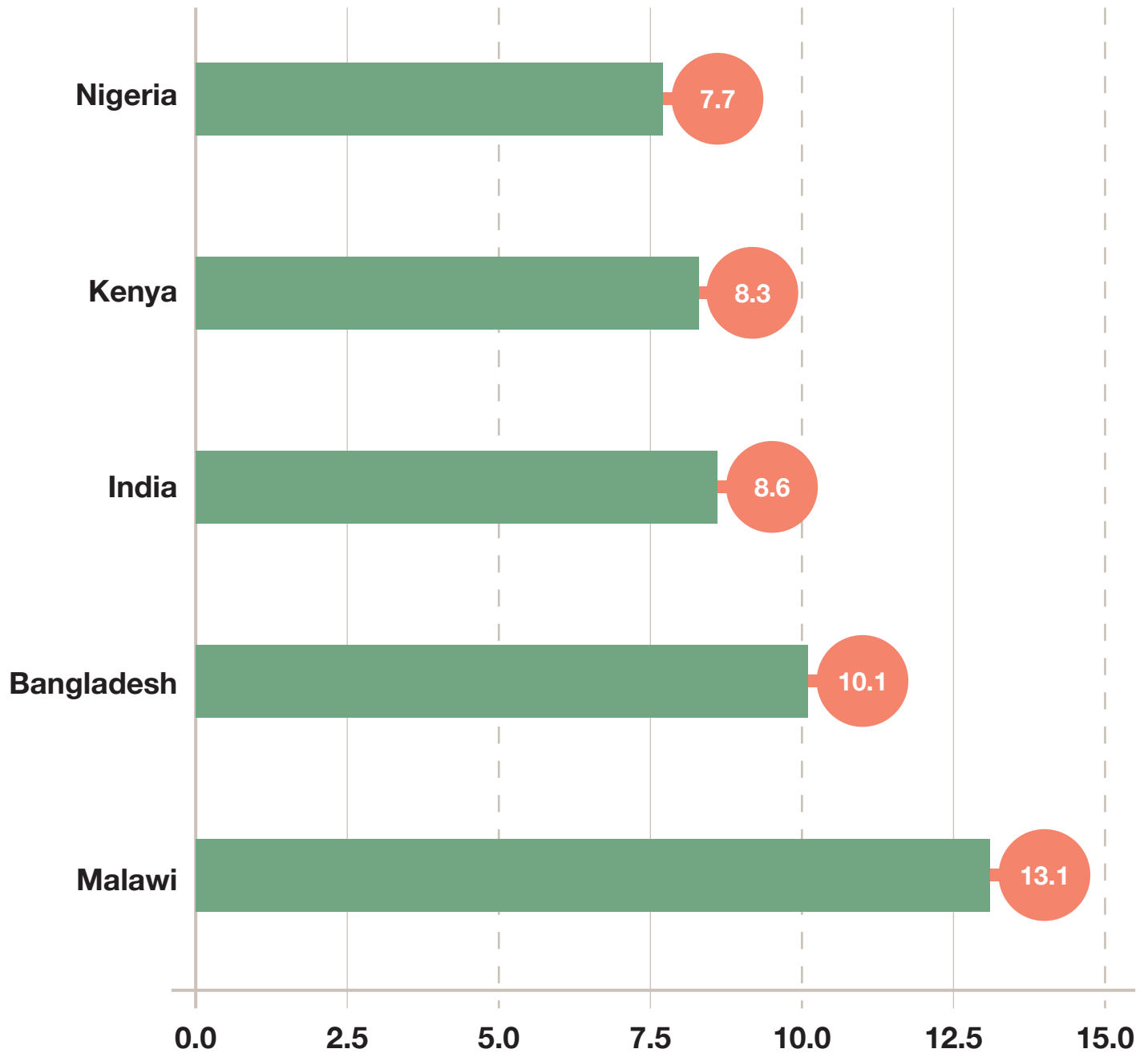
- Programme (66%)
- Fundraising (17%)
- Support (16%)
- Governance (1%)



Largest country expenditure (€ millions and %, and % of total)

The countries implementing programmes with the largest expenditures are:


Largest country expenditure (€'m)



Reserves

Overall, the reserves position remains strong, and there are strong cash balances across the Federation:

	2020 (€m)	2019 (€m)
Restricted	45.4	38.3
Unrestricted	43.1	41.2
TOTAL	88.5	79.5

ActionAid Zambia is responding to the hunger crisis in Western Province. 
Photo: Fredrick Ntoka/ActionAid



Governing in Uncertain Times

Adaptation and Transition

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to ravage the world nearly two years after it was first detected and has created a very difficult environment for our operations. This required us to adapt our ways of working as an organisation, including in executing our governance mandate.

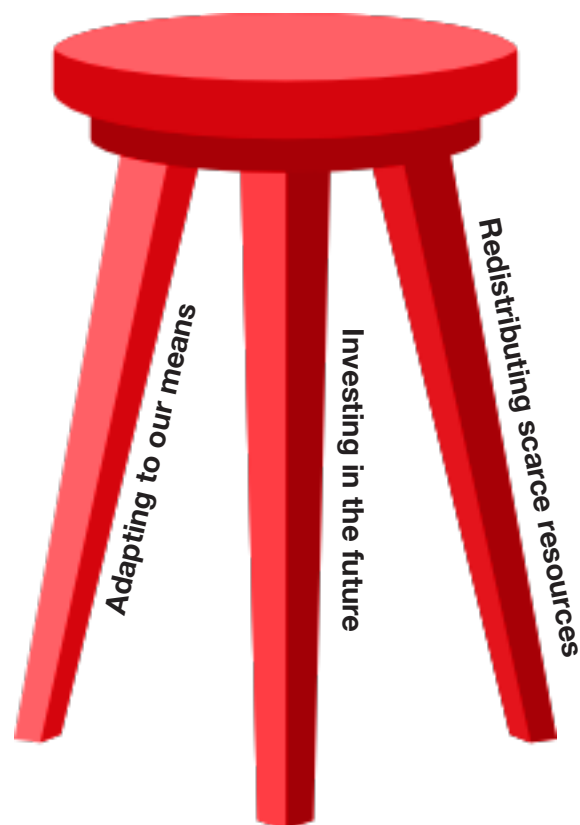
The year 2020 was thus not just a year of unprecedented crisis, it was also one of opportunity to demonstrate our agility and so did we! Forced to shift from our deeply cherished tradition of annual face-to-face meetings, our critical governance mandates were executed virtually and staggered over two phases in June and in October. The June meeting focused on time-sensitive business such as approval of annual and audited accounts and returns to enable us to meet our statutory and legal obligations. The October Assembly, also held virtually covered every other business, including approval of the critical institutional documents such as the Strategy Implementation Framework (SIF), the Long-term Finance and Funding Strategy (LTFFS) and approval of new Affiliates.

Below are the highlights from the 2-rounds of the GA in 2020:

- ▶ The approval and admission of ActionAid Nepal (host of the virtual assembly), ActionAid Rwanda and ActionAid Tanzania as Affiliates, and the recognition of ActionAid/Alianza Colombia as a Country Programme. This brings the total number of Affiliates to 25, Associates are 5 and 15 Country Programmes.
- ▶ The approval of the Long-term Finance and Funding Strategy (LTFFS) that sets very clear actions to adapt to our means, invest in future sustainability and better redistribution of scarce resources as reflected in the 3-legged stool.
- ▶ The approval of the Strategy Implementation Framework (SIF2) which confirms our determination to achieve greater focus on systems change for economic and climate

justice, as well as calls for further investments in public engagement.

- ▶ The following new office bearers were elected by the Assembly to fill in critical positions in our governance bodies: Three candidates were elected to the International Board; **Joanna Wetherborn** (Guatemala) – new member; **Elizabeth Wakilo** (Kenya) – Re-elected; **Azaveli Lwaitama** (Tanzania) – Re-elected. The Assembly also elected **Umaru Fofana** from **Sierra Leone** as the 2021 Assembly Convenor. Two candidates were elected to the 2021 Assembly Organising Committee: **Esther Mwangi** (Kenya) and **Rabi Isma** (Nigeria) while two members were elected as 2021 Election Committee members: **Haddy Dandeh Jabbie** (Gambia) and **Francesco Falco** (Italy).



Finally, the seven countries below were recognized for demonstrating the highest level of compliance to the Federation's seven top assurance policies.

TOP PERFORMING COUNTRIES

AA Australia



AA Congo (DRC)



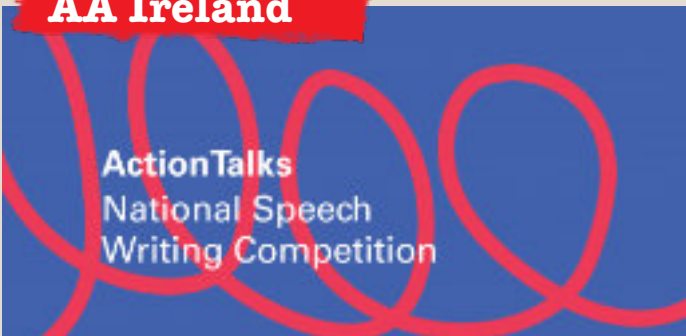
AA Denmark



AA Ghana



AA Ireland



AA Mozambique



AA Liberia



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مقدمة من أكشن إيد فلسطين
للمساهمة في الحد من انتشار فيروس كورونا المستجد "COVID19"
تأتي هذه الاستشارة كجزء من برنامج الحقوق والصمود
والأمان الإنساني
بالتعاون مع جمعية وفاق لحماية النساء والطفل ومركز الأبحاث

act:onaid

أكشن إيد فلسطين
من برنامج الحقوق والصمود
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بالتعاون مع جمعية وفاق لحماية النساء والطفل ومركز الأبحاث

