

Action



Changing the world
with **women and girls**

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Welcome to your
Summer 2024 issue of
Action magazine!

Issue 25 Summer 2024

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In this issue, you will hear from women on the frontline of disasters and conflict situations as they explain why they should be involved when responding to an emergency.

Women and girls are disproportionately impacted by disasters and emergencies. This is because they often exacerbate existing gender inequalities like period poverty and heighten the risk of gender-based violence, such as early marriage, trafficking and sexual assault.

It is vital, therefore, that women and girls have the tools to act quickly in a crisis and build resilience for themselves and their communities.

On page six, you can read about Shiva doing just that in Nepal. Through a local youth network, she is helping her community prepare for floods while advocating for women's rights.

You can also learn about programmes working in partnership with ActionAid, like the Women-Led Alternatives to Climate Change on page eight, which supports women and girls in Cambodia to cultivate long-term solutions to climate change.

We hope these stories inspire you as much as they do us. Thank you for your continued support of women and girls changing the world.

Changing the world
with women and girls
actionaid

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Front cover: Elizabeth's photograph featured in our Women By Women exhibition, showcasing the leadership of women living through displacement who are using their stories to shatter stereotypes. Read more about the exhibition on pages 18-19.



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Nuela and her daughter also featured in the Women By Women exhibition. Read more on pages 18-19.



ActionAid partner, Maan Development Centre, has prepared and delivered more than 1150 hot meals in Dier al Balah / Middle area.

An update on Gaza

The Gaza Strip remains in a state of emergency, with Israeli forces continuing to bombard the area from the land, air and sea

Nowhere is safe, and tens of thousands of Palestinians have already been killed since hostilities began on 7th October, including over 10,000 women and 7,000 children (figures correct at the time of writing).

The situation is only getting worse, with famine now predicted for about 96 per cent of the population in September 2024 unless things change drastically.

ActionAid is continuing to do everything we can to get aid into Palestine, and your generosity and support have been crucial in helping us do so.



Destruction in Khan Younis following bombing.

Over the last few months, we have been working with the main hospital in Gaza, Al-Awada, to provide emergency support to civilians. We have also worked with partner organisations to provide counselling for children and gender-based violence services for women and girls.

So far, we've been able to reach over 190,000 people with humanitarian relief and helped get food and water to over 80,000 people. ActionAid has also been distributing non-food items, including over 3,000 period dignity kits containing tampons, sanitary pads, clean underwear and soap.*

However, getting these essentials into Gaza has been and remains extremely difficult, with access restraints, prohibited items and continued conflict creating multiple barriers.

**Figures correct as of 7th May*

Dr Mohammed Salha, acting director of Al-Awada Hospital, has described how this impacts patients.

He said: "We are in the north [where] for more than two months, we are without vegetables and fruits and fresh food. We now have a few kinds of food only: flour, some cans. And it's [affecting] the nutrition of children and women.

"There is no milk for many of [the] children. We are providing only one can of milk for each [baby] [for] the women who [gave] birth in Al-Awda Hospital."

This is why ActionAid urgently calls on leaders across the world to employ all available means to stop the bombing, ensure a ceasefire is in place and protect civilians, particularly women and children.

The time for action is now.



Youth volunteers for Palestinian Development Women Studies Association (PDWSA), ActionAid's partner in Gaza, hold sessions to raise awareness of psychological stress and trauma.



Members of Yuwa Bakheri meeting at their offices.

The key to safety

Flooding was destroying her community, so Shiva decided to take a stand

Every year, Shiva and her community in Nepal deal with devastating floods that threaten to obliterate their livelihoods and homes, and it is only getting worse.

In 2022, a particularly bad flood destroyed most farms in the area, meaning farmers lost a lot of money and no one had enough to eat.

That's why ActionAid is supporting women and girls to set up a network of youth hubs across Nepal to prepare for and build resilience against flooding and other disasters.

After seeing what climate change had done to her community, Shiva decided to join Yuwa Bakheri, a grassroots youth hub in her area.

At the hub, Shiva connected with ActionAid and took part in training on search and rescue, first aid and



A drawing by a member of the Yuwa Bakheri youth group.

disaster risk reduction. She learned a variety of key skills, like how to make a lifejacket, and went on to share her knowledge with others.

Shiva is now the joint secretary of Yuwa Bakheri and hopes to bring positive change to her community through her work.

"I've been at the youth hub for about two to three years. I have worked on helping prevent early marriage, advocating for free education and preparing for disasters," she explained.

Shiva added, "The Youth Hub has been active in deciding which ways we can inform people about disasters – like using sirens, disseminating information or through social media and websites.

"I have been able to take leadership and work on the change I want to see in my community."



Members of the Yuwa Bakheri youth group training in disaster response.

Like ActionAid, Shiva believes women and girls need to be involved in emergencies that affect their communities, such as flooding. Women are key players in leading assistance during disasters, so it is vital their voices are heard.

ActionAid's Arise Fund directly supports women-led emergency response and preparedness work. We are having an event in London, in October, where we will be able to share more about this work – if you would like to receive further details, please email philanthropy@actionaid.org You can find out more at actionaid.org.uk/arise



Harvesting resilience and change

How women champions and farmers are joining forces to grow a more secure future

In Cambodia, climate change is having an enormous impact on farmers.

One of the biggest issues is the unpredictability of rainfall, which causes more frequent droughts as well as intense flooding. While rain is not something anyone can control, it is clear farmers need to adapt in some way to keep up with the changing climate.

In 2021, ActionAid UK ran an appeal called *She is the Answer*, which focused on women-led responses to the effects of climate change in Cambodia. Thanks to your generosity, the appeal raised £2.26 million,

including £1.08 million from the UK government.

Now, that money is supporting a three-year project across four provinces in Cambodia.

The project, Women-Led Alternatives to Climate Change (WLACC), has reached nearly 28,000 people in the country so far.

It aims to support women to become leaders in disaster response, climate change adaptation and sustainable farming by using a Women Champions Network in each of the four provinces. The network also campaigns for local authorities to change their policies to address the needs of the community.

© Keurt Navy



Group photo from the opening ceremony of the Resilience Market in Kampot Province, with Women Champions Network members, farmers and partner staff.

Through the network, hundreds of farmers have begun learning about sustainable farming and received small grants to acquire equipment for chicken rearing, vegetable seeds and materials for vegetable growing.

The Women Champions Network is also proving that when women and girls are equipped to lead the fight against climate change, the whole community benefits.

For example, in summer last year, a Resilience Market was launched in Kampot province with support of the network, ActionAid Cambodia and its partners.

In Kampot province, nearly 100 farmers have been trained in sustainable farming and are actively using new farming techniques thanks to the work of the Women Champions Network. However, they struggled to sell their products at the market, as buyers could not distinguish between local farmers' products and imported produce.

So, with the help of the Women Champions Network, the community set up a Resilience Market.

This small enterprise is run by women and exclusively sells local and natural products supplied by smallholder farmers. It is also an opportunity for women in the area to develop experience in running a small business and earn an income.

"I am really happy and satisfied with the startup of this Resilience Market," said Chan Kanha, the leader of the Women Champions Network in the Kampot province.

"This is the initiative of women champions as a response to the communities' needs, empowering women in earning their own income and promoting climate resilience."

Mrs. Kanha urges the community, local authorities, partner organisations and other businesses to support the Kampot Resilience Market to run and grow successfully.

She added:

"By supporting this business, it helps the society and women themselves to recognise their own value and important roles and contribution to the community."



Group photo of Women Champions Network members at the Resilience Market opening, Kampot province.

© Keurt Navy

A day at the Women, Peace and Security event in New York

Every October, the United Nations celebrates Women Peace and Security week in New York

The Women, Peace and Security annual event is an opportunity for international institutions, INGOs (International Non-Governmental Organisations) and grassroots organisations to come together and discuss the impact of conflict on women and girls, and the importance of women's leadership in peacebuilding and peacemaking.

Last year, ActionAid sent a delegation of 14 women's rights leaders and ActionAid staff from across the globe to represent us in New York.

Women Peace and Security week is an excellent opportunity for ActionAid to share the vital work we do with important stakeholders, so we thought we'd share what we got up to.

Here's how it went!

09:00 am

The team starts the day with a planning session. This is either to prepare for a panel event with UN



ActionAid at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

© Burhainah Shdeifat/ActionAid

Women or to discuss the messages we want to get across when we meet with embassies during the week.

10:00am

We head over to UN Women headquarters for a panel event, featuring leaders of women's rights organisations from across the world. We hear from the founder of the Gender Equality Network in Myanmar, a key youth advocate in Ukraine, a Syrian-refugee and the founder of Kareemat in Türkiye and the founder of Golden Women Vision in Uganda.

© UN Women employee



ActionAid and UN employees at the Women and Peace Security session in New York.

Sarah Douglas, deputy chief for peace, security and resilience at UN Women, is also on the panel alongside Niki Ignatiou, who works at ActionAid.

The event is unique in offering the lived experiences and perspectives of women from countries affected by conflict. The audience hear from the women leaders about the challenges women and girls face when there is no peace and security.

The discussion focuses on systematic gender-based violence against women across the globe, and the agency and resilience of women and girls facing it. It's great for the panellists to be able to share their experiences, challenges and recommendations with the international community.

ActionAid will be sending a delegation to New York this October as well - keep your eyes peeled on our social media and updates from colleagues on our work!

14:00-18:00

We spend each afternoon meeting with countries to discuss their permanent missions to the UN. Across the week, we meet with Austria, Canada, Ireland, Spain and the UK. It's a fantastic opportunity for women's rights leaders and ActionAid staff to share information on their experiences and struggles within their home countries and to create important relationships with senior officials in embassies. On one afternoon, we attended the Annual Open Debate of the UN Security Council on Women, Peace and Security.

Attending events like this has proven to be an excellent tool for ActionAid to advance the agenda of women's rights organisations and women-led organisations, gather intelligence and promote networking.

These events are key spaces for us to influence diplomats and draw attention to the political situation of countries facing conflict, which is more important now than ever given the amount of conflict happening in the world.



Panel event including members of the ActionAid delegation

© Julia Rosell Jackson/ActionAid



Gloria using emergency equipment during DRRC training.

Leading the response

Norma and Gloria are proving why women need to be involved in times of emergency

Agua Caliente, where friends Norma and Gloria live, is a mountainous region in central Guatemala.

While it is a beautiful place to live, the area is prone to mudslides and flooding, and in recent years, it has gotten worse.

In 2020, Agua Caliente was at the mercy of two hurricanes that devastated homes and livelihoods. With climate change bringing more and more storms to the area, the community felt it was time to learn how to prepare for disasters.

This is where the Disaster Risk Reduction Commission (DRRC) comes in.

Typically, in Agua Caliente, men are the ones who take charge and decide how to respond to a disaster. However, the DRRC believe in a different approach.

“Since the moment we started the commission, men and women have worked together,” says Gloria, who is part of the DRRC with Norma.

Set up by ActionAid partner the Guillermo Toriello Foundation, the DRRC is a group of volunteers trained in disaster preparation and



Gloria (left) and Norma (right) are helping their community prepare for disasters.

management. Now, when disaster strikes, both women and men on the commission decide what steps to take, where families should go to seek safety and how best to respond.

“We felt defenceless and very much suffered in the face of hurricanes Eta and Iota,” Gloria explained.

“Our location is dangerous, but now we are organised and have knowledge of what to do in an emergency. We have gained training in risk management and emergency response and can now assist somebody who is injured, as well as know how to rescue people buried in debris.”

Norma added, “The biggest challenge in continuing our work is getting our husbands to understand the importance of what we do. But for me,

it is very important to be part of the Disaster Commission.”

Including women like Norma and Gloria in emergency responses is vital to the safety of the community. Women offer specific skills and insights that are sometimes overlooked, which is why we continue to support groups like this commission across the world.

So far, the DRRC has helped put out a house fire in the area, rescuing a family and saving all their belongings. They have also provided first aid to the Major of the community who injured his head in a fall.

Now, they continue to prepare for the winter months and any climate-induced disasters that may come with them.



Norma is one of five women in the Agua Caliente Disaster Risk Reduction Commission. Here she is pictured with her son.

Write your Will for free

Building a safer, fairer world has never been more important

In communities across the world, women and girls are working to create a future that we can all be proud of.

Including a gift to ActionAid in your Will is an easy way that we can build this future together.

Although writing your Will can feel daunting, it doesn't have to be. ActionAid has partnered with Octopus Legacy so you can write your Will online for free.

All you need to do is answer some simple questions on the website to receive a Will tailored to you, using the information you provide. The team of experts at Octopus Legacy will check all the details and send you your Will to print out at home.



© Mohamed L Touray / ActionAid

Sainabou Jabbi, farmer in The Gambia and part of the Rooted Resilience project, has been able to grow her harvest and improve her and her family's livelihood.



For more information or to write your Will online using Octopus Legacy visit will.octopuslegacy.com/ **ActionMag** or scan this QR code.



© Ina Makosi/ActionAid

Awa Sarr, president of the women's group on the island of Djirnda, investing in sustainable livelihoods like beekeeping.

Gifts in Action

Show your loved ones you're thinking of them and support women and girls leading change with an ActionAid virtual gift.

From schoolbooks to beehives, these gifts go towards different ActionAid funded projects across the world. We also have a range of cards to accompany your present, whether you're sending thanks or remembering someone close to you.

One of the projects you could support with a virtual gift is the women-led group innovating sustainable solutions to climate change in their community in Senegal. Rising sea levels are affecting farmland, and as a result, earning a living and feeding their families is becoming more difficult.



The development of beekeeping is presenting a new, sustainable livelihood in Senegal and your gift could buy a new beehive for the community. This would help more women earn an income and put food on the table.

There are a number of projects like this that can be supported with ActionAid's virtual gifts, and you can find out more about them at actionaid.org.uk/gifts

Fundraise for ActionAid

Join our fundraising community raising funds for ActionAid

Whether you're keen to get active, want to express your creativity or are celebrating a milestone - there are plenty of ways to put the 'fun' in fundraising.

Get sponsored

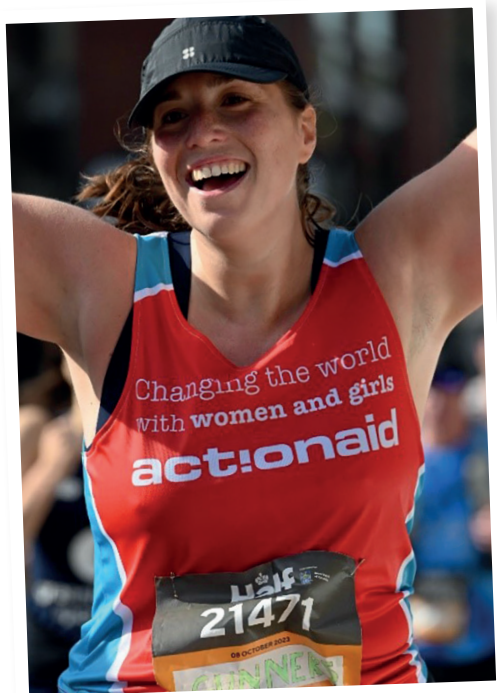
From running to cycling, skydiving and mountain climbing, there are so many great ways to get active and raise money for women and girls claiming their rights across the world.

Take Olivia for example (pictured right), who ran the Royal Parks Half Marathon last year. As a survivor of violence herself, she said,

“This is a charity that is unfortunately very close to my heart. I will always do what I can do to help women and children around the world with this topic.”

Olivia

Olivia managed to raised over £850, which will go towards preventing and responding to violence against women and girls living in poverty across the world.



© Royal Parks Half Marathon

If you're a running enthusiast like Olivia, or fancy giving it a go, you can join our Royal Parks Half Marathon team at actionaid.org.uk/royalparks.

Explore other exciting challenges at actionaid.org.uk/sponsored-events.

Try something new

Meet The Ladies Who Ferment. They are a joint force of women who enjoy fermenting things and decided to turn their hobby into a way to raise money for charity. Their Pickles for Peace workshop for the Gaza Crisis Appeal raised over £850.

Whether you're a keen baker, avid knitter or looking for a new hobby, you can turn your favourite pastime into a fundraiser to help change the world with women and girls.

For more inspiration, take a look at actionaid.org.uk/ideas.

We are always surprised by our fantastically creative fundraisers and can't wait to see what you come up with next.

Just £32 could provide a family with a two-month supply of water to drink, cook or clean with in the aftermath of a disaster or emergency.

Fundraising is also an incredible way to celebrate and remember someone special. You might choose to remember someone by taking part in a sponsored event or you could create your own activity, as unique as them.



The Ladies Who Ferment

If you would like to hold your own fundraiser or take part in a sponsored event, get in touch with events@actionaid.org or call us on 0140 238 000. We are here to provide tips and resources and to make your fundraising as fun and easy as possible.



A group of friends who lost their husbands during the 12-year-Syrian conflict make clothes together at Kareemat, a women's empowerment organisation based in Kilis, Türkiye.

Women By Women: Shattering refugee stereotypes and narratives

ActionAid UK launched the third Women By Women exhibition at the gallery@oxo in the Oxo Tower Wharf on London's Southbank

Refugees are constantly being talked about, whether it be in debates in Parliament or in the media.

But it often seems their voices are routinely left out of the conversation.

That is why in March, we dedicated our Women By Women exhibition to celebrating the leadership of women living through displacement who are using their stories to shatter stereotypes about refugees and those seeking asylum.

Women By Women is a unique photographic campaign championing inspirational women and girls and

the remarkable talent of women photographers worldwide.

This year, we showcased images of women making incredible contributions within their host communities, shot by women photographers in Türkiye, Uganda, Bangladesh, Poland and Colombia. It also highlighted the importance of women's rights organisations in those countries and their vital work in providing safety and support for displaced people.

For example, the exhibition featured a collection of images taken in a place called Kareemat in Türkiye. Founded

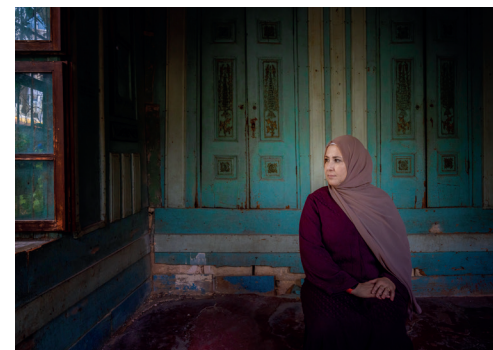
by activist Najlaa, Kareemat is the first Syrian women-led organisation in Türkiye that supports women's economic empowerment through training and education. Kareemat also works to promote peacebuilding between refugees and the local community in Killis, a city near the border with Syria.

Kareemat and Najlaa have had a huge impact on refugee women in the area, who are now learning how to settle into Turkish culture and make a living.

During the Women By Women opening ceremony, which took place on 6th March, there was a panel event featuring more inspirational women from around the world who are reclaiming the narrative about refugees.

The panel discussed why it was important refugee women and girls were given the right support and how women's rights organisations, like Kareemat, are often grossly underfunded despite the vital work they are carrying out.

On the panel was award-winning photographer, F Dilek Yurdakul, who was behind the Türkiye images in the 2024 exhibition. Speaking about the importance of Women By Women, she said: "Photography is being the voice of the voiceless. The voice of that strong woman should be heard by the whole world."



ActionAid UK has made a conscious decision to only produce images and tell stories that are representative of people's lived realities. The Women By Women exhibition is a key part of this, and we are proud to continue this work.

The exhibition has been supported by Postcode International Trust, thanks to funds raised by players of People's Postcode Lottery, who provide a significant portion of ActionAid UK's overall unrestricted income. Unrestricted funding allows ActionAid to work alongside rights holders and Women's Rights Organisations in a way that empowers them to innovate, focus more on programming, and adapt quickly to changing environments and needs of the communities they operate in.

A huge thank you to players of People's Postcode Lottery for helping to support ActionAid's work, including the Women by Women campaign and our anti-racist storytelling.

Celebrate and donate

Whether your birthday is fast approaching, or you're looking for a meaningful way to celebrate a loved one, there are many ways you can stand in solidarity with women and girls across the world



Swap gifts for donations

Sixteen-year-old Anya (picture above) has held an online fundraiser for her birthday every year since she was just five years old.

Whether you have a birthday, wedding or other milestone moment, consider asking for donations in lieu of gifts.



Give a gift that changes lives

It can be difficult to find the perfect gift for loved ones. Especially when you're looking for a present with meaning. That's where our incredible range of **Gifts in Action** can help.

Our inspiring range of virtual gifts can make a real difference in the lives of women and girls worldwide as they challenge injustices and transform their families' futures. Starting from as little as £11, you can choose from our range of cards that can be sent by post or email, either directly to the lucky recipient or to you to pass on.

From goat gifts to school materials to emergency midwife support, each Gifts in Action purchase can truly make a difference.

Learn more by visiting
actionaid.org.uk/celebrate

View our full range of inspiring
gifts at actionaid.org/gifts