

AACES

AUSTRALIA AFRICA COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SCHEME

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Cover Photo: Fatima visits a clinic to receive advice on family planning. Young people are accessing sexual and reproductive health information, thereby increasing demand for family planning services. **Photo by Marie Stopes Tanzania.**

EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the 7th edition of AACES newsletter – a quarterly publication for AACES partners. We hope that this publication will be useful in sharing information, program highlights and approaches, and lessons learnt. We thank partners who shared with us stories, photos and highlights published in this edition. We also welcome comments and suggestions regarding issues dealt with in this edition. If you have stories, information, photos or ideas you would like published, feel free to contact the editor, Douglas Waudo on: d.waudo@acbf-pact.org

Launch of AACES 2013-14 Annual Report in Nairobi

The AACES 2013-14 Annual Report was launched in Nairobi on 12 March 2015 at the Intercontinental Hotel.

The launch event also featured a presentation of a research report on Traditional Birth Attendants and the relationship to the formal health system in Kenya. The Nossal Institute undertook the research for Global Health in partnership with AMREF and Mothers Union of the Anglican Church of Kenya. The Australian Government under a two-year Australian Development Research Award funded the study, which was conducted in Laikipia and Samburu counties.

Speaking during the launch, John Feakes, the Australian High Commissioner to Kenya said he was delighted by the achievement and impact of the AACES program.

Anglican Archbishop Eliud Wabukala who attended the launch said that it was the commitment and spirit of teamwork between the AACES partners, which has enabled the program to make a significant contribution towards improving lives of marginalised people. Dr. Patrick Amoth, speaking on behalf of the Kenyan Government, recognised the partnership between AACES and the Government of Kenya in improving service delivery and influencing policies. Over 200 participants, including program beneficiaries, government representatives, Australia Awards alumni, religious leaders, partner NGOs and the media.

“Gender equality and women’s empowerment is a particular priority for Australia, and its very encouraging to see in the Annual Report how AACES partners have helped women and girls access services and participate in decision-making, which has improved their living standards and status”, said Mr. Feakes.

From Left – Mary Sanguda, AACES program beneficiary, John Feakes, Anna Dorney (Counsellor – Development Cooperation - DFAT), Eliud Wabukala, and Patrick Amoth during the launch of AACES Annual Report in Nairobi. **Photo by Douglas Waudo / AACES Resource Facility**



Launch of AACES 2013-14 Annual Report in Tanzania

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The AACES 2013-14 Annual Report was launched in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania on 4 March 2015.

The launch, organised by AACES Tanzanian partners was attended by over 70 participants, including representatives from the Tanzanian Government, DFAT Nairobi and Tanzania, program beneficiaries and the media.

Speaking during the launch, the chief guest, Mr. Achilles Ndyalusa, Senior Community Development Officer of the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children for Tanzania lauded AACES' work, which he attributed to have contributed a lot towards the Government's national goals and target across ministries.

The launch also received extensive broadcast and electronic media coverage in the mainstream Tanzanian media houses.

The AACES 2013-14 Annual Report as well as the Annual Report video documentary is available on Yammer.

"I pledge the Ministry's full cooperation and support throughout the implementation of this project," said Mr. Ndyalusa. "As the project progresses, I am committed to exploring how it can be scaled-up with the sense of partnership to ensure that Tanzanian national priorities are delivered and high quality services are made available," added Mr. Ndyalusa.



Participants following proceedings during the launch of the AACES Annual Report in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. Photo by CARE Tanzania. More photos from the Tanzania launch have been posted on Yammer.

From Little Things... Big Things Grow

By CARE Ethiopia

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When we first met Ethiopian single mother Jifare in 2012 she was daunted by a horrifying dilemma: “how will I feed my children today?”

Due to her community’s prevailing gender barriers, the 60-year old widow was unable to work. Without work, she had no money; without money, she couldn’t afford food.

Her ability to support her family of five was as variable as the climate. Jifare considered the dry season, from November to February, to be the “good times”. From April to July, however, life wasn’t so good, with the heavy rain making it challenging to harvest crops and put food on the plate.

Even at the best of times her family’s diet was meagre. Maize, one of Ethiopia’s staple crops, was often the only item on the family’s menu. On the rare occasions Jifare was able to serve three meals a day, all three consist of boiled maize. Only occasionally could she afford salt, sugar and other household items like soap.



Support through village savings and loans associations is supporting women like Jifare, a widow with four children in Ethiopia, improve their agricultural productivity and diversify their incomes. **Photo by CARE Ethiopia.**

“I don’t have enough money to buy vegetables. Only if I sell haricot beans can I buy vegetables from the market,” Jifare explained.

When her husband died a few years ago, Jifare was forced into raising her four children alone, but had no regular source of money. While she sometimes sold maize to others in her community, cultural norms prevented Jifare from farming the small block of land near her house.

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“I cannot cultivate the land because I am a woman,” said Jifare. “I wish this was not the case, especially on days when the children complain that they are hungry. They only get a little bit of food in the morning and in the evening, and cry that there is not enough. I need seeds to sow...it will improve our life.”

In 2012 Jifare’s family received some financial assistance from the government’s safety-net program, which targets households living in regions where rainfall is erratic and drought is common. She also had the chance to take part in CARE’s Women’s Empowerment through Improved Resilience, Income and Food Security Program (WE-RISE), which compliments the services provided by the government.

The WE-RISE program was the turning point Jifare has been waiting for. By working cooperatively with Village Savings and Loans Associations, CARE provided Jifare with haricot bean and teff seeds, farmer training, credit and education services. CARE’s work aimed to assist Jifare’s family in the short term, while helping to eliminate the need to rely on aid over the longer term. CARE’s staff also worked with the community, including village leaders, to challenge the barriers and cultural norms that prevented women from farming their land.

Today Jifare smiles as she talks about the food she is able to grow.

The family now has a cow, donkey and some chickens. Jifare rents out the donkey to neighbours to help cart water. She uses the milk from the cow and the eggs to provide food for her four children, and when possible, she sells some eggs at a local market to earn money to pay for school uniforms and soap. Her daughters were inspired by Jifare’s entrepreneurial spirit and have started buying and selling coffee and spices at the market to help earn money for the family’s day-to-day needs such as sugar and salt.

“I have learnt how to farm and harvest maize, haricot bean, teff, inset, cabbage and wheat, and have recently planted some coffee trees,” says Jifare smiling. “My family now eats three times a day and we have more food in our stomachs.”

Nowadays Jifare doesn’t just wish for seeds and food, she wishes her children will complete school and get good jobs.

“I want to have a happy life. I want my children to get an education and I want to continue to save money through the village savings and loans group, and learn how to be a better farmer so I can cope when the rains don’t come or when the crops aren’t strong,” says Jifare with a look of determination in her eyes.

Meet Mr. John Feakes, Australian High Commissioner to Kenya

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Mr John Feakes is the new Australia's High Commissioner to Kenya with concurrent accreditation to Tanzania, Somalia, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. Mr Feakes will be Australia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office Nairobi (UNON), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). He will be accredited to the East African Community and the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region.

Australia has warm relationships with East African countries and cooperate closely in the international arena. Australia and Kenya enjoy growing commercial, agriculture, food security and mining ties, while many Kenyan students study in Australia.

Tanzania is a growing partner for Australia in tourism, education, volunteering and business, particularly in the extractives sector with multiple Australian resource investments. Australia is a strong supporter of peace and state-building efforts in Somalia as it works to meet its Vision 2016 goals. Australian contributions support the African Union Mission in Somalia on counter-piracy and humanitarian assistance. Australia's relationship with Rwanda has built on close cooperation in the UN Security Council. Australia enjoy increasing people-to-people links with Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi.

Mr Feakes is a senior career officer in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and was most recently Chargé d'Affaires in Jordan then Lebanon. He has served as Special Representative in Tarin Kowt, Deputy High Commissioner in Port Moresby and Minister-Counsellor in Washington. In Canberra, Mr Feakes has led the Policy Planning and Strategic Assessments Branches. Mr Feakes holds a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours from the University of New South Wales and is married with three children.



Mr. John Feakes during the launch of AACES 2013-14 Annual Report in Nairobi, Kenya. **Photo by Douglas Waudo / AACES Resource Facility.**

How AACES is Transforming and Savings Lives



A pupil in Okrakwadwo, Eastern region in Ghana access clean drinking water after rehabilitation of a broken-down piped water system. **Photo by WaterAid Ghana.**

The economic and social status of women has improved through opportunities to earn income from a variety of sources. Village savings and loans associations are integral in strengthening women's business activities. **Photo by: Caritas, Malawi.**



This little boy, now two years old, is the first baby to be born at the Kawere Maternity Waiting Shelter in Zimbabwe. The shelter has improved access to health care services for mothers and children. **Photo by AFAP, Zimbabwe**



Advocacy on gender equality and gender-based violence ensures women and girls have rights to education, own property and have access to legal and health services. **Photo by Oxfam, Zambia.**



From Right: Philomena, Josephine and Janet are proud of their farm produce during a farmer field day in Kitui County, Kenya. They are members of Mwingi South Co-operative Society where they have benefitted from increased access to modern agricultural technologies and markets. **Photo by Douglas Waudo /AACES Resource Facility**



EVENTS:

- 22 April 2015 – Earth Day
- 10 May 2015 – Mother's Day
- 24-29 May 2015 - AACES Annual Reflection Meeting
 - ✓ Venue: Sunbird Capital Hotel, Lilongwe, Malawi
 - ✓ 24-25 May 2015 – Field Visit
 - ✓ 26-28 May 2015 – Reflection Workshop with Most Significant Change process (2¹/₂ days)
 - ✓ 28 May 2015 (Afternoon) — Individual NGO Meetings
 - ✓ 29 May 2015 (Whole Day) – Program Steering Committee meeting.
- **Check out the Administrative Note on Yammer for more information on the workshop & field visits.**

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For inquiries contact the Resource Facility at: e.etti@acbf-pact.org For information and file sharing, updates, announcements, online chat and conferencing, photo and video gallery and much more, visit AACES on Yammer at: www.yammer.com/access If you are not a member of Yammer, drop an email to the Resource Facility.

4 Ways on How to Effectively Use Yammer

Sound familiar?

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Who can help me with this information?

What's going on with AACES partners?

I'm new to AACES. Where can I find...?

Who's going to the annual reflection meeting?

What's AACES protocol for engaging with...

Does anyone have experience with...

What is new in MCH, WASH or Food Security?

Anyone know a good MCH, WASH or Food Security Specialist?

Where can I find the latest information on AACES?

How can I share with great information with ACCES partners?

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