

# AACES

AUSTRALIA AFRICA COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SCHEME

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**Cover Photo:** Women farmers in their potato farm in Umzimkulu in South Africa. The women are part of a co-operative that is being supported by Oxfam's partner LIMA to establish food gardens and promote WASH services. **Photo by Douglas Waudo / AACES Resource Facility.**

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear reader, welcome to the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES) newsletter – a quarterly publication for AACES partners. We at the Resource Facility 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](mailto:d.waudo@acbf-pact.org)

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## AACES Thematic Workshop in Pretoria, South Africa

A two-day thematic workshop was held on 26-27 November 2014 at the Leriba Hotel in Pretoria, South Africa. Over 40 people including Australian and African NGO representatives and DFAT staff participated. The first day of the workshop focused on **Program Sustainability and Exit Strategy**, where participants shared experiences and learning on sustainability and exit. Participants identified key factors that combine to enable sustainability and successful exits. The workshop also enabled individual NGO understanding of the strengths and concerns for sustainability and exit in their AACES projects.

The Australian Deputy High Commissioner to South Africa, Chris Munn, addressed participants, and noted that the aid program is important in furthering Australia's development, foreign policy and economic diplomacy interests in Africa and reiterated that women and girls' empowerment is key. He commended AACES for its success in empowering women and girls and expressed Australia's genuine commitment to bring women and girls to the center stage across all its programs. NGOs asked questions on opportunities for engagement on the Africa Aid Investment Plan and Australia's political engagement with governments in Africa in the context of shrinking civil society space.

The second day of the workshop focused on **Documentation for Knowledge Sharing and Learning**, with the aim of strengthening the capacity of AACES partners to document and share lessons. During the workshop, participants shared and discussed good practice approaches in documenting and disseminating lessons for learning in AACES.

For more information on the workshop, including all presentations, search for the topic: **Pretoria Thematic Workshops** on Yammer. Or log onto this link:

[https://www.yammer.com/aaces/topics/6375197?trk\\_event=search\\_ac&trk\\_model=topic&trk\\_len=8&trk\\_pos=0#/Threads/AboutTopic?type=about\\_topic&feedId=6375197](https://www.yammer.com/aaces/topics/6375197?trk_event=search_ac&trk_model=topic&trk_len=8&trk_pos=0#/Threads/AboutTopic?type=about_topic&feedId=6375197)



AACES partners posing for a photo-shot with the Australian Deputy High Commissioner to South Africa, Chris Munn (fourth from the right on the front row) during the thematic workshop in Pretoria, South Africa. Photo by Douglas Waudo / AACES Resource Facility

## AACES Partners Field Visit in Durban, South Africa

*Prior to the AACES Thematic Workshop in Pretoria, South Africa in November 2014, Oxfam South Africa conducted a field visit involving AACES partners to its project area in Umzimkulu, KwaZulu-Natal. The visit aimed at learning and sharing of experiences within AACES. The AACES partners who participated in the visit came from Caritas Malawi and Tanzania, AFAP Malawi, AOA Kenya, WaterAid Ghana and Malawi, World Vision East Africa, ActionAid Kenya and CARE Malawi. This is a story told by Douglas Waudu from the AACES Resource Facility.*

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The drive from Durban to Mahawini village in Umzimkulu in KwaZulu-Natal took slightly over 2 hours. Members of the Sizanani Co-operative in a pure South African version gladly received us with pomp, song and dance. AACES partners were here to learn and share experiences on how Oxfam through its local partner, LIMA, are developing and improving the livelihoods of rural communities, among them orphans, crèches, old age homes and people living with HIV/AIDs, through integration of food security in WASH activities.

Prior to our arrival, members of the co-operative, comprising of 14 members (10 female), were busy on one side of their well-fenced one-hectare farm weeding their crops. While on the other side, three sprinkle irrigation systems were watering cabbage, spinach and potatoes. Looking around the expansive bare land that is characterised with grazing land and erratic rainfall, it immediately became clear to us why the idea of modern agricultural activities was well overdue.

Oxfam though LIMA is certainly giving this group of smallholder farmers hope and the belief to be self-reliant as well as improve their incomes and agricultural productivity. The co-operative members have been supported with infrastructural and input provisions such as seeds, water tanks, farming implements, protective clothing and irrigation systems. Members have also been trained in vegetable and potato production, the use of the irrigation system and co-operative governance. In addition, LIMA is providing the co-operative with mentorship, training in best agricultural practices and linkages to input and output markets.



Members of the Sizanani Co-operative on their farm.  
Photo by Douglas Waudu / AACES Resource Facility.

‘We are integrating access to food security and WASH services because in this marginalised communities these are the two key things that the people need the most’, says Fundiswa Molefe, LIMA’s agriculture facilitator. Fundiswa explains that LIMA’s objective through the WASH program is to provide relief to marginalised communities living in remote areas by assisting them with the establishment of food gardens and provision of water infrastructure for sanitation and hygiene.

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In partnership with other Oxfam’s partners, LIMA uses farmers groups such as Sizanani Co-operative to provide education and training relating to WASH services. ‘This approach has proved to be very effective and efficient, since the communities get to learn about WASH services as well as food security, which are of critical concern to them,’ says Fundiswa.

With support from LIMA, the Sizanani co-operative has recently planted certified seed potato, cabbage and spinach on their farm, and are planning to also grow butternut. According to their records, they expect to earn a total income of South African Rand 666,000 (USD 57,841) in the next one year, with South African Rand 438,691 (USD 37,857) accounting for their net income.

‘We never knew that we would one day grow crops in our community, since we always believed that our land was not good for farming’, says a member of the Sizanani Co-operative. ‘However, from what we have witnessed with our own eyes, we are now very excited and encouraged to not only keep farming but also spread the message to other communities. We are also very pleased by the fact that we are learning not just about agricultural activities but water, sanitation and hygiene as well,’ she adds.

## AACES in Pictures: Transforming Communities, Changing Lives



Nurse Catherine supported by AOA’s The Road Less Travelled treats a mother and child at the Morupusi Dispensary in North Laikipia in Kenya. AOA is delivering basic health services to people in remote and rural areas through the strengthening of a sustainable health system. **Photo by Loretta Pilla / AOA.**

Women participating in focus group discussion on gender equality in Zimbabwe. Through training and awareness campaigns women are identifying and demanding for their rights to education, health services, land and water, sanitation and hygiene services. **Photo by Tafadwa Mhou / Plan International Zimbabwe.**





Ássaro Alifa, a person with disability wielding a wheelchair in Saniala village, Niassa Province in Mozambique. AFAP is working with the Network of Associations of Persons with Disability (FAMOD) to support a sustainable wheelchair and appliance manufacturing unit. This support is helping people like Ássaro gain employment as well as technical skills to manufacture wheelchairs for people with disability that are locally available and cost-effective. The wheelchairs are sold to private individuals as well as to the government, with the proceedings used to re-invest back in service and maintenance, training, and salaries for welders. **Photo by Dr Robin Wyatt.**

Nela Silishebo busy at work in Mongu, Zambia. Nela is among the women trained by Oxfam in construction, who are now taking up paid roles in construction and challenging gender stereotypes in the community. Having completed the women in construction training, Neila has since been elected chairperson of a World Bank funded project on climate change adaptation in her community. As a woman, this has given her greater opportunity to take up leadership positions and influence policy changes. **Photo by Misozi Tembe / Oxfam.**



Bena shelling groundnuts harvested from her farm in Uganda. Through ActionAid's training and support, women farmers such as Bena have been empowered to diversify their sources of income by providing access to credit, which has helped them to pay for farm inputs, improve farming techniques and develop small businesses. **Photo by Harriet Gimbo / ActionAid Uganda.**



A man feeding a child at a Village-Based Child Nutrition Centre in Rwanda. Through World Vision's training and awareness campaigns, men are challenging traditional norms and are increasingly participating in issues of maternal and child health for their families. **Photo by World Vision Rwanda.**

## AACES Partners Field Visit in Durban, South Africa

Prior to the AACES Thematic Workshop in Pretoria, Oxfam organised a two-day field trip in Durban, South Africa in November 2014. The field trips aimed at promoting learning and sharing of experiences among the AACES partners. The field trips gave opportunity to partners to visit projects implemented by Oxfam partners integrating water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and food security as well as the integration of WASH and Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers.

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The AACES partners were also able to get insight, learn and share lessons and experiences between the rural and urban WASH and food security, integrating the youth in WASH and food security and see innovative WASH designs implemented by Oxfam's partners. In addition, the AACES partners got the opportunity to interact with community members in marginalised communities who shared their experiences and outcomes of accessing safe water, sanitation and hygiene as well as improve their agricultural productivity



**ABOVE:** Group 1 of AACES partners visiting a WASH sanitation facility (prototype) demonstration site in Umzinto, Durban, South Africa. **BELOW:** Group 2 of AACES partners learning about the integration of food security in WASH while visiting a nutrition garden managed by the Sizanani Co-operative in Umzimkulu in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. **Photos by Oxfam South Africa, and Douglas Waudo / AACES Resource Facility, respectively.**



The Resource Facility is planning to have quarterly online discussions through Yammer on selected topics in the first quarter of 2015. Discussions will run for one month each quarter. The purpose of this activity is to facilitate knowledge sharing and learning in various topics of interest to partners. The Resource Facility will open a general discussion page on Yammer Online Now portal, where the topic for discussion for the month will be posted and thereafter there will be daily moderation of the discussion. At the end of every discussion, the key points will be summarized by the Resource Facility and posted on Yammer before the next discussion and chat begins.

The first online discussion will run from 12 January- 13 February 2014. The topic is: **‘What are the key indicators for monitoring and assessing sustainability?’** The topic is intended to be a follow up to the thematic workshop that was held in November 2014 in Pretoria, South Africa. Going forward, the Resource Facility would like partners to propose discussion topics.

## Yammer Online Now

The Yammer Online Now is a chat portal found on the right side of the Yammer page. It has a list of the members you frequently interact with and those who are online at the moment are marked with a green dot. To chat with a member you click on their name and a chat dialogue box will appear. Kindly note that you can chat with as many people as your browser can allow and all the chat information is stored in your inbox. For more information on the use of Yammer Online Now, log onto: <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/2840528/en-us>

## ACBF’s Executive Secretary visits the Australian High Commissioner in Nairobi

The ACBF Executive Secretary, Professor Emmanuel Nnadozie, paid a courtesy call to the Australian High Commissioner to Kenya H.E. Geoff Tooth on 13 November 2014. The visit was part of Professor Nnadozie’s official visit to Kenya during which he held meetings with senior government officials.

The High Commissioner expressed his appreciation to Professor Nnadozie for meeting with him. On his part, Professor Nnadozie thanked the High Commissioner and also expressed his appreciation to the Australian Government for contracting ACBF as Resource Facility Manager for the Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES). Professor Nnadozie briefed the High Commissioner on current reforms in ACBF geared towards emphasis to results and sustainability. Professor Nnadozie added that he looks forward to more partnership opportunities with the Australian Government in Africa.

‘This visit reflects our commitment to growing our partnership with the Australian Government in implementing their aid program in Africa. For example, ACBF can work with the Australian Government in strengthening capacity for effective strategies, legal frameworks and policies to improve governance of extractive industries in the Continent,’ noted Professor Nnadozie.



Professor Emmanuel Nnadozie,  
ACBF Executive Secretary.

## EVENTS

- 5 March 2015 – Official launch of the AACES 2013-14 Annual Report
- 8 March 2015 – International Women's Day
- 22 March 2015 – World Water Day
- 25-29 May 2015 – AACES Annual Reflection Meeting in Lilongwe, Malawi



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