Dear Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to share with you ActionAid USA's 2014 Annual Report in which we give you an overview of some of the fantastic work we’ve achieved around the world with your support.

For people living in poverty around the world, 2014 was a difficult year. Countries in West Africa saw the world’s largest outbreak of the deadly Ebola virus, and thousands of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip were left with nothing as their homes and businesses were destroyed.

But within these humanitarian crises, the power of people around the world has really shone through. Supported by our local staff who live and work in the affected communities, networks of ActionAid volunteers went from door to door in Liberia and Sierra Leone, risking their lives to tell their friends and neighbors how to protect themselves from the Ebola virus. Their actions helped stopped the virus from claiming many more lives.

But our work in 2014 wasn’t limited to humanitarian emergencies. We have continued to support communities in Haiti to demand greater accountability for how earthquake reconstruction aid money is spent. We succeeded in getting Congress to pass a landmark bill to improve the transparency of how US aid to Haiti is used.

We also stood side-by-side with communities in Africa, Asia and Latin America, who are being forced off their land to be replaced by large agribusiness plantations that produce crops for export. This shift undermines the local food security and livelihoods of the very smallholder farmers that feed the majority of the world’s poorest people. We have challenged the US administration’s promotion of large-scale agriculture projects as ‘the solution’ to ending rural poverty and instead offered clear policy handholds that can enable the United States to support smallholder farmers to sustainably grow their businesses through targeted public finance for agriculture.

It is such a privilege to be able to travel the world and meet heroic and powerful change-makers that are overcoming daily obstacles to secure the lives and livelihoods of their families and communities in the face of poverty, hunger, humanitarian crises and climate change. They inspire me every day.

One trip stands out in my mind – a visit to a favela in Northeast Brazil where women talked about how they have won expanded public transportation that has reduced their exposure to sexual violence. I also joined their children for a “birthday party” to celebrate their victory to get a public school built and funded by the government, right in the center of this deeply impoverished favela.

I’ve seen how communities are working together to demand the change that’s needed to help them tackle poverty and injustice. Our long-term presence and human rights approach means that our staff and partners are a trusted part of the communities where we work. Whether it’s delivering vital supplies to Ebola clinics, building resilient communities in the face of climate change, claiming rights to land, or more than a million Ugandans petitioning their government to invest in small scale agriculture, our work is driven by the people living in poverty and exclusion – that’s what makes us different and so effective.

By taking action with us and supporting our work, you have made your voices heard in the corridors of power here in the US. But your support is also felt far outside the United States, by the communities around the world where people are fighting for a life free from poverty and injustice.

Thanks for everything that you do.

Marie Clarke
Executive Director
Marie.Clarke@actionaid.org

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2014 ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Devastating Ebola Outbreak in West Africa
  See page 4

- Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza
  See page 6

- US-Africa Summit
  See page 8

- Marching for Climate Justice
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- Delivering More Transparent US Aid to Haiti
  See page 13

- Demanding an End to Biofuels Expansion
  See page 12

- Making Our Cities Safer for Women and Girls
  See page 15

- Claiming the Right to Education
  See page 14
RESPONDING TO HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES

DEVASTATING EBOLA OUTBREAK IN WEST AFRICA

In 2014, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone were hit by a deadly outbreak of the Ebola virus.

In a part of the world still recovering from a bloody civil war, the disease ripped its way through entire communities, leaving nearly 8,000 dead by the end of the year.

ActionAid staff on the ground in Liberia and Sierra Leone were quick to respond to the crisis. As a result of our long-term presence in both countries, we were able to respond quickly to the crisis and get help to those who needed it most.

We mobilized networks of volunteers and partners to provide health information to communities, showing them how the disease spreads and what they could do to protect themselves and their families. We provided sanitation supplies such as soap and disinfectant, rubber gloves and other vital equipment to health centers, along with food and clothing to quarantined families.

As the outbreak wore on, we were ready with packs of clothing and hygiene items for survivors as they were released from the Ebola treatment centers. We also provided education packs to children, so that they could continue to learn despite the schools being shut.

By the end of the year, we had reached 271,000 people across Liberia and Sierra Leone, and began work on long-term relief and support. We are continuing to support the poorest and most vulnerable individuals, especially those facing food insecurity.

Our long-term plans include a focus on supporting small scale food producers, support to the thousands of people who lost their jobs and businesses when the crisis hit, and putting pressure on governments, donors and international organizations to invest in health care in both countries.

To date, ActionAid has supported 271,000 people to fight Ebola in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

- PUBLIC EDUCATION ON EBOLA PREVENTION
  202,000 people visited by trained volunteers

- SANITATION SUPPLIES
  Provided to medical facilities across 7 districts in Sierra Leone and 4 counties in Liberia

- FOOD PACKAGES
  To 550 families in quarantine

To date, ActionAid has supported 271,000 people to fight Ebola in Sierra Leone and Liberia.
**HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN GAZA**

In July, more than 2,100 Palestinians were killed and thousands more were injured during the devastating month-long war. More than 100,000 people were forced to leave their homes, unable to return to their destroyed neighborhoods, and as the conflict ended they continued to be denied their human rights to safe drinking water, sanitation, health services education, freedom of movement and work.

ActionAid has supported more than 7,100 people with voucher distributions for food, and non-food items such as blankets, clothing and shelter materials. As the year continued, we worked with community leaders and our partners to reach the most vulnerable members of their communities who were receiving little or no support, while making sure that mattresses, blankets and warm clothing were available ahead of the cold winter months.
US-AFRICA SUMMIT

PROTECTING LAND RIGHTS AND THE RIGHT TO FOOD

In August, President Obama hosted the heads of states of nearly 50 African countries for the US-Africa Summit. Trade and investment were high on the agenda, with energy and agriculture among the top areas of business interest. Although food security was not one of the focus areas, we succeeded in drawing attention to the impact of large agribusiness projects on small-scale food producers in Africa.

ActionAid USA participated in an official side event and helped organize an alternative summit at Howard University, where grassroots activists with an interest in Africa could debate important issues such as the New Alliance – a US-backed G8 initiative that promotes large-scale agribusiness plantations in Africa by offering international companies tax breaks and large amounts of land in return for investment. We also targeted high-level media outlets and got coverage in The Guardian, a leading UK newspaper.

The morning after the Guardian article published, USAID officials contacted us and asked for a meeting to discuss our concerns. This led to a series of meetings in the fall, where we were able to bring partners from Tanzania who are in an active struggle to protect their land rights to meet with USAID and the State Department.

We are continuing to build an international movement to speak out on the New Alliance and were successful in getting the US government to propose new guidelines for New Alliance investors on due diligence for land deals.

PROMOTING PUBLIC INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURE

The key to ending hunger lies in the 500 million small-scale farmers who currently provide food for nearly 2 billion people around the world.

Armed with the necessary tools to respond to climate change and additional access to key resources, these farmers could feed even more people, putting an end to hunger once and for all. Yet the US and other donor governments are not providing enough of the investment needed to make this future a reality.

ActionAid continues to hold the elected position of Northern Civil Society Representative to a global fund for agriculture that directs over a billion dollars of government and private funding to promote agriculture globally. In this context we were able to better target public funding for agriculture and inform how to increasingly reach women smallholder farmers.

At the US-Africa Summit, ActionAid called on the United States and African governments to work together to support these farmers. We released a new report just ahead of the summit, arguing for the importance of making public investments in agriculture and the urgent need for governments to stop relying on the private sector to solve the challenges facing agriculture in the twenty-first century.

Earlier in the summer African governments met for their own summit in which they collectively pledged to end hunger in Africa by 2025. Our report outlined 10 recommendations that could lead to the kind of transformation African governments are seeking.

These recommendations included increasing investments from donors and improving the efficiency of investments from African governments, directing investments at staple crops, women farmers, sustainable agriculture, simple labor-saving technologies, extension services, and agriculture research, supporting the political power of small-scale farmer organizations, strengthening land tenure and improving the transparency of agriculture budgets.

At the summit, we saw African leaders and the US government unite around a shared vision for a bright future for Africa. We will continue work to hold the US and other donor governments accountable to ensure that an end to hunger remains part of this vision, with Africa’s small-scale farmers key to the transformation.
MARCHING FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

People living in poverty are already feeling the impact of climate change.

For many, rainfall is now much more unpredictable, droughts and floods have become the norm, and more intense storms bring death and destruction. But ironically, these are the people who have done the least to cause the climate crisis.

Blame sits firmly with the rich countries – like the United States – that caused the crisis. They have a moral obligation to provide money to help the poor deal with the loss of homes, livelihoods and incomes that climate change is causing.

ActionAid has been advocating for the creation of a new Green Climate Fund since 2009 and thanks to actions like the huge People’s Climate March in New York in September, in 2014, this became a reality, with governments pledging money to the fund. ActionAid was elected to represent Northern Civil Society at this Global Fund.

We support communities around the world to build resilience to climate change impacts, through sustainable agriculture methods, infrastructure improvements, advocacy for better government services, and more. These communities have much of the experience and expertise needed to successfully adapt to climate change, but need the resources.

With a global climate deal expected to be agreed in Paris at the end of 2015, we are working hard to make sure that the voices of the world’s most vulnerable people are being heard in the negotiations.

www.actionaidusa.org
DEMANDING AN END TO BIOFUELS EXPANSION

As more and more countries around the world put in place biofuels targets, food prices are becoming more unstable and communities are being forced off their land to make way for large plantations that grow food for fuel.

This is why ActionAid USA works to oppose biofuel expansion by showing the impact that the US government’s biofuels policies are having around the world.

In 2014, we continued our advocacy work with the US Environmental Protection Agency, the US administration and Congress on the types of biofuels that could be included in the targets and were successful in stopping corn butanol from being approved as an advanced biofuel.

If approved, it would have had major impacts on food prices and community land rights, as a lot more corn would have been diverted from food to make fuel and more land would have been needed to meet this increase in demand.

DELIVERING MORE TRANSPARENT US AID TO HAITI

A major new piece of legislation was passed in 2014 that will increase the transparency of US aid to Haiti.

The Assessing Progress in Haiti Act came about thanks to our direct advocacy work in Washington D.C. and the thousands of supporters across the country who signed petitions, called their Members of Congress, tweeted, made phone calls and joined face to face meetings.

ActionAid USA policy staff worked on drafting the bill, and conducting outreach to different Congressional committees to ensure the bill passed. Throughout this process, we worked to bring the voices of the communities we work with in Haiti to the table, calling on US decision-makers to make sure that US aid is spent more effectively.

The priority expressed by our Haitian partners after the earthquake was secure land and housing rights. It became clear that much of the reconstruction aid was unable to be delivered because of land tenure challenges. In response to this demand from Haitian communities, we have also led a civil society coalition calling on the US government to implement the globally agreed tenure guidelines – legislation that will protect the rights to land of poor communities around the world.

We presented new research with evidence from Haiti, Mozambique, Senegal and Tanzania showing the importance of land tenure, and helped train Haitian community members to strengthen their ability to advocate before national and international policy makers.
CLAIMING THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

Education is a sure-fire way to save lives, change destinies and transform communities.

Every child in the world should have the right to an education. But 57 million children are currently out of school – more than half of them girls. And for those who do manage to attend, often a lack of learning materials, poorly trained teachers and overcrowded classrooms mean any education they do get is of an unacceptably low quality.

In 2014, we continued our work to tackle discrimination and violence against girls. We worked with communities to build sustainable incomes, which helped them send their girls to school. We have also helped improve the quality of classrooms and equipment, and get teachers the training they need.

But perhaps most importantly, we are working with communities to tackle the problems that prevent the state from providing quality education to its citizens. Decades of neglect and lack of investment can’t be solved overnight, but at ActionAid we push for governments to take responsibility for their education systems, and continue to campaign for big companies to pay their tax in poor countries, so that governments have the money to improve public services like schools.

MAKING OUR CITIES SAFER FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS

All around the world, cities are expanding at an alarming rate. People are leaving their communities and the countryside, and heading to urban areas in search of jobs and a better standard of living.

But many of our cities are ill-equipped to deal with such a big influx of new people. Poorly constructed housing springs up quickly and the basic or non-existent public services struggle to cope with the increased strain.

Urban areas hold many hidden dangers for women and girls, who are vulnerable to attack. Millions are left with little access to education or healthcare, and are unable to own property or earn a living.

We are working with women’s groups to make their cities safer, connecting them with local authorities so that they can campaign for the changes that will make them safer. We are also supporting women and girls to increase their earning potential, from establishing community cooperatives to influencing national and global policies.
Statement of Activities

REVENUE AND SUPPORT

- Grants: $5,417,914
- Contributions: $568,921
- Interest Income: $1,622
- Other Income: $ -
- Gain on write-off of accounts payable: $ -

Total Revenue and Support: $5,988,457

OPERATING EXPENSES

- Program services: $3,731,814
  - Policy and Campaign: $3,569,248
  - Media: $162,566
  - General and Administrative: $476,159
  - Fundraising: $569,037

Total Operating Expenses: $4,777,010

Statement of Financial Position

ASSETS

- Cash and Cash Equivalents: $1,476,024
- Accounts Receivable: $29,728
- Affiliate Receivable: $ -
- Grants Receivable, net of discount: $3,618,695
- Prepaid Expenses: $37,153
- Property and Equipment, net: $4,722
- Security Deposit: $10,371

Total Assets: $5,176,693

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

- Liabilities
  - Accounts Payable and Accrueds: $52,465
  - Affiliate Payable: $49,859
  - Accrued Vacation: $19,866
  - Deferred Rent and Leasehold Incent.: $52,189

Total Liabilities: $174,379

- Net Assets
  - Unrestricted
    - Undesignated: $432,393
    - Board Designated: $350,000
    - Total Unrestricted: $782,393
    - Temporarily Restricted: $4,219,921
  - Total Net Assets: $5,002,314

Total Liabilities and Net Assets: $5,176,693
MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

$250,000 or more
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
- David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- Gordon Cooper Margaret A. Cargill Foundation
- Anonymous Donor-Advised Fund

$100,000 - $249,999
- Zetterberg Foundation

$50,000 - $99,999
- Rockefeller Brothers Fund

$25,000 - $49,999
- Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development
- Wachs Family Fund

$10,000 - $24,999
- Anonymous Donor

$5,000 - $9,999
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