

Members of the Likuma GBV Watch Committees being ferried across the river to conduct dialogue sessions at Lweti Fish Camp in Nalolo, Zambia.

RESILIENT, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTS (RISE) GRANTS CHALLENGE

PREVENTING AND MITIGATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE TO IMPROVE ACCESS, BENEFITS AND CONTROL OF FISHERIES RESOURCES IN ZAMBia

**Action Aid Zambia**

Quarterly Report

April to June 2024

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# **GRANT INFORMATION**

| Lead Organization: | ActionAid Zambia |
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| Implementing Partners: | Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) |
| Project Title: | Preventing and Mitigating Gender-Based Violence to Improve Access, Benefits, and Control of Fisheries Resources in the Fisheries Sector in Zambia |
| Grant Start Date & End Date: | 1st February 2023 to 31st December 2024 |
| Target location(s) (community, province, country) | Sesheke, Nalolo, and Mongu of the Western Province of Zambia |
| Grant Number: | 001\_IUCN\_2023 |

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# **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

AAZ ActionAid Zambia

CBFRM Community-Based Fisheries Resources Management Committees

CCL Citizen Climate Lobby

CSPR Civil Society for Poverty Reduction

GBV Gender-based violence

GBVWCs Gender-based Violence Watch Committees

IUCN International Union for Conservation of Nature

KZF Keepers Zambia Foundation

NGOCC Non-governmental Gender Organizations’ Coordinating Council

OSC One Stop Center

RISE Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Environments

USAID United States Agency for International Development

VSU Victim Support Unit

WWF Worldwide Fund for Nature

WILDAF Women in Law and Development in Africa

YWCA Young Women’s Christian Association

# **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

ActionAid Zambia (AAZ), in partnership with the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), is implementing the RISE grants challenge project to improve access, benefits, and control of resources by women in the fisheries sector. It builds upon innovative and existing interventions to enhance gender-based violence (GBV) prevention while pioneering new response mechanisms to GBV cases in the fisheries sector.

The project promotes the sustainable management of fisheries resources in Nalolo, Sesheke, Mongu district of Western Province in Zambia by establishing Community Based Fisheries Resources Management Committees (CBFRMC), Women Watch Committees (WWCs) and through mother support groups. These three mechanisms support GBV awareness of and the protection for women against GBV in the fisheries sector, which ultimately contribute to the efficient management of fisheries resources in the three (3) targeted districts.

In Sesheke, the project is implemented in ten (10) camps located in Katongo, Ngweshi, Supi, and Muhuku fishing communities; in Nalolo, the project is in five (5) areas located in Mukukutu, Matongo, and Likuma fishing communities, while in Mongu, the project is implemented in three (3) fishing communities namely Mulamba harbor, Liyoyelo, and Shungwe in the Barotse floodplain of Western Province in Zambia.

## **TARGET PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS**

The project targets 1,805 stakeholders in all three project districts, including at least 60 percent women and 40 percent men. In addition, the project aims to target 9,025 indirect stakeholders, including 70 percent women and 30 percent men.

The RISE project in Zambia collaborates with various key stakeholders, including local communities, indigenous people, fish traders, processors, fisherwomen, and fishermen who live in the western part of Zambia, belonging to the largest traditional establishment in Zambia. The project stakeholders are predominantly those who live near the Zambezi River, depend on natural resources such as land and water, and have fishing as their main source of livelihood and income. In addition, the communities live far from the social, health, legal, and justice structures. Survivors from these communities have difficulties in seeking help and justice. Service providers also find it difficult to access these communities due to existing traditional social norms and distance barriers.

Other participants include but are not limited to the following: Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation, Department of Fisheries, Local Council, District Gender Committee, Community Development and Social Services, Victim Support and Child Protection Units under Zambia Police, judiciary, district administration office, Human Rights Commission, and National Heritage Conservation Commission.

# **KEY ACTIVITIES**

During this reporting period, the project reached a total of 1385 people with 747 men and 638 through Dialogue sessions, meetings, training, capacity building and approximately 10000 women and 8000 men during the radio program under sensitization and awareness raising activities.

## **KEY ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED**

During the reporting quarter AAZ and YWCA Mongu implemented trainings, dialogue sessions and workshops about GBV and sex for fish corroboration meetings, radio programs, stake holder engagements, traditional leadership meetings, transboundary meetings, assessments of the community based fisheries management committees and community sensitizations and follow ups on reported GBV cases. The section below provides details of the activities implemented in the quarter from 1st April to 30th June 2024.

**KEY ACTIVITIES**

During the reporting quarter we implemented refresher training workshops, corroboration meetings, radio programs, community sensitizations and follow ups on reported GBV cases.

**Activity Name: 2.2.3 Train Mother Support Groups and Traditional Leaders in the management process of GBV-VAW cases in partnership with Victim Support Unit, Community Development and Committees and Women Watch Committee**

**Meetings with GBV Watch Committee Members:** The meetings were held on May 8th and 9th May 2024, in partnership with YWCA, with support from the Zambia Police and District Health Office. The objective was to review the GBV Watch Committee’s work, enhance their capacity in planning, coordination, and reporting, and introduce the GBV Referral book for documentation and referral processes. The meetings included 23 female and 21 male participants from the GBV Watch Committees in Nalolo. Discussions focused on reviewing the committee's community work, understanding their challenges, and improving the documentation and referral processes. The sessions aimed to ensure that the committees effectively contribute to the prevention, mitigation, and response to GBV in their communities The output under this engagement included documentation tools (GBV Referral books), revised work plans, and training materials. Improved documentation and referral processes, enhanced community engagement, and increased awareness of the challenges faced by GBV Watch Committees. The committees are now better equipped to plan, coordinate, and report their activities, leading to more effective prevention and response to GBV

The meetings highlighted the need for stronger monitoring and support mechanisms for GBV Watch Committees. The effects of climate change, the EL Nino drought wave has led to migrations and more time allocated to source for limited food such as standing long queues to purchase mealie meal impacting their work negatively. Many community members, including GBVW committee members, migrate to better water spaces along the rivers to catch fish or move to unknown locations to seek other livelihood sources disrupting their participation in the project. Additionally, the reduction in fish catch quality and quantity has particularly affected women, who wait longer at fish camps, increasing their vulnerability to GBV, including "sex for fish" practices. Future steps include providing necessary tools like bicycles, first aid kits, and communication devices to the committees guided by the availability if resources. Linking committees with Community-Based Volunteers under the Ministry of Health and establishing safe spaces for GBV survivors are also priorities as well as linking them to the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) Committee for financial support of alternative livelihood skills. These actions aim to ensure that GBV Watch Committees can effectively respond to emergencies and continue their work despite the challenges posed by climate change and migration.

**Activity Name: 2.2.3 Train Traditional Leaders in the management process of GBV-VAW cases in partnership with Victim Support Unit, Community Development and Committees and Women Watch Committees.**

**Stakeholder Engagement Meeting** The stakeholder engagement meeting aimed to update participants on the RISE project, discuss GBV interventions, and foster collaboration among various government departments in Nalolo District. The meeting took place on May 11th, 2024, bringing together 51 participants (26 females and 25 males), including high-level officials such as the District Commissioner and representatives from the Barotse Royal Establishment (BRE). This activity supports the achievement of our intended results by ensuring that key stakeholders are informed and actively involved in addressing GBV issues linked to the fisheries sector.

The activity was designed and implemented by AAZ in partnership with YCWA. Key members from the implementation team included project coordinators, GBV specialists, and community mobilizers. The community participants consisted of government officials, traditional leaders, media representatives, and members of the local community who are directly affected by GBV and environmental degradation in fisheries.

Outputs from this activity included meeting minutes, action plans, and stakeholder commitments to improve GBV response mechanisms. Observed outcomes were enhanced coordination among government departments, increased awareness of GBV issues in fisheries, and commitments to explore opportunities to improve the district's One Stop Centre infrastructure for GBV response. The identification of key areas for improvement, such as gender-responsive budgeting and infrastructure for GBV response, was also a significant outcome.

Next steps include holding quarterly meetings by the Gender Subcommittee, with action plans to meet before the end of Q2. Increased stakeholder collaboration and further engagement with traditional leaders and community members will be crucial. The project team will support the district in meeting with private and public funders, lobbying for the development of a one-stop center for GBV response, and implementing gender-responsive budgeting practices. Enhanced coordination among government departments and increased involvement of traditional leaders will be crucial for the sustainability of these efforts.

**Activity Name: 2.2.3 Train Mother Support Groups and Traditional Leaders in the management process of GBV-VAW cases in partnership with Victim Support Unit, Community Development and Committees and Women Watch Committee**

**Engagements with Young People**: The engagement with young people took place on May 10th, 2024, with 24 female and 23 male participants, between 16 to 26 years oldsupported by GBVWC representatives and fisheries department representatives. The main aim was to discuss their role in climate advocacy, considering their unique challenges, and to learn what they can do to mitigate and prevent GBV in the fisheries sector as selected from the affected resource users house holds. The session included a revision of the RISE project objectives, how lack of water in our Barotse floodplain and Zambezi River contributes to the global threats of food security, freshwater species and genetic biodiversity and the critical nexus of the Gender linkages with climate change. This was followed by an open discussion on the impact of climate change on young people in fisheries sector in Nalolo, and a participatory exercise mapping daily responsibility. This exercise helped highlight the different challenges and responsibilities faced by young men and women in the community and how they hinder their participation especially young women in collective action

Outputs here included discussion summaries, Handouts on Youth engagement in Fighting GBV and Environmental sustainability, participatory exercise results, and suggestions for youth engagements. Observed outcomes included increased awareness among young people about their role in mitigating GBV and environmental degradation, recognition of their unique challenges, and identification of new strategies for youth engagement. The exercise revealed that young women have more responsibilities at home, increasing their vulnerability to GBV, while young men face pressures related to economic challenges and substance abuse. Young participants highlighted the high risk of GBV and the impact of climate change on their livelihoods. The discussions revealed that teenage pregnancies, early marriages, and dropout rates among girls are significant issues. Boys expressed concerns about substance abuse and the pressure to provide for their families. Both groups emphasized the need for participation and inclusion in decision making platforms, more role models and support systems as well as creation of psychosocial network of safe spaces for sharing experiences and strategies to overcome challenging situations in their communities. Future steps include establishing mentorship programs, creating support groups, and advocating for youth representation.

**Activity Name: 1.1.4 Training of community facilitators, and traditional - Formation of the Community-Based Fisheries Resources Committee: The Assessment Process**

This activity aims to sustainably manage the fisheries resources in compliance with state legal requirements provided in the fisheries act of 2011 of Zambia. The assessment was planned by AAZ with support from the Department of Fisheries officers, BRE, YWCA including GBVWCS, and community leaders and fish camps communities. The team visited four main fishing camps in Sesheke and three in Nalolo, engaging 46 men and 46 women in Sesheke, and 62 males and 50 females in Nalolo.

Data were collected on: Identification of fishing camps and villages, Socio-economic status of residents, Dominant problems related to fishing activities, Safety concerns and GBV, Existing governance structures, Presence of government and NGOs, Conflict resolution mechanisms and Political representation and community engagement.

**Key Findings from Nalolo:**  
Fishermen primarily engaged in fishing, while women focused on fish trading and seasonal farming. Educational attainment is low, with most residents relying on fish trading and seasonal farming for income. Drought conditions hindered farming, and the lack of saving groups and farming equipment exacerbated economic vulnerability. Problems included reduced water levels, overfishing, illegal practices (e.g., use of poisonous substances), decreased fish quality, invasive species, in addition to the already existing GBV linked to "sex-for-fish" practices.

**Key Findings from Sesheke:**  
Similar issues were found, with additional trans-border concerns due to the shared Zambezi River. Differences in fishing policies between Zambia and Namibia created conflicts. Namibian fisheries authorities had more resources for patrols, leading to stricter enforcement and severe penalties for Zambian fishermen. This resulted in reports of deaths, legal challenges, GBV, and safety concerns, including harassment and theft by law enforcers.

**Governance and Social Structures:**  
Most camps were headed by male chairpersons with limited authority. Government, though owning the rivers now, poorly regulate due to resource constraints. Traditional leadership, involving village headmen (Indunas) and area chiefs (Silalo Indunas), played a significant role but faced issues of corruption and power exploitation.

The assessment revealed deep emotional sentiments among community members. Women struggled as providers and caretakers, facing multiple challenges, including inadequate menstrual health, limited access to services, and wildlife conflicts. Men voiced concerns about GBV and exploitative practices by female traders. An emotional incident highlighted the strained relationship between community members and government officials, with women threatening to boycott RISE project meetings if fisheries officers continued to accompany the team.

**Key Outputs and Outcomes observed during this activity includes d**etailed assessments in seven fishing camps providing a comprehensive understanding of socio-economic and governance dynamics. The process raised awareness about sustainable fisheries management and the impact of GBV although conflicting views emerged from participants, others supporting while others were not. The assessment produced valuable documentation, which will guide the formation of CBFRM committees and the development of targeted interventions. This step is critical for sustainable fisheries management, addressing GBV, and enhancing community-level GBV referral systems.

**Next Steps:**

1. Ongoing dialogues with traditional leaders to secure their support for CBFRM committees.
2. Conducting gender-sensitive elections and training programs to enhance participants' capacity in sustainable fisheries management and monitoring.
3. Ensuring a gender-responsive approach by integrating local perspectives and addressing gender dynamics.
4. Developing and agreeing on by-laws to govern the CBFRM committees when ever they will be formed and fostering effective governance and community engagement

**Activity Name: 1.1.4 Training of community facilitators, and traditional Leaders in 3 wards, on harmful social norms, GBV prevention and response in the fisheries sector.**

The primary activity involved **engaging traditional leadership** in Western Province to discuss the sustainable management of fisheries resources and address Gender-Based Violence (GBV) within the fisheries sector. The provincial fisheries office and Action Aid, under the RISE project, led these engagements in partnership with YWCA. Meetings took place in Sesheke, Mongu, and Nalolo between May 20th and 31st, 2024, aiming to update the Barotse Royal Establishment (BRE) on interventions by Action Aid in partnership with YWCA regarding fisheries resource management and its interlinkages with gender and GBV. This activity supports the achievement of intended results by fostering collaboration between traditional leaders and fisheries management efforts, enhancing community involvement, and promoting sustainable practices, thereby improving leadership and decision-making skills for women and men in Sesheke, Nalolo, and Mongu.

Community participation comprised 35 males and 9 females in Sesheke, 7 males and 1 female in Mongu, and 23 males and 2 females in Nalolo. The meetings took place at significant locations, including the King’s palace in Mongu and Queen’s palace (only female traditional leader) in Muoyo, Nalolo and the Silalo Indunas in Sesheke with other high-ranking traditional leaders of the BRE.

The main output was the series of engagement meetings with traditional leaders, which provided a platform to discuss sustainable fisheries management and GBV. These discussions highlighted the importance of the role of traditional leaders in management of fisheries resources. The sessions allowed traditional leaders to voice their awareness and perspectives on GBV and gender norms, emphasizing the importance of addressing both male and female victims of GBV. The activity produced detailed records of the discussions and feedback from traditional leaders, which will serve as a reference for future engagements and policy development, ensuring that local perspectives are prioritized in management strategies.

The engagement activity led to significant outcomes and potential long-term impacts, including perception changes among traditional leaders regarding the role of women in fisheries management. As much as these leaders appreciated the GBV part of the meeting, they voiced out several grievances about co management of the fish, educating how their own way of reserving the Fish was more sustainable than what government officials came to impose on the community. Our communities are organized with leaders living nearby and are often fishermen themselves. We didn't need the government's fish ban, which conflicts with our traditional timing.

*“I have been a fisherman for 30 years, yet no one consults us on fish management. You go to school for four years and then impose rules that affect us. You have one office per district, located in town. We've been observing, and now that fish is depleting, you come to engage us. We had no issues before the government took over our resources. Next time, bring government officials; your role is intermediary, and you can't respond on their behalf,”* expressed Chief Innocent Minyoi of Maondo Ward, Sesheke, emotionally during the dialogue session.

Following this activity, the next steps include:

* Further interface meetings with traditional leaders and government to build on the initial discussions and address their concerns comprehensively for a best solution because co-management of fisheries resources through CBFRMC is still unwelcome to the gate keepers of the community.
* Adapting the project team’s approach based on feedback (Further Engagements with traditional leaders due to their dissatisfaction about Government’s management of fisheries resources.) from the initial engagements to better align with local customs and perspectives. This may involve more culturally sensitive communication strategies and greater emphasis on the historical role of traditional leaders in resource management.

**Transboundary Fisheries Meeting between the Namibian and Zambian Fisheries Authorities.**

AAZ, under the RISE project, in partnership with the Fisheries Department and Mind Shapers, attended a meeting between the Namibian and Zambian fisheries authorities and Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) in Katima Mulilo, Namibia on May 24, 2024. The aim was to discuss transboundary fisheries conflicts which affect the beneficiaries engaged under the RISE project. Transboundary fisheries - GBV related conflicts include harassment of women by law enforcement, lack of gender-sensitive or human rights approaches in law enforcement, temporary marriages (sex for fish purposes) between Zambian fishermen and women from neighboring countries leading to family neglect, unreported GBV cases due to unclear reporting procedures, illegal settlements (fish camps) fostering other illegal activities like robbery, drug abuse, and illegal fishing increasing women’s safety concerns, and lack of harmonized policies regarding management of both GBV cases and fish harvesting/trading among states. The meeting included 10 male and 5 female participants and aimed to revive the transboundary fisheries forum technical team for information sharing and joint patrols. This was in response to various issues the project has long been encountering along these fish camps in Sesheke.

The outcomes of this meeting included Namibian fisheries staff expressing frustration over Zambia's inconsistent participation in the joint permanent commission, citing weak law enforcement on the Zambian side as a cause of illegal fishing and trade activities. The meeting highlighted a disparity in fisheries management prioritization: Namibia's fisheries sector significantly contributes to its GDP (4.5%), while Zambia's fisheries department receives less attention.

Legislative Review and Harmonization: Both countries are reviewing their fisheries legislation to align policies with the realities along the Zambezi Chobe flood plain. Key areas of focus include:

* Accurately reflecting the concerns of fisheries resource users in legal documents.
* Community engagement and human (women’s) rights advocacy in fisheries conservation.
* Addressing gender-based violence (GBV) and exploitative practices like "sex-for-fish." as they contribute to more than 50% of the depletion of fish.
* Harmonizing legislation with updated fisheries research to guide fishing bans.

Namibia opposes a fishing ban during the rainy season based on current research, while Zambia lacks updated research to inform its policies, underscoring the need for collaborative decision-making.

Agreements and Joint Initiatives:  
The meeting resulted in agreements to enhance cooperation and address transboundary fisheries management challenges:

1. Joint law enforcement patrols on the Zambezi River.
2. Gender-inclusive training sessions for community members, law enforcers, and stakeholders.
3. Collaborative fisheries research to update and harmonize legislation.
4. Joint sensitization and awareness campaigns on human rights and sustainable practices.
5. Exchange visits to familiarize with aquaculture practices.
6. Exploration of fisheries reserves to reduce dependence on natural water bodies.
7. Strengthening legislation to prohibit illegal fishing gear

The RISE lead was invited to attend the Fisheries Indaba in Windhoek, Namibia, organized by NNF under the KAZA region. Both countries agreed to exchange fisheries legislation, draft an implementation plan for joint ventures, and continue the transboundary fisheries forum with support from partners like AAZ and Namibia Nature Foundation. The Zambian Fisheries Department is preparing to revise the Fisheries Act to include gender considerations and address local community challenges.

This meeting marked a significant step towards improving transboundary fisheries management by fostering collaboration, aligning legislation, and addressing critical issues like GBV and illegal fishing. The involvement of organizations like AAZ and Mind Shapers ensures community voices are heard and integrated into legal developments, promoting a more inclusive and effective approach to fisheries management.

**Activity 5.4: Support mother support groups sensitize the communities on the dangers, causes, effects and prevention measures of Gender-Based Violence**

In the quarter under review, YWCA broadcasted (2) radio sensitizations focusing on the causes, effects and dangers and prevention mechanisms of GBV in Mongu at Oblate radio Liseli. This was also aimed at addressing the concept of “**Sex for fish**” in the fishing camps where women fishmongers are usually coerced into sex in exchange for fish by the fishermen. There were **5** females and **3** males who participated in the activity. Notable increase in GBV knowledge was observed during the activity through live phone calls by several listeners who had shown interest and active participation. It is estimated that over 18000 listeners followed the radio GBV sensitization from 11 districts out of 16. The total estimated listenership for oblate radio Liseli is approximately over 18000.

**Activity 5.6: Collaborate with Mongu Fast Track Specialized Courts in prosecuting GBV cases in the fisheries sector**

In the quarter under review, YWCA facilitated a collaboration meeting with Mongu Fast Track specialized court in prosecuting GBV cases in the fisheries sector. The main objective for the corroboration meeting was to strengthen corroborations between YWCA, VSU, traditional leaders and Mongu fast track court in prosecuting GBV cases. This activity was held in Mongu and attended by **10** (5 women and 5 men) participants including Mongu fast track court magistrates, VSU Officers and traditional leaders as well as selected fishers from the targeted project fishing camps. During the activity YWCA had the opportunity to present the RISE project overview and its achievements in addressing GBV to prevent “**Sex for fish**” practices in the fishing camps.

The collaboration meeting correspondingly enabled the Mongu fast track court to highlight their role in prosecuting GBV cases. The activity further helped the fisherwomen to appreciate the challenges on access, control and benefits from fisheries resources. Collectively, measures to respond to GBV cases in the fishing camps were proposed which included active community participation, monitoring and reporting of GBV cases to Zambia police for prosecution through the fast track court. The stakeholders also proposed to ensure the safety for women and girls in the fishing camps through increased sensitization on the dangers of sex for fish targeting the fishermen.

Under the similar activity, AAZ conducted a follow-up discussion with stakeholders from the Mongu Fast Track (MFT) court, the sole fast track court in a province of 16 districts, provided insights into strengthening GBV response mechanisms guided by the following questions: *How does the court handle GBV cases? How accessible is the fast-track court to the community? How often does the court sit? Which partners does the court collaborate with? No. of cases handled by the court? Any challenges faced by the court in addressing GBV cases?*

The MFT court remains a usual court while operating as a fast-track court entails prioritization of GBV cases and not necessarily handling GBV cases only, ensuring they are addressed within a week to minimize adjournment periods. Cases are primarily referred from the Victim Support Unit (VSU), though accessibility remains a challenge for rural and fishing communities due to distance.

The court operates daily, giving priority to GBV cases. While the MFT court collaborates with partners for infrastructure support, it does not engage partners in handling GBV cases. On average, 15 to 20 cases are handled weekly, with an increasing trend in cases from fishing camps. However, data management needs improvement for detailed statistics.

Challenges identified include long distances for involved parties, socio-economic pressures on survivors, and disparity in handling cases involving wealthy individuals, often resulting in impunity. The court expressed concern over inequity and lacks proper infrastructure, forcing improvisation in juvenile cases. Additionally, there is a lack of emotional consideration for legal implications, judges are reluctant to leave more children fatherless, and convicting perpetrators alone has proven ineffective. The court encouraged a more engaging approach, such as mental health or psychosocial counseling, before legal proceedings.

**Refresher Training of Mother Support groups, community facilitators and traditional Leaders in 3 wards, in Psychosocial Counseling for GBV & VAWG survivors**

In the quarter under review, YWCA Mongu held a refresher Training of Mother Support groups, community facilitators and traditional Leaders in Psychosocial Counseling for GBV & VAWG survivors. This refresher training workshop was necessitated by recommendations from Women Watch committees (WWC) during a monitoring visit. The primary objective for this activity was to strengthen the capacities of Women Watch Committees, mother support groups, Community Fisheries Resource Management committee and traditional leaders in Psychosocial Counseling for GBV & VAWG survivors.

The training workshop, therefore, was attended by **10** males and **18** females drawn from the mentioned community committees located at Mulamba harbor, Liyoyelo and Shungwe fishing communities. The refresher training workshop looked at several aspects of psychosocial counseling for GBV & VAWG survivors which included psychosocial support for survivors of SGBV, basic principles of working with survivors of SGBV, ethically process of disclosure of the SGBV Case, basic counseling skills to communicate with survivors of SGB, identification of psychosocial needs of SGBV survivors and referral procedures for people affected by SGBV for appropriate service provision.

So far the refresher training workshop has contributed to adequate knowledge and skills for WWC, Mother support groups and CBFRMCs and traditional leaders to offer basic psychosocial counseling and support for survivors of SGBV. The action further helped the participants to fully understand the basic principles of working with survivors of SGBV and identify the psychosocial needs of SGBV survivors and refer them for appropriate service provision. It further encouraged SGBV survivors to seek a judicial remedy and persons of concern to become actively involved in protecting women, and girls against SGBV.

**Refresher training workshop of Mother Support Groups, Traditional Leaders and Facilitators in Paralegal Aid for SGBV cases**

In the reporting quarter, YWCA conducted a two (2) days refresher course training workshop of Mother support groups, traditional leaders and facilitators in paralegal aid for SGBV cases. The training objective was to strengthen the capacities of WWCs, CBFMCs, paralegal facilitators and traditional leaders to respond to SGBV cases. There were **18** women and **10** men whose capacities were built to respond to SGBV cases. The activity was facilitated by Officers from Victim Support Unity under the Zambia police. The workshop participants were drawn from Mulamba harbor, Liyoyelo and Shungwe fishing communities.

The refresher course training workshop covered aspects of the Anti GBV Act number 1 of 2011, and filing and dealing with complaints of GBV and protection orders. The refresher training workshop enabled the participants to appreciate the objectives for enacting the Anti GBV Act and its Contents. It also helped the participants to appreciate the Protection Orders enacted in the Anti GBV Act. The activity further helped participants to appreciate the Anti GBV initiatives being implemented in the community at various levels. The refresher training workshop has since contributed to the efforts of always protecting fisher women and girls against SGBV.

**OTHER PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND FOLLOW UPS**

**GBV Sensitization meetings in the fishing camps by the GBV Watch Committees**

During the reporting period AAZ and YWCA through the GBV Watch committees held six (6) sensitization meetings in Mongu, 6 in Sesheke and 6 in Nalolo on GBV to address emerging issues on sex for fish practices and conserving of fish including controlling overfishing, and restricting gear, season or size restrictions which is intended to protect fish populations. A total of **88** women and **63** men in Mongu, 82 women and 55 men in Nalolo, 103 men and 80 women in Sesheke from the target fishing camps were reached out.

During the quarter under review there were five (5) follow up visits conducted with VSU based on reported GBV cases identified by community committees. In Mongu there were four (4) GBV cases reported out of which three (3) were responded to, by VSU. All the three (3) cases involved physical harm to the female survivors by their spouses who were later referred to access medical services. In Nalolo, there seven (7) cases referred to receive support, (4) to help lines, 2 VSU and 1 case to the traditional leadership. In Sesheke, 5 direct cases were recorded by the VSU related to fish sex for fish conflicts, the committee members referred a total of eight (8), (3) to the traditional leadership, (2) to the victim support unit. (2) to the Keeping girls in Skills (KGS) schemes and one (1) AAZ facilitated a case management about a juvenile who was forced into marriage by the father.

**Monitoring and follow ups by AAZ Management**

In Nalolo and Sesheke, follow up visits were equally made spearheaded by the Head of Programs from AAZ especially for management to have interface meetings with community members from the 14th to 20th April 2024. The main aim of the meeting was the Head of programs department to further understand the community activities and assess the impact of the project as well identifying gaps which should be addressed within the remaining period of project life.

The community participation involved fishermen and fish traders of 32 males and 28 females in Nalolo as well as 42 males and 54 females in Sesheke, the team also met 5 male & 3 female stakeholders in Sesheke and 3 male stakeholders in Nalolo. The visits were led by the Head of Programs (HOP) and Resource mobilization with support from the Rise project and the GBV watch committee chairpersons. The finding by the HOP reviewed strong rootedness of the project on the ground with recommendations of enhancing documentations and record keeping by the GBVWC members. Further, strengthening stakeholder engagement in Nalolo as it was noticed that Sesheke stakeholders’ engagement was performing better than Nalolo.

**Stakeholder Orientation on Gender Responsive planning and Budgeting at District Level, Sesheke**

On the 9th of June, Sesheke District held a meeting by the Gender Division from Cabinet office from Lusaka attended by 2 females and 16 males Heads of Department, including AAZ to be oriented on gender responsive planning and budgeting ue to the influence and advocacy spearheaded by the RISE project from the grassroot level. The aim of this activity was to ensure that government and CSOs budgets to address Gender Equality to meet the needs of women, girls and people in exclusion and for government departments to mainstream gender in all the activities. Equity to be considered in resource allocation to government departments.

**The rapid needs drought assessment exercise**

The drought assessment exercise was conducted by a team of twelve people (4 from ActionAid Zambia and 8 from the community) from 21st April to 27th April 2024 in three communities namely Kapau and Kariba fishing camp under Sesheke district and Mukukutu under Nalolo district where the RISE beneficiaries also live. The aim was to understand how the drought has affected the 5 different types of groups and capture each groups’ immediate needs to also be shared among interested partners and potential supporters. With the technical support from the RISE staff, the assessment focused on stakeholders at district level and community level through focus group discussions. The community level had five target categories: 124 Women, Young women and Girls; 113 Young men and Boys, Men; and People with Disabilities (PWDs) and other vulnerabilities had 12 females and 15 males. The overall assessment indicated that these five categories of people were affected differently by drought crises in the communities, women and girls indicated an increased risks to GBV vulnerability and each group had their own priorities with needed immediate relief support in form of food, water, and cash. A detailed Report is available [here](https://actionaidglobal.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/--ActionAidZambiaFileShare/Shared%20Documents/General/RISE%20REPORTS?csf=1&web=1&e=04ytdv) and can be shared upon request.

**Gender Analysis Update** The report was completed and shared with this report [here](https://actionaidglobal.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/--ActionAidZambiaFileShare/Shared%20Documents/General/RISE%20REPORTS?csf=1&web=1&e=3PbOQr)

**CHALLENGES**

The project experienced a few challenges, including the following:

* Formation of community based natural resource management needed more time to engage the traditional leaders and communities, co management of fisheries resources still has mixed feelings among the userMore time to be given and more exchange lessons to be conducted by nearby fish conservation areas who are managing their resources successifull
* An increase in transboundary challenges with fish communities threatening to boycott rise meetings if we keep going with law enforcers in the community- Already begun the Bi and multilateral conservation efforts among countries of shared natural resources such as the KAZA transfrontier conservation alliance under the SADC.
* Effects of climate change – El Nino wave effects have continued to affect general project implementation due to shifted priority of immediate needs. Collaborating with government and other stakeholders to address climate needs for our beneficiaries with regards to adaptation and resillient measures and humanitarian support
* Delayed response to some reported cases by Zambia police under victims supports unit - we are working towards strengtheing VSU GBV response mechanisms systems through multisectoral partnerships and engagements.
* Lack of stipends for committee members affecting their role in the project-

**SUCCESSES**

The project has continued to yield some prominent successes which include the following:

* Successfully engaged the traditional leadership and were able to get feedback on their positions regarding the co management strategy to better inform future
* Support groups, Women Watch committees, Community facilitators and traditional leaders empowered with Psychosocial Counseling skills for GBV survivors
* women and female youths from the fishing camps empowered to handle and respond to SGBV cases in the fishing camps
* The Victims support unit, one stop centre and the Health facilities have continued to receive direct reports from the fish camp related to sex for fish. Sesheke One Sop Center alone

**PLAN FOR NEXT QUARTER**

We intend to implement the following activities in the next quarter:

* 2.2.4. Host a training camp for women and youth on preventing and mitigating GBV in fisheries sector, including trainings on Safety Management and Self-Defense
* 3.3.2. Building the capacity of identified CBFRM leaders in leadership, advocacy, conflict management, sustainable fisheries and watershed management
* 3.3.3 Capacity building of men fishers on harmful social norms, Gender Based Violence prevention and enhancing women participation in the sector.
* Monitoring visits
* Follow ups on GBV cases/incidences

# **MEL REPORT**

## **STAKEHOLDER MAPPING AND ENGAGEMENT**

During the last quarter, Due to the strong relationships the project continues to maintain with its stakeholders, there has been a notable commitment to keep engaging. The stakeholders demonstrate increased interest and commitment to the project's goals and objectives. Maintaining strong relationships with these stakeholders will remain a priority as the project progresses, ensuring their continued participation and alignment with the project's vision.

Additionally, there has been growing interest in policy harmonization from the KAZA trans frontier such as Namibian fisheries authorities. These communities share the same boundary with Zambia, and issues such as gender-based violence (GBV) know no boundaries with potential collaboration and learning platforms due to the shared fisheries and all environmental resources. The involvement of the Namibian fisheries authorities further strengthens our transboundary efforts to address shared challenges and opportunities.

Below are AAZ and YWCA’s key institutions and individuals (CSOs, international organizations, and government) that had an interest in the organization's work and that the organization has an interest in. The table further analyzes the expectations/interests and likely conflicts of the interactions/engagements in the quarter under review.

| **STAKEHOLDER** | **WHY WE ARE INTERESTED IN THEM** | **WHY THEY ARE INTERESTED IN US** | **AREAS OF POSSIBLE CONFLICT** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Target Stakeholders/ rights holders/ communities | Promoting gender equality and equal access to fisheries resources  Addressing the effects of linkages between GBV and climate change | Act as a link between them and the systems, providing a means for expressing and addressing varied and complex societal needs. | Social and Traditional norms |
| Barotse Royal Establishment (BRE) | Due to its distinct status with a king in the Western Province. Their influence, crucial for project acceptance, makes it essential to secure their blessings, as decisions in their kingdom hold formal significance. | We unify different people in the BRE, facilitating GBV discussions through meetings.  Our platform encourages community innovation for effective GBV combat.  As advocates, we represent indigenous rights nationally and globally, ensuring the protection and respect of Barotse people's views in the project. | Traditional norms and BRE procedures and historical hesitance of accepting developmental projects may frustrate the results |
| Young Women Christian Association | Strategic partner for implementing activities.  Strong base at the community level  Long-term experience in addressing GBV at the community level | Funding sources for implementing RISE project activities.  Expansion of Key YWCA programming areas  Advancement of the organization at the national level | The Target group's priority areas and interventions may differ. |
| Various NGOs and CSO within and outside Western province. | Resource-efficient, enhances synergies, prevents duplication of efforts, knowledge exchange, amplifies positive change, and expands networks, enabling shared access to resources and funding opportunities. | Collaboration to enhance collective impact. This fosters resource-sharing, knowledge exchange, and a broader network, ultimately strengthening efforts to combat gender-based violence more effectively and efficiently. | Competition for funding, differing priorities, or overlapping project scopes. Varied approaches, organizational egos, and duplication of work. |
| **Key government stakeholders** | | | |
| Department of fisheries | Similar focus in responding to the conservation of fisheries resources to increase benefits, and access among communities.  Focus on reducing poverty among vulnerable groups.  Strong coordination  Implementation of the fisheries act | Established fisheries management community structures.  Provision of logistical support in establishment and strengthening of CBRFM and ensuring the structure and process aligns well with the governments provision for easy continuity even after the project | Duplication of efforts  Same target areas/beneficiaries  May not respond to advocacy issues.  Attribution of work and visibility |
| Gender Division | The Gender Division is essential, guiding and supporting national gender programming via District and provincial committees. As a strategic partner, they will ensure project sustainability and the continuity of objectives and outcomes. | Stakeholder interest lies in our project's vital data contribution for national gender and GBV planning, budgeting, and policy influence. They also seek to extend our gender training resources to diverse sectors beyond fisheries. | Seeking for information beyond the projects jurisdiction to provide. |
| One Stop Centre (Zambia Police-VSU, Community Development, Ministry of Health, local judicial court) | Law and policy reforms and their implementation  Access to justice processes  Provision of information on GBV  Provision of micro-financial incentives | Capacity building  Advocacy and lobbying  Provision of referrals to GBV survivors  Established GBV community structures | Delays in responding to GBV cases and delays in investigating GBV cases.  Delayed disposal of GBV cases  Inadequate budget allocation to gender/GBV |
| Simalaha Community Conservancy | Support in Strengthening community fisheries groups, Possibility of taking over the CBFMC established under RISE when project phases out, Experience in managing CBFMC, Partnership in managing transboundary similar conflicts, Collaboration in influencing a strong, gender-inclusive fisheries policy | Collaboration in resource and activity implementation, Support to offer GBV/Gender trainings or interventions in their CBFMC, Learning and sharing experiences in conserving nature, Partnership due to shared boundary, same context and mutual interests | Competition for funding, differing priorities, time frames, or overlapping project scopes. Varied approaches, organizational egos, and duplication of work. |

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## **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The project's activities have contributed to significant outcomes in the sustainable fisheries sector in Sesheke, Nalolo, and Mongu. Through training and engagement, community facilitators, traditional leaders, and young people have developed essential skills to promote gender equality, prevent gender-based violence (GBV), and manage natural resources harmoniously. Radio sensitization and awareness campaigns have reached a wide audience, raising awareness about GBV and its connection to environmental issues. Collaboration with specialized courts has ensured that GBV survivors receive legal assistance and support. Transboundary engagement with neighboring countries has promoted harmonized policies and practices, addressing GBV issues across borders.

Traditional leaders are now engaged in promoting sustainable natural resource management, and young people are empowered to understand the impacts of climate change and GBV in the fisheries sector. The project has strengthened community-level mechanisms to prevent, mitigate, and respond to GBV, creating a safer environment for women and men in the sector. Ultimately, the project has improved leadership and decision-making skills, enabled women to access and benefit from fisheries resources, and mitigated GBV. These outcomes have contributed to a more inclusive, sustainable, and supportive environment for women and men in the fisheries sector.

|  | **Indicator:** # of persons trained with USG assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations. | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Activity name of communication or training effort (i.e. awareness raising campaigns, radio shows, community meeting, stakeholder engagement and trainings, location, participants)** | **Type of intervention** | **Date(s) of intervention** | **Unit of measure: 1 count per person trained or reached through awareness raising activities** | | | **Location (district, village, country)** | **Quarter** | **Year** |
|  | **M** | **F** | **Total** |
|  | 2.2.3 Train in the management process of GBV-VAW cases in partnership with Victim Support Unit, GBV Watch Committee members | Workshop | 08/05/2024 – 09/05/2024 | 21 | 23 | 44 | Nalolo District | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
|  | 2.2.3 Train in the management process of GBV-VAW cases in partnership with Victim Support Unit, and Watch Committee and stakeholders | Workshop | 11/05/2024 | 25 | 26 | 51 | Nalolo | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
|  | | | | | | | | | |
|  | 2.2.3 Train in the management process of GBV-VAW cases in partnership with Victim Support Unit, and Watch Committees and Young People. | Training | 10/05/2025 | 24 | 23 | 47 | Nalolo | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
| **Indicator:** Indicator: Number of safety planning meetings held and safety plans created. | | | | | | | | | |
|  | Actvity: 1.1.4 Training of community facilitators, and traditional – Conducting an assessment follow up on the formation of the Community-Based Fisheries Resources. | Assessment | 21/05/2024 – 23/05/2024 | 46 | 46 | 92 | Sesheke  District | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
|  | Rapid Needs Drought Assesment | Assessment sessions | 21/04/2024-28/04/2024 | 128 | 136 |  | Nalolo and Sesheke | Quarter 2 | 2024 |

| Actvity: 1.1.4 Training of community facilitators, and traditional – Conducting an assessment follow up on the formation of the Community-Based Fisheries Resources | Meeting | 26/05/2024 – 31/05/2024 | 62 | 50 | 112 | Nalolo | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Activity:1.1.4 Zambia and Namibia Fisheries AuthorityTransboundary engagement. | Transboundary Engagement | 24/05/2024 | 10 | 5 |  | Sesheke | Quarter 2 | 2024 |

| Actvity: 1.1.4 Training of Traditional Leaders, community facilitators, and traditional - Formation of the Community-Based Fisheries Resources Committee- Engagement of Traditional Leaders | | Meeting | 20/05/2024-31/05/2024 | 35 | 9 | 44 | Sesheke District | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Actvity: 1.1.4 Training of Traditional Leaders, community facilitators, and traditional - Formation of the Community-Based Fisheries Resources Committee- Engagement of Traditional Leaders | | Traditional Stakeholders Engagement | 20/05/2024-31/05/2024 | 7 | 1 | 8 | Mongu | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
| Actvity: 1.1.4 Training of Traditional Leaders, community facilitators, and traditional - Formation of the Community-Based Fisheries Resources Committee- Engagement of Traditional Leaders | | Traditional Stakeholders Engagement | 20/05/2024-31/05/2024 | 23 | 1 |  | Nalolo District | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
| Activity 5.6: Collaborate with Mongu Fast Track Specialized Courts in prosecuting GBV cases in the fisheries sector | |  | 15/04/2024 – 25/04/2024 | 8 | 5 | 13 | Mongu District | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
|  | Indicator: Number of people reached by a USG funded intervention providing GBV services (e.g., health, legal, psycho-social counseling, shelters, hotlines, other) | | | | | | | | |
| Number of referred GBV cases reported and in progress by the GBV Watch Committees | | Referal cases made | 01/04/2024-30/06/2024 | 3 | 27 | 30 | Mongu Nalolo and Sesheke | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
| Number of cases recorded from the one stop centre | | Reported GBV cases to OSC | 01/04/2024-30/06/2024 |  |  | 48 | Sesheke | Quarter 2 |  |
| **Indicator: # of people reached within communities on GBV and environment linkages via communications and/or training efforts** | | | | | | | | | |
| Activity 5.4: Support mother support groups sensitize the communities on the dangers, causes, effects and prevention measures of Gender-Based Violence | | Radio sensitization | 01/04/2024 | 8000 | 10000 | 18000 | Mongu District | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
| Community Sensitization Meetings | | Awareness / GBV Cascading/ Dissemination of Information | Awareness / GBV Cascading/ Dissemination of Information | 88 | 63 | 151 | Mongu | Quarter 22024 |  |
| Community Sensitization Meetings | | Awareness / GBV Cascading/ Dissemination of Information | 01/04/2024 – 30/06/2024 | 55 | 82 | 137 | Nalolo | Quarter 2 | 2024 |
| Community Sensitization Meetings | | Awareness / GBV Cascading/ Dissemination of Information | Awareness / GBV Cascading/ Dissemination of Information | 103 | 80 | 183 | Sesheke | Quarter 2 | 2024 |

## **LEARNING AGENDA**

**RISE LEARNING QUESTIONS**

**RISE LEARNING QUESTIONS**

**Question 1: Does addressing gender-based violence and environment linkages improve women’s participation and engagement in conservation and climate action**s? Yes

Sub-questions:

1.A. To what extent do survivor-centered, trauma informed, community-driven solutions improve women’s safe participation (from gender-based violence and environment linkages) in conservation and climate actions?

GBV has been a barrier for women safe participation in conservation and climate actions. Therefore, improving the social economic status of women through sustainable interventions to protect them from GBV creates a safer environment for women in conservations and climate actions. For example women in the Western Province suffer from GBV due low income, vulnerability and poverty and this makes them reliant on men for their livelihood who in turn take advantage to abuse and prevent them enjoying their rights to access benefits in the fisheries sector.

The engagement traditional chiefs to advocate for women leadership and decision making in the fisheries and water sector is critical for improved women participation in conservation and climate actions. For instance in the Western Province due to certain cultural norms men uphold decisions and control over the fisheries and water resources. Therefore, challenging these norms will encourage women participation in decision making and leadership in the environmental sector and climate change initiatives.

1.B. To what extent does improved women’s safety from gender-based violence and environmental linkages contribute to increased environmental engagement, outcomes, or results?

Communities, more especially the women are the primary users of water resources. Their practices can lead to climate change negative impacts including land degradation, contamination of fisheries and water resources, clogged water bodies among others. Therefore, improved women’s safety from gender-based violence and environmental linkages leads to increased participation of women in conservation and climate change actions.

Question 2: Does investing in this intersection result in strengthened knowledge and/or information on how gender-based violence and environment linkages are connected and what promising approaches exist? Yes

Sub-questions:

2.A. What issues/factors most influence gender-based violence and environmental linkages?

Lack of awareness about its interlinkages, government systems which perpetuate Poverty and low income, commercialization of the fish resources, alcoholism, ignorance on GBV, inequality, some cultural norms and beliefs and men’s dominance in the fisheries sector and fishermen demanding for sex from women in exchange for sex are the major GBV contributing factors.

**2.B. What promising approach or combination of approaches most influence improvements in safety from gender-based violence and environmental linkages?**

* Continue raising awareness and educational serries
* Empowering men and boys as GBV change agents to challenge men’s and boy’s behaviors and practices that fuel violence against women and girls in the environment sector
* Promoting women’s participation in decision making and leadership positions in the environment sector
* Consultative and collaboration engagements with Fisheries / Environmental Offices, Law enforcers, providers of GBV referral services etc on the further understanding of the interlinkages between Gender/ GBV and Environmental.
* Strengthening the community level mechanism of GBV response as well as utilizing the existing indigenous reporting structures of conflict such as BRE
* Exploring on the indigenous knowledge, cultural perspectives, and contextually relevant solutions which could address both GBV and Management of Water resources.

# **APPENDIX I: COMMUNICATION PRODUCT**

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Zambia Police, Social welfare and Action Aid Zambia (AAZ) under the RISE project reunite a juvenile with their family after being rescued from a forced marriage to an older man, a result of drought-related desperation. Photo credit: Action Aid Zambia

**Casting a Net of Support to GBV on Fisheries Families**

In the midst of a devastating drought in Southern Africa, a heart-wrenching story of gender-based violence (GBV) and exploitation has emerged. The El Niño phenomenon has ravaged the region, exacerbating poverty and GBV in communities reliant on fisheries resources. The high demand for fish has normalized harmful practices like "sex for fish," leading to physical, psychological, and economic GBV. Grace Maliwa, chairperson of a GBV Watch Committee, shared a poignant tale of a woman who suffered in silence. The woman's husband, a fisherman, was both her provider and tormentor. She endured physical and psychological abuse, fearing confrontation would only worsen her situation. The drought intensified her suffering, as her husband's dealings with exploitative fish traders left their family with little food.

In a desperate bid to feed his family, the husband began sending their underage daughter to a 60-year-old neighbor in exchange for food. This exchange was done by the neighbor to sexually exploit the child. The mother's horror and helplessness were compounded by her fear of confronting her husband. The mother eventually found the courage to confide in a GBV Watch member, her voice trembling as she revealed the unthinkable. The GBV Watch member sprang into action, contacting the AAZ office through RISE staff for support. RISE provided funds to apprehend the father and neighbor, and the girl was taken to a safe house for three months. In addition, the mother was and is still in recipient of mental health counseling sessions from the one stop center apart from the community level psychosocial support she receives from fellow women belonging to the GBV Watch committee.

The emotional scars of the trauma were evident as the girl bid farewell to her friends at the safe house, tears streaming down her face. "*I will miss you, but I have to go and be with my mother. I miss her, and she needs my help at home*." Her future remained uncertain, going back to her fisheries dependent family, her childhood lost to the harsh realities of GBV.

RISE facilitated the girl's return to school under the Keep Girls in school scheme, while the GBV Watch members continued to support the family. The neighbor, who was almost marrying the girl child, even if he is blind, was engaged as an agent of change in society, where instead of serving his sentence in prison, he is spreading awareness about GBV and its impact in the fishing communities. Though justice was not served, as the emotional wounds of this family's trauma would take quite some time to heal, it highlights how life-changing GBV prevention and mitigation resources can be for those who need it

Other Pictures