



african  
initiatives

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT  
SOCIAL JUSTICE

# the talking stick

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# COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT SOCIAL JUSTICE

I joined African Initiatives in April 2008 and this year I took my third annual monitoring trip to Ghana to meet with our long term partner, the Community Self Reliance Centre (CSRC). Each year I have visited women's groups facilitated by CSRC. These groups of up to twenty women have been set up both to improve the lives of their members economically as well as socially and politically.

In 2010 when I went to Ghana I was impressed by the fact that both men and women were well informed about women's rights and could tell me, for example, how under the law women were able to inherit the property of their husbands upon his death. However, actually putting those rights into practice was problematic, and still impossible for the majority of women. During this years trip CSRC's Women's Programme Officer, Rebecca Seidu, was much more upbeat, and told me that some women now owned property and more and more women were using Ghana's Domestic Violence Support Unit to resolve family disputes. Winning over Chiefs has been instrumental to the success of CSRC's women's rights work. Communities would rather resolve domestic matters themselves than have government outside agencies involved in what are regarded as local issues.

Our work continues to grow. In Ghana, the women's rights work has been successfully expanded to include a sexual reproductive health element. With funding from the Body Shop and new four year funding from Comic Relief, more and more women will be able to realise their rights and have

access to health care along with their children. In Tanzania, we are expanding our reach into more and more schools, including ten new schools that support pastoralist girls' right to education. This new project raises awareness of girls' educational rights among communities by using traditional methods of Maasai communication through song and dance. A pilot project of evening classes for children who are unable to attend school during the day because of their semi nomadic lifestyle will be carried out and assessed in the third year of the project.

Our global education work continues in the UK. Since the UK Coalition Government slashed funding for this type of work, financing this aspect of what we do has become increasingly difficult. We work in schools and with communities to increase adults and children's understanding of global issues bringing them alive to them perhaps for the first time. If we want our children to grow up engaged and active in global debates free from media inspired prejudice and stereo-types then we need to find other sources of funding for this work.

We aim for the Ghanaian and Tanzanian communities in which we work to claim their rights. In Ghana, this would mean not just individual women able to inherit their husband's property and live free from domestic violence and forced marriage, but whole communities enjoying these same freedoms and rights. With this in mind, your ongoing support for our work continues to be greatly appreciated, assisting communities to take action and change their lives.

Rosie Martin  
*Chief Executive*

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# HEALTH CARE; FREEDOMS AND CHOICE IN NORTHERN GHANA

Northern Ghana is a society in which there is widespread discrimination against women. Widowhood rites are widely practiced whereby women are routinely brutalised, humiliated, disinherited, sexually abused and forced to produce children for male relatives; females are considered the property of fathers and husbands.

Women are excluded from decision-making even in relation to their own welfare including reproductive health. Women do not make decisions about contraception or birth spacing. Only 48% of women in the north have a supervised delivery; many men actively oppose their wives who want to give birth in a hospital. In the north, maternal mortality is 6% whilst infant mortality is 46 per 1,000 live births. This compares to 0.11 deaths per 1,000 maternities in the UK and an infant mortality rate of five per 1,000 live births.

Ghana's National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) provides health care free at the point of delivery for an annual registration fee and covers most common illnesses. An evaluation of the scheme in relation to Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 (which aim to decrease childhood mortality and improve maternal health) by Mensah et al (2009) compared health outcomes of recent mothers who were enrolled in the NHIS with those who were not. The findings suggested that NHIS women were more likely to receive prenatal care, deliver in hospital, have their deliveries attended by health professionals, and experience less birth complications and infant death. Uninsured women were more likely to delay seeking care, develop obstetric complications and die. The study concluded that the NHIS was an effective tool for increasing health care access, and improving health outcomes.



However, uptake of the NHIS in the north is less than 50% of the population (African Initiatives' field experience indicates this is lower). Minimal publicity of the scheme is exacerbated by low literacy among the population and low understanding of the scheme's benefits. Registration is time consuming, not local and expensive. Making claims is perceived as problematic. Low enrolment is associated with poverty, low educational attainment, and lack of health facilities in the immediate environment.

The cost of registration is an issue for many and even though the poorest can register for free many do not know this is available to them, and in any case, people do not understand the registration process.

Having collected baseline data, African Initiatives and our partner, the Community Self Reliance Centre (CSRC), started a new small scale project in 2010 to improve women's access to the NHIS and therefore their health status. This has greatly expanded into a now fully funded five year project with the aim of improving health outcomes for women and children, focusing on reproductive health. It is expected that enrolment with the NHIS will increase from 50% to 75% by the end of the five year period, affecting the lives of some 10,000 people.

**For our aims to be met women's voice needs to be raised and attitudes towards women need to change.**

We want to see measureable decreases in infant and maternal mortality with more women giving birth in hospitals attended by health professionals with improved pre and post natal care. CSRC use festivals or "durbars" to educate people on the locally available health services and assist communities in demanding timely and responsive health care provision from the government, including more locally available services through their Village Health Committees.

For our aims to be met women's voice needs to be raised and attitudes towards women need to change. Community leaders and men need to accept that women have rights and that certain traditional practices are harmful and degrading. CSRC will work along side communities, training community activists or peer educators to work in communities and schools to realise this attitude change. It is only with this change of heart that women will at last be able to realise their freedoms and be able to make their own choices concerning theirs and their children's health.



**African Initiatives' New Year BBCRadio 4 Appeal**

Sunday 1st January at  
7.55am and 9.26pm

Thursday 5th January at 3.27pm

*Please tune in and support us!*



# EMPOWERING GIRLS FOR THE FUTURE

In light of discussion and research by Tanzanian Education Stakeholders on 'Gender based violence in schools in Tanzania', our education programme is looking ever more relevant.

Funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), Comic Relief, trusts and foundations, African Initiatives addresses gender imbalances in the education sector through various girls' education projects. Our objective is to provide an environment where girls are given the resources and tools to enable them to have the same opportunities as boys.

The Tanzania Violence against Children study (TVAC 2009) has uncovered worrying statistics about the high rates of physical, sexual and emotional violence in schools. Keeping girls in school is a big challenge. The distance to school, overcrowding and entrenched female stereotypes mean the

retention of girls in schools is low. The journey to school has been cited as an especially risky time, 26% of girls in the study experienced at least one incident of unwanted sexual contact on the journey to and from school. A further 17% experienced sexual violence on school grounds.

The work, with our partner the Community Aid and Small Enterprises Consultancy (CASEC), targets girls living in dangerous ghettos (unsupervised accommodation where girls experience high level of sexual violence) by constructing dormitories for them. The plight of these girls' lives in the ghettos was the focus of two BBC Radio documentaries recorded by BBC journalist Lizz Pearson, which were broadcast in 2011. One documentary was featured on BBC World Service's African Perspective programme, and the other on BBC Radio 4's Women's Hour, which can still be listened to at:

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007qlvb/episodes/2011\(18/05/11\)](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007qlvb/episodes/2011(18/05/11))



Before and after:  
building of a new hostel



Our work also establishes girls' clubs in schools, which aim to build confidence, provide a safe environment and a trained counsellor to discuss issues affecting them, and give access to general life skills and information. This includes HIV and AIDS and methods of birth control. It is still the policy of the Tanzanian Government to deny girls access to education if they become pregnant.

*Key achievements over the past year include:*

- Girls have moved into six dormitories, are preparing to move into a further eight, and ten more are currently being built.
- Girls' clubs have been established in 16 schools, involving 640 girls.
- 16 matrons have been trained as counsellors and dormitory supervisors.
- 14 school boards have been trained.
- There has been widespread district and government level support for the project, with some other districts expressing an interest in building dormitories in community schools.

During November 2010 our partners, the Pastoral Women's Council (PWC) and the Community Aid and Small Enterprises Consultancy, carried out research to gain an in-depth understanding of the major barriers affecting girls attending school in Ngorongoro district, a pastoralist area in northern Tanzania. The findings of this research painted a grim picture, with perhaps one of the most shocking findings being that community leaders task morans (young Maasai warriors) with deliberately getting

girls pregnant to prevent them from continuing with their education. This is being addressed through community awareness raising activities as part of our ongoing education work and includes community driven action plans to keep girls safe.

The research showed that only 44% of girls of primary school age are enrolled in school in Ngorongoro district, a predominately Maasai area. The Tanzanian national average for girls' enrolment in primary school is 95%. To address this, we have recently been awarded a second DFID grant, working with PWC and targeting pastoralist girls of primary school age to increase their enrolment and participation in primary schools in northern Tanzania.

This new project will be aimed at changing attitudes towards educating girls using traditional methods of Maasai communication, including song and dance. It will be carried out in conjunction with a pilot study of evening classes for children who are unable to attend school during normal school hours, thereby providing young people who have not had a traditional education the chance to gain some basic skills.

# LAND RIGHTS IN NGORONGORO; THE CONTINUING CONFLICT

*An update written by  
PWC, September 2011*

The Ngorongoro district has experienced land tenure conflicts between local communities and outsiders for many years. The communities' access to land has been restricted through wildlife conservation interests, including establishment of protected areas and hunting concessions. African Initiatives' partner, the Pastoral Women's Council (PWC) advocates on behalf of communities who are at risk of land exploitation by outside forces.

## Ngorongoro Conservation Area

The Ngorongoro Conservation Area (NCA), home of the world famous Ngorongoro Crater, is controlled and managed by Ngorongoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA). It is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Currently there is growing pressure from the Government to resolve perceived conflicts between local residents and conservation by evicting people to reduce the number of residents in NCA. In 2008 more than 200 families were evicted and relocated to Sonjo area near the Kenya -Tanzania border.

NCA law and policies restrict most community activities. For example, livestock are forbidden from grazing in the Ngorongoro Crater and the highlands, the cutting of firewood is restricted and building bomas [homesteads] requires permission. The NCA has also stopped sponsoring the secondary school education of children from the district. In 2009 government restrictions began on subsistence farming and since 2010 it is prohibited, however other livelihood alternatives have not been provided. The plots are small, under an acre, but provide essential food for families.

The ban on cultivation is beginning to have a catastrophic affect on residents of NCA. The drought in the area means cattle are without adequate grazing and families are being forced out of the area. The lack of food has necessitated emergency food aid to be brought in but PWC has received reports that children are dying of malnutrition every week in the area.

UNESCO in June this year amended their policies to acknowledge that the rights of indigenous residents

must be accounted for in World Heritage Sites. PWC hopes that this will be the start of some of the authoritarian legislation governing the area and denying people the right to basic livelihoods being revoked.

## Otterlo Business Corporation

In 1992 the Loliondo Game Controlled Area hunting block (which runs along the western edge of the Serengeti National Park) was leased to Otterlo Business Corporation (OBC) without any consultation with the communities. A member of an emirate royal family who is a senior officer in the United Arab Emirates defense ministry leases the area under the Otterlo name. OBC has held exclusive hunting rights to this area ever since. The overlap of the OBC hunting area and these village lands is a major source of ongoing conflict.

In March 2010 a constitutional court case against the Ministry of Natural Resources and OBC begun, challenging the creation of the exclusive hunting corridor. It is ongoing with the consolidated efforts of NGOs and the community.

Since the start of the case OBC has allowed grazing on the land and seemed more open to negotiations. It is hoped this might be the beginning of a resolution of the conflict.

## Sukenya Farm

Soitsambu village is located in Loliondo division, Ngorongoro district. In 1984, Tanzania Breweries Ltd (TBL) obtained a parcel of land in Sukenya sub-village of over 12,000 acres in size. This land was obtained in an irregular fashion according to the land law prevailing at the time.

In 2006, TBL divested the property with sale of their leasehold to Tanzania Conservation Ltd, which has the same ownership as Thomson Safari Company, an international tourism company with a major operation in northern Tanzania. Thomson Safari Company began operations with the intention to develop the farm as a tourism site and wildlife conservation area. One of their first objectives was to remove any local people residing in, or seasonally using, the property. This objective has created major conflicts between the company, local government, and the villagers.

In January 2010, the village council of Soit-sambu decided to pursue this matter in court, thereby instituting legal proceedings against Tanzania Breweries Ltd (TBL) and Tanzania Conservation Ltd (TCL) at the Arusha High Court.

Preliminary objections against the Sukenya legal case were filed by both TBL and TCL at the end of 2010. On 31st May 2011 the Judge in the case ruled in their favour, dismissing the case on technical grounds. PWC believes it is not proper to determine a public interest case on such a basis and has assisted the community with lodging an appeal.

One day before the case was dismissed two young boys herding cattle were beaten by a Thomson Safari guard. This was the first human rights abuse that had occurred since the community had first started legal proceedings. Since the appeal has been lodged there have been no further beatings but the community are still chased off the land for grazing their cattle. They are also denied access to water, which is becoming a critical issue as the area is facing a period of drought.

## TACKLING HIV AND AIDS IN TANZANIA

Tanzania has one of the highest national HIV and AIDS prevalence rates in the world. As the largest country in East Africa, it bears a large share of the global pandemic. The estimated HIV prevalence rate is 8.6% among adults aged 15-49, and 65% of new infections occur among youth aged 15-24 years.

In Tanzania, lack of awareness and education, as well as gender inequality, are some of the main drivers of the pandemic. Moreover, women and girls are disproportionately affected, influenced by factors including low educational attainment, early and forced marriage, fertility expectations, sexual violence and economic inequalities.

As a result many females as well as men do not have a basic knowledge about how their bodies work, sex or sexuality, and do not know how to prevent HIV infection. In many instances, poor family relationships and strong religious beliefs make these kinds of subjects taboo within the family unit and so for many adolescents there is nowhere to learn about these sensitive issues. Consequently, social expectations and economic necessity mean that adolescents and women comply with sexual demands despite the lack of protection.

Working with our partner CASEC, we support a HIV and AIDS Education and Prevention Campaign targeting secondary schools and the CASEC Youth Centre in Arusha, Tanzania. Now in its second year, the project reaches in excess of 12,000 students annually with the support of CASEC staff, volunteers and student peer educators. Fauzai Shaame, one

of the volunteers currently working on the project shares her thoughts about this life changing work.

"Before I joined CASEC's Youth Centre last year, my knowledge of HIV and AIDS was limited. But now I have gained so much more knowledge through the professional workers who support CASEC. Initially this enabled me to start teaching students at the Youth Centre with confidence about HIV and AIDS and now I am involved in starting new 'health clubs' in different secondary schools in Arusha where I can teach and share my knowledge.

"Through these clubs and with support of student 'peer educators', students have the courage to open up and discuss ideas and issues they have which they could not do before. This creates better relationships and better understanding amongst young people and it helps them to extend their knowledge of HIV and AIDS for themselves and the communities they came from. Tanzania without HIV and AIDS is possible and it begins with you and me".



Peer Educators at Oloirien School

# STEPPING INTO THE SOUTH WEST

African Initiatives is using a new BIG Lottery funded project to explore the global in the local. In partnership with CADE (Cornwall Development Education) we are working with primary schools in Bristol and Cornwall to explore the similarities and differences between communities in the rural and inner-city south west.



Partnerships between schools in the south-west and overseas are now commonplace, educational and valuable. However we have found that teachers believe there is a real need for children in some Bristol schools to recognise the diversity in the UK. A teacher from a school based in inner city Bristol said "We talk about the outside world a lot, without stopping to think that rural Devon and

Cornwall are just as "outside" for many of these kids as Brazil or Bangladesh." Some children in Bristol have a suspicion of the perceived "white" rural population and express discomfort about visiting "the countryside". Primary students in inner-city Bristol found the fact that 75% of people in Cornwall use a car to get to work amazing (and not environmentally friendly!) 'City, Town and Country' will establish realistic ideas of UK diversity and environment.

There are many reasons to explore ideas of community; 11.2% of the population in Bristol are from a Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) background (2009) and in an ever contracting world this will increase. "Social cohesion" needs to be addressed to prepare our young people for a national and global future. This is made more apparent as suburban (mainly white) schools report that racism is on the increase as nearby BME communities grow. According to the Department for International Development, 47% of people are uncomfortable with so many different races and religions living in Britain (2010). In the mono-cultural south-west - geographically the size of Scotland - it is vital to foster opportunities of bringing schools and communities together. Not only to learn about children in other south-west communities but to enable them to explore their own.

## Power through Education

Awareness and understanding of Millennium Development Goal 3, Gender Equality, are at the heart of this project, funded by DFID, in the UK and Tanzania.

The stark fact is that worldwide, 1.3 billion people live in absolute poverty on less than \$1 a day. 70% are women. But this is not confined to poorer countries. In the UK, single mothers are most at risk in the current economic climate. In the USA two thirds of the poorest people in the country are women. But why, when women are at the heart of all spheres of global wellbeing? It is only through an understanding of the ways in which women are denied their rights across the world that we can work together to overcome these challenges.

One hundred women of all ages and backgrounds attended our first international women's rights conference in Bristol, and a few men got past the

gates too. A mixture of talks, workshops and mini-activities going on throughout the day meant that there was something for everyone. Participants had the chance to learn about the projects undertaken by our partners on the ground in Africa. Inspiring guest facilitators from organisations including the British Red Cross and Refugee Action spoke about their work with women in Bristol and the South West, while Ellie Land, Director and Animator, discussed the representation of women in film. "I've learnt so much today," said one participant, "I just wish there was more time to spend on each topic."

Our second International Women's Rights Conference will take place on 25th February 2012. Free for all and including lunch, email [info@globaleducationinitiatives.org.uk](mailto:info@globaleducationinitiatives.org.uk) or call 0117 915 0001 to register.

# THANKS FOR MAKING A DIFFERENCE...

African Initiatives' achievements would not be possible without the generosity of our supporters, the leadership of our Board and the huge amount of time and enthusiasm put into the organisation by our growing numbers of committed volunteers.

Special thanks go to:

- Helena Jones
- Raymond and Natalie King
- Alan Buckle
- Margaret Buckle
- Richard and Diana Martin
- City of Bristol Envision Team
- African Initiatives' regular givers
- BBC journalist Liz Pearson for her hard work in securing media coverage for African Initiatives including BBC Radio 4's 'Women's Hour'
- All eighteen runners who took part in this years Bath Half Marathon on behalf of African Initiatives
- Our dedicated climbers who took part in the Kilimanjaro Peace Climb in September on behalf of African Initiatives
- All our designers who have contributed to our work without charging a fee

African Initiatives' Global Education Team would like to thank the following partners for all their contributions to our events and projects:

African Voices Forum  
 Avon and Somerset Federations of Women's' Institutes  
 Bristol Fair trade Network  
 Bristol Local Authority  
 British Red Cross  
 Broadmead Baptist Church, Bristol  
 CADE, Cornwall Development Education Centre  
 City of Bristol College  
 Envision  
 Glenfrome Primary School, Bristol  
 Gloucestershire Local Authority  
 Kingsweston School, Bristol  
 Launceston Community Primary School, Cornwall  
 Pioneer Expeditions Worldwide  
 Resource Futures  
 South Gloucestershire Local Authority  
 St Gregory's Catholic School, Bath  
 St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School, Bristol  
 St Mary's Catholic Primary School, South Gloucestershire  
 St Werburgh's Primary School, Bristol  
 Stoke Climsland Primary School, Cornwall  
 The South West Development Education Centre Network  
 Think Global  
 Traidcraft  
 Wiltshire Global Education Centre  
 Winterbourne International Academy  
 WISE

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 Enid Slater Charitable Trust  
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 The Joan Spence Marsland Trust  
 Joe Franklin Charitable Trust  
 Miss KM Harbison's Community Trust  
 The Mercury Phoenix Trust  
 The Morel Charitable Trust  
 The Noel Buxton Trust  
 The Onaway Trust  
 Open Gate  
 Dr REB Solomons Charitable Trust  
 The Sylvia Adams Charitable Trust  
 The Waterloo Foundation

Finally... A very big thank you to all our major funders who have believed in our work and made it happen...

The Body Shop Foundation  
 DFID (Now known as UK AID)  
 Comic Relief  
 British Council  
 BIG Lottery



THE BODY SHOP FOUNDATION



## BUILDING EQUAL PARTNERSHIPS

Partnership is at the core of the work African Initiatives does in the UK and Africa. Through networks we can increase our impact and reach more people, vital for small organisations. In partnership with the British Council we deliver Global Schools Partnership courses across the region to support schools in building and developing sustainable, educational and equity based partnerships with schools in Africa, Asia or the Caribbean.

Despite recent cuts in government funding, this remains one of the most popular - and enduring - ways of bringing the world to education in the south west. However, one of the biggest questions arising out of every training day we do is that of charitable fundraising - is there a place for it in an equal partnership or does it undermine all of the positive work a partnership can do? Answers on a postcard please...

## New Global Education Website!

Go to [www.globaleducationinitiatives.org.uk](http://www.globaleducationinitiatives.org.uk) for up-to-date news, opportunities and resources in global education; including lists of our artifact and topic boxes. It will also tell you how to access our new resource website we run in partnership with other global education providers in the south west which contains thousands of workshop plans, photos and other resources.



## Interested in running the Bath Half Marathon?

Run for African Initiatives and your support will make a significant impact in the fight for global equality.

**Sunday 11th March, 2012**

Contact us and sign up today

E: [amanda@african-initiatives.org.uk](mailto:amanda@african-initiatives.org.uk)

T: 0117 9150001

If you like what African Initiatives is doing then we would appreciate your support.

Please fill in the form and send it back to us (NOT your bank).

African Initiatives

Brunswick Court, Brunswick Square, BRISTOL BS2 8PE

If you tick the **Gift Aid** box we can also claim the tax on your donations.

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To the Manager

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Branch address

Postcode

Please pay African Initiatives £  
each month / quarter / year (delete as appropriate)  
from my account until further notice.

A/c no

Sort code

Start date

Your name

Your address

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Signature

Date

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Please find enclosed cheque for £  
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Gift Aid

**Gift Aid Declaration**  
If you are a UK taxpayer, the value of your gift can be increased by 28% under the Gift Aid scheme. On your behalf, we simply claim back the tax from the Inland Revenue. All you have to do is tick the box below which shows that you are a UK tax payer.  
For UK Supporters I would like African Initiatives to reclaim the tax I have paid on all my donations in the previous seven years (but no earlier than 6th April 2000) and any further donations I may make until further notice. I pay and have paid income or capital gains tax (in the UK) equal to the tax that African Initiatives will reclaim (currently 28p for every £1 I give). The tax reclaimed will be used to help fund the whole of African Initiatives' work.

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