

Changing the world  
with **women and girls**  
**act:onaid**

# The Ambassador Network

# Welcome to the Ambassador Network

Growing up in India, I would walk through a slum every day on the way to school and wonder why people were forced to live in such appalling conditions. But working with ActionAid in India during the 1990s helped me to see that poverty isn't inevitable.

Since joining ActionAid UK as Chief Executive, I have been truly inspired by our incredible work across the world, the passion of my colleagues and the life-changing stories of the people whose lives we've helped transform. While we are a global organisation, our roots lie within local communities. Our local staff and partners work directly with women and girls, unlocking their knowledge and skills and empowering them to understand and claim their rights.

We spend time listening to fully understand the challenges people face, so we can respond with solutions that fit their needs and circumstances. And we stay for as long as it takes to ensure real change not only happens, but lasts.

We can't do this without you.

The Ambassador Network provides significant and unwavering support, helping to fund our most urgent and vital work across the world and giving assistance to those who need it most.

This is why I'm inviting you to join the Ambassador Network: an international partnership of individuals who are dedicated to helping lift women and girls out of poverty and create long-term sustainable change. Over the years I have been deeply inspired by the passion and support of our Ambassadors and hope that after reading this brochure you will be too. I look forward to welcoming you as a partner in our work.



**Girish Menon**  
Chief Executive, ActionAid UK



Hajira Abraham and her family. Hajira is a member of the women's watch group Woremamed, in Ethiopia, which reports and tackles violence against women and girls.



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# About ActionAid

**ActionAid is an international charity that works with women and girls living in poverty.**

Our dedicated local staff are ending violence against women and girls and helping change lives, for good. We won't stop until women and girls are out of danger, out of poverty and on track to create the future they want.

The denial of women and girls' rights is one of the biggest causes of poverty worldwide – and a grave injustice. That's why ActionAid puts the rights of women and girls at the heart of everything we do.

In the 40-plus countries we work in, our dedicated local staff are supporting women and girls as they claim their rights and help lead their communities out of poverty.

Our work benefits men and boys too, but we put women and girls first because no community can truly prosper when half its citizens are denied their rights. Challenging gender inequality is essential if we are to end violence against women and girls and tackle poverty worldwide.

# What is the Ambassador Network?

The Ambassador Network is a diverse group of individuals who are committed to supporting ActionAid's most vital and challenging work in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Ambassadors support us with a minimum annual donation of £5,000. This contribution is vitally important as it provides flexible funding which is allocated efficiently and effectively according to the areas of very greatest need, and is invested in innovative pilot projects. It also supports ActionAid member countries with core funding and enables them to run local, national and global campaigns to change laws or policies that discriminate against women and girls.

“I joined the Ambassador Network because I have a passionate belief in ActionAid's work and I wanted to do something to give back to those less fortunate. I know that through ActionAid my support has maximum impact and I trust the organisation to use the funds wherever there is the greatest need.”

**Diane Semark, ActionAid Ambassador**



Geta Haile set up a women's savings and credit group in the Shewa region of Ethiopia, with ActionAid's support.



With ActionAid's support, Lavender and the Nyarongi Women's Network, Kenya, helped 30 girls return to school.

# What do you get from joining the Network?

As a valued member of the Ambassador Network, we will enable you to become fully immersed in ActionAid's work and see how your support is making a real difference.

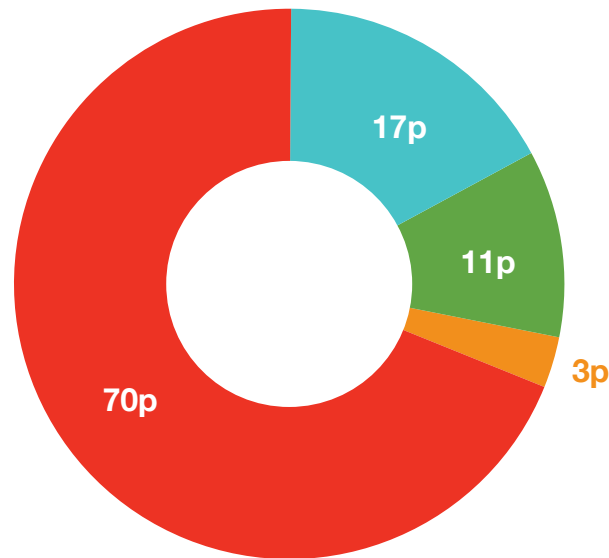
## You will:

- receive regular updates on ActionAid's work
- gain access to ActionAid experts from across the globe
- receive invitations to special briefings, webinars and exclusive events
- have the opportunity to visit ActionAid's work and see the impact of your support
- have access to a dedicated member of ActionAid staff to answer any queries or questions about our work.

“My wife Jane and I were most impressed by what we saw during the Ambassador trip to Tanzania. In the UK we thought we knew about the work being done, but seeing it for ourselves really brought to life the huge impact that we are collectively having as Ambassadors.”

**Neville Grant, ActionAid Ambassador**

# How your donations are spent



For every £1:

**70p**

is spent on our programmes and areas of greatest need, including development and emergency work.

**10p**

is spent on support costs and running the organisation.

**17p**

is invested in generating further support.

**3p**

is spent on campaigning and influencing policy-makers.



Thanks to an ActionAid-supported savings group, Kenyan FGM survivor Evalyne was able to build and furnish her home.

© Jennifer Huxta/Actionaid

## The impact of your donations

**£20,000**

could **train 820 people** on how to stay safe in a disaster, and **train 120 girls in Rwanda** to become peer mentors by learning how to **report cases of abuse and sexual violence**.

**£15,000**

could **empower 225 women in Cambodia** to challenge violence against women in public spaces, and **provide 1,000 families** in refugee camps with hygiene essentials.

**£10,000**

could be invested in a **vocational training programme** in India which would enable 87 women to learn the skills to help them get a job and **increase their income**.

**£5,000**

could provide **coaching for 250 girls in Ghana** to help them understand their rights and gain confidence to **challenge harmful traditional practices**, such as female genital mutilation (FGM).

# Responding to emergencies

Every year, up to 300 million people worldwide are affected by emergencies caused by natural disasters and armed conflict, putting more people at risk than ever before.

We know the largest loss of life occurs in the first 72 hours after a disaster and that people living in poverty suffer most – especially women and girls. So it's important that we have the resources to act quickly.

The Ambassador Network provides significant support to ActionAid's Emergency Action Fund, which means that when disaster strikes we can respond immediately. The Fund also helps communities reduce the impact of future crises, and supports them to demand better protection from their governments. Since August 2017 when violence intensified in North Rakhine, Myanmar, over 650,000 Rohingya refugees have crossed into Bangladesh.

The support provided through the Ambassador Network meant that we could provide over 50,000 refugees with immediate food, water and shelter materials. When women and girls told us that there were no private toilets or washing spaces and that they felt unsafe to use the few facilities that did exist at night, we built 50 female toilets and 20 private bathing spaces, powered by solar panels.



An ActionAid women-led committee working together to raise awareness of health and safety issues within Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.



# Changing lives: Shilpy's story

## Exploited and overlooked

At just eight years old, Shilpy left school in Bangladesh because her parents could not afford the fees. To help her family, Shilpy then joined her parents in a garment factory when she was 12. “We used to work 14 or 15-hour days. We didn’t get any leave and often the wages we did earn were paid a month late.”

## Breaking the cycle

Determined to change her life, Shilpy joined an ActionAid-supported Rights Cafe where she learnt how to negotiate confidently with her male supervisors and managers. Rights Cafes nurture and train young female leaders who pass on their new-found knowledge to their colleagues.

After attending the Rights Cafe for two years, Shilpy now leads a women’s group and educates others about their rights, helping women to take part in peaceful protests and lobby the government for better working conditions.

## Long-term change

“The line manager used to shout at us all the time and we would get beaten,” says Shilpy. “Now, our managers don’t delay paying our salary and they pay us our overtime accurately. There is also no abuse on the garment floor anymore.”

The training Shilpy received at the ActionAid Rights Cafe hasn’t only helped her in the workplace. “I only did two years at school, so the cafe has helped make me articulate. I feel confident negotiating with the owner of my home about our rent and talking with my husband about our finances.”

## ActionAid’s impact

ActionAid is supporting nearly 200,000 female workers like Shilpy in garment factories around Bangladesh, helping them understand their rights through Rights Cafes. Women can now sit on factory committees alongside their managers and **have the confidence to insist on fair pay**, fair hours and, most importantly, stronger workplace safety measures for everyone.



15-year old-Ama, from Ghana, escaped child marriage thanks to Abiba from ActionAid.

# Join us

Join the Ambassador Network and support ActionAid's life-changing work.

Get in touch for more information and to talk to us about becoming an Ambassador:



020 3122 0631



[ambassadors@actionaid.org](mailto:ambassadors@actionaid.org)



[actionaid.org.uk/ambassadornetwork](https://actionaid.org.uk/ambassadornetwork)

“As an Ambassador, I feel that I am part of something much bigger and that my support can have a real impact.”

**Johnnie Johnson,**  
**ActionAid Ambassador**

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