Transform Africa Profile

Transform Africa (TA) is a UK-registered charity\(^1\) based in London which helps local communities in Africa to tackle poverty and its root causes. It raises funds for specific projects, provides technical services that improve the effectiveness of local communities, and carries out research, lobbying and advocacy work.

Its work focuses on five main areas:
- Water, sanitation & hygiene (WASH)
- Health
- Micro-credit & business training
- Youth training for gainful employment.
- Capacity building of local organisations

The majority of its trustees are professionals of African origin, helping it to draw in the resources of other Africans living and working overseas.

\(^1\) Registered Charity No: 1081769
History

Transform Africa was founded in 1998 by several large charities engaged in capacity building in Africa\(^2\). After realizing that local communities were more receptive to assistance from local organisations, they decided to develop a group of Africa-based capacity-building consultants. In 1999, Transform Africa was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. It became the centre of this network, providing advice in critical areas such as governance, project planning and management, financial management and fundraising.

Between 1999-2004, Transform Africa trained eight local consulting organisations in Gambia, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe and, jointly with them, supported over 120 local organisations in those countries to improve their structures, systems, governance and project planning, management and monitoring.

Transform Africa believes that poverty in Africa is mainly caused by poor leadership and embedded beliefs, attitudes and practices which act as barriers to social and economic development. Therefore, fighting poverty effectively requires addressing both the causes, which include gender discrimination and weak leadership, and the symptoms, such as poor access to safe drinking water, affordable micro-credit, and skills development opportunities. We observed that many local organisations and communities focus on addressing the symptoms of poverty, but lack the capabilities to address the transformation of the negative behavioural and attitudinal aspects of their organisations and the communities they work with. Apart from the advantage of being based in UK where it can easily approach funders in Europe, Transform Africa is well grounded in the above two areas.

Since 2005 Transform Africa has broadened its capacity building approach in order to enable local organisations and the communities they work with to fight poverty and bring about sustainable social and economic changes more effectively.

Because demand was outstripping resources, it was decided in 2014 to limit Transform Africa’s operations to selected countries in Eastern and West Africa.

Current Projects

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\(^2\) Founder organisations include Christian Aid, Oxfam, World University Services, the Catholic Agency For Overseas Development (CAFOD) and Action for Disability and Development (ADD)
Transform Africa Board of Trustees

Transform Africa is managed by a Board of Trustees. Three of the five trustees are of African descent.

Tahera Aanchawan (Chairperson) is a British citizen with a Ugandan background and is a specialist in Health and Community Care. She has also been a trustee for the Diana Princess of Wales Fund, and various other charities.

Steve Roberts (Treasurer) has over 30 years’ experience in fundraising and development management. Prior to joining the Transform Africa Board he had worked as Fundraising Manager, Principal Grants Manager and Consultant Grants Officer.

Olive Luena specialises in micro-finance, enterprise development, and gender issues. She has managed integrated development programmes in Africa, and is retired CEO of the Tanzania Gatsby Trust.

Dr Sulemana Abudulai is from Ghana. He has a long experience in management and development work. He previously worked at Comic Relief as a Grant Officer and currently, he is the Africa Field Representative for the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

Elizabeth Kemp is a specialist in capacity building, community support and advocacy. She has successfully managed such projects in Uganda and Tanzania, and has experience in clean water and micro-finance.

Transform Africa Staff Team

Transform Africa has a permanent staff of five, all based in the UK:

Charles Kazibwe (CEO) has an MSc in NGO Management and Social Policy and over 30 years of experience as a development worker. He has worked with Transform Africa for 19 years and before this served as ActionAid’s Project Manager in Uganda;
Country Director for Sierra Leone and Liberia, and Regional Education Advisor for Africa. He has also been a Trustee of BOND, a networking organisation for UK-based charities working in international development.

David Rowland (Finance & Administration) is a Chartered Global Management Accountant (CGMA) with over 20 years’ experience in all aspects of financial management. He has worked for Transform Africa for the last 14 years, and ensures that it is always compliant with the Charity Commission’s requirements for Statements of Recommended Practices (SORP) and Statements of Financial Activities (SOFA).

The two programme officers - Francess Conteh and Saidu Bangura – are all qualified professionals with on-the-ground experience of development projects in the countries in which Transform Africa operates.

In addition to its permanent staff, Transform Africa has a large network of UK-based volunteers, and works with volunteers and permanent staff provided by its African partners.

**Method of working**

Transform Africa supports local communities wishing to undertake projects that will improve their quality of life, for example by:

- Constructing boreholes, dams and hand-dug wells, whilst providing training in hygiene and sanitation to protect clean water resources;
- Increasing HIV awareness and education in order to reduce the spread of AIDS;
- Providing affordable microcredit loans and training in business management for people who want to set up their own businesses;
- Providing Apprenticeship and vocational training for young people to improve their employment opportunities.

Transform Africa uses a rigorous partner selection process to identify and form long-term partnerships with local organisations, with whom it jointly works with to raise funds to implement initiatives they see as critical for transforming their lives, but which would otherwise be beyond their means and capabilities.

All of the money raised is in response to needs identified by the communities through their local partner, and goes directly to these communities to address specific needs.
## Transform Africa’s Partners

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**Examples of past and current projects**

**Our projects**
Improving cassava processing Enterprises in Northern Communities of Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone faces significant challenges related to food security. Poverty is prevalent, particularly in the Eastern and Northern regions, where more than 75% of the population live on less than USD 1.25 per day. Cassava has huge potential to improve food security in the country, but this potential has been largely untapped since cassava remains more a subsistence than a cash crop. Gari is the most popular processed cassava product and when properly stored, it has a shelf-life of six months or more. Traditional methods are very labour intensive; are almost exclusively carried out by women; and result in low product yields of poor quality. However, mechanical grating equipment and screw or hydraulic presses for dewatering are available locally in Sierra Leone, but are prohibitively expensive to most, so traditional manual methods are most generally employed, and this is most particularly the case in rural areas.

Since 2016, with a grant from Comic Relief, Transform Africa and Association for Rural Development (the local partner in Sierra Leone) have been supporting local communities to move from manual to mechanical cassava processing and increase food security in 2 districts of Northern Sierra Leone.
To achieve the above objectives, we have been supporting local cassava processors to form co-operatives, get training in business management and getting affordable start-up loans to purchase mechanised equipment for their enterprises. We have also been supporting cassava farmers to get improved cassava varieties and on-farm training in agronomic practices.

By the end of the funding, the initiative had achieved the following outcomes:

1. The number of mechanical gari processing enterprises had increased from 3 which were operating before our initiative to 13, with each one processing a minimum of 4 metric tonnes of raw cassava per month.

2. Cassava farmers reported increased crop production and availability of food for family consumption and big surpluses for sale.

3. Both supported Co-operatives and cassava farmers were reporting increased incomes which enabled them to meet family basic needs such as healthcare, education for their children and clothing.

4. Both families of cassava farmers and gari processors reported a remarkable reduction in domestic violence, which they attributed to increased household incomes.
Roasting gari
Transforming Urban Slums in Sierra Leone

Freetown could be better summarised as a slum city with over 97% of the population (UN-HABITAT, 2010) living in deplorable conditions where most households lacked improved services to their homes. Most of the communities are characterised by widespread poverty with most people living in one-room shanty houses because the cost of plots and putting up permanent residential houses were beyond the means of the slum dwellers. Due to overcrowding, the environmental sanitation was deplorable, with many slum dwellers using the sea, streams or nearby bushes as toilets. Safe drinking water was not easily accessible as water pipes had got rusty and the supply was cut off. Unemployment is very high and small scale businesses, which are mainly carried out by women and youths were on a subsistence level due to lack of capital and lack of business management skills.

Transform Africa, in partnership with Youth Development Movement, have been implementing a Comic Relief-funded Freetown Urban Slums Transformation Initiative between 2013 and 2019. It focused on supporting poor people, especially women and unemployed youths living in eight of the
slum communities to improve their quality of life through increased access to affordable micro-credit loans, vocational and apprenticeship training and security of land tenure in the slums and basic services, including safe water, improved roads and drainage and hygiene education.

When an external evaluation was carried out in 2019, following the end of funding, findings showed that beneficiary communities had realised the following positive changes:

1. A total of 2,483 community members had gained substantial economic empowerment through access to affordable loans, trainings in literacy/numeracy, business management and wealth creation.
2. 546 youths that had successfully completed their vocational and apprenticeship training and were already gainfully employed.
3. With the support of the project, community members had constructed 30 new safe water points and reconnected several abandoned running water points, thus increasing the number of people accessing safe drinking water by over 20,000.
4. Several access roads, steps and footpath bridges had been rehabilitated, which greatly improved movement within the target area.
5. According to interviews carried out with various community members stakeholders, several people had adopted best hygiene/sanitation practices, like regular hand washing, proper disposal of solid and liquid waste, properly covering their cooked food and drinking water.

Carpentry apprentices at Fullah Town slum
Catering trainees at YDM VTC

Hairdressing trainees at YDM VTC
Safe water well in Wellington slum community

Celebrating a newly-constructed steps-cum-road
Empowering fishing communities in Uganda to fight poverty and HIV

Kalangala District comprises over 62 islands on the Uganda side of Lake Victoria. The majority of the communities depends on fishing as their main source of livelihood and fisher men have a tendency of engaging in risky sexual activities which fuel the spread of HIV. These include men sharing sexual partners, concurrent multi-sexual relationships, unprotected sex, transactional sex, alcoholism, gender-based violence and drug abuse. As a result, the current HIV/AIDS prevalence rates are estimated at 25 - 30%, compared to the national average of 7 - 8%.

One of the major challenges facing the communities in Kalangala District is the lack of HIV services and as a result, It is among the districts in Uganda with the highest loss of follow up in the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) and paediatric care. Contributory factors include limited access to
PMTCT and other HIV services on remote islands, extreme poverty that excludes many from travelling by boat to islands with health services, stigma and limited community capacity due to lack of resources and skills.

With a grant from Positive Action for Children’s Fund (PACF) Transform Africa have been supporting the communities to increase uptake of PMTCT and Paediatric services and enhance women’s to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection since 2017.

By the the end of 2019, the major achievements included the following;

1. Overall uptake and retention into care of the various services had increased to 11,700, representing 99.7% of the project target of 11,738. This has been achieved as a result of insistence on pregnant women going with their male partners to attend antenatal clinics, adoption of partner identification models and regular home based counselling intended to ensure adherence and reduce stigma.

2. All non-professional birth attendants were now acting as linkage facilitators whose role had changed to referring mothers to health units.

3. A total of 1,724 women were now engaged in gainful employment, which represented (105.8%) of the project target of 1,540.
The shack Namutebi used to live in

Namutebi at her new house.
Drama sessions for increasing community awareness on HIV, PMTCT and paediatric care for School children.

A four-bedroom house with zinc roof and solar lighting system refurbished by Jane, a beneficiary of the economic empowerment component of the project.

**Increasing access to drinking and general purpose water for rural communities in Uganda**

Over 40% of the population in rural areas of Mityana and Mubende Districts in Uganda lack clean and general purpose water, especially during the dry seasons. As a result families walk long distances to collect dirty parasite-infested water from ponds, which are shared with animals, for drinking and other domestic uses. Consequently, there is a high incidence of poor health
due to waterborne diseases and lack of a conducive hygiene and sanitation environment. In addition, farming activities are very constrained due to lack of all year-round water for their crops and livestock, resulting in poor nutrition and inability of families to have adequate incomes to meet their basic needs.

Between 2018 and 2019, Transform Africa and its local partner BIVA secured grants from Charles Hayward Foundation and Guernsey Overseas Aid and Development Commission to support rural communities some of the most underserved areas to manually construct boreholes.

By the end of 2019, a total of 30 boreholes had been constructed, thus increasing access for over 15,000 people to safe drinking and general purpose water for other domestic uses such as agriculture and livestock farming in the recipient communities. One of the beneficiaries had this to say:

“As the family bread winner, I am excited that we now have easy access to clean water. As I couldn’t afford to leave my market stall to go and collect water, I have been relying on my children to collect water for the family. They have been doing this late in the evening after school, which wasn’t safe because of the distance they have been walking to fetch it from the nearest protected source.”

![Previous source of water](image1)

![Community members constructing a borehole](image2)
Funding of future projects
We plan to continue focusing on supporting poor communities in Africa to improve their quality of life. To achieve this, we need to maintain an annual minimum income of £200,000.

Why donate to us?
Transform Africa is based on the concept of helping poor people in Africa to help themselves, and puts a lot of emphasis on building up local organisations that can lead by example. Our partners live close to the communities and have spent a long time getting to know the local communities in their areas, and have become trusted advisers to many of them. Because they speak the same language and share the same concerns, they are able to increase the confidence of individual aid recipients by spending time with them to resolve any personal issues. This is a luxury that is not always available to larger charities.

By donating to Transform Africa, you can give some of the world's poorest people the chance of a better life
Contact details

We are always pleased to hear from anyone who can help.

Please contact me, Charles Kazibwe, at –

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You can also donate via our website:

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or our GlobalGiving project page:  
https://www.globalgiving.org/donate/30459/transform-africa/

Empowering communities in Africa to fight poverty and its causes