Case of Change – Anticipatory Action Planning: A Gamechanger for Resource Mobilisation and Resilient Programing

What Changed?

In 2025, Zimbabwe Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) transformed the way it plans, designs, and implements development and humanitarian programmes by adopting Anticipatory Action (AA) Planning as a core organisational approach. Following participation in an Anticipatory Action Planning training facilitated by the Local Humanitarian Actors Forum (LHAF) in May 2025, Zimbabwe YMCA shifted from largely reactive responses to a proactive, risk-informed model.



AAP session facilitated by CA



YMCA representative during the AAP training

Today, AA is embedded across all its programmes, guiding how the organisation prepares for climate shocks, food insecurity, health risks, and economic disruptions. This approach has strengthened Zimbabwe YMCA's ability to anticipate hazards, activate early responses, and protect vulnerable communities before crises escalate. As a result, the organisation successfully integrated AA principles into two major grant proposals in 2025, the Emergency Appeal for Food Insecurity and the Climate Smart Agriculture in Zimbabwe project, both funded by the World Alliance of YMCAs. These proposals were successful, and the projects are now being implemented with stronger preparedness systems and community engagement mechanisms in place.

Why Does It Matter?

This shift has significantly improved Zimbabwe YMCA's institutional readiness and resilience. By planning, the organisation has reduced operational delays, strengthened coordination with district structures, and improved targeting of early actions. Communities supported through these programmes are better prepared to cope with drought, food shortages, and climate-related risks.

Anticipatory Action addresses root causes of vulnerability by linking early warning systems, community planning, and sustainable livelihoods. It promotes long-term resilience rather than short-term relief. By embedding AA into fundraising and programme design, Zimbabwe YMCA has also enhanced its credibility with donors and partners, supporting sustainable resource

mobilisation. This ensures that preparedness and adaptive programming are not one-off activities but part of an ongoing organisational culture.

The approach contributes to wider systems change by strengthening collaboration with District Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Committees, technical specialists, and extension services. It promotes coordinated, evidence-based responses that can be replicated by other local actors.

What Was Christian Aid's and Partners' Role?

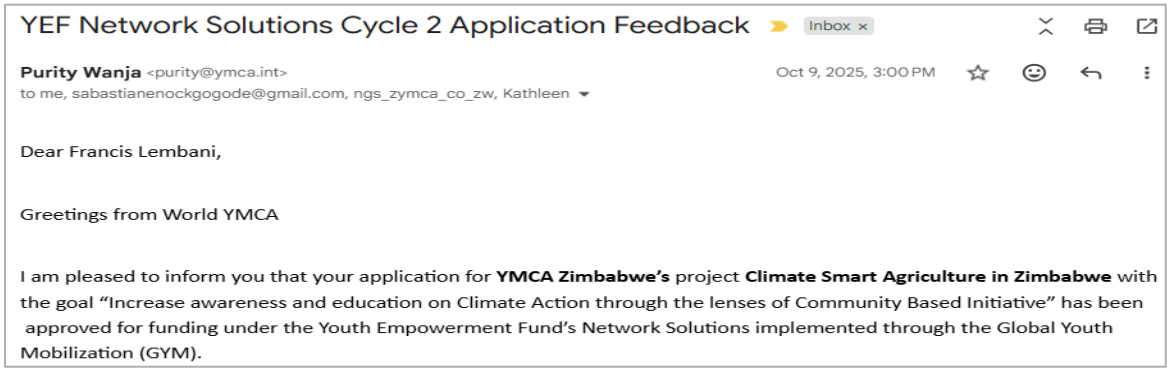
This transformation was made possible through the Local Humanitarian Actors Forum (LHAF), implemented by the Methodist Development and Relief Agency (MeDRA) with funding from Christian Aid under the Local Humanitarian Strengthening Initiative (LHSI). Since October 2024, LHAF has provided a centralised platform for learning, collaboration, and capacity strengthening among local humanitarian organisations in Zimbabwe.

Christian Aid's financial and technical support enabled MeDRA to convene AA Planning trainings, facilitate peer learning, and develop knowledge resources through the LHAF Knowledge Hub's knowledge base and the Learning Management System Courses. Through this partnership, Zimbabwe YMCA accessed practical training, mentoring, dialogue forums, and learning materials on anticipatory action, fundraising, and adaptive programming. These inputs strengthened the organisation's leadership, internal accountability, and preparedness systems.

What Evidence Illustrates This?

Reflecting on the training, a Zimbabwe YMCA Programme Coordinator, Franics Lembani shared: *"We realised that a hazard does not become a disaster if there is planning. Anticipatory Action has changed how we think, how we fundraise, and how we work with communities."*

Since adopting AA, Zimbabwe YMCA has integrated the four key pillars, coordination frameworks, trigger methodologies, financial mechanisms, and evidence-based advocacy into its programmes and proposals. This aligns directly with the LHAF project outcome of improving preparedness of local actors to respond to disasters and strengthening institutional capacity for anticipatory and adaptive programming.


YEF Network Solutions Cycle 2 Application Feedback Inbox ×

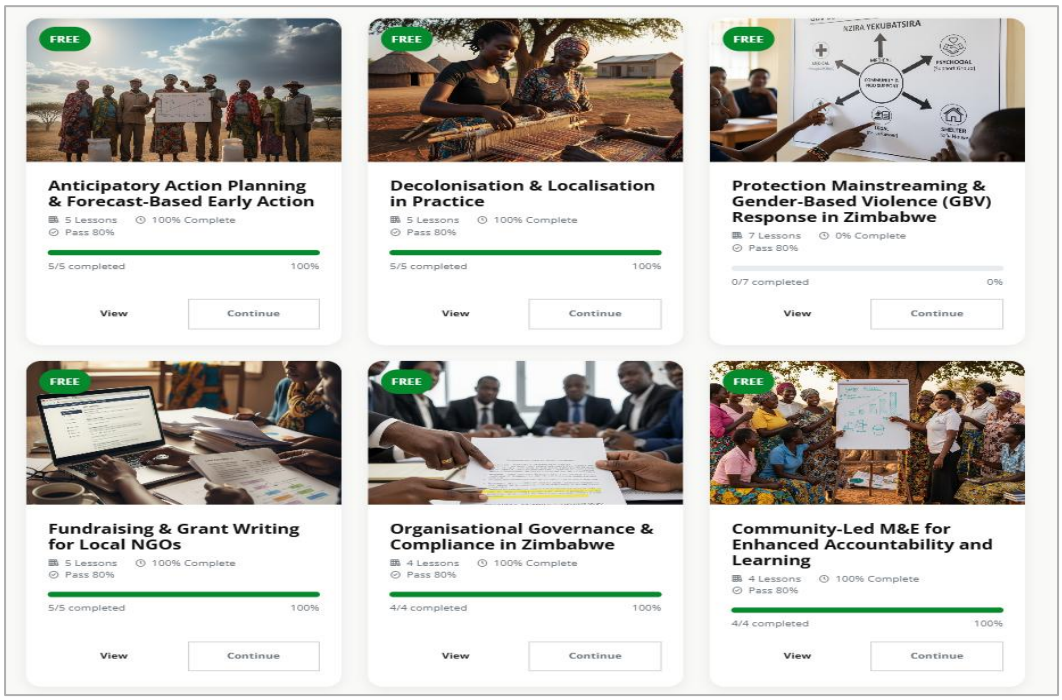
Purity Wanja <purity@ymca.int> Oct 9, 2025, 3:00 PM
to me, sabastianenockgogode@gmail.com, ngs_zymca_co_zw, Kathleen

Dear Francis Lembani,

Greetings from World YMCA

I am pleased to inform you that your application for **YMCA Zimbabwe's** project **Climate Smart Agriculture in Zimbabwe** with the goal "Increase awareness and education on Climate Action through the lenses of Community Based Initiative" has been approved for funding under the Youth Empowerment Fund's Network Solutions implemented through the Global Youth Mobilization (GYM).

Confirmation of one of the Grants



Locally contextualised courses that are currently offered in the LHAF knowledge hub Learning Management System