

ActionAid spreads fear of GMOs in Uganda with pictures of rats with tumors

Donors to one of Britain's largest humanitarian aid charities have been unwittingly funding an aggressive anti-GM food campaign in Africa that misleadingly warns farmers that eating the crops could give them cancer.

A senior official working for ActionAid in Uganda told The Independent that the charity shows farmers pictures of rats with tumours as part of its campaign to prevent GM technology from being made legal in the country. Scientists say the campaign spreads fears that have no basis in fact.

ActionAid has also commissioned radio commercials warning of the dangers of eating GM foods despite a ruling by the World Health Organisation that they have “no effects on human health”.

The charity, which raises millions of pounds in small donations in the UK and provides funds to ActionAid Uganda, makes no mention of the Ugandan anti-GM campaign on its UK website or in its annual report.

When The Independent contacted ActionAid UK and asked about Mr Kawooya's comments it immediately distanced itself from the campaign. In a statement, ActionAid UK said: “Thank you for letting us know that ActionAid in Uganda has been telling farmers that GM could potentially cause cancer.

“That should not have happened and has been stopped. ActionAid's expertise lies in tackling rural poverty through the promotion of sustainable agriculture. As such, country programmes are asked not to take a position on the health impacts of GMOs... There remain very large concerns about the roll out of GM technology in poor countries.”

Read full, original article: ActionAid: The charity spreading 'groundless' fears over GM