**Concept Note – Modus Operandi**

1. **Purpose**

The concept note, as its name suggests, is a brief document that broadly describes the outline of a proposed response in its conceptual phase. It is the basis for immediate consultation between the secretariat and funding members to forecast the level of interest in funding an Appeal. The forthcoming Appeal should be drafted accordingly to the level of funding interest expressed in the concept note (i.e. to set-up realistic targets), or if there is not sufficient soft pledges and funding interest, then the decision to not go forward with drafting an Appeal should be taken. Please note that the concept note is a tool that should also be used to search and secure back donor funding. If there is significant funding interest from funding members in the concept note, the Forum/requesting member(s) needs to subsequently submit an Appeal.

Please note that the concept note is not set in stone; this implies that the Appeal can have different elements from the concept note and that additional members can join the Appeal even if they were not included within the concept note.

***Important delays:***

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| ***Category 2 (Global/Large-scale) emergency*** | ***Category 3 (Complex) emergency*** |
| -Concept Note issued 48 hours after issuing an Alert  -The Appeal will be issued 5 days after submission of the Concept Note | -Concept Note issued 7 days after issuing a call for action (alert)  -The Appeal will be issued 14 days after submission of the call for action (alert) for an Appeal with a lifespan of 1 year; and will be issued 21 days after the submission of the call for action (alert) Note for an Appeal with a lifespan of 2 years. |

1. **Need to know**

***Eligibility?***

Eligibility for the concept note is also restricted to members who have signed the Membership Cooperation Agreement and are in good standing (positive compliance with reporting requirements from previous ACT emergency response and not suspended). The concept note is a tool strictly used for category 2 (large-scale/global) and category 3 (complex) emergencies.

***Who can submit?***

Only one concept note per emergency will be issued. Accordingly, when there is more than one ACT alliance member in the country, there should be consultation within the forum/among members prior to the concept note submission being sent to the ACT Secretariat; i.e. the concept request should be sent by the Forum or endorsed by all ACT members in a country where no Forum exists.

If the Forum/requesting member(s) would like to submit a concept note outside of the set timeframe, the concept note will need to be accompanied with a written supporting document explaining why the concept note was not submitted on time. Please note that the ACT Secretariat reserves the right to reject a concept note if the submission timeframe is not respected and the justification is deemed not suitable.

***Funds and timeframe?***

For a category 2 (Global/Large-scale) emergency, the response is limited to **0 - 24 months** implementation timeframe and the Appeal must be issued within 7 days of the onset of the emergency.

For a category 3 (Complex) emergency, the response is limited to **0-4 years** implementation timeframe and the Appeal must be issued within 14 days of the onset of the emergency for an Appeal with a lifespan of 1 year, or within 21 days of the onset of the emergency for an Appeal with a lifespan of 2 years.

Please note that no more than **15%** budget can be allocated to indirect costs.

***Compliance?***

* Concept Note requests must be made in accordance with other ACT Alliance policies and guidelines. Furthermore, the proposed response must adhere to humanitarian principles, the ACT Alliance Code of Conduct, and the Core Humanitarian Standards.
* The Concept Note and subsequent Appeal must be submitted to the ACT secretariat in English. Translation costs incurred by the member can be included in the Appeal budget. The final document will be issued by the ACT secretariat in English only.
* Expenditure will be reported against the original budget headings. The USD equivalent MUST be shown alongside with local currency reporting as was in the budget.

1. **How to complete the concept note format**

Please follow the instruction in *Italic* written directly on the concept note template. Please note that the Concept Note consists of two templates: 1- the narrative template “word document” and the financial template “excel spreadsheet”.

1. **Responsibilities**

The Forum/requesting member(s)

* Responsible for coordinating with other members in the country and issuing the concept note on behalf of all members, as well as contacting the ACT Secretariat to let them know that a concept note will be issued.
* The Forum/requesting member(s) is also responsible for writing the first draft of the concept note and subsequently revising this draft accordingly to the inputs from the ACT Secretariat.

The ACT Regional Secretariat

* Responsible providing quick and pertinent feedback on the first draft of the concept note to the Forum/requesting member(s) so that a revised draft can be written.
* The ACT Regional Secretariat is also responsible for disseminating the concept note once it has been approved and signed off.

The ACT Global Secretariat

* Responsible for approving the Concept Note
* Responsible for signing off the Concept Note
* Responsible for contacting membership to enquire for funding the concept note