

# Appeal

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## Rapid Response Fund 2017 – GRRF17

### Total Appeal Target: 3,000,000 USD

Geneva, November 30, 2016

Dear Members,

**Subject: Appeal for ACT Alliance Rapid Response Fund Contributions**

ACT Alliance has the privileged position of being a network of local, national and international actors committed to partnerships amongst each other. This commitment enables international and global members of ACT to enhance the capacity of local and national actors, through resources, training and/or other support, allowing for first response in the beginning of a crisis or disaster to come directly from the community itself.

ACT Alliance prioritizes approaches that attempt to ensure a commitment of responsibility towards communities in emergency response. Dignity, community empowerment and capacity-building are cornerstones of our local and national responses. Our members at the local and national levels are embedded within communities, familiar with the needs of communities and able to respond before any other actor in times of crisis. It is the role of the ACT Alliance, in the context of its emergency response mechanism, to ensure that the tools and resources available lend towards reinforcing this ambition.

The Rapid Response Fund (RRF) is a global fund of the ACT Alliance administered by the ACT secretariat. Funds for the RRF are provided by ACT Alliance members and non-members on the basis of an annual appeal.

In exceptional cases the RRF can also be requested by implementing members, through the Forum, as an advance on a forthcoming appeal for immediate life-saving or humanitarian needs assessment activities. This would act as an immediate “start-up” fund, allowing for a maximum of 150,000 USD to be used in the first 6-8 weeks of a large-scale/global emergency. This amount will be reimbursed in the appeal. This is being introduced in 2017 for the first time, based on the recommendations from the Emergency Response Review and the Humanitarian Policy (2015).

As of 30 November 2016, 9 RRF projects were approved in 2016, ranging from immediate response to populations affected by conflict (Armenia), as well as natural disasters (Uruguay, Liberia, India, Bangladesh, Tanzania, Dominican Republic, Egypt and Costa Rica). In total, more than 575,000USD was disbursed within 24 hours of the request for funding, providing life-saving assistance by ACT members to thousands of people around the world, within 72 hours of the onset of the emergency.

As per previous years, the RRF appeal continued to enjoy a good level of funding in 2016. In line with ACT Alliance messaging towards the World Humanitarian Summit, as well as in keeping with the overall ambitions of the ACT Alliance, the RRF is a unique tool for empowering local and national members as frontline and first responders in the first moments of an emergency. This is particularly relevant for emergencies that take place

outside the view of the media – emergencies that affect the lives of populations but are not large enough to draw the attention or resources of global humanitarian actors.

This year, in keeping with the launch of the revised Humanitarian Response Mechanism for ACT Alliance, the request for funding has remained at 3 million USD. Feedback from members around the world indicates that the RRF is one of the most valuable tools for immediate, life-saving response to communities. As such, the revision to the mechanism will allow the RRF to play a more central role in emergency response activities for ACT members. In addition, the revision to the Humanitarian Response Mechanism prioritizes the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (EPRP) as the cornerstone of ACT community-based emergency response, rewarding forums with EPRPs to have access to both increased funding and longer response timeframes. As you are aware, the revision of the mechanism has also eliminated the ACT Secretariat-managed RST; instead, ACT members in forums are encouraged to support each other in rapid deployment for assessment and response.

The ACT Humanitarian Response Mechanism identifies four categories of emergencies. The Humanitarian Policy (2015) outlines that the RRF tool can be used in two of the categories: 1- Local/National Emergencies and 2- Large-Scale/Global Emergencies.

1- ***The RRF tool in Local/National Emergencies is framed in the following manner:***

**Criteria:**

- Sudden on-set emergency requiring emergency relief or humanitarian response;
- Limited-sectoral response required; needs can be met by single-actor or combination of local actors;
- Little global media attention;
- < 150,000 people affected;
- Local/national capacity to respond, but beyond the capacity of affected population's traditional coping mechanisms;
- Local or National ACT member(s) have presence in the disaster area, or ability to access;
- Can be country wide, or within a specific region/community within a country (including in the context of a protracted crisis).

**Time frame:**

- 0 weeks to 24 weeks

**Tools:**

- **Alert** (within 24 hours), issued by Forum, disseminated by Secretariat;
- **Rapid Response Fund Request** (within 48 hours): Requested by implementing members, through the Forum. For Forums with EPRP's in place, 0-24 weeks, 150,000 USD maximum; for Forums without EPRP's, 0-12 weeks, 60,000 USD maximum;
- **Appeal** (if recovery exceeds RRF timeframe; RRF amount to be reimbursed): Appeal can be issued within 3 months if emergency escalates and/or there are considerable funding pledges and/or member interest;
- **Peer Monitoring**: Required for RRF's that will convert to an Appeal, set up according to guidelines by Forum;
- **Evaluation**: RRF's exceeding 100,000 USD require Secretariat-led evaluation (can be conducted by funding member or Secretariat); this is addition to any financial audits that may be required according to ACT Financial Guidelines.
- **Humanitarian Advocacy/Communications Messaging**: Required for all RRF's;
- **Situation Reports**: Issued by Forum/implementing members bi-monthly at minimum, but may be more frequent depending on the nature and the timeframe of the emergency.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the RRF is to provide one-time financial resources to members of the ACT Alliance, in the first days following a local or national **emergency**, and where local or national members have the capacity to respond. The aim is to enable first responders to conduct immediate emergency response programming focused on saving lives, over a three to six month timeframe. The response must adhere to humanitarian principles, the ACT Alliance Code of Conduct, and the Core Humanitarian Standard. The emergency could be of a rapid onset nature (e.g. earthquake or flood) or of a complex humanitarian character (e.g., refugee or internal displacement situation).

## **ADDITIONAL CRITERIA AND PARAMETERS FOR USE**

### **Who may request RRF Funding:**

- Local and National ACT Alliance Members, with capacity to respond only within the borders of their specific country are eligible for the RRF; members who have the capacity to respond across international borders (such as neighbouring countries), or are considered global or international organisations are not eligible.
- Eligibility for the RRF is also restricted to members who have signed the Membership Cooperation Agreement and are in good standing (e.g. positive compliance with reporting requirements from previous ACT emergency response and not suspended); local partners of global or international members are not eligible.

### **Parameters:**

- The RRF must be channelled towards life-saving actions related to the emergency (e.g. food, nutrition, health, water/sanitation, clothing, shelter, household kits, psychosocial activities, and essential transport/logistics, staff and support costs; no more than 5% of the total budget will be allocated to indirect costs).
- RRF requests must be made in accordance with ACT Alliance policies and guidelines.
- The RRF request should be submitted within 48 hours of the occurrence of the emergency, and will be approved within 24 hours of receipt by the ACT Secretariat. Timeframes as per the Humanitarian Response Mechanism will be strictly adhered to for RRF requests.
- RRFs will be used where a one-time transfer of RRF funds combined with locally available resources will be sufficient to meet the needs of that emergency.
- In cases where the RRF leads to an appeal (e.g., if the magnitude of the emergency is greater than originally thought), then the initial RRF funding will be treated as a funding advance. This means that once funds for the appeal are received, the ACT Secretariat replenishes the advance from Appeal funds until the full amount has been recovered.
- RRF funds may be used to cover the cost of replenishment of a member's in-country stocks which were used in the emergency response.
- Only one RRF 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 RRF submission being sent to the ACT Secretariat.
- The RRF request should be sent by the forum or endorsed by all ACT members in a country where no forum exists.

### **Amount:**

- EPRP's are central to the RRFs - for Forums with EPRP's in place, maximum project timeframe is 0-24 weeks and 150,000 USD maximum; for Forums without EPRP's, timeframe is 0-12 weeks and 60,000 USD maximum.
- Any unspent balance from the RRF implementation must be returned to the ACT secretariat.
- Funds available to the ACT Secretariat to administer the RRF are limited. Utmost care, coordination and consultation will be checked by the ACT Secretariat with forums/members requesting the RRF

to ensure the wisest utilization of these funds. Decision for disbursement of funds is the responsibility of the Global Humanitarian Coordinator in conjunction with the Head of Strategy and Partnerships.

- The ACT Secretariat encourages, and welcomes, contributions from interested members towards a specific emergency and specific RRF (in addition to members' annual contributions to the global RRF fund), in order to maintain sufficient funds in the global RRF fund.

#### **Reporting Requirements for Requesting Members:**

- At the end of the first month following the emergency, the forum/requesting member(s) will submit a situation report (sitrep) to the ACT secretariat, using the ACT sitrep format. Forum/members are expected to accompany the sitrep with photos and human interest stories.
- A final report (narrative and financial) will be prepared by the requesting member(s) and submitted to the ACT secretariat within 60 days of completion of RRF activities, following the ACT appeal and RRF reporting guidelines and ACT appeal and RRF financial report format. Support and guidance for these requirements will be provided by the ACT Secretariat.
- Expenditure will be reported against the original budget headings. The USD equivalent MUST be shown alongside with local currency reporting as was done in the budget.
- An audit report is required by the ACT Secretariat if one member receives 50,000 USD or more for an RRF. The audit report must be submitted within 90 days of completion of RRF activities.
- If a member receives less than 50,000 USD, an audit report does not need to be submitted to the ACT Secretariat. However, the member must include the RRF funds in the annual audit of the member organization. Income and expenditure incurred on the RRF should be clearly distinguished and identifiable from the annual audit report. While ACT will not be requesting these audit reports on a regular basis, the member must be able to produce the annual audit report upon request by the ACT Secretariat.
- In cases where the RRF leads to an appeal (e.g. if the magnitude of the emergency is greater than originally foreseen by the ACT forum/members), the RRF will be understood to be an advance and will be reimbursed to the global RRF fund from the appeal funds.

#### **Reporting Requirements for the ACT Secretariat:**

- The ACT Secretariat will prepare and disseminate a summary report (narrative and financial) to the alliance on the use of RRF funds for the period January to December of a given year. The ACT Secretariat annual audit report will include the RRF.
- The above reports will be disseminated to all members within six months of the completion of the year.
- In the case that funds were contributed by a member towards a specific RRF project, final financial and narrative reports (including audited financial statements where applicable) that are received from the requesting member(s), will be shared with the ACT funding member.

#### **2- *The RRF tool in Large-Scale/Global Emergencies in framed in the following manner:***

In 2017, based on the recommendations from the Emergency Response Review and the new Humanitarian Policy (2015), the RRF tool can also be used exceptionally as a "Start-Up Fund" in category 2 (large-scale/global) emergencies. The Start-Up fund is an advance on a forthcoming Appeal for immediate life-saving activities, to replenish used pre-positioned emergency stocks or for conducting a humanitarian needs assessment in a highly mediated category 2 (large-scale/global) emergency. The main purpose of Start-Up Fund is to make immediate funding available to ACT Alliance forums and members in the early stages of an emergency, so they can begin their relief operations as soon as possible following the onset of the crisis.

Please note that the Start-Up Fund is a tool designed to respond to highly mediated category 2 (Large-scale/global) emergencies because it can only be requested if there exists firm pledges (secure funding) for

the response to the crisis. The Start-Up fund, needs to be requested, approved and funds released within 72 hours of the onset of the emergency (category 2). Please note that the ACT Secretariat reserves the right to reject a Start-Up Fund request if there is no evidence of confirmed pledges/funding, insufficient funds available in the RRF or if the timeframe is not respected.

#### Eligibility:

The Start-Up Fund is open to all members of the ACT Alliance 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 Start-Up fund is an advance on a forthcoming Appeal, thus the Forum/requesting member must subsequently submit a concept note and Appeal.

#### Who can submit:

Only one Start-Up Fund can be issued per emergency. Accordingly, when there is more than one ACT alliance member in the country, there must be coordination the forum/among members prior to sending the Start-Up Fund request to the ACT Alliance Secretariat; i.e. the Start-Up Fund should be sent by the Forum or endorsed by all ACT Alliance members in a country where no Forum exists.

#### Funds and timeframes:

The Start-Up Fund is limited to 0 – 2 months implementation timeframe and members can request up to a maximum of 150,000.00 USD. As the Start-Up Fund acts as an advance on a forthcoming Appeal, the amount will be reimbursed in the Appeal so that the RRF is replenished once the Appeal contributions are received.

#### Compliance:

- Start-Up Fund request 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 Standard.
- The Start-Up Fund request must be submitted to the ACT secretariat in English.

#### GRRF16 Fund request:

Following is financial summary for 2015 (audited) and 2016 (unaudited) as of 30 November 2016:

	USD 2015	USD 2016
Cash balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> January	318,253	356,806
Add: Income received in the year	568,378	478,948
RRF payments made to requesting members in the year	(550,344)	(578,329)
RRF payments reimbursed, as subsequently followed by an appeal	0	0
Unspent balances refunded by requesting members in the year	20,519	79,257
<b>Cash Balance as of 30 November 2016*</b>	<b><u>356,806</u></b>	<b><u>336,682*</u></b>

The appeal target for the RRF in 2017 is 3 million USD. Once year-end figures are established (31 December), any 2016 balance is automatically carried forward for 2017 RRF disbursements. 3% of all new funds will be allocated to RRF fund management, provision of monitoring and evaluation by the ACT Secretariat, and support for capacity building to local and national members.

Kindly send your contributions to GRRF17 to the following ACT bank account:

Account Number: 240-432629.60A (USD)      or      Account Number: 240-432629.50Z (Euro)  
IBAN No: CH46 0024 0240 4326 2960A      IBAN No: CH48 0024 0240 4326 2950Z  
Swift Code: UBSWCHZH80A  
Account Name: ACT Alliance  
Bank Name and Address: UBS SA, P.O. Box 2600, Geneva 2, SWITZERLAND

**Please inform Line Hempel, Director of Finance and Administration ( [Line.Hempel@actalliance.org](mailto:Line.Hempel@actalliance.org) ) and Nick Clarke, Head of Strategy and Partnerships ( [Nick.Clarke@actalliance.org](mailto:Nick.Clarke@actalliance.org) ) of all pledges/contributions.**

**For further information please contact:**

Nick Clarke, Head of Strategy and Partnerships ( [Nick.Clarke@actalliance.org](mailto:Nick.Clarke@actalliance.org) )

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