

ACT Alliance
FUNDRAISING STRATEGY 2017 - 2018

I. Background & Purpose:

I.1. Background

The rapidly changing development and humanitarian financing context is challenging ACT Alliance and its members to rethink their business and fundraising strategies. While there are some new opportunities to tap into traditional methods of funding for the work of the Alliance and its members, the implementation of collaborative initiatives has turned out to be more of a challenge.

In 2014, the Governing Board of ACT Alliance recognised that the sustainability of the global Alliance required that external fundraising be accorded an increasingly prominent role and that this must happen at all levels of the Alliance. By May 2015, the Governing Board concluded that the Alliance Secretariat would need to accumulate close to 20% of its income through external fundraising by 2018. Also in 2015, ACT Alliance formed its first Advisory Group on Fundraising which, among other tasks, was mandated to produce its fundraising strategy and to provide guidance to the Alliance on the principles which should guide its fundraising. Subsequent to receiving the Governing Board's endorsement of the direction of a previous fundraising strategy draft, the Advisory Group on Fundraising has developed this current strategy which is closely linked to the Secretariat's operational plan for fundraising. Taken together, both documents guide concurrent work paths for improving the Alliance's financial viability, while enabling realization of goals under the Global Strategy of the ACT Alliance. Action plans specifying the contributions, levels of ambition and timelines required to meet this strategy's two objectives will be completed upon full endorsement by the Board.

I.2. Strategic Aims:

In order to secure the financial future of ACT Alliance, the Alliance has prioritized three strategic aims. These are meant to inclusively address the common and constituent needs of the global Secretariat, the fora and member organisations. Ensuring that these aims are common to a majority of the members will enable the Alliance to acquire additional and diversified funding within a rapidly changing funding environment.

- *Jointly Develop Added Value with a view to mutual benefits*
- *Undertake and Share Donor Intelligence and Forecasting*
- *Maximise opportunities for alignment, harmony and balance among the Strategic Objectives of the AFGs, the Secretariat and membership*

I.3. Values:

The proposed strategy suggests seven principles on which ACT Alliance would base its fundraising. These include:

- Good donorship supported and implemented;
- Good stewardship promoted and managed;

- Responsibility-driven resource solicitation;
- Collaboration among the ACT members;
- Advocacy and information as the prologue to fundraising;
- Consistent communication across all interlocutors;
- Key ethical concerns mainstreamed;
- Collaboration rather than competition between the secretariat and members;
- Engagement with national members through Forums.

Further guidance on good practice will be developed to enable the Alliance's constituent parts to work well together, based on its values and principles, in fundraising.

I.4. Scope & Structure:

This fundraising strategy is focused on the short-term: 2017-18, with a view to laying the ground work required for the longer-term works (and funding) needed in 2018 and beyond. It assumes that throughout the remainder of 2017 and up through 2018, the Secretariat will continue to develop its structure and capacities, and that as it does so, a culture for fundraising must also be built. Moreover, the culture and expectations of the Alliance's Governing bodies for funding may also be required to evolve. As the operating space and funding for NGOs of all types and sizes continue to shrink globally, there will be fewer and fewer resources available for redistribution among the membership and Secretariat. One of ways in which the expectations for provision of resources will need to be redefined in terms of realities and opportunities involves the impracticality of merely shifting the responsibility for providing Secretariat funding away from the large international organisations and onto any other entity external to the Secretariat. Fundraising will need to be undertaken and managed in the short-term by Secretariat staff capable of providing true leadership – in addition to technical representation – for leveraging the Alliance's added value among currently and potentially interested sponsors.

In the longer-term, i.e., 2018 through 2020, fundraising responsibilities should be spear-headed by a "Resource Acquisitions and Management Unit," comprised of Secretariat-based, full-time professional fundraisers, and substantially supported by programme and regional Secretariat leadership. Another longer-term goal that should be undertaken during this period is to assess and redesign the configuration of the Alliance's governing bodies with a view to inclusion of the skill sets and relationships most required to ensure the viability of the Alliance. Ensuring representation of particular groups, regions and interests on the Board will need to be secondary to ensuring that there will first be capacities for engagement represented and that those correspond to the various public, private and individual resources that must be cultivated.

The role of the AG Fundraising will in neither the short nor long-term scenarios be operational, but will focus on information and advice with regard to the changing donor landscape; including, trends, forecasting, donor intelligence and reliable recommendations for future relationship building.

II. Strategic Objectives for 2017-2018

Strategic Objective 1: Diversify and increase funding for sustainability of the ACT Secretariat

During 2017-2018, the ACT Secretariat will have established a diverse set of workable, sustainable resource options that generate funding from internal and external sources at a level that is commensurate to budgetary aspirations.

Priorities, Actors, Immediate Outcomes

The Secretariat

- A Secretariat fundraising group formulated from global and regional Secretariat leadership, is headed by Strategy & Partnerships, and meets on a 6-weekly basis
- Culture change and capacity building of the Secretariat leadership is initiated (e.g., capacities developed for navigating 'theory of change' development, grant proposal writing, partnership development and relationship building)
- Processes and tools to facilitate and expedite funding work developed
- Trusts, Foundations and in-kind contributions are solicited world-wide for specific goals and needs
- Capacity statements in priority areas of work for which external funding will be sought are developed
- Partnership portfolio of priority donors – both new and existing – prioritized, diversified and maintained
- Targeted external fundraising consolidated per key programme area or need and initiatives developed for funding

The Members

- A concept for an enabling membership model with corresponding fee structure is discussed (short-term); developed and after 2018 agreed. Clear benefits and responsibilities for membership are explicated during the process.
- Secondments of technical expertise for the global and regional offices of the Secretariat support well-defined needs and areas of growth

The Forums

- A portfolio of donors for funding the ACT Alliance by country and region is grown and maintained

The Advisory Groups

- Development and growth of additional funds for Humanitarian response via the Rapid Response Fund (RRF) are supported by the HPPG
- The Alliance's reputation growth, as well as external communication around emergencies, are targeted to increase visibility and support fundraising by the AGC

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Core Humanitarian
STANDARD

The ACT Alliance Secretariat's continuous improvement in the application of the Core Humanitarian Standard is independently verified by HQAI

The AGF

- A strategy for world-wide solicitation of gifts from Trusts, Foundations and in-kind contributors is developed in favour of specific goals and needs
- A preliminary, cutting edge design for a professional, full-time Acquisitions and Management Unit based in the Secretariat, with model Terms of Reference is offered for consideration to the Secretariat and Governing Board
- Development of donor relations is supported by provision of model “talking points” and briefs for use by Secretariat staff. This will include: rationale for funding the Alliance; identification of added value of supporting ACT Alliance – for members and the donor

Strategic Objective 2: Increase both opportunities and quality of collaboration among ACT Alliance members for implementation of the Global Strategy.

During 2017-2018, an enabling environment is promoted to enhance collaboration in fundraising amongst ACT members. This includes capacity building in ethical fundraising, funding acquisition and management, and promoting appropriate opportunities for working in consortia.

Priorities, Actors, Immediate Outcomes

The Secretariat

- The revised ACT Alliance Principles of Ethical Fundraising document is promoted among the membership with a view to enhancing the appetite for intra-alliance collaboration and ultimately, the effectiveness of partnerships
- Communication is enhanced at the level of each of the regional Secretariats and their corresponding forums, with a view to increasing two-way information dissemination on funding opportunities and partnership or consortia needs

The Members

- The Principles of Ethical Fundraising are endorsed by members
- Joint-programming and fundraising possibilities are solicited and provided by members
- An indicator for collaboration with other ACT Alliance members through partnerships or consortia is included in members’ organisational strategies

The Forums

- Capacity building opportunities offered at the country and regional level by member organisations are publicized and invitations offered to one another’s staff, as permitted by practicality

- Forum members support partnership development via data-bases at the regional Secretariat level. Member's country offices submit their profiles of capacities, interests, HR assets and presence
- Forum members collaborate with the Secretariat at the regional level to develop fundable programming for the benefit of all parties

The Advisory Groups

- AGs respond to members' needs for technical inputs and advice supporting funding for collaborative partnerships

The AGF

- The Secretariat and their partners' regional project goals are nurtured and supported by individual AGF members as external focal points working with each regional Secretariat hub, directly
- The Secretariat's thematic program priorities and partnerships are represented by individual AGF members providing external support