

Global Strategy for ACT Alliance 2019-2026

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Executive Summary

Draft motion for decision-making:

The General Assembly affirms the Global Strategy for ACT Alliance 2019-2026

Background

ACT's current global strategy concludes at the end of 2018. The strategy revision aimed to provide an opportunity for all involved in the life of the alliance to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the current strategy, the changes in context since its development in 2013/14, and to consider progress to date. As per our current 2015-2018 strategy, the revised Global Strategy is for the whole of the alliance. The revision process was approved by the Executive Committee of the Governing Board in February 2017, commenced in April of that year and included:

- Survey questionnaires sent to ACT Members and Forums (May-June), and ACT Advisory Groups and Communities of Practice (June-November), and feedback from members and forums to a draft discussion paper sent in December;
- Focus group discussions held with ACT's Governing Board (June), Regional Forum leaders (e.g.: Africa, July 2017), secretariat staff, and visits to Members and Forums by the General Secretary;
- Input from a small group of external actors engaged in innovative approaches to development through a FutureACT meeting held in July 2017;
- Issues and opportunities arising from ACT's more intentional engagement and partnerships with UN and other external actors;
- Ecumenical engagement through strategic discussions such as the Ecumenical Strategic Meeting of leaders, involving: ACT, Anglican Alliance, Caritas Internationalis, LWF and WCC (March 2017), and the Ecumenical Strategic Forum, involving WCC, LWF and ACT (October 2017);
- Work on the Global Strategy at the Secretariat Week of Meetings held during 28 January-2 February 2018;
- Presentation of first draft of global strategy to Executive Committee in February 2018 for reflection and input;
- An amended first draft circulated to members and forums for consultation during March-April 2018 accompanied by consultations held virtually and/or face-to-face at regional level;
- Continued accompaniment and input throughout the process by the Secretariat Strategy Working Group;
- Endorsement by the Governing Board of the direction of the 2019-2026 strategy and approval of the document for dissemination ahead of discussion and endorsement by the members at the 2018 General Assembly.

The proposed strategic approach and areas of focus for 2019-2026 seeks to build on our 2015-2018 strategy and reflects input received from all of the above sources.

Key issues in summary

- Strategy period: 2019-2026 – 8 years with an evaluation before the mid-term General Assembly at the end of Year 4 (2022) providing an opportunity for members to discuss progress and agree on any mid-term adjustments
- ACT's vision, mission, core values and approach reflect our commitment as a Christian, church-based alliance
- Our approach will be integrated across humanitarian, development and advocacy work
- Thematic and programmatic priorities:
 - Climate Justice
 - Gender Justice
 - Peace and Human Security
 - Migration and Displacement
 - Emergency Preparedness and Humanitarian Response
- Forums at the centre of our work
- Partnerships are prioritised
- Amendments to previous drafts included clearer articulation of:
 - How our Christian faith both informs and influences our work as a church-based alliance
 - How an integrated approach in humanitarian, development and advocacy work can be realised
 - Our move towards forums as key implementing structures
 - Economic justice as an important consideration in our areas of work
 - How youth can contribute to the life and work of the alliance

The 2019-2026 Global Strategy will be supported and implemented through a detailed operational implementation plan. Initial planning has been undertaken by the secretariat, and will be further developed after affirmation of the Global Strategy at the 2018 General Assembly and approval by the incoming Governing Board. The implementation plan will include:

- How to strengthen the nexus between humanitarian, development and advocacy work of the alliance, and to guide the implementation of the Global Strategy in a holistic and integrated manner across the priority thematic and programmatic areas identified;
- Indicators, responsibilities and timelines for the priority areas of the Global Strategy, further specifying the operationalisation of the results areas and the roles and responsibilities of the different structures within ACT for implementation;
- How goals within our thematic and programmatic priority areas (climate justice, gender justice, peace and human security, migration and displacement, emergency preparedness and humanitarian response) will be realised;
- Plans for the strategic implementation areas: communications, partnerships, resource mobilisation, and innovation;
- Plans for implementation support areas: quality and accountability, measuring change and impact, knowledge management, supporting structures.

The global strategy is also supported by ACT policies and where needed sub-strategies to accompany implementation planning. Many of these have already been elaborated during the current strategic period 2015-2018, but may need revision in light of the new Global Strategy. These include but are not limited to:

- ACT secretariat (multi-)annual operational plan(s) and budget(s)
- An operations model for a sustainable funding of the ACT Alliance
- ACT Alliance Advocacy Strategy
- ACT Alliance Communications Strategy
- ACT Alliance Capacity Development and Learning Strategy

Proposed next steps

Upon affirmation at the General Assembly, the incoming Governing Board shall be requested to approve the 2019-2026 ACT Alliance Global Strategy at their inception meeting. Upon approval, it is envisaged that the current strategy document will be communicated in different ways to different audiences, e.g.: a 4-6 page A5 document for external partners, accompanied by web and app-based versions for ACT members and staff. This will be supported by the implementation plan.

actalliance

hope
in action PUTTING
PEOPLE FIRST

A Global Strategy for ACT Alliance

2019 - 2026

A Call to Action by Churches Together

The ACT Global Strategy *Hope in Action – Putting People First* is a response to the changing global social, economic and political environment, which poses challenges and opportunities for civil society (CSOs) and faith based organisations (FBOs) to play a meaningful role in fostering a just and inclusive world. Comprised of national, regional and global members, ACT has much to contribute as a Christian, church based alliance with its roots firmly planted in strong faith based communities at local level. This eight-year strategy is the result of a comprehensive participatory process and sets the direction for the whole of the Alliance. It builds on progress achieved to date while calling our members to work together to maximise impact and realise its goals for this next period.

The global community can and should do more to save lives, improve the well-being of all human beings, promote peace and ensure the realisation of all human rights, as well as to preserve the integrity of God's creation. Equally, faith actors and FBOs can do more to live their faith by engaging in all processes that have an impact on the life of people, especially the most vulnerable and marginalised. The prophetic and moral voice of faith communities and organisations, associated with their care and concern to save lives, bring transformational development, denounce injustices, and uphold dignity are paramount to putting people first and a clear demonstration of *Hope in Action*.

ACT Alliance has an impressive track record in humanitarian and advocacy work. However, a surge of new commitments, approaches and transformation is needed for the Alliance to significantly advance its vision, mission and actions. With this global strategy, we seek to leverage the cohesion, effectiveness and relevance of the Alliance by having national and regional forums as its core implementing structures. The global strategy also emphasises ACT as a faith motivated and rights based alliance, which lives its faith and intentionally engages and embraces global political processes, such as the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the agenda of the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit.

To ensure justice and well-being for every human being, ACT builds on what has worked in the past and uses what we have learned to overcome existing and emerging challenges. Fulfilling the global strategy and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) requires new evidence-based approaches backed by innovative and sustainable funding, and an integrated approach to harness humanitarian, development and advocacy work. It also requires strategic partnerships with the United Nations (UN), faith based organisations, other civil society actors/alliances, national governments and the private sector to achieve these objectives.

The ACT global strategy provides a strong focus on gender justice, localisation and the role of youth. Every human being is created in the image and likeness of God and as such the global strategy focuses on a world where everybody is valued equally, enjoys equal human rights and equitably shares responsibility in the distribution of power, knowledge and resources. We want to see all people free from cultural and interpersonal systems of patronage and oppression, and from violence and repression based on gender. Young people are central to everything we want to achieve. By helping youth to participate fully and equally in society and to realise their rights to sustainable development, we are equipping them to attain their full potential.

The three overarching objectives of the global strategy are **cohesion**, **effectiveness** and **relevance**. With its full implementation ACT seeks to support the priorities and plans of individuals and communities at local level and build the momentum of ACT as the world's biggest Protestant and Orthodox alliance undertaking high quality humanitarian, development and advocacy work.

It is an ambitious vision, but it is achievable. By working together to implement the global strategy ACT can deliver a historic transformation that will improve the lives of generations to come. To that end, the Alliance shall continue to mobilise ambitious commitments and actions from ACT members and promote the engagement of all sectors of society. Together, we can promote hope in action and put people first.

Who We Are

Action by Churches Together (ACT Alliance) is a coalition of more than 145 churches and church-related organisations working together in over 125 countries to create positive and sustainable change in the lives of poor and marginalised people regardless of their religion, politics, gender, race or nationality in keeping with the highest international codes and standards. ACT Alliance is faith-motivated, rights based, impact focused, committed to working ecumenically and inter-religiously, with the communities we seek to serve and accompany at the centre of our work. Our members respond in areas where suffering, poverty and injustice occur, regardless of location.

As the world's largest Protestant and Orthodox alliance, ACT is an expression of who we are as church and related members, what we uphold and how we work together. Churches are local. They have been an integral part of communities across the globe for millennia, bringing hope and healing often in remote and marginalised locations. They will continue to be so in the years to come. As a result, ACT is firmly rooted in the communities that it serves. ACT members are committed to *leaving no-one behind*. *Hope in Action* seeks to include those who are otherwise excluded or marginalised. ACT seeks to release the agency of people affected by poverty and crisis by moving them from being passive recipients to actors in their own development and relief. In doing so, ACT Alliance enables, supports, brings specialist skills, enhances voices and shares learning, enabling and accompanying communities to realise their hopes and ambitions through joint action.

ACT Alliance is committed to working in a spirit of **ecumenical diakonia** (serving together). **Diakonia** is an expression of what churches *are* and *do*. The commitment to unity and sharing includes a mission to serve in the world, participating in God's mission of healing and reconciliation, and of lifting up signs of hope. This was already an integral component of the ecumenical movement in its early periods, even before the founding of the World Council of Churches (WCC), as exemplified in the Commission on Interchurch Aid, Refugee and World Services (CICARWS). ACT Alliance is rooted in this history of ecumenical commitment for joint social service. It was founded by the WCC, the Lutheran World Federation and related agencies with the goal to establish a coordinated platform for ecumenical diakonia, expressing the joint vision to assist people in need and work for a better world. ACT Alliance therefore expresses its commitment to prophetic diakonia, denouncing injustice (advocacy) and announcing (actions) the 'good news' – in serving human need, breaking down barriers between people, promoting humanity in justice and peace, and upholding the integrity of creation, so that all may experience 'fullness of life' (John 10:10). ACT Alliance renews its commitment to working together with our ecumenical partners and inter-religious organisations during this strategic period.

Our core **vision** and **mission** are an expression of who we are and what we want to achieve. ACT members are united in the common task of all Christians to manifest God's unconditional love for all people. The Alliance works towards a world community where all God's creation lives with dignity, justice, peace and full respect for human rights and the environment. During this strategic period, we seek to be a cohesive, effective and relevant alliance working for justice and peace, fostering local leadership and upholding resilient and sustainable communities.

ACT members are bound together by **core values** that are grounded in our Christian faith and which guide our humanitarian, development and advocacy work. Upholding the **dignity**, uniqueness and intrinsic worth of every human being as created in the image of God is central to who we are and critical to the work we do. ACT seeks to **respond** without any form of discrimination and exclusion to human suffering irrespective of race, gender, belief, nationality, ethnicity, age, disability or political persuasion. We denounce structures and mechanisms of exclusion in order to promote the common good and the world's well-being. Our work seeks to promote a **participative**, open environment, enabling responsible working relationships where communities are central to identifying local needs and assets, and in decision making - determining priorities, inclusive approaches and mechanisms for response. We believe that a person is not only sacred but also has a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable. As a faith motivated and rights based alliance, ACT understands that all people are rights-holders and our action as a faith based constituency adheres to the principle that universal and indivisible human rights are the cornerstone of international human rights legislation as emphasised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, and reiterated in numerous international conventions, declarations and resolutions. Being true to our values requires ACT to uphold high standards of **accountability, mutuality and transparency** - recognising our accountability to those we seek to serve, to those who support us, to each other and ultimately to God.

What We Do

In promoting a just, inclusive and sustainable world, ACT Alliance implements effective **humanitarian, development and advocacy** work at national, regional and global levels by saving lives, providing emergency assistance and supporting sustainability, enhancing the rights of those whose rights are not realised. During this strategic period, ACT will focus on the relationship between these three pillars of work to promote an integrated response that challenges policies and practices that contribute to vulnerabilities, perpetuate inequalities and contribute to the destruction of the environment. ACT will seek to advance the role of national actors and leadership across all of its humanitarian, development and advocacy work as the basis on which to build resilience, human rights and dignity, with ACT forums playing a central role in facilitating the implementation of the localisation agenda at national and regional levels. This will necessitate a stronger focus on building relationships with local humanitarian, development and advocacy actors, and in particular churches and church based organisations.

In addition, during this strategic period ACT Alliance will seek coherence in all its work to achieve greater impact. Our principles of human rights, gender justice, do no harm, conflict resolution, participation and putting people first will be prioritised, as we seek to contribute to positive change using our faith perspectives. We will also seek to uphold and promote space for a diverse and vibrant civil society to contribute to the development of a just and inclusive world. To this end, ACT speaks in ways that connect our faith values and human rights, enabling us to communicate within and outside of the faith constituency.

A Changing Context

The global context within which ACT Alliance operates is ever more volatile and uncertain, and the challenges we face in working for a better world where all live in dignity have become more complex. While many of the issues not have changed since the last ACT global strategy (2015-2018) was developed, the pace of change, intensity and impact has. In taking stock as we develop a new global strategy, some of the most salient issues include:

- **Large-scale forced displacement:** According to UNHCR, at the end of 2016 there were 65.6 million people who were forcibly displaced. Currently there are 40.3 million internally displaced people (IDPs) globally (IDMC). Key challenges faced by IDPs, refugees, stateless persons or those displaced by climate change or natural disasters is the lack of protection and the violation of their rights. These issues also affect many of the world's migrants, particularly those in lower-skilled sectors. Many of them are increasingly part of large-scale mixed irregular movements including forced migration, making them vulnerable to exploitation and rights abuses.
- **Climate change:** Many humanitarian catastrophes across the world today are increasingly related to climate change, and it is a key driver of poverty and an inhibitor for sustainable development, causing loss of lives, income and damage to properties, exacerbating population displacement and conflicts. Sea levels are rising and oceans are becoming warmer. Longer, more intense droughts threaten crops, wildlife and freshwater supplies. Our planet's diversity of life is at risk from the changing climate.
- **Depletion of natural resources:** The current global population is 7.2 billion and growing, while earth's total resources can only support 2 billion people at the current demand. All natural resources are being depleted and the consequences will have a strong impact on the planet, given that we are already using 2 to 3 times more of the Earth's natural resources than is sustainable. More intense natural hazards and disasters are expected, while human-induced conflicts stand to further strain the use, management and access of these resources.
- **Growing inequality:** While global levels of poverty have decreased, inequality is increasing. The distinction between the Global North and South is fading and being replaced by a more complex picture. The global inequality crisis is reaching new extremes, both within and between countries, and is undermining global efforts to end poverty, discrimination and marginalisation, advance women's rights, defend the environment, protect human rights and democracy, prevent conflict, promote fair and dignified employment and uphold the rule of law.
- **Insecurity and polarisation:** Fuelled by xenophobic and racist extremism and the rise of populism and nationalist politics in many parts of the world, insecurity and polarisation within and between countries is negatively impacting global responses to poverty and injustice. A far-reaching crisis of democracy linked with a distrust in democratic institutions, has been accompanied by a decrease in traditional forms of political and civic participation (elections, political party membership, etc.). This, combined with a decrease in respect for human rights, has resulted in increasing insecurity and polarisation, fuelled by the misuse of mainstream media. At the same time, such crises are often linked with socio-economic situation of the countries and the inter-relationship with individuals' economic insecurities. In addition, international human rights frameworks are being challenged and disrespect of International Humanitarian Law is increasing, as are challenges to international and regional human rights instruments, mechanisms and court processes.
- **Political dynamics and new agendas:** There is an emergent shift in power dynamics and creation of new centres of power. Traditional Northern (Western) countries are diminishing in global influence. Across the globe, some countries are trying to develop inclusive, cohesive democracies with changing values to accommodate populations originating from different cultures and governance structures. At the same time, others are replicating the kind of power politics exemplified by the former 'great powers' which have detrimental effects on the conclusion and implementation of international agreements that would go beyond self-commitments of states. The intergovernmental system is in many ways unfit for purpose to tackle some of the challenges of today's world. Other actors (e.g. transnational corporations or CSOs) have come into the picture to fill some of the regulatory void created by this situation.
- **Technology:** Rapid development within technology including the rise of social media means that the world is connected as never before, bringing positive and negative results. The use of smart

technologies for development and commerce (e.g., mobile banking across Africa), and smart tools to measure development impacts provides new and exciting opportunities for how development actors work, while also posing some challenges for minority and vulnerable groups. Artificial intelligence may bring benefits and risks for humanity. This is combined with an increased influence of the media and the roles, habits and attitudes of Millennials (known as Generation Y).

The issues above affect the environment in which ACT Alliance members are involved. In addition, there are specific issues and situations that directly affect the work of ACT and its members, which require special attention during this strategic period:

- **Global frameworks:** Agreements such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Istanbul Principles for development effectiveness, the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Paris Agreement have created new opportunities for how humanitarian and development actors respond - including a growing affirmation of working together in partnerships to realise global goals. This offers new opportunities not only to create sustainable positive change, but also to provide global platforms to confront challenges affecting ethics, humanitarian values and principles.
- **Role of religion and faith:** There is a renewed and growing recognition that religion in our world is an important factor in public life and all of its social, economic and political aspects, and as such needs to be taken seriously, both in its negative and positive aspects. This reality requires more interfaith action, dialogue and partnership. Religion, spirituality and faith have a role to play in the future of development.
- **Shrinking space for civil society and CSOs:** The hard fought space for civil society and CSOs has been shrinking around the globe. Increasing bureaucratic regimentation and red tape, combined with restrictions in the name of combating terrorism has meant that civil society and CSOs have increasingly less space in the spheres of humanitarian action, development and particularly as advocates and monitors for good, fair and transparent government actions and giving voices to the disempowered. The space for CSOs is further shrinking in national and multilateral arenas, affecting both organisations and individual human rights defenders.
- **Changing media ecosystems impacting democratic institutions:** New information and communication technologies and social media are transforming societies everywhere. Traditional, digital and other media can be democratic tools for grassroots mobilisation, but they are vulnerable to censorship and information control by global conglomerates and governments. Media reform and pressures on society - especially the closing of public spaces - together with widening inequalities, the 'fake news' phenomenon and increasing threats to freedom of expression all make the struggle for communication rights more relevant and urgent. These issues have a direct impact on decision-making at all levels, as well as on the ways in which humanitarian, development and advocacy interventions are designed and delivered.
- **Resources allocated for official development assistance (ODA) and humanitarian aid:** People in least developed countries (LDCs) tend to remain in deeper poverty, have fewer domestic resources than other developing countries and are vulnerable to risks, politically and environmentally. The current country-based allocation system for ODA is inadequate. Current ODA is also increasingly misused as a tool for achieving political objectives that can conflict with human rights standards and principles. While overall humanitarian funding increased in 2015, the gap between requirements and contributions to humanitarian agencies grew and most of these resources were not channelled to NGOs.
- **The Private Sector:** A major global trend we are currently witnessing is the rapidly increasing

prominence of the private sector both in shaping development policy and as a key actor in the delivery of humanitarian and development plans. We are also seeing a trend in institutional donors shifting their attention increasingly towards the private sector, often at the cost of funding for civil society actors. Mirroring the impact of the world as a whole, this trend affects all members of the ACT Alliance as they strive to implement their shared vision for transformational change.

These issues have had a noticeable effect on the operating space of ACT members as well as within the communities they serve. This global strategy tries to take into consideration these issues and provides strategies and indicators to address them, as we seek to remain **cohesive**, **effective** and **relevant** as an alliance in the years to come.

A Holistic and Integrated Response to the Challenges of the World

ACT Alliance will respond to the fast changing and volatile humanitarian, development and political context through holistic and integrated programming under its broad humanitarian, development and advocacy pillars, building on the distinct mandates and specialties of our membership. The causes and effects of disasters, conflicts, poverty, deprivation, and human rights violations are closely intertwined with each other and with the negative impact of current models of economic development. As such, during this strategic period ACT will strengthen the nexus between our humanitarian, development and advocacy work, particularly in the five thematic and programmatic priority areas of this strategy.



Humanitarian programming will demonstrate the links with sustainable development and advocacy through a stronger focus on resilience, disaster risk reduction (DRR), and linking relief, rehabilitation and development (LRRD) approaches. It will endeavour to highlight the unique value and niche of faith based actors in delivering humanitarian assistance that builds resilience and reduces risks and vulnerabilities at individual, household and community levels. Moreover, ACT Alliance will attempt to leverage the particular potential as FBOs to strengthen linkages between human dignity, human rights, protection and spirituality.

ACT Alliance will undertake humanitarian advocacy that carries the agenda of ACT national forums and the voice of communities affected by crises, as embodied in the localisation agenda of the Grand Bargain and

other ACT commitments made at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit. This approach shall be complemented by building strong links between humanitarian programmes and the overall ACT advocacy work streams, e.g. climate justice, gender justice, economic justice, migration and displacement, SDGs, and human rights.

Our advocacy will respond to, support and align with the implementation of global policy frameworks, particularly the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs as well as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and other global agreements on migration and displacement and international humanitarian and human rights law, and the potential intersections between them.

The SDGs and their interconnected nature provide a good starting point in our aim to strengthen the links between our thematic and programmatic priorities. ACT Alliance will articulate a position to build on and expand current work to reduce inequality and to promote gender and economic justice, looking particularly to strengthen the links with the peace, security and development nexus and the migration and displacement work areas. On one hand, our work on emergency preparedness and response will be connected more closely with disaster risk reduction, strengthening community resilience, livelihoods, climate change adaptation and compensation for loss and damage, and climate-induced migration. On the other, emergency response and efforts at strengthening community resilience will need to be well connected to peacebuilding efforts and the area of migration and displacement, in order not only to “bounce back” after situations of violent conflict, but to achieve transformational development towards greater community and social resilience to conflicts in the future.

Thematic and Programmatic Priorities

During this strategic period, ACT will promote and implement **emergency preparedness and humanitarian response** that ensures stronger participation of affected communities and local and national organisations, and fosters greater investment in preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience. ACT will seek to develop a reputation for delivering high quality humanitarian response programming according to humanitarian standards, in accordance with international frameworks and norms. ACT will also strengthen its brand in humanitarian coordination at all levels to realise and leverage the benefits of working together, and further build on external partnerships to amplify the impact of its humanitarian work. This includes UN agencies, interagency platforms, civil society and NGO networks, faith based networks and local faith actors, and global and regional ecumenical bodies.

Transformational and sustainable development is about taking action so that all peoples’ human rights are upheld. Many of our members are working against poverty, exclusion and inequalities, and developing new forms of solidarity, promoting new international and financial architecture, fiscal justice, or social security. This work continues to be a major focus of our membership.

Based on its identity as a leading faith based network, ACT will specifically work to build on the opportunities for faith based organisations in the global religion and development agenda, and increase understanding and visibility of the role faith based organisations play. As an alliance, ACT will work to develop its competence and confidence in promoting its faith motivated and human rights based approach in its language and work.

As ACT Alliance develops robust programming in its priority areas, incorporating a strong dimension on countering inequalities and economic injustice, it will promote sharing of innovation and good practice

among forums and members. This will place a strong emphasis on ‘local agency’ and putting people at the centre of development, integrating a human rights based approach in our work, ensuring that development programming encompasses integration of economic, social, political and ecological dimensions, and integrates influencing for change to norms and policy to overcome root causes of poverty and injustice.

ACT will work to align its work on transformational and sustainable development to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the SDGs. At one level, and as cohesiveness and capacity is enhanced, this will require forums to engage substantively in the policy development, implementation and monitoring of national implementation plans, and as such will be contextually driven in relation to the overall policy framework and any particular goals. Joint implementation of pilot programmes by national forums towards the implementation of SDGs (inter alia in partnership with UN agencies and other partners) will be encouraged, with the intention of broadening their scope as this strategy progresses.

At regional and global levels, ACT’s focus will continue to be on the achievement of the underpinning principles of the SDG framework (by which the UN system is holding itself to account): to “leave no one behind” and to reach the furthest behind first, to focus on people and their rights, to ensure sustainability, to address peace, justice and strong institutions, and its universal, integrated and global nature. ACT has a strong basis on which to build, and this will now require ACT to connect its humanitarian, development and advocacy work more cohesively.

While ACT as a whole will not seek to focus its development advocacy on particular goals and targets within the SDG framework, the priority areas make it evident that ACT’s work on transformational and sustainable development will engage particularly with Goal 5 – Gender Equality, Goal 10 - Reduced Inequalities, Goal 13 – Climate Change, and Goal 16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, which will also serve to connect humanitarian policy and practice as well as advocacy more coherently. Forums will link with this framework and identify their own areas of engagement and joint collaboration within the 17 SDGs based on what is most relevant for their respective contexts. The Alliance will further highlight the importance of an enabling environment for civil society for ensuring that ‘no one is left behind’ and for more sustainable and equitable outcomes across all goals.

To address root causes of injustice, vulnerability, and poverty ACT Alliance will implement coordinated **advocacy for justice and dignity** at local, national, regional and global levels. ACT Alliance advocacy is an essential complementary tool for the successful implementation of transformational and sustainable development, and emergency preparedness and humanitarian response. ACT’s advocacy will be faith motivated and human rights based, and as such is an important expression of our prophetic diakonia, where we denounce injustice (advocacy) and announce the good news (actions) to all.

The motivation for ACT Alliance advocacy is both prophetic and political. Prophetic in the sense that we will advocate for the restoration, preservation and upholding of the dignity of all people, who are created and bear in the image of God. This also included our advocacy for the environment and the integrity of all creation. Our advocacy shall be political as we engage with political processes, structures and decisions makers, whose role and mandate have impact on the lives and livelihoods of people and communities.

ACT Alliance advocacy will be impact oriented; it will amplify the voices and experiences of people and communities; it will connect our members’ organisations and forums all across the world; it will be anchored within the ecumenical family; and it will build a global network of specialists, as well as strategic partnerships and relations. For impactful advocacy, ACT Alliance will prioritise work within its national, sub-regional and regional forums.

For this strategic period, ACT's programmatic priorities are:

1. Climate Justice

ACT Alliance recognises that climate change is a threat to lives, livelihoods and to the whole creation all across the world. It exacerbates poverty and inequality and undermines the ability of communities, particularly in developing countries, to enjoy full life with dignity. Scientific evidence has shown that climate change is a reality in the world today, and that human activity is its primary cause. It is expected that the impacts of climate change, including the many incidences of floods, droughts, sea level rise and other extreme weather events will continue to affect communities, hence undermining peace and development while resulting in humanitarian crises.

To respond to climate change, ACT Alliance will implement a climate justice programme that includes humanitarian action to save and protect communities in the wake of extreme weather events and long-term climate adaptation and mitigation initiatives in communities that will enhance resilience towards climate change impacts and address climate induced economic and non-economic loss and damage. In addition, ACT will continue to advocate and mobilise for climate justice in the context of the Agenda 2030, Sendai Framework for Action of DRR and the UNFCCC, with a specific focus on the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

For this strategic period, ACT Alliance will focus on the following result areas:

- i. ACT Alliance promotes the ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement through lobbying, advocacy, mobilisation and campaigning at national, regional and global levels targeted at national governments, regional bodies and processes under the UNFCCC.
- ii. ACT Alliance promotes community resilience through climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction and mitigation programmes, including through linking humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and development at community and national levels.
- iii. ACT Alliance strengthens its role as a faith based actor by engaging in ecumenical and faith inspired climate justice initiatives and partnerships that mobilise the moral and ethical imperative for global solidarity with people and communities affected by climate change.
- iv. ACT Alliance responds to the impacts of climate change through its humanitarian mechanism.
- v. ACT Alliance supports its forums through capacity building for climate justice advocacy and programming.

2. Gender Justice

ACT Alliance understands gender equality as the equal enjoyment of human rights, opportunities, responsibilities, resources and rewards irrespective of gender or sexual identities, including fundamental freedoms in the political, civil, economic, social and cultural fields of life. Gender equality is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people centred development. Gender equality ensures that all people have the power to shape societies, faith communities and their own lives.

ACT believes in an end to gender inequality and injustice, gender-based discrimination and violence, and in closing the gender gap and addressing unequal power relationships for the promotion of human dignity for all. This is ACT's commitment to achieving gender justice as a common value, and equality between all human beings as an inalienable human right, and because all are made in the image and likeness of God

and have equal worth and value.

The human rights principles of universality and non-discrimination apply to all people with whom ACT Alliance works. ACT will strive to ensure all its work consistently tackles intersecting areas of discrimination, such as gender, disability, nationality, race, religion or belief, class or political opinion, and will work for the empowerment of all, with special attention to women and girls as stated in Sustainable Development Goal 5 and the Istanbul Principles on development effectiveness.

By the end of this strategic period, ACT aims to be a leading faith based alliance speaking out on gender justice, with a strong track record of effective programming that responds to intersecting inequalities. As a faith based network, ACT is in a key position to act on gender injustices. Religious leaders play a central role in the lives of ordinary people as norm setters, moral compasses, legislators and advocates at national and international levels. ACT will strengthen its capacity to play a leading role in promoting gender equality amongst faith based humanitarian and development organisations and foster a step change at all levels within society, guided by alliance-wide strategic thinking and the development of a long term operational strategy based on mapping, data and policy positioning.

Gender equality will be a primary focus of ACT's work when engaging with the global religion and development agenda, as well as peace and human security discourses. ACT will also build strong partnerships with churches, civil society organisations, women's rights groups, the private sector, governments, the UN and other international bodies as an essential means to achieve gender justice and SDG 5.

For this strategic period, ACT Alliance will focus on the following result areas:

- i. All ACT Alliance members have a gender policy, that reflects ACT Alliance's Gender Policy, and have established procedures to ensure gender equity.
- ii. ACT Alliance will develop quality resources and provide online training opportunities, which members and forums are using and sharing with other partners to promote best practice and effective gender equality programming.
- iii. ACT Alliance has strong national, regional and global partnerships with interfaith, ecumenical and UN agencies, in which ACT Alliance forums and local partners actively participate within a variety of multi-stakeholder networks to promote gender justice.
- iv. ACT Alliance has strong gender analysis that shapes its public facing policy and advocacy positions across all thematic areas of work.
- v. ACT Alliance upholds the Core Humanitarian Standards and ensures that in humanitarian crises the specific needs of vulnerable groups (women, girls, elderly, ethnic and sexual minorities) are met.
- vi. ACT Alliance addresses critically important areas of gender justice, including gender based violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and economic empowerment ensuring no one is left behind.
- vii. ACT Alliance members integrate faith and rights based approaches to gender justice, enabling development programming across the membership to be gender sensitive or gender transformative.
- viii. The ACT Alliance Gender Justice Campaign serves as a spring-board for the realisation of gender justice both internally across the membership and within local, national, regional and international spaces.

3. Peace and Human Security

The world is affected by an array of profound and interconnected crises that not only accelerate complex power dynamics, but also increase war, violence, conflicts, human rights violations and economic inequalities. Struggles for the right to life and human dignity, self-determination, freedom of expression, assembly and association, freedom of religion and belief, along with freedom from both political subjugation and increased militarisation, are manifestations of people's quest for peace with justice and security. By engaging with populations under stress to address the needs they identify, human security directly and positively affects the daily lives of people threatened in their survival, livelihood and dignity.

To promote peace and human security ACT Alliance will work closely with National Councils of Churches, interfaith networks and civil society organisations to support or develop programmes and join other initiatives to prevent violence by addressing the root causes of conflict and strengthening a community's robustness to manage potential conflicts in the future. This involves addressing and preventing violence and ensuring that both women and men participate in decision-making processes, post-conflict reconstruction and transitional justice processes. Strengthening women's economic and social security, as well as addressing gender-based violence, are essential measures to secure a durable peace, security and reconciliation.

For this strategic period, ACT Alliance will focus on the following result areas:

- i. ACT Alliance connects people and groups "on the ground" (community and religious groups, grassroots organisations, etc.) with policymakers and powerbrokers (governments, the UN, corporations, banks, etc.) to not only resolve conflicts, but also to build societies, institutions, policies, and relationships that are better able to sustain peace and justice.
- ii. ACT Alliance supports strengthening instruments for preventing violent conflicts, and joins and enables the participation of its members and churches in peacebuilding, conflict transformation and reconciliation initiatives (e.g., National Councils of Churches). This includes the Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement of Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes, where churches can offer a platform to discuss a way out of violence on the basis of shared values, while playing an active role in influencing decision makers.
- iii. ACT Alliance promotes the involvement of women and youth in peace processes and peace negotiations to ensure that the needs and priorities of both women and men are included in peace processes and peace negotiations.
- iv. ACT Alliance builds capacity through peace education; addressing peace and rights based programming, and issues of human security, (e.g., access to justice and overcoming impunity).
- v. ACT Alliance engages ecumenically and in close cooperation with churches and other faiths in advocacy for peace at national, regional and global levels (e.g., UN Security Council), as well as with local communities, local governments, NGOs, regional and global networks and academic institutions.

4. Migration and Displacement

ACT Alliance recognises the pressing humanitarian and human rights challenges affecting increasing numbers of people on the move worldwide. The vast majority of today's roughly 65 million forcibly displaced people move within and between countries in the Global South, about two thirds of them are internally displaced, and thus outside the reach of specific international instruments. More and more people also find themselves displaced by the impacts of climate change, either temporarily or permanently,

and both within and across borders. Migration, while primarily a positive and beneficial feature of human history, also poses increasing challenges for those moving to escape abject poverty, economic inequality, and/or rights abuses, and seeking a better future for themselves. This is particularly true for semi- or low-skilled labourers from poor, rural areas, many of whom have little or no formal education.

The current global crisis of solidarity and increasing inequality has led to a situation in which large numbers of people – regardless of their motives for movement or their particular legal status in transit or at destination – are being pushed to the margins of countries and societies. As many developing countries struggle to continue to care for their neighbours in crisis who are on the move, the Global North's response has been a tightening of border controls, coupled with an absence of regular pathways towards protection and opportunity on their territories. The result has been an increase in smuggling and trafficking of persons, of exploitative labour practices, especially in the informal sector, which often provides the only means of survival for the marginalised, and an increase in protracted displacement situations worldwide.

To respond to this situation, ACT Alliance will implement a migration and displacement programme that promotes rights-based, locally and regionally informed, and globally coordinated advocacy on the rights of people on the move, addresses issues of human trafficking, and that builds the capacity of our members to develop and implement relevant and integrated humanitarian and development programming on the ground, and that strengthens ecumenical collaboration in these areas.

For this strategic period, ACT Alliance will focus on the following result areas:

- i. Migrants and displaced people access rights and protection through ACT Alliance advocacy related to international human rights norms and standards, particularly through pushing for transparent and participatory implementation and monitoring of the emerging global framework on migration to be mandated by the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, and by the Global Compact on Refugees.
- ii. Migrants and displaced people access rights and protection through ACT Alliance's accompaniment and amplification of their voices at a global, regional and national level, particularly through capacity building at ACT forum level.
- iii. ACT members and ecumenical partners are enabled to improve their work on rights-based protection and advocacy for migrants and displaced people through learning and sharing experience on related programme development.
- iv. ACTs work on rights-based protection and advocacy for migrants and displaced people is supported and enhanced through communications.

5. Emergency Preparedness and Humanitarian Response

The current context of humanitarian work is largely driven by intensifying levels of conflict and natural disasters. In 2018 alone, more than 128 million people across the world need humanitarian assistance and protection, and more funding is required to help them than ever before. The humanitarian sector needs to invest in more effective, efficient and cost-effective ways of delivering assistance in order to respond faster to crises, as well as the need to conduct more comprehensive, cross-sectoral and impartial needs assessments that will contribute to long-term solutions. There is also a wide recognition of the need to install multi-year and flexible programming approaches to protracted crises, as we see more and more crises moving into this territory.

The work of the ACT Alliance on emergency preparedness and humanitarian response is founded on its

policy to enable an effective ecumenical response that saves lives and maintains dignity. It remains committed to strengthening the resilience of affected communities and accountability to people and communities affected by crisis. Humanitarian needs define our priorities and the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence guide our actions.

As part of the holistic and integrated approach to humanitarian response, development and advocacy, ACT's emergency preparedness and humanitarian response will invest further in preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience, in addition to its work in life-saving emergency assistance. This will be supported by stronger humanitarian coordination and partnerships at all levels, and appropriate humanitarian advocacy with duty bearers and other positions of power.

ACT Alliance's humanitarian work will seek to harness the combined strength of its members in delivering response at scale and considerable reach through the 'Total ACT Response' and joint programming approaches. Recognising the growing intensity of natural hazards as well as ever-increasing pressures brought about by key drivers of humanitarian needs such as conflict and climate change, ACT has the opportunity to demonstrate its value as the leading faith based alliance in humanitarian response.

To achieve this goal, ACT Alliance will seek to promote and exercise a strategy that ensures quality and accountable humanitarian response, and stronger participation of affected communities and local and national actors through the localisation and faith based agenda in humanitarian action. Our actions will be guided by our commitment to ecumenical diakonia, and framed within the principles of quality and accountability embodied in the Core Humanitarian Standard and Sphere Standards.

Our humanitarian programme goals will be enabled by strengthening the role of ACT national forums in engaging local partners and communities and local faith actors' communities in delivering humanitarian response. Further, ACT Alliance will support survivor and community-led approaches to humanitarian response to ensure efficiency, resilience, dignity and self-esteem within communities. ACT humanitarian programmes will also seek to employ joint implementation approaches that demonstrate strong coordination and multi-sectoral impacts, and supported by a dynamic approach to funding and fundraising.

ACT Alliance will further invest in strengthening the humanitarian capacity of forums and national members through robust capacity and learning mechanisms, sharing of technology and expertise, and establishment of an effective surge support mechanism that utilizes the available resources within forums and across geographic regions. These mechanisms shall be defined by national forums based on their own contexts through up-to-date Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (EPRPs), which will be made mandatory for all forums beginning 2019.

ACT humanitarian advocacy will be primarily guided by, but not limited to, the ACT commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit (i.e., The Grand Bargain and Charter for Change), and the crisis/country-specific advocacy agenda of ACT Forums and communities.

For this strategic period, ACT Alliance will focus on the following result areas:

- i. ACT Alliance promotes and ensures stronger participation of affected communities and local and national organisations in preparedness and humanitarian response, and greater investment in preparedness, disaster risk reduction and resilience.
- ii. ACT Alliance has a strong reputation for delivering high quality humanitarian programming according to humanitarian principles and standards, and accompanied by a robust capacity building mechanism especially for ACT national members and local partners.
- iii. ACT Alliance strengthens its brand in humanitarian coordination at all levels to realise and leverage

the benefits of working together.

- iv. ACT demonstrates the unique value and niche of faith based actors in delivering humanitarian response that builds resilience and reduces risks and vulnerabilities at individual, household and community levels.
- v. ACT Alliance humanitarian advocacy at all levels is informed by the ACT WHS Commitments, the advocacy agenda of national forums and local partners, and the voice of communities affected by crises.

How We Will Do It - Strategies for Implementation

The implementation of the global strategy is supported by the policies, sub-strategies and implementation plans of the Alliance. Recognising the need for contextualisation at regional and national forum levels, ACT will use the following key approaches to implement the 2019-2026 strategy:

National, Sub-Regional and Regional Forums at the Centre of Our Work

A uniqueness of ACT Alliance is its national, sub-regional and regional forums. During this strategic period, forums will become central to responding to ACT's mandate and implementing the work of the Alliance as part of a holistic and integrated response. Forums are the meeting point where all ACT members operating in specific countries and regions come together as equals to work collaboratively on humanitarian response, sustainable development and advocacy initiatives and programmes, leveraging the skills and expertise of individual members and linking with local churches and organisations as key partners in advancing this work. The Alliance commits to building the capacity of forums with the required support to realise the objectives of the global strategy.

To meet the needs more fully of those ACT seeks to serve, forums will:

- Establish mechanisms to work in a cohesive and effective way, based on shared working with the same principles and standards, and upholding accountability in all its dimensions
- Undertake joint planning, implementation and monitoring as a means to enhance effectiveness and impact
- Develop the capacity of all members through local initiatives and practices and, shared learning and resources
- Enhance the full participation of members, including fostering relations with ACT advisory structures and participating actively in these at regional and global levels

Every national and regional context is different, and this diversity will be reflected in the structure and activities of the forums as they implement ACT's global strategy at national and regional levels. However minimum mandatory requirements will be adhered to as forums develop their work and deepen their collaboration:

- Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans (EPRPs) are mandatory to all forums, and members intending to implement emergency work through an appeal must be part of updated EPRPs.
- Forums will coordinate the alignment of the development and advocacy work of their members to the framework of the SDGs as a condition to access potential funding resulting from global ACT agreements with the UN, governments and multilateral institutions.
- Forums will include influencing and advocacy priorities in their strategies and are encouraged to

identify advocacy priorities, take part in and support advocacy initiatives at national, sub-regional, regional and global levels with ACT members and other stakeholders.

National, sub-regional and regional forums of ACT Alliance are - for ecumenical, theological and historical reasons - not complete without the participation of National Councils of Churches (NCCs) and Regional Ecumenical Organisations (REOs). This does not only mean that NCCs and REOs have a permanent invitation to participate in their respective national, sub-regional and regional forums, but can also imply that NCCs and REOs could regularly host ACT forums. Where ACT Forums and NCCs/REOs are less or insufficiently related to each other or work in different areas, they are encouraged to explore reasons for this together and enter into a deeper relationship of continuous collaboration. In addition, all forums may extend an invitation to Christian and interfaith organisations to participate in these meetings, in order to maximise the impact of FBOs in humanitarian, development and advocacy work.

Member Engagement

ACT's **Engagement Model** of membership will foster active engagement by members and forums in the life of the Alliance, enhancing ownership and participation at national, regional and global levels. The Engagement Model of membership seeks to:

- Foster a culture of active member engagement in the life of the Alliance
- Offer an inclusive model of membership for organisations of all sizes
- Offers opportunities for participation in decision-making for all members
- Stimulate dynamic forums as national, sub-regional and regional hubs of ACT membership
- Value both financial and non-financial contributions to the life of the Alliance
- Specifically address the fee structure to enable fair and equitable participation of members

ACT will recognise the needs and capacities of its members reflecting a commitment to working together and to sharing resources for greater programmatic impact.

To maximise the benefit of the Engagement Model of membership, **capacity exchanges** and **knowledge sharing** is essential. Members and forums should benefit from each other's experience on engagement in thematic priority areas and technical capacity, such as strategic thinking, public relations, fundraising, innovative approaches, etc. The exchange of experience is in all directions (North-South, South-North, South-South, and North-North).

Partnerships to Maximise our Impact and Sustainability

During this strategic period, ACT will work to scale up its influence and impact by building more intentional partnerships with a range of stakeholders to maximise benefits for our members and the communities they serve. We will consolidate existing and develop new partnerships that work to keep people and their rights at the centre, contribute to building public and private spaces that are just for all, and to achieving sustainable development that preserves the integrity of creation for current and future generations.

ACT will align with stakeholders who share our values and strategic priorities and meet our rigorous due diligence principles. ACT will build partnerships that are mutually transparent and accountable, and which promote equality and mutual respect between stakeholders irrespective of their size, status or power. Our partnerships will not prejudice our advocacy and as such ACT will engage with institutional donors and governments, advocating for positive change in models of development that have a strong anti-poverty and anti-inequality focus. The Secretariat will facilitate opportunities for members and forums to realise

high impact partnerships at national, regional and global levels, supporting forums to develop and benefit from these relationships.

ACT will develop and build partnerships at global, regional and national levels with:

- Ecumenical organisations
- Faith and interfaith organisations
- Governmental and inter-governmental organisations and specialised agencies
- Global networks
- Private sector, trusts and foundations
- Academia, social and grass-roots movements, and coalitions

The benefits we seek to realise from these partnerships range from increased financial support at global and forum levels, broader influence including access to power centres, increasing support and accessing new avenues for advocacy, collaboration for joint programming, access to specialist services (e.g., impact evaluation), and specialist support for capacity building (e.g., humanitarian response, leadership development, internships). Using relationship management tools ACT will track the quality and level of engagement with our partners (and where possible ensure that this data is available on a real time basis for our members).

Communications, Brand and Visibility

Communications is a vital part of the global ACT Alliance, both internally in connecting the Secretariat, ACT bodies, and its members with each other, and externally sharing the work done by ACT with its partners, media, and other key audiences. ACT's communication will reflect the values and identity of the Alliance through evidence-based storytelling, raising and amplifying the voices of the communities we work with through advocacy with particular emphasis given to language, culture and respect of diversity. ACT will build the cohesion, effectiveness and relevance of the Alliance through clear, relevant and timely internal communications. ACT will increase its visibility by sharing the work of forums, members and other groups as they implement impact-based programmes.

The primary objectives of ACT's communication include building ACT's brand, increasing the quality, timeliness and relevance of materials, working with members to build their capacity in communications, and increasing ACT's position in the media. This work will strive to embrace:

- A story-telling culture
- A people-centred approach and a sense of community among ACT members
- The enhancement of local impact and the promotion of local voices

ACT will continue to innovate and follow best practices to increase ACT's audience within our membership, towards external groups and the wider public, using multi-media, social media and other platforms to create, curate, and share content. ACT will share within its membership stories, photos, video and other material, and to continue to develop spaces for internal and external feedback of learning and best practices.

Resource Mobilisation and Funding for Sustainability

While institutional funding opportunities become more complex and demanding, there are increasing opportunities for the Alliance to access funds together. Rather than fostering a culture of competition, ACT Alliance will enable an environment that enhances collaboration in fundraising amongst members,

including:

- Supporting members to increase their funding opportunities by being part of a global alliance
- Providing opportunities for forums to access funding collectively (e.g., through UN partnerships, governments, etc.)
- Capacity building in ethical fundraising, funding acquisition and management
- Promoting opportunities for working in consortia

ACT will ensure that appropriate support structures are in place including secretariat staff with defined fundraising roles and responsibilities, plus motivated, engaged, well-informed forums, with all forum members benefitting from funds acquisition. ACT will increase its capacity at regional levels to assist in building the skills of the Alliance in institutional funding and management.

ACT will also seek to develop innovative new forms of financing learning from and where viable utilising proven models, e.g., impact investing. We will seek to build a financial support base from church constituencies in the Global South. We will also seek opportunities for funding and partnering with other constituencies compatible with our identity.

Accompanying our move into this strategic period and as part of a wider implementation plan, ACT Alliance will develop a robust business model to ensure that we can achieve our goals. This will include an assessment of the current and potential capacity of forums and the secretariat, the resource investment required to achieve our aims and metrics to measure progress and impact.

Innovation

ACT will work together to develop innovative approaches and programming which address humanitarian, development and advocacy challenges by encouraging and creating spaces for forums and members to engage creatively with one another. The Alliance will explore, develop and pilot new approaches to programming, funding, measuring impact and the use of technologies. Our approach will follow a model of co-collaboration with stakeholders and the piloting of new ideas with a view to scaling what is successful. ACT will seek to develop incubators and/or sponsored problem solving challenges to develop creative responses to poverty and injustice made up of ACT members, agitators from civil society, communities, private sector and academia – with innovation and/or peer to peer funding for piloting ideas.

ACT's work in innovation will also seek to develop and leverage specialist partnerships to help the Alliance develop a culture of innovation and pilot new ideas/methods of working. Examples include partners skilled in smart technologies, funds management, impact investing and social entrepreneurship.

Quality and Accountability

ACT Alliance is committed to demonstrating accountability in every aspect of its work, to the communities we serve, and to our membership and governance. Alongside a commitment to learning, ACT's focus on quality and accountability will strengthen the work and impact of our forums and membership. This includes a continued commitment to planning, and functional monitoring and evaluation systems which help in translating quality and accountability issues into the real practice of programme management and implementation.

The Alliance will endeavour to observe the highest standards of quality and accountability in the humanitarian, development and advocacy sectors. This will include, but is not limited to the Alliance's

adherence to the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS), the Code of Conduct of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the SPHERE Humanitarian Charter and the Istanbul Principles on development effectiveness. ACT members, forums and the ACT Secretariat will foster greater accountability to each other and other relevant stakeholders. Members, forums, governance and the secretariat will implement the ACT Quality and Accountability Framework and develop capacities where gaps exist.

Measuring Change and Impact

ACT's aim to achieve high levels of quality and accountability and increase benefit for members and communities requires increased focus on how the Alliance measures change and impact. Members, forums and partners want to know that the collective work undertaken is generating positive impact for the communities ACT serves. As part of ACT's ongoing work in measuring quality and accountability and as we seek to demonstrate cohesiveness, effectiveness and relevance, ACT will look to develop/undertake:

- Results driven, evidenced-based approaches combined with effective and efficient metrics
- Use of existing and emerging technologies to measure and communicate real time data in order to ensure more responsive programming
- An emphasis on the collective impact of our work as an alliance at national, regional and global levels
- The communication of outcome/impact level results, backing up the stories of change we share with our members and supporters
- A culture of learning through knowledge and capacity exchanges, lessons learned and undertaking real-time evaluations to improve performance
- A culture of adaptive leadership which is responsive to a changing environment

ACT will undertake an evaluation of progress and impact before the 2022 General Assembly, providing space for the Alliance to make any mid-term changes and adjustments in response to changing realities.

Applied Learning and Knowledge Management

Efficient and effective methods of learning and knowledge management, staff training and development, and continuous learning are essential to support the work of the Alliance. During this strategic period, we will develop our learning and knowledge management capacities to enable the sharing of experiences and lessons learned. ACT will facilitate access to knowledge, best practices and innovative initiatives utilising appropriate tools such as ACTLearn. We will utilise platforms for storing data and video stories in a manner that is accessible by all members. Our desire to develop a story telling culture will be backed up by verifiable data in accordance with IATI principles where feasible. Effective mapping of forum and member activities will increase our ability to raise resources at forum level and enhance our advocacy work.

Utilising Educational Technology (EdTech), the sharing of learning, experience, knowledge and innovation with capacity building will be supported by an ACT Alliance Academy. The purpose of the Academy is to establish a more robust conceptual framework for shared capacity building within the Alliance. In collaboration with members, ACT will develop shared learning pathways on specific areas to develop the core and technical competencies necessary to implement the global strategy (e.g., ACT Induction, Forum Life, Accountability, etc.). This will be complimented by other means of capacity building such as face to face trainings.

ACT will explore how to connect the employees and volunteers of our members to one another, enabling

peer to peer learning and support. We will encourage a culture of mentoring at all levels across the Alliance to increase the capacity of current and future leaders.

We will use appropriate technologies/Information and Communication Tools for Development (ICT4D) for front line and supporting activities to enable more effective coordination between members and forums when engaging externally. Learning from the experiences of members, ACT will explore options for, and where practical trial, the use of shared services for back office functions for members to reduce duplication and overheads at all levels.

Supporting Structures

In joining ACT Alliance, all members have committed themselves to collaborate and work closely together, leading to situation-specific responses, programmes and initiatives. and to active participation in the life and different structures of ACT Alliance where they exist. We share identity and aspiration. By working together and by connecting to one another effectively we can move forward and achieve even more together. This requires leadership at all levels: united leadership that is, acts and relates as an alliance, strengthening our abilities to uphold a common identity and go the extra mile to reach the communities we serve. ACT members are expected to set the joint direction of the Alliance, making full use of our supporting structures.

National, Sub-Regional and Regional Forums

ACT national, sub-regional and regional forums are the meeting point where all ACT members operating in specific countries and regions come together as equals to work collaboratively on humanitarian response, sustainable development and advocacy initiatives and programmes, linking with local churches as key partners in advancing this work.

Advisory Structures

ACT Alliance will develop effective structures for enabling members to engage in the life of the Alliance. Ultimately, we seek to have an impact focused mechanism to enable members to support the work of national forums and engage fully in the work of the Alliance at regional and global levels.

Governance

ACT's Governing Board governs the Alliance between general assemblies and ensures that the Alliance meets its overall objectives. It is accountable to the ACT members through the General Assembly (held every 4 years). An Executive Committee acts between meetings of the Governing Board to address items delegated by the Governing Board. Governing Board members:

- Ensure that the mission of the Alliance is carried out
- Are accountable to the ACT Alliance membership
- Lead “the spirit” of the ACT Alliance
- Ensure financial sustainability of the ACT Alliance
- Implement the principles of ACT Alliance and maintain high ethical standards and quality
- Build a fruitful working environment in the Board
- Enable the work of the Alliance, including the ACT Secretariat
- Promote the cause and visibility of the Alliance

Secretariat

Across all of its offices, the Secretariat will support the work of ACT forums and members by fulfilling five key functions:

- **Connecting**
 - Members, churches and communities to one another through forums and member engagement groups
 - The work of our members and voice of communities to global processes in national, regional and global arenas on agreed priority areas
 - Members to ongoing developments in the global development discourse to inform their work and future direction
- **Facilitating**
 - Working together through collaborative, impact driven work between members for the benefit of the communities they serve
 - The strengthening of forums within the alliance through encouraging the creation of new forums, capacity exchanges, peer to peer learning, sharing good practice, etc.
 - Ecumenical and interfaith engagement building on existing and establishing new relationships
 - The development of external partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders (multi and bi-lateral actors, other civil society alliances, the private sector, academia, etc.) for the benefit of our members and the communities they seek to serve
 - The enhanced visibility and input of youth in the life of the alliance, creating space for youth to develop an alliance-wide movement, engaging in, influencing and enhancing the work of the alliance in areas that resonate for them, and recognising the substantial proportion of youth populations in the majority of countries where our members are serving
 - Spaces for new and creative thinking and programming to address issues of poverty and injustice, including through the convening of internal and external stakeholders
 - Opportunities for leadership development to increase effectiveness, support and institutional memory by using expertise from within and outside the alliance
 - The transfer of knowledge and skills between senior leaders and specialists within the alliance to increase peer to peer support leading to increased impact
- **Promoting**
 - Exchanges between member organisations
 - The foundation of member engagement groups on issues of joint interest
 - An openness to learn from each other
 - The understanding of the act alliance as a network with many decentralised relationships
 - Agreed common standards and the adherence of these in the work of the alliance
- **Developing**
 - Mapping of member activity at national, regional and global levels for use in leveraging the Alliance
 - Joint global initiatives and campaigns on core issues
 - Policies, strategies and plans for implementing the global strategy
- **Leveraging**
 - Our presence as the world's largest Protestant and Orthodox faith based alliance in order to engage appropriately at national, regional and global levels
 - Our collective footprint and investment in humanitarian response, development and advocacy to:

- a) increase resources for the Alliance to further enhance its programmatic work and impact
- b) ensure that the voices of the poor and marginalised are heard and responded to at national, regional and global levels

The Secretariat and membership will work together to allocate roles and tasks to achieve our aims. Members with suitable capacities will be encouraged to provide technical leadership for some national forums. In providing this leadership, such members will to some degree need to subsume their own organisational interests and profile in favour of the needs of the wider forum membership.