

## **Statement from the Youth CoP to the ACT Assembly**

Paul wrote to Timothy: Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12)

### **Youth are agents of change**

Youth under the age of 30 make up nearly half of the world's population but our voice is not properly heard. At the same time, we already foster change in our local communities, nationally and globally when we take an active part in the work of the ACT Alliance. Youth provide a unique opportunity to engage with the next generation of world-changers and communicate ACTs agenda to their peers.

Youth are a key actor in reaching the sustainable development goals by 2030, but in order to do so youth need to have a voice at the decisions-making tables around the world. However, only 7% of the delegates in this room right now at the ACT Assembly are below 30 years and are representing half of the world population. Currently the ACT Alliance has no one below 30 in their governance board.

We, the youth engaging in ACT, as representatives of the youth in our member organisations are seeking equal and genuine participation in the Alliance, as well as concrete and consistent platforms to engage in within ACT. It is vital to acknowledge young people as vibrant and important components of the Alliance by creating space for youth involvement, at management, program and decision-making levels.

We therefore have the following suggestions for enhanced youth participation in ACT:

### **The ACT assembly**

Youth delegates with speaking and voting rights should be a regular feature of the General Assembly to make sure that youth are heard within ACT. The youth ask that the Youth CoP is recognized as a Global Youth Forum which will elect two representatives to the Governance Board.

### **Advisory groups, Communities of Practice, National and Regional Forums**

The Alliance should have youth included in all its forums, including as members of the Advisory Groups, relevant Communities of Practice and the National and Regional Forums. Youth as a development priority should be engaged in all three strands of the Alliances work; advocacy, development and humanitarian practice.

### **The Youth CoP as platform for communication**

The Youth Community of Practice should be a place to exchange ideas, experiences and knowledge between the youth organizations in ACT. In order to do this the CoP needs platforms where these can be exchanged. The youth requests funding for a biannual Youth General Assembly, one of which would happen prior to the ACT General Assembly.

### **Further measures to enhance youth participation**

In order to better include youth in the work of ACT, all organisations within the alliance should aim to include more young staff and young participants at trainings and meetings. Further there should be regular reporting of the youth involvement in the Alliance, to ensure that youth continue to be part of the discussions which concern us and where we can bring fruitful insight. There is need for the ACT Alliance to create a substantive youth desk that will be a liaison between the CoP and ACT and coordinate the work of youth within the life of ACT.

### **To sum up we call for:**

- The youth CoP to be recognized as a Youth Global Forum
- Two seats in the governance board
- Youth to be included in all forums and advisory groups
- A youth desk within ACT

The future belongs to the youth and thus we need to play a key role in the alliance today.  
That is Hope in Action!