

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

ACT Alliance Global Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic – ACT201

ACT Alliance is issuing this Call for Proposals under the Global ACT Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic – ACT 201. The Appeal document can be found [here](#). This document provides guidance for ACT Forums and members on their proposal submissions for their humanitarian response in the countries where they are present.

There are two funding mechanisms open for proposal submission, the Rapid Response Fund (RRF) and ACT Appeal (Full Appeal), following the same categories outlined in ACT Alliance’s Humanitarian Policy.¹ Requesting members will submit the necessary requirements as prescribed in the Humanitarian Policy for both Rapid Response Fund and Appeal strands. The templates to be used are generally the same as the regular RRF and Appeal templates, slightly revised for COVID-19 response. The updated RRF templates is issued along with this Call, and will be made available on the same webpage as the COVID-19 Appeal (*Appeal templates to follow next week*).

I. General Guidelines for Proposals (RRF or Appeal)

The Call for Proposals will follow a phased approach, as guided by the level of funding available at this point and considering the funding challenges in traditional fundraising environments. The **First Phase** will be a call for COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund (RRF) proposals from national members, which would ensure immediate ACT presence on the ground for life-saving and preparedness/prevention work and provide a clear signal of a locally-led approach. The **Second Phase** will be the call for Appeal proposals from ACT Forums, which would provide the space for larger-scale and multi-sectoral approaches for response in particular priority contexts.

Proposals submitted shall meet at least one of the following overall outcomes of the Global Appeal:

1. Reduced morbidity and mortality of COVID-19 patients, and increased preparedness and resilience of communities through public health interventions, community preparedness and prevention, and community engagement.
2. Improved and sustained access to humanitarian assistance across multiple response sectors, and protection services for human assets and rights, social cohesion, and livelihoods.
3. Religious leaders, churches and other communities of faith mobilized in managing beliefs, attitudes and social stigma, and ensuring community inclusivity and cohesion.
4. Appropriate action by duty bearers to provide assistance and ensure protection of refugees, IDPs, migrants, women, and other communities and groups particularly vulnerable to the pandemic.

Eligibility

1. All active ACT members who have signed the Membership Agreement and are in good standing (e.g., positive compliance with reporting requirements from previous ACT emergency response).
2. Local partners of ACT members who are not ACT members themselves are NOT eligible to apply directly, but can work with ACT members to participate in this response.
3. Suspended ACT members are NOT eligible to apply as direct requesting member nor as implementing partner of another ACT member.

¹ See <https://actalliance.org/documents/act-alliance-humanitarian-policy/>

A. First Phase: COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund (from 15 April 2020)

The COVID-19 RRF mechanism is accessible for national or local ACT members only, in line with the ACT Humanitarian Policy, and to ensure a locally-led approach. **Urgent action such as life-saving emergency response, along with preparedness and prevention measures**, will be the preferred intervention areas for the RRF. Proposals will be submitted directly by ACT national members to the ACT Secretariat Regional Office, with official endorsement from their ACT Forum (except in countries with no formal ACT Forums).

Project Outputs and Activities

As mentioned above, RRF projects need to be anchored on at least one of the overall outcomes of the Global ACT Response. To define project objectives, outputs and activities, members may consult the Programming Guidelines for different sectors and thematic areas in the Global ACT Appeal. This does not prevent members from developing proposals outside the programmatic entry points of the Appeal, especially if the local context or needs assessments require a different approach.

Project Duration

Project proposals submitted under the COVID-19 RRF will be **three to six (3-6) months** within the inclusive dates of the Global Appeal (15 April 2020-14 April 2021).

Budget

The global RRF budget under the COVID-19 Appeal is USD 3,000,000. This proposed budget is not secured. While the prescribed budget ceiling (maximum) is USD 100,000 for this round of RRF proposals, projects demonstrating high value for money will be strongly preferred.

Submission deadline

- First round: Friday, 17 April 2020, 17:00 CEST (up to 15 RRF projects globally)
- Second round: dates to be announced, subject to availability of funds

National members planning to submit an RRF proposal are strongly encouraged to get in touch as soon as possible with their respective ACT Regional Office for further guidance.

B. Second Phase: COVID-19 Appeal (from 15 June 2020)

The proposals under the ACT Appeal funding strand will be considered as approved proposals under the Global ACT COVID-19 Appeal, rather than stand-alone ACT Appeals. Funding approval depends on the amount raised in the Global Appeal, with possibility for either full or partial funding.

In addition to the general eligibility criteria, members planning to participate in the Appeal must:

- Have in-country presence and be members of the ACT national Forum
- Be endorsed by the ACT Forum to implement the response (to be indicated in templates)
- Where there is no active ACT Forum, requesting members will need to communicate the details of their response to other members that are present in the country and the ACT Secretariat

Project Outputs and Activities

Appeal projects need to be anchored on at least one of the overall outcomes of the Global ACT Response. To define project objectives, outputs and activities, members may consult the Programming



Guidelines for different sectors and thematic areas in the Global ACT Appeal. This does not prevent members from developing proposals outside the programmatic entry points of the Appeal, especially if the local context or needs assessments require a different approach.

Project Duration

Project proposals submitted under the Appeal will be nine to twelve (9-12) months, with earliest start dates from 15 June 2020, and latest from 15 September 2020.

An earlier start date may be considered for exceptional cases, depending on funding availability. Please inform your respective ACT Regional Office of any such requests.

Budget

The global budget for the Appeal component is USD 9,000,000. This proposed budget is not secured. While no specific budget ceiling (maximum) is prescribed for Appeal proposals, projects demonstrating high value for money will be strongly preferred.

Approved proposals may only be partially funded or made part of the funding pipeline, depending on the status of donor contributions. The real-time funding level of the Appeal will be made available online via Crystal Report: (<http://reports.actalliance.org/report/Appeals%202016-dynamic.aspx>, Appeal Code ACT201). Further inquiries may be addressed to the ACT Regional Offices.

Submission Deadline

Appeal proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis. Applications can be received from 01 June 2020 (for projects starting 15 June) to 01 September 2020 (for projects starting 15 September).

Forums/Members planning to submit an Appeal proposal are strongly encouraged to get in touch as soon as possible with their respective ACT Regional Office for further guidance.

C. Other Response Modalities

The Global ACT Appeal indicates other response modalities that are not covered by this Call for Proposals:

1. COVID-19 Programming in other ACT Appeals

Members currently implementing humanitarian response through ACT Appeals may consider introducing **practical** COVID-19 response elements within their existing projects. This would refer to resource or budget adjustments that do not require a formal revision of Appeals and approved RRF projects, and not reallocation of funds at scale. All requests under this modality must be communicated to the ACT Secretariat, which will determine an appropriate arrangement with donors depending on the compliance requirements attached to the funding.

It is quite important to note that while there are available opportunities for introducing COVID-19 programming in on-going humanitarian interventions, any such measures need to be carefully analyzed alongside the ACT Alliance and the humanitarian sector's position in order not to divert funds meant for other life-saving and critical response work, especially those crises that remain underfunded and underserved. Conversely, there is also the principle of introducing additional flexibility in consideration of the operational challenges faced by many implementing organizations owing to COVID-19. This may include No-Cost Extensions and the ability to re-program to other outputs and sectors within reasonable

bases, and easing the administrative burden related to such adjustments. A guidance document for COVID-19 programming in on-going ACT Appeals is being developed by the Secretariat, and will be communicated by the ACT Regional Offices soon.

2. Total ACT Response

ACT members may respond through their own response mechanism and operational/partnership arrangements outside the Global ACT Appeal. In view of the **Total ACT Response principle**, members managing their own response shall coordinate and share information with the ACT Forum in the country of operations. Further, such members are strongly requested to share detailed information about their response to the ACT Secretariat. An ACT 4W/5W tool will be communicated by the Secretariat to generate this information.

II. Project Selection Criteria

RRF and Appeal proposals will be assessed based on the following elements, drawn from the Start Fund selection criteria, OECD-DAC criteria for development effectiveness, and ACT Alliance-specific considerations:

1. Relevance and Appropriateness

- Spread and severity of COVID-19 in proposed project location/s (indicators in ACT Appeal)
- Alignment with the ACT Global COVID-19 Appeal Objectives and Outcomes
- How the project addresses local needs and priorities based on appropriate context and needs assessments
- How the project addresses access to resources and information by women and vulnerable groups, with gender perspectives
- How the project links with ongoing programmes of requesting forum/member in-country (humanitarian, development, or advocacy)
- The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution.
- Appropriate at-risk contexts selected for COVID-19 programming, e.g. urban poor areas; refugee and IDP camps; people on the move, including holding and detention centres; areas with lack of access to health services and facilities; underserved areas/populations in other active crises

2. Efficiency

- Value for money demonstrated in proposal narrative and budget
- The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economical and timely way.
- A measure of the outputs (qualitative and quantitative) achieved as a result of inputs.

3. Effectiveness

- Likelihood of planned activities to lead to expected results, i.e. intervention logic or theory of change
- Quality and accountability components, i.e. adherence to Core Humanitarian Standard, Sphere Minimum Standards and HSP companion standards, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA)
- Engagement in humanitarian coordination with government and/or other humanitarian actors, e.g. participation in Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs) and engagement in platforms such as Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs), clusters, NGO fora, government-led coordination
- Clearly defined operational elements of the response (i.e. implementation strategy and support mechanisms)

4. ACT Alliance presence and capacity

- Member capacity and presence on the ground; proven track record and technical capacity to implement humanitarian programmes including PMER.
- Demonstrated coordination of ACT national Forum (where there is no ACT Forum, demonstrated coordination among members)
- Updated EPRP and/or COVID-19 Contingency Plans
- Strong relationships with local faith actors, churches and other communities of faith

For Appeal proposals, the following additional element will be assessed:

5. Impact

- The extent to which the intervention is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.
- The potential significance and transformative effects of the intervention.
- Beyond the immediate results, the indirect, secondary and potential consequences of the intervention, i.e. holistic and enduring changes in systems or norms; potential effects on people's well-being, human rights, gender equality, and the environment.

III. Project Selection Process

A **COVID-19 Appeal Steering Committee** is being established by the Secretariat to provide advisory support in proposal selection and fund management for the Global ACT Appeal for an initial period of six months (April to October 2020). To date, four international or funding members have signed up to be part of the Committee: ELCA, UMCOR, Kerk in Actie, and Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. ACT Regional Offices are currently recruiting representatives from ACT national members (1 each from Africa, Asia Pacific, LAC, and MENA).

The Committee will be composed of senior staff of ACT members from:

- ACT funding members or international members that are not requesting members of the ACT Appeal; and
- ACT national members who are not expecting to submit proposals for the ACT COVID-19 Appeal/RRF; if no such national members are identified, ACT national members who may end up submitting a proposal can be considered but with a requirement to recuse when reviewing their own proposal.
- ACT Secretariat staff as appropriate

Main Functions

Advise the ACT Secretariat on the following mechanisms related to ACT Global COVID-19 Appeal:

1. Review the country prioritization and proposal selection criteria as described in the ACT Global Appeal, and develop additional guidelines if necessary
2. Finalize the Call for Proposals for the ACT Global Appeal (Appeal and Rapid Response Fund strands)
3. Decisions for the selection of countries/forums using the tiered selection criteria
4. Decisions for project selection and funding allocation based on the level of contributions for the ACT Global Appeal (RRF and Appeal strands)
5. Participate in relevant global ACT coordination meetings for COVID-19

Project selection and funding decisions will be made by the Secretariat, with advice from the Appeal Steering Committee. Proposals in progress can be reviewed by the ACT Secretariat upon request; however, once an application has been submitted, the proposals will be reviewed on their own merits. Decisions will be communicated within 5 working days by the Secretariat, along with notes from Steering Committee discussions.

Three types of decisions will be made: Approved, Disapproved, For Revision. Some proposals may be approved in principle, subject to availability of funding.

Funding for approved RRF proposals will be disbursed fully; for Appeals, release of funds will be determined based on funding availability, agreed workplan. and fund transfer schedule.

IV. M&E and Reporting

The ACT Global COVID-19 Response places a strong value for learning in this particular response, recognizing that this is the first time the Alliance is utilizing a global approach in responding to a crisis. It is strongly advised that project proposals clearly demonstrate the tools and methodologies for learning and knowledge development, as this response is expected to inform different elements of the ongoing reform of the ACT humanitarian mechanism, as well as establish new and innovative mechanisms for strengthening the crucial role of ACT Forums, national members, and local faith actors in humanitarian response.

As indicated in the Appeal, the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) requirements for the COVID-19 Response will follow the established procedures for regular RRFs and Appeals, i.e. requesting members will be responsible for monitoring activities and reporting to track project performance, identify results and learnings, and address potential delays at an early stage. Considering the challenges posed by lockdowns in many countries, monitoring by implementing members and the ACT Secretariat can utilize non-traditional approaches such as remote monitoring depending on the situation. These details should be made clear in the project proposals.

RRF reports will be sent directly by the requesting members to their respective ACT Regional Office, while Appeal Reports will be consolidated at Forum level and then sent to the ACT Regional Office. A general consolidation of reports will be made by the Secretariat for reporting against the Global Appeal, to be sent to donors. Specific RRF/Appeal reports will be made available upon request. In cases of back donor funding, special conditions may be set for certain projects. Such conditions will need to be discussed between the funding member, the ACT Secretariat, and the requesting member/Forum.

V. Proposal Submission

COVID-19 RRF Proposals will be submitted to the ACT Secretariat Regional Offices directly by requesting national members. Appeal proposals will be submitted by the ACT Forum Convener or Coordinator on behalf of requesting members. Members and Forums are responsible for ensuring that the ACT Secretariat receives their proposal within required due dates. Proposals received after the due date may be considered in the next deadline, subject to availability of funding.

Applications, along with other inquiries related to the Call for Proposals, shall be sent to the respective ACT Secretariat Regional Office supporting the country (addressed to the Regional Representative, with copy to the Regional Humanitarian Officer).

Africa

ACT Regional Representative, Elizabeth Kisiigha Zimba (Elizabeth.Zimba@actalliance.org)
Humanitarian Programme Officer, Caroline Njogu (Caroline.Njogu@actalliance.org)

Asia and the Pacific

ACT Regional Representative (ad interim), Femia Baldeo (Femia.Baldeo@actalliance.org)
Humanitarian Programme Officer, Cyra Michelle Bullecer (Cyra.Bullecer@actalliance.org)

Europe

Humanitarian Programme Officer, Dragana Levicanin (Dragana.Levicanin@actalliance.org)

Latin America and the Caribbean

ACT Regional Representative, Carlos Rauda (Carlos.Rauda@actalliance.org)
Humanitarian Programme Officer, Sonia Judith Hernandez (Sonia.Hernandez@actalliance.org)

Middle East and North Africa

ACT Regional Representative, Rachel Luce (Rachel.Luce@actalliance.org)
Humanitarian Advisor, George Majaj (George.Majaj@actalliance.org)

All other countries/Forums not supported by ACT Regional Offices/staff can get in touch with the Head of Humanitarian Affairs in Geneva (Alwynn.Javier@actalliance.org)

Visit the ACT Alliance COVID-19 webpage: <https://actalliance.org/covid-19>

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