

ACT's Roadmap on Accountability Improvement & Compliance

Duration: 5-Months (Sept 2022 - Jan 2023)

Background

ACT Alliance is the largest coalition of Protestant and Orthodox churches and church-related organisations engaged in humanitarian, development and advocacy work in the world. It consists of 138 members working together in over 120 countries to create positive and sustainable change in the lives of poor and marginalised people, regardless of their religion, politics, gender, sexual orientation, race or nationality, in keeping with the highest international codes and standards.

ACT Alliance is committed to demonstrating accountability in every aspect of its work. Where accountability is the acknowledgement, communication, and assumption of responsibility for actions, decisions, and policies including administration, governance, implementation, and consequences of the implementation of all activities the member is involved in. We believe that it is important to uphold a high standard in protecting the rights and dignity of the communities we serve. We see it as part of our duty-of-care.

The ACT Quality and Accountability (Q&A) Framework summarises standards of quality towards which ACT can be held to account by its stakeholders and by each other. It states ACTs primary commitments and the different responsibilities of members, secretariat and governance in relation to ACTs accountability mechanisms. The ACT Q&A Framework includes the ACT mandatory policies, international standards, cross-cutting and sectoral policy guidance. Where, policies are approved by the Governing Board and ACT members are obliged to adhere, irrespective of their areas of work.

As a global alliance, ACT has a complex accountability chain within a diverse and independent membership. Some member organisations work primarily through partners and some implement programmes themselves. Within the alliance, ACT members work individually and as part of national and regional ACT forums; some work together through an ACT appeal mechanism in response to a disaster, others plan and implement joint development projects together, while others participate in formal ACT advisory groups or communities of practice.

All ACT members are accountable to their own governance structures and are responsible to the ACT Alliance for meeting the obligations of their ACT

membership. ACT members who fund or access funds through the ACT emergency appeal mechanism have additional accountability responsibilities. All ACT members share the same ethos and values. As an alliance, ACT seek to ensure that the processes for accountability and varying roles and responsibility coexist seamlessly, and all accountability systems work as a coherent whole. ACT works to ensure that an effective system for accountability instils a culture of accountability at all levels.

ACT Secretariat runs an annual membership survey to assess the members. Based on responses from the recent surveys, the ACT Reference Group on Quality and Accountability, Membership and Nomination Committee and the Governing Board agrees to strengthen the membership accountability to ACT policies. Hence, we seek a consultant to develop an evidence-based roadmap for strengthening members accountability to ACT mandatory policies. To propose a future direction and concrete recommendations to close the gaps in relation to member's accountability.

Objectives of the Consultancy

The objective of the consultancy is to develop an evidence-based roadmap for closing the accountability & compliance gap of ACT members.

We envisage a two-step process.

1. Undertake an Accountability Assessment to gain a comprehensive understanding of the current accountability gap of ACT members, as well as key constraints and barriers to full compliance (from members and the secretariat).
2. The second is to develop an evidence-based roadmap and action plan to guide the ACT Alliance to implement the measures (short-term, medium-term, and long-term)¹ to close the accountability and compliance gap in membership. This will also include, an action plan for various stakeholders, particularly ACT governance, ACT secretariat, Reference Group on Quality and Accountability, Membership and Nomination Committee who monitor different aspects of compliance.

Scope of the Consultancy

The assignment is expected to be completed in two phases with the following scope of work:

Phase 1: Accountability Assessment (completed – see the note below)

- a. Define Analysis Framework

¹ Short-term: 1-2 years, Medium-term: 2-3 years, Long-term 3-5years

Develop an analysis framework for conducting the accountability assessment. The analysis framework should outline the key pillars of the accountability assessment, provide a detailed technical approach and the analytical process for identifying opportunities, constraints, and developing recommendations. It will be important to frame this analysis in alignment with the ACT Quality & Accountability Framework and the Code of Good Practice.

- b. Information Gathering
 - i. Conduct desk review of the ACT policies, documents, processes, and mechanisms in place to support accountability:
 - a. Identify/list ACT membership requirements and requirements for participation in Humanitarian & Gender Justice Programmes etc.
 - b. Identify policies in place to support accountability
 - c. Analyze current status of membership accountability
 - d. Recommendations on how to close the accountability gaps
 - ii. Identification of key respondents to participate in interviews/surveys/focus group discussions.
- c. Analysis and report writing
 - i. Provide a comprehensive report of the current status of membership accountability, showcase the existing accountability mechanisms in place.
 - ii. Provide a comprehensive analysis of the current gaps in membership accountability to ACT policies, the constraints and barriers.
 - iii. Provide evidence-based recommendations to close the accountability gaps identified. The recommendations should also include the needed measures to overcome the barriers.

Phase 2: Roadmap for ACT Members Accountability & Compliance

- a. Information Gathering
 - i. Develop questionnaires for conducting interviews/surveys/focus group discussions with Reference Group on Quality & Accountability, ACT membership and nomination committee, members, secretariat staff, governance,
 - ii. Conduct interviews/surveys/focus group with key respondents
- b. Development of Roadmap
 - i. In collaboration with ACT Secretariat, develop the initial draft of the Roadmap. The Roadmap should clearly outline the key

recommendations for each stakeholder including any technology/IT solutions to be put in place; an implementation plan, and a complete monitoring and assessment plan. The implementation plan should be broken-down under short-term; medium-term, and long-term timelines, along with the responsibilities, and the recommendations on “essential” or highest risk membership requirements i.e. we need the consultant to provide a clear recommendation on ACT membership requirements that have zero tolerance for non-compliance.

- ii. Develop a second draft of the Roadmap incorporating feedback from the stakeholder consultation as well as the comments from the relevant ACT structures.

Important Note: The assignment was started in March 2022 and from tasks listed above under Phase 1 are almost completed. So we are looking for team leader to work with two other team members working part-time on this assignment to complete the Phase 2 of the assignment.

Expected Deliverables

Phase 1: Accountability Assessment

- Analysis framework and report outline
- Desk research report
- First draft of the Accountability Assessment Report
- Final draft of the Accountability Assessment Report
- Powerpoint Slides with a summary of the report
- Present the analysis and recommendations

Phase 2: Roadmap for ACT Members Accountability & Compliance

- Interview/survey questionnaires
- First draft of the Roadmap
- Final draft of the Roadmap
- Powerpoint slides with a summary of the Roadmap

Skills and Experience

- Degree in social sciences, development studies, or another comparable discipline.
- Minimum of ten years of professional experience in supporting organizational management/development
- Strong experience in developing accountability Roadmaps/Strategies.
- Strong experience in developing monitoring and assessment tools.
- Experience working with faith-based actors would be an asset.

- Good listener, analytical and highly cooperative.
- Significant experience in conducting consultations & facilitating discussions.
- Extensive experience with quality report writing.
- Sets priorities, meets deadlines and manages time efficiently.
- Experienced working for non-profit organisations of varying sizes and capacities.
- Knowledge of ACT Alliance and about Quality & Accountability is an asset but not a requirement.
- Fluency in English is mandatory, fluency in French and Spanish an asset.

Reporting

The team will work in collaboration with the members of the ACT Reference Group on Quality & Accountability but report to the ACT Global Quality & Accountability Officer/Director of Operations.

Timeline

The task is expected to be completed in around 05 months (maximum 20days) and will commence in September 2022 on dates to be agreed with the team. The work can be conducted remotely.

Important Note: We kindly ask you to read the [ACT Code of Conduct](#) and [ACT Alliances principles and policies](#). All consultants are required to sign the ACT Code of Conduct when entering into any kind of engagement with ACT Alliance. We expect you to strictly maintain the confidentiality of all documents shared/produced during this assignment.