

ACT ALLIANCE MEMBERSHIP AGREEMENT

Between the ACT Alliance Voting Member and the ACT Alliance

1. PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT

This is a Membership Agreement between (please print the full name of the ACT Alliance Voting Member):

a church or church-related organisation (hereinafter referred to as the “ACT Voting Member”) and the ACT Alliance - Action by Churches Together (hereinafter referred to as ACT Alliance).

This agreement represents the expressed commitment of these two parties to work collaboratively to advance the ACT Alliance global mission of working together “for positive and sustainable change in the lives of people affected by poverty and injustice through coordinated and effective humanitarian, development, and advocacy work”¹.

It outlines the roles and responsibilities of the ACT Voting Member and the ACT Alliance, including the relationship between the ACT Voting Member, the ACT Alliance governing bodies and the ACT secretariat. These roles and responsibilities demonstrate a shared member commitment to value effective partnerships and to seek ways to broaden and deepen trust within the alliance. The ACT Code of Good Practice, outlined in Annex 1 of this document, forms an integral part of this membership agreement, as does its appendix.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARTIES

2.1 ACT Voting Member

The ACT Alliance Statutes state that the Voting Members of the ACT Alliance must commit themselves to:

- 2.1.1 Adhere to the vision, mission and commitments of the ACT Alliance, as summarised in the Founding Document, dated February 27, 2009.
- 2.1.2 Adhere to and comply with all mandatory policies of the ACT Alliance, which have been or shall be adopted by the Governing Board.²
- 2.1.3 Adhere to the Code of Good Practice of the ACT Alliance (including the Code of Conduct for the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and other codes which may be adopted by the

¹ ACT Alliance mission statement, Founding Document 2009, see: <http://actalliance.org/documents/act-alliance-founding-documents/>

² The ACT Quality and Accountability Framework outlines all ACT mandatory policies and related member commitments. See: <http://actalliance.org/about/standards-and-policies/>

Governing Board in the future) as well as The Code of Conduct of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, and for organisations involved in humanitarian assistance, also the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere Standards).

- 2.1.4 Co-brand with the name ACT Alliance according to the ACT Branding Policy, which has been or shall be adopted by the Governing Board.
- 2.1.5 Actively participate in the global or national and regional forums where they exist and work with and strengthen other ACT Alliance members.
- 2.1.6 Pay the membership fees (Forum Fee and the Income Based Fee (IBF), as the case may be) and comply with any other financial obligation as set by the By-laws which will be adopted by the Governing Board and/or contribute to the ACT Alliance according to their means and potential.
- 2.1.7 Agree to submit annual audited financial and narrative reports on request.
- 2.1.8 Meet ACT Alliance criteria as set by the Governing Board for accessing appeal funds for humanitarian assistance and related activities.

Additionally, Voting Members of the ACT Alliance commit to:

- 2.1.9 Ensure all mandatory ACT policies as outlined in the ACT Quality and Accountability Framework are available to staff, as appropriate, and that they understand and comply with them.
- 2.1.10 Commit to work towards aligning ACT member strategies with the ACT Alliance Strategic Plan, where relevant, exploring areas of common interest and building synergies and new forms of cooperation between members.
- 2.1.11 Support and enable staff, where possible, to actively participate in ACT reference groups and communities of practice.
- 2.1.12 Participate in developing, disseminating and monitoring ACT policies, procedures and strategies.
- 2.1.13 Participate, as appropriate, in the funding, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of ACT appeals.
- 2.1.14 Ensure ACT emergency appeals are implemented and reported on in compliance with ACT Alliance policies and guidelines.
- 2.1.15 Ensure that the terms and conditions of individual ACT funding member agreements, signed by the ACT secretariat on behalf of requesting members, are honoured.
- 2.1.16 Adopt and implement, through building the capacity of staff, policies and practices that are consistent with ACT policies and guidelines, especially related to gender equality, rights-based approach, humanitarian protection, climate change, disaster risk reduction, psychosocial, security, capacity development and impact assessment ³.
- 2.1.17 Adopt risk management strategies that ensure that all development and humanitarian funds are used for their intended purpose, used efficiently and economically and never knowingly used for supporting individuals or entities involved in illegal activities or for financial gain.
- 2.1.18 Cooperate with any investigation into an alleged breach of any mandatory ACT policy or code.
- 2.1.19 Ensure that ACT stakeholders have access to timely, relevant and clear information about the organisation and its activities.
- 2.1.20 Recognise that the General Secretary of the alliance is the prime spokesperson for the alliance and that all communications regarding the alliance are carried out in compliance with the ACT Communications Policy and the ACT Advocacy Policy and Procedures.

³ See: <http://actalliance.org/about/standards-and-policies/>

2.2 ACT Alliance

The ACT Alliance governance and management structure shall enable the alliance to meet its overall objectives. The following are the specific responsibilities of the Governing Board, Executive Committee and Membership and Nominations Committee.

As noted in the ACT Alliance By-laws, the Governing Board has the overall responsibility for the governance of the ACT Alliance between general assemblies. It approves policies that affect the alliance.

As noted in the ACT Alliance Statutes, the Governing Board has the following responsibilities:

- 2.2.1 Appoint and dismiss the General Secretary of the ACT Alliance.
- 2.2.2 Appoint and dismiss the members of the Executive Committee.
- 2.2.3 Fill until the next Ordinary General Assembly any vacancies on the Governing Board (including the Moderator, the Vice-Moderator and the Treasurer) occurring as a result of the death, retirement or resignation on the basis of a slate of nominations presented by the Membership and Nominations Committee.
- 2.2.4 Approve the Strategic Plan for the ACT Alliance.
- 2.2.5 Ensure the ACT Alliance is meeting its objectives as outlined in the Strategic Plan.
- 2.2.6 Ratify overall policy decisions which affect the ACT Alliance as a whole.
- 2.2.7 Approve the annual budget prepared by the ACT secretariat.
- 2.2.8 Establish the bookkeeping and the financial statements of the ACT Alliance.
- 2.2.9 Prepare and convene the General Assembly.
- 2.2.10 Appoint Advisory Groups to advise the Governing Board or the Executive Committee.
- 2.2.11 Receive and approve reports from the ACT Alliance General Secretary and the Executive Committee, and Advisory Groups as appropriate.
- 2.2.12 Receive advice and recommendations from the Membership and Nominations Committee and approve applications for Voting and Observer membership.
- 2.2.13 Decide on appropriate procedures for nominations from the National, Global and Regional Forums for elections to the Governing Board and Executive Committee.
- 2.2.14 Suspend or exclude Voting and Observer members from the ACT Alliance.
- 2.2.15 Fill any vacancies on the Membership and Nominations Committee until the next General Assembly.
- 2.2.16 Receive complaints and decide on appropriate sanctions.
- 2.2.17 Adopt and amend the ACT Alliance By-laws.
- 2.2.18 Define and fix the membership fees (Forum Fee and Income Based Fee (IBF)).
- 2.2.19 Define and fix the Observer Fee.
- 2.2.20 It can delegate management tasks and responsibility to the Executive Committee as appropriate.
- 2.2.21 It can also delegate the establishment of the bookkeeping and the financial statements to the Treasurer.

It shall additionally:

- 2.2.22 Provide oversight to ensure that all funds designated for the work of the alliance are used efficiently and economically and for their intended purpose.
- 2.2.23 Enable the ACT Alliance and the staff to adequately address the specific requirements and needs of development and humanitarian assistance work according to their nature and at the same time ensure coherence and professionalism.
- 2.2.24 Ensure the alliance is equally owned by the “Global South” and “Global North”.

- 2.2.25 Take account of the ACT obligation to ensure good stewardship of funds by minimising the costs of the governance and management structure.
- 2.2.26 Promote: the participation of all regions; women; ownership of the ACT Alliance; commitment to the ACT Alliance; and the coherence and inter-relationship of humanitarian and development work.
- 2.2.27 Ensure governance election procedures are sufficiently transparent, participatory and inclusive.
- 2.2.28 Ensure that nominations and elections to governance committees enables opportunities for participation of as many ACT Voting Members as possible and are transparent and accountable.

As noted in the ACT Alliance Statutes, the Executive Committee assumes tasks and responsibilities according to the Governing Board's delegation and instructions.

The Executive Committee will:

- 2.2.29 Supervise the implementation of policies and financial decisions between meetings of the Governing Board.
- 2.2.30 Grant approval of policies and procedures for the ACT Alliance for the eventual ratification by the Governing Board.
- 2.2.31 On behalf of the Governing Board, provide support and advice to the General Secretary on various issues of strategic importance.
- 2.2.32 Receive progress reports from the Secretariat on all activities undertaken according to the Strategic Plan.
- 2.2.33 Monitor adherence to The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, the ACT Code of Good Practice and any other quality standards in the fields of humanitarian, development, human rights and advocacy work.
- 2.2.34 Ensure that the learning from evaluations and other assessments are incorporated into policies and guidance for project implementation and recommend to the Governing Board on actions, as appropriate.
- 2.2.35 Receive reports regarding infringement by ACT Alliance Voting or Observer Members of the Code of Good Practice, Code of Conduct, policies and other elements of the ACT Alliance mission, vision and values and recommend to the Governing Board on actions, sanctions and disciplinary measures as appropriate.
- 2.2.36 Receive periodic financial reports from the Secretariat and provide advice/guidance as needed.
- 2.2.37 Ensure that activities of the Secretariat are carried out in line with the approved annual budget.
- 2.2.38 Provide accountability and reporting to the Governing Board.

The Membership and Nominations Committee has two key responsibilities as outlined in the ACT Alliance Statutes, namely, to advise on membership issues and to prepare slates for election to the Governing Board.

The ACT Alliance By-laws note that in particular, it will:

- 2.2.39 Develop appropriate procedures for membership applications and sanctions and inform the Governing Board of issues arising out of these mechanisms.
- 2.2.40 Screen all applications for membership and make recommendations to the Governing Board as to whether organisations applying for membership should be accepted.
- 2.2.41 Receive and respond to complaints about members, following procedures agreed by the Governing Board.

- 2.2.42 Make recommendations to the Governing Board on any specific sanction which needs to be taken against a member, according to the agreed procedure.
- 2.2.43 Prepare nomination slates for all elections to the Governing Board and Executive Committee.

2.3 ACT Alliance Secretariat

The ACT Alliance secretariat, as outlined in the ACT Alliance By-laws will be led by a General Secretary who is accountable to the Governing Board. The General Secretary will be the prime spokesperson for the ACT Alliance.

As noted in the ACT Alliance By-laws, the ACT Alliance secretariat will work with its members to realise the objectives and functions of the ACT Alliance including, to:

- 2.3.1 Develop the capacity of its members so that they deliver high quality and effective development and advocacy programmes and can respond quickly and effectively to emergency situations.
- 2.3.2 Promote cooperation of its members in their development, humanitarian and related advocacy work through the global forum and national and/or regional forums, specific global initiatives, and other means.
- 2.3.3 Facilitate the emergency response of members through coordinated appeals and implementation of assistance through the global forum, national or regional forums (wherever possible).
- 2.3.4 Promote strict adherence to the ACT Code of Conduct and the Code of Good Practice for the ACT Alliance and to other codes and standards to which ACT Alliance is a signatory.
- 2.3.5 Promote the visibility of the ACT Alliance through coordinated communications and ensure adherence to the ACT Alliance Branding Policy.
- 2.3.6 Actively engage in international debates and initiatives on development, humanitarian and advocacy issues.

Additionally, the secretariat commits to:

- 2.3.7 Facilitate the development and support dissemination of ACT policies, positions, strategies and guidelines in a participatory and inclusive way.
- 2.3.8 Inform ACT members of all policy decisions approved by ACT governance and provide the necessary documentation in a timely manner.
- 2.3.9 Facilitate the development of the ACT Strategic Plan through participatory engagement with ACT members and the global, national and regional forums.
- 2.3.10 Facilitate the work of formal ACT reference groups and communities of practice.
- 2.3.11 Orient ACT members on the identity, functions and work of the ACT Alliance.
- 2.3.12 Ensure the existence of proper financial systems of internal control, adequate procedures for the authorisation of payments and that documentation of each transaction conforms to generally accepted accounting practices.
- 2.3.13 Prioritise cost effectiveness and make sure funds are used for their intended purpose.
- 2.3.14 Ensure that all individual ACT appeal funding agreements signed by the Secretariat on behalf of the requesting member are shared with the requesting member in a timely manner. If additional reporting requirements and/or special conditions related to backdonor requirements are contained in the agreement, the secretariat shall first consult with the requesting member before signing the agreement.

Accountability of the secretariat

It is the obligation of the secretariat and its staff to be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken by them, and to be responsible for honouring their commitments, without qualification or exception. To support this process the ACT secretariat will:

- 2.3.15 Make available a copy of its draft annual operational plan to the members, by August 31, and also provide an annual report against that plan by May 31 each year.
- 2.3.16 Have a procurement policy outlining good business practice to which it will comply when procuring goods and services. The advantage of competition shall be utilised and tenders and tenderers shall be treated objectively in order to achieve competition on equal terms.
- 2.3.17 Ensure the existence of strong internal control systems covering all areas of work for the secretariat.
- 2.3.18 Keep financial records in accordance with generally accepted international accounting standards.
- 2.3.19 Keep and make available all programme, project and activity-related documents and financial records for seven years, for purposes of follow-up and control.
- 2.3.20 Confirm in writing receipt of all financial contributions within 30 days of receipt of the bank notification.
- 2.3.21 Actively work to resist, prevent and detect all forms of fraud and corruption within the organisation, and activities the organisation takes part in.
- 2.3.22 Take prompt action, in line with the ACT Complaints Policy and related guidelines on investigations, to address an alleged breach of ACT's fraud and corruption policy.
- 2.3.23 Submit an audited annual financial report for the whole organisation. The report should be in accordance with the professional standards promulgated by the Swiss Institute of Certified Accountants and Tax Consultants.
- 2.3.24 Make available the ACT financial report to ACT members on an annual basis, and not later than May 31. The audit should be performed by an independent certified/chartered auditor. The auditor should be a member of the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC) or an equivalent national body with international auditing standards. The financial report will include:
 - a report to the ACT member on the annual financial report
 - the auditors' report and opinion on the consolidated financial statements further to the audit conducted in accordance with international standards on auditing
 - a consolidated balance sheet, income and expenditure account, movements in funds and reserves, and notes to the financial statements
 - an appendix with opening fund balances, income, expenditure, transfers between funds and closing fund balances for the year under report
 - It should be possible to identify each grant from the member in the audited annual financial report, in the income statement or in the audited notes to the financial statements.
- 2.3.25 Provide, on request, the annual auditors' management letter to ACT members.

3. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES AND COMPLAINTS

When a dispute arises between the parties to this Membership Agreement regarding its interpretation and application, all good faith efforts shall be made to resolve the dispute amicably. In the event this proves impossible, the parties shall consult together with a view to its expeditious settlement, including by reference of the dispute to the governing bodies. It is expected that all ACT members will attempt to resolve any compliance issues among and between each other locally and as soon as an issue arises, especially if members are working in a partner relationship. Alternatively, such complaints can be addressed at the ACT forum level, if forum members have agreed to a common complaints' mechanism.

If the issue cannot be resolved at the country level or between members, formal complaints from one (or more) ACT Alliance member organisation(s) about the conduct of other ACT Alliance member organisation(s) should be submitted directly to the ACT Alliance "Complaints Focal Person" by email address: Complaintsbox@actalliance.org, by letter or by phone call. Such complaints shall be addressed according to the procedures set out in the ACT complaints handling and disciplinary policies.⁴

4. MEMBERSHIP SUSPENSION OR EXCLUSION

An ACT Voting Member can be suspended or excluded according to the procedures decided by the Governing Board. ACT membership status may be terminated through:

- A member informing the secretariat that they wish to terminate their membership
- An organisation not meeting their obligations of membership
- A member no longer fulfilling the criteria for membership.⁵

Membership can be suspended or exclusion effected by the ACT governance in line with the agreed procedures as outlined in the ACT Membership Disciplinary Policy.

5. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Individual ACT Voting Members may require additional and specific agreements with the ACT Alliance. These will be negotiated directly with the secretariat, signed by both parties, and appended to this Member Agreement.

6. DATE OF EFFECT

This agreement will come into effect on the date of signature of both parties and continues in effect until either:

- I. It is terminated by both parties upon written notice to the other party and will terminate 60 days after receipt of such notice.
- II. The terms of agreement are revised by the Governing Board.

⁴ For details of the policy and supporting complaints and investigation guidelines please refer to: <http://actalliance.org/about/standards-and-policies/>

⁵ As outlined in the ACT Founding Document (p. 6), see: <http://actalliance.org/documents/act-alliance-founding-documents/>

The terms and conditions of this agreement are approved by the ACT governance and cannot be changed without action by the Governing Board. Should there be changes to the terms of agreement, a revised agreement would need to be prepared and signed.

An organisation whose member status to the alliance has been approved by the ACT Governing Board but, has not signed a membership agreement within a six (6) month period after notification of said approval, will not be considered as a member of the alliance. The approval will be considered ineffectual. The organisation will therefore not benefit or participate in alliance activities, including participation in the national, sub-regional, regional and global forums, accessing humanitarian funds through the alliance, participating in ACT structures, and will not be able to co-brand under the ACT Alliance name and logo.

For the ACT Voting Member

Name of ACT Alliance Voting Member organisation:

Name of authorised representative:

Position: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

For the ACT Alliance

Name of ACT Alliance General Secretary:

Rudelmar Bueno de Faria

Position: ACT Alliance General Secretary

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Annex 1

ACT ALLIANCE CODE OF GOOD PRACTICE

1. INTRODUCTION

The ACT Alliance as a membership-based organisation is committed to providing high-quality humanitarian, development and advocacy programmes and to working in an open and accountable way.⁶ The Alliance was founded with clear respect for the independence of its members. At the same time, the ACT Alliance has a vested and collective interest in the performance of individual members or group of members.

ACT Alliance members are bound together by several core values that are grounded in our Christian faith and which guide our work. We have a responsibility to be accountable to those individuals and communities with whom we work, to those who support us and to each other.

2. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The *ACT Code of Good Practice* is an organisational level commitment to continuous improvement and movement toward best practice principles. It complements the *ACT Code of Conduct*⁷ which serves as a guide for individual ACT staff to make ethical decisions in their professional lives and at times in their private lives.

The Code of Good Practice for the ACT Alliance sets out common values, principles and commitments that will shape the humanitarian, development and advocacy work of ACT members. It outlines the minimum professional and ethical standards required from all ACT members.

The Code of Good Practice provides principles for all ACT members focusing in four key areas:

- i. *Overarching principles* - the fundamental principles that guide our work as an alliance.
- ii. *Organisational principles* – the principles that promote professional management, leadership and support in ACT member organisations to guide how we work. They provide the foundations for effective and accountable programming.
- iii. *Programmatic principles*⁸ – the principles that guide our actions in ACT member programmes addressing capacities and promoting justice and equality in line with ACT policies and guidance.
- iv. *Relational Principles* – the principles that support ACT members working together and promote collaboration, cooperation and partnership among alliance members

⁶ ACT Alliance Founding Document, February 2009

⁷ ACT Code of Conduct for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, fraud and corruption and abuse of power: <http://actalliance.org/about/standards-and-policies/>

⁸ The programmatic principles will be reviewed every three-five years to embrace new developments and in some cases, new scientific evidence, so that the Code becomes established as a credible and accurate reflection of sound programmatic practice for the ACT Alliance.

3. ACT ALLIANCE PRINCIPLES

i. Overarching Principles

Each member of the ACT Alliance commits to...

1. Acting in ways that respect, empower and protect the dignity, uniqueness, and the intrinsic worth and human rights of every woman, man, girl and boy;
2. Working with communities and individuals on the basis of need and human rights without any form of discrimination, ensuring that the capacities and capabilities of communities are considered at all times, and especially targeting those who suffer discrimination and those who are most vulnerable;
3. Speaking out and acting against those conditions, structures and systems which increase vulnerability and perpetuate poverty, injustice, humanitarian rights violations and the destruction of the environment;
4. Working in ways that respect, strengthen and enable local and national-level capacity;
5. Not using humanitarian or development assistance to further a particular religious or political partisan standpoint⁹;
6. Upholding the highest professional, ethical and moral standards of accountability, recognising our accountability to those with whom we work, to those who support us, to each other, and ultimately to God;
7. Meeting the highest standards of truthfulness and integrity in all of our work; and
8. Endeavouring not to act as instruments of government foreign policy.

ii. Organisational Principles

1. Commit to responsible and transparent governance and management including upholding the highest ethical standards and being accountable to all stakeholders
2. Develop and maintain the organisational capacity necessary to support development and humanitarian programmes in terms of mobilisation of resources¹⁰ and creating management conditions to achieve strategic objectives;
3. Commit to act in ways that will protect God's creation, restore the environment and respect human rights;
4. Promote gender equality as a common value and gender mainstreaming as a method of work;
5. Take responsibility and hold ourselves accountable for ensuring the safety, dignity and security of our staff and volunteers;
6. Make a 'core commitment' to mainstream protection in all work, at a minimum, ensuring mechanisms are in place to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and other forms of gender-based violence;

⁹ See end of document for Appendix – ACT Alliance Non-Proselytism Statement, adopted by the ACT Alliance Governing Board, June 2016.

¹⁰ Such as: staffing, infrastructure, technology, and finances.

7. Make a concerted effort to engage with churches and their local ministries, recognizing their role in providing religious and spiritual care as well as essential humanitarian and development assistance to local communities;
8. Manage financial resources in an efficient, transparent and accountable manner; and
9. Reflect in communication and fundraising materials the dignity, resilience and initiative of affected communities.

iii. Programmatic Principles

1. Uphold high ethical, human rights and programmatic standards in all of our work (as relevant) such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹¹, Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief¹², Sphere Standards¹³, the Principles of Partnership,¹⁴ the ACT Code of Conduct¹⁵, and all other ACT Alliance policies and codes¹⁶.
2. Listen to, and incorporate into all stages of programmatic work, the perspectives of those women and men whose lives are affected by crises, poverty, exclusion, rights deprivation and injustice and support them as they claim their human rights and work to improve their situation and overall wellbeing.
3. Address the root causes of poverty, rights deprivation, injustice, and exclusion in appropriate ways, including working for relevant changes within both formal and informal institutions.
4. Work to ensure that appropriate and timely support reaches the most deprived men and women within communities.
5. Proactively seek equal and meaningful participation of women and men from the communities with whom we work in initiatives and decisions that affect their lives and livelihoods, making a concerted effort to include those who are disproportionately excluded in their society.
6. Promote an integrated, community-based approach to our work, creating a link between development and humanitarian assistance and related advocacy work, recovery, reconstruction, and disaster risk reduction.
7. Use work approaches that develop community capacity, strengthening existing community capacity and prioritise the use of local resources (human, material, cultural, etc.).
8. Enable the active participation of communities in determining appropriate self-protection and risk reduction measures.
9. Work to foresee and understand the impact of our work on existing and potential conflicts and inequalities, incorporating “Do no harm” principles in our work and where appropriate, grasping opportunities to support peace.
10. Ensure the people that we work with have access to information about ACT, our programmes, our budget, funding sources, how they can give feedback or complain, and participate in our work.

¹¹ See: <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html>

¹² See <http://www.ifrc.org/en/publications-and-reports/code-of-conduct/>

¹³ See Sphere Standards 2011 version <http://www.sphereproject.org/>

¹⁴ See <http://actalliance.org/about/standards-and-policies/>

¹⁵ See the “ACT Code of Conduct for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, fraud and corruption and abuse of power”, revised January 2011 at <http://actalliance.org/documents/act-alliance-code-of-conduct/>

¹⁶ For all ACT policies and guidelines see: <http://actalliance.org/about/standards-and-policies/>

11. Ensure rigorous, high quality standards in all our work, having effective systems for planning, monitoring and evaluating.
12. Use moral and ethical business practices when relating and cooperating within ACT and with external actors such as other NGO, UN agencies, the private sector and the military.
13. Work in a complementary and collaborative manner with other national and international development and humanitarian institutions and agencies.

iv. Relational Principles

1. Nurture and sustain partnerships to support more effective, fair and satisfying ways of working together with an emphasis on greater sharing of power, learning, and knowledge;
2. Commit ourselves to being transparent with, listening to, learning from, and sharing experiences with other members in order to improve the quality of our work and draw on the rich diversity of our alliance.
3. Build relationships, strengthen effectiveness and work collaboratively, adopting complementary strategies in our work.
4. Recognise and value the unique gifts that each of us has been given.
5. Build and sustain transparent and accountability-based relationships to support coordinated and effective humanitarian, development and advocacy responses.
6. Strengthen the capacity of churches who are responding to the developmental needs of their communities, paying particular attention to enhancing the capacity of ecumenical organisations and to support programmes undertaken by multi-faith groups.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the principles is the responsibility of each ACT member signatory and as such, each member organisation should institute a system to self-evaluate its efforts and progress towards each principle.

An ACT Peer Review system will be facilitated by the ACT Secretariat to assess the level of implementation of the principles and to serve as a shared learning experience for alliance members. The ACT Secretariat will provide assistance to help implement parts of the Code where possible and as appropriate, supported by ACT's Global Working Groups.

5. COMPLIANCE AND SANCTIONS

All ACT Alliance members must adhere to the Code of Good Practice and its Appendix. It is expected that all ACT members will see the mutual benefits of following the good practices set out in this Code, and will attempt to resolve any compliance issues among and between each other especially if members are working in a partner relationship. Alternatively, such complaints can be addressed at the ACT forum level, if forum members have agreed to a common complaints mechanism.

If the issue cannot be resolved at the country level, formal complaints from one (or more) ACT member organisation(s) about the conduct of other ACT member organisation(s) can be submitted to the ACT General Secretary. S/he will refer such complaints to the ACT Complaints Advisory Group which reports to the

Governing Board. The group will present the findings and conclusions of any investigation to the Governing Board. The Governing Board will then decide on the necessary disciplinary action (if any) based on the defined ACT disciplinary procedures outlined in the ACT Complaints Policy and Disciplinary Procedures.¹⁷

6. ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

An ACT member organisation endorsement of the Code and its Appendix means that the ACT Voting Member supports ALL principles, even if the organisation is not involved in all areas of sectoral work.

The representative of the ACT Voting Member Organisation, whose signature appears below, has read, understood and is in agreement with the content of this Code of Good Practice and its Appendix. The ACT Voting Member Organisation also accepts the consequences of non-adherence to any of the above provisions under this Code and of non-adherence to its Appendix below.

Full name of ACT Voting Member Organisation: _____

Name of Signatory: _____

Position: _____ **Signature:** _____

Date: _____ **Place:** _____

¹⁷ For details of the policy and supporting complaints and investigation guidelines please refer to <http://actalliance.org/documents/act-alliance-complaints-handling-policy/>

*Appendix to Code of Good Practice***ACT ALLIANCE NON-PROSELYTISM STATEMENT**

The Cambridge Dictionary defines proselytism as: “to try to persuade someone to change their religious or political beliefs or way of living to your own”. It is this understanding of proselytism that forms the basis for this ACT Alliance Non-Proselytism Statement.

ACT Alliance members are bound together by core values expressed in the Alliance Founding Document. Through these core values the ACT Alliance and its members affirm that

- All persons are created in the image of God
- God is known through Jesus Christ and revealed through the Holy Spirit and Scriptures
- God stands beside the poor and oppressed
- The Church is called to manifest God’s gracious love for all people and work towards a reconciled human community as one body of Christ
- The earth and all it contains are God’s gifts and are to be protected and shared in good stewardship

ACT Alliance’s humanitarian, development and advocacy engagement is a witness to God’s unconditional love for the world. ACT Alliance affirms its overall rights-based approach where poor and marginalised communities are at the centre. ACT Alliance affirms the freedom of religion or belief as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and freedom of religion as a human right as well as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights including its affirmation of everyone’s right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

ACT Alliance does not use humanitarian or development assistance or advocacy programmes to further a particular religious or partisan political standpoint. This means that ACT Alliance and its members

- Reject the use of any aid, either to an individual or to a community, to advance religious or partisan political standpoints
- Reject the use of their programmes to advance religious or partisan political standpoints
- Reject the use of manipulation, coercive techniques, force or exploitation of people’s vulnerability to advance religious or partisan political standpoints
- Are truthful and transparent about their identities and motivation when asked and offer information about the goals of their organisations and programmes if requested
- Advance through their engagement and programmes, where necessary, with tolerance of differences in belief and protection of those whose human rights are not respected

In keeping with that, we celebrate when people’s lives are enriched by faith, but we reject any attempt to misuse humanitarian or development assistance or advocacy programmes to manipulate either an individual or a community towards a particular religious belief. We believe such attempts lack integrity, result in poor development and dishonour the One who is our motivation.

Breach of this Code of Good Practice, including the appendix, is subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Membership Disciplinary Policy and ACT Complaints Policy.