

1. Act for Peace Accountability Statement

Our Accountability Framework consists of:

- An Accountability Statement that details our understanding and approach to accountability and our core Accountability Commitments
- A supporting Accountability Commitment Plan that details the current mechanisms we have to implement our core Accountability Commitments and goals and indicators for continually building and strengthening them.

1.1. What we mean by accountability

Act for Peace believes that accountability is the responsible use of power and being responsive and answerable to our key stakeholders, in particular the people and communities involved in our advocacy, development and humanitarian work.

Act for Peace believes accountability and transparency are fundamental commitments that enable us to:

- achieve positive and sustainable change in the most vulnerable communities
- shift the balance of power and influence to ensure people and communities have a real say in the design and management of our programs (promoting voice and choice);
- achieve quality and effectiveness in our program delivery and advocacy

The primary stakeholders we are accountable to are:

- People and communities that benefit from our work
- Partners
- NCCA member churches
- ACT Alliance, ACFID, HAP and other membership networks
- AusAID and other donors
- Staff and our Governing body

1.2. Our approach to partnership

Working in partnership is central to Act for Peace's approach to all our international aid and development work. Act for Peace works in partnership with other organisations, communities and individuals for sustainable positive change. Our partnerships are based on long term engagement, trust and ongoing consultation, shared learning and feedback. We support our partners to obtain the skills, capacity and will to deliver on our accountability commitments.

1.3. Our Guiding Principles

The following concepts are central to our approach and the approach of our ACT Alliance partners:



- **participation**- the involvement of people in all aspects of their own development from analysing their situation, identifying their own needs and assets, and the planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation of development endeavours
- **developing capacity**- sustainable development enhances the capacity of persons and communities to determine their own future and to increase the utilization of available local financial and human resources. Development which is imposed or remains dependent upon outside support is not sustainable
- **non-discrimination**- it protects the God-given dignity of each person and does not discriminate on any basis
- **gender equality**- all development work has a gender impact and does not affect women and men equally. Sustainable development requires a gender analysis of the roles of both men and women within the family and broader community. It also requires the active participation of both men and women in decision making and implementation of development activities to ensure that the activities enhance the status of women and benefit the whole community
- **cultural and spiritual sensitivity**- although cultural and religious practices can both support and inhibit development, development can not be sustainable unless cultural and spiritual practices of persons and communities are recognised, enhanced and incorporated into development process
- **protecting human rights**- human dignity and well-being are enhanced through ensuring that governments fulfill their responsibility to protect people's economic, social, cultural, civil, political, religious and communication rights
- **advocacy**- mobilising public opinion regarding the root causes of poverty and injustice to influence those in positions of power and influence
- **promoting peace and reconciliation** – development planning, particularly for communities that have experienced recent conflict, must incorporate effective prevention and reconciliation strategies
- **effective communication**- appropriate communication methodologies are essential to ensure effective participation by communities in all stages of the development process
- **environmental sustainability**- sustainable development is environmentally aware, preserving, maintaining and regenerating the natural resource base. Particular attention is paid to the knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples as they relate to the environment



As set out in our protection policy below, we are also committed to:

- Prioritise the **safety, dignity and empowerment** of women, girls, boys and men at all times without discrimination
- Make a core commitment to **mainstream** gender and protection into all humanitarian assistance programs
- Adopt a **community based approach** to protection work that enables the active participation of communities in determining appropriate risk reduction measures
- Ensure that all humanitarian needs assessments **address risk**, taking into consideration threats, vulnerabilities and capacities of individual and communities
- **Ensure mechanisms are in place** to prevent and respond to the occurrence of sexual abuse and exploitation and gender-based violence
- Ensure that specialised protection programs **observe professional standards** and do not exceed the agency's capacity, expertise or mandate
- Protection advocacy must be based on a **careful risk-benefit analysis** involving field staff and affected communities and be part of an integrated protection strategy
- Recognise that the state has the primary responsibility for protection and ensure that the ultimate aim of protective humanitarian action is to **reinforce, not replace, the state's responsibility** to respect, protect and fulfil human rights
- Seek to work in a **complementary and collaborative** manner with other humanitarian actors to strengthen the impact of collective protective action and avoid unnecessary duplication.

1.4. External principles and codes we're committed to

Act for Peace aims to work according to internationally agreed standards as set out in the:

- ACT Alliance Codes and Policies
- The ACFID Code of Conduct
- The HAP Standard
- The Code of Conduct for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief
- The Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response
- The People in Aid Code of Conduct
- Principles of Partnership (Global Humanitarian Platform): Equality; Transparency; Result-oriented Approach; Responsibility; and Complementarity.



1.5. Our Core Accountability Commitments

The following accountability commitments will guide our international humanitarian, development and advocacy work and the governance and management of Act for Peace:

Quality and Effectiveness – the quality and effectiveness of our work is achieved through competent staff and partners; well designed internal processes and systems and strong contextual and power analysis and collaboration with others.

Safeguarding and Protection – Within the framework of human rights provide for the safety and security of communities, partners and staff through analysing and addressing identified protection risks, threats and vulnerabilities.

Transparency - The provision of accessible information and the opening up of organisational procedures, structures and processes to internal and external assessment.

Participation and Empowerment - The processes that enable primary stakeholders to play an active role in the decision making and activities that affect them.

Being a professional, competent and caring organisation - the agency is human-centred and invests in effective governance and management, human resource planning and staff development and care.

Continual learning and improvement - the ongoing dialogue, monitoring and evaluation to enable learning and change that improves management and practice and our results.

Responsible stewardship of resources - financial and material resources are used and accounted for in ways that are appropriate, accurate and transparent.

Responsive to complaints and concerns - primary stakeholders can seek and receive responses for grievances and alleged harm and learning is used to improve policy and practice.

