

# Accountable Now

GLOBAL STANDARDS LOCAL TRUST



## **World Vision Independent Review Panel Feedback**

**Accountability Report 2015  
Review Round April 2017**



# World Vision

## Feedback from the Independent Review Panel

### Review Round April 2017

02 June 2017

Dear Kevin Jenkins,

Thank you for submitting your Accountability Report. We, the Independent Review Panel of Accountable Now, appreciate your efforts to continuously strengthen accountability to communities, local partners, supporters, staff, donors, or other key constituencies. Our key focus is on accountability to those you serve. It is against this background that we critically discussed your report and came to the individual assessment below. Before we share this with you, however, we want to highlight a few issues of concern that we found throughout most of the nine reports assessed in the last review round.

### Closing the feedback loop with stakeholders (NGO2, NGO9)

A [recent study](#) on 40 international civil society organisations' (CSOs') accountability practices - conducted by the *direct impact group* on behalf of Accountable Now - revealed that only three out of these 40 CSOs responded with an appropriate answer to a complaint test within three weeks.

This is alarming. All Members of Accountable Now should have a fully functioning feedback mechanisms in place. However, when checking your reports we found a consistent lack of reporting filed complaints per type, quantity, and region as well as a total lack of information on how they were resolved. We believe this is not an acceptable level of accountability. CSOs should not only have a mechanism in place but should first be capturing complaints with the appropriate level of detail and then monitoring their resolution and agreeing what actions need to be taken to ensure the same issues do not arise.

[Feedback Labs](#), with whom Accountable Now collaborated on the [People-Powered Accountability project](#), also serve as a valuable source of information on how to close feedback loops.

### Collaboration with partners, communities and networks (NGO6, EC7 & SO1)

As part of the [10 Accountability Commitments](#), Accountable Now Members commit to working in genuine partnership with local communities and partners. With increased globalisation of information, more empowered citizens engage and civic space is challenged, it becomes ever more important to help local communities and partners to thrive. However, we found that coordination with local communities is still an overall weakness area among the Accountability Reports we received. Some



“common” ICSO practices can have intended or unintended consequences on local communities. We would thus like to particularly highlight a lack of contributions to building local capacity and resources. Do you take into account local market conditions and think about working alongside local organisations building their capacity? We suggest that ICSOs should start to consider their impact on the sustainability and independence of local civil society in all their work (such as planning, budgeting, economic impact, etc.).

### **Adding to what people do to improve their lives** (NGO3)

To state the obvious, impact measurement is important. However, many evaluations mentioned in received Accountability Reports focus on collecting relatively large amounts of data on people reached, however, this does not tell us much about the improvement in their lives. Moreover, we should critically ask ourselves: What is the ICSO’s credit in this improvement and what positive impact is actually due to the people and beneficiaries themselves?

While we are of course aware that resources are limited, there is clearly no substitute for a robust and honest impact evaluation of our programmes and activities.

### **Organisation-specific feedback to World Vision:**

World Vision’s interim report is good and reflects improvement in some (not all) areas. The report goes beyond the minimal areas of improvement and gives a snapshot on various accountability good practices. The Panel has mostly limited its assessment to the areas of improvement and did not provide an in-depth review to the other areas such as child protection, financial management, anti-corruption practices and ethnical fundraising.

World Vision demonstrates **good practice** in the area of coordination with other actors (NGO6). Main **weakness areas** continue to be: environmental sustainability (EN16, EN18 & EN26) and a lack of cross-references to Accountable Now’s reporting indicators. Both environmental sustainability (EN16, EN18 & EN26) and procedure for local hiring (EC7) are considered not addressed in this report as both were only covered in [World Vision’s response](#) to the previous Panel feedback letter but were not covered in this Interim Report despite being include in the previous Improvement Analysis. World Vision notes that most Panel recommendations will be addressed but does not indicate which ones will not and why.

World Vision is transparent concerning child protection incidents that included death and injury of 25 children participating in a World Vision activity and the injury or death of 34 children in road accidents involving World Vision vehicles. The Panel would be interested in knowing the preventive child protection measures taken by World Vision in order to avoid such incidents in the future.

Also, the Panel is interested in understanding the systematic anti-corruption measures taken to avoid the US\$226,000 that was confirmed to have been lost to fraud and the insufficient documentation to demonstrate that Gifts-in-Kind, valued



at approximately US\$1.1 million, were distributed to the intended beneficiaries in Malawi. The Panel flags this issues since similar figures were also reported to have been lost due to corruption or fraud in the 2014 Accountability Report.

In 2016, World Vision was covered heavily in the news as their director in Gaza was arrested by Israel based on [allegations of diverting cash to Hamas](#). A recent [media statement](#) came from Kevin J. Jenkins, President and Chief Executive Officer of World Vision International to highlight that their staff member pled not guilty to all charges made against him and that a wide-ranging review of World Vision's operations including a forensic audit is underway by a leading global accounting firm which has not generated any concerns about diversion of World Vision resources. Based on this incident, the Accountable Now Board agreed in its [October 2016 meeting](#) to introduce critical incident reports from Members. Also, the Panel encourages World Vision to actively monitor their profiles on feedback platforms such as [Great Nonprofits](#) and [Charity Navigator](#) to address complaints made against them. This is paramount in times when public scrutiny on CSOs is extremely high.

World Vision has a comprehensive [accountability page](#) on their website where their Accountability Report is uploaded. The **logo of Accountable Now** is featured prominently in footer of their website. It is appreciated that Elie Gasagara, Partnership Leader for Global Accountability at World Vision and a Trustee on the Accountable Now Board, continues to represent Accountable Now in the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) and in the Quality and Accountability group.

Our intention is that this feedback letter, and any response you may wish to provide, is made publicly available on the Accountable Now website along with your report – as it is the case with all previously reviewed reports. However, should there be errors of fact in the feedback above or in the note below; we would of course wish to correct these before publication. Please share these comments or amendments by [2 July 2017](#).

If you have any other feedback or comments on our work, please share them with us by sending them to the Accountable Now Secretariat.

Yours sincerely,

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Rhonda Chapman

John Clark

Louise James

Jane Kiragu

Nora Lester Murad

Michael  
Roeskau

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# Cover Note on World Vision's Accountability Report 2015

Review Round April 2017

## PROFILE DISCLOSURES

### I. Strategy and Analysis

1.1	<p><b>Statement from the most senior decision-maker</b></p> <p><i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>World Vision's interim Accountability Report starts with a strong opening statement by Kevin J. Jenkins, President and Chief Executive Officer of World Vision International. The statement highlights how World Vision is committed to the principle and practice of 360-degree accountability with feedback from communities and people affected by crises at its heart. The examples from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nepal and Sudan, cited in the statement, show how World Vision is striving to continuously receive and act-upon feedback received. The decision of World Vision to pursue certification of the Core Humanitarian Standard signals how accountability is taken seriously by World Vision.</p>
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### Institutional commitment to accountability

*Fully addressed*

World Vision's interim report is full with evidence that captures general accountability trends including focus on impact and stakeholder feedback. World Vision is commended for the integration of accountability to children and communities through different operational areas and mechanisms via their Programme Accountability Framework (PAF). World Vision also reports integrating their PAF to the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) to promote accountability to affected populations in humanitarian responses. In the next Accountability Report, the Panel would like an update on how World Vision's Programme Accountability Framework works in practice to ensure institutionalisation of accountability at all levels of the organisation.

Reviews of World Vision's work in areas such as integrating gender equality in programming over 20 years highlight their positive impact and contribution to well-being of their stakeholders. The Panel praises World Vision for contributing to addressing, in FY15, the root causes of vulnerability for approximately 650



million vulnerable children as a result of policy changes or the improved implementation of existing policies. Given the significance of the number, the Panel would like to understand how World Vision calculated their contribution to addressing the root causes of vulnerability for 650 million children.

There is clear evidence to suggest that community feedback is critical to internal accountability mechanisms at World Vision. The cooperation with the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to design, implement and consolidate 'beneficiary feedback mechanisms' is an important step and the Panel looks for more details and lessons learnt from this process in the next report. Moreover, studies such as '[Accountability to Affected Populations for a Hunger-free World](#)' indicate that lessons learnt from accountability practices are captured for scaling-up across the organisation. The Panel further finds World Vision's work on gender issues via partnering with faith groups very interesting and would like to understand how such work can help bring more gender diversity within World Vision governing bodies.

### Cross-reference in overview table

*Not addressed*

The report unfortunately does not include clear references to the different Accountable Now reporting indicators. Additionally and as stated in the last feedback letter, the interim report should only contain an opening statement in addition to updates on weakness areas, plus any significant changes. World Vision, although provided information beyond the minimal expected, did not reference them. This makes it difficult to review the report and to relate relevant information to the adequate weakness areas. The Panel reiterates that the next full Accountability Report should be well-referenced; otherwise it will be sent back to World Vision to be adequately cross-referenced before being reviewed. The Panel refers World Vision for good practice on how Oxfam cross-references their [Accountability Report](#) (pages 43-45).

## PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

### I. Programme Effectiveness

NGO6	<p><b>Coordination with other actors</b></p> <p><i>Addressed</i></p> <p>World Vision provides a very comprehensive overview on their work with communities including coordination with various actors. As mentioned under "3.1 Putting communities at the centre", World</p>
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	<p>Vision collaborated with a number of child-focused ICSSOs (Educo, Plan, Save the Children and War Child) in releasing the first phase of the <a href="#">Child Friendly Feedback Mechanisms</a> study and in publishing a collective study titled <a href="#">Putting Children at the Heart of the World Humanitarian Summit</a> demonstrating active collaboration and shared learning. Under "3.2 Gender and Diversity", World Vision reports scaling-up their coordination with faith leaders and their congregations via their Channels of Hope, an innovative approach that tackles sensitive gender issues from a faith perspective.</p> <p>Also, the Panel commends World Vision's approach to working with partners to empower children and communities as change agents (as highlighted under "3.4 Impact on children and communities") and to supporting national advocacy efforts, especially those that connect local and national stakeholders with regional and global movements and opportunities (as mentioned under Advocacy and <a href="#">Citizen Voice &amp; Action</a>). Including an indicator for advocacy performance at the local level in the Global National Office Dashboard to ensure advocacy is done with and by (not for) local actors and communities is seen as <b>Good Practice</b> by the Panel. The expansion of Advocacy and Citizen Voice &amp; Action to 630 programmes in 48 countries is impressive and the Panel looks for more progress in this regard. The Panel would be interested to know more updates on the 2015-launched framework outlining the five most important drivers of sustainability for community-based programmes which includes partnering (as mentioned in <a href="#">Building a Better World for Children world vision 2014</a>, page 5). Furthermore, World Vision's adoption of the post-2015 agenda marks a new era in which advocacy is key in mainstreaming accountability and is a good contribution to the global SDG debate and learning.</p>
<h3>III. Environmental Management</h3>	
<p>EN16, EN18 &amp; EN26</p>	<p><b>Environmental sustainability</b></p> <p><i>Not addressed</i></p> <p>World Vision did not address environmental sustainability in their Interim Accountability Report but rather in their <a href="#">response</a> to the Panel's feedback letter on their 2014 Accountability Report. World Vision recognises the importance of tracking carbon emissions and some offices have started to track their emissions which were found to be mainly due to flights, fuel and electricity. Given the limited effects of tracking carbon emissions, World Vision decided to focus</p>



	<p>on promoting environmental issues and resilience/adaptation through field programming. The Panel understands World Vision's position but highlights this as a major <b>weakness area</b>. As mentioned in the last feedback letter, World Vision is encouraged to provide at least data for their headquarters if they cannot get all national entities on board as fast as they would like to. Accountable Now's Secretariat can put World Vision in contact with other Accountable Now Members who have explored smart and cost-effective ways in tracking and reducing their emissions. The Panel refers World Vision to the <a href="#">good practice</a> (pages 88-94) of Oxfam and Plan International in calculating their greenhouse emissions and to Plan's comprehensive <a href="#">approach</a> (pages 98-99) on outlining and mitigating their global environmental impact.</p>
<b>IV. Human Resource Management</b>	
EC7	<p><b><i>Procedure for local hiring</i></b></p> <p><i>Not addressed</i></p> <p>World Vision provides an overview on their total workforce (staff and volunteers) and their gender division. Details on local hires are not provided in their Interim Accountability Report but rather in their <a href="#">response</a> to the Panel's feedback letter on their 2014 Accountability Report. World Vision says they have not changed their position on local hires as outlined in their <a href="#">2012 Accountability Report</a>, according to which 95% of global staff is nationals of the country in which they are employed. World Vision plans to provide an update on their procedures for local hiring in their 2016 full Accountability Report. In the meantime, the Panel considers this a <b>weakness area</b>.</p>