

**ActionAid  
International  
Annual Report to  
INGO Accountability  
Charter 2015**

**act:onaid**

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## Abbreviations

<b>ALPS:</b>	Accountability, Learning and Planning System
<b>CE:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>CHS:</b>	Core Humanitarian Standards
<b>CMS:</b>	Contract Management System
<b>CSO:</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>EAGLES:</b>	Evaluation and Accountability Global Leaders network
<b>FLT:</b>	Federation Leadership Team
<b>GA:</b>	General Assembly
<b>GHG:</b>	Greenhouse gas
<b>HR:</b>	Human resources
<b>HRBA:</b>	Human rights based approach
<b>LGBTI:</b>	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex
<b>M&amp;E:</b>	Monitoring and evaluation
<b>IB:</b>	International Board
<b>ILT:</b>	International Leadership Team
<b>IPAT:</b>	International Programme Accountability Team
<b>IS:</b>	International Secretariat
<b>KPI:</b>	Key performance indicator
<b>LRP:</b>	Local Rights Programme
<b>PRRP:</b>	Participatory review and reflection processes
<b>RAF:</b>	Resource Allocation Framework

# 1. Strategic commitment to accountability

## Statement from the most senior decision-maker

ActionAid is committed to being accountable to the people living in poverty with whom we work, and to the organisations and grassroots movements that represent them. Accountability is a key value underpinning our Theory of Change and our human rights based approach to programming. Our rootedness in communities helps us support them to be in the driving seat of change, and to clearly demonstrate our accountability – from presenting the results of our work in the short term, to showing that we are an organisation that learns from experience to enhance our impact in the long-term. This means we constantly monitor our work and adapt it in real time based on evidence gathered, and on the views of people living in poverty.

In an effort to become more effective and mutually accountable (and in line with ActionAid's Accountability Charter), in 2015 we introduced a series of measures to strengthen the ActionAid Federation (see Section 2.3), its financial sustainability and its democratic processes. This included reorganising the Federation's decision-making and implementation bodies to ensure country members play a stronger leadership role through a Federation Leadership Team and International Platforms (see Section 2.3 for explanations of these) where countries lead on making management decisions and setting the priorities for issues that affect all ActionAid countries. Through these new ways of working we experienced greater integration of our work at local, national and international levels, and were able to share learning experiences across the Federation.

The constantly changing external and internal environment meant more than ever that we needed to be committed, passionate and agile to properly serve the communities and movements with whom we work. This year ActionAid – in response to demand by the Federation – brought forward the review of our current five-year strategy. This created an opportunity for all of us to reshape our priorities and to add the most value for gaining the rights of people living in poverty and exclusion. The Federation will engage in a consultative new strategy development process throughout 2016, with the new strategy to be launched January 2017.

Our Accountability Charter (approved by the General Assembly in 2013, see ActionAid's Accountability Charter<sup>1</sup>) and its five core principles<sup>2</sup> have now been embedded into our annual planning and reporting processes for two consecutive years, providing an opportunity to systematically collect and analyse ActionAid's progress on accountability. While we still face some challenges in applying the principles of the charter consistently across the Federation, we have seen an overall improvement in the analysis of how well we apply these principles in practice.



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<sup>1</sup> ActionAid's Accountability Charter [http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/accountability\\_charter\\_2013.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/accountability_charter_2013.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Participation and inclusion; Evaluation and learning; Transparency; Complaints and resolution; Monitoring our commitments and ensuring compliance (mutual accountability).

As a Federation we have consistently made efforts to measure progress against our current strategy, *People's Action to End Poverty*, through reporting against global indicators (though comparison of countries' overall progress is challenging, as they report against diverse and content-specific indicators). Data generated from global indicators in countries vary widely, limiting their use for aggregation and conclusion-drawing at a global level. In addition, evidence shows that this approach to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is not conducive to integrating the views of people living in poverty into our programme work. In response, we initiated a review of our organisational approach to M&E, which included a thorough consultation with a wide range of stakeholders within and outside ActionAid. Learning from this review aims to advance our approach to M&E and inform the framework for our new strategy.

In this report we have tried to address all the issues raised by the Independent Panel. We embrace this opportunity to work with the INGO Accountability Charter and look forward to close collaboration in future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adriano Campolina', written in a cursive style.

Adriano Campolina  
Chief Executive, ActionAid International

## 2. Organisational profile

### Name of organisation

ActionAid International (also referred to as 'ActionAid' in the report)

### Primary activities

ActionAid works to end poverty and injustice through purposeful, individual and collective action (partnerships), led by people living in poverty, supported by those willing to stand in solidarity, and through developing and promoting alternatives and campaigns based on human rights. To achieve this mission, ActionAid works in five key areas:

- Rights to agriculture and natural resources, especially for women
- Holding those with power to account
- Strengthening rights to education for children and young people
- Protecting rights during conflict and emergencies
- Securing women's and girls' rights

In undertaking this work, ActionAid's main activities include: participatory analysis and awareness-raising; mobilising civil society and citizens worldwide; building solidarity networks; strengthening partners' capacity; working with social movements; addressing immediate needs of vulnerable people (especially in emergencies); advocacy and campaigning work; and undertaking research to develop and promote alternatives to existing systems, policies and practices. Additionally, ActionAid engages in varied fundraising activities.

### Operational structure

ActionAid is a Federation of autonomous (not-for-profit) Affiliate Members and Associate Members (governed by National Boards), and Country Programmes and countries where ActionAid has a 'presence'<sup>3</sup>. The International Secretariat (IS) supports, coordinates and monitors the activities of members and manages Country Programmes in the 20 countries that are in the process of achieving membership status (see Annex 1 for a list of national offices).

In addition, the IS leads on international work on behalf of the Federation. An International Board (IB) elected by a General Assembly (GA) appoints the Chief Executive as the staff leader and manager of the IS and the Federation. The Chief Executive is supported by a team of International Directors who are part of the International Leadership Team (ILT).

ActionAid International Affiliate Members and Associate Members have National Boards and some have General Assemblies. The ActionAid structure within each country may vary in relation to its size and staffing. The IS's headquarters is in Johannesburg, South Africa, with international hubs in Rio de Janeiro, Bangkok, Brussels, London and Nairobi. →

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<sup>3</sup> ActionAid has a presence in countries where there is no Affiliate Member, Associate Member or Country Programme present, but is carrying out activities in line with our mission, either through a Member or through the International Secretariat.

As a Federation, ActionAid believes strongly in the principle of subsidiarity and the idea that decisions should be taken as close as possible to those principally affected by the decision. Accountability for this principle is to every other member of the Federation represented at the ActionAid GA.<sup>4</sup> The Assembly agrees the policies to which all members should adhere, agrees the devolution of power, and mandates the International Board to monitor compliance and decision-making through the IS.

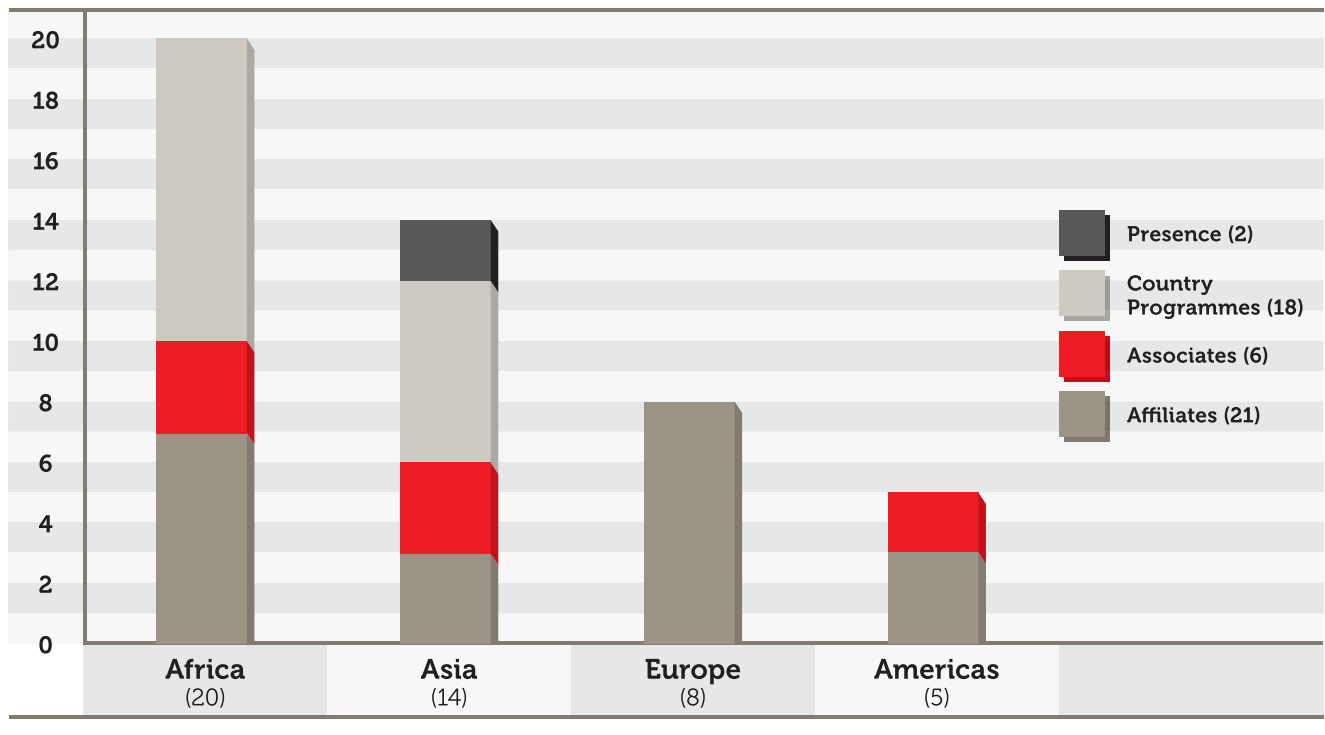
In 2015 we continued our path towards internationalisation (a more decentralised structure) and a more democratic, networked and accountable Federation. In line with our organisational vision, a **Federation Leadership Team (FLT)** was formed to provide executive leadership for the Federation as a whole, delegated to take management decisions and set priorities for issues that may affect all ActionAid countries. This representative body is made up of Country Directors, the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive.

**International platforms** have been created to contribute to devolving power within the Federation and to galvanise country leadership. These platforms are spaces where Affiliate Members, Associate Members, Country Programmes and the IS come together to share and integrate their plans, make decisions on policy research, advocacy and campaign initiatives, and share learnings and experience. Countries lead on prioritising areas of focus and Country Directors play a leadership role through co-chairing all platforms. There are six platforms that provide strategic leadership on each of our five strategic areas of work, and one on integrating systems across the Federation.

**Delegations** are also an integral part of our organisational vision. Delegations involve the assignment of international work to countries that have the capacity to add the greatest support value to our mission. By the end of 2015, nine delegations were approved by the International Board. The diagram in Annex 2, ActionAid International organisational structure, provides visual representation of these governance structures.

In 2015, the Federation was made up of the International Secretariat and 47 country-based Affiliates, Associates, Country Programmes and Presences (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: ActionAid Federation – membership type, by region, 2015



<sup>4</sup> This is reflected in the Accountability Charter as one of the accountability principles, i.e. “monitoring commitments and ensuring compliance”, or mutual accountability.



## Location

### **Main International Secretariat:**

4th Floor West, 158 Jan Smuts Avenue, Rosebank 2196, Johannesburg, South Africa

## Number of countries

As of December 2015, ActionAid worked in 47 countries in over 400 programme areas. The Federation comprised 27 members (21 Affiliate Members and six Associate Members) and 18 Country Programmes; we also have a Presence in two countries.

ActionAid Federation members – 2015	
<b>Affiliates (21)</b>	Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Denmark, France, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, India, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, Netherlands, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sweden, The Gambia, Uganda, UK, USA
<b>Associates (6)</b>	Mozambique, Nepal, Tanzania, Thailand, Vietnam, Zambia
<b>Country Programmes (18)</b>	Afghanistan, Burundi, Cambodia, China, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Lesotho, Liberia, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Palestine, Rwanda, Senegal, Somaliland, South Africa, Zimbabwe
<b>Presence (2)</b>	Arab Region Initiative (based in Jordan), Philippines

## Nature of ownership

ActionAid is an association ('Vereeniging' in Dutch) of ActionAid members from various countries and is registered in the Netherlands. There are two categories of membership: Affiliate and Associate (an associate is a member transitioning to becoming an Affiliate). An Affiliate has two votes in the GA, while an Associate has one vote.

Those organisations working in countries without National Boards (Country Programmes) operate as branches of ActionAid and are expected, over time, to transform themselves into Associates and ultimately into Affiliates. However, due to political or legal registration restrictions, some countries may take longer than others to go through the transformation.

## Target audience

ActionAid works with the poorest and most excluded people and the organisations that represent them in both rural and urban areas. ActionAid focuses in particular on women, children, youth, and men living in poverty, as well as socially excluded and marginalised groups. Other stakeholders include partners, allies (social movements, other INGOs and NGOs), supporters and donors, and in some cases also governments (see Figures 2 and 3).

Figure 2: People engaged\* with ActionAid, 2015 (by age)

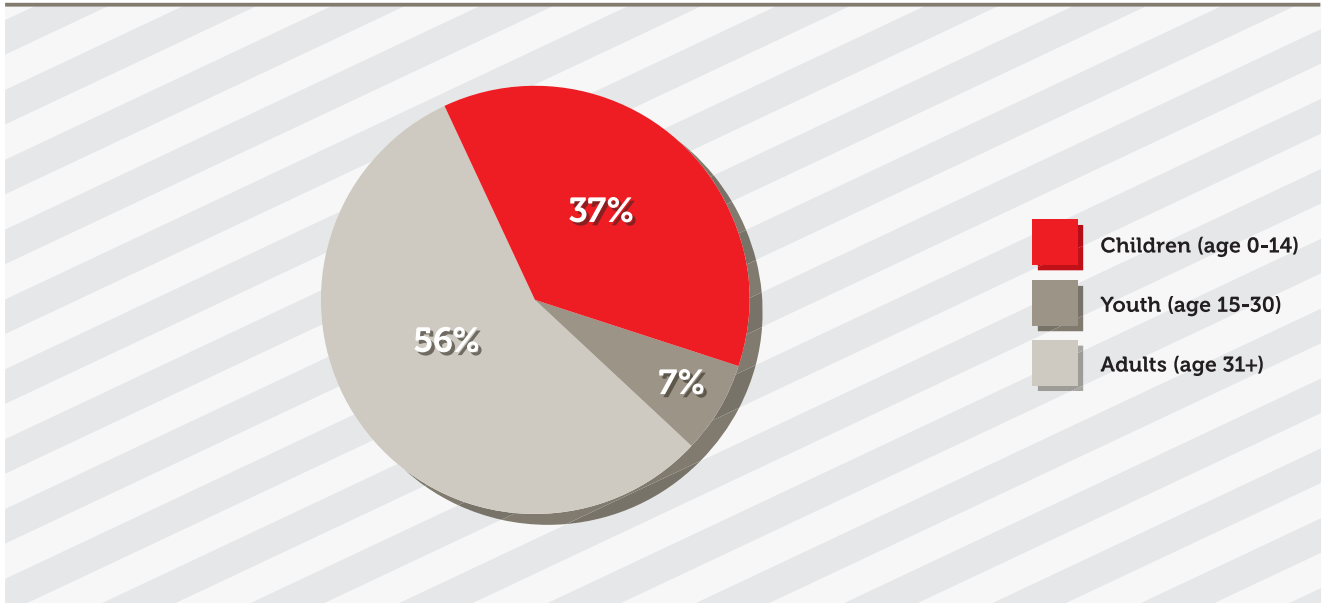
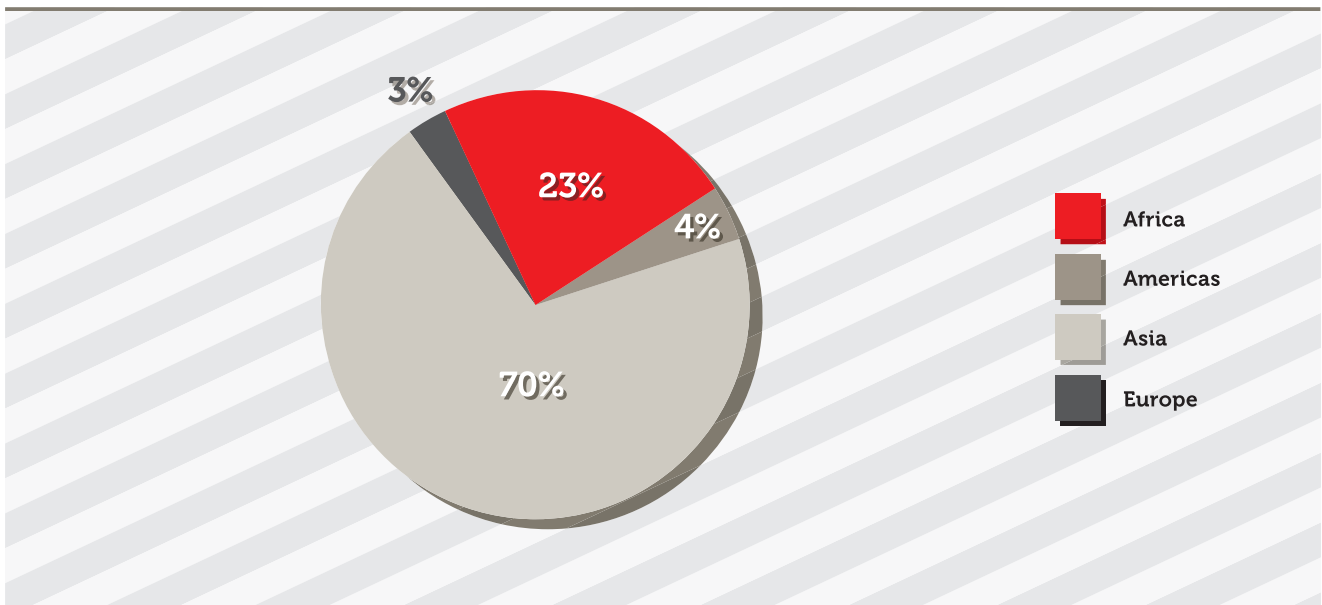


Figure 3: People engaged with ActionAid, 2015 (by region)



\* 'Engaged' is defined as any stakeholders involved in ActionAid's work, including people we work with in our Local Rights Programmes, and any financial or non-financial supporters.

## Scale of the reporting organisation

The 'scope' of our work is to end to poverty and injustice through individual and collective action, led by the active agency and empowerment of people living in poverty and supported by solidarity, rights-based alternatives (ideas that stretch the scope of our existing interventions or frameworks) and campaigns that address the structural causes and consequences of poverty. This year we continued to work towards this through:

- Building solidarity networks
- Mobilising supporters and CSOs
- Advocating and campaigning to curtail poverty and injustice
- Working in partnership with social movements, communities and CSOs
- Strengthening CSOs and people's capacity
- Responding to emergencies and people's immediate needs in disasters
- Promoting a human rights based approach to development

The 'scale' of this work is outlined here by figures describing its actual impact, broken down by ActionAid's five key areas of work.

Key areas of work	Number of member countries and programmes involved	Approximate number of partners and alliances involved
Rights to agriculture and natural resources, especially for women	39	4,350
Holding those with power to account	35	1,615
Strengthening rights to education for children and young people	37	1,530
Protecting rights during conflict and emergencies	26	540
Securing women's and girls' rights	42	2,430

### Rights to agriculture and natural resources, especially for women

- 343,300 farmers in 26 countries practiced climate-resilient farming methods.
- 177,800 women had a greater understanding of their rights and legal entitlements to land and natural resources or had been trained on these issues.
- 77,400 women in 22 countries gained more control of the land they farm, as well as access to water and other natural resources.
- 3,750 women's groups were trained and organised to claim their rights and legal entitlements to land.

### Holding those with power to account

- 1,250 local governments in 24 countries took steps to be more transparent on tax practices.
- 40 coalitions: ActionAid was active in 40 coalitions and campaigns on Tax Justice in 14 countries, providing capacity building and technical support, and facilitating networking and lobbying.
- 138 community projects were supported to monitor unfair tax practices and the impact on public services.

## Strengthening rights to education for children and young people

- 295,500 people including parents, teachers and children were trained to understand education rights and how to monitor the quality of public education.
- 3,200 schools in 27 countries provided improved access to free, safe, quality education for boys and girls.
- 21,800 girls completed primary education and transferred to secondary education in 12 countries.

## Protecting rights during conflict and emergencies

- ActionAid responded to 27 new emergencies in 19 countries, as well as five ongoing emergencies, including the continued response to the Ebola crisis in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and responses to the Nepal Earthquake and Vanuatu Cyclone.
- 103 of ActionAid's Local Rights Programmes integrated risk reduction strategies and allocated budgets to address capacity gaps.
- Over 700,000 people received humanitarian assistance in ways that respected their rights.
- 45,750 people were trained to protect lives and livelihoods and prepare for emergencies.

## Securing women's and girls' rights

- 43,700 women reported increased control over income and greater negotiating power.
- 1,360 projects in 22 countries were supported to protect women and girls from violence.
- 171,500 women in 26 countries earned a living through running their own businesses or selling produce.

Our total global income was €243 million in 2015 and our annual expenditure was €253m (our global annual budget is, on average, €255m). Total capitalisation in terms of net assets as of December 31, 2015 was €88m (see Table 1). We have 3,020 employees across the ActionAid Federation. Through child sponsorship and individual giving we link over 385,000 citizens worldwide in acts of solidarity (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Financial supporters by region, 2015

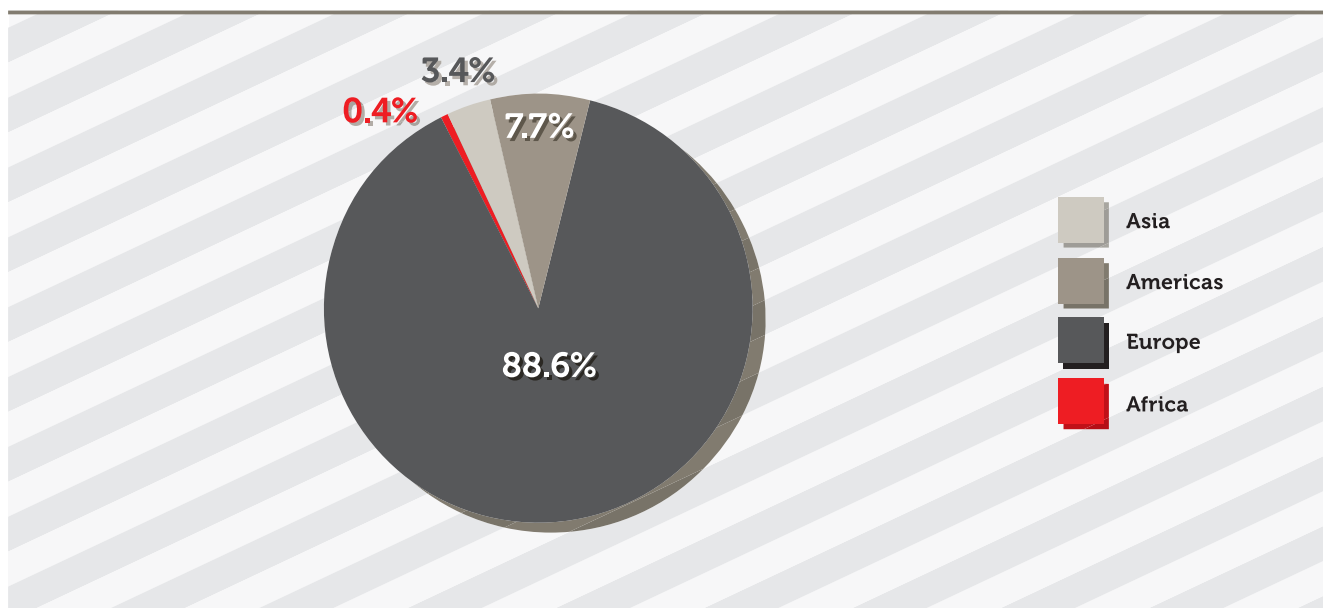
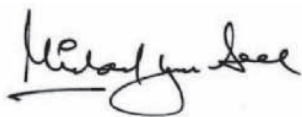


Table 1: Aggregated statement of financial position as at 31 December 2015

	Restricted €000	Unrestricted €000	2015 Total €000	Restated 2014 Total £000
<b>INCOME</b>				
Committed giving	86,650	66,335	<b>152,985</b>	143,443
Institutional income	73,333	12,192	<b>85,525</b>	77,528
	159,983	78,527	<b>238,510</b>	220,971
Investment income	279	619	<b>898</b>	1,102
	160,262	79,146	<b>239,408</b>	222,073
Other income	(2,708)	6,468	<b>3,760</b>	5,081
<b>Total income</b>	<b>157,554</b>	<b>85,614</b>	<b>243,168</b>	227,154
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Fundraising	8,368	41,601	<b>49,969</b>	47,458
Programme	151,876	46,929	<b>198,805</b>	176,178
Governance	1,754	2,822	<b>4,576</b>	3,630
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>161,998</b>	<b>91,352</b>	<b>253,350</b>	226,266
Net surplus/ (deficit) before transfers and investment profit	(4,444)	(5,738)	<b>(10,182)</b>	(112)
Gross transfers between funds	(3,697)	3,697	-	-
Gain on investments	-	(169)	<b>(169)</b>	568
<b>Net Surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>(8,141)</b>	<b>(2,210)</b>	<b>(10,351)</b>	456
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>				
Foreign exchange gains/(loss)	(5,458)	7,915	<b>2,458</b>	3,377
<b>Net Surplus/(deficit) after comprehensive income</b>	<b>(13,599)</b>	<b>5,705</b>	<b>(7,893)</b>	3,833

Approved by the Assembly of ActionAid International on 22 July 2016 and signed on its behalf by:



Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda  
Chair, ActionAid International



Michael Lynch-Bell  
Treasurer, ActionAid International

Further detailed information about the distribution of income between the countries and money movement could be found in the 2015 ActionAid Annual Report.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> 2015 ActionAid International Annual Report, see: <http://www.actionaid.org/publications/annual-report-2015>

## Significant changes

In 2015, ActionAid created new governance and decision-making structures with the aim of enabling a more democratic, networked and accountable Federation. As referenced in section '2.3 Operational Structure', a Federation Leadership Team was formed to involve countries in federal decisions. This representative body is composed of Country Directors, the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive. It has the mandate to make management decisions and set priorities for issues that affect all countries in which ActionAid works.

ActionAid also created International Platforms to increase the participation and leadership of countries in decisions that affect them. These platforms are spaces where countries and the IS come together to share and integrate their plans, make decisions on policy research, advocacy and campaign initiatives, and share learnings and experiences. Countries lead on prioritising areas of focus and Country Directors play a leadership role through co-chairing all platforms. There are now six platforms that provide strategic leadership on each of our five strategic areas of work and one on integrating systems across the Federation.

An integral part of our organisational vision is the allocation ('delegation') of international work to countries with the capacity to add the greatest support value to our mission. By the end of 2015, nine areas of work had been delegated in this way, approved by the International Board. The following countries are now providing Federation leadership on these respective areas:

- Organisational sustainability – ActionAid Bangladesh
- Humanitarian response communication, funding and policy – ActionAid UK
- Safe Cities campaign – ActionAid Liberia
- Democratic governance – ActionAid Denmark
- Disaster risk reduction policy, resilience programming and climate justice – ActionAid Bangladesh and ActionAid USA
- Women in emergencies – ActionAid Australia
- Strategic expansion – ActionAid Italy
- Advancing accountability through decentralised governance systems – ActionAid Kenya
- Enhancing accountability to disaster-affected communities – ActionAid Kenya

The ever more difficult funding environment prompted us to revisit our organisational priorities and to make difficult operational decisions as a result of financial challenges. The impact of reduced income from regular giving generally was compounded by deep and sudden cuts in government funding for ActionAid Denmark, which affected many countries in the Federation, as well as the IS. This situation required the timely redistribution of reduced funding between countries, redundancies at the IS, and the unfortunate closure of our Nicaragua programme at the end of 2015.

To enable the organisation to effectively respond to the changing context, at the end of 2015, the International Board decided to accelerate our new five-year strategy development, enabling profound debate and potential deep changes. In line with this decision, in 2016 ActionAid will be engaging in a process of reviewing the current strategy and developing a new strategy that will guide the organisation's work from 2017 onwards.

There were transitions in the membership status of a few countries within the Federation: ActionAid Vietnam achieved Associate Member status; membership development processes for ActionAid Mozambique and ActionAid Rwanda began; and ActionAid's Nepal's Affiliate Membership plan was approved.

## Awards received

In 2015 ActionAid Federation members received a number of awards, including:

- ActionAid Vietnam was recognised by different parts of the Vietnamese government for its contribution to the country's development and poverty reduction at all levels, receiving three awards from the provincial authorities of Cao Bang, Kien Giang and Ha Giang.
- ActionAid Ghana won, for the second consecutive year, the Not-for-Profit Organisation of the Year award from Ghana's most prestigious marketing and brand body, The Chartered Institute of Marketing Ghana (CIMG). Getting nominated by the public and subsequently winning this award reflects the public awareness of ActionAid Ghana.
- ActionAid Hellas won five social media awards and five advertising awards for its International Day against Racism online video, which used actors to depict a racist incident, and filmed (with a hidden camera) the reactions of members of the public who stood up against it.
- ActionAid Australia won the New South Wales State Partnership Award for Sustainability with the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) for their recent relocation of offices. The new offices are in a more energy efficient building with solar panels; the energy generated from the solar panels goes back into the grid and the building receives solar credits on electricity bills. The shared building also has controlled air conditioning and motion sensor lighting.
- ActionAid India won the 'Best NGO' award at the National Awards for Excellence in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Sustainability for its work to create better futures in India.

## 3. Report parameters

### Reporting period

This report covers the period January 1 2015 – December 31 2015.

### Date of most recent previous report

ActionAid International Interim Accountability Report 2014: submitted December 2015.

### Reporting cycle

ActionAid reports biennially on the Global Reporting Initiative.

### Contact person

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## Process for defining reporting content and using reporting process

Table 2: Process for defining and preparing this report

Process flow/steps	Countries submit global annual reporting, including account-ability section	Analysis of the reports including account-ability section	<b>INGO Review Panel feedback circulated among IS &amp; directors</b>	CE response drafted in consulta-tion with directors/ relevant functions	CE response sent to INGO Charter	Based on feedback, sections of the new report are drafted	Report draft goes to directors for comments	Report draft goes to Audit and Risk committee of Inter-national Board	Report signed off to be sent to INGO Charter
Function Involved	RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed)								
ActionAid Affiliate Members, Associate Members, Country Programmes & presence	Responsible/ Accountable	Informed	Informed	Informed	Informed	Informed	Informed	Informed	Informed
<b>IS Planning &amp; Reporting team</b>	Accountable	Responsible/ Accountable	Responsible	Responsible	Responsible	Responsible	Responsible	Responsible	Responsible
IS Monitoring & Evaluation team	Informed	Responsible	Informed	Informed	Informed	Informed	Informed	Informed	Informed
IS Governance, Account-ability team	Informed	Accountable	Accountable	Accountable	Accountable	Accountable	Accountable	Accountable	Accountable
IS Finance team	Accountable	Responsible	Informed/ Consulted	Informed	Consulted	Informed	Responsible	Informed	Informed
IS HR team	Informed	Responsible	Informed/ Consulted	Informed	Consulted	Informed	Responsible	Informed	Informed
IS Programme Development team	Informed	Responsible	Informed/ Consulted	Informed	Consulted	Informed	Responsible	Informed	Informed

To raise awareness and commitment across all functions, a template of the relevant section of the report was circulated to heads of team who oversee various functions of the organisation, along with the previous report entry and feedback, and a request for updated information (see Table 2).

Once these sections were written (and had taken into consideration feedback from the Independent Review Panel) they were consolidated and sent to the heads of M&E, Governance, Accountability and Leadership Development, Organisational Development, the Deputy Chief Executive and the Chief Executive for feedback and approval.

## Boundary of the report

This report is ancillary to and should be read alongside the 2014 and 2015 ActionAid International Annual Reports,<sup>6</sup> as it covers the same reporting period. This report covers the entire ActionAid Federation which includes all Affiliate Members, Associate Members, Country Programmes and International Secretariat, and does not include the activities of ActionAid's partners. It seeks to consolidate the work that ActionAid does overall in terms of advancing accountability. The report includes information and topics of relevance to ActionAid's stakeholders and staff, which also pertain to strategic objectives, values, policies and management systems.

## Material content limitations

This report follows and takes account of the 2015 ActionAid International Annual Report. It does not include information on each indicator from all members of the Federation. Instead it provides an overall summary of the accountability work carried out across the organisation, with some specific examples.

We are constantly working towards more consistent practical application of the accountability principles in the Federation (which are meaningful for the countries/members as well as the Federation as a whole). We do this by incorporating accountability sections into our annual planning and reporting templates, and analysing Federation-level data to inform our future actions.

## Basis for reporting

ActionAid's operations include no national entities, joint ventures, subsidiaries, outsourced operations or other entities, thus there is no basis for reporting on these.

All Affiliate Members, Associate Members and Country Programmes are required to report annually against a common template coordinated by the IS. This template is accessed via an online platform from which ActionAid staff with authorised login details can access and view all plans and reports from any national office, including the IS. The global annual reporting template includes our global monitoring framework, to which countries must report their contribution. This global monitoring framework includes 60 indicators, 30 of which report on impact and outcomes, and 30 of which report on outputs and process. Key learning, achievements and reflections on progress against our various strategic objectives are recorded, along with learning generated by partners' implementation of our human rights based approach. Information on our supporter base; partners; sustainability actions (including CO<sub>2</sub> emissions); and country engagement figures (including on disability and diversity) are collected. Examples and progress made against our five core accountability principles are also captured via this template. Learning generated by this data collection exercise is integrated into future planning and prioritisation, and is used to draft annual reports and the INGO Accountability Charter reports.

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<sup>6</sup> 2014 ActionAid international Annual Report

<http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/ar20report20201420final2028not20spreads29.pdf>

2015 ActionAid international Annual Report

[http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/action\\_aid\\_international\\_annual\\_report\\_vfinal\\_12\\_hi\\_res.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/action_aid_international_annual_report_vfinal_12_hi_res.pdf)

## Significant changes

ActionAid continues striving to improve and align its methods of measuring results across the Federation. Since 2013, we have consistently applied our global monitoring framework to international planning and reporting processes, with which countries indicate their alignment and to which they report contributions. This global monitoring framework includes 60 indicators (see section above) and is accompanied by specific tools and guidance for monitoring and reporting at all levels. This approach has helped us to apply more rigorous and systematic ways of measuring and aggregating the results of our work.

In 2015, we initiated a review of our M&E approach, which included a thorough consultation with a wide range of stakeholders within and outside ActionAid. This 'M&E political debate' aims to draw lessons from our current practice to advance our M&E approach and ensure its alignment with our core values and beliefs about what change is, and how it happens. This consultation phase saw the responses from approximately 1,000 people. The outcomes of this debate will feed into the development of the M&E approach and framework in our new strategy.

Our Evaluation and Accountability Global Leaders (EAGLEs) network continued to grow. This network of M&E practitioners and experts consists of more than 75 members from 42 countries in the Federation and provides a mechanism for the Federation to better coordinate M&E activities, and to share and learn from each other.

## Reference table

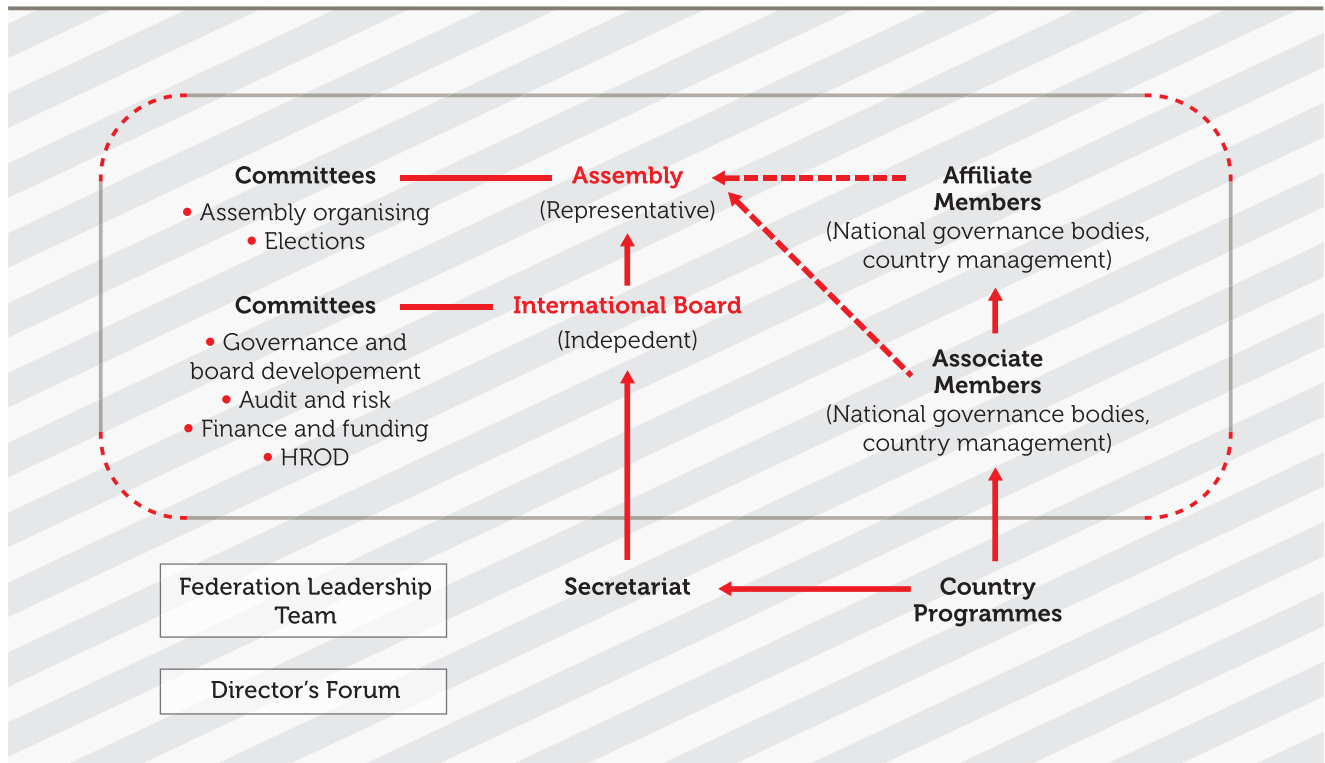
This content is the GRI content index for Level C.

## 4. Governance structure and key stakeholders

### Governance structure and decision-making process

ActionAid is an international Federation with a two-tier governance model (see Figure 5):

Figure 5: ActionAid governance structure



**Tier 1: A General Assembly (GA)**, in which all **Affiliate Members** and **Associate Members** participate fully via a named representative from each member's National Board. The GA provides the highest level of governance for the Federation. The GA is responsible for (among other things) admitting and expelling members; approving overarching, longer-term international strategies and policies; and allocating resources appropriately. The GA elects the International Board, to which the majority of the day-to-day governance is delegated. In addition, the GA has two committees: the Assembly Organising Committee, which ensures efficient preparation and running of GA meetings; and the Election Committee, which manages elections.

**Country Programmes** are accountable to the Secretariat. The Secretariat is accountable to the International Board, which in turn is accountable to the General Assembly. The Assembly is accountable to its Members. The Assembly is therefore the highest governance authority of ActionAid International.

During a GA meeting, each representative acts in two capacities:

- as a representative of her/his member organisation's interest, at times carrying mandates/positions from the organisation; and
- as a member of the GA, responsible for the overall governance of ActionAid and acting in the best interests of ActionAid as a whole. B takes precedence over A.

Associate Members, Affiliate Members, Country Programmes and the Secretariat give ActionAid the power to guarantee the identity, unity, security, integrity, growth, development, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and economic health of the whole of ActionAid. In this process they cede some of their autonomy for the greater, common good of the larger ActionAid. Only those decisions that have a broad impact affecting the whole organisation are taken at the centre of the organisation.

Apart from the evaluation of the GA meeting itself, there is no regular evaluation of the Assembly's performance. However, the International Board (elected by the Assembly) conducts a self-review every year, usually with the support of an external facilitator. The results are translated into an action plan and progress is followed up at subsequent International Board meetings and reviews. A set of governance standards that were developed in 2013 further underlines the need for a governing body to assess its performance on a regular basis.

Each member must comply with laws and regulations and be monitored through an Assurance Policy (2010) which requires each member to report on alignment to Federal policies and national legislation.

**Tier 2: ActionAid International's Board** provides effective and regular governance, oversight and support to the Chief Executive and International Leadership Team. The International Board has eleven (11) members and the following four committees (which reflect themes around which National Boards also organise their committees):

- Governance and Board Development
- Finance and Funding
- Audit and Risk
- Human Resources and Organisational Development

**Risk management:** There is a risk management process within the organisation that ensures response to all major risks. The specific risks around compliance with relevant laws and regulations in the jurisdictions within which ActionAid operates are being addressed through the recently revised Assurance Policy with the objectives of:

- Promoting mutual respect, accountability and responsibility between member countries and programmes.
- Improving the performance of ActionAid and its member countries and programmes.
- Reducing the risk of damage to the mission or reputation of ActionAid and its member countries and programmes.

## Division of powers

Neither the Chair of the International Board nor the convener of the GA is an executive officer. The ActionAid International Governance Manual<sup>7</sup> explains that: "Governance is the process by which an Assembly or Board functions as a unit to direct the organisation while management is the process of implementation, translating governance policy into programmes and services." The following table illustrates this distinction.

The International Board appoints, reviews performance, supports, challenges, terminates the contract of the Chief Executive (CE). The CE is managed by the International Board Chair and they meet quarterly in line-management review meetings.

The Governance and Board Development sub-committee establishes Board management good practice guidelines and regularly reviews and supports the relationship between the International Board and the CE, and its effectiveness. This is also part of the annual International Board review. CE is subject to the same performance management reviews as all other staff, and the International Board chair is guided by the Human Resources and Organisational Development committee, which includes performance reviews, 360 degree feedback, etc.

Each member of each governing body of the Federation is obliged to declare any potential conflict of interest s/he may have as an International Board member. Such declarations are made annually and include affiliation to political parties and other special interests. A code of conduct included in the ActionAid International Governance Manual also identifies how to deal with actual and potential conflicts of interest.

Regular governance reviews typically look at the conflict of interest register and see if it is up-to-date and being used. More in-depth governance reviews are also carried out as part of the organisational life cycle and they are described as part of the Accountability, Learning and Planning System (ALPS). The governance model review recommended that governance reviews be more in-depth and consider not only International Board performance but the whole governance arrangement of the organisation, including the extent to which the organisation is in compliance with relevant policies and requirements.

## Number of members of the highest governance body

The ActionAid Assembly is composed of 27 members (21 Affiliate Members and six Associate Members). The ActionAid International Board comprised 11 independent members in 2015.

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<sup>7</sup> ActionAid International Governance Manual:  
<http://www.actionaid.org/publications/good-practices-actionaid-governance-governance-manual>

## Mechanisms for internal stakeholders (e.g. members or employees) to provide recommendations to the highest governance body

The relationship between ActionAid and its members is described in ActionAid's Constitution,<sup>8</sup> membership regulations and licensing agreement. The members own the Federation and there are several mechanisms through which they can provide input and recommendations to the GA (both at international and national levels). For example:

- Members nominate representatives who attend, participate, vote and make overall decisions at ActionAid's annual GA meetings. Three months prior to every GA meeting, members are called upon to submit motions/formal proposals and recommendations for the Assembly to consider and decide upon. The process of decision-making is clearly defined in the constitution.
- ActionAid's International Board presents an annual progress report to the GA. This report outlines the work of the International Board and can include recommendations. The report is complementary to ActionAid's Annual Report, which is an account of the Federation's progress towards its strategy.
- The CE at international level and Country Directors at national level are secretaries to the Boards/Assemblies – this provides a connection between governance and management.
- In some cases, ILT members attend as ex-officio members of the Boards/Assemblies where they may raise forthcoming issues and make recommendations to the International Board. Some members of the ILT are secretaries to the Board sub-committees.
- ActionAid conducts an annual joint GA and Directors' Forum meeting. This enables Country Directors to interact with members of the governance bodies, enabling Country Programmes, which are not represented at the GA, to be heard.

The CE ensures that key decisions taken by the International Board are communicated to all staff in the Federation. ActionAid's intranet site, the HIVE, is a key internal platform for sharing information and storing relevant documents. It is also used for a range of peer-learning initiatives.

ActionAid has a Complaints and Response Mechanism Framework and Policy<sup>9</sup> which applies to all units of the Federation, including the IS. Its purpose is to provide any stakeholder with a channel for complaints. The issue will then be investigated and appropriate action taken.

All members are required to perform a governance review annually. This review, usually facilitated by an external consultant at least every three years, is intended to assess the effectiveness of the governance structure and to provide employees with an opportunity to appraise and feed into the governance process. Participatory review and reflection processes (PRRPs) also provide an opportunity for internal stakeholders to assess the effectiveness of governance bodies. PRRPs involve regular and ongoing monitoring of the progress and outcomes of ActionAid's work. During PRRPs, data is collected through participatory monitoring mechanisms, and then analysed and consolidated for learning and accountability purposes.

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<sup>8</sup> ActionAid's constitution, see:

[http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/the\\_constitution\\_of\\_actionaid\\_international\\_as\\_amended\\_in\\_2010.doc](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/the_constitution_of_actionaid_international_as_amended_in_2010.doc)

<sup>9</sup> Complaints and Response Mechanism Framework and Policy, see:

[http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/complaints\\_mechanism\\_and\\_policy.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/complaints_mechanism_and_policy.pdf)



## Compensation

ActionAid GA and International Board members are volunteers receive no direct or indirect compensation for their position other than a cost allowance for direct expenses incurred in the course of their duties.

The CE is an ex-officio secretary to the International Board, but is not a member. The CE attends International Board meetings with no voting powers. There is no remuneration from outside of ActionAid for the senior leadership team, and no remuneration or other payments have been made to International Board or Committee Members of ActionAid International for their services as International Board or Committee members, or for other services provided to the organisation, in 2015 (2014: €nil).

There are three key aspects that ActionAid considers when making any decision on salary scale (pay points) that have a direct impact on the valuation of the evaluated role, staff cost dimensioning and organisational affordability:

- a. evaluated value of the role – job’s worth (mark-to-market);
- b. internal parity;
- c. the organisation’s ability to pay.

Considering the above variables, all roles are evaluated using the Mercer job evaluation framework so as to establish a relevant grade and salary scale for the position.

## Processes in place for the highest governance body to ensure conflicts of interest are identified and managed responsibly

Conflicts of interest at International Board level are managed by the Governance Manual’s ‘Conflicts of interest and duty’ section (Section 5.13 and Annex 7 of the Governance Manual).

This section states that “Members have an annual duty to record all relevant private interests and duties in ActionAid International’s Register of Interests of Board members”. Practical guidance on good practices in GA meetings is drawn from recommendations provided by the UK National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO). These include the following:

- Any representative who has a private interest or duty in a matter under discussion at a GA meeting should declare the nature of her/his interest or duty and withdraw from the room, unless she/he has a dispensation to speak.
- If a representative has any other interest or duty which does not create a real danger of bias, but which might reasonably cause others to think it could influence his/her decision, she/he should declare the nature of the interest or duty, but remain in the room, participate in the discussion and vote if the Assembly Convener, in consultation with other representatives present, agrees she/he can do so.
- If in any doubt about these rules, representatives should consult the Assembly Convener.

## Process to support the highest governance body’s own performance

The International Board is composed of members elected by two routes though their status is the same once elected:

- At least two thirds are elected by the Assembly from candidates nominated by members.
- No more than one third are elected by the International Board itself, to ensure that the Board has the necessary balance of gender, expertise, regional representation and other diversity.



The procedures outlining the appointment, term limits, responsibilities and internal accountability of the International Board are outlined in Sections 5.1, 5.2, 5.7, 5.8, and 5.12 of the Governance manual,<sup>10</sup> which is available on the ActionAid international website.

The International Board engaged in its annual reflection and review of the past year (informed by multi-stakeholder feedback from a GA survey, Country Directors and external consultancy governance experts, i.e. the Hauser Centre (Harvard) to identify ways to further improve its performance on leadership and oversight. This focused on three thematic areas: 1) financial sustainability of the Federation; 2) future of ActionAid in a changing INGO sector and 3) strategies for strengthening the Federation/members. The International Board uses this process to set key priorities to inform their commitments for the year, against which their performance is measured.

## Externally developed environmental or social charters, principles or other initiatives to which the organisation subscribes

In June 2015, ActionAid UK successfully published income data to the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) registry. In December 2015 and May 2016 respectively ActionAid published Federation-wide annual 2014 and 2015 data on global DFID, European Commission and DANIDA contracts.

ActionAid is a member of the Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS) Alliance and we are in the process of going through a self-certification process on CHS (Quality, People Management, Accountability). ActionAid has a People in Aid Quality Mark I accreditation, and we are exploring ways to use the accreditation to help move forward with the CHS self-certification. A **case study** on ActionAid's People Management Scorecard was published by Core Humanitarian Standards Alliance.

## Stakeholder groups of the organisation

Our stakeholders include individuals and groups of individuals who experience poverty and denial of rights, including but not limited to poor and excluded women, children, indigenous peoples, landless people, marginal and smallholder farmers, people affected by disasters and conflict, people living with HIV and AIDS, migrants, sexual minorities, informal workers, and other groups suffering from social discrimination and poverty.

In addition to these individuals and groups, ActionAid also works with the following stakeholders:

- Communities in which ActionAid is present and neighbouring communities
- Community-based organisations, local and international NGOs
- Networks, coalitions and alliances
- Governments (national, regional, local)
- Institutional and individual donors
- Supporters, members, volunteers
- Private sector institutions
- Academic institutions
- Suppliers
- Employees and others who work for ActionAid

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<sup>10</sup> Governance Manual:

<http://www.actionaid.org/publications/good-practices-actionaid-governance-governance-manual>

## Process for identification, selection and prioritisation of key stakeholder groups

Guidelines for identifying and engaging with stakeholders are provided in ActionAid's *Accountability, Learning and Planning System (ALPS) guide (2011)*<sup>11</sup> and our *Human Rights Based Approach Handbook, Version 21*<sup>12</sup>. These guidelines, along with the ActionAid International Partnership Policy and Practice Framework (2014)<sup>13</sup> set out the criteria for how to select and engage with stakeholders, partners and other actors.

ActionAid's development programmes are called Local Rights Programmes' and include the organisation's three HRBA programme components – empowerment, campaigning, and solidarity work. Rights programmes may be implemented at local, sub-national, national or international levels and are usually undertaken through partnerships with rights holders groups, community-based organisations, local NGOs, coalitions and movements.

ActionAid's work in each country is framed by a Country Strategy Paper which identifies key stakeholders and partners depending on different priority issues. Each Local Rights Programme also develops a long-term strategy that will identify local partners. In most cases (at local level) we develop long-term partnership agreements – for up to 10 years – meaning a deep, mutual understanding is developed. In a Local Rights Programme ActionAid does not typically partner with governments, but to achieve a common purpose ActionAid may sometimes works with them.

At the start of each programme, ActionAid and partners mutually assess each other, based on the International Partnership Policy and Practice Framework, and once a partnership is agreed, both parties sign a Memorandum of Understanding. Partnerships are reviewed regularly. Efforts are made to ensure that partners and ActionAid provide each other with feedback – both in terms of working relationships and the quality of the programme implemented.

In relation to other stakeholders, such as potential donors or sponsors, the ActionAid International Company Fundraising Policy<sup>14</sup> stipulates whom we can or should not engage with, including "companies that fail to demonstrate adequate respect for human rights (including labour rights) or adequate compliance with core environmental standards, as set out in specific UN conventions and treaties. Partnerships with such companies that knowingly sustain poverty compromise our ability to deliver our mission and live by our values."

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<sup>11</sup> ActionAid's ALPS guide (2011), see: [http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/alps\\_2011.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/alps_2011.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> ActionAid's Human Rights Based Approach Handbook, Version 2, see: [http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/1.\\_peoples\\_action\\_in\\_practice\\_final\\_20\\_07\\_2012.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/1._peoples_action_in_practice_final_20_07_2012.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Full text of the policy is available upon request or in ActionAid intranet.

<sup>14</sup> Full text of the policy is available upon request or in ActionAid intranet.

## 5. Performance Indicators

### I. Programme effectiveness

#### NGO1: Involvement of affected stakeholder groups

ActionAid's organisational processes and planning cycles are designed to increase the influence and involvement of people living in poverty. It does this by developing plans, budgets and strategies at the grassroots level, using mechanisms such as transparency boards (for example, posters outside a partner's office about how funds are being spent) to provide information about money allocation and programme goals to ensure transparency. Programmes are designed with grassroots community involvement at all stages – from the initial appraisal through the five-yearly strategic planning cycle and the annual planning and review cycle. This enables people living in poverty and other local stakeholders to feed into country strategies, which in turn influence ActionAid's overall strategy.

Participation and inclusion is at heart of what we do and how we work. Our Participatory Review and Reflection Process (PRRP) is an established tool for critical reflection, shared learning and monitoring progress of our work at various levels across the Federation and within countries. Conducting PRRPs with communities provides a mechanism by which people living in poverty can participate and input into programme intervention strategies, processes, achievements and future plans. Partners and national offices use insights generated from these processes to revise strategies, plans, and generate learning.

Annual plans and reviews guide the detail of work. Reviews are held at key times in the annual cycle (at least twice a year) to ensure involvement of and feedback from all stakeholders. External reviews are required at the end of each strategy period.

Reflection-Action Circles are the most direct and appropriate way to share and discuss information of interest to community members – mainly because they use participants' own verbal and community-orientated approach to debating shared concerns. However, we have learnt that support may be needed to help Reflection-Action Circles feedback people's views in a timely manner, and in ways that pose no harm to those who have aired their views. This presentation,<sup>15</sup> provides an introduction to ActionAid's integrated participatory methodology: Reflection Action.

External and internal audits and staff climate surveys are carried out periodically to provide additional insights into the health of the organisation. External Audits are statutory for most of the ActionAid countries. Governance reviews of International Board performance are also carried out by Affiliates and by ActionAid.

As well as PRRPs, stakeholders are informed at various levels through a variety of channels: reports, workshops, meetings, social audits (at local, district/regional and national level), community newsletters, billboards and notices, child sponsorship letters and annual general meetings. The type of information to be shared is described in our Open Information Policy.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Reflection Action: An introduction to ActionAid's integrated participatory methodology. See: <https://prezi.com/waabbcbd4p7q/reflection-action/>; and <http://www.networkedtoolbox.com/tools/toolboxes/>

<sup>16</sup> Open Information Policy, see: [http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/open\\_information\\_policy\\_0.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/open_information_policy_0.pdf)

## Involving stakeholders in the work of ActionAid Ethiopia

ActionAid Ethiopia has ensured participation of people living in poverty and other partners using a range of engagement strategies. Participatory review and reflection processes are conducted twice in a year at the Local Rights Programme level, and national level platforms are held annually.

These national level platforms give the opportunity for stakeholders to reflect on the success of our strategy, including indicating what the future should look like. In addition to this, the participation of people living in poverty and local partners is continuously ensured through joint planning, programme implementation and monitoring. These platforms give an opportunity for people to raise concerns and issue in a number of different ways.

## Social audits by ActionAid Nepal

ActionAid Nepal has established social audits as a way to ensure accountability and demonstrate transparency. ActionAid Nepal and its partners have adopted social audits as a participatory process of reviewing and evaluating their achievements, shortcomings and promoting joint learning with the active participation of all stakeholders. At the same time, social audits have been used as a forum for making relevant information open to stakeholders addressing, among others, programme achievements and gaps, expenditure and cost effectiveness, and organisational systems and structures. Social audits have been promoted at all levels, not only to prove accountability, but also as a forum for advocating for transparency and accountability.

National social audits primarily target external stakeholders at the national level (representatives from government agencies, various networks, federations and alliances, and from other I/NGOs, from the bilateral and multilateral donor community, media, etc.)

Due to the success of this approach to stakeholder participation, the Social Welfare Council of Nepal recently introduced a policy to make social audits mandatory for all INGOs working in Nepal. ActionAid Nepal can proudly take credit for such initiatives since it was the first organisation to initiate this process in 2002.

## Stakeholder engagement affects decision-making in ActionAid Bangladesh

In 2015, after a PRRP, members of a farmer's group in Kutibari village identified the mobilisation of farmers and the Department of Agriculture as a key goal. For this they required evidence of successful climate resilient sustainable agriculture practices that they could share with other members of the community and service-providing institutions.

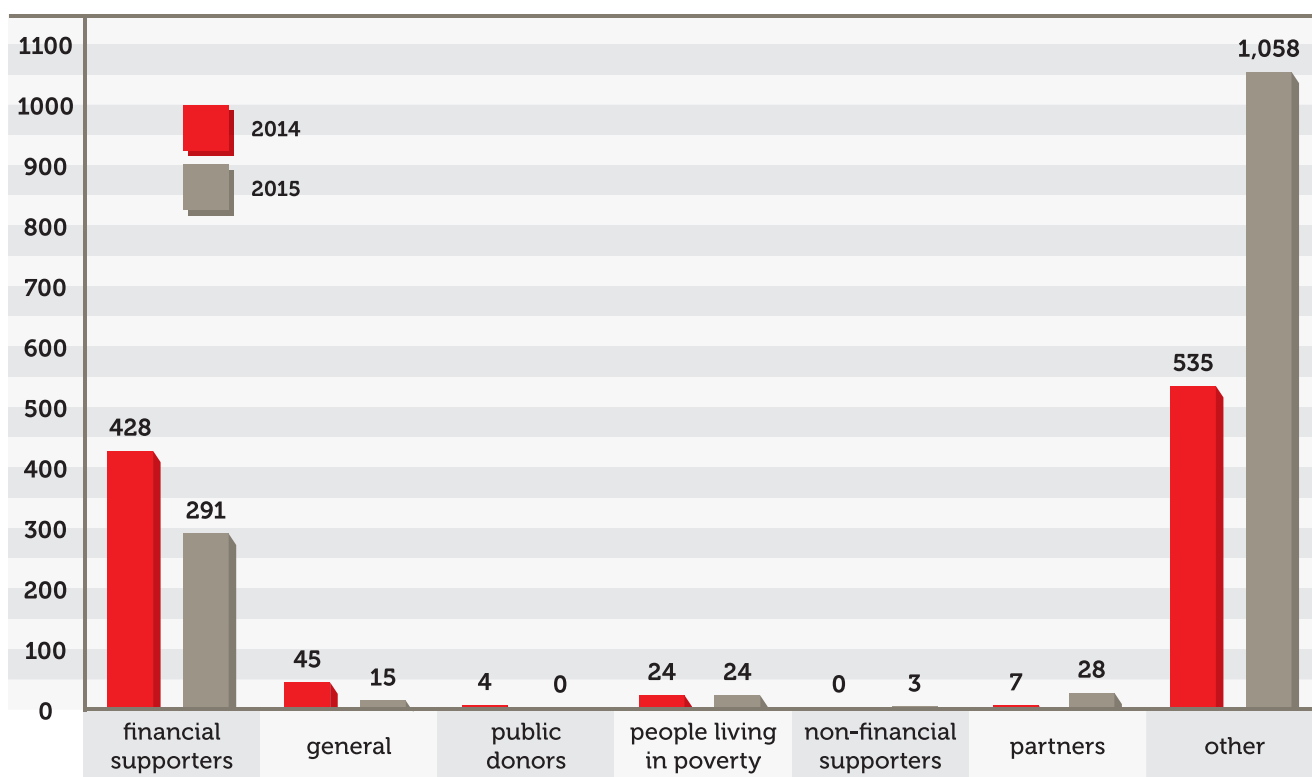
To do this the farmers felt it necessary to carry out research on climate-resilient sustainable agriculture in their community. They made a proposal requesting local ActionAid staff to provide technical support. On receiving this proposal the team revised their current action plan to include a research component and ActionAid Bangladesh provided the financial and technical support to implement the research.

## NGO2: Mechanisms for stakeholder feedback and complaints

'Feedback' and 'complaints' are quite distinct. Any communication from stakeholders is considered to be feedback unless it is "an external grievance made against ActionAid or more specifically against one of its employees, associated consultants or partners where the organisation has allegedly failed to meet a commitment",<sup>17</sup> in which case it is considered a complaint. As we have already reported about engaging with stakeholders and feedback mechanisms in NGO1, we will only address the complaints in this report.

Through the global annual reporting process, complaints and resolutions, including a number of complaints by broad categories of people (people living in poverty, partners, financial supporters, non-financial supporters, general, public donors, other) are collected (see Figure 6). Complaints are dealt with across the Federation using our written Complaints and Response Mechanism Framework – Policy and Procedure.

Figure 6: Complaints by type



Countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Greece, Ireland, Malawi, the Netherlands, UK and Zimbabwe have consistently registered complaints since the implementation of the accountability principle on complaints and resolutions in 2013. The total number of complaints reported across the Federation in 2015 was 1,419, from 31 countries who self-reported. The majority of these complaints came from ActionAid UK supporters, which can be attributed to ActionAid UK's robust systems to monitor, capture and resolve complaints – further details on this can be found in section P6, Ethical Fundraising. →

<sup>17</sup> Complaints and Response Mechanism Framework

[http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/complaints\\_mechanism\\_and\\_policy.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/complaints_mechanism_and_policy.pdf)

Notably, the total number of complaints from communities is 24, and from partners is 28. These complaints range from the level of difficulty of the content of partner training, the quality of seeds used by a partner in a community project, and the target area of a donor-funded project. In ActionAid Thailand, partnership guidelines and training were developed as a result of a query raised by a partner on financial documentation and reimbursement processes. Training was offered to all partners and an open question and answer session was provided to address additional queries and concerns.

### **NGO3: System for programme monitoring, evaluation and learning**

A global monitoring framework,<sup>18</sup> has been developed to measure our impact and progress against the current strategy *People's Action to End Poverty*. This framework aligns to each of the five strategic objectives and consists of six outcome level and six performance indicators per key change promise. Key learning, achievements and reflections on progress against our various strategic objectives are recorded, along with learning generated by our human rights based approach being implemented by partners. As a Federation we are making efforts to report annually against global indicators, though comparison of countries on overall progress is challenging, as countries report against diverse and content-specific indicators (see Section 2.8 for progress against selected indicators). Data generated from global indicators in countries vary widely, limiting their utility for aggregation and drawing conclusions at a global level. However, we continued our efforts to provide results-based reporting for donors, endeavouring faithfully to reflect our progress in ways that are meaningful and insightful for our partners, communities and other stakeholders.

Evidence and lessons learnt through the global monitoring framework were fed into discussions of the International Platforms, informing their decisions and courses of action.

A review of M&E was initiated, which included a thorough consultation with a wide range of stakeholders within and outside ActionAid. This review aims to draw lessons from our current practice to advance our M&E approach and ensure its alignment with our core values and beliefs about what change is, and how it happens. This consultation phase saw the responses from approximately 1,000 people. The outcomes of this review will feed into the development of the M&E approach and framework in our new strategy. ActionAid is also more proactively investing in generating evaluation evidence, and drawing on evaluations for programme development.

ActionAid has invested in strengthening evaluation methodologies. Following a light touch review of evaluations across the Federation, ActionAid produced a series of evaluation guidelines and practice notes, which set out the principles and good practice for ActionAid to embed into all our evaluations. These are now published on our intranet and set out minimum standards and include guidance, for example on commissioning evaluations and developing an evaluation terms of reference.

The Evaluation and Accountability Global Leaders (EAGLEs) network, a network of M&E practitioners and experts across the ActionAid Federation, continued to grow and expand. In 2015 it consisted of more than 75 members from 42 countries and provided a mechanism for the Federation to better coordinate M&E activities, and to share and learn from each other. The network provides M&E practitioners from across the Federation to work together as a community in a coordinated way, harmonising our approaches, prioritising our work and championing M&E at all levels.

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<sup>18</sup> Copy of framework upon request or can be found directly on ActionAid intranet.



ActionAid elaborated and tested an innovative methodology to measure 'value for money' in the communities in which we work. The methodology allows community members to judge how well we are achieving value for money by assessing whether we are allocating resources in the areas that generate the most change. This approach is rooted in accountability towards people living in poverty, as opposed to being associated with donor driven requirements. This methodology was developed and tested in Ethiopia, Myanmar, UK, Pakistan and Nigeria.

### ActionAid Australia meta-evaluation on women's rights in emergencies

ActionAid Australia coordinated a meta-evaluation into women's rights in emergencies (Strategic Objective four), which was shared with the International Secretariat Humanitarian and Resilience team and the Humanitarian International Platform, which recognised that the signature of ActionAid's emergency response is advancing women's rights in emergencies, response and recovery. The meta-evaluation confirmed the value of ActionAid's investment in women's rights in emergencies and found that ActionAid's emergency response work consistently focuses on women's rights as non-negotiables, builds on existing capacities of women and their organisations, ensures women's equal participation in decision-making, creates safe spaces for women, and strengthens access to resources.

While the evaluation also highlighted the fact that further work on protection is needed to embed community based, women-led protection mechanisms across all ActionAid emergency responses, responses in Vanuatu and Greece (which had not been evaluated at time of writing) indicate that this work is already being developed.

### Monitoring and evaluation processes in ActionAid Bangladesh

Improved capacity in results-based monitoring improved programme learning and strengthened programme effectiveness in 2015. Aggregated M&E data was consolidated globally through the International Platforms and helped to identify effective strategies and evidence gaps. For instance, we identified a gap in programming relating to the structural causes of violence against women and girls. At the March 2015 meeting of the International Platform on Women's Rights, participants from 18 countries discussed this issue and decided to adopt a stronger feminist perspective across our work. In response, ActionAid Brazil developed a feminist approach to M&E during 2015-16 and International Platform participants agreed to strengthen feminist analysis through framing issues around power structures and inequality. In 2016, ActionAid will test data collection tools for measuring power shifts to ensure stronger M&E in this area.

## NGO4: Measures to integrate gender and diversity

ActionAid's human rights based approach emphasises the need to include all marginalised people in programme design, implementation and evaluation. Our approach emphasises accessibility – for example, our participatory Reflection Action methodology uses a combination of methods to increase accessibility (e.g. visual and audio) as best practice.

Promoting equality and celebrating diversity are integral to the principles on which our strategies are based. These eight principles each contain a set of minimum standards,<sup>19</sup> including a programme checklist that helps to ensure programme design, implementation and M&E are consistent with our human rights based approach. Despite being a well-established principle across the Federation, we recognise more can be done to advance all aspects of diversity – race, ethnicity, literacy, disability and sexuality-related issues – in our ways of working internally and in our HRBA implementation in our external programmes. There are some encouraging examples where our programmes have focused on vulnerable sections of communities, for example, working with disabled members of communities in Afghanistan, Australia, The Gambia, India, Kenya, Lesotho and Malawi; and with communities discriminated against on the basis of caste in Nepal and India.

ActionAid is committed to improving inclusion of persons with disabilities. In 2015, as part of global reporting by 23 countries providing data on disability, 16 reported having a programme on disability, including six in the education sector, and 10 in other areas (including working with survivors of the Rana Plaza disaster in Bangladesh and working on issues of rights and discrimination in Pakistan, Malawi, Myanmar). Disability-related issues were also explored in our Safe Cities for Women campaign in Cambodia and Liberia.

In this current strategy period no concrete targets have been set in relation to integrating gender and diversity into programme design and implementation. However, ActionAid has made strong progress in improving overall data collection tools and capacity, and data storage and sharing systems, creating a strong foundation for systematic data disaggregation and analysis by disability, age and gender. ActionAid collects data on the number of staff with disabilities across the Federation.

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<sup>19</sup> See: <http://www.actionaid.org/publications/peoples-action-practice>, page 19.



## Integrating gender and diversity, ActionAid Bangladesh

ActionAid Bangladesh, through its integrated work at local and national level, addressed disability issues in a number of ways during 2015:

- Conducting regular advocacy meetings with authorities of primary schools on the right to education for children with disabilities, such as School Management Committees and Education Committees at district level. As a result, 36 children with disabilities were enrolled in primary schools and received teaching materials and a stipend for education.
- Developing a curriculum on inclusive education for Primary Teachers Training Institutes (PTIs), Resource Centres, Education Officers and Head Teachers. This curriculum is acknowledged by the Directorate of Primary Education and National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE) for piloting at selected PTIs. Through this piloting process, 105 teachers' trainers were trained.
- 53 young persons with disabilities received business development and management training and 73 young men and women with disabilities started businesses after receiving start-up funding from community-based organisations.

## Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities lobby for safer criminal justice systems, South Africa

In 2015, ActionAid South Africa, in partnership with the Forum for the Empowerment of Women, implemented a project to enable members of LGBTI communities, particularly young black lesbians, in 15 townships around Johannesburg to become activists to engage with the struggles of LGBTI people. Through awareness raising and training, these women were helped to empower themselves and to advocate for broader systemic change in the criminal justice system to increase safety and equality. The women in the project reported an improved sense of self-worth and participated in non-LGBTI events in their communities, thereby increasing their visibility. They were able to mobilise support and solidarity for Soweto Pride – an annual event creating a platform to celebrate LGBTI rights. With the establishment of support groups, led by trained leaders, they continue to support each other through the experiences they face in their community.

## NGO5: Advocacy positions and public awareness campaigns

Based on consultations and research at local and national level, programme teams put together campaign proposals to submit to the International Leadership Team. These campaigns aim to best represent the interests of people living in poverty and exclusion, while also contributing towards achieving our strategic aims.

Once these proposals are approved and endorsed by the General Assembly, specific campaign plans are formulated, approved, monitored, evaluated and revised according to the procedures laid down in ALPS. This includes regular annual PRRPs by all countries and units participating in the campaign.

Our international campaigns are managed and monitored by steering groups involving both international and national staff. This process of annual review and reflection enables us to chart progress towards set targets and objectives or milestones reached. It also identifies areas where a shift in strategy may be required.

ActionAid's priorities in terms of policies and campaigns are based on our own and others' experience, and on knowledge and analysis. They are developed using agreed criteria, which include quality research and analysis, accountability, awareness of our mandate, authority and legitimacy and the need to meet legal requirements. In addition, ActionAid has specific guidelines<sup>20</sup> for conducting policy research and publishing external material, for signing off position papers and external communications.

Campaigns are based on research and analysis by ActionAid and each campaign goes through the following process prior to being approved:

1. Proposals are assessed by a Technical Assessment Panel consisting of the International Head of Campaigns, International Head of Communications, International Fundraising Manager, an external expert on campaigning strategy, attitudes and values, fundraising/campaigning integration, and one International Board member/independent Trustee.
2. Proposals are circulated to all countries for scoring against the selection criteria approved by the Directors' Forum.
3. Scores and outcomes of the technical review enable an advisory team of Country Directors to shortlist a maximum of five campaigns for further development.
4. The shortlist is then approved by the ActionAid ILT.
5. A Policy and Programme Forum approves the final 'portfolio' of three campaigns following a debate and vote.
6. The Policy and Programme Forum's recommendation, together with recommendations on the roles and responsibilities of members and IS in implementing the campaign portfolio, is then sent to the ILT for approval, the ActionAid International Board for endorsement and then to the Directors' Forum and GA for launching.
7. The three priority campaigns identified for the current strategy period are Tax Justice, Safe Cities and Urban Spaces for Women and Girls, and Land Rights.

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<sup>20</sup> Full text of the policy is available upon request or in ActionAid intranet.

## Corrective action to improve influence over advocacy work, ActionAid Ireland

Based on a report of monitoring visit to Kenya by Irish Aid, received in May 2015, corrective action was taken to improve aspects of a five-country women's rights programme implementation.

As a result of the monitoring report, a decision was made to formalise the International Programme Management Team (IPMT), which was already operating across the five programme countries, and introduce an oversight group – an International Programme Accountability Team (IPAT). The IPAT was made collectively responsible for the systematic oversight of the women's rights programme and the successful implementation of the programme, to ensure that work was strategically aligned, of appropriate quality, and that donor accountability and contractual requirements were met. The agreed purpose of this IPAT was to:

- (a) enhance accountability of this women's rights programme to beneficiaries and donor;
- (b) enhance shared learning within ActionAid and externally;
- (c) seek to influence policy and advocacy; and
- (d) identify funding opportunities for the women's rights programme.

## NGO6: Processes to take into account and coordinate with other actors

ActionAid's work is characterised by a strong appraisal period prior to a decision being made about exactly how and when to embark upon a new area of work. During this appraisal period, other actors are identified and their activities considered in terms of possible coordination and cooperation.

The appraisal stage is a thorough process of analysis in which the actions of other stakeholders, ActionAid's added value, and potential partnerships and alliances are considered. ActionAid believes the appraisal stage is crucial for building a solid foundation for participation and partnership with communities as well as to achieve an in-depth understanding of an area. This includes finding out which other organisations are operating in the area and either complementing their work or ensuring that we do not duplicate efforts. Our evaluations and peer reviews also always specifically look at how well we have collaborated with and what we have learned from other actors.

Our Partnership Policy and Practice Framework 2009 states: "A partnership is the relationship of equality between entities based on mutual respect, complementarity and accountability where the shared values, purpose, goals and objectives are clear and which recognises autonomy of the entities.(...) ActionAid recognises a partnership as both a dynamic process and a relationship (...) It is often a longer-term relationship (...) allowing time to develop and deepen the relationship for shared goals, objectives, programmes and projects. A partnership involves the transfer or exchange not just of funds but also of solidarity, staff, ideas, learning and extended relationship (e.g. to partner's partners) etc. A partnership is grounded in a documented agreement, which spells out the contractual obligations, irrespective of whether ActionAid provides funding or not."

## Coordinating with other actors in ActionAid Somalia

While implementing a Local Rights Programme in Somalia, ActionAid consulted with the Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs, Justice, Education, Agriculture, Interior, and Religion/Endowment. With the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, along with other stakeholders, we discussed how to speed up enactment of ministry's female genital mutilation policy to address challenges being faced by women and girls. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs subsequently confirmed its commitment to the promotion of women's rights by providing official approval for multisectoral collaboration and integrated planning on the issue. During consultation with the Ministry of the Interior, the importance of promoting women's participation in local structures was recognised.

A series of consultation and awareness meetings was also undertaken with local authorities and communities in programme locations. Participants included representatives from district authorities, village development committees, elders, religious leaders, women and youth groups, and the private sector, among others. The purpose of the consultation meetings was to increase awareness and political consciousness among stakeholders to protect women's rights, avoid duplication of effort, identify opportunities for collaboration, and promote women's participation in community decision-making structures.

Some of the key outputs of the meeting and a subsequent action plan were women's representation in the development committees in all districts.

The method by which partners' accountability is ensured is outlined in the Partnership Policy and Practice Framework, which states that: "The partner demonstrates willingness to embrace participatory approaches and practices in its work and relationships at all level so as to enhance accountability, openness and transparency to poor and excluded people."<sup>21</sup>

It also lists the following context specific documents as key for accountability:

- partnership agreement;
- programme memorandum (or project document);
- programme and financial reporting formats.

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<sup>21</sup> From ActionAid International's Partnership and Policy Practice Framework (full text of the policy is available upon request or in ActionAid intranet.)

## II. Financial management

### NGO7: Resource allocation, tracking and control

ActionAid international publishes audited accounts on an annual basis;<sup>22</sup> the financial statements are audited by the independent audit firm Ernst & Young. The accounts published are in line with all relevant laws and statutory requirements, and are also contained in the ActionAid International Annual Report.<sup>23</sup>

#### Ensuring the effectiveness of our resource allocation in achieving key strategic objectives:

The processes in place to track the use of resources in ActionAid are:

- The Resource Allocation Framework (RAF): a set of policies that determine how financial resources are allocated between ActionAid units and how the IS and international work are funded. The RAF is overseen by the leadership team and requires International Board approval thereby ensuring adequate corporate governance.
- The Financial Management Framework: a set of accounting and financial management policies that determine how finances are managed.
- Internal audit: an internal appraisal process that assesses, as part of its remit, whether resources are used for their intended purposes.
- External audit: reviews the validity and accuracy of the financial statements produced at the end of the year.
- ALPS: offers guidelines and approaches to being accountable to the whole range of stakeholders, in particular the people living in poverty with whom we work.

The standards used in ActionAid are:

- Internal audit works to the global standards of the Institute of Internal Auditors.
- External audits are undertaken in line with the International Standards of Auditing.
- The RAF is an internal regulatory document that guides the allocation of resources.

In 2015, the Finance and Funding Committee of the International Board approved a revised Resource Allocation Framework (RAF), which focusses on pooling Federation resources for collective strategic decision-making to ensure that investment in fundraising – including expansion to new markets – is in line with our investment and expansion criteria.

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<sup>22</sup> See: <http://www.actionaid.org/who-we-are/transparency>

<sup>23</sup> 2015 ActionAid International Annual Report, see: [http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/action\\_aid\\_international\\_annual\\_report\\_vfinal\\_12\\_hi\\_res.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/action_aid_international_annual_report_vfinal_12_hi_res.pdf)

## How we track the use of resources, including cash and in-kind-contributions, for their intended purposes

- Planning and budgeting – we have robust planning and budgeting systems and processes which ensure that funds are applied to intended purposes.
- Accounting system – we use an accounting system with dedicated account codes and analysis codes to track funding from specific donors, funding sources and activities.
- We produce monthly, quarterly and annual reports and keep track of key performance indicators (KPIs). Some KPIs are used to specifically ensure that funds are spent on the intended purposes.

Evidence of robust internal and external controls to minimise the risk of funds being misused:

- The Financial Management Framework forms the bedrock of our internal control systems. All members of the Federation are required to comply with its Accounting standards and policies.
- ActionAid’s planning process – whereby the budget holders and directors provide their financial plans based on a budget allocation. Once plans are underway we provide reports based on expenditure incurred in line with the budget as set out. This ensures we keep track of amounts spent and any variances above or below 10% are recorded. Reports also include monthly management accounts; quarterly reports as well as annual reports. The management teams review the accounts and take appropriate action on a timely basis.
- ActionAid’s published annual report includes the audit opinion provided by the External auditors.
- Corporate governance – we have a robust board of trustees which provides independent oversight of the management of the organisation.
- Internal audit reports are submitted to the Audit and Risk Committee of the International Board and the Internal Audit Team is independent of management.

An assurance framework which details the ways in which assurance is derived around the main operational areas is attached for your reference.

ActionAid is also undertaking a process of financial transformation – a strategic priority to strengthen and align financial management and operations across the Federation. This includes the implementation of a Global Financial System, the roll-out of our Financial Management Framework, the roll-out of the Top 10 Basics Change initiative (financial minimum standards), and Treasury management plans (including optimisations of currency risk management and trading).

The global Contract Management System (CMS) project is still ongoing despite facing delays in 2015 due to resourcing constraints. The CMS project will deliver a harmonised set of contract management ‘business’ processes, adopted throughout the Federation, that manage restricted funds through their entire lifecycle – from planning to closure. These business processes will be supported and driven by a new online, web-based and global IT system, serving as the primary platform on which all ActionAid countries will manage restricted funding. An interim database is currently in place, however a vendor for the system has now been selected and pilots in countries have been re-instigated. A steering group is being put in place, and online training modules, due diligence guidelines and Memorandum of Understanding templates are being developed. Once the system is officially launched, this is expected to enable ActionAid to effectively and efficiently track and manage compliance and accountability for restricted funds.

## NGO8: Sources of funding

The major sources of funding are voluntary (committed) giving, which includes individual supporters and high value donors; institutional income; and other income. During 2015, committed giving income was €153 million; institutional income was €86m; investment income was €1m; and other income was €4m.

The top five largest donors in 2015 were: the Government of Denmark €29m; the European Union €10.2m; UK Government €10m; Government of Netherlands €5m; and the UN World Food Programme €3.8m.

### III. Environmental management

In the last report (2014-15) data for the environment section was analysed and divided into two broad categories: direct and indirect emissions, organised as follows:

**Scope 1:** All direct greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

**Scope 2:** Indirect GHG emissions from consumption of purchased electricity, heat or steam.

**Scope 3:** Other indirect emissions, such as the extraction and production of purchased materials and fuels, transport-related activities in vehicles not owned or controlled by the reporting entity, electricity-related activities not covered in Scope 2, outsourced activities, waste disposal.

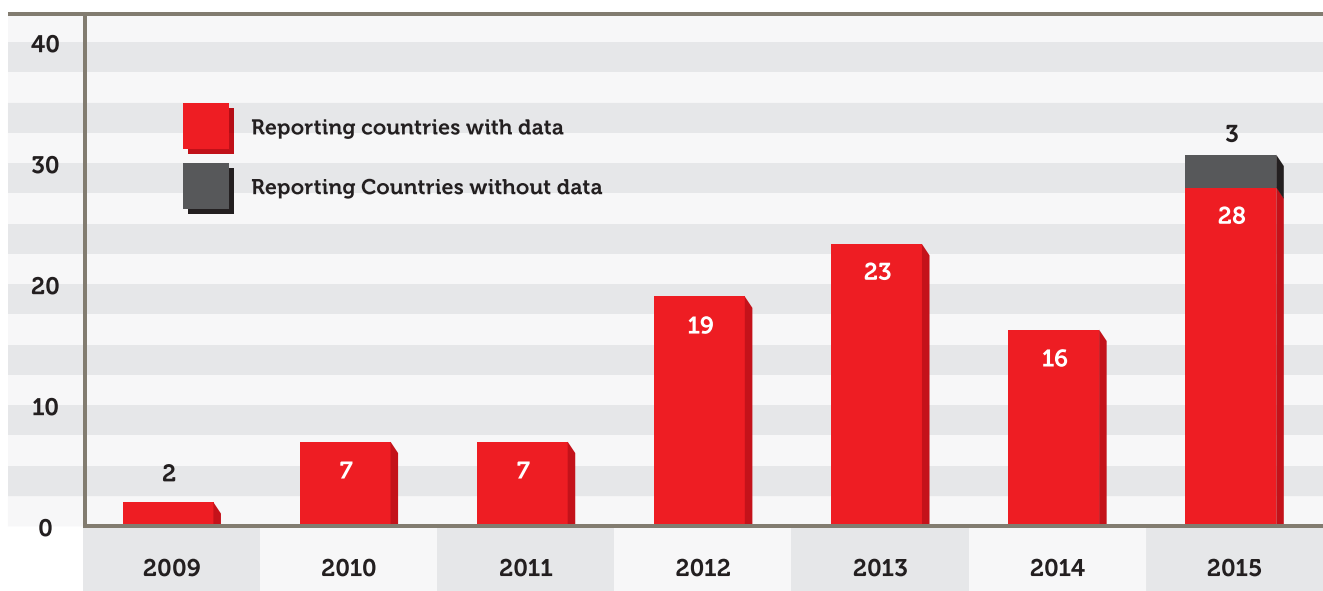
In 2014 ActionAid measured the operational GHG emissions of the IS and 15 member countries. ActionAid refers to each of the national members and the secretariat as 'units', so in 2014 we reported on a total of 16 units. For 2015, we expanded our reach and collected carbon footprint data from 31 units; among them, three countries also reported their programme intervention.

#### EN16: Total direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions by weight

Over the past three years, ActionAid has become more and more conscious of measuring and reducing its negative environmental impacts. There was a slight fluctuation in the number of countries reporting their environmental impacts in 2014, due to disruption as a result of office re-locations and staff turnover of the Green Champion (sustainability focal person) in a few countries. However, there has been significant progress in expanding this work over the last three years: 31 units reported their 2015 emission data and programme intervention, compared with 23 reports in 2013.

Please note that the six offices of the IS are considered as one unit when reporting CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Figure 7: **Number of reporting countries (including IS)**



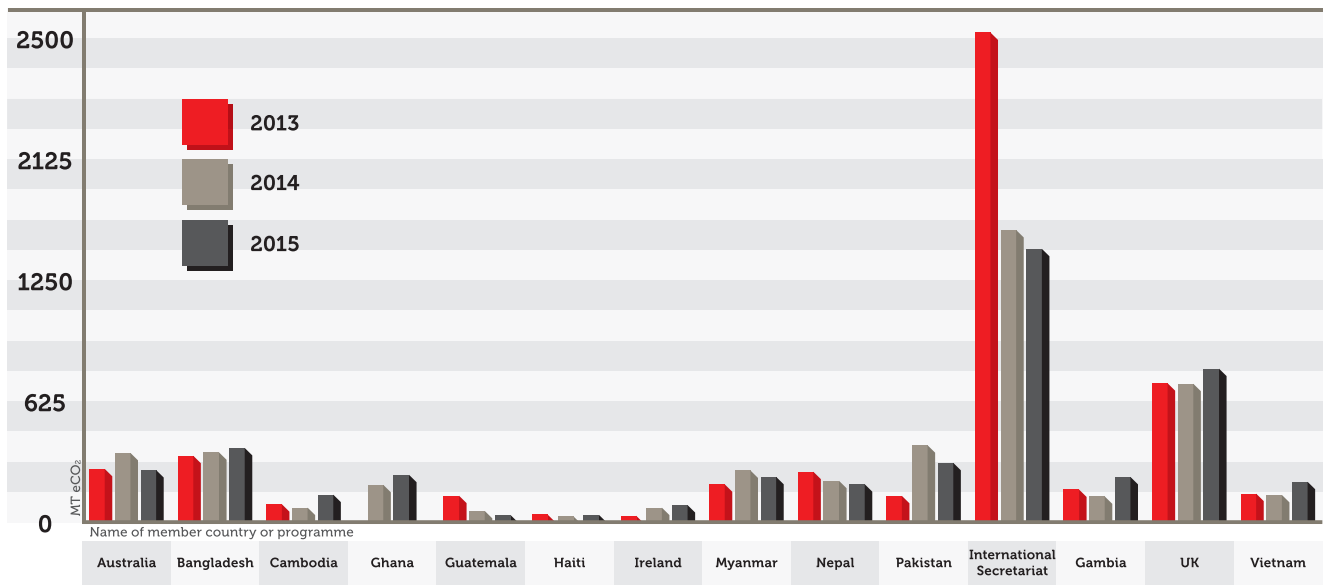


## Dynamic of country reporting of emission data<sup>24</sup>

Fourteen units (13 countries and the IS) have consecutively reported emissions associated with the major four units (office energy, paper, local travel and air travel) over three years (2013, 2014, 2015) (see Figures 7 and 8).

Although we have reduced emissions by 6% since 2013, there was a slight increase (1.5%) in 2015 compared to 2014 figures. There are a number of reasons for this, including increased engagement at policy level particularly around the post-2015 Millennium Development Goal discussions and increased awareness, however it is important to note that some variations could be shown due to different methodologies countries have used for data collection and analysis.

Figure 8: Member countries and programmes (including IS), showing variance between 2013, 2014 and 2015 emissions



The figures obtained were from the collection of direct and indirect emission of energy data which is obtained through ActionAid's Green Action Sustainability data collection form which is divided into four sections: offices, vehicles, travel and paper. Each reporting office submits data (validated through invoices and other relevant documents) for the entire calendar year. The data is then sent to a central database and is used to assess environmental impact and calculate the unit's operational impact.

<sup>24</sup> 'Without data' means units have reported on different initiatives undertaken within their own country programmes but have not provided any data on the four benchmark tools used to measure emissions.



ActionAid carbon emissions in 2015 (all direct scope 1) were calculated following the Greenhouse Gas Protocol (GHGP). Scope 1 emissions were calculated using factors from the GHGP calculators. Emissions from electricity (scope 2) were calculated using national average conversion factors for each country as reported by the International Energy Agency, *CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions from Fuel Combustion in 2015* (except for the Gambia, Lesotho, Sierra Leone and Uganda, which were sourced from Carbon Monitoring for Action, *CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions per Region*).

Please note that data for two of these countries (Denmark and Sweden) and the International Secretariat is incomplete and represents only partial measurement of their operational impact. This is due to new Green Champions being in place in each of these countries who are still working out the most effective way of collecting this data. All of these offices should have more comprehensive data to report in 2017.

Data were collected on: purchased electricity, generator fuel, vehicle fuel, paper use and air travel. Data on coolant emissions were not collected for 2014 and 2015 because it has proved too difficult for staff working in field offices to accurately track the quantities of coolant used each year. ActionAid Green Champions are working to develop a common method to incorporate data on coolant emissions and to improve the data collection system for coolants in future years.

Data used to calculate GHG emissions is site-specific except as follows:

- The IS is located in the same building as ActionAid UK in London. Separate utility data for the IS and ActionAid UK are not available. Emissions in the table below are based on site-specific data for the London office, but were apportioned based on the number of staff working for each organisation within the office.
- In locations where offices are not independently metered, estimates for electricity were made based on building meter readings and adjusted for occupied area.

The International Secretariat's Institutional Development Directorate is working with the rest of the Federation to understand the challenges they face in data collection and reporting. Based on their feedback and suggestions, ActionAid developed new guidelines with a common format for data collection, verification and reporting, which is now operational. ActionAid also developed its own carbon calculation tool, flight calculator and paper calculator to calculate its own emission which will be operational from 2016. Countries have completed an initial trial phase of the tools to develop an understanding of the use of the tools. As a result of staff turnover, there was a delay in the response from a few of the piloting countries which delayed the project from the planned launch in 2015 to 2016.

## EN18: Initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reductions achieved

In 2010, ActionAid developed new guidelines (guided by senior management) for collecting data on and reporting countries' emissions. While ActionAid Affiliate Members, Associate Members and Country Programmes have yet to set targets for concrete emission reduction, they are nonetheless encouraged to ask themselves the following questions:

- What are the measures or alternative pathways we can take to reduce emissions without hampering the programme?
- What do we need to change to implement the actions?

In 2015 ActionAid emitted about 8,186 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide) and is in the process of adopting the 4R approach (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) as well as voluntary offsetting,<sup>25</sup> to safeguard the environment from our operations.

International travel and meetings guidelines were introduced in 2015 as a commitment to reduce environmental impact and our contribution to climate change, to ensure the safety and security of staff and make effective use of financial resources. Any international travel or meetings require an official business case, and meetings require authorisation by an International Director.

ActionAid invited countries that are taking measures to calculate and reduce emissions from their operations to provide some examples:

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<sup>25</sup> ActionAid mostly operates in low-income countries where per capita emission is low, rendering it not mandatory for ActionAid as a Federation to offset its emissions. However, to ensure we walk the talk, ActionAid is voluntarily undertaking an offsetting programme.

## Examples from countries that are taking measures to calculate and reduce emissions from their operations

- ActionAid Australia has implemented multiple strategies to reduce carbon emissions, including a commitment by all staff members to walk to work or use public transport where possible. Additionally, all departments within ActionAid Australia are committed to end all unnecessary travel (and record all trips that are made) and use Skype for meetings with international partners and stakeholders when possible. To reduce office energy consumption, all staff members are committed to ensuring that electrical items are switched off when not in use and this is monitored by members of a newly introduced Green Committee, which monitors energy consumption, including ensuring electrical items are switched off when not in use. Furthermore, all lights in the ActionAid Australia office are motion sensitive and are therefore not in use when there is no one present.
- ActionAid Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Denmark, Guatemala, India, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Sweden, and Zimbabwe have all actively put in place initiatives this year to reduce the amount of printing, range from introducing online technology to purchasing improved equipment that requires a password to release and print documents.
- ActionAid Brazil donated used equipment to schools and other local organisations, have purchased ENERGY STAR-qualified office equipment and appliances and have activated power management features on computer and monitors.
- ActionAid France moved offices to a new building certificated for low energy consumption and emissions.
- ActionAid Guatemala and ActionAid Mozambique are combining field visits required by partners and various staff to reduce the amount of local travel required, reducing fuel consumption.
- ActionAid India has organised more than 52 meetings through video conferencing technology, reducing emissions and saving time and resources, and introduced the requirement of taking public transport for travel up to 1,000 kilometres.
- ActionAid Sweden has chosen a power company that provides green energy, 95% of which is hydroelectric and 5% of which is wind.
- ActionAid UK and ActionAid Denmark has installed LED lighting where possible, using 87% less power.

## EN26: Initiatives to mitigate environmental impact of products and services

ActionAid is a not-for-profit organisation and works with people living in poverty to ensure their socioeconomic development. In general, ActionAid projects (where directly related to the environment through livelihoods or land use) focus on improving the ecosystem and reducing land and other natural resource degradation. However, ActionAid does not yet follow a formal procedure for conducting environmental impact assessments of programmes and projects across the Federation.

In 2015, ActionAid Bangladesh, Vietnam, Nepal and Senegal were able to link their Green Action work with their work in communities by promoting sustainable livelihood options. For example, ActionAid Bangladesh supported a plantation programme in a flood-prone community with which it works, involving 1,400 sponsored children. Each child was given two seedlings to plant (one fruit tree and one timber tree) along with a half-day teaching on planting. The tree planting not only helped sequester carbon emissions, but also provided income generation opportunities and food security.

## IV. Human resource management

### LA1: Size and composition of total workforce

By 2015 ActionAid's total, full-time equivalent staff headcount was 3,044 compared to 3,051 in 2014 (see Figure 9). The number of female staff members decreased by two, while the number of male employed decreased by five. The headcount for 2015 is calculated at an average headcount rate from January to December 2015. The overall headcount comprises the following:

- top level staff – 11%;
- middle level staff – 45%; and
- entry level staff – 44%.

Figure 9: ActionAid workforce, by sex, 2013–2015

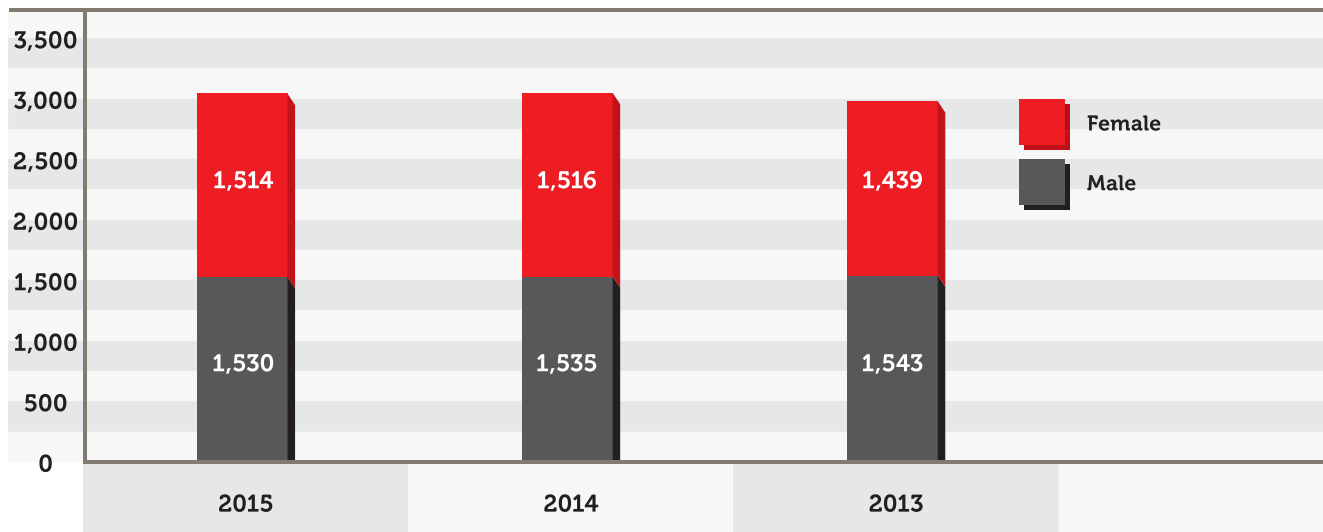


Figure 10: ActionAid workforce, non-core staff, 2015

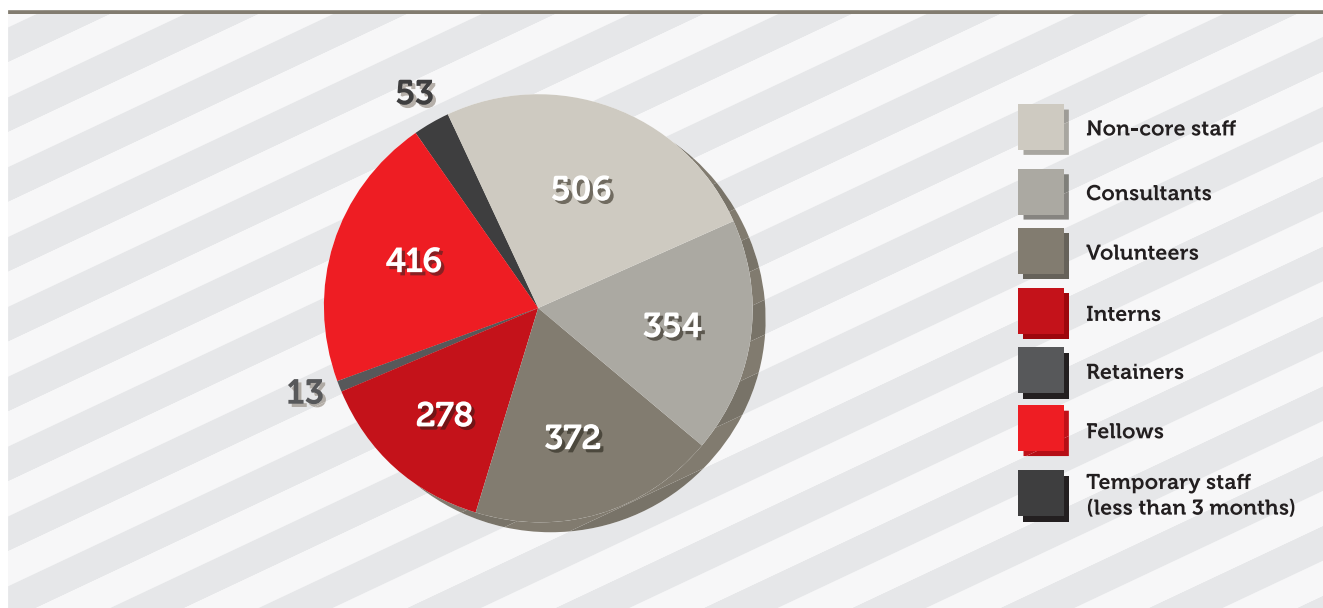
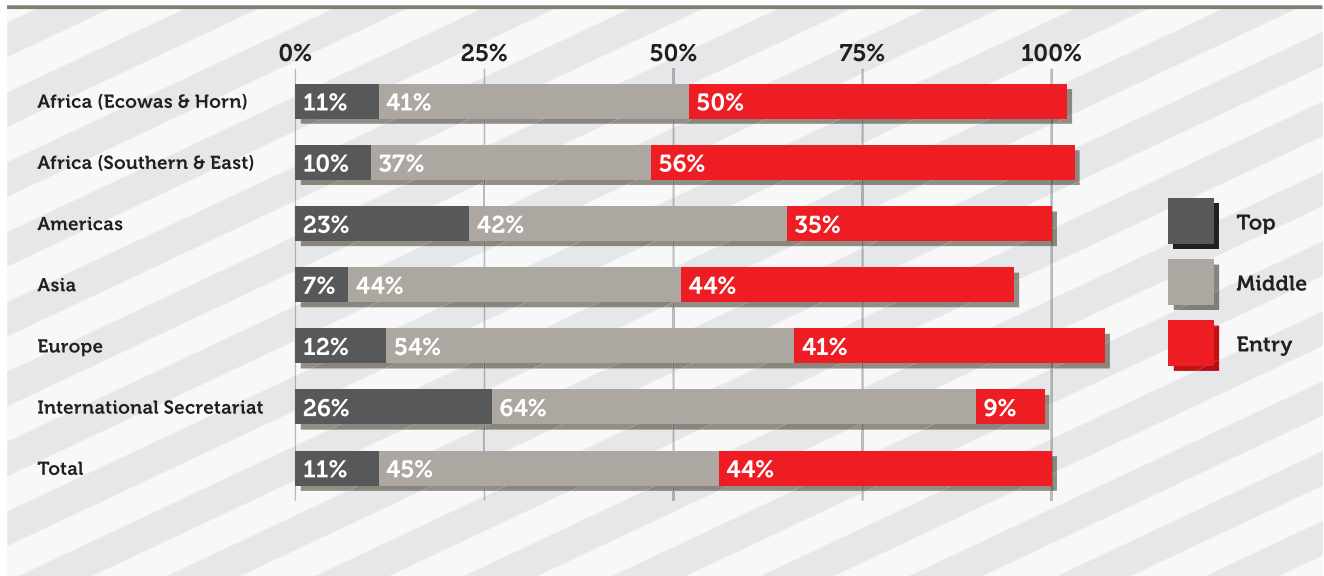


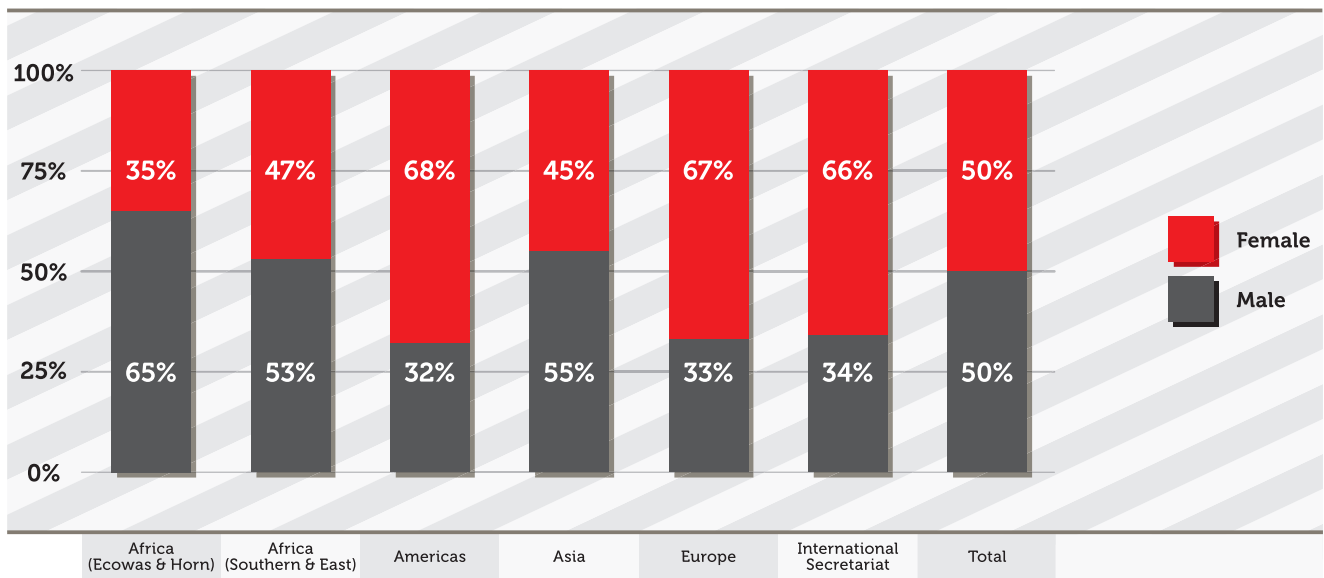
Figure 10 shows the number of non-core staff, consultants, volunteers, interns, retainers, fellows (youth volunteers in Myanmar), and temporary staff. These individuals are seasonal service providers and are not on the full-time pay roll. The total number of other staff is 1,992 for 2015. The ActionAid workforce by level and region is presented in Figure 11, and by sex and region in Figure 12. The categorisation of ActionAid grading structure can be found in Annex 3.

Figure 11: ActionAid workforce, by level, by region, 2015\*



\* Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding

Figure 12: ActionAid workforce, by sex, by region, 2015



## EC7: Procedures for local and senior management hiring

Our recruitment policies and procedures aim to attract and select a diverse workforce with the skills and capabilities to fulfil our requirements. Our advertising templates have a clause encouraging qualified females to apply. Our interview panels must be set up with a gender and diversity balance (see section on Recruitment and Selection in the Global HR Standards). ActionAid operates through its national offices worldwide and through the IS hubs. In national offices, the majority of staff (at all levels) are local people. Members of the local National Boards are nationals of the respective country and take part in hiring the Country Directors. ActionAid commits to hiring local people for local jobs. Following the 2011 Remuneration and Benefits review, implemented to limit international expatriate contracts to senior leadership team members if necessary, led to a decrease in the overall number of expatriate staff. By December 2015 the number of expatriates had decreased to 25 out of the total 3,044 staff.

From 2012, we introduced a principle called 'localisation' for all of our staff on long-term staff expatriate contracts. Housing and school fee benefits are reduced to 50% at the beginning of the 6th year on the expat being in one location and completely fall away at the beginning of the 7th year.

This is fully outlined in the Global Human Resources Standards<sup>26</sup> and the International Secretariat Human Resources Handbooks.<sup>27</sup>

## LA10: Workforce training

Training forms an important element of ActionAid's learning ecosystem and framework for individual, team, organisational and inter-organisational learning. Linked to this is the 70:20:10 approach, where 70% of development consists of on-the-job learning; supported by 20% learning from others, and 10% structured learning (classroom training). Training can also be a combination of these approaches, involving methods such as peer to peer learning, mentorship and job placements.

Identifying training needs: At a national level, during the 2015 global planning process, countries indicated the type of capacity development support they needed for the coming year. Based on this, those able to provide this support (fundraising, IT, M&E etc.) developed specific training to be delivered at organisational level.

At the individual level, staff identify learning and development needs with their line manager during their personal performance management process. This is reviewed bi-annually.

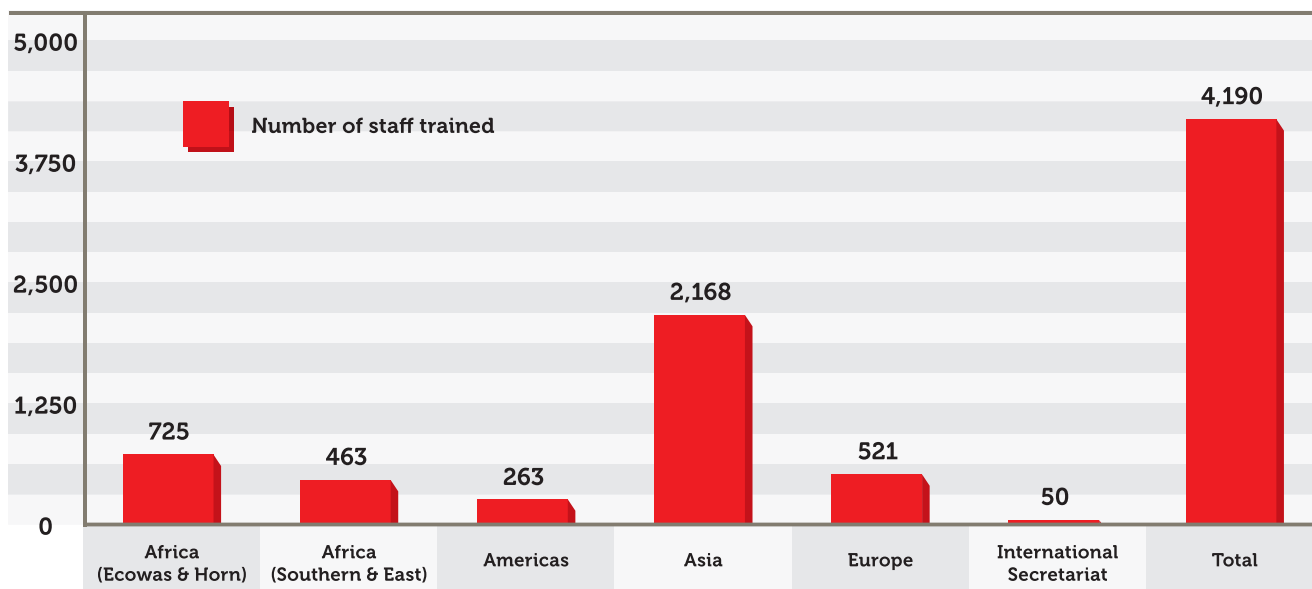
Investment varies from country to country, but (as per Global HR Standards) it is recommended that 1% of the total staff annual budget is put aside for training. In our reporting we are able to extract the training courses attended by staff members, the number of staff who attended, as well as the total amount spent on training by region (please see Figure 13).

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<sup>26</sup> Full text of the policy is available upon request or in ActionAid intranet.

<sup>27</sup> Full text of the policy is available upon request or in ActionAid intranet.

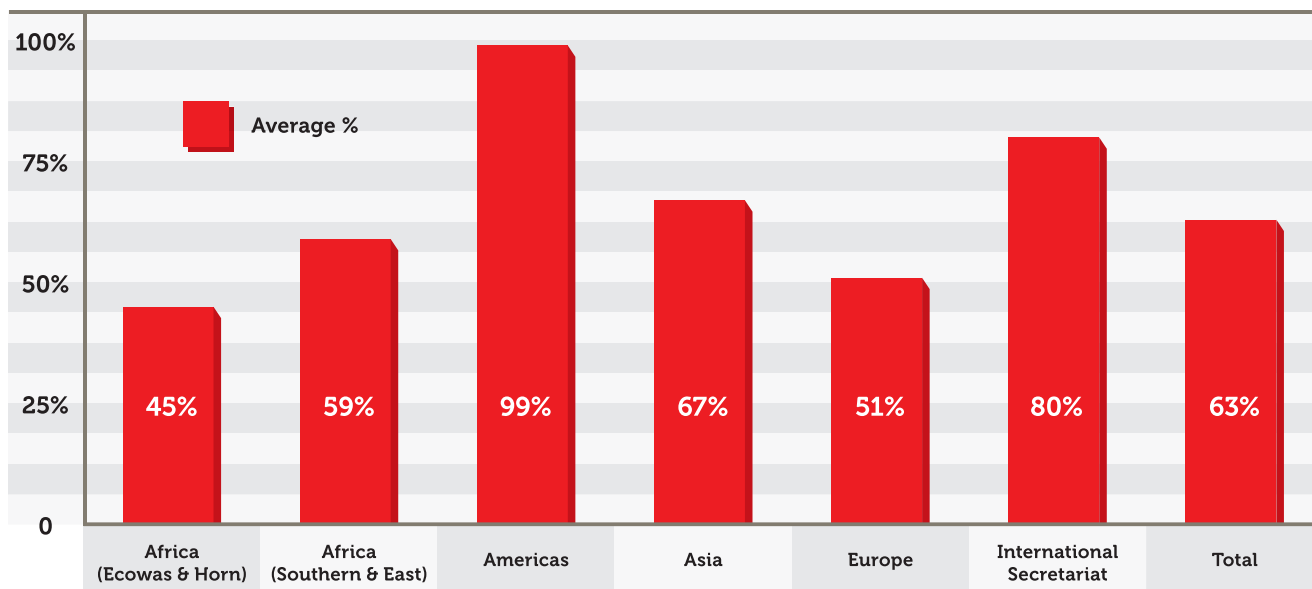
Figure 13: ActionAid staff trained, by region, 2015



Staff training as a percentage of total staff costs was 2.63%, comprising (by region): Africa (southern and east): 0.68%; Americas 0.33%; Asia 0.82%; Europe 0.87%; IS 0.07%; Africa (ECOWAS & Horn) region 13.03% - primarily attributed to countries in the region reporting on training partner' staff. The total, excluding ECOWAS and the Horn of Africa, would be 0.55%.

## LA12: Performance reviews and career development plans

Figure 14: ActionAid, average performance appraisal completion, by region, 2015



In 2015, 63% of staff across the Federation at all levels completed performance management reviews (see Figure 14). In total, 143 staff were promoted into positions at a higher level during 2015. Of this number, 85 were females. Staff at manager level or higher are expected to complete a 360 performance assessment as part of their annual performance management review.

We also have the Value Practice through the ActionAid Leadership Competency Framework embedded in our Senior Leadership Development Programme, Middle Management Leadership Development Programme, IS 360 degrees performance management system, and leadership competency based interviews.

## LA13: Diversity in your organisation

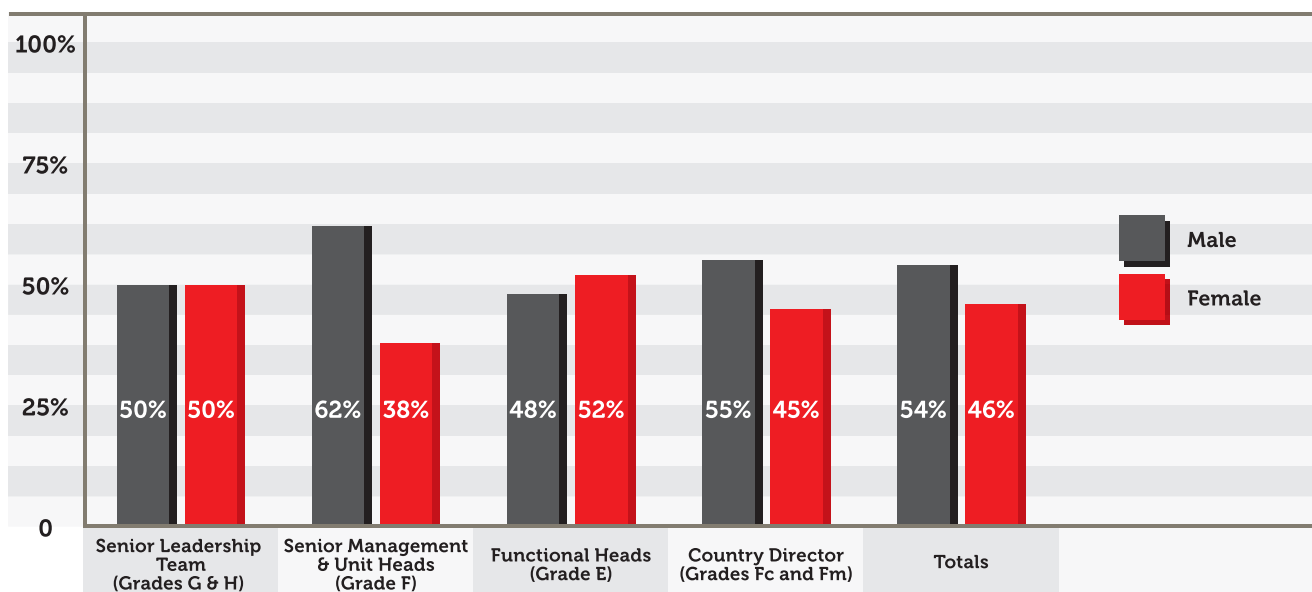
The ActionAid International Board consists of five men and seven women (one of whom is the Chair of the International Board). International Board members have a geographically diverse background: Africa (3), Latin America (2), Europe (4), Asia (3).

- The General Assembly should take at least 50% of their members from groups, communities and movements of poor and excluded people.
- At any given time, 50% of the members of the General Assembly should ideally be women.
- The General Assembly's composition should also reflect locally significant social and regional diversity as far as possible.

We track and report quarterly on the number of females in leadership positions in the ActionAid Federation. Senior leaders are categorised as Senior Leadership Team, senior management and unit heads, function heads, Country Directors and Senior Management Team members at country level. In December 2015, our total percentage of female leaders was 46% while our target is 50% (see Figure 15).

Diversity and inequality have been identified as a key strategic area to address as a part of ActionAid's Global Strategy 2018–2028. Though currently we have diversity indices for ActionAid's IS, we do not have a diversity position paper for the ActionAid Federation as a whole, though there are plans to address this.

Figure 15: Women in ActionAid leadership positions, 2015





## NGO9: Mechanism for workforce grievances and responses

In ActionAid the meaning of 'feedback' and 'complaints' is quite distinct. Any communication from stakeholders is considered to be feedback unless it is "an external grievance made against ActionAid or more specifically against one of its employees, associated consultants or partners where the organisation has allegedly failed to meet a commitment".

In addition ActionAid keeps a log of all whistleblowing and grievances reported through the IS, with information on how the issues were investigated and resolved. Global policies including the Whistleblowing,<sup>28</sup> Complaints and Response Mechanism Framework,<sup>29</sup> as well as the Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy<sup>30</sup> are and followed throughout the Federation for all ActionAid staff and partners.

Internally, the Bullying and Harassment Policy in the Workplace Policy for IS Staff was introduced to create a conducive and respectful work environment. Global Human Resources Standards ensure non-negotiable minimal HR standards that Federation entities must adhere to, and alignment to in-country labour law. International Internal Audit maintains a complaints register for the Federation with the issue, mitigation and closure status.

ActionAid's Human Resources Team conducts HR audits against a people management scorecard, which gives a clear snapshot of the country's people management practices. This includes employment relations issues and reporting. In 2015, through this process 38 countries reported having received and registered complaints.

We had a successful Federation-wide 11 days anti-sexual harassment campaign in 2015. As an organisation that places a strong emphasis on women's rights internally, we deployed a women's exit survey for all voluntary women leavers across the Federation, and tracked scores and qualitative feedback and based on insights, feedback deploy action plans to address emerging issues within the Federation.

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<sup>28</sup> Full text of the policy is available upon request or in ActionAid intranet.

<sup>29</sup> Complaints and Response Mechanism Framework:

[http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/complaints\\_mechanism\\_and\\_policy.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org/sites/files/actionaid/complaints_mechanism_and_policy.pdf)

<sup>30</sup> Full text of the policy is available upon request or in ActionAid intranet.

## V. Responsible management of impacts on society

### SO1: Impact of activities on the wider community

ActionAid does not have 'operations' as such in most communities, as we work primarily through partners, and even where we are 'operational', our work consists mostly of social work (such as reflection meetings and training on rights). Thus it is the opening and closing of our programmes that has the most significant impact on communities as described previously in this document.

Our Country Entry and Exit policy<sup>31</sup> describes the following potential ways of ActionAid's entry to the country:

- a. Short-term or long-term entry: ActionAid can enter a country either as part of the organisation's long-term growth strategy as defined in the International strategy, or to do work on a short-term basis, mainly in response to major/red-alert emergencies which have an impact on substantial populations across a country/countries.
- b. Short-term entry to respond to emergencies is done mainly through local partners where credible organisations exist. Short-term engagement in response to disaster and emergencies will clearly state withdrawal at the end of the project within a period of three years. This timeframe allows for emergency response and recovery interventions to be completed.
- c. Short-term engagement in responding to red-alert emergencies is approved by the International Board. Given the urgency to begin a response in emergencies within hours, communication and agreement between the Chief Executive and the Chair of the International Board is adequate to approve an emergency response.
- d. Planned entry into new countries for the long-term is guided by ActionAid's international strategy, *People's Action to End Poverty*. The expansion framework and operational plan is approved by the International Board. Decisions on entry into new countries/territories is made by the GA following a motion by the International Board.
- e. Full appraisal of a proposed country is carried out according to ALPS guidelines, applying the criteria set out in the international strategy for shortlisted countries. A matrix of criteria, indicators and tools/means of verification is developed and agreed to inform the appraisal process by the review teams.

Policy also states that whether planned or forced exit, ActionAid will exit from a country respectfully by consulting and communicating with all stakeholders in time; respecting legal and contractual obligations with governments and donors; providing counsel and support to staff; and ensuring all risks related to the exit are mitigated and no liability ensues from the processes of exit.

Child protection is ensured through the ActionAid Child Protection Policy,<sup>32</sup> which is based on the Principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Declaration of Human Rights, which include:

- the best interest of the child;
- non-discrimination;
- freedom of expression;
- respect for children's opinions in matters affecting them;
- participation of the child.

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<sup>31</sup> Full text of the policy is available upon request or in ActionAid intranet.

<sup>32</sup> Full text of the policy is available upon request or in ActionAid intranet.

## Public lists make service delivery transparent, Pakistan

While implementing a rights-based service delivery emergency programme, ActionAid Pakistan ensured transparency and accountability through displaying a beneficiary list in prominent places – lists that were verified by members of community-based organisations and implementing partners. Information about community redress systems or complaint systems was also displayed, which mostly included the contact details (mobile number and address) for where complaints could be submitted. The complaints received were recorded and duly addressed as per the policy framework.

### SO3: Anti-corruption policies

In 2014 ActionAid finalised the Anti-corruption and Anti-Bribery Policy and Guidance document.

This policy relates to the ActionAid International Secretariat, Country Programmes, Associates and Affiliates with respect to corruption, laundering and bribery detection and prevention and reporting. While its revision was linked with that of the Financial Management Framework, the Anti-Corruption and Anti-Bribery Policy should be a stand-alone policy.

In 2015 we introduced a quarterly fraud and corruption declaration process for all countries and have shared relevant training material with countries. In addition, Internal Audit has initiated a Community of Practice on Fraud, Bribery and Corruption with members drawn from across the Federation to increase awareness and training in this area.

### SO4: Actions taken in response of incidents of corruption

ActionAid obtains a quarterly declaration from countries on fraud. On an annual basis a loss register is compiled which provides details of all incidents of fraud and corruption and how they were dealt with. This is also submitted to the regulatory authorities as appropriate (for example the Disasters Emergency Committee, Charity Commission, etc.).

The total recorded losses through fraud in 2015 were €44,413, involving 15 cases in 12 countries compared to €45,196 in 2014, €169,092 in 2013, €50,700 in 2012 and €11,500 in 2011. A majority of these amounts are deemed recoverable and management actions are underway to recover them.

A total of four staff members were dismissed for fraud-related offences in 2015 while six partnerships were terminated.

ActionAid China recovered €18,000 for fraudulent activity involving a staff member in 2010. The matter was reported to the police who then recovered the amount from the ex-staff member.

Other non-fraud related losses amounted to €31,572 in 2015 compared to €108,240 in 2014. These represent amounts lost through theft, negligence and other means in the course of normal ActionAid operations. Our joint efforts to manage the risk of disallowances on donor funded projects are intensifying and should ultimately lead to reduced repayments. In 2015 however, two cases of disallowances were recorded, amounting to €92,000, compared to just one in 2014 for €34,000. Internal Audit, Finance and the Partnership Development (Grant Compliance) teams continue to prioritise increasing awareness around compliance with donor contracts and monitoring the trends on the repayments.

## VI. Ethical fundraising and communication

### PR6: Ethical Fundraising

ActionAid has a multitude of policies that relate to different issues (e.g. cross-border issues, corporate fundraising, etc.) because laws and cultures vary hugely across our markets and policies need to be flexible enough to cover all our countries. Thus, the relevant policies serve as a minimum standard only. Compliance with laws and standards relating to marketing and fundraising is part of the governance role of the senior leadership team in each country, and the National Boards in each of the countries. ActionAid Internal Audit Unit checks on compliance with these issues when they do their audits every two years (with the support of the Fundraising and Communications Directorate).

All funds raised are used in line with the Resource Allocation Framework, which ensures the most efficient possible use of resources within the organisation. ActionAid publicises all major institutional gifts and gifts in-kind in our Integrated Annual Reports.

In 2014 and 2015 Programme Led Funding Planning (PLFP) was a priority project, which aims to ensure that ActionAid can raise, manage and channel funds in a smarter, more effective way to facilitate the achievement of our strategy objectives at international and national level.

Other ActionAid policies that help to ensure ethical fundraising practices include:

- Child Sponsorship Policies and Communication Standards
- Company Fundraising Policy
- Cross-Border Fundraising Policy
- Levy Policy (determining how the proportion of the costs of a project, agreed by the donor, are set aside for administration purposes)
- Online Fundraising Policy and Guidelines
- District Area (now Local Rights Programme) Start-Up, Transfer and Phase Out policies
- Brand Guidelines
- Corporate Engagement framework
- Resource allocation framework
- Child Protection Policy

Recently, ActionAid UK has changed the classification of complaints to specifically include tracking fundraising-related complaints. This information is fed back through a quarterly compliance report that goes to the heads of various fundraising teams, the senior leadership team, and Trustees. These complaints are discussed at Individual Giving team meetings to provide opportunity to re-assess activity that has generated the complaints.

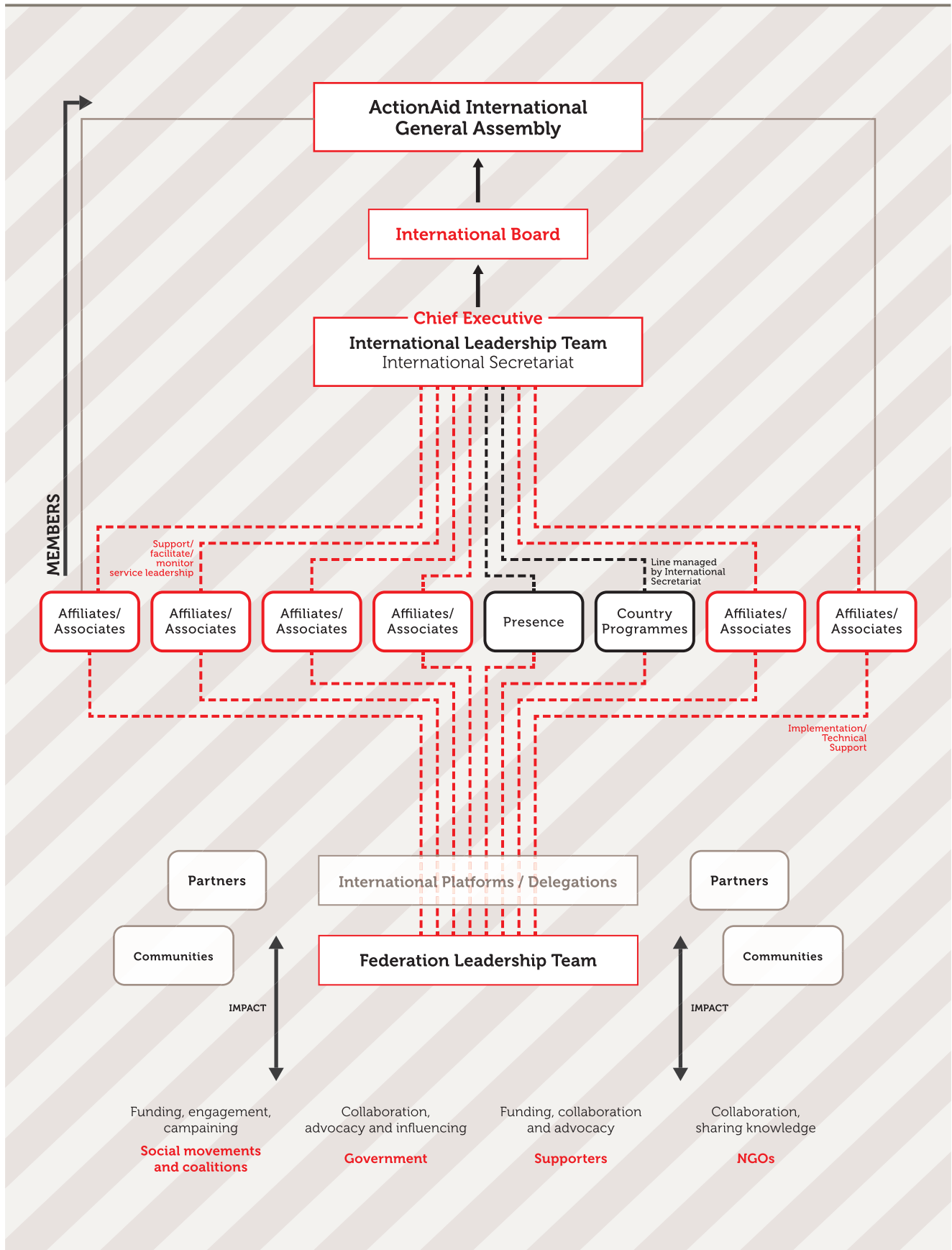
### Addressing complaints in ActionAid UK

In 2015 there was particular media attention in the UK on charities, and we received several complaints referring to staff salaries in the charity sector. Supporters felt concerned about how their donations were being spent, and some felt that charity staff should either work on voluntary basis or be paid a minimum wage. We chose an honest and transparent approach to this type of complaints and responded with a statement which included 'Out of every £1 donated to ActionAid UK from supporters, 88p is spent on charitable activities, 11p helps us to raise more funds, and less than 1p goes on governance.' This approach resonated with our supporters who felt that they could trust our decisions as we are open and transparent to sharing financial information.

## Annex 1: ActionAid Affiliate and Associate Member offices

Country	Membership status	Address
Australia	Affiliate	Suite 2 Level 2, 10 Mallett Street, Camperdown NSW 2050, Australia
Bangladesh	Associate	House No. 8, Road No. 136, Gulshan-1, Dhaka, 1210, Bangladesh
Brazil	Affiliate	Rua Morais e Vale, 111-5º andar – Centro, Riode Janeiro, RJ, CEP 20021-260, Brazil
Denmark (MS)	Affiliate	Borgergade 14,2, DK-1300. Copenhagen K, Denmark
France (Peuples Solidaires)	Associate	15 Avenue Trudaine 75009, Paris, France Present Address: 2B, Rue Jules Ferry 93100, Montreuil, France
Ghana	Affiliate	Post Office Box 19083, Accra-North, Ghana Present Address: 3rd Asoyi Lane, East Legon, Accra, Ghana
Guatemala	Affiliate	7a. Avenida 5-71, zona 2, Guatemala
Hellas	Affiliate	52, Falirou str, 11741 Athens, Greece
India	Affiliate	R-7, Hauz Khas Enclave, New Delhi - 110 049, India
Ireland	Affiliate	172 Ivy Exchange, Granby Place, Parnell Sq Dublin 1, Eire
Italy	Affiliate	Via Giuseppe Broggi, 19/A – Milan, Italy
Kenya	Affiliate	P.O. Box 42814-00100 Nairobi, Kenya
Malawi	Affiliate	Old Town, Manobec Building, Opposite Cresta Complex, P.O. Box 30375, Lilongwe 3, Malawi Present Address: Upper Hayyat Complex Building, Corner Kamuzu procession and Selous Roads, 1st Floor, P.O. Box 30735, Lilongwe 3, Malawi
Mozambique	Associate	Rua Comandante João Belo nr 208, PO BOX 2608. Maputo, Mozambique
Nepal	Associate	ActionAid Nepal, GPO Box 6257, Apsara Marg , Ward No. 3, Lazimpat, Kathmandu, Nepal
Netherlands	Affiliate	Stadhouderskade 60, 1072 AC, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Nigeria	Affiliate	Plot 590, Cadastral Zone, 2nd Floor, NAIC Building Central Area, Nigeria Present Address: Plot 477, 41 Crescent, Off Sa'adu Zungur Avenue, Gwarinpa, Abuja FCT, Nigeria
Sierra Leone	Affiliate	36, Freetown Road, Lumley, Freetown, Sierra Leone Present Address: 13 Bintumani Drive, Off Cape Road, Aberdeen, Freetown, Sierra Leone
Sweden	Affiliate	Roddargatan 15, S-116 20 Stockholm, Sweden
Tanzania	Associate	Plot 115, Ngorongoro Street, Milkocheni B Area, PO Box 21496, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Thailand	Associate	60/1, Monririn Building Tower A 2nd Floor, Unit A201, Soi Phaholyothin 8 (Sailom), Phaholyothin Rd., Samsennai, Phyathai, Bangkok 10400, Thailand
The Gambia	Affiliate	MDI Road, Kanifing, PMB 450, Serrekunda, The Gambia
Uganda	Affiliate	Plot 2514/2515, Gaba Road, Kansanga, P.O. Box 676, Kampala, Uganda
UK	Affiliate	33-39, Bowling Green Lane, London, EC1R 0BJ, UK
USA	Affiliate	1112, 16th Street, NW Suite 540, Washington DC 200 36, USA Present Address: 1420 K Street NW Suite 900 Washington, DC 20005, USA
Vietnam	Associate	5th Floor, 127 Lo Duc Street, Hai Ba Trung District, Hanoi, Vietnam
Zambia	Associate	5011 Los Angeles Boulevard, Longacres, Lusaka, Zambia

## Annex 2: ActionAid International organisational structure





### Annex 3: ActionAid grading structure – detailed definition

Career level	Grade	Job family/cluster	Grade description
Executive	Fc CD	Country Director	Roles at this level are accountable the performance of the whole organisation and help to establish the long-term strategic direction. They manage high-level stakeholder relationships which have significant publicity and potential impact for the organisation. They are responsible for promoting the organisational vision and values to all employee levels within their remit, solve complex issues without clear policy or precedent and champion continuous operational improvement. Roles at this level will possess depth and breadth of professional knowledge, within the context of the industry and have a deep understanding of the operational infrastructure of the business.
Management	E+	Senior Management Team (Functional Heads )	Senior Management (Unit Heads/Heads of Department) e.g. Head of Operations, Head of Programmes, Head – M&E)
	E	Line Management / Subject Matter Expert	Line Management / Subject Matter Expert, Manager, Advisor e.g. Programme Manager, Campaigns Manager, Emergencies Manager
Professional	D	Senior Professional	Coordinator, Campaigner, Analyst , Donor Coordinator, Admin & Office Manager, Senior Officer – HR / Sponsorship
	C	Professional	Officer, Accountant e.g. Information Officer, Major Partnerships Officer, HR Officer
Para-Professional /Support	B	Senior Support / Entry Professional	Administrator, Assistant Accountant e.g. Team Administrator, Programmes Administrator, Office Administrator
	A	Support	Assistant, Support e.g. Office Assistant, Driver, Security

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ActionAid International is incorporated  
in The Hague, The Netherlands.

**Registration number:** 27264198

ActionAid International Secretariat is incorporated  
in South Africa under the Companies Act 2008.

**Registration number:** 2004/007/117/10

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