

Feedback from the Independent Review Panel

Review Round March 2016

14 April 2016

Dear Salil Shetty,

Many thanks for submitting your INGO Accountability Charter report. In times of conflict and climate change, when civil society organisations (CSOs) have an increasingly important role to play, the space for civil society is shrinking in many parts of the world. Strong accountability and the demonstration that we “walk our talk” have never been more important. It is also against this background that the Charter has initiated an alliance with seven national CSO accountability frameworks to strengthen our collective voice as we devise a shared [Global Standard for CSO Accountability](#).

Before providing you with an individual assessment of your report, there were some issues that arose in all or many reports that the Independent Review Panel wants to share with you:

Getting fit for the digital age

Digitisation allows for unprecedented connectivity. At a time when citizens have increased levels of agency and literacy this is a game changer in the way CSOs work. Mobilisation and relationship building with large numbers of people to *co-create* the change they want to see is at the heart of most new CSO strategies – particularly in campaigning. Working *with*, not *for* stakeholders, is not just seen as the right thing to do, but also as the most impactful.

Important in this evolution is moving ICSOs from transparency to actively sharing information, from consultation to joint decision making and from taking responsibility for others to sharing mutually defined responsibilities.

The Charter has initiated the [Digital Accountability project](#) and Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Oxfam, Transparency International and others are already intensively involved in this project. We look forward to more cooperation with and among Member organisations on this particular issue and for these issues to be addressed more in future reports.

Globalisation / National level accountability

Decentralisation processes usually place more responsibility and capacity at the national level. To ensure an ICSO presents a unified, coherent voice and can protect its brand, a strong and globally shared understanding of mutual accountability is key. Thus, decentralisation often goes hand in hand with a stronger mandate for the ICSOs’ global accountability mechanisms. These should help national entities build capacity in the accountability practice, and also demand stronger delivery on global commitments. Charter Members are encouraged to ensure that all their entities adhere at least to the following minimum standards: transparency, effective and independent oversight, involving people we serve, coordination with partners, sound financial management and impact focus.

Inclusion and diversity

Many Charter Members still focus mainly on gender when demonstrating their accountability in terms of diversity. This is a lost opportunity. As we all know, there is also discrimination on the basis of disability, age, ethnicity, etc. Actively reaching out to these constituencies will strengthen their rights and their participation. For example, positive action can increase the employment of those with disabilities or from minority ethnic groups. Such inclusion is central

to a human rights based approach, but may also improve results by tapping into a wider base of experience. For further advice, click [here](#) on the outcome of a Charter webinar on inclusion or [here](#) to look at some good practice examples of Charter Members.

Please ensure that all points listed above are taken into consideration when further developing your accountability practices in the coming months and collecting data for the next INGO Accountability Charter report.

Organisation-specific feedback to Amnesty International

Amnesty International's eighth accountability report to the INGO Accountability Charter is a concise interim report based on [last year's Improvement Analysis](#), which came along with the [Independent Review Panel's feedback letter](#).

Strong and forward-looking **institutional commitment** is highlighted in the opening statement demonstrating how the new Global Strategy deepens Amnesty's commitment to accountability. It is appreciated that Amnesty proudly presents Charter membership on their website and links to reports and Panel feedbacks (see [here](#)). However, all Full Charter Members are also requested to publish the Charter logo, too. This visualisation clearly strengthens their public commitment to accountability – also for stakeholders to hold them directly accountable towards the commitments made. The Charter will only be seen as a strong collective agreement to accountability if Members actively and proudly support communication around it.

All issues raised in the recent Improvement Analysis are covered. While some progress is already sufficient, other areas such as appraisals at national entity level should still be improved. Overall, it is clear that Amnesty takes the Panel feedback seriously and tries to incorporate it into ongoing and new initiatives or reviews. The Panel looks forward to further improvements in the identified areas and to reviewing the next full report.

Our intention is that this letter, and any response you may wish to provide, is made publicly available on the Charter website along with your report. You can find the reports that were previously reviewed on our [website](#). However, should there be errors of fact in the feedback above or in the note below; we would of course wish to correct these before publication. Please share these comments or amendments by 15 May 2016.

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

Yours sincerely,



Louise James · Michael Röska · Jane Kiragu



Rhonda Chapman · John Clark · Saroeun Soeung

Amnesty International

Review Round March 2016
 Cover Note on Interim Accountability Report 2014
 (Based on the Improvement Analysis for the 2014 Report)

PROFILE DISCLOSURES	
I. Strategy and Analysis	
1.1	<p>Statement from the most senior decision-maker <i>Fully addressed</i></p> <p>Colm O Cuanachain (Senior Director, Office of the Secretary General) provides a very strong institutional and strategic commitment towards accountability on behalf of Salil Shetty. Amnesty International (AI) affirmed their understanding that impact lies at the heart of accountability, as reflected in their new Strategic Goals. This is essentially shared with the INGO Accountability Charter’s understanding thereof.</p> <p>Moreover, the movement’s accountability is closely interconnected with their capacity to play their part in building agency and creating space for others to defend human rights. In this regard, Amnesty is constantly improving themselves – in particular via the new overarching Global Strategy, which will be delivered by their “now globally distributed yet interconnected movement”. Objectives include increasing the active participation of their stakeholders, training staff, reforming the governance structure, developing an agile impact assessment, increasing cross-regional collaboration etc. AI sees the new global strategy not only as the framework to increase their human rights impact but to deepen their commitment to accountability.</p>
Governance	
<p>Amnesty International admits the need to strengthen the quality and speed of decision-making and the internal accountability processes. In this regard, the organisation provides a comprehensive overview of the ongoing Governance Reform, which aims at more participatory, inclusive, effective and timely decision-making processes. The current International Council Meeting and Chairs Assembly would be reformed into one single permanent body called the Global Assembly; Regional Forums would prepare core decisions from a regional perspective. Finalisation is expected at the International Council Meeting in 2017. The Panel looks forward to further progress being documented in the next full report.</p> <p>Moreover, the Charter Secretariat will offer a workshop on governance, accountability and decentralisation in September 2016 (see here) and looks forward to engaging with AI on this matter.</p>	
Improved Numbers for Programme Effectiveness	
<p>Amnesty International demonstrates evidence and progress made in various areas such as stakeholder participation, gender and diversity measures at entity-level, participatory approaches workshop, or meaningful integration of youth. Of particular note is AI’s recognition that not only is improved stakeholder engagement important, but that staff training and skill sharing around participatory approaches to working is equally important, as well as</p>	

leadership development for young people. AI has demonstrated a sophisticated and integrated understanding of the elements required to ensure authentic engagement of stakeholders throughout all stages of programmes and activities beyond simple quantitative measures. The Panel looks forward to continuing improvements and on-going reflection.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

<p>LA10 / LA12</p>	<p>Global Talent Management <i>Fully addressed</i> Amnesty International launched a commendable management training scheme in 2014. Additionally, induction training improved and results from the accreditation process with the National Equality Standard (NES) highlighted certain awareness areas such as the need for more training of managers on managing diversity in their teams, or to encourage more women into senior positions. While the number of staff appraisals at national office level is still low (53%), the Panel positively notes the increase in comparison to 2013. 90% of staff at the international secretariat level receive annual appraisals.</p>
<p>SO3</p>	<p>Anti-corruption <i>Fully addressed</i> After Amnesty had identified a lack of awareness among staff of their internal anti-corruption policy, the Panel now appreciates that they implemented a new training programme which reached over 100 staff members in 2014. Further evidence and more participants reached are welcome for the next full report.</p>