

Accountable Now

Board of Trustees Meeting

14 February 2018

Minutes

Present

Janet Dalziell, Greenpeace International (*Member*)

Elie Gasagara, World Vision International (*Member*)

Brendan Gormley, (*Chair*) (*Independent*)

Caroline Harper, Sightsavers (*Vice-Chair*) (*Member*)

Janet Mawiyoo, (*Independent*)

Bettie van Straaten, CIVICUS (*Treasurer*) (*Member*)

Perry Maddox, Restless Development (*Member*)

Apologies

Rosa Inés Ospina, Rendir Cuentas (*formally linked to 12 Commitments*)

In attendance from the Secretariat

Rocío Moreno, Executive Director

Ezgi Akarsu, Programme Manager (*Minute taker*)

Welcome (ACC 18/01)

- **All action points from the last Board meeting have either been completed or are currently being processed.**
- Trustees discussed the recent scandal around Oxfam, and Accountable Now's response. They **decided** to circulate Accountable Now's critical incident policy amongst all members to ensure the policy is known, and to formulate a fit-for-purpose code of conduct/safeguarding policy.
- It was also **decided** to refer to this incident when reviewing Accountable Now's new reporting mechanism at the end of 2018, to identify any additional information members should be providing to their stakeholders.

Executive Director's Report (ACC 18/02)



The Interim Executive Director highlighted the following key achievements and developments in the period from October 2017 to February 2018:

- **Changes to the team, with Rocío Moreno beginning as Accountable Now's new Executive Director in February 2018, taking over from interim Executive Director Nick Roseveare. Isabelle Büchner also took up the position of Programme Officer in January 2017.**
- **The official launch of the Global Standard at the International Civil Society Week in December 2017, and progress on planning for the continuation of the project, after the end of its first phase in April 2018.**
- The kick-off of CIVICUS' Resilient Roots project. Accountable Now is one of the key project partners, and has contributed to project planning over the past months.
- Accountable Now's new reporting framework and questions were finalised in December 2017, and members will begin reporting in line with these from 2018.
- Communications efforts around Accountable Now's 10th anniversary have begun. A series of blog and social media posts are planned, focusing on one of the 12 Accountability Commitments each month.
- Accountable Now's first ever quarterly newsletter was sent out in January 2017.

Financial Report and Legal Update (ACC 18/03)

- **The Board acknowledged the financial overview for 2017 (01 January – 31 December 2017) as presented by the Treasurer.**
- **It was decided to approve a revised 2018 Budget** once an updated estimate of the Global Standard budget in 2018 becomes clear, as the figures will vary significantly from those expected when the budget was approved in October 2018. It was noted that these expected changes in funding pose no risk to Accountable Now's operations, as staff costs and core activities are covered by the regular restricted funding which comes in through membership fees.
- **Trustees decided to continue working with Accountable Now's current auditors, Sayer Vincent, for the financial year 2018.** Accountable Now is continuing to undergo several changes, with a new Executive Director, recruitment of several new Trustees and Independent Review Panel members. In light of this, the search for new auditors will be delayed until the financial year 2019.
- **Accountable Now's membership strategy was discussed, including a reporting and fee structure for federation-like organisations bringing their country offices on board. The Secretariat will explore options and a more thorough discussion will be had at the next Board meeting in May.**

Global Standard Update (ACC 18/04)

- **The Executive Director presented the latest developments on the Global Standard project. SIDA has informed Accountable Now that they will not be able to consider any new project proposals until late 2018, and suggested that the International Civil Society Centre apply for a one-year extension for the Global Standard. This**



will bridge the gap until the proposal for Phase 2 can be submitted for consideration in late 2018.

- Accountable Now is working with the Centre and other project partners to develop an application. Accountable Now is still expected to take on the role of the Global Standard's Secretariat, coordinating efforts on strategy, planning, and fundraising for Phase 2 as well as communications and outreach.
- The Board **expressed its support** for the extension year solution.

Board and Trustees (ACC 18/05)

- **Trustees acknowledged the outcome of the Board self-evaluation**, noting that it was positive overall, in what was a challenging year for Accountable Now. **Securing funding, increasing Accountable Now's visibility and acceptance amongst stakeholders, and attracting new members remain areas for improvement.**
- Trustees **agreed** that they will conduct bilateral discussions with the Board Chair, as in previous years. The Secretariat will contact Trustees to schedule calls.
- The need for the timely recruitment of 2-3 new trustees was **noted**, and it was **agreed** that the Secretariat would formulate a call for applications highlighting the key qualities and expertise the Board currently requires. This will be circulated amongst Accountable Now's members, and a small committee of the Board will vet nominees in line with the gaps on the Board that need to be filled.
- Trustees **decided** that Accountable Now's Articles of Association should be amended to ease the restrictions around Trustees' affiliations with member organisations. In order to increase the independence of the Board and strengthen Accountable Now's credibility, the Articles should simply stipulate that at least 50% of Trustees must be representatives of member organisations. The Secretariat will draft an amendment to be brought to members at the AGM in May.

Reporting and IRP (ACC 18/06)

- **At the Independent Review Panel's most recent meeting in December 2017, it was decided that an overview of key issues arising from IRP meetings would be shared with Accountable Now's Board.**
- The IRP had requested that the Board consider the issue of minimum governance requirements for Accountable Now members. Trustees **decided to task the Secretariat and the IRP with formulating a proposal on this issue.**
- It was also **decided** to formulate a position on how the Accountable Now Secretariat or Board follows up on members' performance – particularly when the minimum requirements mentioned above are not met or the Panel feels members are not taking its feedback seriously. The Secretariat will work on a proposal.
- Trustees **noted** the urgent need to recruit 3-4 new IRP members in the coming months. It was **agreed** that the Secretariat will circulate a call for new Panel



members amongst Accountable Now's members, as well as amongst Trustees, to pass on to possible candidates.

2018 AGM Agenda (ACC 18/07)

- **Due to time constraints, it was decided to conduct more detailed discussion on this agenda item online.**
- **Overall, Trustees noted the need to balance an engaging, catchy and concise agenda with the value provided to attendees who need to travel significant distances to attend.**
- **The Secretariat will work on a proposed agenda and share with Trustees for their input.**

Any Other Business (ACC 18/08)

- **Trustees finished the meeting with a closed session without the Secretariat.**

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 03 May (face to face, followed by AGM on Friday 04 May).

END