

Accountable Now

Trustee Meeting

25 January 2017

Minutes

Present

Janet Dalziell, Greenpeace International
Clare Doube, Amnesty International
Elie Gasagara, World Vision International
Brendan Gormley, Independent (*Chair*)
Caroline Harper, Sightsavers (*Vice-Chair*)
Miklos Marschall, Transparency International
Janet Mawiyoo, Kenya Community Development Foundation
Rosa Inés Ospina Robledo, Independent
Bettie van Straaten, CIVICUS (*Treasurer*)

In Attendance from Secretariat

Karenina Schröder (Executive Director), *Minutes*
Anna Schneider (Programme Officer)

Welcome (ACC 17/01)

- All action points from the last Trustee meeting minutes are either completed or currently processed.
- Trustees shared their concern about increasing populism, post factual communication and right wing politics. Against this background accountability and trust building with local communities is key. We need to make a stronger case however on how this investment in accountability does indeed improve the environment CSOs operate in.

Executive Director's Report (ACC 17/02)

- The Executive Director's Report was well received and the Performance Plan for the ED for 2017 **accepted** as a good reflection of what Accountable Now wants to achieve in the coming year.

New Reporting Framework (ACC 17/03)

- Trustees **acknowledged** the Committee's work on reviewing Accountable Now's accountability commitments (currently The Charter). They **agree** to the approach chosen by the Committee to take the DRAFT Global Standard as the starting point for their review.



- Trustees **agreed** in principle with the next steps in this review process, but ask the Secretariat to be mindful of coordinating this process well with the writing group that is finalising the Global Standard itself at the end of February. The ED and one Programme Officer are part of this writing group and will take care of that. Any specific suggestions on different wording or ordering of the commitments as they currently stand, will be shared individually with the Secretariat.

Membership Applications (ACC 17/04)

- Trustees **agreed** to welcome TECHO as an Affiliate Member.
- Trustees reviewed the application of SolidarityNow in regard to meeting our Membership criteria of having “to work predominantly internationally or on international issues.” SolidarityNow is based in Greece and has no international offices. But Trustees recognised the fundamentally international nature of its work on the migrant crisis and its internationally focused advocacy work on this issue. It is only against this background that Trustees **accepted** SolidarityNow’s application for Membership if there is no equivalent national CSO accountability standard in Greece. The Secretariat will check this and inform Trustees.
- The application for Membership by another CSO will be shared with Trustees electronically when it arrives at the Secretariat. Trustees will vote on accepting them as an Affiliate Member via e-mail.
- Trustees **agreed** to review the current Membership criteria to ensure they reflect well where Accountable Now wants to be in the future and allow for consistency and clear public profile. The review shall look at the issue of internationality as well as the current provision that a nationally based organisation can only become a Member if no equivalent national code exists. The Secretariat will make a suggestion for the April Trustee meeting with the aim to finalise a DRAFT for the AGM in June to review.

Relationship with the International Civil Society Centre (ACC 17/05)

- Trustees **accepted** a revised offer from the Centre for a collaboration agreement. This clearly states now that Accountable Now is an independent sister organisation and that neither the Centre nor Accountable Now shall take any decisions that harm the other organisation. Trustees agreed that this was a good negotiation outcome and that Accountable Now shall enter into this new phase of collaboration with a positive will of wanting to make it work. A more detailed agreement on the daily cooperation modalities will be drafted by the Secretariat with the help of the Treasurer.
- Trustees further **agreed** to take some time during the June Trustee meeting to reflect in more depth where Accountable Now wants to be in five years’ time and what this means in terms of strategic partnership, physical location etc. going forward.

Finances and Legal Issues (ACC 17/06)

- Trustees **noted** the Financial Overview 2016.
- Trustees **mandated** the Chair to sign the Cooperation and Service Agreements with the Centre for 2017.



- It was **agreed** to not change the auditors for the financial year 2017 because Accountable Now is going through quite some changes including its move to obtain charity status. Against this background, it is helpful to have auditors who are very familiar with Accountable Now for many years now. It was **agreed**, however, to put out a tender for new auditors for the financial year 2018 to ensure good governance.
- Over the past two years, Accountable Now has raised an increasing amount of income not from Membership fees but external funding. To support this trajectory going forward, the Greenpeace representative **agreed** to be on the Steering Committee of the People-Powered Accountability project – the main fundraising area at the moment.

Trustee Development (ACC 17/07)

- The Trustees **acknowledged** that the outcome of its self-evaluation is overall good and raises no immediate concerns. In his annual individual calls with all Trustees, the Board Chair will discuss how to further improve Trustee performance on securing funding and new Members.
- For the next Trustee evaluation, it was **agreed** to have a stronger focus on Trustees' suggestions for key strategic developments in the future.
- The Secretariat is asked to make a suggestion in regard to timing the Trustee self-evaluation in a way that allows for its outcomes to optimally inform decisions. It will discuss a suggestion with the Board Chair.

Any Other Business (ACC 17/08)

- Trustees **agreed** in principle that the Secretariat should make communication succinct and timely and potentially move from a printed annual report to quarterly virtual newsletters. In order to fully inform our Members, the public and authorities, however, we still need a consolidated, publically accessible annual progress report in whichever format is most suitable.
- The Centre has been very engaged in drafting and disseminating a [Civic Charter](#), capturing key civic rights that allow citizen engagement to flourish. Several hundred people and organisations have already signed it. The Trustees are asked to vote via e-mail whether Accountable Now shall also sign it.
- The next Trustee meetings will take place on 05 April, 2017 (Wednesday, online) and June 8, 2017 (Thursday, face-to-face together with the AGM in London).

END