

Christian Aid's Accountability Framework

Christian Aid's Essential Purpose is to expose the scandal of poverty, to help in practical ways to root it out from the world, and to challenge and change the systems that favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised. We are an agency of 41 churches in Britain and Ireland and are mandated to work on relief, development and advocacy for poverty eradication. We work with and through partners overseas: churches, ecumenical bodies, local NGOs and movements who have common values and who we recognise to be in the best position to identify and deliver support and assistance to the communities that they work with.

Accountability is vital to upholding our Christian based values and for maintaining our legitimacy and credibility to speak out so that it fully supports our Essential Purpose. We aim to hold ourselves openly responsible, in ways that involve our key stakeholders, for what we believe, what we do and say we will do – and for showing what we have done compared to what we said we would do. Doing this enables us to get feedback on what works and what doesn't, and what we need to improve. This increases the likelihood of success in our work with poor communities and enhances a sense of ownership among all our stakeholders. It also reduces the potential for inefficient use or misuse of the resources entrusted to us.

Christian Aid's [Statement of Accountability](#) outlines how we strive to exercise accountability to all its stakeholders:

Poor and marginalised people and their communities	Our supporters, including campaigners and volunteers
Our partners	Our sponsoring churches and board of trustees
Our managers and staff	Our allies
Our institutional donors	The wider public and those we challenge
Our regulators	Our suppliers and people who work in our supply chain
The natural environment	

To enable us to manage our accountability to our key stakeholders we have identified five target stakeholder groups, whom we believe have a primary stake in the achievement of our Essential Purpose and whose means of 'holding us to account' are most in need of strengthening. Outlined in this document are our commitments to these groups;

Poor and marginalised communities	Partner organisations
Supporters, campaigners and volunteers	Our sponsoring churches and board of trustees
Our staff	

There will be overlap between managing our accountability to these constituencies, for example, as a partnership organisation much of our accountability to poor and marginalised communities will be through our partners.

In April 2012 we launched our new corporate strategy, 'Partnership for Change'. We are currently in a period of transition, interpreting the strategy and its' supporting Performance and Capability Frameworks for the different contexts in which we work. As part of this process, this framework is a live document that will be continually monitored and updated as required, particularly following the finalisation of department plans in early 2013. This latest revision has been expanded to reflect our commitment to ensuring cross-organisation understanding and ownership of our accountability commitments, and over the coming year we seek to strengthen our accountability to all stakeholder groups.

Participation

Christian Aid's Commitment	Where are we now – gaps and good practice	Areas for improvement	Commitments for 2012/13	Responsible
			By when	
<p>To partner organisations and to poor and marginalised communities</p> <p>We recognise that our ability to ensure participation is largely dependent on that of our partners. To meet our commitment, we therefore expect that the partners that we chose to work with can develop and maintain the involvement of poor and marginalised women, girls, men and boys throughout the project cycle. Christian Aid will assess, monitor and evaluate the quality of community participation in partners' work and review partnership where commitment is not evident</p> <p>In our development and humanitarian work, Christian Aid is committed to;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defining and documenting the process we use to identify the people with whom we work, referring to age, gender, diversity, special needs and other characteristics. 2. Ensuring that communities are able to influence decision making by enabling affected women, girls, men and boys and other stakeholders to participate in different stages of the project, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying what needs to change • designing and implementing projects • monitoring what is delivered • assessing impact 3. Consulting partners at an early stage in key decision making processes including 5 year strategic planning, funding decisions and programme reviews. Christian Aid will share the resulting policy with the partner community and invite and respond to their comments. 	<p>Guidelines for participation expectations have been produced and shared with country offices</p>	<p>Establishment of a system that will enable us to monitor the usefulness of these guidelines, and identify areas for improvement</p>	<p>January 2013</p>	<p>UK accountability team</p> <p>Country managers</p> <p>REMs</p> <p>HAP focal points</p>
	<p>Christian Aid adheres to international standards in humanitarian work, and uses these standards to guide practice in the field. Participation is key in the red cross code of conduct, sphere and HAP.</p>	<p>Guidelines for minimum expectations will be produced and shared with partners</p>	<p>January 2013</p>	<p>UK accountability team</p> <p>Country managers</p> <p>REMs</p> <p>HAP focal points</p>
	<p>No systematic way for Christian Aid to store data on beneficiary age, gender and diversity</p>	<p>Pilot a system where data will be collected and analysed in two roll out countries</p>	<p>March 2013</p>	<p>UK accountability team</p> <p>Country managers</p>
			<p>March 2013</p>	<p>REMs</p> <p>HAP focal points</p>
	<p>PVCAs are conducted in some donor funded programmes, and there is guidance for integrating accountability into PVCAs</p>	<p>Learning from this process will be documented and shared with management and staff to formalise accountability in the PVCA process</p>	<p>June 2013</p>	<p>UK accountability team</p> <p>Country managers</p> <p>REMs</p> <p>HAP focal points</p>
			<p>March 2013</p>	<p>PFD</p> <p>UK accountability team</p>
	<p>Christian Aid ID staff and partners actively engage to develop country plans and programmes that are mutually agreed through consultative processes</p>	<p>Evidence will be collected to document the processes of partner consultations; gaps will also be identified and highlighted to management to make improvement plans</p>	<p>March 2013</p>	<p>UK accountability team</p> <p>Country managers</p> <p>REMs</p> <p>HAP focal points</p>

Information sharing and communication

Christian Aid's Commitment	Where are we now – gaps and good practice	Areas for improvement	Commitments for 2012/13	Responsible	
			By when		
<p>To all stakeholders We are committed to improving our performance and accountability through being open and transparent, making available on our website and / or on request information about;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> our organisation, its vision/mission Governance and management Organisational policies Strategies and plans Finance and performance Feedback/complaints mechanisms 	Improved information on accountability and transparency should be made available on Christian Aid's website, and updated regularly	Christian Aid Accountability Framework made available online and continually updated	On-going	UK accountability team	
		Open information policy available online, and visits monitored	March 2013	Digital	Country Managers
				REMs	
				HAP focal points	
				UK accountability team	
				Strategy & Performance	
		Accountability and transparency content on website updated	June 2013	Strategy & Performance	Communications
		IATI reporting available on Christian Aid website and IATI register	March 2013	Digital	Strategy & Performance
				Finance	
				PROMISE	
Digital					
<p>To partner organisations and to poor and marginalised communities We commit to supporting our partners in making the information below available to the communities they work with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> its background and contact details; its accountability framework, staff code of conduct and complaints procedure; its goals and project objectives, expected results with the timeframe, and a financial summary, as well as summaries of evaluations and progress reports; staff roles and responsibilities; criteria for selecting target groups and deliverables how input from participation activities has contributed to decisions. <p>Christian Aid will provide its partners with sufficient information so that they can understand the purpose, achievements and challenges of Christian Aid and how to engage with the organisation.</p>	Roll out Christian Aid country offices have assessed their good practice and gaps in information sharing and have made plans to improve practice	All country roll out countries have their own contextualised open information policies with a monitoring plan to ensure that the right information is getting to the right people using the appropriate techniques	March 2013	Country Managers	
				REMs	
				HAP focal points	
				UK accountability team	
	In roll out countries information sharing guidelines have been shared with partners.	June 2012	A system is set up so we can monitor how practical and useful these guidelines are and how we can improve on them	UK accountability team	
	Partners have been trained and are part of the accountability self-assessments	March 2013	Information sharing questions are included in Christian Aid monitoring and evaluation	Country managers	
				REMs	
				HAP focal points	
	Case studies are collected about effective methods of information sharing, and the impact this has on	December 2012		UK accountability team	
				PIL	

Last updated, December 2012

<p>We will make available on request information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our organisation, its vision/mission • Governance and management • Organisational policies • Strategies and plans • Finance and performance • Feedback/complaints mechanisms <p>We also commit to ensuring that our public policy/advocacy and campaign positions are robustly researched and well-founded in partner and beneficiary experience.</p>		programmes		
	Christian Aid uses the 'Good Enough Guide' for basic information sharing	Guidelines for minimum expectations for humanitarian programmes will be produced and shared with partners and endorsed/monitored by humanitarian division managers	August 2012	UK accountability team HAP focal points REMs
	Country roll out offices are developing open information policies	All roll out country offices will have a contextualised open information policy developed in consultation with partners and which will outline the best way to share information systematically in appropriate languages .	December 2012	Country managers Country focal points REMs
		Country offices will monitor how their information policy is used and what difference it makes to their relationship with partners	March 2013	Country managers Country focal points REMs
		Country offices have periodic reviews of their OIPs. The country open information policy is updated according to partners' feedback.	On-going, annually	Country managers Country focal points REMs
		Clearly defined Policy & Advocacy Research methods	On-going	Country managers Country focal points REMs

Complaints

Christian Aid's Commitment	Where are we now – gaps and good practice	Areas for improvement	Commitments for 2012/13	
			By when	Responsible
<p>To poor and marginalised communities and to partner organisations We are committed to enabling project participants, target groups and end users to make a complaint when there is a</p>	HQ has an international complaints policy	This policy will be reviewed and updated in consultation with country offices	April 2012	UK accountability team HAP Focal Points

Last updated, December 2012

<p>problem with our work or a project that we are funding, and to know that it will be acted on.</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring that our formal complaints mechanism works effectively and that complaints are handled through an accessible and safe process.</p> <p>We will respond to the feedback and complaints made by communities and we make improvements and inform our stakeholders how we have done this.</p> <p>We will encourage our partners and support them to establish their own complaints mechanisms to facilitate the handling of complaints from the communities that they work with.</p> <p>Christian Aid is committed to enabling partners to make a complaint when there is a problem with our work or a project that we are funding, and to know that it will be acted on.</p>		Records of complaints as evidence of mechanisms being used; six monthly reports will be sent to management so they can see common themes for improvement	On-going six-monthly	UK accountability team HAP Focal Points
	<p>Roll out country offices are developing their own contextualised complaints policies, and have been given guidance on how to set up complaints mechanisms in communities.</p>	<p>In all roll out countries a complaints policy and procedure will be in place. All complaints and responses will be recorded at country offices which will then feed into central system which will monitor complaints across all country offices.</p>	December 2012	Country managers REMs HAP focal points
			<p>Records of complaints as evidence of mechanisms being used; six monthly reports will be sent to management so they can see common themes for improvement</p>	On-going six-monthly
		<p>As part of the PPA pilot complaints mechanisms will be set up in 2 countries and those experiences will be documented and analysed.</p>		January 2013
		<p>Country offices will monitor top line complaints from communities to partners, and encourage partners to improve their programmes based on feedback/complaints from communities</p>	March 2013	UK accountability team REMs HAP focal points
		<p>Case studies collected about effective complaints mechanisms, and the impact this has on programme</p>	January 2013	UK accountability team
	To supporters, campaigners and volunteers	There is clear information	Supporter complaints	March 2013

Last updated, December 2012

<p>We are committed to providing supporters with accessible complaints mechanisms, to responding to complaints in a timely manner as appropriate and to ensuring that complaints are fed back to relevant decision makers.</p> <p>We will use feedback to improve the supporter experience where possible and appropriate, for instance where technical issues with our web sites are reported or to improve data protection.</p>	<p>on our website and printed resources on how to contact us, but no defined complaints mechanism and no easily accessible information on how supporters can escalate a complaint to independent bodies.</p>	<p>policy and mechanism to be developed and made easily accessible on the website. Information to include details of relevant external bodies such as the Fundraising Standards Board, Charity Commission, Information Commissioner etc.</p>		<p>of Supporter Relations Communications / Digital</p>
<p>Where complaints concern issues of a more subjective nature including, but not limited to, policy and fundraising practice, we are committed to ensuring that these views reach the appropriate staff and are taken seriously.</p>	<p>Supporter feedback (including complaints) is captured on the Ascent CRM against the supporter record. Some level of judgement is exercised by staff in deciding exactly what feedback to capture, particularly where feedback is given informally.</p>	<p>Further training delivered to staff and volunteers on how and when this mechanism should be used to ensure that use is consistent across the organisation and feedback captured is fully representative.</p>	<p>March 2013</p>	<p>Supporter Enquiries</p>
	<p>Informal feedback (such as comments written on response forms) sent to outsourcing companies is not captured.</p>	<p>Feasibility of capture of responses discussed with outsourcing companies.</p>	<p>March 2013</p>	<p>Head of Supporter Relations</p>
	<p>Monthly Supporter Feedback report is circulated to directors and staff in SPD and Supporter Relations so that it can be used to inform decisions. Specific feedback is passed on to other relevant staff as appropriate.</p>	<p>Feedback levels are insufficient to be accepted as truly representative. Alternative ways of gathering feedback from supporters to be investigated.</p>	<p>March 2013</p>	<p>Supporter Relations Inspiring Participation Insight</p>
<p>To our staff We are committed to modelling our outward facing commitments internally, and to ensure that</p>	<p>Whistle blowing and grievance procedures in place</p>	<p>Installation of a suggestion box to be explored, and web based department feedback system to be explored</p>	<p>On-going</p>	<p>HR</p>

Shared goals, values and ways of working

Last updated, December 2012

Christian Aid's Commitment	Where are we now – gaps and good practice	Areas for improvement	Commitments for 2012/13	Responsible
			By when	
We will work with individuals and organisations who agree on shared goals, values and ways of working as out lined in the Christian Aid corporate strategy, Partnership for Change	Staff and partners have a shared and common understanding of our goals, values and ways of working	Ensure communication of and compliance with Christian Aid values among staff	On-going	SMG
		Ensure that out communications materials and online representation are in-line with our values	On-going	Digital & Communications