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Quality and Accountability Framework for the Church of Sweden's International work			1(12)
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## Quality and Accountability Framework for the Church of Sweden's International work

### 1. Introduction and scope

The Church of Sweden bases its international work as part of the worldwide ecumenical movement. Our starting point is a life-empowering theology that is expressed through the active choice to be present with those living in vulnerable situations. The Church of Sweden International work aims to ensure that our commitments to quality and accountability permeate in all the activities we undertake.

The scope of the Quality and accountability framework (QAF) is solely for the Church of Sweden's International work including church cooperation, development cooperation, humanitarian aid, policy dialogue and mobilisation, support and fundraising. The QAF is intended as a guide for staff, governance representatives and stakeholders on how the Church of Sweden International work defines quality and accountability and how the work will be implemented. It details our commitments, accountability statement, and working with partners on quality and accountability. Annex 1 is a table listing all of Church of Sweden International work's mandatory and guiding standards, principles, policies, commitments and guidelines. Annex 2 details the key actions being undertaken to ensure roll-out and implementation of the commitments as well as continuous improvement in the organisation.

### 2. Purpose

The Church of Sweden's International work is committed to bring about positive change together with and for people who live in vulnerable situations around the world. The Church of Sweden International work believes in delivering a high quality of work and results. We want to shift the power imbalance to ensure that rights holders and target groups are informed, know their rights, are treated with respect and can make decisions on the work that

affects their lives. Quality and accountability is reflected in all of the Church of Sweden's International work. The Church of Sweden's International work implements with and promotes development effectiveness, a gender integrated human rights based approach and principled humanitarian action.

We have expertise in specific methods and approaches to ensure that people are at the centre, including the human rights based approach, gender mainstreaming, community-led programming and community based psychosocial support.

As the Church of Sweden's International work rarely implements directly, the focus of our quality and accountability work is with our partners. Within the partnerships, the Church of Sweden's International work contributes to developing good accountability mechanisms by providing expertise in the above mentioned methods and approaches. In dialogue with partners, we identify capacity building opportunities for continuous improvement. The Church of Sweden's International work role in each partnership is to facilitate and enable, not dictate and control. Rather than imposing our accountability commitments on our partners, the aim is to share standards, promote quality and accountability and contribute to the partnership with methods and approaches that put people at the centre.

The purpose of the QAF is to increase the quality, effectiveness and impact of our work. We encourage our stakeholders to review and monitor our work and to hold us accountable if we fall short of our commitments.

**The Church of Sweden International work is committed to:**

- 1. a human rights based approach**
- 2. gender mainstreaming**
- 3. promoting environmental sustainability**
- 4. equal and mutually accountable partnerships**
- 5. efficient, results-based, and appropriate response and to do no harm**
- 6. transparency and participation**
- 7. handling complaints**
- 8. be a learning organisation**
- 9. staff care and competency**

## **10. the ACT Alliance’s Code of good practice and the Swedish requirements under the Swedish Fundraising Council<sup>1</sup>, the Swedish Fundraising Control<sup>2</sup> and the Swedish Public access to information principle**

The Church of Sweden’s International work strives to meet our commitments in all of our work, however when this is not possible, each situation will be assessed individually by the senior management using a risk management strategy.

### **3. The strategy for the Church of Sweden’s International work**

The Strategic plan for the Church of Sweden’s International work 2018-2022 governs our work and describes our identity, mission, vision and overall objectives. Our mission is “for the sake of life and us together in the worldwide church, God sends us, in our words and actions, to share the Gospel, defend human dignity, safeguard the Creation and live in faith, hope and love”. The Strategic plan identifies six thematic areas within which the Church of Sweden International work wants to contribute to change in cooperation with its partner churches and organisations:

- Theology and development
- Just Peace
- Gender justice and gender equality
- Sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Fair and sustainable livelihoods
- Save lives, alleviate suffering and uphold human dignity

Strategic maps (balanced scorecards) have been developed at an overall organisational, sector and when relevant unit level as an internal quality management tool for managers to ensure that we are meeting our mission, vision, strategic priorities and achieving our strategic results and goals in three selected areas. Each strategic map has four different perspectives: people, stewardship, internal processes and organisational capacity with the ultimate aim of positive change together with and for people who live in vulnerable situations around the world. There is one common balanced scorecard for the International Department, with the different sections and/or units working towards fulfilling selected goals. The strategic maps are linked to our overall organisational risk analysis, both of which are analysed and reflected on bi-annually to ensure that we are doing the right things in the right way and managing risks accountably.

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<sup>1</sup> FRII = Frivilligorganisationernas insamlingsråd (The Swedish Fundraising Council)

<sup>2</sup> Svensk insamlingskontroll (The Swedish Fundraising Control)

## 4. Accountability statement

Accountability is a fundamental aspect of the Church of Sweden's International work governance, strategy and operational implementation. We define accountability as a mutual commitment, by the Church of Sweden's International work, our partners and other stakeholders, to hold ourselves and each other accountable to the people we aim to assist by abiding to our policies, values and mutual agreements, while also assuring quality and results in all our work. The Church of Sweden's International work strongly believes in close dialogue and openness with our partners in order to learn from each other. The participation of rights holders/target groups in programmes and/or projects is at the core of the Church of Sweden's International work understanding of quality and accountability.

The Church of Sweden's International work focuses on improving the quality of our partnerships and together with our partners develop good accountability mechanisms between us and towards the people we aim to assist. This focus includes mutual capacity development, organisational support to our partners and monitoring of our partners' work. The Church of Sweden's International work make available information to partners outlining how we will work with them and partnership requirements<sup>3</sup>.

As a member of the Action for Churches Together (ACT) Alliance we have signed up to the Alliance's conditions for Membership, Policies and Guidelines. We abide by our ACT membership requirements which are summarised in the ACT Accountability Framework, and the ACT Code of Good Practice. The Church of Sweden's International work is certified against the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), certificate number hqai-chs-2016-001, and we are a member of the CHS Alliance.

The Church of Sweden's International work abides by Swedish labour law and has two Codes of Conduct for staff, the National level Code of Conduct that outlines the national level staff policies and guidelines as well as the Code of Conduct for International work for the prevention of misconduct including corruption, fraud, exploitation and abuse (including sexual), and to ensure child safeguarding.

In Sweden, we are voluntary members of the FRII (Swedish Fundraising Council Code of Conduct), and the SIK (The Swedish Fundraising Control), which is an expression of our accountability. The Church of Sweden must comply with rules concerning transparency in the Church Ordinance and can only refuse to disclose information in select cases, known as the Public access to information principle.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Outlined in the Guide to partners and Guidelines for partner collaborations and further defined the strategic maps per sections.

<sup>4</sup> Known internally also as principle of transparency, sk Offentlighetsprincip. The Church of Sweden decided to continue to abide by the Public access to information principle after separating from the State in 2000. In general, the content and rules of the Church of Sweden's Public access to information principle and the Swedish Public Access to Information Act are the same. The Secrecy Act however, is not regulated in the Church Ordinance but by collective agreements.

## 5. Stakeholders

The Church of Sweden's International work is committed to ensuring accountability and implementing according to our commitments towards all of our stakeholders. The focus of our accountability work is with our key stakeholders<sup>5</sup> including those parties we have contractual agreements with (partners). Our key stakeholders are rights holders / target groups, partners, staff, diocese, parishes, and institutional donors<sup>6</sup>.

A major part of our funds are raised through private donations from individuals, local congregations and dioceses and the general public in Sweden. We are committed to working closer with these stakeholders in Sweden on defining mutual accountability and linking our work. During the strategic period 2018-2022, we will be focusing on our external and internal communications and reporting to our stakeholders in Sweden.

## 6. Partnership

As we seldom implement directly, working with our partners is at the core of the Church of Sweden's International work existence<sup>7</sup>. We are committed to coordinating and working in partnerships based on mutual respect and accountability as well as continual improvement. We are part of the worldwide church community and the global ecumenical movement, and members of the ACT Alliance, the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches. In some cases this work is formalised through agreements with membership organisations. We prioritise working within the ACT membership however we also enter into partnerships outside of the Alliance with churches and church related bodies, civil society organisations (faith based and secular), community-based membership organisations, umbrella bodies, consortia and networks.

The Church of Sweden's International work shares our accountability commitments with partners and we aim to put people at the centre. We achieve this in dialogue with our partners, discussing in turn how they will work on issues and approaches of quality and accountability and how we can facilitate support to them in achieving their commitments. By following the partnership in dialogue, we seek to bring about continuous joint learning.

Within our partnerships, there is a chain of quality and accountability that must be respected. In order to ensure the integrity of our partners, use resources effectively and to avoid unnecessary confusion among stakeholders this chain cannot be interrupted. The Church of Sweden International work's responsibility is to follow-up on quality and accountability through partners' dialogue, compliance with agreements, etc. The different levels of responsibility are set out in annex 3.

The Church of Sweden's International work Guideline for partner collaborations and Guide to partners define how we work with partners, the criteria for selection of partners and types of partnerships.

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<sup>5</sup> See Annex 3 and a full list of our stakeholders is available in Annex 1 of the Guidelines for information sharing.

<sup>6</sup> Swedish International Development Agency (Sida); Europe Aid, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO); Radiohjälpen, etc.

<sup>7</sup> The Church of Sweden's International work will choose to implement directly with the aims of increasing financing and/or strengthening the work of the ACT Alliance in that country/region.

## 7. Validity and follow-up

The QAF was approved by the Director for International affairs on 2019-01-15. The Director for International affairs, with the support of the senior management team, is responsible for the content and implementation of the QAF. The Department of Strategic Planning and Donor Relations is responsible for the monitoring and updating of the QAF and its annexes on an annual basis. The Department of Strategic Planning and Donor Relations is also responsible for ensuring communication of the QAF and its content following the Guideline for information sharing.

The QAF relates directly to the Church of Sweden's International work Guideline for partnership collaborations, the Guideline for information sharing and the Guideline for handling complaints.

## Annex 1: Mandatory and guiding standards, principles, policies and guidelines

This table lists standards, principles, policies, commitments and guideline that are mandatory or guide our work.

Internal mandatory standards	External mandatory standards	Policies and guidelines that guide our work
<p><b>Overall:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Our theology: A life-empowering faith as our driving force</li> <li>2. Strategic plan 2018-2022</li> <li>3. Delegation order (Delegationsordning), 2018</li> <li>4. Quality and accountability framework. 2018</li> <li>5. Code of conducts:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. National level</li> <li>b. International work Code of Conduct for the prevention of staff misconduct including fraud, corruption and exploitation and abuse and to ensure child safeguarding</li> </ol> </li> <li>6. Strategy and categories for staff working abroad, 2016</li> <li>7. The Swedish fundraising council (Frivilligorganisationernas insamlingsråd, FRIL)</li> <li>8. The Swedish fundraising control (Svensk insamlingskontroll)</li> <li>9. Public access to information principle</li> </ol> <p><b>Humanitarian work:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. Guidelines for the Church of Sweden humanitarian action, 2018</li> <li>11. Policy for practicums premoria: Working in consortia/humanitarian aid, 2016</li> </ol> <p><b>National level:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Church ordinance</li> <li>13. Travel Policy, 2008</li> <li>14. Policy on fundraising, 2011</li> <li>15. Policy on offensive discrimination, 2012</li> <li>16. Policy for fair treatment, 2015</li> <li>17. Guidelines for alcohol and drugs, 2016</li> <li>18. Environmental Policy, 2016</li> </ol>	<p><b>Overall:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>28. Core humanitarian standard</li> <li>29. Principles of partnership</li> <li>30. Code of good practice for NGOs responding to HIV/AIDS</li> <li>31. Sida's Development cooperation and humanitarian guidelines</li> <li>32. Sida's Communications policy</li> </ol> <p><b>ACT Alliance:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>33. ACT membership agreement, 2011</li> <li>34. ACT Code of good practice, 2011, app 2016</li> <li>35. ACT Branding Policy and Guidelines, 2017</li> <li>36. ACT National, sub-regional and regional forums policy, 2018</li> <li>37. ACT Procedure for funding, 2017</li> <li>38. ACT understanding of development, 2008</li> <li>39. ACT Humanitarian Policy, 2017</li> </ol> <p><b>Develop Cooperation:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40. Istanbul principles for development effectiveness</li> <li>41. Civil society organisations (CSO) strategy</li> </ol> <p><b>Humanitarian Work:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>42. The Code of conduct for international red cross and red crescent movement and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in disaster relief</li> <li>43. The Sphere standards and the Humanitarian Standards Partnership</li> <li>44. Charter for change</li> <li>45. MoU: ACT Fast</li> </ol>	<p><b>Overall:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>46. Strategic maps (balanced score cards)</li> <li>47. Organisational risk analysis and matrix</li> <li>48. Arbetsordning för Kyrkostyrelsens internationella råd, 2018</li> <li>49. IASC Gender with Age Marker</li> <li>50. Do No Harm</li> </ol> <p><b>Guidelines:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>51. A Human rights based approach, 2016</li> <li>52. Policy dialogue, 2015</li> <li>53. Partner collaborations, 2015</li> <li>54. Complaints handling, 2017</li> <li>55. Information sharing, 2018</li> <li>56. Guidelines on managing earmarked funds, 2014</li> </ol> <p><b>Humanitarian work:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>57. Good humanitarian donorship</li> <li>58. IASC Guidelines on mental health and psychosocial support in emergency settings</li> <li>59. A faith-sensitive approach in humanitarian response, 2018</li> </ol> <p><b>Geographic position papers:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>60. Sustainable peace between Israel and Palestine, 2017</li> </ol> <p><b>Thematic position papers:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>61. Sexual and reproductive health and rights, 2013</li> <li>62. Just peace, 2016</li> <li>63. Gender justice and gender equality, 2016</li> <li>64. Social protection, 2012</li> </ol> <p><b>National Level:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>65. Policy on advances, 2009</li> </ol>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19. Policy on anti-corruption, 2016</li> <li>20. Guidelines for representation and gifts, 2016</li> <li>21. Purchase policy, 2016 and Code of conduct for suppliers to Church of Sweden</li> <li>22. Remuneration Policy, 2017</li> <li>23. Financial policy and ethical guidelines, 2017</li> <li>24. Work Environment Policy, 2017</li> <li>25. Informationssäkerhetspolicy, 2018</li> <li>26. Personuppgiftspolicy, 2018</li> <li>27. Gender Equality Plan, 2018</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>66. Policy on official residence, 2009</li> <li>67. Policy for use of social media while on duty, 2015</li> <li>68. Agreement guidelines, 2016</li> <li>69. Guidelines for release of addresses, 2016</li> <li>70. Guideline for credit and debit cards, 2016</li> <li>71. Travel guidelines, 2017</li> <li>72. Procurement guidelines, 2017</li> <li>73. Guidelines for hiring interns, 2018</li> <li>74. Arbets- och delegationsordning för kyrkostyrelsen, 2018</li> <li>75. Guidelines for hiring and handling close relationships between employees, 2018</li> <li>76. General secretaries delegation order</li> <li>77. Guidelines on offensive discrimination, 2018</li> </ul>
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A full list of ACT Alliance membership requirements (including standards, policies and codes) and how they relate to the Church of Sweden's International work is available in our internal information and planning system (Vips) [Start](#) > [Organisationer](#) > [Action by Churches Together Alliance](#).

A detailed list of internal mandatory and guiding documents is available from the Office of the International director.



## Annex 2. Key actions

The matrix below summarises the actions we are taking to ensure quality and accountability is reflected in all our work and to ensure continual improvement. The Church of Sweden's International work is certified against the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), certificate number hqai-chs-2016-001, and is a member of the CHS Alliance. Our quality and accountability actions focus on partners' dialogue, development of the E8 Goat initiative<sup>8</sup>, addressing the corrective actions from the CHS audits, ensuring compliance with membership requirements and continuing to ensure staff ownership of the new strategy, management structure and PMER<sup>9</sup> system.

Key Actions	Responsible	Timeframe	Commitment
Improved information sharing and communications with our all stakeholders, focusing on our key stakeholders <sup>10</sup> and stakeholders in Sweden, ensuring we communicate in relevant media and languages.	Department of Fundraising, Mobilisation and Communications, Policy and Global Ecumenical Alliances unit and the Department of Strategic Planning and Donor Relations	December 2019	6
Building partners capacity on quality and accountability. During the programme period 2018-2022, the emphasis will be on human rights based approach, staff code of conduct and Complaints Handling. This includes building capacity within the Act Alliance, focusing on the ACT forums.	Regional Department with support from the Department of Strategic Planning and Donor Relations	On-going	1, 2, 4,7,9,10
Improve quality control of our and partners compliance against the all agreements.	Unit for international finance and the Department of Strategic Planning and Donor Relations	On-going	1,2,4,5,6,10
Build capacity of staff on quality and accountability, including knowledge and implementation of our commitments, staff codes of conduct, the Complaints and response mechanism, the Child safeguarding guideline, Guidelines on information sharing, and	The Department of Strategic Planning and Donor Relations	On-going	9,10 (all)

<sup>8</sup> The E8 GOAT initiative seeks to increase collaboration between the 8 ACT Alliance European organisations with the aim to 1) build the capacity of ecumenical and other partners as development actors in their own right 2) increase the amount of resources available for our combined development work 3) improve operational impact 4) strengthen the ACT Alliance.

<sup>9</sup> The new organization was launched in 2014 along with a new PMER system (Planning, monitoring, evaluation reporting and learning).

<sup>10</sup> See Annex 3 for list of key stakeholders.

how to work with implementing partners to increase quality and accountability to rights holders and /or target groups.			
Continued collaboration with E8 Getting our Act Together (GOAT) initiative and further coordination within the ACT Alliance.	Policy and Global Ecumenical Alliances unit and Regional Department with support from the Department of Strategic Planning and Donor Relations and unit for international finance	On-going	4,5,6,7,8
Together with partners, strengthen information sharing, participation and feedback with affected populations	Regional department and the Department of Strategic Planning and Donor Relations	On-going	6,7
Launch the Child Safeguarding guideline, focusing on staff training, mainstreaming in the PMER system and recruitment routines.	The Department of Strategic Planning and Donor Relations	2019	1, 2

Further information on the key actions can be found in the Church of Sweden International work's action plan for resolution of corrective actions from the CHS audit.

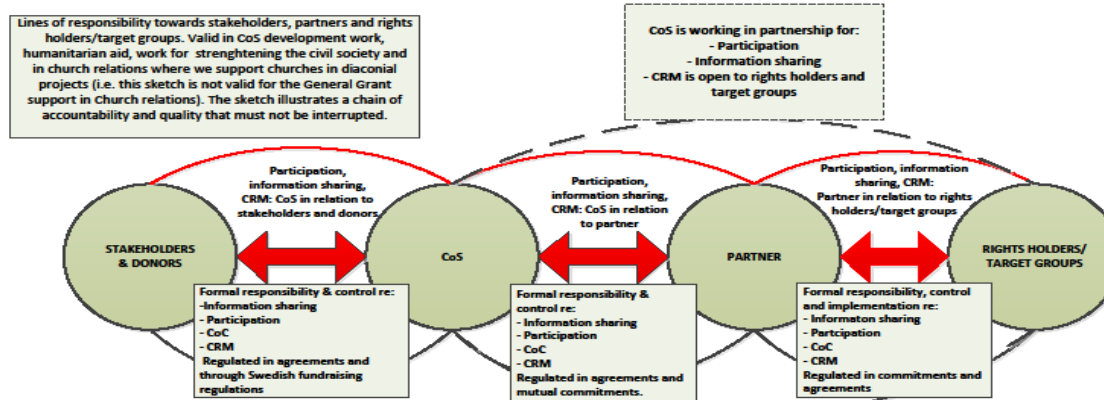
## Annex 3. Church of Sweden's International work stakeholders in quality and accountability



*Key stakeholders in the inner most circler*

## Annex 4. Levels of responsibility in implementing quality and accountability

CoSs plan/strategy for participation, informationsharing and handling of complaints (CRM)



Full lines indicates CoS' formal responsibility – the division of labour, responsibility and control between stakeholders, partners and rights holders. These lines indicates that we sign agreements on mutual accountability and quality. This chain of accountability and quality must not be interrupted.

Dotted lines indicates a responsibility for accountability and quality not only formally agreed upon with partners but also indicates a sphere of moral interest where CoS will follow-up – without by-passing our partners! This means that CoS' CRM must be open to all. As well as we through our collaboration with partners want to strengthen and challenge ourselves and partners for increased participation and information sharing. In relation to monitoring, follow-up and evaluation the dotted lines indicate that CoS is not the formal programme/project manager, hence our responsibility is to follow-up on a different level, e.g. through visits and evaluations we meet rightsholders, through following up compliance with agreements we make sure CoS and Partners deliver as according to our agreements and mutual commitments.

CoS: Responsibility to follow-up on quality and accountability and compliance with agreements. Regulated in agreements and through dialogues with partner. Practice eg by follow-up visits, evaluations and random sampling for compliance .