



# **Individual Self Reflection 2020 on World Humanitarian Summit Commitments and Initiatives - ACTIONAID**



## Stakeholder Information

**Organisation Name**  
ACTIONAID

**Organisational Type**  
NGO - International

**City and Country where Headquartered**  
Johannesburg, South Africa

**Focal Point Name**  
Sonya Ruparel

**Region**  
Global

**Twitter ID**  
@ActionAid



## 2D Take concrete steps to improve compliance and accountability

### Individual Commitments

Commitment	Commitment Type	Core Responsibility
ActionAid endorses the Call to Action on Protection from GBV in emergencies in 2016, and commits to integrate women-led community based protection mechanisms as part of its core humanitarian response programming by 2020.	Policy	Uphold the Norms that Safeguard Humanity

**1. Highlight the concrete actions taken between 1 January – 31 December 2017 to implement the commitments which contribute to achieving this transformation. Be as specific as possible and include any relevant data/figures.**

#### Gender-based violence prevention and response

- Research conducted on **community-based protection in protracted crises** to inform related framework and toolkits.
- **Protection of Women's Rights ToT** (Training of Trainers) held, including representatives from Fiji and Philippines partner women's rights organisations.
- ActionAid **co-chairs the Global Protection Cluster's GBV** (Gender-based Violence) **AoR** (Area of Responsibility) **advocacy reference group**. Work includes a position paper on GBV against Rohingya population in Bangladesh and strategy development.

Protection focus in ActionAid's major humanitarian responses, e.g.:

- **Somaliland drought** – Women's safe spaces enabled discussions on rights and GBV, access information, and helped to build confidence to take leadership positions.
- **Kenya drought** - Improved safety and reduced GBV risk through dignity kits, protection training and strengthened referral mechanisms for legal, psychosocial and medical support.
- **DRC Kasai conflict** - 10 women's groups with 50 members each implemented women-led protection plans in 5 territories.
- **Rohingya crisis, Bangladesh** - safe spaces for women supported +10,900 women and girls. Dedicated bathing spaces for women and children built, and women-led community watch groups created.

**2. A. How are you measuring progress toward achieving your commitments? Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.**

- Through existing, internal systems or frameworks for monitoring, reporting and/or evaluation.
- Other: Developing a reporting process that aligns all commitments – Grand Bargain, WHS, CHS and Call to Action against GBV.

**B. How are you assessing whether progress on your commitments is leading toward change in the direction of the transformation?**

ActionAid collects qualitative information through programme evaluations (real-time, mid-term, final) and consultations with women affected by disasters. ActionAid also use evidence and lessons to adapt tools to strengthen community-based protection work, and the experiences of women to influence other humanitarian actors.

**3. A. Please select no more than 3 key challenges faced in implementing the commitments related to this transformation. Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.**

- Funding amounts
- Funding modalities (earmarking, priorities, yearly agreements, risk aversion measures)
- Human resources/capacity

**B. How are these challenges impacting achievement of this transformation?**

Protection from violence against women is poorly resourced and in emergencies is given lower priority than other life-saving needs. Any available funding is often short term. The shortage of protection specialists, especially at community level is also a challenge and there is limited funding available to invest in building expertise.

**4. Highlight actions planned for 2018 to advance implementation of your commitments in order to achieve this transformation.**

- ActionAid is developing a new toolkit and training programme on women led community-based protection, including a specific



protracted crises contexts section. ActionAid is also recruiting additional protection specialists to support country programmes and the roll out new resources.

- ActionAid will develop, document, implement and promote women-led alternatives at national and global levels that increase women's access to and control over resources.
- ActionAid will also chair the new localisation task team for the GBV AoR.

## 5. What steps or actions are needed to make collective progress to achieve this transformation?

The power imbalances evident in the humanitarian system mirror the broader gender inequalities experienced by women living in poverty. **Global humanitarian response must recognise women's agency in disasters and their right to participate in decision-making processes.** This can be assisted with greater inclusion of women's organisations in humanitarian spaces. Top level leadership including Humanitarian Coordinators and UN agencies should further **invest in protection** by promoting a culture and greater resources to prioritise protection.

## 6. List any good practice or examples of innovation undertaken individually or in cooperation with others to advance this transformation.

One example is in Fiji, where ActionAid partnered with a feminist community media/policy network to advance sharing information on GBV issues. In addition, in Bangladesh, UN Women recognised ActionAid's women's safe spaces in the Rohingya crisis response as best practice models for replication.

### Keywords

Gender, People-centred approach, Protection



### 3D Empower and protect women and girls

#### Individual Commitments

Commitment	Commitment Type	Core Responsibility
ActionAid commits by 2020 to ensure the meaningful participation of women in all formal and informal decision making processes, ensuring that women make up at least 50% of rights-holders engaged in community decision making and consultation processes that ActionAid leads.	Operational	Leave No One Behind
ActionAid commits to ensure all of its humanitarian programming is gender responsive by 2020.	Operational	Leave No One Behind
ActionAid commits to ensure at least 50% of its implementing partners in humanitarian action are women-led or women's organisations by 2020.	Operational	Leave No One Behind
ActionAid commits to ensure at least 50% of leadership positions in humanitarian contexts are held by women by 2020, and that at least 50% of staff at all levels are women by 2020.	Operational	Leave No One Behind
ActionAid commits to increase funding and capacity development to local and national women's groups as equal partners in our humanitarian action.	Financial	Leave No One Behind

#### 1. Highlight the concrete actions taken between 1 January – 31 December 2017 to implement the commitments which contribute to achieving this transformation. Be as specific as possible and include any relevant data/figures.

- ActionAid has prioritised driving women-led emergency preparedness, response and prevention in its 2017-2028 strategy.
- 43% of ActionAid's humanitarian surge roster members and 63% of its Humanitarian and Resilience Platform members are women.
- In 2017, ActionAid took a leading role in lobbying for gender to be included in the Grand Bargain, by co-hosting an event at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Geneva.
- ActionAid also produced the position paper on *Promoting localised, women-led approaches to humanitarian responses*, and published the *Women in Humanitarian Surge* report as part of the Transforming Surge Capacity Project to encourage more women to join humanitarian surge rosters that was widely picked up in the sector.

ActionAid established the Shifting the Power Coalition in the Pacific to support local women's organisations to engage in humanitarian response, build preparedness, response and coordination capacities and link with national coordination mechanisms.

In ActionAid's major 2017 humanitarian responses:

- Kenya drought - 7 of 8 local partners are women's organizations - 87%.
- Somaliland drought - 2 of 3 local partners are women led organisations -66%.
- Ethiopia drought -1 women-led local NGO partner, plus 10 women-led community-based saving and credit cooperatives.
- Nepal floods - 3 of 5 local partners were women's organisations - 60%.
- DRC Kasai conflict – partners include 40 Women's Platforms, 4 IDP Committees (2 women led), 40 Community Children Clubs, 40 Men Against SGBV Platforms (sexual and gender-based violence).

Direct funding to the women's organisations in the above responses ranged from 15%-72%. Capacity building initiatives included training in protection, Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), needs assessments, disaster planning, advocacy, resource mobilisation and psychosocial first aid.

#### 2. A. How are you measuring progress toward achieving your commitments? Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.



- Through existing, internal systems or frameworks for monitoring, reporting and/or evaluation.
- Other: ActionAid is developing a reporting process that aligns all our commitments – Grand Bargain, WHS, CHS and Call to Action Against GBV.

**B. How are you assessing whether progress on your commitments is leading toward change in the direction of the transformation?**

Progress against these commitments is built into the terms of reference of our response evaluations and captured in our annual reporting processes. ActionAid is currently developing a more sophisticated tool to capture progress against all commitments including WHS, CHS, Grand Bargain, Call to Action Against GBV.

**3. A. Please select no more than 3 key challenges faced in implementing the commitments related to this transformation. Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.**

- Funding modalities (earmarking, priorities, yearly agreements, risk aversion measures)
- Human resources/capacity
- Information management/tools

**B. How are these challenges impacting achievement of this transformation?**

- HR systems must be reviewed to increase the number of women recruited in humanitarian contexts including in leadership positions and on surge rosters.
- Funding modalities – local/national women's organisations often face barriers to participating in coordination mechanisms and are unable to access bilateral/pooled funds.
- Stronger information management systems are required to capture progress.

**4. Highlight actions planned for 2018 to advance implementation of your commitments in order to achieve this transformation.**

- Strengthen women-led preparedness work across 12 countries through a DFAT (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia) funded Gender Action Plan programme with multi-year investments in 3 countries.
- Develop a streamlined tool to track progress against commitments.
- Continue to prioritise recruiting women to ActionAid's humanitarian surge roster and review internal systems to increase the number of women humanitarian staff and leaders.
- Develop, document, implement and promote women-led alternatives at national and global levels that increase women's access to and control over resources.

**5. What steps or actions are needed to make collective progress to achieve this transformation?**

- Wider **recognition and acceptance of women's agency** in disaster preparedness, response and recovery, and women's organisations' capacity and knowledge.
- Make the **Grand Bargain localisation workstream an opportunity to advance commitments on women's and girls' rights** and women's leadership in emergencies.
- Facilitate the **engagement of local and national women's organisations in the localisation process** discussions.
- Better integrate **women's rights and gender equality measures across the cluster system**.
- Increase **direct funding to local and national women's organisations**.

**6. List any good practice or examples of innovation undertaken individually or in cooperation with others to advance this transformation.**

Following the 2017 Kenya drought, ActionAid established **women-led disaster management committees to lead local level response**. The committees were supported to mobilise, conduct assessments, plan, make decisions on response implementation and monitor programmes. The committees also influenced the wider response by connecting with county and sub-county steering groups.

**Keywords**

Community resilience, Gender, Local action, People-centred approach



## 4A Reinforce, do not replace, national and local systems

### Individual Commitments

Commitment	Commitment Type	Core Responsibility
ActionAid will ensure in each response that its staff will be accompanied by front-line responders and local organisations when attending collective coordination platforms. ActionAid will also advocate for the inclusion of front-line responders and local organisations to ensure they have a seat at the table in collective response coordination processes.	Partnership	Change People's Lives: From Delivering Aid to Ending Need

**1. Highlight the concrete actions taken between 1 January – 31 December 2017 to implement the commitments which contribute to achieving this transformation. Be as specific as possible and include any relevant data/figures.**

#### Strengthening national/local leadership and systems

The evaluation of the Shifting the Power project co-led by ActionAid revealed that local partners have become more effective coordination body members with **increased influence and access to national humanitarian platforms/networks**. The Transforming Surge Capacity project established **collaborative localised surge rosters** with 600+ members, facilitating local deployments.

ActionAid also established the Pacific Shifting the Power Coalition, supporting local women's organisations to engage in humanitarian response, build preparedness and link with national coordination mechanisms.

Humanitarian responses:

- **Ethiopia drought** - Local partners were supported to participate in multi-agency assessment, resulting in the revised Humanitarian Requirements Document. This increased partners' experience and visibility in the coordination system. ActionAid/Shifting the Power project members established a humanitarian forum at local NGO network Consortium of Christian Relief & Development Associations (CCRDA) to enhance their influence in the humanitarian coordination system.
- **Somaliland drought** - Local partners actively engaged in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), protection and food security cluster.
- **Nepal Floods** - ActionAid and partner Kamaiya Mahila Jagaran Samaj (KMJS) Bardiya are co-leading district humanitarian coordination in Bardiya.

**2. A. How are you measuring progress toward achieving your commitments? Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.**

- Through existing, internal systems or frameworks for monitoring, reporting and/or evaluation.

**B. How are you assessing whether progress on your commitments is leading toward change in the direction of the transformation?**

ActionAid will develop a tracking tool to monitor progress. In addition, recommendations from the Shifting the Power project specifically looking at this commitment will be incorporated into our ways of working. We continue to work directly with local organisations to strengthen advocacy asks to support this transformation.

**3. A. Please select no more than 3 key challenges faced in implementing the commitments related to this transformation. Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.**

- Buy-in  
 Funding modalities (earmarking, priorities, yearly agreements, risk aversion measures)

**B. How are these challenges impacting achievement of this transformation?**

- Funding modalities – local partners still find it difficult to participate in coordination mechanisms and access bilateral and pooled funds.
- Buy in – key stakeholders, including donors, need to increase their trust in local knowledge and local coordination mechanisms.

**4. Highlight actions planned for 2018 to advance implementation of your commitments in order to achieve this transformation.**



- ActionAid is undergoing Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) verification, which commits us to strengthen local capacity.
- In 2018, ActionAid will revise reporting tools to track our progress, and recommendations from the Shifting the Power project will be incorporated into our ways of working.
- We will also continue to advocate support to local actors to participate in humanitarian coordination mechanisms, both internally including in our training programmes and response toolkits, and externally, including at the Grand Bargain annual meeting.

## 5. What steps or actions are needed to make collective progress to achieve this transformation?

Ensure the participation, active engagement and co-leadership of local and national NGOs in response coordination mechanisms by:

1. **addressing language barriers** that limit participation in coordination fora by holding meetings in relevant national languages.
2. **supporting local and national NGOs to actively lead, engage in and be heard** in meetings, increasing visibility and confidence to access pooled funds.

## 6. List any good practice or examples of innovation undertaken individually or in cooperation with others to advance this transformation.

- ActionAid Nepal and local partner KMJS Bardiya are co-leading district level humanitarian coordination in Bardiya.
- ActionAid established Shifting the Power Coalition in the Pacific, supporting local women's organisations to engage in humanitarian action.
- The Shifting the Power project set up new national humanitarian coalitions of local organisations in Bangladesh and Ethiopia.

### Keywords

Local action, People-centred approach





## 5A Invest in local capacities

### Individual Commitments

Commitment	Commitment Type	Core Responsibility
ActionAid commits to provide increased support by way of direct funding and capacity building to national and local NGOs by 2020. This support will empower and allow them to play a central role in the programming and delivering of principled and coordinated humanitarian assistance.	Financial	Invest in Humanity

**1. Highlight the concrete actions taken between 1 January – 31 December 2017 to implement the commitments which contribute to achieving this transformation. Be as specific as possible and include any relevant data/figures.**

#### Direct funding to national/local actors

The Shifting the Power project co-led by ActionAid enabled us to explore how capacity, resources and systems can be shifted to local partners. Using a capacity self-assessment, local partners created capacity building plans to deliver against gaps identified. Examples of support to local actors in 2017 major responses:

#### Nepal floods

- 93% funds directed to local partners.
- Local partners participated in training on women's protection and psychosocial first aid.

#### DRC Kasai conflict

- 60% funds directed to local partners
- Women's organisations trained in preventing Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV), developing protection plans, sustainable agriculture and working with state actors.

#### Kenya drought

- 66% funds directed to local partners.
- Local partners trained in disaster preparedness, DRR, resource mobilisation and needs assessments. ActionAid also supported partners to establish public information sharing systems to strengthen accountability.

#### Ethiopia drought

- 52% funds directed to local partners.
- Partners supported to develop capacity building plans, preparedness plans and create emergency response teams.

**2. A. How are you measuring progress toward achieving your commitments? Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.**

- Through existing, internal systems or frameworks for monitoring, reporting and/or evaluation.
- By applying processes/indicators developed to measure WHS commitments specifically.

**B. How are you assessing whether progress on your commitments is leading toward change in the direction of the transformation?**

ActionAid's humanitarian response programmes in 2017 significantly exceeded the Grand Bargain minimum target of 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders as directly as possible. However, we will continue to actively track and promote funding local and national actors, particularly women's organisations.

**3. A. Please select no more than 3 key challenges faced in implementing the commitments related to this transformation. Only the categories selected by the organisation will be seen below.**

- Buy-in
- Funding modalities (earmarking, priorities, yearly agreements, risk aversion measures)

**B. How are these challenges impacting achievement of this transformation?**

- Funding modalities – local partners still find it difficult to participate in coordination mechanisms and are unable to access bilateral and pooled funds.
- Buy-in of donors - multilateral and bilateral systems are not set up to fund local and national NGOs and are risk averse.



#### **4. Highlight actions planned for 2018 to advance implementation of your commitments in order to achieve this transformation.**

- A local partnerships adviser will be recruited to drive forward our commitments to shift power to local actors, through direct support to countries and rolling out the local partner capacity self-assessment (SHAPE) framework developed by the Shifting the Power project.
- ActionAid will also continue to influence the localisation discussions at the Grand Bargain annual meeting.
- We will also develop a global monitoring matrix to capture all progress against commitments and reduce country reporting burdens.

#### **5. What steps or actions are needed to make collective progress to achieve this transformation?**

The **sector must champion localised responses** and document good practice. We must also **strengthen the capacities and influence of local and national humanitarian actors** to effectively prepare for and respond to emergencies by building on knowledge, skills, processes, and create contingency funds.

**Collaborative networks** are also proven to be effective in increasing local leadership, so should be supported. Finally, donors should be less risk averse and commit to increase funding to local and national actors.

#### **6. List any good practice or examples of innovation undertaken individually or in cooperation with others to advance this transformation.**

- The Transforming Surge Capacity built localised humanitarian surge capacity rosters in Asia.
- The Shifting the Power project supported 55 local partners in five countries to conduct capacity self-assessments on decision-making and leadership in humanitarian responses, partners have since created plans to address gaps.
- ActionAid also worked with INGOs to develop national NGO Start Fund windows.

#### **Keywords**

Disaster Risk Reduction, Gender, Local action, People-centred approach, Private sector



## Additional Reports

Attachment
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<a href="#">Grand Bargain self report -ActionAid Intl- FINAL submitted 14.03.18.docx</a>
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