

Mid-Term Funding Report Form

Global Standard for CSO Accountability – Extension Phase 2019/20

SECTION 1: General Information

Name of organisation that received funds: Australian Council for International Development (ACFID)

Project title: ACFID working with the Global Standard Extension Phase 2020

Funding period (start and end date): 01 October 2019 – 30 September 2020

Grant Amount: EUR 40,044

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SECTION 1: Narrative Reporting

1. Please provide an update on how project implementation has developed vis-à-vis the project plan:

As detailed in the project plan, ACFID's project implementation has focused on advancing the first 3 of objectives of the Global Standard extension phase; promote the use of the Global Standard, create a knowledge pool on the Global Standard, and strengthen CSO capacity to engage on the Global Standard.

Since the project funding start date, ACFID has managed to deliver against its project plan through the delivery of **Activity 2: Global Standard masterclass for Southeast Asian Platforms**, designed to both promote the use of the Global Standard, and strengthen CSO capacity to engage with the Global Standard.

At **Annex 1** to this report, a full activity report on the sessions presented at the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) Asia Pacific regional forum, attendance and outcomes of this activity is provided. The masterclass session plan is provided at **Annex 2**.

2. Please share your key successes, challenges and any unforeseen changes so far.

Notwithstanding the success of the project activities delivered as outlined at **Annex 1**, ACFID has encountered some challenges to our project implementation, some of which are yet to be fully resolved.

Firstly, at the ICVA conference, we spent a considerable amount of time on renewing ACFID's relationship with the Pacific Island Association of NGOs (PIANGO), establishing momentum and energy for the idea of collaborating on a workshop to develop an accountability standard for the Pacific in 2020, including the Pacific participants that should be invited to participate and what the benefits of this would be. Whilst initial agreement to collaborate had already been secured,



this was a new series of conversations with the new Deputy Director who had taken responsibility for this work for PIANGO.

It was agreed with the Deputy Director that this should be revisited in detail in the new year when planning commenced for the Pacific Islands regional CSO forum, which was to be held in April 2020. Very sadly, ACFID received notification from the Executive Director of PIANGO in January that PIANGO's Deputy Director had died suddenly. At this time ACFID responded only to express our sympathies and offer support to any immediate resourcing pressures the organisation was experiencing as a result. In conversations then held with the Executive Director in February, there was mutual enthusiasm for this concept to still be progressed and take place in April and was awaiting PIANGO informing ACFID of a new point of contact in the organisation to progress this activity. The outbreak of COVID-19 has now prompted the suspension of planning for the Pacific Islands CSO forum.

ACFID has planned discussions with PIANGO on how this could still progress, the first of which will be held on Thurs 23 April. At present, we are suggesting that we could hold some workshops with regional participants online across a series of introductory workshops. The advantage of holding the events in this format is that it will potentially allow more participants than the original budget may have permitted. However, at this point it remains unclear whether there will be sufficient internet coverage across all locations for this to be a viable option, and ACFID is still hopeful of other modes of delivery becoming possible as the global pandemic situation continues to evolve. As these decisions are likely to be very iterative over the coming months, it is not possible to provide a greater level of detail just yet.

ACFID remains committed to achieving the overall project outcomes of our original plan. As we continue to identify and develop relations with each of the Pacific Island partners, we believe it is still possible to produce guidance materials, support an organisation in the Pacific to adopting the standard, and create further knowledge in the region, which are our identified outcomes and measurements of success for the activities. This could be done through intensive 1-1 support to identified organisations in the Pacific region who have access to the necessary infrastructure to support online collaboration. ACFID's early research into this possibility has flagged that this could be possible for Fiji (the Fijian Council of Social Services), Vanuatu (the Vanuatu Association of NGOs) or the Solomon Islands (DSE – attendees at the ICVA regional forum). ACFID will provide further updates on this activity as these possibilities become more concrete.

3. Do you have any suggestions or needs for further support and collaboration from or with the Centre and/or other Project Partners?

As flagged in Annex 1, ACFID has received a large amount of interest in knowing more about the Global Standard as a result of the Bangkok workshop, including some potential points of follow up for funding sources that may not have been explored previously. Many more resources than ACFID alone are required to follow up on all these points of contact, and more support from project partners, and particularly those with regionally/contextually relevant experience is needed to effectively make use of all of these opportunities. At present, ACFID has focused our attention on the Pacific.



4. Please share any further information you think would be of interest for the following up and implementing during the remaining project period:

It was an intention of the original plan for this funding period to host the partners meeting in Bangkok that we would be able to follow up with a number of interested organisations and funding bodies located there, a number of which were identified through the help of ICVA. ACFID would be happy to assist in helping to maintain this relationship, and when possible, conducting a visit to Bangkok to progress such conversations, particularly where useful to advance discussions on fundraising.

We see that at present there is an opportunity to highlight the Global Standard's potential as a tool to advance localisation and the Standard could be marketed to potential donors as a ready built framework for equipping civil society organisations to be effective in their own right, reducing the need for foreign organisations to be conduits of funding and programming in developing countries and in humanitarian response situations. This is particularly relevant in the current situation of tropical cyclone Harold in the Pacific, where COVID is preventing international humanitarian relief from taking part in a response. Thus, at this time, we believe that the Global Standard represents quite a compelling case for large donors such as the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). ACFID would be pleased to support outreach of this kind with a Pacific focus. We have held conversations with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade that have also discussed the potential for support funding, but they are on hold as planning for the April workshop has been suspended for the time being.

SECTION 2: Financial Reporting

Please fill in the template sent to you, if there are any changes from the proposal budget, please mark those clearly in the budget and provide a short explanation so it is easy to follow.



ANNEX 1

ACFID Summary of ICVA Regional Partners' Meeting (Bangkok)

ICVA is the International Council of Voluntary Associations, a global network of NGOs focused on improving the effectiveness of humanitarian response. The ICVA regional partners meeting in Bangkok takes place annually, bringing together these NGOs, plus key funding bodies and multilateral partners engaged in humanitarian response in the Asia-Pacific region. This year's meeting took place on 26-29 November. ACFID hosted two sessions. CCC joined ACFID for the accountability masterclass

ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

1. Accountability masterclass (agenda and workshop outline attached)

- 40 participants
- Format worked well. Started with the plenary presentation, presenting the standard generally then going on to show how this works in practice using case studies of how CCC and ACFID work with the Global Standard.
- Moved to group discussions with a designated table host. The discussion from participants was highly engaged, and there was a lot of sharing about different organization context, and overviews of 'current state' accountability.
- Ended back in plenary with showing participants how to assess themselves using the Rendir App (interesting to find out whether anyone did this).
- Interest was in exploring how the standard would work specifically. Lots of questions around alignment, how a reference standard works, compliance, complaints, how to manage and uphold a standard. In the humanitarian space there is a lot of enthusiasm for localization and the empowerment of local actors in responses. The Global Standard works well with this ambition as it offers a possibility of adapting an existing standard, and ensuring the relevancy of your standard to your operating context.

2. Accountability roundtable with the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS)

- 20 participants (different participants to the workshop)
- Lots of interest from various organisations, interest in harmonizing standards and making them easier to understand.
- It was unplanned that a number of participants hadn't heard of the Global Standard before, because the roundtable was their first event. Our assumption in planning the roundtable was that many participants would have been to the masterclass the day before.
- Generally, it was difficult to introduce the Global Standard and talk about its relation to the CHS as part of one discussion.
- There's a piece of work in mapping the Global Standard to CHS. Regardless of whether we feel there is any value in collaborating with the CHS generally, there was a lot of interest in the room about the value of knowing where they overlap so that orgs already using the CHS could understand if/where the Global Standard would fit. This may also be the case for other standards and worth considering in this phase if so.

OUTCOMES

Interest that should be followed up identified from:

- KCOO (Korea)



- CANGO (China)
- Amity Foundation (China)
- PIANGO (Pacific – ACFID will follow-up)
- CODE NGO (Philippines)
- DSE (Solomon Islands) – noting part of PIANGO outreach already
- IDEP Foundation (Indonesia)
- Japan Platform (JPF)
- DPNet Nepal (Nepal)

Funding bodies worth looking into:

- Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF)/elrha
- Potential opportunity to touch base with a multi-lateral like UNOCHA – this would be a great thing for them to invest in and would really work towards creating the trust and ownership that they need to drive accountability back to National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs) and support local leadership of humanitarian response through capable civil society

REFLECTIONS

- There was real power to demonstrating the partnership by having two partners work together on delivering outreach. CCC (Vibol)'s presence in the masterclass was absolutely invaluable to its success and we should continue to look into ways we can facilitate this, even if through the use of technology or pre-filmed videos.
- Organisations generally seem really attracted to the idea of peer-to-peer mentoring between networks and platforms. We should continue to emphasise this in our outreach offerings.
- This is a good time to be reaching out to humanitarian actors in particular as there is a huge push on accountability to affected populations AAP but not so many accessible solutions out there for how to do this and how to reconcile with localization (CHS only – but verification is difficult)
- Humanitarians also now recognizing that squeeze on Civic space make humanitarian response difficult and need to find ways to work with this – the Global Standard is a good way to promote local civil society strengthening
- On the comms front – it would be particularly useful to have pre-done powerpoints etc. for use – I ended up using an ACFID branded one for this workshop because I don't have a good looking Global Standard branded one
- We're going to need to take some decisions about what an organization needs to do to align or become a partner sooner rather than later. At the moment, the message I've gone with is that the point is to get started and figure out what the right path looks like for your organization, but this is going to keep coming up the more orgs we get on board, and some kind of international verification/sign off is of particular interest to Southern actors

QUESTIONS

- Follow-ups – if many of these continue to show interest it's a lot more outreach than ACFID could manage under our current resourcing. **Would others be interested in working with potential partners that are close to them geographically?**
- **Would we be considering where to focus efforts/potentially getting some profiles together for the next meeting?** Given it's in Feb, this would be a piece of work to get over the line, but potentially very valuable.
- There is a tension with the ambition of a global movement and with the localization possibilities, and that this accessibility to customize and contextualise is what makes the Global Standard more attractive to work with than other standards for organisations who are new to standards and accountability. But we need to figure out a way to



manage this with the risk of resulting standards being poorly administered/assessed. **Some kind of global complaints/accountability mechanism could be useful? Should we unpack this at the next meeting?**



A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE
HUMANITARIAN ACTION



AUSTRALIAN
COUNCIL
FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT



GLOBAL
STANDARD
FOR CSO
ACCOUNTABILITY

ANNEX 2

Accountability Masterclass: *Charting the Path to Greater CSO Effectiveness* 2019 Asia-Pacific Regional NGO Partnership Week Session Overview

Session Date: *Thursday 28 November*

Session Time: *1.30pm – 3pm*

About the Organizer:

[The Australian Council for International Development \(ACFID\)](#) is the peak body for Australian Non-Government organisations (NGOs) involved in international development and humanitarian action. ACFID's 125 members work in 86 countries, deploying over 21 000 personnel to deliver some \$1.6 billion in Australian Aid annually. ACFID's members choose to regulate themselves under the ACFID Code of Conduct, an internationally recognised standard that drives good practice across the breadth of their work. With our members and partners, ACFID seeks to be an influential policy voice, a catalyst for change and a standard bearer for good practice in the development and humanitarian world.

ACFID is a founding partner to [the Global Standard](#). Throughout 2015-2017, ACFID worked with the [nine other partner organisations](#) to develop and agree a Global Standard that reflects a common understanding of accountability and effectiveness for all our organisations. ACFID believes that effective and accountable civil society is a fundamental pillar of any democracy. Upholding Australia's values of free and open engagement with civil society in our regional outreach underpins ACFID's involvement in this initiative. Further, through empowering the organisations that ACFID's members partner with in the Pacific and across Asia to improve, prove and demonstrate their effectiveness, our collective voice and action are also strengthened.

Introduction

The Australian Council for International Development ([ACFID](#)) is a partner to the Global Standard project, a collaboration of [10 Civil Society Organisations](#) from around the world to design a reference standard for CSO accountability. [The Global Standard](#) was agreed and launched at the end of 2017. ACFID is now embarking on outreach in our region to encourage more of our peer organisations to join this important movement.

What is the Global Standard?

[The Global Standard](#) is a reference standard that civil society organisations (CSOs) can adopt and implement to strengthen their accountability practices. [Using 12 accountability commitments](#), it captures a shared understanding of accountability from CSOs from all over the world and embodies a dynamic approach to accountability, encouraging organisations to engage in a continuous two-way dialogue with stakeholders.

The Global Standard can be used by individual organisations that wish to adopt a globally recognised method measure and demonstrate their organisational accountability. It can be used by umbrella NGOs (such as ACFID) to align an existing standard to the methods and terminology used worldwide. It can be adopted in its entirety

or used to create a roadmap to developing greater accountability. Choosing to work with the Global

Standard enables organisations to reach a network of quality and standard managing peers that can provide technical expertise and advice at each step of this process.

Working with the Global Standard

ACFID used the process of revising our own Code of Conduct throughout 2016 and 2017 to ensure a high level of alignment between the ACFID Code of Conduct and the Global Standard. For ACFID's members, the Code's alignment with the Global Standard enhances the value and interoperability of the work they undertake in order to maintain the high standard of organisational effectiveness required under ACFID's Code. This boosts the value they derive from their membership of ACFID, the strength and quality of the work they do and how they communicate with stakeholders about this work.

In a rapidly changing world, the need for effective and prepared civil society actors at every level who are responsive to the needs and voices of affected populations as their highest priority has never been more important. This session will use ACFID, our members' and our partners' experience in working with the Global Standard to unpack the value to individual organisations and other peak bodies from around the world in joining the global movement for dynamic accountability, and what this could look like in practice.

Expected Outcomes

This is a hands-on session that invites you to "deep dive" into case studies that flesh out the details of aligning to the Global Standard and how this has led to improvements in the overall effectiveness of ACFID's members. Participants will learn how the Global Standard for CSO effectiveness offers organisations the opportunity to unlock the power of a global movement for dynamic accountability that is uniting civil society organisations from around the world. We will also be joined by the [Cooperation Committee for Cambodia \(CCC\)](#), a membership organisation of 170 local and international NGOs working for sustainable development in Cambodia, who will present a case study on working with the Global Standard.

Attending and participating in the masterclass will enable participants to:

- Learn the fundamentals of the Global Standard, the rationale underpinning its development, and the vision and purpose of this initiative;
- Hear the experiences of ACFID and CCC in applying the Global Standard as reference standard within both of our organisations, and the value derived from doing this;
- Explore how choosing to work with the Global Standard could transform how organisations conceive of accountability, and how we hold ourselves to account;
- Begin to chart a roadmap for what a path to enhanced CSO effectiveness through working with the Global Standard might look like in your context.

Session Format

Panel Discussion and Workshop

Facilitators

Jocelyn Condon, Director of Development Effectiveness, ACFID (jcondon@acfid.asn.au)

Jennifer Clancy, Humanitarian Advisor, ACFID (jclancy@acfid.asn.au)

Suggested Background Reading:

The Global Standard for CSO effectiveness - <https://www.csostandard.org/our-work/the-global-standard/>

Agenda

Time	Program	Facilitator
1.30-2pm	<p>Introduction of panel members</p> <p>Introduction of the Global Standard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dynamic Accountability - The 12 Commitments - The function of a reference standard <p>Presentation of case studies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ACFID - CCC <p>What is the opportunity for organisations to work with the Global Standard ?</p>	Jocelyn Condon (ACFID) Vibol Chea (CCC)
2-2.30pm	<p>Workshop discussion: Opportunities and challenges</p> <p>Breaking into groups (3-4), a representative from each profiled organisation will join a table to host a general discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The fundamentals of working with the standard - Adopt the Global Standard or align an existing standard? - Determining the path to get started 	Jocelyn Condon
2.30-2.45pm	<p>Activity: But what does that mean for my organisation?</p> <p>Participants will be invited to use the Global Accountability self-assessment tool to conduct an initial assessment of their organisation's state of accountability.</p> <p>Using the results, participants will be able to reflect their initial impressions back to the group and consider what next steps may be.</p>	Jocelyn Condon
2.45 – 3pm	Next steps, Wrap-Up and Close	Jocelyn Condon