Terms of Reference: Consultant to support the Mid Term Strategic Review and Finetuning of the AASA Country Strategy

1.0 Background
ActionAid is a global justice federation working to achieve social justice, gender equity and poverty eradication working in 44 countries around the world. ActionAid South Africa (AASA) is proudly a part of the ActionAid International Federation. The organisation is a nationally registered civil society organisation, established in 2006 and works with people living in poverty and exclusion to build sustainable, people-centred and just alternatives to injustice and inequality. Guided by feminist analysis and a human rights-based approach, AASA sees the interconnections between people’s struggles for social transformation. The organisation allies itself primarily with grass-roots communities, youth, like-minded organisations and social movements to develop initiatives and campaigns that address the systemic drivers of poverty, injustice and inequality in South Africa.

Governed by an Advisory Board of Directors, the organization operates in 6 Local Rights Programmes in Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and the Northern Cape. In addition to this, short term programmes have been implemented in Mpumalanga, Gauteng and Western Cape with donor funding support.

AAI approved a new international strategy “Action for Global Justice (Strategy 2028)” in April 2017” which was informed by a diligent review process and an intensive consultation across the federation. This is the main reference document for AASA and will be running up to 2028. Other critical documents that guide ActionAid’s work include Accountability Learning and Planning System (ALPS), AAI MEL Approach and Strategy, The Strategic Implementation Frameworks (SIF) for the period under review, Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA), Safeguarding and SHEA Policies, Participatory Reviews and Reflections Guide and Case Story Collection Guide. The current Country Strategy Paper (Building People Power) has been aligned to the national goals and approaches with the internationally agreed strategic objectives to ensure optimizing the impact the federation and its members can have at all levels.

2.0 ActionAid Country Strategy
In 2017, ActionAid South Africa completed a new five-year country strategy. It was developed over a 7-month period, based on consultation and discussion with staff and various stakeholders. Since that time, several members of the AASA team changed including the previous country director and three senior management teams in 2018. This delayed the adoption and operationalisation of the strategy. However, aspects of country strategy have been implemented.
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The strategic plan prioritises Building People Power; Build Alliances with social movements and solidarity and push for change as part of a collective.

2019 was mid-point of the strategic plan, which is expected to run to 2021. The AASA team began the process of reviewing the strategy in August 2019 by convening a workshop with staff on to reflect on the relevance and the effectiveness of the strategy to date including the ability of the organisation to deliver on the strategy. This workshop pointed to the importance of strengthening internal objectives and focusing on operational efficiency. A follow up workshop was conducted at the end of February 2020 and a task team was established to oversee the implementation of the strategy, however during this period several events redirected the organisation’s efforts. This included the Corona virus which led to a national lockdown and necessitated a shift of focus to a humanitarian response. The pandemic amplified existing inequalities and has highlighted the gravity of violence against womxn and girls in the country, which UN Women refers to as a shadow pandemic.

In this period, the country management team with the support of partners and academic experts reflected on the implications of the womxn and girls’ rights during and post COVID, with this in mind, the team concluded that the persistent systemic inequalities in the area of economic rights for young women require an urgent focus. More importantly, womxn and girls’ vulnerability to violence was further heightened during the lockdown, though this was an unintended consequence – it pointed to how the lack of access to education and support can stifle the process of encouraging productive citizenry. In this period alone, cases of femicide spiked, Statistics SA has further reported that over two million people have lost their jobs so far. This will have dire effects on the economy but more importantly on young women who undoubtedly have been pushed further and further into poverty adding another level of vulnerability on many fronts including to violence.

Our call is therefore urgent! Whilst programmatic direction is being developed factoring the effects of COVID 19 including a post COVID 19 world, there is need to step back and take stock of the changing landscape, internal changes within the AASA country office and transitions across the Federation. This review will lead to a revision of our strategic priorities including the refinement of the AASA country strategy.

2.1 The Key Objectives of the Strategic Mid Term Review and Fine Tuning include:

Building on work that has already been done, the assignment will be two fold,

1. CSP mid-term review and
2. Supporting the AASA country team to finalise the strategy. This process will cover the assessment of the key activities implemented during the duration of the two years of CSP, i.e. in the timeframe between February 2018 and August 2020. It will also assess progress towards key performance indicators.

The CSP mid-term review and finalization will be guided by the indicative questions presented below and generate corresponding findings and recommendations aimed at improving implementation and guiding strategic planning of the remaining years.

The following indicative questions will be further refined during the inception phase of the mid-term review:

**Programme Policy/ Policy framework:**

- To assess the extent to which the programme design and development, strategies and Human Rights Based Approach have been in line with and contributed to the achievement of ActionAid South Africa’s mission, goal and strategic objectives as outlined in the Building People Strategy.
- Assess how programme strategies and interventions have contributed to sustained improvements in the lives of women and people living in poverty and in the areas AASA works and more generally how AASA has contributed to the impact and development changes (positive or negatives) that the draft CSP has brought as regards to achieving the CSP goal and objectives.
- Mapping the relevance of the strategic plan based on the current contextual issues within the operating environment with a focus on how COVID 19 is influencing the context
- Assess how AASA has contributed to pro-poor policy and practice change in South Africa through local, national and international level policy influencing and advocacy work.
- To assess the extent to which women’s rights have been central and integrated/mainstreamed within the CSP programming and implementation.
- To assess the effectiveness of working with partners and draw lessons on how the approach can be improved to enhance the lives of people living in poverty’s active participation in development processes, quality programme delivery and sustainability.
- Assess the development, relevance, coherence and effectiveness of AASA policy of working with coalitions, networking and national level advocacy and how these have contributed to bringing about pro-poor policy and practice change.
- Assess the extent to which the AASA has created linkages between local level (LRP) actions and policy and advocacy work at the national, regional and international levels
- Where are the opportunities for AASA to impact in the country
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Human Resources and Organizational Development – focusing on building an empowering, learning and value driven organizational culture, which encourages initiative and innovation. This area will include looking at organizational implications such as: -

• **Organizational design** (structures; enabling and empowering leadership style; self-managed team working and team-based decision-making; staff motivation, internal communications/information systems, shared learning, M&E and other accountability systems, organizational learning, governance i.e. Advisory Board). This will involve reviewing the extent to which organisational design, structure, culture, behaviour, systems, work standards and practices etc have contributed to enhancing organisational effectiveness and the achievement/non-achievement of CSP goals.

• **Staffing and staff capacities and competencies** (how staff capacity is enhanced to take on emerging and changing roles, understanding of ALPS/ strategies/rights-based approaches, emergent HR strategies; how adequate and appropriate was capacity building and performance management efforts.)

• **Organizational Identity and Profile** – including external communications, publications, and documentation; how others perceive us and what strategic links we have built with key institutions/partners; what has been AASA contributions to national and Federation wide and what has been the influence?

**Partnership Development & Fundraising:** This should have particular focus at Community-level work and look at strengthening capacities and developing partnerships with civil society organizations, promoting participatory methodologies for people and community empowerment to enable poor and excluded people (e.g. women, girls) to demand and achieve basic rights;

• To assess the extent to which programme development and expansion have been matched with resource mobilization (funding/fundraising) to achieve programme goals and objectives and leverage on policy influencing?

• Assess to what extent has funding sources been diversified to meet programme delivery needs within the context of a human right-based approach

**Profile Raising, Information Sharing and Visibility**

• To assess the extent to which AASA has raised its profile, improved its visibility and effectively communicated its work and positions.

• To assess the extent to which AASA has maximized use of the various communication channels to recruit supporters
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**Internal Governance**
- To assess the extent to which the Advisory board (including board sub-committee) and General Assembly have performed against plans and corporate governance standards including risk and accountability management?
- To assess the smoothness of relationship between the board and the management
- To assess the level of involvement and contribution to the federation and other affiliates and associates

**3.0 Methodology**
The consultant will propose an appropriate methodology that would best suit the assignment which will include the sampling, data collection tools for various internal and external stakeholders at local and national within the tentative planned period of October – November 2020.

The consultant will ensure that the principle of inclusion, transparency, participatory people-centered process/methods are at the core of the review process and report.

The suggested methodology will include:
- An in-depth Literature/Document Review that will involve desk study analysis and mapping of all relevant material and resources
- Questionnaires and surveys addressed as appropriate to groups of stakeholders at various levels (e.g. community groups, movements, project implementation entities and other stakeholders and partners, etc.)
- Semi-structured Interviews, Key Informative Interviews, focus group discussions and meetings (in person, via skype and telephone) with project officers and relevant stakeholders at district offices, donor representatives, and with various stakeholders, such as implementation partners, particularly representatives of the beneficiary communities, and beneficiaries;
- Selected field visits to meet with the local stakeholders, beneficiaries and partners involved in the implementation of the projects, including interviews with direct beneficiaries, particularly women and the youth;
- Participatory workshops to steer the evaluation and to discuss findings and recommendations

**5.0 Requirements**
The potential consultants/consulting team for the CSP V Mid-term review should be composed of members with the following proposed skills blend:
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- Should have at least a Master’s Degree and 5-10 years’ experience in reviewing/evaluating complex programmes relevant to the CSP Priorities and Focus areas.

- Women rights and feminist programming and MEL expertise with good analytical understanding of development programmes, capacity to design, review and evaluate complex programmes from women’s rights and gender perspective.

- Experience working with movements or being part of networks and other self-mobilized groups.

- Should have extensive knowledge of country-level and international development.

- Undertaking policy analysis, advocacy and campaigning work across levels.

- Understanding of Human Rights and Human Rights Based Approaches inclusive undertaking power analysis.

- Applying participatory methodologies to reviews or any other related processes.

- Experience in Organizational Learning and Development Reviews with knowledge of Human resources, corporate governance, finance, fundraising and communications.

4.0 Expected Deliverables
The consultant will be responsible to produce the following deliverables:
- Proposal – this will provide details in terms of but not restricted to methodology, timeline, team composition and their profiles and data collection tools for the mid-term review.
- Develop and submit an inception report of mid-term review to AASA defining the plan, scope of study, detailed review process, work plan, and finalized reporting structure in consultation with AASA
- Submit mid-term review report which will be shared with management for comments and provide a detailed presentation of the findings to the AASA leadership, management team and stakeholders in a validation workshop.
- Utilise the findings to shape the Country Strategy and Support AASA to finalise the strategy.

The consultant shall be completely independent and shall not in any way have been involved in the implementation of the CSP.

5.0 Management and coordination
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- The exercise will be managed by the Country Director who will provide the oversight and supported by the Women’s Rights Lead.
- The day to day management and coordination of the Consultants will be carried out by the Women’s Rights Lead.
- A CSP Mid-term review reference group will be established to provide overall guidance and quality assurance of the review process, methodology and validation of the deliverables.

Submission of Proposal

- Interested consultants/consulting firms are requested to submit both their technical and financial proposal with title "AASA CSP MTR and Finetuning Bid Submission" at the cover of the envelope or email subject in either hard copies or electronic not later than 12 October 2020 to:

Please send your applications proposals to the following:
Email: rsarecruitments@actionaid.org, no later than Monday, 12 October 2020

Should you have further questions only related to the ToR, please submit your request on email to the Women’s Rights Thematic Lead Manager, Lindelwe Nxumalo on: lindelwe.nxumalo@actionaid.org or Country Director Nondumiso Nsibande on: nondumiso.nsilbanedi@actionaid.org

NB: Important information to note due to Global Pandemic our office telephone numbers is current affected not in full operational and will not be answered as per normal

ActionAid South Africa reserves the right to withdraw any of our vacancies at any time