



ACORD Strategic Plan 2007-2010

Nairobi, December 2006



1. BACKGROUND

1.1. History of ACORD

The Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development (ACORD) was established in 1976 as a consortium of international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), with the purpose of collectively responding to emergency situations in some of Africa's poorest, most crisis prone and marginalised areas. Over the years, the work developed further into relief, rehabilitation, long-term programming research and capacity building.

Informed by the analysis of its work over the three decades, the changing paradigm of development, the process of globalisation and the changing landscape of institutions and civil society in Africa, ACORD went through a transformation process with major implications on its organisational vision and role, programming framework and intervention strategy. The change was geared at strengthening the African ownership and positioning the organisation for sustainable Africa wide impact towards social justice.

During the previous strategic period 2002-2006, ACORD made significant strides, transforming itself from a Northern consortium into an Africa-Led International Alliance working in common cause with people who are poor and have been denied their rights to understand, challenge and change the conditions that cause poverty and exclusion. 45 projects primarily addressing consequences of poverty evolved into 12 decentralised country and regional programmes focused around the four thematic leads of livelihoods, conflict, HIV/AIDS and gender, and aiming to address root causes of poverty through a combination of practical work, research and advocacy. The secretariat was relocated from London to Nairobi and a primarily African management team was recruited. In June 2005, ACORD signed a headquarters agreement with the Government of the Republic of Kenya and in November 2005, three African individuals joined ACORD's Board of Directors.

ACORD is present across the continent, collaborating with a vast network of community based organisations, in Southern Africa: Angola and Mozambique; Eastern and Horn of Africa: Ethiopia, Eritrea (being phased out), Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya; Central Africa: DRC, Rwanda and Burundi; and Western Africa: Mali, Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Guinea (Sahel I) and Chad, Cameroon and Nigeria (Sahel II). ACORD has a well established HIV/AIDS Prevention and Support Programme (HASAP), providing capacity building services to internal and external stakeholders and emerging thematic programmes in conflict and gender. In 2006, ACORD launched a Pan Africa programme on food sovereignty.

ACORD has maintained its charity registration and a liaison office in the United Kingdom and its legal status as stated in the Memorandum and Articles of Association. The founding Northern NGOs remain members and primary donors of ACORD.

1.2. ACORD's Vision, Mission and Values

1.2.1. Vision

ACORD's vision is a society in which all citizens are equally able to achieve their rights and fulfil their responsibilities.

1.2.2. Mission Statement

ACORD works in common cause with people who are poor and those who have been denied their rights to obtain social justice and development and be part of locally rooted citizen movements.

1.2.3. Core Values

- We believe people are the primary actors in their own survival and development.

- We work for social justice and equality, especially for the poor and marginalized.
- To achieve this, we work in partnership with communities and in alliance with other organisations.
- We will contribute to the resolution of conflicts affecting the communities with which we work, aware that social justice and equality are the basis of meaningful peace.
- To advance these values, ACORD will carry out its work with integrity and courage.
- We respect and celebrate diversity, both within the communities we work with, and within our own organisation.
- We seek to achieve excellence in what we do.

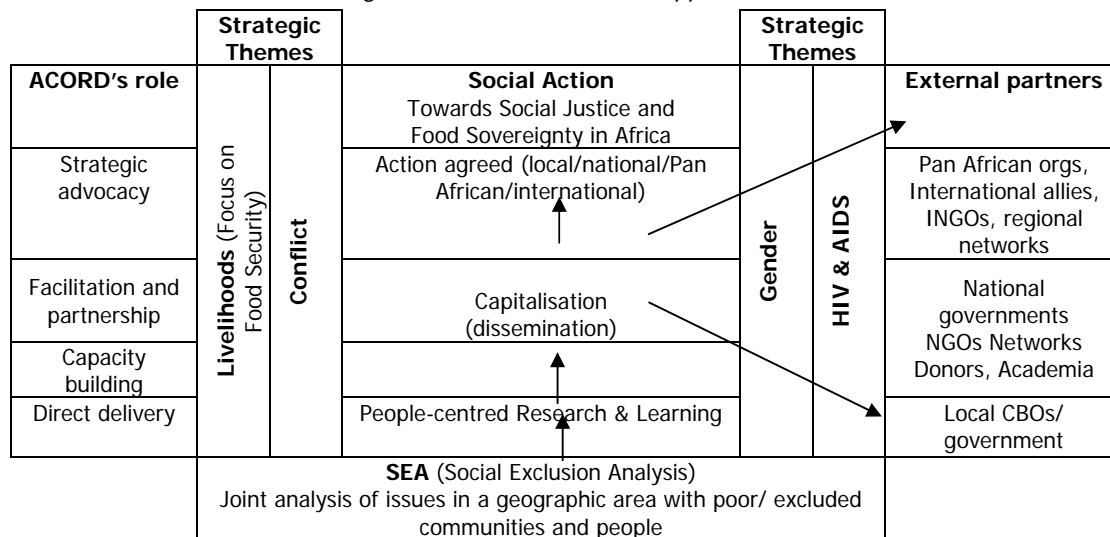
1.3. Work Principles and Approaches

ACORD's response to the challenges of Africa is informed by a belief that people themselves are the agents of change and actors of their own development. People's ability to take action on the causes of poverty is what will transform Africa's future. This belief underpins ACORD's practical work at the grassroots, its research methodologies, and advocacy at policy levels.

ACORD works towards the empowerment of the most affected communities themselves to challenge the marginalisation, social injustice, inequalities, abuse of rights, poverty, exclusion and powerlessness that are reinforced by the dynamics of globalisation.

The Social Exclusion Analysis is a tool used to build grassroots connections with communities and organisations/actors. It is a tool for joint analysis of causes of poverty and exclusion and identification of required social actions to influence policies and practices. In this way, the poor and excluded are identifying their own priorities and engage in processes that impinge on them directly. Ultimately, this builds the foundation for a more representative social movement with a strong popular base.

Figure 1. ACORD's Role and Approaches



The figure above provides an overview of ACORD's role and structure. It illustrates that social action informed by a social exclusion analysis done jointly with the poor and excluded communities themselves, is at the heart of all its work. While service delivery offers ACORD an entry point to work with the grassroots, the social action/advocacy also builds the capacity of community based organisations (CBOs) and promotes the empowerment of people to take action in alliance with others. ACORD will therefore use a combination of instruments ranging from practical interventions delivering services, to capacity building of local institutions, facilitation of networking and partnership and opening up space for strategic advocacy at the different levels.



In all this, ACORD will seek to work in partnership and alliance with other actors. ACORD is committed to enable people at the grassroots level to articulate and drive their own agenda and invest in local awareness raising and policy literacy. Having achieved strong grassroots connections, ACORD also engages at the Pan African and international level using its bottom-up informed learning and expertise of its hundreds of activist staff across Africa. As an international alliance (south-north), ACORD also works through its networks in the north to leverage change. Through its research experience, it works with academics and research institutions to develop alternatives that reflect the needs of the poor and excluded.

The ACORD strategic plan (2007-2010) reaffirms ACORD's vision to promote social justice in Africa and its commitment to work in common cause with people whose rights are being denied. Based on an updated analysis and understanding of the external environment and a review of ACORD's organisational strengths and limitations, it sets out the overall strategic directions for the next four-year period.

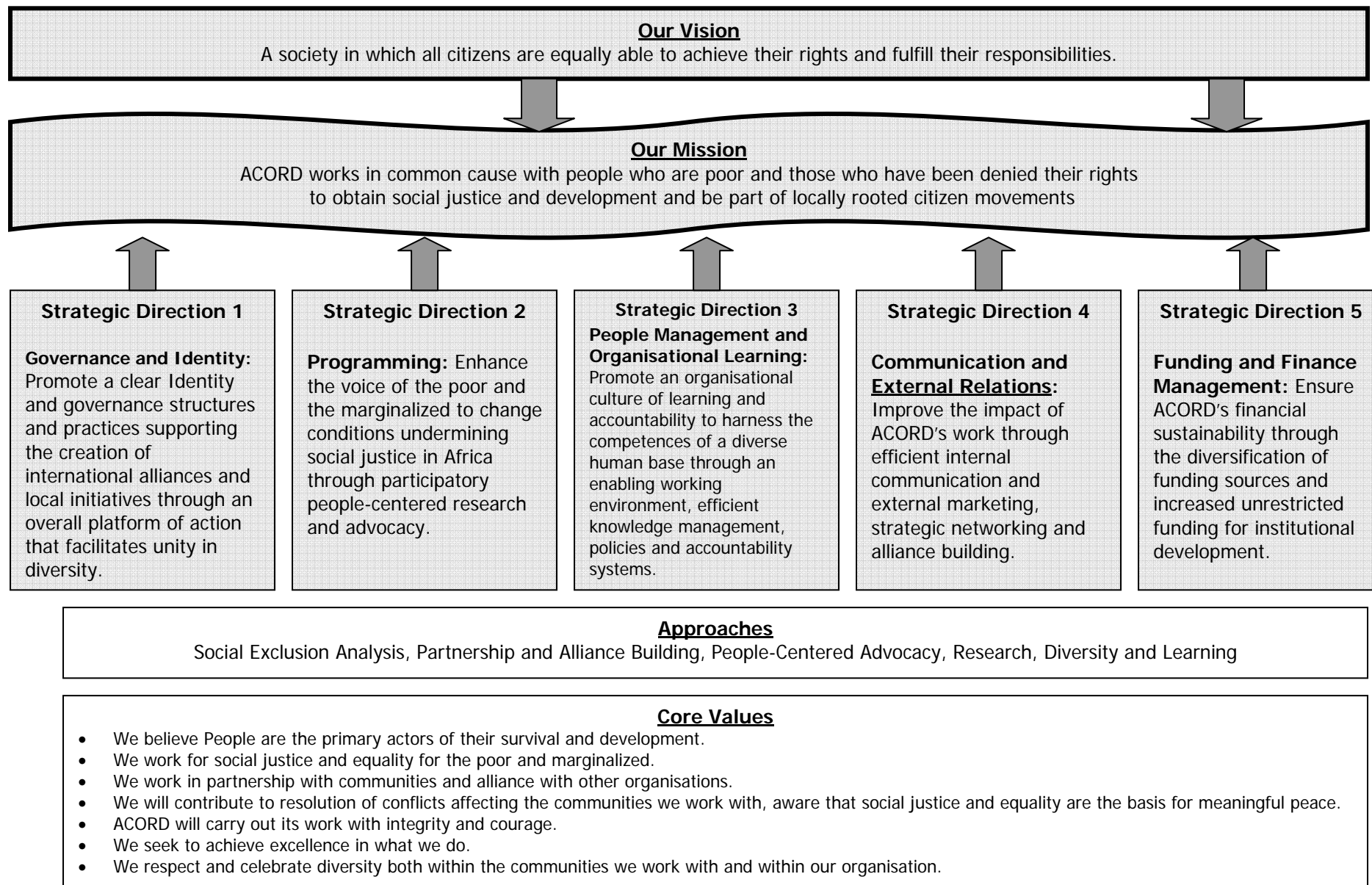
An overview of the strategic plan framework is presented in section 2. This is followed by a description of priorities within each strategic direction in section 3.

Section 4 outlines annual priority milestones in a logical framework format.

Section 5 deals with the implementation arrangements and review mechanisms and the budget is found in section 6.



2. ACORD's Strategic Plan Framework



3. The Strategic Directions

To underpin its programming work and to promote the achievement of its vision of social justice in Africa, ACORD has identified five broad strategic directions for 2007-2010: i) Governance and Identity; ii) Programming; iii) People Management and Organisational Learning; iv) Communication and External Relations; and v) Funding and Finance Management.

These five broad issues are highly interrelated and mutually supportive. For ACORD to effectively deliver on its Africa agenda and fulfil its mission, the organisation needs to function well in terms of governance and strategic programming, as well as in the strategic management of its human capital, organisational systems, partnerships and financial resources.

3.1. Governance and Identity

Priorities in relation to governance and identity are to: i) Decide on membership and board issues to arrive at an internal governance that better reflects ACORD's African identity and leadership; ii) Clarify roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat and field offices; iii) Institutionalise stakeholder accountability structures, with particular emphasis on the primary constituencies at community level; and iv) Have a fully functional organisational system for monitoring and evaluation underpinning the accountability at the various levels.

3.2. Programming

Under programming the operational priorities will be: i) Thematic alignment of programming work; ii) Develop clear strategy and share best practices in community mobilisation and social action; iii) Further develop people-centred research and advocacy; and iv) Institutionalise the documentation of best practices and cross-learning to develop a body of ACORD approaches. The overarching programmatic objective for advocacy at the Pan African level will be food sovereignty, while ACORD will further develop its conflict, HIV/AIDS, gender and livelihoods themes during the strategic period. The programmatic objectives are further detailed in the Pan Africa programme, thematic documents and area programme strategies.

3.3. People Management and Organisational Learning

The strategic direction on people management and organisational learning, centres on people as ACORD's key resource and the importance of institutionalising knowledge, emphasising: i) Strengthening people management standards and implementation of human resource policies across the organisation; ii) Institutionalising performance management and staff development; iii) Promoting an organisational culture of learning; and iv) Devise an organisational system for knowledge management.

3.4. Communications and External Relations

Communications and external relations, and more specifically: i) Development and implementation of a comprehensive marketing and communications strategy; ii) Strategic networking, partnership and alliance building; iii) Capitalisation on research and publications for organisational profiling; and iv) Web-based Intranet for internal communication and information sharing are the priority areas.

3.5. Funding and Financial Management

Finally, enhancing funding and financial management will be a major priority in the strategic period with components including: i) Aligning fundraising with ACORD's strategic objectives; ii) Mobilisation of unrestricted funding for institutional development; iii) Expansion and Diversification of the funding base to reduce dependency on few donors; iv) Strengthening ACORD fundraising capacities at the country level; v) Multi-annual strategic framework agreements with key donors and vi) Effective grant management.



4. Annual Priorities and Major Milestones

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	ANNUAL MILESTONES				INDICATORS	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
	2007	2008	2009	2010		Budget
1. Governance and Identity	Organisational accountability and governance mechanisms clarified <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Africa focus confirmed Role of staff and board Two-way accountability mechanisms between country and regional (area) programmes and secretariat incl. peer reviews and annual meetings 	Built up a rooted and legitimate African constituency and implement a clear accountability system towards communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community accountability policy and mechanisms developed 	Revisit board and membership structure based on new alliances in Africa and beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal ownership of ACORD is rooted in Africa 	ACORD is established as a Pan African organisation rooted in Africa and open to the world	% of African and international board members Nb. and representative associated African civil society organisations and networks under ACORD's constituency Availability of updated statutes reflecting a Pan African identity and governance structure	Broader Africa-based board and Assembly meetings Annual all ACORD meetings
2. Programming	Programme work is aligned along thematic choices that feed into the Pan Africa programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New AP strategies are thematically aligned Thematic focal points in APs designated Job Descriptions of AP managers are reviewed in line with thematic strategies 	A critical mass that is informed, engaged and linking up with the social movement to achieve food sovereignty is mobilised through ACORD's programmes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacities of staff and partner org. in community mobilisation and advocacy is strengthened 	Advocacy is being done consistently at national and Pan African levels on thematic issues based on the grassroots work and feeding back <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the inclusion of social movements for global influencing 	ACORD's combination of practical activities and people-centred research and advocacy are having an impact in geographic and thematic focus areas (food sovereignty and cross-cutting areas) in Africa	Degree of implementation of thematic strategy alignment Proven participation in and facilitation of social movements in Africa Level of implementation of the advocacy campaigns	Staff and partner Capacity Building in themes, social mobilisation and advocacy

3. People Management and Organisational Learning	<p>A comprehensive M&E system is operational at country, region and Pan African levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up-to-date database of existing information and research Baseline data for key thematic M&E indicators available 	<p>Staff Capacities aligned with strategic requirements and internal mechanisms for cross-learning, and organisational development operational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance management system fully operational Staff development needs assessment undertaken Staff secondments Peer reviews 	<p>ACORD's approaches, methodologies and key best practices within each theme have been documented and made available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisational programmatic approaches and broad practices have been defined and documented Best practice case studies available for each major area of ACORD's programmatic priorities 	<p>ACORD is established as a leader and reference organisation in Africa for the thematic areas (food sovereignty, gender, conflict and HIV/AIDS)</p>	<p>Nb. of work secondments and exchange visits</p> <p>Nb. of documented best practices and researches</p> <p>% of new strategy and programme proposals that actively builds on documented lessons and evaluations</p>	<p>M&E consultancy</p> <p>Internal facility allowing staff exchange visits and work secondments</p> <p>Research and documentation of best practices</p> <p>Publications and Dissemination</p> <p>Annual Learning Events and Forums</p>
4. Communication and External Relations	<p>Alliances made with Pan African organisations, particularly on food sovereignty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACORD Partnership Guidelines are available Partnership agreements signed with key Pan African Organisations under the Pan Africa programme 	<p>Enhanced ACORD visibility on thematic issues through working with the media in Africa</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines for working with the media available Developed ACORD messaging at all levels/themes Developed branding based on clarified identity Established contacts with African and some global media institution 	<p>ACORD web-based Intranet rolled out at country level</p>	<p>The work of ACORD is well known among relevant actors in Africa and they are interested in establishing or deepening working relationships with ACORD</p>	<p>Nb. of Pan African and international meetings where ACORD is called upon to contribute on issues in Africa</p> <p>Nb. of partnership agreements, accreditations and observer status</p> <p>Nb. of joint publications with partner organisations</p> <p>Nb. of media hits</p>	<p>Networking travels to relevant Pan African meetings within Africa</p> <p>Media and Policy Advisor posts in the secretariat (possibly international volunteers)</p> <p>IT consultants training staff and some upgrading of equipment and internet connectivity</p> <p>Communication costs: ICT, telephone, fax, post,</p> <p>ACORD branded stationary</p>



<p>5. Funding and Financial Management</p>	<p>Enhanced institutional funding and cost recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scoping of high potential new funding sources undertaken Institutional development proposal marketed Full cost recovery approach implemented <p>Grant management procedures streamlined and systematically monitored by the secretariat through intranet system</p>	<p>Pilot tested public fundraising in Africa in selected countries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reached break-even in three countries 	<p>Self-sustained decentralized funding functions in country and regional programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruited/Designated trained funding officers at the national level Capacitated fundraising and finance management personnel at national level 	<p>Secured long-term strategic framework agreements with key donors</p>	<p>% unrestricted and institutional funding</p> <p>Reduced incidence of unfunded costs and budget deviations</p> <p>% of grants reports submitted before or within 1 week after the deadline</p> <p>Amount of funds mobilised from within Africa</p> <p>% of country and regional programme funds mobilised locally</p> <p>% of funding that is multi-annual</p>	<p>Marketing visits to ACORD members and key donors in Europe and Canada</p> <p>Investment for public fundraising: direct mail, telemarketing, advertisement and campaign material and additional staff time</p> <p>Training of focal persons for funding and finance in the full cost recovery methodology</p>
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5. Implementation Arrangement and Review Mechanisms

The Senior Management Team (SMT) under the leadership of the Executive Director and with the involvement of area programme managers will be in charge of making sure that the strategic plan 2007-2010 is being implemented across the organisation.

Annual organisational and cross-departmental operational plans will integrate actions under the strategic plan and the budget required for implementation. The strategic actions will also be integrated in departmental operating plans and individual operating plans that form the basis for ACORD's annual performance evaluation system, and its mid-term reviews and annual performance evaluation.

The various members in SMT will be in charge of monitoring and reporting on progress within their particular responsibilities and contributions in the bi-monthly SMT meetings. The Executive Director will integrate an update on progress in the implementation of the strategic plan to the Board of Directors, twice a year and to the annual ACORD assembly.

Progress and challenges in the implementation will be analysed and discussed in peer reviews to be organised annually. The operational plan for the following year will be refined and adjusted on the basis of the lessons learnt and recommendations coming out of the peer reviews. ACORD staff, board and members, as well as relevant partners, would be invited to participate in the peer review.

In terms of reporting, ACORD's organisation-wide annual report will contain summary progress report on the implementation of the strategic plan.

There will be a mid-term evaluation at the end of 2008 and a final evaluation towards the end of 2010.

6. Budget

PROPOSED INTEGRATED BUDGET FOR ACORD 2007-2010

	2007	2008	2009	2010
	UK£	UK£	UK£	UK£
1 AIM 1	179,000	142,000	125,000	106,020
1.1 ALIGNMENT OF INTERNAL GOVERNANCE AND IDENTITY	70,000	66,000	104,000	65,020
1.1.1 Analysis and recommendations on legal registration, legitimacy and funding	20,000			
1.1.2 Networking and learning board/assembly members		10,000	5,000	5,000
1.1.3 New member and/or board recruitment		5,000	8,000	8,000
1.1.4 Assembly and Board Meetings	50,000	51,000	51,000	52,020
1.1.5 Global meeting on identity, policies and accountability mechanisms			40,000	
1.2 ENHANCING INTERNAL ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS	70,000	63,000	18,000	38,000
1.2.1 Launching and familiarisation on global policies and organisational standards	30,000	25,000		
1.2.2 Translation and Dissemination of Policies and Standards	5,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
1.2.3 Secretariat - Field Management Meetings	-	20,000	-	20,000
1.2.4 Global staff association establishment	20,000			
1.2.5 Peer reviews (cross-programmes and area programmes-secretariat)	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
1.3 STAKEHOLDERS ACCOUNTABILITY STRUCTURES	13,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
1.3.1 Develop community accountability policies and mechanisms	10,000			
1.3.2 Develop partnership agreements with local partners	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
1.4 ORGANISATIONAL SYSTEMS FOR MONITORING & EVALUATION	26,000	10,000	-	-
1.4.1 Review the global management assessment framework	2,000			
1.4.2 Capacity Strengthening in M&E	24,000	10,000		
2 AIM 2	6,589,986	6,421,830	6,537,000	7,233,341
2.1 PAN AFRICAN PROGRAMME	967,986	1,025,830	1,161,000	1,242,341
2.1.1 Livelihoods	459,986	442,330	566,000	606,790
2.1.2 HIV & AIDS	368,000	383,000	355,000	355,551
2.1.3 Conflict	70,000	100,500	120,000	140,000
2.1.4 Gender	70,000	100,000	120,000	140,000

2.2 AREA PROGRAMMES	5,355,000	5,155,000	5,155,000	5,755,000
2.3 ENHANCE PROGRAMME QUALITY	267,000	241,000	221,000	236,000
2.3.1 Programme strategy review and thematic alignment	20,000	15,000	10,000	10,000
2.3.2 Capacity Strengthening in research, policy advocacy and campaigning	25,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
2.3.3 Publication, Translation and Dissemination of Updated Programming Manual	8,000			
2.3.4 Documentation of case studies on best programming practices	10,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
2.3.5 Annual learning weeks	20,000	20,000	5,000	20,000
2.3.6 Programme management and supervision	184,000	184,000	184,000	184,000
3 AIM 3	275,163	250,504	201,207	218,729
3.1 PEOPLE MANAGEMENT & HR MANAGEMENT POLICIES	114,512	113,227	59,679	60,022
3.1.1 Social Audit on HR management & development and employee stakeholders review		12,485		
3.1.2 Review, adaptation and training on HR policies at country level	11,000			
3.1.3 Insurance - travel and life	9,000	9,180	9,364	9,551
3.1.4 Staff Security	12,512	12,512	12,512	12,512
3.1.5 Production of Induction kits and Training Modules on HR Management policies	4,000			
3.1.6 Fund for Implementation of the HIV/AIDS work place policy	8,000	7,650	7,803	7,959
3.1.7 Staff re-alignment costs (recruitment, redundancy)	70,000	71,400	30,000	30,000
3.2 STAFF DEVELOPMENT	61,051	48,265	56,848	76,537
3.2.1 Staff Development and Learning	45,000	35,000	35,000	35,000
3.2.2 Area Programme Management Assessment	16,051			19,252
3.2.3 Facility for Exchange Visits and Secondments		13,265	21,848	22,285
3.3 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT	99,600	89,012	84,680	82,170
3.3.1 Thematic Reference Groups	11,100	9,212	9,180	9,000
3.3.2 Intranet implementation and roll-out	24,000	15,300	11,000	8,670
3.3.3 Evaluations and documentation of lessons learnt	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500
3.3.4 HR and admin management	57,000	57,000	57,000	57,000

4 EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION, NETWORKING & ALLIANCE BUILDING	141,134	129,673	125,426	129,352
4.1 EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS	58,934	54,029	50,329	50,635
4.1.1 External Communication and Branding Services	14,000	14,000	10,000	10,000
4.1.2 Media contacts and external relations	6,934	7,073	7,214	7,358
4.1.3 ACORD stationary and branding material	10,000	7,956	8,115	8,277
4.1.4 Website functionality and support	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
4.1.5. Translations	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
4.1.6. Design, layout and production	12,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
4.1.7. Communication and Dissemination	5,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
4.2 NETWORKING, PARTNERSHIPS AND ALLIANCING	82,200	75,644	75,097	78,716
4.2.1 Alliancing and Profiling Through Participation in Relevant Thematic Forums	12,000	12,240	12,485	14,982
4.2.2 Profiling and Networking Visits to External Partners	14,000	9,000	8,000	7,000
4.2.3 Hospitality	6,000	4,000	4,000	4,000
4.2.4 Pan African Sponsorship Committee	10,200	10,404	10,612	12,734
4.2.5 Partnership and communication management	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
5 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND MANAGEMENT	377,660	355,989	311,484	313,948
5.1 FUNDING ACORD STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	48,960	49,693	50,441	50,904
5.1.1 Preparation, implementation and monitoring of thematic and country funding plans	12,300	12,300	12,300	12,000
5.1.2 Programmes and proposal development fund	36,660	37,393	38,141	38,904
5.2 EXPANDING AND DIVERSIFYING FUNDING BASE	68,440	59,609	39,022	40,683
Presentation of ACORDs institutional development to prospective donors and foundations	15,000	15,300	15,606	15,918
5.2.2 Establishment and management of database of friends of ACORD	6,600	6,732	6,867	7,004
5.2.3 Capital campaign	36,700	27,234	6,000	7,000
Socially responsible private sector - private sector fundraising in Kenya, Uganda, Burundi and additional other African countries	7,140	7,283	7,428	7,577
5.2.5 E-fundraising, maintenance and marketing of online facility	3,000	3,060	3,121	3,184



5.4 STRENGTHENING FUNDRAISING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CAPACITIES	117,900	109,120	104,242	104,367
5.4.1 Advisory Services for Fundraising	12,000	5,000		
5.4.2 Developing and disseminating fundraising training modules and reference documents	4,000	4,080	4,162	4,245
5.4.3. Global Organisational Funding Workshop and Capacity Building		20,000		20,000
5.4.4. ACORD knowledge reference group in funding and finance	2,000	2,040	2,081	2,122
5.4.5. Capacity strengthening in full cost recovery, cash flow planning, fin.mgt&analysis	30,000	10,000	30,000	10,000
5.4.6. Fund Raising Team	69,900	68,000	68,000	68,000
5.5 EFFICIENT GRANT AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	142,360	137,567	117,779	117,994
5.5.1 Streamlining grant management procedures & systematic monitoring tools	5,000	5,100	5,202	5,306
5.5.2 Maintenance of contracts database and grant management system under the Intranet	5,360	5,467	5,577	5,688
5.5.3 Standardising accounting software (Sun System) and train staff organisation wide	30,000	25,000	5,000	5,000
5.5.4 Finance Management	102,000	102,000	102,000	102,000
6 ORGANISATIONAL ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT	251,100	253,162	256,285	257,411
6.1 Occupancy costs	20,000	20,400	20,808	21,224
6.2 Communication costs	13,100	13,362	13,629	13,902
6.3. Running costs	35,000	35,700	36,414	37,142
6.4. Travel and related costs	35,000	35,700	36,414	37,142
6.5. General Admin support	148,000	148,000	149,020	148,000
7 CAPITAL FUND	-	151,900	333,092	28,804
7.1. Capital fund support	-	151,900	333,092	28,804
TOTAL EXPENSE	7,814,043	7,705,058	7,889,494	8,287,604
8 FUNDING PLAN	7,814,043	7,705,058	7,889,494	8,287,604
8.1. In country programme grants	5,890,500	5,629,500	5,660,500	5,966,500
8.2. Centrally managed programme grants	967,986	1,025,830	1,161,000	1,246,341
8.3. Cost recovery income	435,557	449,728	467,994	474,763
8.4. Insitutional development funding	470,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
8.5. Public fundraising	50,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
TOTAL	7,814,043	7,705,058	7,889,494	8,287,604