

Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA) Strategy 2016-2018 Including plan for 2016 and motion passed at 2015 AGM

ACTSA is distinctive, valued and has a real impact. What we do and how we do it, based on partnership and solidarity, makes a real difference contributing to upholding and improving rights and reducing poverty. We educate, inform and campaign. No other region of Africa has a group in the UK similar to ACTSA working on it.

“Eradicating the legacy of apartheid and rebuilding our region will take many years. We need your support. “

“While the circumstances and the specific nature of the challenges in our country might have changed. The task remains the same. To lead the country in creating a better life for all, particularly the poor. ” Nelson Mandela.

2015 Review

The ACTSA National Executive (NEC) reviewed the 2013-2015 strategy whose priority themes were:

- 1. Improving rights**
- 2. Advancing the position of women**
- 3. Economic justice**
- 4. Campaigning, including information, education and advocacy work**
- 5. Ensuring ACTSA is an effective, sound and dynamic organisation as a foundation for the above.**

The ACTSA National Executive Council (NEC) affirmed the first three themes remain relevant, are a priority and should be adopted for 2016-2018 and the fourth and fifth were means to implement the themes.

(ACTSA is a relatively small organisation with a big impact. We currently have five staff, two full time and three part time, 1,400 individual members and 130 affiliates and over 2,600 people and organisations are sent our E updates). (Do we keep this section in?)

ACTSA Strategy 2016-2018 and plan for 2016

ACTSA's priority themes for 2016-2018 are:

- 1. Improving rights**
- 2. Advancing the position of women**
- 3. Economic justice to eradicate poverty**

We will implement these through; -

- Information, education, campaign, advocacy and project work.**
- Ensuring ACTSA is an effective, sound and dynamic organisation.**

The key focus for ACTSA's work in 2016 will be;

- Swaziland: covering both human rights and improving women's rights.**
- Justice for ex-miners suffering from silicosis**
- Information, education, campaign and advocacy work,**
- Fundraising. This is vital for ACTSA to carry out this strategy and plan.**

Work on Zimbabwe, Women's rights and gender equity across the region, LGBT issues and HIV/AIDS is important and will be done but given resource constraints and the

need to provide guidance to the staff and the membership/affiliates the above four highlighted areas will be the key focus for ACTSA's work in 2016.

Work on Swaziland and Justice for the Miners is distinctive. If ACTSA did not do it then it would not be done. Focussing on these will make a real difference in people's lives through upholding and improving rights and reducing poverty. Information, education, campaigning and advocacy work is an essential part of what ACTSA does. ACTSA is a resource on Southern Africa. To carry out this strategy and plan we need to raise sufficient funds. We need to increase ACTSA's income. This is vital to sustain ACTSA.

These activities will be done in partnership and solidarity with the people of Southern Africa. What we do, why we do it and how we do is important. It puts our values into action

We will be flexible and adapt to developments and demands from the region, the UK and global context in line with the above priority themes and our aims and objects.

2016- 2018 Context

Global

Conflict, war in the middle-east, in parts of Africa and Asia. There are large numbers fleeing conflict and seeking to make a more secure and better life.

Economic trends; there maybe stagnation.

The challenge of man-made climate change.

Chronic poverty and increasing inequality. There is increased recognition of the need to address inequality if poverty is to be eradicated. There are more very poor people (defined as "living" on \$1.25 a day or less) in so called middle income countries than in the countries defined as the poorest. There is though no real agreement on how to reduce inequality The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were agreed at the UN by the end of September 2015. The SDGs differ from the Millennium Development Goals in that they are universal. Of particular relevance to ACTSA's work are SDGs 1, 5, 8, 10, 16 and 17.

EU – USA trade agreement The EU and the USA may agree a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), a trade agreement which will impact on environmental and social rights and standards and open up public services to the private sector. It also allows for private companies to sue governments in closed courts. Given this would be a trade agreement between the largest trading blocs it will have a global impact.

Southern Africa

There are challenges of poverty, inequality, creating decent work/jobs and improving education. The region is not suffering from war or significant conflict. There is the need to uphold and improve rights, including of women and LGBT people. There is the paradox of a commitment from governments across the region to equal representation of women in government yet women across the region continue to suffer discrimination, high levels of violence and abuse. For LGBT people discrimination on these grounds is against the South African constitution and has been removed from the penal code in Mozambique yet LGBT people across the region continue to experience abuse, violence and criminalisation.

UK

The Conservatives won the 2015 election. Cuts to public expenditure will continue. There will be a referendum on whether the UK remains a member of the European Union. There may be moves to hold another referendum in Scotland on whether it separates from the rest of the UK and becomes an independent state. The International Development budget will be kept at 0.7% and is likely to be increasingly used dealing with the impact and consequences of conflict and post conflict situations. DFID now has aid programmes in only six of the 15 member states of SADC.

1. Improving Rights, Reducing Discrimination

ACTSA will contribute to defending and advancing human rights and reducing discrimination in Southern Africa, working in partnership and solidarity with groups and organisation there.

We recognise that as well as action to achieve and protect civil and political rights, there is need for action to reduce poverty and inequality (see Economic Justice section).

Some of our work improving rights and reducing discrimination has a country focus (see Swaziland and Zimbabwe) and some is thematic, promoting gender equity and the rights of women (see Gender section).

In 2015 the focus for much of this work has been ACTSA work on Swaziland. (See section 4)

In 2016 we will:

- contribute to reducing the discrimination faced by and improving the rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans people (LGBT) across Southern Africa, developing contacts with organisations and groups in the UK and South Africa
- Consider if there is specific work we can support in Swaziland, based on discussion with Stonewall about possible work on Swaziland
- Facilitate links between LGBT groups in Swaziland and the UK.
- Signpost members to resources on LGBT rights in Southern Africa with a new section on the ACTSA website.
- Campaign, with others, for the rights of those living with HIV/AIDS and against HIV/AIDS related stigma and discrimination.
- Support work to improve access to HIV testing and counselling, treatment and care including anti-retroviral therapy(ART)

By the end of 2018 ACTSA will have contributed to significantly improved rights and reduced discrimination for women and LGBT people and for those living with HIV/AIDS.

2. Gender equity and the advancement of women

ACTSA will campaign for gender equity and the advancement of women in Southern Africa. This is essential to eradicate poverty and improve rights.

Women face violence, discrimination and poverty simply because they are female. Women have multiple roles, in the home, working outside of the home e.g. agriculture, often running small businesses and also often as carers. In Southern Africa women are hit harder by HIV/AIDS, climate change and unfair trade rules. They are often denied a voice in how to tackle discrimination and overcome poverty. We work closely with and our work is guided by a number of women's organisations in Southern Africa.

In 2015 we have:

- Supported and developed the Improving Women's Rights in Swaziland project
- Continue developing links with women's organisations in southern Africa to better inform our work on gender equality.
- We have been unable to review the Dignity! Period (see Zimbabwe section) and now plan to do this in 2016.

- We have not been able to do work on how UN Women is working, its effectiveness and is it being properly resourced?

In 2016 we will:

- **Continue to support the implementation and development of the Improving Women's Rights project in Swaziland (funded by the BIG lottery)**
- **Carry out an end of project evaluation of the project, (current funding ceases in September 2016)**
- **In consultation with partners in Swaziland, will decide whether to try and continue the project, if so this will involve fundraising.**
- **Publish a briefing paper on Women's Rights in Swaziland**
- **Continue to develop our relationship with women's organisations in Southern Africa and seek to link these to groups here.**
- **Improve our understanding of the difference UN Women is making and if appropriate campaign for it to be properly resourced.**

By the end of 2018 ACTSA will have contributed to improving women's rights in Swaziland and strengthened our links with organisations active on women's rights across Southern Africa.

3. Economic Justice

ACTSA supports action to eradicate poverty and reduce inequality across Southern Africa. We call for the sustainable development of the region with inclusive and equitable growth to benefit all its citizens and directly contribute to the eradication of poverty and reduced inequality.

ACTSA supports sustainable development which recognises the right to land, food, clean water, decent housing, health, education and employment and to able to live in dignity with rights upheld.

ACTSA will engage in research and publications on the root causes of poverty and inequality in Southern Africa and promote actions to tackle these causes. ACTSA will comment on whether the policies and priorities of the UK, EU, IMF, World Bank and other international/multinational bodies are contributing to sustainable development which reduces poverty and inequality in Southern Africa. ACTSA will campaign for trade justice and against trade agreements which will work against poverty eradication.

ACTSA will push for the private sector to be transparent, accountable and use their wealth, resources and power to support the reduction of poverty, inequality and discrimination, promote human rights and sustainable and equitable development. ACTSA will campaign for companies, especially those involved in mining, to provide decent work, with decent pay and conditions, with risks to health and safety minimised and for decent compensation, health screening and care for those whose health has been affected by the conditions they work or have worked in.

We will campaign for the international community to provide good support to Southern Africa to meet the challenges of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and to maintain and if possible increase funding to the Global Fund on HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB. We will campaign for affordable medicines.

In 2015 we:

- Brought the Chair of Health and Safety of NUM South Africa to the UK to attend and make representation at the Anglo American AGM. He also attended the Scottish TUC, addressed a meeting of the London Mining Network
- We publicised the videos and photo exhibition on southern Africa miners with silicosis at various trade union conference and events.

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In 2016 we will:

- Aim to achieve decent compensation and access to health care for those ex-miners in Southern Africa suffering from silicosis.
- We will work closely with NUM South Africa, with trade unions, groups and individuals here and in South Africa to put pressure on the mining companies to provide decent compensation and health care for those suffering from silicosis.
- We will produce a briefing paper on silicosis and mining in South Africa.
- We will attend the Anglo American AGM and aim to bring someone from South Africa to attend to continue to put the case for decent compensation and health care for southern African ex-miners with silicosis.
- We may organise actions around the Anglo American AGM
- We will consider organising a petition in support of the campaign
- We will consider if can increase publicity, gain increased public support and put pressure on the mining companies e.g. through adverts in South Africa and UK media, on-line actions.

By the end of 2018, ideally earlier: we hope to have helped secure decent compensation and health care for ex- miners in Southern Africa suffering from silicosis.

4. Swaziland

ACTSA will defend and seek to improve human rights in Swaziland and contribute to the reduction and eventual eradication of poverty there.

Swaziland's deepening social, political and economic crisis is driving people deeper into poverty, worsened by the denial of rights and democracy, the highest rate of HIV and TB in the world and failing public services. ACTSA is one of the few organisations outside of Southern Africa working in support of rights, democracy and poverty reduction in Swaziland. We work closely with partners in Swaziland and Southern Africa to raise awareness, encourage action for rights and democracy and strengthen solidarity.

In 2015 we have:

- Brought the General Secretary of the Trade Union Federation of Swaziland (TUCOSWA) to the UK to meet with and brief, the UK government, he met with the Minister for Africa twice, with Commonwealth Secretariat, Foundation, trade unions here and addressed a meeting at Chatham House
- Produced a photo exhibition, Stories from Swaziland
- Run a petition calling for the release of four human rights defenders, (They were released, two are on bail)
- Met with the Commonwealth to raise Swaziland's non-compliance with the Commonwealth Charter
- Due to lack of resources we are unable to bring a representative of Swazi civil society to Britain to lobby the Commonwealth and British government, and to the Commonwealth's Peoples forum immediately prior to the Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) meeting in Malta in November.
- The United Nations Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights in Swaziland was postponed to 2016 so we plan to make a submission then.

In 2016 we will:

- **Publish a briefing paper on Human Rights in Swaziland**
- **Provide regular updates to UK parliamentarians on the situation in Swaziland.**
- **Bring a Swazi human rights activist to the UK**
- **Inform and influence FCO thinking and positions on Swaziland**
- **Improve contact with groups in Southern Africa and Europe working on Swaziland.**
- **Consider whether to launch a petition to call for the Commonwealth to refer Swaziland to the Ministerial Action Group**
- **Make a submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review on Swaziland.**
- **We will also be undertaking activity, producing reports on Women's Rights in Swaziland (see section 2).**

By the end of 2018: we will have contributed to improving the rights of Swazi women; Increased awareness of the situation in Swaziland in the UK and internationally. Informed and influenced the policy of the UK government and Commonwealth Secretariat on Swaziland ensuring a stronger stance on support for human rights and poverty alleviation/eradication. Deepened solidarity by groups and individuals in Britain in support of the people of Swaziland's struggle for human rights, democracy and poverty eradication.

5. Zimbabwe

ACTSA supports and campaigns for rights, democracy and sustainable development to eradicate poverty in Zimbabwe.

ACTSA has produced briefing papers which analyse how the crisis in Zimbabwe developed and regular Zimbabwe updates. Whilst human rights continue to be violated and the freedom of assembly and organisation curtailed since the election of 2013 the focus has moved from the political to the economic although they are closely linked. The ruling party has seen purges and there are now several opposition parties.

In 2015 we have:

- Produced occasional Zimbabwe Updates
- Publicised abuses of human rights there
- Contributed to maintaining and developing the Zimbabwe Europe Network (ZEN) of which ACTSA is a founding and board member, attending its AGM in Brussels and hosting meetings of its board.
- Continued to engage with the British government and European Union to seek an informed and appropriate response to the crisis in Zimbabwe to reduce poverty and uphold rights.
- We have not been able to visit Zimbabwe to review Dignity! Period and identify what form of practical assistance, which does not duplicate what others are doing, ACTSA may support

In 2016 we will:

- **Conduct a review of Dignity!Period and decide whether to continue that specific project of providing sanitary pads to women in Zimbabwe.**
- **Continue to monitor the situation and produce Zimbabwe updates**
- **Support human rights defenders**
- **engage in advocacy with the UK government and European Union, promoting policies to improve human rights and reduce poverty.**

By the end of 2018: We will have contributed to improving rights in Zimbabwe; met needs and priorities identified by Zimbabwean women; contributed to the development of UK and EU policy to uphold rights and reduce poverty.

6. Information and education on southern Africa

ACTSA informs, educates and campaigns.

In 2015 we have/will produce:

- Three issues of ACTSA News
- Four issues of the Angola Monitor in English and Portuguese
- An E update, news from ACTSA, (sent by email to 2,200)
- A photo exhibition Stories from Swaziland
- Provided information and analysis on request to a range of enquiries from the media and public.
- Put regular information, news on the ACTSA website
- Promoted and supported the Archive Committee of the Anti-Apartheid Movement's Forward to Freedom project.

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In 2016 we will publish:

- At least three issues of ACTSA News. We will consider if can/should move to four
- A monthly E update from ACTSA
- Four issues of the Angola Monitor, provided funding is maintained.
- Four issues of the Zimbabwe Update.
- A paper on Women's Rights in Swaziland
- A briefing paper on Human Rights in Swaziland
- A briefing on silicosis and Southern African Miners

We will:

- Improve the ACTSA website. We aim to increase the visits to and the duration of the visit to the ACTSA website.
- Increase our Facebook and Twitter followers. Engage younger audiences, potential members/ supporters e.g. through increased use of social media
- Promote the Forward to Freedom exhibition, education pack and other material produced by the AAM Archives Committee
- In addition to producing publications we will actively promote them to increase circulation and readership

- We plan to publish the Angola Monitor in 2016 but that is significantly dependent on getting continued funding

By the end of 2018 ACTSA will have contributed to an improved, deeper and wider understanding of the context in Southern Africa.

7. Solidarity and partnership

ACTSA, based on a shared vision and common values, works with others in the UK, internationally and especially in Southern Africa to contribute to a Southern Africa where poverty and discrimination is reduced, human rights and equality advanced and dignity for all achieved.

We will celebrate the achievements of Southern Africa whilst being clear about the challenges and problems that confront the region. We will be guided in our analysis, actions and priorities by what the people of Southern Africa want. We recognise that it is both what we do and how we do it that is important so we pledge to work in solidarity and partnership.

ACTSA works in partnership with Local Authority Action for Southern Africa (LAACTSA) with which we currently have a service level agreement. ACTSA has a memorandum of co-operation with Community Heart and recognises our shared history and heritage with the Canon Collins Trust.

In 2015 we have:

- Continued to provide coordination, support and development to the Local Authority Action for Southern Africa (LAACTSA)
- Worked with trade unions to build solidarity with their counterparts in Southern Africa
- Sought to keep in touch with a range of civil society organisations across Southern Africa

In 2016 we will:

- **Work and discuss with LAACTSA on whether and how the network of local authorities active on Southern Africa can and will continue.**
- **Liaise with our national affiliates on their priorities on Southern Africa and how we can best work together.**
- **Mark the 40th anniversary of the “Soweto” uprising. We will liaise with others on this.**

By the end of 2018: we will have strengthened partnership and solidarity between the UK and Southern Africa with a focus in improving rights and eradicating poverty.

8. Grassroots Development

Our ability to campaign and to maintain our core levels of financial support depends on retaining and expanding our supporter base of individuals, groups and affiliates.

- We seek to maintain and increase membership and supporters through information, communications, campaigns and actions.
- We offer people choices, to join ACTSA or donate or simply sign up to campaign. They are not mutually exclusive. You can do one, two or three of these.
- We ask people to get involved in our campaigns and activities.
- ACTSA has active groups, including ACTSA Scotland and ACTSA Bristol and will continue to encourage the establishment and development of ACTSA groups.

In 2015 we have:

- Encouraged organisations to affiliate to and campaign with us.
- Urged people to join and/or donate and/or campaign with ACTSA.
- Encouraged local activity as well as a national level.
- Worked with partners in southern Africa to actively inform our campaigns and ensure they receive regular information about our work.

In 2016 we will:

- Maintain and if possible increase the number of affiliates
- Produce and make widely available a new membership leaflet
- Get more people to take a campaign Action for Southern Africa
- Aim to make it easier to take an online action
- Deepen our relationship with key partners in Southern Africa

By the end of 2018: we will have maintained our membership and affiliates and increased the numbers supporting and campaigning with ACTSA.

9. Fundraising

ACTSA needs to raise funds to do its work. We will pursue funding sources to maintain and increase our income.

ACTSA is largely supported by its membership but income from that source whilst good compared to many ngos is in decline with the possible exception of legacies. ACTSA has recognised we need to diversify income streams: maintaining and if possible increasing it from a) the public (members, groups, supporters and individual donors and b) affiliates. We also need to raise funds from c) trusts and foundations, d) corporate donors and e) large donations from individuals and possibly but not that likely f) government. ACTSA currently and for many years has not received government funding.

Our fundraising is led by our values and priorities and there is an ethical funding policy. In common with many organisations and certainly for smaller campaigning organisations fundraising is a major challenge.

In 2015 we have:

Sent out regular direct mailing appeals relating to specific campaigns and needs.

We will hold our annual fundraising dinner.

Encouraged our supporters to organise events and activities to support our work

Had five runners in the London Marathon, who raised nearly £7,000

We have not been able to develop and submit applications to trusts and foundations and this will need to be priority for 2016 nor develop a legacies programme and promote it extensively.

In 2016 we will:

- Aim to increase income from members and supporters
- Make funding applications to trusts and foundations for ACTSA's priorities
- Develop and promote a legacies programme
- Get runners for the London Marathon with a target of raising £7,500
- Hold a fundraising dinner, target £25,000
- Aim to gain continued funding for the Angola Monitor
- Discuss with LAACTSA if they can continue funding us to provide them with support.

By the end of 2018: we will have: maintained core funding and increased it from trusts and foundations.

10. Charitable Status

The 2011 AGM agreed that ACTSA should apply for charitable status.

ACTSA applied in 2012. The Charity Commission (CC) commented and advised ACTSA that; its objects were not exclusively charitable, although some were capable of being charitable; that ACTSA activities had to more clearly demonstrate they were in support of and had the effect of putting into practice charitable objects; and the ACTSA structure would need to be reviewed so trustees could meet their obligations as a charity. The NEC has considered the CC comments and sought professional advice. That advice has confirmed that much of what ACTSA does is capable of being charitable. The NEC has agreed that to best ensure ACTSA's work can continue ACTSA should, taking into account the views expressed by the CC and with professional advice, actively explore options to gain charitable status for its work. This process is being undertaken.

The NEC will present proposals to the 2016 AGM or if thought necessary and appropriate call an Extraordinary General Meeting.

11. Motion passed at ACTSA AGM 2015

This AGM believes that the centenary of the birth of Nelson Mandela in 2018 should be an event of world significance.

This AGM calls upon the NEC to investigate the possibilities for a celebration of this centenary in the UK and, where appropriate, to initiate action to ensure that such celebrations take place.