Policy Committee Terms of Reference

Terms of reference approved by Scotland's International Development Alliance (the Alliance) Board of Trustees in August 2023.

1. CONSTITUTION

1.1 The Alliance Board (the Board) has established a committee of the Board, known as the Policy Committee (the committee), with terms of reference as set out below.

1.2 Board members may: (i) constitute committees to facilitate the work of the organisation and/or improve the workings of the organisation and (ii) may, if they choose, delegate responsibility and decision-making to representatives in said committee.

1.3 The terms of reference of, and any delegation of executive power by the Board to, a committee must be recorded in the Board's minutes.

1.4 The Board of Trustees may revoke or alter a delegation in whole or part, or alter its terms and conditions.

2. PURPOSE

2.1 The committee is a sub-committee of the Board and its purpose is to support the delivery of the Alliance strategy by providing expert advice and input that furthers the policy direction of the Alliance and to provide a platform for member collaboration.

3. DEVELOPING POLICY DIRECTION

3.1 The committee provides input on planned activities, e.g. upcoming meetings, conferences, consultation responses, policy papers and positions; develops policy positions for the Alliance to consider taking up for formal advocacy; and receives updates from the Alliance on in-progress projects.

3.2 Policy positions and priorities should be developed that (i) reflect a broad consensus among the membership of the Alliance, (ii) are based on sound evidence, and (iii) align with the Alliance's strategic objectives.

4. MEMBER COLLABORATION

4.1 The committee provides a platform for policy collaboration amongst members; an opportunity for problem solving and information sharing; and the opportunity to create member-led initiatives.

4.2 The committee can submit proposals for advocacy work for the Alliance to commit resources to in September for consideration by the Alliance board and executive for the following year. The board would expect that two, and

no more than three, policies would be under active consideration by the committee at any one time, to ensure that resources are used effectively.

4.3 Key factors for uptake by the Alliance include relevance to the stated aims and scope of the Alliance (particularly to renew focus on 'sustainable/international development'); relevance and accessibility to Alliance members; relevance to decision makers; pathways to funding; feasibility of success (given constraints of the Alliance); and the level of interest/commitment from committee members to deliver the activity.

4.4 The agreed topics may then be developed and delivered by members of the committee, in separate working groups as deemed appropriate. The Alliance can offer support in facilitating/administering these groups if required, sharing details with the membership and wider stakeholders, and providing communications and influencing support as needed.

5. COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

5.1 The Committee will comprise a maximum 18 permanent members, of which at least two must be representatives from the Board of Trustees and one a member of staff at the Alliance.

5.2 There is to be a minimum of three and a maximum of 18 committee members at all times.

5.3 The Committee shall elect cochairs biennially, who are to be approved by the Board. Gender balance and diversity should be sought when appointments are made.

5.4 The co chairs will alternate the role of meeting chair where possible.

5.5 Representatives from the Board are appointed by the Board. Board members can nominate someone from their organisation to represent them on the Committee.

5.6 Representatives from the membership will be appointed by the Alliance based on the principle that (i) a mixture of type and size of organisations must be represented on the committee, (ii) representatives must be willing to commit to the minimum required engagement. Gender balance and diversity should be sought when appointments are made.

5.7 A call for committee members will be included at least once a year in Alliance newsletters, noting any specific skills or representation gaps.

5.8 The Committee composition should be reviewed annually in agreement with the Board and Committee Co-chairs.

5.9 Should applications for committee membership exceed available places, the Board and Co-chairs will review the committee composition and select those who best address any skills or representation gaps.

6. QUORUM AND COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

6.1 A quorum of the committee is set out in the table below:

Committee members	Quorum
3	2
4 -7	4
8 - 9	5
10 -11	6
12 - 13	7
14 -15	8
16 - 17	9
18	10

6.2 In the absence of the committee co-chairs the remaining members present can elect one of themselves to chair the meeting.

6.3 Questions arising at any meeting must be determined by a majority of votes of the committee members present that are entitled to vote.

6.4 In the case of an equality of votes for a non-urgent issue, the meeting chair will not have a second or casting vote but a decision on the relevant matter must be referred to the next available board meeting.

6.5 For urgent decisions where a meeting cannot be held for any reason, Alliance staff will discuss issues with the committee co-chairs, who will contact at least one other committee member to make a decision. If no decision can be reached, the Chair of the Board may step in to make a final decision.

6.6 The meeting chair will support Alliance staff to build agenda and nominate a minute taker at the start of each meeting. Alliance staff will finalise and share minutes, promote agendas, and encourage engagement from the wider membership before and after all meetings.

7. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

7.1 Committee members may appoint a substitute to attend meetings with prior approval by Committee co-chair.

7.2 A nominated Alliance staff member will attend all meetings.

7.3 Online attendance shall be made possible at every meeting, and dates shall be made public to wider membership so that any Alliance members can engage and attend meetings (where space allows).

7.4 Experts and non-Alliance members can be invited to meetings for specific purposes as agreed by Committee members.

8. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

8.1 Meetings are to be held not less than quarterly and at such other times as required.

9. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

9.1 Meetings of the committee are called by Alliance staff at the request of the committee co-chair.

9.2 Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date together with an agenda of items to be discussed, are to be forwarded to each member of the committee, any other person required to attend, no later than five working days before the meeting. Supporting papers are to be sent to committee members and to other attendees as appropriate, at the same time.

10. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

10.1 Alliance staff will ensure that a formal record of committee proceedings and resolutions is maintained.

10.2 Following approval of the minutes by the meeting chair they are to be circulated to all members of the committee and accessible, readable interpretations of proceedings and decisions will be promoted via the Alliance website to all members.

11. AUTHORITY

11.1 The committee is authorised by the Board to:

11.2 Make decisions on overarching policy positions, and advise on policy and advocacy priorities for the Alliance

11.3 Undertake work in support of policy objectives of any member of the Alliance provided they align to the Alliance organisational strategy and have followed the procedure set out in section 4 of this Terns of Reference.

11.4 Delegate any of its duties as is appropriate to such persons or person as it thinks fit, including experts or specialists who work with member organisations.

12. DUTIES

12.1 The Board authorises the Policy committee to:

12.2 Develop and prioritise workstreams that which align with the Alliance strategy

12.3 Provide guidance and recommendations to the Board on matters related to committee's role.

12.4 Organise engagement opportunities for wider membership to learn about the work undertaken by the committee.

12.5 Consider any other topics referred to it by the Board.

13. REVIEW

13.1   The committee will conduct an annual planning meeting each Autumn, which will include a review of its performance, ensure that it is provided with sufficient resources to undertake its duties and recommend any changes it considers necessary to the Board for approval.

13.2   These terms of reference will be reviewed and, where necessary updated, at least once a year.

14. REPORTING PROCEDURES

14.1   The committee co-chairs or a nominated board member on the committee are responsible for reporting to the Board. The approved minutes of all meetings and resolutions of the committee are to be circulated to the Board after every meeting. Alliance staff will retain copies of the minutes and the papers and share with wider membership via the website.

14.2   Alliance staff will share details of its work with all members on the Alliance website, and offer ways to contribute to the work of the committee.

15. MODUS OPERANDI FOR ALLIANCE INFLUENCING WORK

15.1   Alliance staff are able to draft, publish and promote policy position statements without prior discussion with the policy committee when said statement is (i) urgently required and (ii) falls clearly within the boundaries of the Alliance statement of values, vision and mission.

15.2   Such statements should be shared with the policy committee as soon as possible and where possible, in advance of publication.

15.3   Alliance staff can seek to influence and campaign on policy issues that pertain to the broad areas outlined in previously published Alliance reports without seeking approval from policy committee members.