

## APT Action on Poverty Summary Strategy

### 2020-2021 and beyond

#### 1. Introduction

##### Our vision:

A fair world free from poverty and discrimination where every person is empowered to fulfil their potential

##### Our mission:

APT Action on Poverty promotes economic empowerment and social change by helping especially vulnerable and socially excluded people achieve sustainable livelihoods<sup>1</sup> and by addressing the barriers<sup>2</sup> that limit their participation.

##### **Aims of APT Action on Poverty**

1. We empower vulnerable people economically and socially by working with local partners<sup>3</sup> in sub-Saharan Africa.
2. We sustain and extend the impact of the work by building the capacity of local organisations<sup>4</sup>, and promoting good practice for wider replication.

#### 2. Our values

##### **Six values of APT Action on Poverty**

- i. **Partnership** – through mutual respect we recognise the worth of all people and organisations and the value of diversity and we recognise that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty
- ii. **Justice** – we believe in fairness, non-discrimination and equal opportunity for all
- iii. **Inclusivity** - we work to bring a fully inclusive approach to all our work and in all partner activity
- iv. **Transparency** – we will be honest and accountable at all levels, open in our judgements and communications
- v. **Sustainability** – we believe our approach building sustainable local capacity of beneficiaries, communities, private sector, organisations and state/non-state institutions offers a more lasting solution.
- vi. **Value for money** – we will be flexible and cost-effective in the use of the resources we have maintaining an exceptionally high level of spend on charitable activities.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> APT has adopted the following definition for sustainable livelihoods: "Livelihoods are the means by which households obtain and maintain access to the resources necessary to ensure their immediate and long-term survival. These essential resources are physical, natural, human, financial, social, and political. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities, assets and entitlements both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base"

<sup>2</sup> The kind of barriers (that unfairly limit the achievement of improved livelihoods) that we address include attitudinal, institutional and environmental e.g. access to services/money / appropriate training; discrimination and injustice e.g. unawareness of rights; corruption; social marginalisation.

<sup>3</sup> These are involved with APT in the development of the project and the main implementing partner(s). They are organisations with established operations in the country; these should where possible be local organisations, but may if necessary include local branches of international organisations

<sup>4</sup> These include local partners, sub-partners, CBOs, service providers and duty bearers

<sup>5</sup> 96p in every £1 of expenditure spent on charitable activities (APT 2019 Financial Accounts)

### **3. Context**

#### **We have:**

- A good reputation and effective programmes and strong relationships with a range of partners.
- Impressive impact in ground breaking work, enabled through access to sustainable livelihoods or directly in sustainable livelihoods.
- A team which carefully focuses and delivers resources to beneficiaries without waste.

#### **We can:**

- Expand our delivery, in partnership, of cost-effective impact in sustainable livelihoods with the most vulnerable and hard to reach people.
- Share and promote particular niches within our experience of livelihoods and its cross-cutting nature and synergy obtained with other areas of work.
- Catalyse widespread impact through our programmes.

#### **We're restricted by:**

- Low awareness of our work, in relation to our specific expertise amongst development practitioners and institutions, and a very low profile publicly amongst potential individual supporters.
- High dependence on a few institutional donors; low levels of unrestricted funding.

### **4. Vision for the Future**

#### **Our 5-year Vision**

##### **Where do we want to be in 5 years' time?**

1. Delivering sustainable, cost effective and transformative economic and social impact with marginalised groups
2. Supporting the development and strengthening of local organisations.
3. Catalysing change in behaviour of private sector (micro/formal) for better development impact; to be a 'mighty atom' in our work (including systemic change, attitude change, influencing supply chains/key players, private sector etc.)

#### **Five Year Targets**

##### **1. Impact:**

5/6 long term themes/programmes resulting in:

- i. Socio-economic impact on over 100,000 marginalised people per annum
- ii. Strengthened support to partners (6-10)
- iii. Catalytic change in operation of private sector (different levels)

##### **2. Developing Sound Financial Platform**

- i. Individuals/trusts/foundations/alternatives providing funding for 50% of core costs
- ii. Income from larger trusts increased by accessing a further 4-5 large trusts.
- iii. Income from individuals/events increased by £20,000.
- iv. Alternative source of funding identified and accessed.

## Our 2-year Vision

### Where do we want to be at the end of 2021?

- **Implementing a cross cutting agenda of inclusive livelihoods work amongst different stakeholders.**
  - 5 programmes running at end of 2020. As 4 programmes finish in 2021, 3 themes/programmes running at end 2021.
  - Qualitative improvements; catalytic impact and adding value.
- **Increase in income diversity**
  - Increased proportion from other than traditional institutional donors to over 30% excluding previously accessed budget lines.
  - Maintaining reserves of 6-12 months.

## 5. Key Strategies

1. **Direct Impact** through quality projects, programmes, training etc (in line with the vision above).
2. **Diversify income:**

Build on success and seek different sources as part of new ways of working

  - i) Trust funding: increase investment to test scope of larger Trusts for project funding (match funding and where possible for standalone programmes) as a priority; more efficient and better management of Trust applications;
  - ii) Improved use of technology/website to make most of partnerships/new funding;
  - iii) Build Professional Training Materials for the capacity building we already do, for funding within programmes and in the future for other forms of collaboration;
  - iv) Maintain/grow individual giving slowly by:
    - supporting with communications (and for Trusts)
    - targeting fundraising testing through online advertising/social media
    - in due course support events which are run by others to raise funds for us.
3. **Focused promotion of APT:**
  - Improve the narrative of what we do and why its successful;
  - Particularly in activities relating to specific target groups (e.g. People with Disabilities, Women, Fragile Environment, Youth);
  - Acknowledge the advocacy that we do on decent work, rights and private sector agenda.

## 7. Planning

In 2020 we will build capacity for accessing larger trusts, strengthen our positioning for developing a range of partnerships, and improve website/technology development for improved foundations for all fundraising from Trusts and Individuals.

- Maintain Project Management and new project applications/advocacy

## Acknowledge

- Keep the number of projects per person low to enable scope for some new programme development to be carried out by programme staff.
- We still need to increase our diversity of sources of funding.
- Seek new opportunities/partnerships/ways of working
- Increase the time investment in large Trusts to further research the scope and possibilities, particularly European/US funding sources
- Continue to support individual giving, small Trusts
- We will test the impact of a more appeals focused website, relationship building and management and improved comms e.g. advertising on social media, possibly Google adverts.
- Develop our approach to working with the private sector, including our niche and clarity on our ethical fundraising stance.

In 2021 we will be looking to build the approach to working with different levels of the private sector and our catalytic impact.

**Appendix A: Examples of our values in action:**

**Partnership: through mutual respect we recognise the worth of all people and organisations and the value of diversity and we recognise that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty**

Diversity in partnership; using innovative ways of working with partners	We work with a wide range of partners in their capacity, aims and mission: from small growing organisations to established national NGOs (such as VEDCO – Uganda, SITE – Kenya); working with partners which target specific vulnerable groups; helping longer standing partners to support smaller CBOs/emerging NGOs (such as SITE's initial support of REEP, MAPCO's support to CBOs).
Valuing partners' development	We started working with MAPCO and SITE as small and fledgling organisations. Successful delivery helped to give them the confidence, track record and credibility that enabled them to secure other projects and become influential institutions. Partners often grow to lead on projects recruiting APT as a specific source of expertise if required.
Sharing learning and building alliances in partnership	Exchanges between partners, within country and internationally to share experiences: E.g. sharing approaches to community-led CBO development between MAPCO and CARD/ other NGO partners in Sierra Leone. Learning visits between partners on monitoring approaches, or building Self Help Groups.

**Justice: we believe in fairness, non-discrimination and equal opportunity for all**

We support rights to skills and resources for workers, and an inclusive approach to fairer working conditions for all	In Kenya soapstone workers have access to safer and improved working conditions, improved productivity to improve earnings. In Uganda we have enabled female domestic workers to enjoy improved rights and better working conditions.
We empower people to be able to work in an environment free from abuse and discrimination	With MAPCO and CARD consortium in Sierra Leone we empower women to help those affected by rights abuse to secure justice through community reconciliation and legal systems, helped by their access to sustainable livelihoods.
We promote the spread of social justice and non-discrimination	Amongst many examples: In Kenya, Uganda and Sierra Leone we have trained duty bearers (police officers or economic development officers for example) to carry out their roles and responsibilities fairly and without discrimination; and build their accountability.

**Inclusivity: we work to bring a fully inclusive approach to all our work and in all partner activity**

We support in-depth work to catalyse attitude change and improve long term inclusion of marginalised people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In many countries where we work women headed households have benefited as a priority and are supported into leadership/decision-making roles.</li> <li>- Promotion of the rights of people with disabilities and working with DPOs to catalyse wider change e.g. Kenya and Uganda.</li> <li>- Marginalised young people may be key to stability after conflict - in Sierra Leone young people are trained in specific skills e.g. through apprenticeship schemes</li> </ul>
We support work with people living in post conflict areas, areas which have suffered a natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We help people move from aid or dependence after conflict, natural disaster/affected by climate change or health pandemic towards sustainable livelihoods e.g. in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone, arid &amp; semi-arid lands of Kenya.</li> </ul>

disaster/climate change or health pandemic	- Based in the community and working with grassroots organisations we are able to make timely and appropriate interventions based on the realities in the ground to begin rebuilding after a range of emergency situations (for example in the recent Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone).
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**Transparency: we will be honest and accountable at all levels, open in our judgements and communications**

Shared learning	We share our reviews and end of project evaluations on our public website
Donor relations	We encourage open and transparent sharing by partners with our funders and therefore are able to build trust and confidence working through difficulties to achieve positive outcomes.
Monitoring and evaluation	We train all our partner organisation in monitoring and evaluation systems and ensure that they develop capacity to perform these key functions. We have been asked by both National Lottery Community Fund and Comic Relief to facilitate sharing by our partners in this area with other partners of these donors.

**Sustainability: we believe our approach focusing on local capacity offers a more sustainable solution, organisationally, economically and environmentally**

Long term self-help groups (community-based organisations)	Addressing sustainability and exit strategy from the beginning of projects through active community consultation, participation and ownership. In Sierra Leone a 2018 review of 64 CBOs supported by APT/MAPCO between 2004 and 2013 found that 56% were still operating and providing services to their members years after project support had ended, e.g. revolving loan fund.
Organisational development	Strengthening local NGOs and other organisations for future sustainability is a high priority and a number of external consultants have commented positively (e.g. UN Gender Monitoring Team)
On-going viable enterprises, cooperatives and employment	Using market systems development approach to tackle weaknesses within a value chain sustainably – e.g. Camel milk value chain approach in Kenya, with impact on incomes, food security, wider market functioning and greater product demand.

**Value for money: we will be flexible and cost-effective in the use of the resources and ensure resource is focussed on addressing need**

We focus over 95% of our spend on support for those we work with	We do not employ overseas personnel or have overseas offices. Our UK team is small and efficient.
We focus on a small number of countries	Enabling us to cluster projects and ensure that the best use is made of UK staff resource, also enabling sharing of experience between partners within a geographical region.
We share the financial cost of projects with our beneficiaries themselves	Whether training inputs, loans or savings, we are very keen to engage those we work with in their own appropriate financial engagement, rather than relying solely on an external funder. This builds confidence, sense of ownership and long-term sustainability.