



RESPOND SA Constitution:

The RESPOND SA National Disaster Relief Support Network (RESPOND SA) is a Christ-centered organization established to coordinate and support disaster relief efforts nationwide, guided by biblical principles and values.

Revised Constitution Text

Article I: Name and Purpose

1.1 Name

The organisation shall be known as **RESPOND SA – National Disaster Preparedness and Coordination Network**, hereafter referred to as **RESPOND SA**.

1.2 Purpose

RESPOND SA is a national Christian network established to **prepare, equip, and coordinate churches and faith-based organisations for effective disaster preparedness and response**. Through training, capacity development, partnership building, and coordinated communication, RESPOND SA strengthens the ability of communities to support formal disaster management structures and first responders during disaster events.

RESPOND SA seeks to promote resilience, collaboration, and recovery in affected communities, while **upholding Christian values and demonstrating the love, hope, and compassion of Christ through service and action**.

Vision: To build a trusted, national, faith-based disaster readiness and response network that strengthens community resilience and ensures swift, coordinated assistance during crises.

Mission: To equip, mobilize, and coordinate churches, NGOs, and volunteers to be prepared, trained, and connected for effective disaster response.

Theology for Disaster Relief

RESPOND SA's theology is rooted in the Christian values of compassion, stewardship, and service. Key principles include:

- **Putting faith into action:** As Christians, RESPOND SA members believe in demonstrating their faith through tangible acts of service and support.
- **Nurturing the earth:** Recognizing the importance of environmental stewardship, RESPOND SA promotes sustainable practices and responsible resource management.

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- **Caring for humanity:** RESPOND SA prioritizes the well-being and dignity of all individuals, providing emotional, physical, and spiritual support in times of crisis.
- **Response support:** As a line of support to first responder, RESPOND SA members organize and manage spaces around disaster-affected areas, ensuring efficient and effective relief efforts.

Core Values and Principles:

RESPOND SA is guided by Christian-centred values and actions, including:

- **Compassion:** Showing empathy and kindness to those affected by disasters.
- **Integrity:** Operating with transparency, honesty, and accountability.
- **Servant Leadership:** Serving others with humility and a willingness to learn.
- **Stewardship:** Managing resources efficiently and effectively to maximize impact.
- **Unity:** Collaborating with diverse stakeholders to achieve a common goal.

By integrating their Christian values with disaster relief efforts, RESPOND SA strives to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those affected by disasters.

Article II: RESPOND SA - Stakeholders

Stakeholders of RESPOND SA

RESPOND SA defines its stakeholders as individuals and organizations that have a vested interest in the organization's mission and activities. The following groups are considered stakeholders:

1. **Founding Members (The Board):**
Unashamedly Ethical,
Communities of Abundance,
The Warehouse Trust,
Funanani Trust,
PEN,
Lewende Woord Church,
Domino Foundation,
City Hope Disaster Relief,
Dutch Reformed Church (General Synod)
2. **Contributors:** Individuals and organizations that provide financial support, resources, and expertise to advance RESPOND SA's mission.

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3. **Partner Organizations:** Organizations that share RESPOND SA's Christian values and mission, and collaborate on disaster relief and recovery efforts.
4. **Individual Volunteers:** Individuals who commit their time, skills, and expertise to support RESPOND SA's activities.

Inclusivity and Boundaries:

RESPOND SA is committed to inclusivity, welcoming individuals and organizations from diverse backgrounds who share its Christian values and mission. There are no boundaries to entry, and RESPOND SA encourages collaboration and participation from all who are committed to Disaster Relief Support and coordination efforts.

New Member Policy:

RESPOND SA is a group of individuals and organizations committed to Disaster Relief Support and coordination efforts, guided by Christian-centered values and actions. To maintain the integrity and cohesion of the group, RESPOND SA has established a referral-based membership policy, ensuring that new members align with the organization's mission, values, and principles.

Membership Eligibility:

New members must be referred by an existing RESPOND SA member (Board member) in good standing. The referral must be accompanied by a recommendation, highlighting the candidate's:

1. Alignment with RESPOND SA's Christian values and mission.
2. Relevant skills, expertise, or resources that can contribute to the organization's goals.
3. Demonstration of integrity, compassion, and commitment to serving others.

Membership Approval Process:

1. The referral and recommendation are submitted to the RESPOND SA Steering Committee for review.
2. The Board evaluates the candidate's eligibility, considering factors such as their reputation, expertise, and alignment with RESPOND SA's values and mission.
3. The Board may request additional information, conduct interviews, or seek input from existing members before making a decision.
4. The Board votes on the candidate's membership, requiring majority vote approval for acceptance.

Membership Rights and Responsibilities:

Upon acceptance, new members are expected to:

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1. Uphold RESPOND SA's Christian values and mission.
2. Participate actively in the organization's activities and decision-making processes.
3. Respect the confidentiality and integrity of the group.
4. Contribute their skills, expertise, and resources to support the organization's goals.
5. Each Member organisation will have one seat to vote on the Board

Membership Termination:

Membership may be terminated by the Board if a member:

1. Fails to uphold RESPOND SA's values and mission.
2. Engages in behavior detrimental to the organization or its members.
3. Fails to participate actively or contribute to the organization's goals.

Article III: RESPOND SA Projects:

The following projects are identified as initial projects:

1. **Advocacy** – Advocacy for Christ and disaster relief are two distinct yet interconnected endeavors. Advocacy for Christ involves actively promoting and representing Jesus Christ and His teachings, sharing God's love, compassion, and hope with others. Disaster relief, on the other hand, provides emergency assistance, support, and resources to communities affected by disasters. When these two efforts intersect, they create a powerful opportunity to share the love of Christ through practical acts of service, providing spiritual support and hope during crisis, and demonstrating God's compassion and care to those affected.
2. **Disaster Relief Aid (Humanitarian Aid):**

Coordinating Disaster Relief Resources

RESPOND SA coordinates disaster relief resources by establishing a centralized hub for information sharing, resource allocation, and response efforts. This involves collaborating with stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, churches, and community groups, to gather and disseminate critical information on disaster-affected areas. RESPOND SA then mobilizes and allocates resources, such as personnel, equipment, and supplies, to meet the specific needs of affected communities. Through effective communication, strategic planning, and coordinated action, RESPOND SA ensures that disaster relief resources are utilized efficiently and effectively to provide timely and compassionate support to those in need.

3. **Training and preparation; recovery and healing.**

RESPOND SA conducts comprehensive training and preparation programs on e.g. Incident Management Systems (IMS) to enhance the capacity of its members and

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partners to respond effectively to disasters. This training focuses on the principles and practices of IMS, including incident command, communication, resource allocation, and situation assessment. Through interactive sessions, simulations, and tabletop exercises, participants develop the skills and knowledge required to navigate the complexities of disaster response and recovery. By investing in IMS training and preparation, RESPOND SA enables its stakeholders to provide critical support to affected communities, facilitating recovery, healing, and the restoration of hope.

4. Compliance & Fundraising (Donations; Sponsorship; Investment).

RESPOND SA undertakes various activities to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements and to secure funding for its disaster relief and recovery efforts. This includes registering with relevant authorities, maintaining transparent financial records, and adhering to governance standards. To sustain its operations, RESPOND SA engages in fundraising initiatives, such as soliciting donations from individuals and organizations, pursuing sponsorship opportunities, and exploring investment options that align with its values and mission. By prioritizing compliance and fundraising, RESPOND SA ensures its long-term viability and ability to provide critical support to communities affected by disasters.

Article IV: Governance (Organisational Structure)

Governance Structure:

RESPOND SA is governed by a Members' Board, which is responsible for strategic direction, oversight, and decision-making. The Members' Board is composed of representatives from member organizations.

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Members' Board Responsibilities:

- Set the overall Christian centered strategy and direction for RESPOND SA.
- Approve the annual budget and financial reports.
- Oversee the implementation of RESPOND SA's projects and programs.
- Ensure compliance with relevant laws and regulations
- Appoint the Steering Committee and other committees as needed

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4.2 Steering Committee (appointed by the Board)

- Oversees project execution
- Appoints backbone organization
- Appoints Advisors
- Appoints National coordinator
- Appoints Regional coordinators
- Appoints Service providers

The Steering Committee is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of RESPOND SA and implementing the strategy and vision of the Members' Board.

The Steering Committee is composed of:

- Chairperson: appointed by the Members' Board
- National Coordinator – Oversight; strategic
- Regional Coordinators (Western cape; KwaZulu Natal; Gauteng).
- Representatives from member organizations as appointed by the Board

Steering Committee Responsibilities:

- Oversee the implementation of RESPOND SA's projects and programs
- Develop and implement operational plans and budgets
- Oversee Monitoring and Evaluation of activities
- Ensure effective communication and coordination among member organizations
- Identify and manage risks.

Backbone Organization: Role and Responsibilities

The backbone organization will provide centralized support, focusing on administrative, human resources, financial reporting, and compliance functions. Its primary goal is to ensure efficient operations, reduce duplication of efforts, and enhance the overall effectiveness of the collective impact initiative.

Key Responsibilities:

1. **Administrative Coordination:** Managing day-to-day communications, including scheduling, record-keeping, and logistics.
2. **Financial Management:** Overseeing financial transactions, budgeting, and financial reporting to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.



By focusing on these core functions, the backbone organization will provide essential support to the collective impact initiative, enabling partner organizations to concentrate on their core missions and objectives.

National Coordinator: Role and Responsibilities

The National Coordinator is responsible for overseeing and supporting the implementation of the collective impact initiative at the national level. This role ensures effective coordination, communication, and stakeholder engagement across the country.

Key Responsibilities:

1. **National Strategy Development:** Collaborating with stakeholders to develop and refine the national strategy, aligning with the collective impact initiative's goals.
2. **Stakeholder Engagement:** Building and maintaining relationships with national stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and private sector organizations.
3. **Regional Coordinator Support:** Providing guidance and support to Regional Coordinators, ensuring effective implementation and coordination at the regional level.
4. **National Level Advocacy:** Advocating for policies and programs that support the collective impact initiative's objectives.
5. **Communication and Reporting:** Coordinating national-level communication, reporting, and knowledge sharing, including progress updates, best practices, and lessons learned.
6. **Fundraising and Resource Mobilization:** Supporting national-level fundraising efforts and resource mobilization to sustain the collective impact initiative.
7. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Overseeing national-level monitoring and evaluation, ensuring data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement.
8. **Expense Management:** Authorizing and managing expenses, ensuring compliance with organizational policies and procedures.

Regional Coordinators:

RESPOND SA may establish Regional Coordinators to support specific projects or initiatives. These Regional Coordinators will report to the Steering Committee and will be composed of representatives from member organizations. Partner Organisations can also be asked to play



the role of Regional Coordinator and will nominate one person taking responsibility on their behalf.

Decision-Making Process:

Decisions will be made through a consensus-based approach, where possible. In cases where consensus cannot be reached, decisions will be made through a majority vote.

Accountability:

RESPOND SA is accountable to its member organizations, beneficiaries, and stakeholders. The organization will ensure transparency in its operations, finances, and decision-making processes.

Article V: Meetings

- Members' Board meetings: quarterly
- Special meetings: as needed
- Steering Committee meetings: monthly
- National Coordinators meeting: monthly
- Task Team meetings: as needed

Article VI: Amendments

Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by any RESPOND member and require a two-thirds majority vote of the Members' Board for approval.

Article VII: Dissolution

In the event of dissolution, remaining RESPOND assets shall be distributed to organizations with similar missions, as determined by the Members' Board.

Article VIII: Miscellaneous

- **Conflict of Interest:** Members and staff must disclose potential conflicts and abstain from voting.
- **Indemnification:** RESPOND will indemnify Members, officers, and employees against claims arising from official duties.

Organisational Description (Plain Language):

Respond SA is a national Christian organisation that exists to prepare and strengthen inter-church coordination for disaster preparedness and response across South Africa. Respond SA focuses on training, orientating, and upskilling churches, faith-based organisations, and

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community stakeholders, enabling them to support national and local first responders effectively during disaster events.

Respond SA does not act as a first responder. Instead, it prepares and equips communities by:

- Providing introduction and orientation to disaster response principles,
- Building supportive church-based response networks,
- Strengthening relationships with national, provincial, and local stakeholders,
- Developing shared resources and frameworks, and
- Up-skilling volunteers and leaders to support coordinated disaster relief efforts.

Adoption:

This constitution was adopted by the RESPOND Founding Members' - Board on **18 February 2025**.

Signatures:

We, the undersigned, hereby acknowledge that we have read, understand, and agree to abide by the provisions of this constitution.

Member Details _____

Organisation _____

Designated Signatory _____

Position _____

Chairperson, RESPOND Members' Board

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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