Net ACT CONSTITUTION

Article 1: Identity & Definition

NetACT is the Network for African Congregational Theology, a network of theological institutions in the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Congregational Theology is theology as practiced in the Christian Congregation as the body of Christ, discerning the will of God in the process of interpreting the Scriptures and its own specific context, empowering the Congregation to address its multiple problems, challenges and sufferings, in Sub-Saharan Africa manifest in the pandemic of HIV/AIDS, abuse of power, corruption and economic injustice (among others).

Article 2: Mission

NetACT aims at assisting the participating institutions to develop congregational theology and leadership. It seeks to achieve this aim through:
A. Contextual relevant training of congregational leadership;
B. Upgrading of academic standards and institutional capacity-building;
C. Developing research programmes at the participating institutions;
D. Developing continuous education programmes;
E. Lecturer-exchange between its participating institutions;
F. Conferences and publications in the field of theology in Africa;
G. Addressing the HIV/Aids problem, especially by providing the theological, moral and spiritual undergirding to curb this pandemic.

Article 3: Values

3.1 NetACT accepts as the foundation of its values and activities the revelation of God as contained in the Old- and New Testaments.

3.2 NetACT believes that Christian congregations are instruments of God’s mission in this world, a royal priesthood, called to be a sign and foretaste of the Kingdom of God by:
A. Demonstrating our unity and koinonia in Christ;
B. Declaring the praises of Him who called us out of the darkness into his wonderful light and proclaiming this good news to all;
C. Practising and promoting love and forgiveness, justice and peace; serving the needs of the world by reaching out to all who suffer in any way;
D. Upholding the sanctity of all human life and respecting the integrity of creation;
E. Urging those in authority to use the power given to them to the honour and glory of God and to the benefit of those entrusted to their care;
F. Interceding for all mankind and the whole of creation.

3.3 While acknowledging that our cultural, racial and ethnic differences have created much division and suffering, NetACT believes that we are united in Christ, the head of the church, his body; NetACT believes that He has transformed our diversity from a cause of division and suffering into a source of creativity and one of our richest resources.

3.4 NetACT respects the autonomy of all participating institutions, acknowledges the contributions of each and cherishes mutual respect, understanding, assistance, humility and openness in the interaction between its participating institutions.

3.5 In view of the unprecedented occurrence of diseases and loss of human life related to the spread of HIV/Aids and its devastating effects on all dimensions of community-
life in Sub-Saharan Africa, NetACT commits itself to prioritise the identification, development and distribution of programmes, directed to reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS and to supporting the direct and indirect victims of HIV/AIDS within the mandate of its mission.

3.6 NetACT seeks co-operation with organisations, agencies and institutions which are active in similar fields of research and programme-development.

3.7 NetACT is committed to utilise all resources as entrusted to it in a transparent and accountable way in full agreement with its aims and mission.

**Article 4: Organisation & Government**

4.1 **MEMBERSHIP**

4.1.1 **MEMBERS**
Members of NetACT shall consist of the following:

A. The founding members of NetACT, including the Justo Mwale Theological College, the Zomba Theological College, the Murray Theological School, the University of Stellenbosch, the Reformed Institute of Theological Training, Hefsiba Theological College, and the Nkhoma Institute for Continuing Theological Training.

B. Other theological institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa, embracing the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition and who subscribe to the Identity, Mission and Values of NetACT (Articles 1-3), subject to them being admitted by the Board of Governors of NetACT.

4.1.2 **ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**
Theological institutions of other Christian traditions (upon application) that subscribe to the Mission and Values of NetACT (Articles 2 and 3) shall be granted the status of associate members subject to the decision of the Board of Governors.

4.1.3 **OBSERVERS**
Individuals or institutions of other Christian traditions who are interested in working with NetACT may be granted the status of observer at the discretion of the Board of Governors.

4.2 **TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**
An institution ceases to be a member of NetACT when:

4.2.1 The institution requests to terminate its membership;
4.2.2 The institution no longer subscribes to the identity, mission and values of NetACT;
4.2.3 The institution fails to attend the meeting of the Board of Governors for two consecutive years.

4.3 **GOVERNMENT**
4.3.1 NetACT shall be governed by a Board of Governors, composed of:

A. **MEMBERS APPOINTED BY MEMBER-INSTITUTIONS;**
   i. Each member institution will appoint one member (primus) as its delegate in the Board of Governors of NetACT with full voting rights.
   ii. Each member institution will appoint one member (secundus) representing the member (primus) in the Board of Governors of NetACT in case of his/her absence and exercise his/her duties with full voting rights.
B.  CO-OPTED MEMBERS
   i. The Board of Governors may co-opt three members to the Board of Governors with full voting rights.
   ii. A co-opted member will not be represented in case of his/her absence in any meeting of the Board of Governors.

C.  MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE DONOR-COMMUNITY
   The Board of Governors shall invite a maximum of three representatives from the donor community, plus one person as secundus, to serve as members of the Board of Governors with full voting rights.

D.  THE NETACT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
   The NetACT Executive Director will be a member of the Board of Governors of NetACT with full voting rights.

4.4  SITTING PERIOD OF MEMBERS, VACANCIES, APPOINTMENT / ELECTION
4.4.1 Members of the Board of Governors shall have a sitting period of three years or until such time that they cease to represent the appointing or electing institution, notification of which will be given by the respective appointing or electing body.
4.4.2 In case a position in the Board of Governors falls vacant, the respective appointing or electing body is entitled to appoint or elect a new member in its vacant position.
4.4.3 Outgoing members of the Board of Governors may be re-appointed or re-elected after a period of three years by their respective appointing or electing bodies.

4.5  MEETINGS
4.5.1 The Board of Governors of NetACT shall meet at least once every two years at a time and place determined by the Executive Committee.
4.5.2 Notification of the meeting of the Board of Governors, accompanied by a tentative agenda, will be sent six months before the date of the anticipated meeting.
4.5.3 The members of the Board of Governors are entitled to amend the tentative agenda up to two months before the anticipated meeting.
4.5.4 The final agenda of the meeting will be sent six weeks before the date of the anticipated meeting.

4.6  QUORUM
   The quorum of any meeting of the Board of Governors of NetACT shall be constituted by the presence of more than half of the representatives of the member-institutions (mentioned under 4.1.2.A) in the meeting.

4.7  DECISIONS
4.7.1 Decisions will be taken by a simple majority of votes.
4.7.2 In case the number of votes is even, the chairman will have a casting vote.

4.8  FUNCTION
   The Board of Governors shall:
   A. Elect from its midst a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary.
   B. Appoint a NetACT Executive Director;
   C. Ratify the appointment of Program managers;
D. Amend or change the Constitution of NetACT;
F. Set and revise policy and objectives for NetACT;
G. Approve the annual report of the chairperson;
H. Approve the annual financial reports;
I. Approve the budget for the next period;
I Lay down by-laws, policies and procedures for the effective functioning of NetACT.

4.9 **SITTING PERIOD AND RE-ELECTION**
4.9.1 The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary of the NetACT Board of Governors will be elected for a period of three years.
4.9.2 A Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary of the NetACT Board of Governors can be re-elected once only in the same position.

4.10 **NETACT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
4.10.1 Composition
The NetACT Executive Committee shall consist of: the chairperson, the vice-chairperson, the secretary of the NetACT Board of Governors and the NetACT Executive Director.

4.10.2 Time and place of meeting
The NetACT Executive Committee shall meet at least once per year at the time and place determined by the Chairman in consultation with the Executive Director.

4.10.3 Functions
The NetACT Executive Committee shall:
A. Supervise the implementation of the policy and programmes as determined by the NetACT Board of Governors;
B. Execute duties assigned by the NetACT Board of Governors;
C. Appoint such personnel as is necessary for the effective operation of NetACT, its bureau and programmes;
D. Receive the reports of the NetACT Executive Director and the Program managers;
E. Prepare annual reports for the NetACT Board of Governors, donors, supporting and participating institutions;
F. Prepare the budget for the next period;
G. Facilitate arrangements for any NetACT meetings

**Article 5: Officials and Staff-Members**

5.1 **GENERAL GUIDELINES**
Proper job descriptions shall guide the work of all elected, appointed and employed officials and staff-members.

5.2 **THE NETACT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
A. Shall co-ordinate all functions of NetACT;
B. Shall be the liaison officer between NetACT, Donors and Member Institutions;
C. Shall be responsible for marketing, fundraising, administration and communication;
D. Shall be responsible for the facilitating of funding and administration of agreed programmes, e.g. ACTEA fees, training programmes, library support, building projects, communication facilities (computers), publishing, etc.

E. Shall be responsible for the effective functioning of the NetACT central office.

E. The NetACT Executive Director may be appointed in a full-time or a part-time capacity.

F. The NetACT Executive Director may be appointed from among the Board of Governors.

G. The appointment of a NetACT Executive Director shall be with agreement of the employing institution.

F. The NetACT Executive Director shall be responsible to the NetACT Board of Governors.

5.3 **NETACT PROGRAM MANAGERS**

5.3.1 NetACT shall appoint Program Managers responsible for the effective implementing of agreed programmes.

5.3.2 Program Managers shall be responsible to the NetACT Executive Director and the NetACT Board of Governors.

5.4 **OFFICE PERSONNEL**

Office personnel may be appointed on a full-time or part-time basis at an agreed remuneration or in voluntary capacity to assist the NetACT Co-ordinator in his/her duties.

5.5 **FINANCIAL RECORDS & REPORTS**

5.5.1 The Board of Governors will be responsible to have financial records properly kept.

5.5.2 A six-monthly financial report will be submitted to the Board through the Executive Director.

**Article 6  Amendment or Alteration of the Constitution**

6.1 A properly motivated proposal for an amendment or alteration to the NetACT Constitution shall be presented by a member institution (mentioned under 4.1.1) to the Board of Governors through its secretary.

6.2 The Articles 1, 2 and 3 of this Constitution will not be altered or amended unless supported by representatives of at least 75% of the Member Institutions mentioned under Article 4.2.1.A.

6.3 An amendment or alteration of any Article of this Constitution, other than the Articles 1, 2 and 3, is carried with a simple majority of votes.