Stichting International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO)

3-year Policy Plan: A systemic approach to improving humanitarian safety and access.

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1. Background

With at least one aid worker killed, injured, or abducted every day, aid work remains immensely dangerous, and studies show that insecurity presents a major challenge to humanitarian access and undermines the ability of vulnerable people to access the aid they need.

To continue operating in such environments, NGOs need direct field-level support—including access to high-quality information, analysis, training, and coordination—while the wider policy environment must be informed by field perspective and reliable data.

The International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO) was established in 2011 to provide *a coherent systemic response* to these needs, delivering actionable solutions that go beyond saving individuals' lives to enable principled humanitarian operations.

Originally established in the United Kingdom (2011-2018), INSO relocated to the Netherlands in 2019 and today provides support to over 1,200 organisations across 17 countries from its international headquarters in The Hague.

2. Mission and Objectives

The mission of the organisation is simple: to help those who help others. More specifically, to help humanitarian organizations deliver aid safely. It is a mission that encompasses a variety of themes including safety, security, access, coordination, preparedness, training, capacity building, data, planning, and policy.

The mission is set out in our Deed of Incorporation, which expresses our 'Objects" as:

a) *the relief and development of people in need anywhere in the world who are the victims of conflict, natural disaster, insecurity or crisis;*
This Object enshrines the humanitarian imperative at the heart of our work.

b) *the welfare and safety of people involved in the provision of humanitarian and development aid anywhere in the world.*
This Object ensures aid worker welfare remains an objective in its own right.

The Deed further details how we will accomplish these Objects by:
   a) providing dedicated safety & security services to organisations working to achieve the relief and development of people in need.

This mandates the type of services to be delivered and defines the intended beneficiaries.

b) promoting and facilitating a wider understanding of conflict and its impact on humanitarian and development safety.

This mandates activities such as policy support, advocacy, research and communications.

INSO is also a signatory to the Red Cross Code of Conduct and holds an enduring commitment to the core principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence.

3. Our Impact

Our work directly facilitates the protection of aid workers and safe humanitarian access while strengthening the evidence base for policy, strategy, and discourse.

While the impact of enabling agents like INSO can be notoriously difficult to measure, we aim to measure impact across four major categories:

Saving lives and improving the safety of aid workers:

By providing 24/7 alerts and analysis, we help partners make informed day-to-day movement decisions and avoid imminent risks. If the worst case arises, we support partners' crisis management with expertise, contacts, and emergency coordination.

Strengthening & facilitating humanitarian access:

Through our presence, local contacts, and detailed assessments, we help our partners navigate the access challenges of entering a country, expanding to a new area, remaining present during a crisis, or returning to an area after they have left.

Professionalising security management practices:

With a wide range of free training modules developed and delivered locally, we build skills from the ground up. Our security policy reviews, contextualized and adapted training, and timely information help disrupt the 'shock-reaction cycle' to support a more professional response.

Improving interagency coordination:

We bring NGOs together to share information, reinforce principles and develop a

collective approach to humanitarian safety. We strengthen NGO/UN coordination and provide a safe space for the development and implementation of community initiatives.

4. Program Strategy

The overarching strategic objective is that the humanitarian community has access to relevant support at all levels of planning, operations, and response. We accomplish this through three pillars of program strategy.

The first pillar of the program strategy is to provide **adaptable and responsive safety & access services** to humanitarian organisations working in high, medium, and transitional-risk countries.

Services can be provided at the local, regional, or global level depending on the beneficiary's needs and may be provided through on-site, roving, or remote platform models, depending on the context.

The general services to operational NGOs include but are not limited to:

a. Incident reporting and alerts

b. Detailed analytical & thematic reporting.

c. Field, regional, and global coordination meetings.

d. Crisis and emergency management assistance.

e. High quality training & orientation.

f. Policy and planning support.

INSO is committed to continually learning and innovating to ensure that services and products remain relevant to our partners' needs and priorities. During this period, INSO is planning several technical and service advances.

To date, full field projects have been established in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Ukraine, Somalia, Kenya, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Nigeria, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Mozambique, and Haiti, while additional remote projects have been established for Sudan and Palestine.

New field programs (INSO platforms) are under development in Yemen, Chad, Sudan, and

Colombia. Additionally, INSO maintains a Roving Training team at the headquarters, which deploys to deliver training services in countries where INSO does not maintain a permanent presence.

Throughout the plan period, additional new projects may be established at the request of NGOs operating in the context or at our own initiation in response to emerging crises and new conflicts.

The second pillar of the strategy is **to introduce and scale a standardised incident database** which can serve as a common operating picture for analysis & operations. The international community has repeatedly identified the need for such a database to record attacks against humanitarian workers and help track trends globally between contexts.

Our Conflict & Humanitarian Data Centre (CHDC) is already providing a successful prototype of what this will look like, and we aim to scale this globally by expanding CHDC coverage to new countries and developing extensive training modules to improve partners' use.

Besides its vital role in day-to-day operations, a common and comprehensive incident database holds potential for several ground-breaking developments including in early warning systems, benchmarking, and policy impact assessment.

To make the common operating picture a reality, we will work internally to improve access and useability of the system and externally to develop trusted partnerships with like-minded agencies committed to the shared goal.

The third and final pillar of the strategy is to **make humanitarian policy and systems more informed, inclusive, and evidence based**. This pillar builds on and complements the other two pillars to address a lack of evidence and representation in the global policy space.

Specific activities will include, but not be limited to:

g. Broadening collaborative partnerships with like-minded NGOs, forums, and donors around common advocacy areas.

h. Facilitating and strengthening Inter-Agency coordination through local, regional, and global forums, including those led by the United Nations.

i. Supporting policy and normative development with reliable data and field perspectives, including with NGOs, UN, donors, and states.

j. Providing quality research into the major themes shaping the humanitarian sector to inform policy and practices.

k. Partnerships, participation, and communications to support and inform a wide range of stakeholders influencing humanitarian safety and access.

By connecting field presence with reliable data and global access, INSO aims to make a positive contribution towards closing the policy to practice gap.

Taken together, the three pillars of the program strategy provide a coherent, system-wide response to the most pressing needs and gaps in humanitarian safety & access.

5. Beneficiaries, Participation and Accountability

INSO is the main safety coordination body, with more than 1,200 organisational partners registered globally and the only one to support local NGOs on an equal basis as international ones.

Approximately 95% of our partners are NGOs, with a distribution of 42% national and 53% international NGOs, with the remaining 5% being UN agencies, donors and Red Cross/Crescent movement organisations.

Our partners originate from more than 50 countries and work across all programming clusters, including WASH, Education, Health, Food Security, Nutrition, Shelter, and Protection.

To be eligible for INSO services, NGOs must be legally established as non-profits – both at home and in the country of application – and conduct humanitarian or development operations.

Our NGO partners participate closely in project development. Each project starts with a Letter of Invitation and is overseen by a volunteer Project Advisory Board of 6-12 NGOs who provide structured feedback on performance. This simple accountability mechanism ensures that INSO remains aware of and responsive to the needs of its beneficiaries.

At the global level, INSO is deeply integrated with the wider humanitarian ecosystem, sitting on the Saving Lives Together Oversight Committee (SLT-OC) and the Global Access Working Group where we work collaboratively with other stakeholders to strength the wider systems of coordination.

We regularly and closely liaise with a wide range of stakeholders, including the HQ staff of NGOs and International Organisations, the UN Security Management System and coordination agencies, various NGO coordination forums, and donor headquarters.

6. Fundraising and Use of Funds

The financial resources of the INSO primarily consist of public/charitable funds provided in the form of grants, awards and cooperative agreements by donor governments and/or international organisations, such as the United Nations.

INSO maintains a wide and diverse funding base, which includes the US Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs (BHA/USAID), Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MINBUZA), European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), UK Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Swiss Development and Cooperation (SDC), German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO), Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (Sida), French Centre de Crise et de Soutien (CDCS), and the United Nations (UN).

Donors contribute through individual country or regional grants negotiated with the donors' in-country or regional representatives or through core grants awarded and managed at an HQ- HQ level.

INSO will endeavour to engage existing and new donors in multi-year or repetitive commitments that provide stability. Where donors are not willing/available to fund project costs or are unable to fund them entirely, projects will be wound-up or scaled back, respectively.

Alternative and less significant sources of funds may include:

- o any amounts or goods raised or to be raised on the occasion of its formation for the realisation of its objects;
- o any amounts or goods received from third parties, including (but not limited to) gifts, inheritance and subsidies;
- o the income and revenues that INSO receives from the activities it organizes and the use of its assets
- o other assets

INSO will use the funding to cover the costs of its projects and activities, most notably:

- o Salaries and fringe benefits of personnel
- o Facilities and accommodation costs
- o Transport and communications

o   Assets, supplies and services

INSO is non-profit, and all of the resources will be applied exclusively towards the objectives.

To verify this, INSO will maintain comprehensive electronic accounting records and supporting documents to support and demonstrate its financial position at all times.

Financial data and records will be routinely reviewed and verified by a layered internal financial team—including country finance managers, an HQ-level finance manager, and an Internal Audit department—while all income and expenditures will be reviewed by an independent auditor on an annual basis. The results of the independent review will be posted publicly.

7. Overheads and Reserves

The Board of Directors is responsible for the careful and responsible management of INSO's financial resources and assets. This includes keeping its overhead costs fair and reasonable and limited to only those considered necessary for the achievement of its objectives and fulfilment of its obligations and duties.

The organisation will establish an operating budget each year to guide and limit its expenses in each functional area. Additionally, INSO will establish an organisational Reserve based on specifically identified needs relevant to INSO over the coming year including grant pre-financing, foreign exchange losses and ineligible costs.

Reserves are an important part of careful financial management as they build organisational resilience to both known and unexpected shortfalls of funds and shocks.

8. Directors, Employees, Principles and Remuneration Policy

INSO consists of a Board of Directors and Employees. Both groups act in compliance with a comprehensive Code of Conduct specifying legal and ethical behavior including in the areas of safeguarding & PSEA, anti-bullying & harassment, fraud prevention and whistleblower protections.

The Board of Directors (Board Members) act in accordance with legal obligations and written Terms of Reference outlining amongst others the eligibility requirements, exercise of powers, and prevention of conflicts of interest.

Board members will not receive any remuneration for the performance of their Board-related duties. They will, however, be entitled to reimbursement of their costs in performing their

duties and non-excessive attendance fees according to the guidelines established by INSO.

Commercial or professional supplies, activities or services performed by a Board Member for the benefit of the Foundation require the prior, unanimous, written consent of all other Board Members. The same shall apply if the Board Member has an indirect interest in these supplies, activities, or services.

INSO will employ salaried Employees for the pursuit of its objects and the delivery of its activities. Employees will be employed under a written contract of employment specifying their terms and conditions, work period, location, pay and eligible benefits.

Remuneration for Employees is decided in accordance with the responsibilities of the Job Description (not the Employee), set in accordance with written organisational policy and salary grid, and is benchmarked to external data from the humanitarian community.

Where necessary, a Board Member may also be an Employee on condition that they are only paid for the activities and functions set out in their contract of employment, which cannot include their duties as a Board Members.