



International NGO safety
Organisation (INSO)

Standard Advisory Board Regulation

(V.2.2013)

Unrestricted Use

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. An INSO platform exists to provide services to the NGO community. As such, the structured participation of NGOs in the design, monitoring and evaluation of such services is a fundamental requirement.
- 1.2. INSO is committed to ensuring such participation through the establishment of an NGO Advisory Board (hereinafter 'the Board') that is a common feature across all INSO managed projects.
- 1.3. The Board is a self-selecting, standing body to represent NGO interests and to ensure that the INSO platform remains relevant to the local circumstances. The Board has practical abilities to guide the development of the INSO platform, which are laid out in this document.
- 1.4. INSO ensures that maintaining the integrity and function of the Board is a specific job requirement for the INSO Director, and s/he is required to act on its advice within the scope of this document.
- 1.5. Board membership remains voluntary and limited as defined in this document and does not confer any legal or financial responsibility.
- 1.6. In Emergency Response contexts, Board formation may be temporarily substituted in favour of more informal consultations mechanisms and contact groups as long as such measures do not endure beyond six months.

2. MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1. As a 'by NGO, for NGO' platform model, membership of the Board is only available to NGOs as defined in INSO registration criteria.
- 2.2. Other types of organisations may be granted observer status at the agreement of the Board but under no circumstances can they be considered Board members (see 2.10).
- 2.3. The formal members of the Advisory Board for [INSET COUNTRY] are listed at ANNEX 1.

- 2.4. The Board size will be maintained at a level that is both manageable and effective within the local context – being not less than six and not more than twelve.
- 2.5. The expansion or contraction of the Board shall be discussed by current members as required.
- 2.6. The Board must at all times reflect the wider diversity of the total NGO community it represents for example in terms of origin, character, size, budget, programming etc.
- 2.7. Membership is unpaid and voluntary. Members may resign their membership at any time on provision of seven (7) days notice. Membership is transferable by inheritance or agreement.
- 2.8. Members are committed to an active and constructive participation, acting in a spirit of equality, partnership and transparency.
- 2.9. Members are committed to acting, as far as feasible, as representatives of the broader community of humanitarian and development agencies in the country but without prejudice to their own specific capacities, priorities and skills.
- 2.10. Donor representatives, INSO management, and the individuals or institutions listed in ANNEX 2 to this document, are authorised to participate in Board meetings and to voice their opinion but will not be considered formal Board members for any purpose.
- 2.11. A maximum of three (3) additional NGOs are welcome to attend, without prior approval, per meeting as non-members in order to raise or discuss specific issues on their own. Notification of intent to attend should be provided to the INSO Director seven days in advance of the scheduled meeting.
- 2.12. The Board will reserve the right to expel a member and declare a Board seat vacant if it determines that the spirit of participation is not being upheld by the sitting member.

2.13. The INSO Director will be responsible for making any updates or changes to this document in full cooperation with the Board members and INSO.

3. MEETING SCHEDULE & QUORUM

3.1. Ordinary Meetings shall be not less than every quarter (3 months) or according to the convenience of the majority.

3.2. A minimum of 50% of the formal Board members sitting at the time must be present to constitute a quorum.

3.3. The Board members or the INSO Director may initiate an Extraordinary Meeting at any time as may be required. Extraordinary Meetings fall under the same regulations as Ordinary Meetings.

3.4. The INSO Director is responsible for collecting agenda items from the Members and then convening meetings with not less than seven (7) days notice.

3.5. The INSO Director will administrate and chair the meetings and be responsible for scheduling, announcing, minutes and participants. This function may be delegated to another INSO staff member.

3.6. Meetings will generally be held at the INSO country office or at any other location considered convenient to the majority.

4. PURPOSE & POWERS

4.1. The general purpose of the Board is to provide a regular opportunity for structured feedback on the relevance and quality the INSO platform and the services it delivers as well as to support, guide and advise the INSO Director on all matters that may time to time affect the programme.

4.2. The Advisory Board had specific powers in the following four areas:

4.2.1. To establish, amend and update the INSO Scope of Services: The Board will be responsible for deciding the initial menu of services offered by INSO and then for monitoring the on-going

relevance/utility/quality of such services to them as the context changes and, where necessary, requesting modifications, updates or suspensions as may be required by context.

4.2.2. To discuss and approve the definition of service users: The Board will be responsible for considering the default INSO definition of service users¹ and for establishing any additional conditions on membership as may be relevant to local context.

4.2.3. To establish, amend and update the rules and regulations of the Advisory Board: The Board will be responsible for making periodic amendments to the rules and regulations to reflect local operating conditions².

4.2.4. To validate the appointment of the INSO Director: Prior to the appointment of the platform Director, INSO will present the final candidate to the Board and request a *No Objection* notice. The Board may request a group interview with the candidate at their discretion. Where the *No Objection* is withheld, or specific Objections are raised, INSO will terminate the selection³.

5. APPLICATION OF POWERS

5.1. After consideration of any topic under 4.2, the Board may choose to formalize its advice to INSO through the provision of an ADVISORY STATEMENT (hereinafter "statement/s") which INSO is obliged to consider.

5.2. It will be up to the Board to determine, on a case by case basis, whether the issue under discussion warrants the production of a statement or not⁴.

¹ Non-profit, humanitarian and committed to Red Cross Code of Conduct for NGOs.

² With the exception of Section 6 which expresses unalterable legal conditions.

³ The Board will be required to consider this seriously and may be asked to provide justification for their Objection.

⁴ In normal circumstances there will be a general agreement on the strategy to be followed, but a statement may be required in cases where there is sharp disagreement within the Board or between the Board and the INSO Director and/or INSO.

- 5.3. The Board is not required to reach agreement or consensus in order to issue a statement, but if consensus is not reached then the statement must then reflect the disagreement and state the reason for it.
- 5.4. Statements can be written or verbal and will be reflected either within the minutes of the meeting or as a separate written statement annexed to the minutes. All statements will be made available to the wider NGO community.
- 5.5. Where written statements are made, responsibility for drafting and presenting written statements will be rotational amongst the members, unless a member volunteers.
- 5.6. Board statements will be taken to represent the official 'will' of the NGO community vis-à-vis the INSO platform and will be accorded a suitably high priority and status.
- 5.7. In the case where INSO rejects the application of a statement, it is obliged to provide a written explanation and justification for this at the earliest possibility.

6. LIABILITY & LIMITATIONS

- 6.1. The Board shall remain at all times an informal advisory body to the local INSO project and holds no binding legal, contractual or financial responsibility for INSO, the local INSO project or its staff which shall instead remain the exclusive responsibility of INSO and its legal partners (if any) at all times.
- 6.2. Under no circumstances may the Board request or compel INSO to adopt any service position or function that, in the exclusive opinion of INSO, would compromise the physical, legal, financial or moral safety or integrity of INSO, its legal partners or its staff and their families.

- END -

ANNEX 1 – MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Valid as of: [DATE]

| ORGANISATION | REPRESENTED BY | EMAIL |
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ANNEX 2 – AUTHORISED PARTICIPANTS

Valid as of: [DATE]

| ORGANISATION | REPRESENTED BY | EMAIL |
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