

The Integral Alliance



Integral Alliance (Integral) is made up of 22 Christian global relief and development agencies, united in their vision of alleviating suffering and restoring hope in disasters and beyond. They are committed to combining resources and drawing together their collective reach, sectoral expertise and their access to funding to respond more efficiently and effectively together to disasters worldwide. Collectively Integral Members work in more than 90 countries, working both directly and with over 580 local Partners.

Integral works to bring together the strengths of all of its Members in disaster response - supporting very localised and often church-based responses, supporting the work of local Partners and enabling a directly implemented emergency response by its Members - in order to best meet the needs of communities affected by disaster. Integral recognises the combination of approaches by its Members as a strength, providing the opportunity for the work of those who implement directly (operational Members) to complement and strengthen the work of Partner-led Members (cooperational Members) and their local Partners before, during and after a disaster.

*Integral endorses and commits to working towards the **Core Humanitarian Standard**. The commitments it contains place communities & people affected by crisis at the centre of humanitarian action.*



Key actions on localisation for organisations are outlined specifically in:

Commitment 3: Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects

Commitment 4: Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback

Commitment 5: Complaints are welcomed and addressed

Commitment 6: Communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance

Commitment 9: Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose

Integral and Localisation

The Grand Bargain¹ is an agreement between more than 30 of the biggest donors and aid providers, which aims to get more means into the hands of people in need. It contains ten commitments and here Integral has focused on commitment #2 - "More support and funding tools for local and national responders", commonly referred to as "localisation".

Integral Members have affirmed the following International Council of Voluntary Agencies' (ICVA) definition of localisation:²

"Localisation is the process of having a humanitarian response owned in part or wholly by a national and/or local capacity that is embedded within, and understands the needs and socio-cultural context of, the area and people in crisis."



Integral believes international organisations and institutions have a role to play in supporting national and local actors. This will include the provision of expertise, good practice, and additional capacity to enable national and local actors to respond to a crisis, rather than relying on external mechanisms and support. Integral understands that in humanitarian crises it is local organisations and communities who respond first. Part of our objective is to support and enable local actors to be able to respond more effectively. Integral acknowledges that localisation is broader than actions taken during a crisis, and that work done in development contexts can make localisation possible when disaster strikes.



Integral recognises the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) definition of local actors – including both state and non-state actors. Non-state local actors are defined as: "Organizations engaged in relief that are headquartered and operating in their own aid recipient country and which are not affiliated to an international NGO... A local actor is not considered to be affiliated merely because it is part of a network, confederation or alliance wherein it maintains independent fundraising and governance systems." State actors include: "State authorities of the affected aid recipient country engaged in relief, whether at local or national level."³



As an alliance of faith based INGOs, Integral models equitable partnerships, placing the community and local actors such as LNGOs, churches, and local governments at the heart of locally-owned crisis and disaster response. Integral recognises that national governments are duty bearers to their disaster and crisis affected communities. However, Integral Members also have an important role to amplify the voices of those who are excluded and affected by crises, where rule of law and governance has broken down, or where conflict exists.

The conversation around localisation is frequently focused on the amount of funding being channeled to local actors. However Integral believes that, at its heart, localisation is about a form of biblical "Jubilee" – a genuine realignment of power, enabling decision-making at a local level. Shifting power into the hands of those most vulnerable is an expression of Integral Members operating in a biblical way as they seek to alleviate suffering and restore hope in contexts of injustice.

¹ <https://www.icvanetwork.org/resources/grand-bargain-explained-icva-briefing-paper-march-2017>

² Page 3 https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/ICVA_ODI_Localisation_paper.pdf

³ Page 2, Section III Definitions of national or local actors:

https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/hftt_localisation_marker_definitions_paper_24_january_2018.pdf

Integral's Approach

Transformational... Complementary... In Partnership

Transformational

Integral chooses to view the ethos of localisation from the perspective of "transformation" and not "decentralisation".

Transformation acknowledges that decision making rights start with the disaster affected community, and their ability, where possible and desirable, to locally coordinate their own humanitarian response.

Complementary

Integral sees the combination of approaches by its Members as complementary; however we acknowledge that "the heavy footprint and attitudes of international agencies are one of the important obstacles to both national leadership and the building of strong and sustained national capacities"⁴.

- We seek to be part of a transformational movement that promotes partnerships which have equity in the delivery of all of Integral disaster responses, and are in line with [Micah Network Partnership Principles](#).
- We commend the [Charter 4 Change](#) movement and the commitments it endorses as one of the ways which can achieve a transformational approach to localisation.
- When local capacity is not existent, unable to respond or not in a position to meet large scale needs as a result of the crisis, we will support direct implementation by an operational Integral Member, so fulfilling international humanitarian principles to serve those who are in crisis.

In Partnership

Integral Members seek partnerships with local actors based on mutual respect, trust, truth and humility.

- Integral is committed to greater transparency of decision making and tracking of its performance, including the volume of funding going to local Partners. Integral will encourage all Members to consider their own commitments to support localisation.
- Integral often brokers the representation of local Partners to international and national donors and coordination mechanisms, advocating when they are undermined or isolated from decision making.
- Integral Members will model accountability to local Partners and enable local decision-making.
- Integral Members are employers of national staff, resulting in the upskilling of local employment markets, while at the same time being very mindful of not undermining local capacity, and promoting fair employment practices.
- Integral supports the sharing of learning between Partners, and recognises that there is much Integral can learn from local Partners.
- Integral coordinates both resources and approaches to strengthen capacity development and the financial stabilisation of local Partners.

Charter4change.org - Commitments



Direct Funding



Partnership



Transparency



Recruitment



Advocacy



Equality



Support



Promotion

⁴ Page 7 <https://start-network.app.box.com/s/0dpqfhx8c3yfh6pcpmjyjkocqm26srr3z>



Integral's Commitments

Statement of Intent



A Partner listening consultation was commissioned across diverse geographical regions in 2019/ 2020 (including the Caribbean, Middle East, East Africa, and South Asia) to inform these commitments.

Integral Members have each developed plans on how they will put these commitments into practice, and agree to dialogue with their Partners about their plans. Integral will seek opportunities to continue to hear directly from local Partners to deepen our understanding and improve our practice of localisation. Efforts will be made to include the voices of both men and women.

As an alliance Integral puts people first, and desires to see each person fulfil their God-given potential⁵. We strive for a truly diverse and inclusive aid industry free from structural racism. Integral reaffirms its desire for a genuine realignment of power through our commitment to localisation, and recognises the need to address power imbalances within Integral and its Members.

For more information on Integral's approach to Localisation please contact the Integral Secretariat at enquiries@integralalliance.org

⁵ <https://www.integralalliance.org/about/vision-mission-values/>

Photo credits :

Page 1 - Left-hand column shows Bangladesh refugee camp following Rakhine State displacement: ©Tearfund (New Zealand), Helen Manson; and a girl sits in the rubble after the Sulawesi tsunami: ©Medair (Switzerland), Paola Barioli.

Page 2 - Left-hand column shows flooding in Bangladesh: ©Tearfund (UK); and Bangladesh refugee camp following Rakhine State displacement: ©Tearfund (New Zealand), Helen Manson (x2)

Page 3 - Recipients of the local Pooled Fund meet in the Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan: ©Tom Price/ Integral Alliance.