



# Islamic Relief Worldwide

## Partnerships Policy

## Version management

Title:	International Programmes Partnerships Policy
URN:	IRW/IPD/011
Category:	International Programmes
Policy Type:	Operational
Version Control:	V2.00
Date of Creation:	2006
Last Modified:	December 2020
Review Date:	December 2022
Approving Body:	Board of Directors
Date of Approval:	17 <sup>th</sup> December 2020
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Department:	Programme Funding and Partnerships Department (PFPD)
Policy Owner:	Head of Programme Funding and Partnerships
For public access or staff access	Staff Access Only

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# 1. Introduction

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Islamic Relief firmly believes that the collective sum of our efforts in partnerships is greater than the sum of our individual parts in achieving meaningful impact. We hope that by setting out our partnership principles and positions we can clarify, and be held to account for, the kinds of relationships we want to cultivate with various types of partners. We will discharge our duty to partners responsibly and transparently with effective compliance and due diligence.

All Islamic Relief 's work in humanitarian response, long-term development, disaster prevention, and campaigns, localisation and advocacy will be guided by this policy. It applies to all entities and offices that operate under IRW's management, and as a guide to 'minimum best practice' for all offices within the Islamic Relief (IR) Family.

## 2. Objectives

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The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the conceptual and operational importance to Islamic Relief's mission to build partnerships, and enhance local capacity where required within the scope of its international development programmes managed by the International Programmes Division (IDP).

### Objectives of the Policy

The aim of the International Programme Partnership Policy is to encourage safe and responsible partnerships with localised actors, operating on the ground. In doing so, IRW aims to:

- Improve design, quality, breadth, depth and added value of partnerships
- Ensure that partnership development will minimise reputational, legal and performance related risk to the organisation, through robust analysis and process management
- Assure that partnerships will be managed effectively and dynamically, be results orientated and benefit from regular review
- Foster organisational learning on partnerships so that this can be retained and lead to improved staff awareness and effective performance management
- Seek clarity on the definition, types and kinds of partnerships which IR can and will engage in

## 3. Policy Basis

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### 2.1 Policy Statement -The basis for the engagement of Islamic Relief with partners

Islamic Relief is committed to working with communities to mitigate the effect of disasters, prepare for their occurrence and respond by providing relief, protection and recovery. To do this we partner with others. Our partnerships will be formed on the basis of shared values and be underpinned by shared responsibilities in a recognised and documented relationship for the delivery of a programme or initiative.

Commitments to the partnership will be based ensuring that we are transparent, accountable and answerable to our donors. All our partnerships will adhere to best practices and ensure that considerations of safeguarding, modern slavery, anti-terrorism are taken into account and embody the principle of "*do no harm*" whilst also exemplifying the commitment for localisation.

IRW's charitable objective is in broad terms "*the relief of poverty in any part of the world*" – and therefore any partnership arrangement that we engage in must aim to directly or indirectly to support this policy statement.

1. The **Objects** of the **Charity** are, as a practical manifestation and application of the humanitarian values inspired and guided by the Islamic faith, to promote for the public benefit:

1.1.1 *the alleviation of human suffering for those who are the victims of war or natural disaster, trouble, inequalities, injustices or catastrophe and the prevention or relief of poverty or financial hardship by:*

- a. *providing humanitarian assistance and other means of saving lives;*
- b. *raising awareness and advocating for those in need;*
- c. *advancing conflict resolution and reconciliation;*
- d. *promoting religious and human harmony.*

1.1.2 *To promote sustainable development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs for the benefit of the public by:-*

- a. *the preservation, conservation and the protection of the environment and the prudent use of natural resources;*
- b. *the relief of poverty and the improvement of the conditions of life in socially and economically disadvantaged communities;*
- c. *the promotion of sustainable means of achieving economic growth and regeneration.*

1.1.3 *to advance and promote education by providing and assisting in the provision of facilities for education, in each case for the public benefit anywhere in the world;*

1.1.4 *to advance health by the provision of financial or other assistance, including medicines, hospitals and other means, in each case for the public benefit anywhere in the world*

Islamic Relief believes partnership provides the means of bringing about change in people's lives through participation, empowerment and the transfer of capabilities to the communities we serve, and is vital to delivering our mission effectively and efficiently.

The concept and practice of partnering with local actors including, civil society organisations, institutions, government and faith-based organisations are fundamental to our honouring our values and fulfilling our Global Strategy, which rests on the principles of building capacity and resilience, changing power relations and removing structural barriers to human development.

IR places a major emphasis on understanding the communities with which we work, and being responsible in how we engage with them. Local actors have a unique understanding of their communities and involvement in the management of programmes and services is essential for long-term sustainability.

IRW believes in the central ethos of adding value to civil society. A strong civil society reflects an empowered and socially responsible population.

In addition to this, IRW has made a commitment to building the capacity of local actors as part of our commitment to both the Charter 4 Change and Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS).

For the Charter 4 Change initiative IRW has affirmed its commitment in relations to Point 2. Reaffirm the Principles of Partnership: where we have endorsed and have signed on to the Principles of Partnership, (Equality, Transparency, Results-Oriented Approach, Responsibility and Complementarity) introduced by the Global Humanitarian Platform in 2007.

As an agency committed to CHS and accountability to communities a strong partnership approach is critical in order to ensure quality standards are met. In particular CHS standard 3 which focuses on strengthening local capacities and standard 6 which focuses on coordinated and complementary assistance.

**2.2** Partnerships take very different forms for IRW around the world. There are various instances where Islamic Relief may work with partners, for example (note that this is not an exhaustive list and can include other incidences which all need to be reviewed on a case by case basis):

- In a humanitarian emergency and as part of our initiative related to disaster preparedness in a geographical location where IRW seeks to fulfil its humanitarian mandate but has little or no operational capacity.
- In development programmes, to leverage both technical and indigenous knowledge towards maximising the impact and sustainability of projects
- As part of specific requirements or conditionalities during a call for proposals
- During the specific implementation of seasonal programmes (Ramadan and Qurbani) where there is a short-term need for logistical and worker support
- In domestic programmes within countries where Islamic Relief is registered
- To safeguard the investment and sustainability of a project once IRW leaves, and in the interests of enabling and empowering local communities
- Where approached by a consortium or potential partners to work together to advocate for an issue where IRW can bring in the special insights of a partner
- Where we are sharing platforms and or making advocacy statements and or forming parts of partnerships for campaigning on particular issues.

As such the scope of this policy is to cover implementing partners; consortium partners; and donor partners predominantly within the remit of the International Programmes Division, although the guidance contained herein can be applicable to areas outside of the Division.

## 4. Scope of Policy

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**5.1** This policy is designed to provide principles for all international programme partnership work across and beyond IRW.

**5.2** This policy applies to IRW's own jurisdiction and for all entities and offices that operate under IRW's management. It provides a guiding and recommended policy for all offices within the Islamic Relief (IR) Family and should be viewed as a benchmark and recommendation for 'minimum best practice'.

**5.3** Operationally, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is ultimately responsible for the implementation of this policy. The CEO has delegated the implementation of the Policy to the Programmes Director for all programme related partnerships and or other designated individuals as per the needs of the partnerships as and where necessary and this process can be facilitated accordingly. Oversight on the compliance of the policy will be undertaken by the Governance Department.

**5.4** The Head of Governance & the Finance Director (or equivalent) will be consulted for certain levels of approvals for partnerships to ensure compliance. This may be according to the value of the partnership or the type of partnership and will take into considerations aspects related to Anti-Diversion and Anti-Money Laundering (AML), along with other concerns related to safeguarding, governance and ethical considerations. The process for providing this level of support will be highlighted in the Partnering Process map which will form an imperative part of the policy.

**5.5** If there is material change in the management of a partner organisation (i.e. if there are substantial changes in the management and or governance of a particular partner e.g. merger) or if there are reputational risks to IR, a partnership will be subject to immediate review.

**5.6** Ultimately, the responsibility lies with IRW's Trustees to be satisfied that a partnership is in the best interests of the charity.

## 5. Purposes of a Partnership

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### 4.1 Purpose of a partnership

IRW believes that the purpose of a partnership is to bring together insights, knowledge, skills and resources which will enable us to reduce human suffering and poverty. This will include actions to support the poor and marginalised people and communities in order to overcome poverty and suffering more effectively.

### 4.2 IRW's definition for a partnership

A "Partnership" is a relationship whereby an organisation with which IRW (or any entity who operate under the Islamic Relief name and logo) shares responsibilities in a recognised and documented relationship for the delivery of a programme or initiative. Commitments to the partnership will be based on Equality, Transparency, Results-Oriented Approach, Responsibility and Complementarity.

Principles of Partnering

### 4.3 Types of partnerships

The different types of partnerships that IR may be engaged in are as follows:



#### **4.3.1 Type A: Implementation Partnerships and Joint ventures / Consortia**

This kind of partnership includes a partner or partners delivering projects, services or influencing for change. This may involve joint analysis, assessments, planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting as well as funding, gifts-in-kind and technical support from and to IRW. This would include a partnership during a humanitarian emergency, recovery and rehabilitation, long-term development programmes, and seasonal programmes (e.g. Qurbani and Ramadan campaigns) and advocacy campaigning.

Joint ventures / Consortia that involve 'on the ground' delivery of services and influencing (including advocating) are included where IRW will work with multiple partners on a project. Typically, each partner has a role in both development and implementation, and the different partners provide complementary technical expertise, cover specific geographical areas and share learning. Funding is usually external, such as a multilateral agency. There will also often be a lead partner holding primary responsibility for the management of funds.

#### **4.3.2 Type B: Strategic partnerships, networks and coalitions**

IRW and a partner will come together at a strategic level. This entails a broader sharing of objectives and is a medium to long-term arrangement. In the case of high level and long-term strategic partnerships a MOU is usually developed to govern the partnership.

In the case of a network or coalition, IRW and partners work together to share and exchange information and expertise. IRW and the partners may seek to complement one another's work, avoid overlap of project activities and/or provide support to an initiative. Examples include the START Network.

Such a partnership may not necessarily be based on a project, service or influencing, though any of these may result from it. Once implementation enters the partnership, 'Type A: Implementation Partnerships and Consortia' becomes applicable.

#### **4.3.3 Type C: Corporate partnerships**

Corporate partnerships are where IRW work with an entity that is a for-profit company or where there is a direct funding benefit to IRW from a for-profit company. Such partnerships must comply with both this, our Values and Code of Conduct.

#### **4.3.4 Type D: Mandated partnerships**

IRW will from time to time work with certain organisations, for example, as part of regulatory frameworks, or governmental or public institutions. This may include local governmental institutions with mandatory responsibility for the provision of services e.g. education departments, health ministries, etc.

#### **4.4 Types of partners**

Partners may be:

1. Local or national non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs)
2. Faith-based organisations (FBOs)
3. Community based organisations (CBOs)
4. International NGOs or international CSOs
5. Governmental bodies – which may be national, provincial, state or local
6. Not-for-profit companies
7. Private and corporate sector companies
8. Trusts and foundations

9. Others – industrial associations, academic institutions, technical/specialist agencies, religious groups and bodies, etc.

#### 4.5 Due Diligence of Funding to Partners

**4.5.1** Before IRW agrees to partner with any entity, that entity is required to undergo the IRW Grantee Due Diligence Process. This is the process by which any partner receiving IRW funds must demonstrate their financial, governance, compliance and safeguarding credentials. See Appendix A for the internal due diligence process.

**4.5.2** IRW can only fund activities that are intended to further its charitable purposes. Funding should cover costs that are directly connected to carrying out agreed activities.

**4.5.3** Where a partnership will generate intellectual property (for example in the case of research by higher education institutions), IRW will need to protect its share of this potentially valuable asset. IP rights are protected under the various contract agreements IRW utilise when entering into 3rd party arrangements.

## 6. Partner Selection and Compliance Process

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**6.1** Any potential partner must be able to demonstrate they can meet the requirements and principles of IRW's Anti-Diversion and Anti-Money Laundering policy, Safeguarding Policy, Modern Slavery guidance and other key operational policies that may be required to ensure any partnership is safe, responsible and value for money. IRW will work with Partners and provide appropriate assistance, processes and forms but the responsibility for compliance will be for the partners.

**6.2** This policy is complemented and put into practice by the "Partner Selection and Compliance Process". This provides the 'practical dimension' of the policy.

**6.3** It is noted that the partner selection process, in meeting these procedures, must be fully documented. This is elaborated in the "Due Diligence Process and Standard Setting", managed by the IRW Executive Board, which accompanies this policy and should always be completed.

**6.4** IRW Management may review and change the "Due Diligence Process and Standard Setting" as they see fit, so long as it fulfils the requirements detailed in this document.

**6.5** A business case is an imperative part of the partnership selection process and has to define the purpose and objectives of the potential partnership, as well as the risks and associated mitigation strategies. It can be made for any of partnerships listed in Section 2.3 by the relevant IRW Departments, Field Offices and any other IR affiliate. On approval by the appropriate line manager information should to be sought from the potential partner for screening and due diligence checks undertaken. Once this is completed positively, a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed and then to govern particular projects, a Project Agreement / Contract will be signed.

**6.7** A potential Partner may be rejected and/or terminated on the basis of:

- They do not pass our Anti-Diversion & Anti-Money Laundering policy
- Not being able to adequately demonstrate compliance and adherence to our policies related to safeguarding, modern slavery and other key perquisite highlighted within the scope of this policy.

- Due diligence on the organisation reveals information which results in the partnership being invalidated.
- The partner does not uphold the key principles of partnership as outlined below and or fails to report and or act upon areas which have been brought to their attention as requiring action to be taken.
- The business case for the partnership is not sufficient to warrant a partnership
- No longer required by the organisation or the partnership was not used during the period of the MOU (all MOU's should cover the maximum duration of the partnering agreement i.e. two years)
- Material change in the structure of governance the partner during the on-boarding process
- We identify a reputational risk that is deemed too high and or a risk arises which makes the partnership no longer attainable.

A partner (or the relevant IR department applying for the partnership) can re-apply after any rejection provided, they have addressed the reasons for the rejection for the IPD Director to then review the case again. However, where the reason for termination and or rejection is due to failure to pass Anti-diversion and AML policy, they cannot re-apply.

The potential partner has no right to appeal where the reason for rejection is due to Anti-Diversion & Anti-Money Laundering concerns. However, where the reason may have been due to other reasons, IRW can determine whether it would be worthwhile working with the organisation to reach that level of acceptability, but the onus to do so would be on the organisation, not IRW.

The agreed partnership will be valid for a duration of two years, unless an alternative duration has been agreed in writing at the time the partnership is formed, upon the completion of which the partnership will have to be reviewed again and undergo renewed due diligence checks to ensure that the partner remains in good standing. In all, case partners will be subject to a due diligence check every two years to ensure the partner remains in good standing.

## 7. Principles of Partnerships

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### 7.1 Principle 1 - Sharing a common mission with our partners, to put those we serve first

#### 7.1.1 Mission

Any partner that IRW works must help us progress towards our organisational principles which are:

Exemplifying our Islamic values, we will mobilise resources, build partnerships and develop local capacity as we work to:

- Enable communities to mitigate the effect of disasters, prepare for their occurrence and respond by providing relief, protection and recovery.
- Promote integrated development and environmental custodianship with a focus on sustainable livelihoods.
- Support the marginalised and vulnerable to voice their needs and address root causes of poverty.

### 7.1.2 Values

Partners must share Islamic Relief's values including a commitment to protecting human dignity and valuing the role that the faith can play, universally, in inspiring and guiding humanitarian action.

### 7.1.3 Objective and added value

The objective, added value and synergy of IRW and the partner working together should be demonstrated and openly shared, as should any limitations.

### 7.1.4 Mutual benefit

IRW believes that each partner in a relationship brings with it unique resources, experiences, approaches and learning. IRW enters partnership believing that it stands to benefit and learn from its partner and their experiences and approaches, and that the partner can benefit from the partnership and learn from IRW.

Investing in local partners for humanitarian and development work minimises costs, creates job opportunities and leaves a more sustainable impact.

### 7.1.5 Do no harm

IRW believes in embodying the "do no harm" principle for all of its partnership working in that "Humanitarian organisations must strive to 'do no harm' or to minimize the harm they may be inadvertently doing simply by being present and providing assistance".

The 'do no harm' principle places an emphasis on ensuring the beneficial role of humanitarian actors in any humanitarian or developmental intervention, which may inadvertently undermine functioning community partnerships and vital systems. IR should, for example, avoid disrupting the development and functioning of local economies by importing food en masse, or inadvertently making a partner reliant on external funding.

Islamic Relief is committed, under our [Do No Harm Commitment](#), to ensuring that its work does not cause harm to in particular the following:

- The people we seek to support and their families and wider communities, in particular in relation to their safety, dignity and rights
- The functioning of communities, relationships between social groups and state-society relations
- The environment, local markets and sustainable livelihoods

This policy refers you to the 'Do No Harm' commitments <https://www.islamic-relief.org/about-us/do-no-harm-commitment/>

IRW's choice of partners must be sensitive to the local context. For example, care must be taken to avoid perceptions of bias towards one ethnic group over another in places where there are ethnic tensions. Islamic Relief's advice includes:

- Partnering with informal organisations that work with or represent different groups; often these are not formally constituted or do not fit the usual 'profile' of an NGO, but where they

exist they can be the most appropriate partner in an insecure or conflict affected environment

- Engage with and link up partners that work on different sides of a conflict. This must be transparently and explicitly organised by the international partner or it may have the opposite effect of reinforcing competition between groups as they compete for available resources
- Provide space, through partnering, for local people to organize and participate in activities that are not associated with the conflict. These must be community-led to be context sensitive as they are more aware of the sensitivities of security
- International agencies can provide some protection for those that want to work for civilian needs but are disrupted by the conflict environment
- Use partnering to support civilian vis-à-vis military authority – NGOs partnering with an international agency can strengthen their ability to operate in relation to the military power
- Encourage a mapping of the connectors and dividers and key actors (see IRW Conflict Toolkit) to check the impact of partner relationships on community group dynamics

#### **7.1.6 Respect**

IRW emphasises mutual respect and equality in any partnership. IRW respects the right of partners to define and pursue their own goals and priorities. The most important stakeholders in a given partnership are the people we serve.

Communities and local CBOs and NGOs may have diverse cultural and social identities, structures, beliefs, and differences in their approaches, but these should encourage partnerships when there is a desire to work towards a common position on important issues.

#### **7.1.7 Inclusion and Protection**

Where possible Islamic Relief seeks to partner with organisations representing traditionally marginalised and excluded groups (such as women and youth-led organisations as well as organisations of persons with disabilities, older persons, and indigenous persons) in recognition that such partnerships not only improve the effectiveness and accountability of our programming and advocacy but also contribute to achieving inclusion and reduce the risk of negative effects, in line with humanitarian quality standards and a human rights approach to development.

## **7.2 Principle 2 - Partnerships that are accountable, transparent, compliant and pursue excellence**

### **7.2.1 Accountability**

IR believes that there is shared accountability in any partnership. This is primarily to those people being served and their communities, the partners themselves and public, multilateral and governmental donors and the relevant authorities. By this principle IR shares the responsibility for professional administration and ethical conduct within the partner programmes it supports. IR must communicate and agree the results and standards it expects to be delivered and monitor compliance with them. IR will ensure and support partners to abide by our commitments to the Core Humanitarian Standard including abiding by the principles of the IR Accountability Framework. We will provide transparency to the local community and other actors about the partnership and the results, outputs and eligibility criteria that apply.

Islamic Relief's Accountability Framework, captured within Islamic Relief's IHSAN Quality Management Framework and incorporating the CHS Standard, will be used to assess and support partner capacity to ensure fulfilment of IR's commitment to accountability to communities. Where there are gaps between IR's accountability commitment and partners processes and systems, particularly in relation to accountability to communities, relevant system strengthening capacity building support will be agreed with the partner. A partner must have in place, at minimum, an adequate complaints and feedback mechanism which can be used by communities to raise any concerns. Where none exists, IR will support to develop necessary mechanisms or partner may choose to promote Islamic Relief's complaint and feedback mechanism, in line with our complaint policy, instead. Where projects are supported through partners, IRW's MEAL Framework will be used as the basis of incorporating relevant monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning processes and tools within the project cycle of the agreed project.

### 7.2.2 Ownership

Each IRW Partnership will have a designated relationship manager who will be responsible for the agreement, budget, implementation and focal point on any matters related to the Partnership. It is expected that a similar position will exist with the Partner.

### 7.2.3 Capability

In any Partnership, the partner should have, or the potential to have, the capacity to undertake and deliver the projects, services or influencing proposed. Where this is not possible, as part of our commitment to C4C and CHS we will assist in identifying the necessary gaps in the capacity of the potential local actors and then allocate support and assistance to address the capacity enhancement gaps.

### 7.2.4 Standards

At Islamic Relief Worldwide the protection of our beneficiaries, staff and volunteers from exploitation and abuse is one of our key focus. We fully acknowledge the gender imbalance of those affected by modern slavery with women and girls being disproportionately affected, in particular being victims of forced labour (especially in the commercial sex industry) and those subjected to forced marriage. We believe in fulfilling the rights and respecting the dignity of each person, including children and young people. Thus, our work is rooted in providing solutions for a life free from abuse and exploitation. In order to fulfil our obligations, we have developed a framework to safeguard the security and safety of those we have responsibilities towards. We must "respect, protect and do no harm". In any IRW partnership, the external partner must be committed to the principles of:

- The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief
- The Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (the Sphere standards)
- Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS)
- Our Values
- Safeguarding
- Fraud, Bribery and Corruption
- Adherence to good practice in relations to Anti-Diversion and Anti-Money Laundering (AML) standards

#### 7.2.4 Safeguarding Framework

At Islamic Relief Worldwide our actions are inspired and grounded by our Islamic values: excellence, sincerity, social justice, compassion and custodianship which hold us responsible to ensure children, young people and people at risk are protected against all forms of harm and abuse including and in particular violence, sexual exploitation and abuse. Islamic relief is also responsible to ensure staff and volunteers are protected against the risk of harm and abuse throughout our operations and programmes.

Our Safeguarding framework makes sure the organisation has a holistic and systematic approach to mainstream safeguarding throughout all levels of the organisational structure and towards those we serve. The safeguarding framework builds on the key learnings from policies addressing safeguarding needs. A crucial component of safeguarding is the mandatory training that all Islamic Relief staff and representatives are required to complete. We also ensure that we are holding ourselves accountable to our beneficiaries of all ages, abilities and needs, including the wider stakeholders, through raising awareness of code of behaviour and conduct they should expect from IR staff, those representing or working with the organisation. When these standards are not adhered to, effective and accessible complaints mechanism have been established in all country offices, for Safeguarding or SEA concerns to be escalated.

Our commitments to providing and ensuring safeguarding to all those that we are interacting with including consideration of Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Modern slavery.

#### 7.2.5 Regulatory guidance

Following UK Charity Commission guidelines

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-due-diligence-checks-and-monitoring-end-use-of-funds> IRW will conduct an organisational assessment of potential partners so that it can become an 'approved partner organisation for IRW' the assessment covers the following key areas:

- Key partner details (inclusive of the governance document of the partner; identifying any association with any proscribed organisation, designated entities or financially sanctioned entities; identifying any reputational risks related to the organisation)
- Representatives and structures (inclusive of the key personnel and any association with any proscribed organisation, designated entities or financially sanctioned entities, or designated individuals list; a 'fit for purpose' assessment of the partner's size, management and operational structure; an assessment on whether the partner is able to deliver the services required, and noting down how we can easily contact the partner's senior representatives and other key staff if needed)
- Practical working relationship (inclusive of prior knowledge of having worked with the partner, and any concerns relating to this; any language, communication or cultural barriers, and how these may be overcome; what other organisations the partner may be working with, and any problems this may present; what arrangements are in place to monitor the charitable services being provided, and the confidence of any third parties involved within the relationship)

**7.2.5.1** Accounting and internal financial controls (inclusive of whether the partner's financial controls are adequate and reliable; whether its financial policies and procedures are documented; the recording and audit systems in place, and whether these are suitable for the type of work being undertaken and scale of funding; whether IRW will be able to inspect the partner's financial records; any concerns about local banking arrangements and the movement of funds, and measures to address this; the extent to which the partner has adequately trained and qualified staff to manage funds,



maintain accounts and report back to IRW; how the partner's senior staff monitor and manage its more junior staff)

**7.2.5.2** External risk factors (inclusive of the special risk factors that apply to the area in which the partner would operate – and the extent to which the partner would be able to deal with these; these may include the political, economic and social environment, potential or actual instability, unrest or conflict, health and safety concerns for charity representatives, and external factors that affect effective monitoring)

**7.2.6** Ethics: Above and beyond the regulatory guidance provided, IRW must consider the partner's ethics and principles, and the extent to which they are consistent with IRW's. For example, a partner in some instances may be considered acceptable, but is known to be funded by the arms trade. This creates ethical issues for an organisation like IRW, and where required, matters should be referred to the Board of Directors.

**7.2.7** Legislation: Any partnership must comply with the UK Financial Crime, Anti-terrorism and Child Protection requirements as well as legislation in the country where the Partner is based.

The IRW Conflict of Interest Policy must be observed. No partner, trustee, government official, IR staff member (or similar) should directly benefit financially or in-kind from the partnership, over and above the benefits that would normally accrue as a member of the local community.

#### **7.2.8 Child Safeguarding Policy**

Any partnership that involves working with children must comply with IRW's Child Protection Policy or good practice on child protection guidelines.

#### **7.2.9 Transparency**

Any Partnership will be subject to the IRW Transparency Policy. Henceforth, all current and recent IRW Partnership agreements will be available for inspection upon request.

#### **7.2.10 Policies and toolkits**

IRW respects that engaging with partners means benefitting from their specific experience, skills, insight and approach, and hence seeks to work complementarily with them. However, IRW tries in any given partnership to apply – realistically and as appropriate – its variety of policies and toolkits. This can include for instance, gender, peace building, human development etc.

#### **7.2.11 Data and Knowledge**

An agreed Partnership must ensure that sharing and storing of relevant data and knowledge complies with applicable data protection laws and is mutually agreed by both parties. This should also consider GDPR data from the various campaigns undertaken by IR.

#### **7.2.12 Records Management**

Any agreed partnership must incorporate the following minimum records management requirements into the relevant agreement when delivering projects through or in partnership with an implementation partner:

- a. Types of records required to be kept.
- b. Responsibilities for keeping original records during and after the duration of the agreement.
- c. Responsibilities for making and transferring copies of records between parties including the format of these copies, whether physical or electronic.
- d. Method and frequency of any required transfer of original or copy records.



- e. Method of assurance necessary to ensure partner is creating and keeping reliable records that can be accessed when required.

#### **7.2.13 Serious Incident Reporting (SIR)**

Partners are required to notify IRW of any serious incidents that involve:

- IRW funds, brand, people or an activity (or joint activity) that they (we) are responsible for
- Any incident that could have an impact on their reputation
- Any incident that does not involve the above, but could have a significant impact i.e. raises issues around due diligence and capability of the partner to continue to deliver or or could trigger suspension or termination of the agreement

This is imperative in order for IRW to meet its regulatory reporting obligations with the Charity Commission to report serious incidents that involve Partners. For further guidance please refer to the Serious Incident Reporting Policy.

### **7.3 Principle 3 – Partnerships that are just, equitable genuine and seek trust and understanding**

#### **7.3.1 Trust**

It is expected that trust between partners will be cultivated and maintained through frequent dialogue concerning values, standards and approaches and through the principles of Equality, Transparency, Results orientated approach, Responsibility and complementarity.

#### **7.3.2 Clarity**

In any partnership, the individual and necessary commitment of both IRW and the partner must be explicit and clearly understood. To fulfil this, the partnership must have an agreement or memorandum of understanding (MOU). Every partnership should be based on a form of agreement which details unambiguously the responsibilities and commitment of the parties, the process and timeframe. This will specify the delivery of minimum standards, regular reporting and financial accountability, and guarantee the partners open access to the documentation and accounts concerning partnership activities. There should be no ambiguity left in regard to the specific responsibilities and commitments of each partner.

#### **7.3.3 Reporting**

Information for accountability and assurance must be provided in regular and timely reports as defined in the funding agreement.

#### **7.3.4 Manage expectations**

Recognising that some partnerships are of limited duration, IR must manage expectations with full respect, honesty and clarity in regard to the limitations of funding and communicate properly any unforeseen changes against project plans. In the case of withdrawal, phased targets towards the partner sustainably taking over responsibility for IR's contribution will lead to outcomes and impact being achieved while minimising disruption or ill feeling.

### **7.3.5 Managing disagreement in the partnership**

The consistent, professional and fair application of this policy should prevent disputes from arising. Constantly being reminded of the mission of partnership – that of reducing human suffering and poverty should not necessarily be seen negatively but rather as an opportunity for improvement. Sources of disagreement should be anticipated as part of regular partnership meetings, and issues should be raised (with a “no surprises” culture) and addressed. IRW’s agreements and memoranda of understanding must account for disputes to being handled professionally with the mediation of IRW Directors if necessary. Details of IRW’s Complaints and Whistleblowing mechanism and policies should be made available to partners.

### **7.3.7 Continuous improvement**

In order to maintain and improve the quality of partnership work, for the sake of IRW’s mission, IRW believes that any partnership should be reviewed at regular intervals during the partnership ( at least once every two years and every 12 months for partnerships that in countries classified as having Enhanced Due Diligence (EDD)), and at the end of a partnership or when a significant collaboration comes to an end. The achievement of planned outcomes and adherence to this partnership policy should be considered, along with decisions about the future potential and direction of the partnership. In addition to this, further measures of assessing performance throughout the relationship will be adopted to ensure that the relationship remains viable.

## 8. Summary: ‘how to apply an overview’

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### 8.1 How to apply the principles of partnering

#### 8.1.1 Approaching local partners with an open and dynamic capacity-building mindset

**8.1.1.1** Naturally, many CBOs and NGOs might not meet international standards. Local partners will not have benefited from capacity building and training e.g. in matters such as the implementation of humanitarian principles and due diligence requirements.

**8.1.1.2** IRW also recognizes that partnerships in themselves require time and dedication to meet various compliance requirements; this may in part fall beyond the capacity of the partner.

**8.1.1.3** It is part of IRW’s approach to help build their capacity to meet such standards, especially of local CBOs and NGOs.

**8.1.1.4** Reasonable and demonstrable measures must be taken to ensure that IRW partnership principles are fully applied, and support should be afforded to build the capacity of local partners by IRW to help do this. In particular – without contravening due impartiality – IRW may provide capacity to help a partner to meet their due diligence requirements. Due process will be in place to capture these measures and may form part of conditional agreement with the proposed partnership.

#### 8.1.2 Monitoring and evaluating success of partnerships

**8.1.2.1** Partnerships that IRW commits to will be monitored and evaluated accordingly (with this policy in mind, as well as the project / service design and organizational expectations etc.).

**8.1.2.2** IRW must take the learning from its partnerships and integrate this into future partnership working, as well as future partner selection (if we are considering re-engaging a partner we have used already, IRW will look to the previous evaluation data on that partner).

**8.1.2.3** IRW at a strategic level should undertake a regular review of its engagement with partners, based upon evaluation information, and implement actions to meet learning outcomes.

**8.1.2.4** Within IRW, the International Programmes Division (IPD) and in particular the Programme Funding and Partnerships Department (PFPD) will take a key role in defining, designing, and managing the organisational partnership review process and will measure and capture metrics related to understanding how to better manage and improve IRW’s partnering abilities.

#### 8.1.3 Accepted partners

**8.1.3.1** Once a partner has been approved via IRW’s partnership approval basis based on this policy, it becomes an ‘accepted partner’ for two years until a review must again take place. This is notwithstanding other regular checks and balances that are being proposed throughout the partnering relationship. If the purpose of the Partnership ceases such as when it is no longer conducive to maintain the partnership at the behest of either party to the partnership, then the Partnership will terminate immediately.

**8.1.3.2** If a partner is found to be in breach of our partnership principles within the two years, then it shall be removed from this ‘accepted partner’ list.

## 8.2 Humanitarian emergencies caused by a natural disaster

**8.2.1** As part of the Disaster Preparedness Strategy, IRW will ensure that potential and preferred partners are identified, assessed and placed onto a register of pre-approved partners to be available at the global / field / partner level as appropriate. The normal compliance and screening procedures will apply.

**8.2.2** However, in the event that a natural disaster (i.e. not a conflict-related or man-made disaster) strikes in an area where IRW had no previously identified partners and where saving lives is an urgent priority – and where proscribed entities do not operate – the International Programmes Director of IRW may permit, after consultation with the relevant personnel and the emergency response lead, the following:

- Partnership with a local partner on an interim basis is approved, subject to a completion of necessary due diligence checks
- The signing of an interim agreement rather than a normal agreement, which includes a termination clause if any remaining items of assessment are proven to be unsatisfactory
- The documentation and usual commitment to some matters can be met at a most basic and cursory level on an exceptional basis in an emergency.

The areas that can be met at a cursory level include demonstrating the values and benefit (parts 2 and 4 in Principle 1), and a long-term commitment to trust (part 1 in Principle 3).

## Appendix 5: Process Map (DRAFT)



