



Fit for Purpose

A strategy for sustained growth 2016 - 2020



IAS Expansion: Sahel and MENA (Middle East/North Africa).

IAS Country Offices: IAS current operational region with IAS in-country registrations.

IAS Supported Countries: Some of the countries with local partners supported by IAS Alliance Members but without IAS in-country registrations.

1. Introduction

International Aid Services (IAS) is an International Non-Governmental Organization (INGO) abiding by Christian values. Its vision is to see a ‘godly transformed society’ and the mission is ‘to save lives, promote self-reliance and dignity through human transformation, going beyond relief and development’. Founded in 1989 with the purpose of assisting conflict affected populations in South Sudan, it is now registered and runs programs in over 10 countries in three key operating regions: Sahel, Greater Horn of Africa and Eastern Africa. IAS also supports partners and projects in other countries outside these regions. The programs are supported by four Alliance Members in Europe and the United States. The Alliance Head Office is located in Stockholm, Sweden.

The expansion of IAS has always been strategically driven by need, injustice and the fact that no one else is responding to the needs of the population. The foundation for growth has been our Core Values of Missions, Integrity, Relational Leadership and Team Work, Empathy (Compassion) and Equality.

With this strategy we wish to continue to build on this foundation. We will continue to serve the unreached and underprivileged populations. We will continue to stay true to our calling and mandate. We will continue to sustain what we have, while we expand and grow by assisting populations in other regions. We want to be Fit for Purpose.

2. Governance

IAS is an International Alliance of four Legacy Members: Sweden, Denmark, USA and Germany. Each of these members are unique organizations with individual legal registrations in their respective countries, but share the same vision, mission, values and logo. An Alliance Agreement is signed between the members outlining the roles and responsibilities, as well as the modus operandi of the Alliance.¹

IAS Sweden has been formally tasked with the role of managing the international Head Office of the Alliance. This mandate includes the oversight and management of all existing Country Offices, as well as the expansion of IAS globally. This expansion includes the addition of new Country Offices, but also extends to new Affiliate Members and Alliance Members. The Swedish Board carries the legal responsibility of the Head Office and appoints a CEO for the Alliance.

In addition to the more generic Partnership Agreement, specific Terms of Reference are signed between the Head Office and the respective alliance members and between the Alliance members governing internal relationships.

3. The Challenges: Context Analysis

The context we work in

Today IAS has established Country Offices in the following 10 African countries: South Sudan (1990 – then Sudan), Uganda (1994), Kenya (1991), Somalia/Somaliland (1994/1999), Ethiopia

¹ The Alliance Agreement can be downloaded from our webpage – www.ias-intl.org. IAS Country Offices are countries where IAS have in-country registrations and its own staff. These offices fall under the management responsibility of the Alliance Head Office/IAS Sweden.

(2004), Djibouti (2003), Sudan (2003), Chad (2009), Tanzania (2007) and Niger (2014). See our Country Strategies for more specific details.

While each country is unique, there are a few common denominators for IAS presence in these countries. These interlinking and overlapping factors increase the vulnerability of the populations IAS aims to serve:

- **Fragile contexts with armed conflict and political instability.** A majority of the countries where IAS operates experience armed conflict and political instability. Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia/Somaliland are examples of such countries where maintaining operations is critical, yet highly challenging.
- **Underdevelopment, poverty and weak civil society.** The countries in the regions IAS is targeting are some of the world's poorest countries. Niger and Chad, not only grappling with chronic humanitarian needs, are also, for example, ranked in the bottom of the Human Development Index.
- **Drought and other climate change related issues.** The effects of climate change can be felt across the regions where IAS operates, and is disproportionately affecting the populations who are already the most vulnerable. Recurring drought and floods in Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya and Somaliland/Somalia are examples where this is of particular concern.

IAS added value to date

IAS has been managed to be present and stay relevant in these challenging contexts during the last 25 years. It is believed that the following value propositions (as obtained from our business model) have contributed to this success. Going forward it will be crucial to continue building on those added values and expand them further:

- Christian faith values in action;
- We invest in people and treat them equally;
- 'We' mentality (not us/them in terms of staff and partners);
- Low staff turnover;
- In-country presence with local expertise and knowledge and with solid relationships established with host governments, non-state actors, civil society and other relevant stakeholders on the ground – most of our programming is driven by competent national staff;
- We reach further (going to the hard to reach areas);
- We have access and we dig deeper,
- We have developed core competencies and positive track records in a number of disciplines; primarily in the sectors of WASH, Inclusive Education and Civil Society Development;
- As a multi-mandated organization we see the value of and strive to be relevant in the whole development spectrum – ranging from emergency relief to sustainable development;
- We drive change, we are highly motivated and we provide quality aid (including adherence to international standards and principles).

Future trends and challenges

Unfortunately the world is not, in the foreseeable future, turning into a brighter place. There will be a multitude of challenges moving forward. In order to stay relevant it will be key for humanitarian- and development actors to be flexible and have the ability to quickly adapt and adjust to new emerging realities. Some of the key trends and challenges, albeit not exhaustive, are:

- **Continued and intensified widespread conflicts and displacement of populations.** Today there are more than 100 million persons displaced, with a majority of them displaced due to ongoing conflict. South Sudan, Syria and Iraq account for more than 25% of the global caseload. This is not a local, national nor regional issue, but a global issue. Fluid borders, changing tactics in warfare and a growing radicalization of various groups is likely to continue.
- **Climate change as well as continued, more frequent and probably intensified natural disasters.** The effects of climate change will continue to put extra pressure on the most vulnerable populations. Furthermore, erratic rainfall patterns will lead to increased and intensified periods of drought and flooding. In the last decade, starting with the tsunami in 2004, there have also been numerous natural mega-disasters, including Pakistan, Haiti, Philippines and Nepal.
- **Urbanization and youth unemployment.** The contexts where much of the armed conflicts are taking place today, for example the Middle East, are also more urban and developed contexts. Addressing needs in these contexts require a slightly different approach than the traditional humanitarian- and development approach.
- **Global systems not coping with the challenges.** While there have been a number of global initiatives, such as the Humanitarian Reform Process, the Transformative Agenda, the Hyogo Framework for Action followed by Sendai, the Millennium Development Goals, followed by the newly adopted Sustainable Development Goals, and perhaps most recently the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul 2016; these systems have not been able to address the challenges faced. There has further been a cry to reform the UN-system, including the UN Security Council, in order to address root causes of conflict and poverty and find lasting political solutions. Far too often there are political deadlocks and a world that is watching instead of taking action to unfolding injustice and needs.
- **Professionalization of the aid industry, funding, innovation and new emerging actors.** There will be a continued professionalization of the global aid industry and an increasing influx of new actors on the scene. The funding levels will not be proportionate to the rising needs. Today, on a global scale, the humanitarian- and development community is reaching more people than ever before, but the needs are proportionally even greater. There will be scrambling for resources and the need to join hands with a wide range of actors. Innovation will be key and the private sector will increase its relevance and engagement.
- **Increased levels of persecution and marginalization of people groups.** There will be continuous growing persecution of people groups based on issues such as race, ethnicity and faith. Christians have been particularly subject to persecution on the basis of faith. The influx of refugees in certain parts of the world has also seen a drive for more nationalistic and protectionist policies aiming at exclusion instead of inclusion. It is likely that these trends will continue.

4. IAS Response: Taking it further

Overall considerations

This strategy is about sustained growth. Sustained refers to the following three key aspects: confirm, uphold and support. For IAS it translates to providing necessary support in our current operational realm. Some of the ways we have done so is to organize and structure our countries into three management regions: Sahel, Greater Horn of Africa and East Africa. Each region has a Regional Focal Point attached to it. The Regional Focal Point acts as an extended arm of the CEO in providing key strategic and management advice for the region it oversees.

Over the last few years there has also been an immense effort to strengthen our internal controls. Today we have a Procedure Handbook containing Policy Handbook, Financial Handbook,

Programme Handbook, Human Resources Handbook and Procurement Handbook. We have thematic manuals on our three core sectors: Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), Inclusive Education/Special Needs Education (IE/SNE) and Civil Society Development (CSD) and designated global focal points for each of the sectors. We are also part of a number of quality initiatives, such as the CHS Alliance (previously HAP and People in Aid), SPHERE and have established a humanitarian unit at the Head Office overseeing the humanitarian portfolio of the organization.

Sustaining the existence of the above mentioned systems, procedures and structures also provides a framework for growth; a growth across several disciplines, including increasing quality throughout the organization. However, our growth for the next five years will also focus on geographical expansion into new regions; regions with severe needs and where injustice is prevailing. Regions with ongoing conflicts, strife and severe persecution, and regions where few actors are providing assistance. The primary region of focus is Middle East/North Africa (MENA) and the continued expansion in the Sahel region.

| Target box | | | |
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| Issue | Target | Timeframe | Responsible person(s) |
| Maintaining quality. | Continue to stay engaged in CHS Alliance and maintain other quality initiatives, such as our own Accountability Framework, Core Humanitarian Standards etc. | 2016 – on-going. | Head of Policy and Quality Assurance. |
| | Continue to develop and strengthen IAS Procedure Handbook. | Annual review starting 2016-ongoing. | Head of Departments. |
| | Produce a graphic and visibility manual. | October 2016. | Head of Marketing and Fundraising. |
| | Produce a Country Director's Handbook | October 2016. | CEO with input from Country Director's and Head of Departments. |

Programme priorities

IAS is a multi-mandated organization with programming in the full development spectrum, ranging from emergency relief, response in chronic humanitarian crises, resilience programming to longer term development programming. To date, IAS has strived to consolidate its programme engagement into three main thematic areas of core competencies:

- **Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM):** Promote the efficient development and management of natural resources to meet the basic and livelihood needs of the beneficiary communities;
- **Inclusive Education/Special Needs Education (IE/SNE):** Ensure equal access and sustained provision of quality learning opportunities for children, youth and women from disadvantaged backgrounds with diverse learning abilities;
- **Civil Society Development (CSD):** Build the capacity of local organizations and organize communities aiming at strengthening their participation in poverty reduction and sustainable

development initiatives. This thematic area has also included projects aiming at community transformation.

IAS has developed manuals guiding its work in these areas. Moving forward, IAS will continue to strengthen our capacity in these thematic areas but the programme focus will be structured according to sectors of engagement.

The IWRM thematic area is very broad and is the approach IAS will still utilize, but the key sector where IAS engages within the IWRM framework has been, and will continue to be, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH). For IE/SNE this has been and will continue to be a sector of its own but will be labelled IE as that is the primary goal of IAS engagements. The CSD thematic area will be split up into two areas. The more project based segments of CSD will continue to be framed within CSD and will focus on projects with transformational focus. The capacity building segments will be enhanced through a newly introduced department of IAS – the IAS Leadership Academy. For more info on the works of the academy, kindly see below under Management.

As such, the new programme priorities of IAS will be the following core sectors:

- **WASH:** Continue to enhance the IAS tool box of appropriate WASH solutions on a local, national, regional and global scale. Utilize the IWRM principles for sustainable WASH provisions. This sector is applied in both humanitarian- and development programmes.
- **IE:** Continue to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged children in all IAS areas of operation. IE/SNE is primarily a sector applied in IAS development programmes, but IAS will strive towards mainstreaming disability issues in all its interventions.
- **CSD:** Within this sector IAS will also undertake specific projects with a more community driven and participatory approach aiming at achieving transformation on an individual and community level. Such programmes are inherently developmental in character and would include, for example, the initiative on Action Against Alcohol which IAS implements in Uganda, Village Development Programmes which are being implemented in Sudan and South Sudan, social care/trauma programmes, etc.

In addition to the above core sectors, IAS will do projects in other sectors, such as: Food Security and Livelihoods, Food Aid, Shelter, etc. However, IAS will endeavour to partner with strategic and likeminded organizations with more core expertise in these sectors in order to maximize impact of our interventions. Cross-cutting themes in all IAS interventions are, among others: community empowerment and participation, gender, child protection, conflict resolution/peace building, HIV/AIDS, environment, drug and alcohol abuse, and disability.

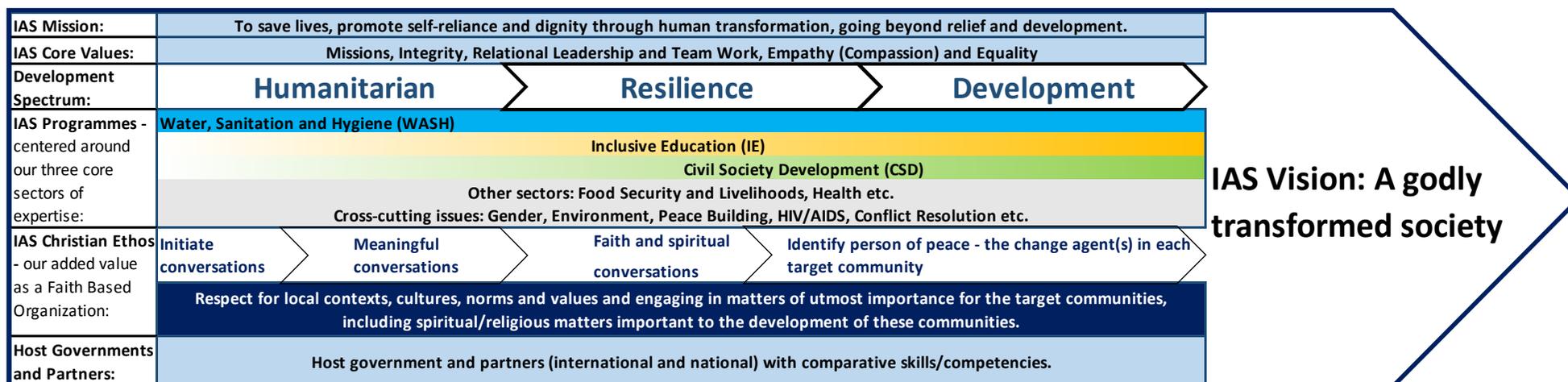
The above is elaborated upon in our Theory of Change (ToC) below.

Our Theory of Change (ToC)

The below picture represents our ToC. The picture shall be viewed as a timeline where the center is the overall development spectrum with the end goal to see transformation. A realization of IAS vision and the end goal to see transformation should be the basis for all interventions, but we realize that we alone cannot fully meet this goal, nor can we be fully accountable for it. Our input in the development spectrum is what we can hold ourselves fully accountable for, and is also what is measurable and tangible. We will aim to have clear measurable indicators in line with international standards for each of our programming sectors.

The ToC has strived towards including IAS added value as a Faith Based Organization (FBO) where we, due to our Christian ethos and identity, are able to engage in discussions of key relevance for both development and transformation. We operate in faith contexts. We know that faith is one of the key drivers for the people we serve, regardless of their religious identity. Our own faith is what drives us into action and we can relate to other people's faith journey resulting in an engagement, framed within mutual respect, around key issues of importance for our target communities.

Our mission corresponds well with the various steps in the development spectrum, and our programming fit certain elements of the spectrum. The three key sectors of engagement are highlighted, but with the understanding that we also engage in other sectors, such as Food Security and Livelihoods. Over time we might extend the scope of our key sectors. What sectors we engage in are not, as such, the main important factor. They are means to an end. Finally, being able to present a complete ToC will hopefully enable a more solid understanding of us as an organization and lead to intentional and purpose-driven programming.



| Target box | | | |
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| Issue | Target | Timeframe | Responsible person(s) |
| Theory of Change | Continue to clarify linkages between our core sectors of programming and to continue to visualize our ToC in an attractive and easy to understand format. | 2016 – on-going. | Program Department, CEO, Country Directors. |
| M&E framework | Ensure that we have developed key standardized and measurable indicators for all our programming. Adapt a common and robust M&E framework for all IAS programming where ToC and indicators feed into. | October 2016. December 2016. | Program Department, Sector Focal Points. |
| Partnership (see also below under partnerships) | Identify and sign project cooperation agreements and/or partnership agreements with key likeminded organizations. | Ongoing and will continue during 2016-2020. | CEO, Program Department, Marketing Department, Country Directors and Senior Management Teams. |

Geographical expansion

Expanding in the Sahel and MENA regions requires robust and fresh thinking in how to conduct constructive programming. While maintaining true to IAS core sectors and competencies, it might be that the programmes will take other shapes, with other administrative setups. In order to see transformational change in this context (as in any context) the key is to ensure long term physical presence by core staff consumed with the vision of IAS. But also a presence which does not jeopardize our presence and capacity in our other regions. Expansion in this region means adding resources, not draining existing ones.

The geographical expansion will be framed within a two-pronged approach; spearheaded by IAS humanitarian- and development programming and IAS corporate section. The corporate section is handled by International Water and Development Consultancy (IWDC). IWDC is registered in Sweden as a limited company and has today a representational office in Egypt. The main engagement will be through establishing IAS presence through its humanitarian programmes targeting the most critical humanitarian contexts in the region, such as Libya, Syria and Iraq. This is also in line with the IAS Humanitarian Strategy. Such programming needs to, from the very onset, be framed within a robust resilience- and development approach with the end goal of seeing transformation.

However, in order to fully sustain those programmes, and also in order to maintain a longer term presence in other more stable countries in the region, IAS will look into utilizing its corporate section. Such countries could include Saudi Arabia, UAE and Qatar. The corporate sections in those countries are set up with the primary focus on providing support to IAS programmes in the region.

| Target box | | | |
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| Issue | Target | Timeframe | Responsible person(s) |
| Geographical expansion | IAS will aim to establish a physical presence in at least 5 new countries in the Sahel/MENA region. | 2016 – 2020. | CEO, Regional Focal Points, HO SMTs, |
| IAS and IWDC | Clarify linkages and operating/governance structures between IAS and IWDC. | December 2016. | IWDC board, IAS Swedish Board, CEO and HO SMT. |

5. Resourcing: How it will be managed

The IAS Alliance Head Office structure has been refined during 2015, and is proposed to remain in force during 2016-2020. More functions/positions can be added but will most likely fall within the departments identified in the structure.

The current three regions (Sahel, East Africa, and Greater Horn of Africa) each have one designated focal point from within the Head Office Senior Management Team (SMT), which will be extending management support to the respective Country Offices of the concerned region. The focal points act as an extended arm of the CEO. Selecting the focal points from within the SMT allows for continuous temperature gauging of the organization as most senior management and strategic issues are discussed within the SMT on a regular basis. Keeping the SMT to a fairly small number of functions will also enable the CEO to lead the organization in a more efficient manner. The new region of MENA will also have a designated focal point from within the SMT. As mentioned above expanding to this region will be through adding staff and resources, not draining existing ones.

The CEO and other senior staff will utilize existing IAS management tools to assist in the overall management of the organization. One of the most critical tools in this regard is the Risk Assessment Grid which is a practical application of the Risk Management Policy. Each country programme is expected to undergo a rigorous risk assessment on an annual basis with relevant steps/outlines for follow-up. Other tools include the handbooks found in the Procedure Handbook as well as any other management tools as deemed appropriate. It is expected that the IAS Leadership Academy will assist in both developing such tools and facilitating training on the same.

In order to continue to enhance IAS and its partners' overall capacity and competence and as means to ensure that learning is maintained throughout the organizations, IAS will establish a 'Leadership Academy – for continuous learning and growth'. This would replace and elevate one of the critical components of the current CSD thematic area.

| Target box | | | |
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| Issue | Target | Timeframe | Responsible person(s) |
| Risk Management | Ensure that all Country Offices and Alliance Members have undergone the Risk Management Exercise. | Initial Risk Management Exercise should have been conducted with all Country Offices and Alliance Members by end | HO SMT, Country Office SMTs and Board/staff of Alliance Members. |

| | | | |
|--------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|
| | | of 2016 followed by annual reviews. | |
| Leadership Academy | Establish IAS 'Leadership Academy – for continuous learning and growth'. | June 2017 as the official launch date. Curriculum development, staffing, funding etc will be developed ahead of the launch date. | CEO, HO SMT, CSD Focal Point. |

Partnerships

Long term presence in the Sahel and MENA regions and continuous growth in our current regions will be ensured by entering strategic alliances/partnerships with key like-minded partners and individuals. For the geographical expansion some key staff will also be sourced from within these networks. It is expected that some of these staff are self-funded and with administrative financial funding. Project funding will be sourced to execute programmes and meeting higher administrative costs, including recruiting local personnel. Administrative financial support generated in these projects will, in addition to meeting increased costs locally, contribute to the successful running of the Alliance Head Office. Having self-funded staff in the region will ensure that the organization has a presence regardless of dips in project funding. The other regions of IAS will also be able to provide staff and other resources for the expansion in the Sahel and MENA regions.

In all IAS countries we commit ourselves to be part of all relevant in-country coordination mechanisms. Not only be part, but also play a leading role.

| Target box | | | |
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| Issue | Target | Timeframe | Responsible person(s) |
| Partnerships | Establishing strategic alliances/partnerships with likeminded entities. Strategic funding arrangements with key donors and partners, including UN agencies and institutional donors both at Head Office and Country Office level. | 2016-2020 (on-going). | Formally led by the CEO this would require substantial input and engagement from all senior staff members of IAS, both from Head Office and Country Office level. |
| Networking and coordination | Representation in key networks and coordination mechanism on country and HO levels. | 2016-2020. | HO SMT, Country Offices SMTs, Humanitarian Coordinator. |

Financial considerations

The financial resources of IAS currently mainly stem from institutional donors, the UN-system, pooled funds and private sources. To a large degree these funds are sourced locally in our respective Country Offices. The Alliance Members are responsible for financing their own respective administrations. Sweden, as mandated to act as Head Office, is also responsible for the Head Office budget.

The sustained growth of IAS also needs to be reflected in financial growth. This will primarily be achieved by increasing the overall financial turnover of IAS. The Head Office will also need to grow slightly in order to provide relevant management support to the various Country Offices and

Alliance Members. As such, there will be some provisions in place for overhead costs and also allocation of Head Office costs through direct costing in various project budgets. The allocation will be done in accordance to fixed administration costs and services provided by Head Office.

The geographical expansion of IAS will follow the same model but, as mentioned above, with the positive effect that some key staff and administrative presence will be ensured through self-funded staff.

| Target box | | | |
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| Issue | Target | Timeframe | Responsible person(s) |
| Global financial turnover | Annual increase with at least 20%. From approx. 10 MUSD in annual turnover 2015 it is expected that by 2020 the turnover will be at least 25 MUSD. | 12 MUSD 2016 14,4 MUSD 2017 17,3 MUSD 2018 20,7 MUSD 2019 25 (24,9) MUSD 2020 | CEO with input from senior staff of IAS. |
| Head Office overhead | All project budgets should include at least 7% as overhead for Head Office. | Starting 2016 – on-going. | Head of Finance and Finance Managers. |

6. Concluding remarks

This strategy is about sustained growth. Our intention has been to provide clarity, guidance and direction for IAS during the next five years. Albeit time bound, the vision behind the strategy is far reaching and will go beyond the timeframe of this strategy. IAS is, furthermore, a fast-paced and dynamic organization. As such, this strategy should be regarded as a living document and can be updated or amended if need be. With much anticipation of what is yet to come.