

# **GUIDANCE FOR CHAPTERS IN THE IAF AFRICA REGION**

The following pages have been developed in order to support the growth and development of chapters in the Africa region. It is not a complete guide but hopefully will be of help to chapters across the region.

## **What is a Chapter?**

IAF Chapters are simply national or local groups of IAF members who meet and collaborate to pursue the Association's mission at a more local level. Chapters also respond to the expressed desire of our members for more frequent and local opportunities for professional and personal development. They also act as a bridge between individual members and the global association.

Wherever there is a community of 5 or more members, they are entitled to develop a Chapter if they wish. IAF chapters are created by a request to the IAF Board following a recommendation by the Regional Director and the Director for Membership and Chapters. The steps to creating an IAF Chapter are straightforward and designed to provide an understanding of the IAF's governance and to ensure proper accountability. In the event that this may not be the case, the IAF Board retains the right to dissolve a chapter. The steps to forming a chapter are detailed below.

## **Why start a Chapter?**

The purpose of a chapter is to enable facilitators to develop a community within their area, region or country. Chapters exist to enable networking, mutual support, enable professional growth and development, and to help facilitators be part of both the local and global facilitator community.

## **Chapters in the Africa region**

Currently (start of 2020), there are 9 chapters in the Africa region as follows (with their date of recognition as an IAF Chapter in brackets and a link to their web page provided):

[Burkina Faso](#) (2019)

[Nigeria](#) (2020)

[Togo](#) (2018)

[Ethiopia](#) (2020)

[Rwanda](#) (2016)

[Tunisia](#) (2018)

[Kenya](#) (2016)

[Tanzania](#) (2018)

[Uganda](#) (2018)

Globally, there were 52 chapters in mid-2020 with the largest numbers in the Europe & Middle East (22) and Asia (10) regions. In addition, there were 5 [Special Interest Groups](#), which all members are able to participate if they have interest to do so, and these are global communities rather than operating within a specific geographic area. For more, see the [IAF Worldwide](#) web page.

## **How to start a Chapter**

### **Background**

The IAF has developed a framework to encourage local and national groupings of facilitators to form around the world. The approach is very simple. A chapter is a group of IAF members who choose to get together to pursue the goals of the IAF at local level. Chapter membership is made up entirely of IAF members. The goals of the IAF and for its chapters are

1. Giving credibility to and furthering the work of the field of facilitators and facilitation locally
2. Providing a local network to foster interchange between professional practitioners in the field
3. Developing appropriate opportunities, methodologies, models, tools and modes that support the practice of exemplary participatory facilitation locally

The driving purpose for IAF setting up chapters is to respond to the expressed desire of our members for more frequent and local opportunities for professional and personal development. Our goal is a network of vibrant local groups who are committed to promoting the benefits of facilitation and contributing to the professionalization of our activities.

New chapters are normally expected to adopt the set of model bylaws provided by the IAF to help members set up chapters in their area.

### **Benefits of creating a chapter**

For IAF members, creating a chapter means an opportunity to get together with fellow facilitators to support the IAF goals and meet their needs in a local context. They may want to set up programmes for their members, by meeting in person or virtually, to exchange experiences and support each other's learning and development. Chapters may decide to charge members for local activities, which may also be available to non IAF members at a higher cost or, alternatively, offer free activities for members that are chargeable for non-members.

For people considering joining the IAF, chapters add a local dimension to the existing membership offer which also includes the opportunity to attend conferences around the world, newsletters, the methods library, a research journal, access to certification of professional competence, and being part of a global network of professional facilitators online and through professional exchange.

The IAF is responsible for promoting facilitation globally, and will encourage local facilitators to join a chapter – providing them with chapter contacts and putting potential chapters in touch with members in their areas.

### **How to create a chapter**

IAF chapters are formed either from existing IAF recognised 'affiliates' or from new groups of facilitators who would like to join our global network and who share and support our aims and principles. In the case where affiliates already exist the natural step would be for that entity to apply for chapter status.

In considering setting up a chapter, or converting an affiliate, if the members concerned are considering a country-level chapter, they should consider two options:

1. **Setting up a country-level chapter** – provided it can meet the needs of IAF members in the whole country. In setting up, you should poll members in the country about their needs and expectation. Consider your population concentration and convenience of transportation and accessibility
2. **Setting up a more local chapter**, named according to geography, if that is more likely to meet the needs of IAF members. For example, If you belong to a large country with several major commercial cities or regions, your membership may decide to establish several chapters according to regions or cities

Our intention is not necessarily to set up a network of one chapter per country – the guiding principle should meet our overall goal of establishing a network of facilitators which can provide as local as possible professional support and development opportunities. We anticipate that these evolve towards as local a network as possible. This means that the structure of chapters in a country is likely to change over time, with chapters dividing into more local groups if that is what the members want. The most appropriate structure can be discussed on a regular basis with the regional team as natural evolution occurs.

The name of each chapter should be in the form 'IAF Place Country' – e.g. 'IAF Lagos, Nigeria'. Where the chapter is established at country level the name of the chapter should be in the form 'IAF Country', e.g. 'IAF Rwanda'. It is fine for a chapter to have another name e.g. 'IAF Ethiopia known as the Ethiopia Facilitators Forum'.

### **How to proceed**

**Step 1** Contact your IAF regional Director or Chapter Representative where one exists and get in touch with existing chapters or facilitators in your area.

**Step 2** Align with an existing chapter where one exists and is convenient for your needs

**Step 3** Convince at least four people to either join IAF or become involved in the development of a local chapter (you should have a minimum of five people to start a chapter), produce a proposal for recognition of the chapter, complete the chapter application form, and submit both documents to the IAF Regional Director. In most cases the bylaws of the chapter should be based on the standard template which is available from the IAF Regional Director. If you intend to make variations to the template please explain the rationale to the Regional Director in submitting your proposal.

**Step 4** If content with your proposal, your Regional Director will prepare a resolution for consideration by the IAF Board. The IAF Board makes the final decision on all chapters. All IAF chapters must be agreed by the Board following a recommendation by the Regional Director and the Board member with responsibility for membership and chapters. In making a recommendation to the IAF Board, the regional representative will take account of whether there is another IAF chapter or group in the area concerned.

A decision on a proposal to agree a chapter will normally be made within three months of informing the regional representative.

Each chapter must submit an annual report to the IAF Regional Director detailing the financial position of the chapter and activities undertaken during the year.

All IAF members in the geographical area covered by a chapter that has been recognised by the Board will be provisionally allocated to that chapter. However, members also have the choice of joining another chapter or not belonging to any chapter. An IAF member can only be a member of one chapter but is free to participate in activities of other chapters and special interest groups.

Chapters are agreed by the Board and recognition will be honoured as long as the chapter is seen to be supporting the aims and principles of the IAF. In the event that this may not be the case, the IAF Board retains the right to withdraw chapter status.

*Adopted by the IAF Board 8 November 2011*

*Adapted from "IAF – Practical Guidelines for Setting up Chapters"*

## **How to organise a Chapter**

There is no fixed way that a Chapter should operate and it is appropriate that Chapters find appropriate structures that suit their needs, as well as being cognisant of local laws and regulations. Some chapters operate very loose structures and are very informal in their operations, whilst others are formalised, legally registered in their countries and have elected committees etc. Chapters are encouraged to find practical and appropriate ways of organising themselves and operating. Chapters are expected to always behave in ways that are consistent with IAF Values and the Code of Ethics whether in their structures, meetings or activities.

## **Key Principles of Chapter Management**

- Abide by the IAF code of ethics (see [IAF Statement of Values & Code of Ethics](#))
- Respect IAF values – Inclusivity, Openness, Global Perspective, Professionalism, Leadership and Excellence (see also [IAF Vision, Mission and Values](#))
- Practise participatory leadership and governance, using systems of rotational leadership as practised at regional and global levels
- Ensure transparency and accountability amongst and between all members at all times
- Respect for and protection of the IAF Brand
- Strive to meet the diverse needs of members (for professional development, networking, mutual support, contributing to the development of the facilitation profession, etc.)
- Develop an internal conflict resolution system to ensure that any conflicts are dealt with quickly and effectively
- Chapters by their nature are not profit-making and act as a branch of the Global Association, thus any finances are for the common benefit of the chapter's development only and never for individual gain

## Chapter Activities

Chapter activities vary greatly between different chapters according to their specific needs and context. Some possible activities (that have worked successfully before) are listed below:

- **Facilitator dialogues** – events with a mix of facilitators using a peer learning model
- **Learning Journeys** – visits to nearby members / chapters, joint participation in facilitation-related activities, learning and exchange
- **Regular meet-ups (monthly / bi-monthly)** – for informal networking, could be at varied times to meet different needs
- **Social events** – not necessarily facilitation-related but to help members know each other more closely and bond
- **Team Building sessions** – more formalised and facilitated team-building activities
- **Online meetings & sessions** – even when people are geographically close, it can be hard to physically meet, so online meeting and more formal sessions can play a role
- **Events to promote “the Power of Facilitation”** – Sample sessions to demonstrate a facilitation method or general skills in schools, universities, organisations, government, private sector etc.
- **Professional Development events** – holding open sessions (for members and non-members) to showcase a particular method or topic
- **Community Service events** – members offer to facilitate sessions on (for example) personal or organisational development with community organisations
- **Work exchanges and professional linkages** – where appropriate, members could invite others in the chapter to participate in their work-related activities

## Chapter Development Fund

IAF is committed to supporting the development of local chapters and sets aside a percentage of its income annually for the “Chapter Development Fund”. This fund is available to all Chapters who wish to claim an annual amount that is fixed and the same for all chapters (currently, in 2020, the amount is USD 500 per year). These funds are intended to help chapters to organise local events and activities that will not only provide development opportunities for existing members but also attract new members to IAF.

Provided that proper financial controls and accountability for the funds are in place and on satisfactory submission of the relevant application form, funds will be transferred to chapters at any point during the year. Funds will not be transferred to chapters where adequate systems are not in place. The IAF Board will consider this on a case by case basis, but normally this would mean a dedicated bank account for the chapter, with responsibility for managing funds being clearly assigned to the Treasurer of the Chapter.

## Communication Tips

Having excellent communication systems will always be critical in order to operate an effective and successful chapter. Here are a few tips to guide chapter communications:

- Share information about chapter organising consistently and transparently at all times
- Have active whatsapp groups and keep them relevant; have clear guidelines on membership and their use (i.e. encouraging relevant and appropriate content)
- Keep the chapter webpage updated regularly and have someone responsible for this
- Encourage all members to participate actively in sharing information and supporting others

## Support and Guidance

There are many means of support available for chapters and chapter members, if they need it. These include:

- Regional Director – contact [rep.africa@iaf-world.org](mailto:rep.africa@iaf-world.org)
- Regional Leadership Team members, esp. sub-regional reps
- Director of Membership & Chapters – contact [memberships@iaf-world.org](mailto:memberships@iaf-world.org)
- Other chapters in the region and outside the region
- IAF office – contact [office@iaf-world.org](mailto:office@iaf-world.org)