

# Newsletter

May 2019



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Welcome to our May 2019 newsletter.

The big news this month is the launch of the M&E Universe, a fantastic new on-line resource to help M&E practitioners to understand and navigate the world of planning, monitoring, evaluation, impact assessment and learning. This project has been under development for some time, drawing on a huge amount of voluntary time and creativity from a whole range of INTRAC staff, associates and friends. The M&E Universe is a brilliant example of INTRAC at its best: drawing together knowledge and expertise grounded in practice, and making complex issues accessible and useful for practitioners. Go to page 9 for more information about the Universe.

You can also find out about our latest publications, including a Special Bulletin to mark the closure of INTRAC's last office in Central Asia after 25 years. The Bulletin includes pieces from INTRAC staff, associates and friends who have contributed—and continue to contribute—to the strengthening of civil society in Central Asia.

We also introduce you to some of our latest capacity building initiatives and evaluation work, including with local authorities and organisations in Mali, and on a migration programme in West, North and East Africa.

In the Viewpoint, Helen Mealins shares her reflections from International Civil Society Week (ICSW) in Belgrade, Serbia, in April. ICSW offers a space for vibrant conversations and exchange of ideas amongst civil society activists from all over the world, working on a vast range of social justice issues. But Helen's reflections also remind us of the fragility of civic space and the heavy costs of fighting to ensure that people can exercise their rights in dignity and freedom.

Finally, under Our People we introduce you to new staff in our Training and Consultancies Teams. And please spread the word that we are in search of a new Chief Executive.

Viewpoint



Our work



Publications

& Blogs



Training



Our People

[www.intrac.org](http://www.intrac.org)

## How far would you go to defend civic space?

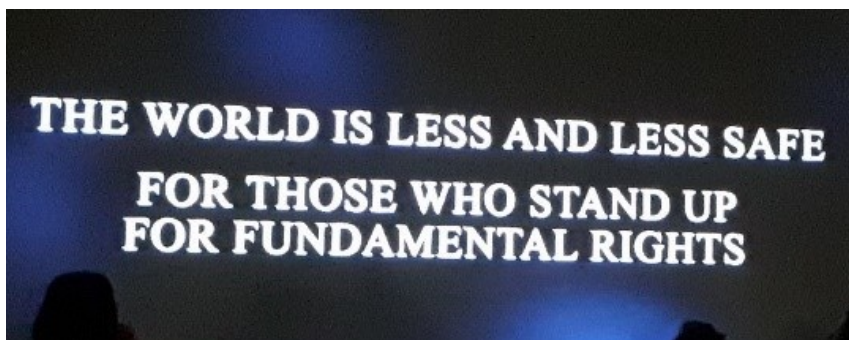
I was left pondering this question after attending CIVICUS' International Civil Society Week (ICSW) held in Belgrade, Serbia, from 8 to 12 April 2019.

The week was themed around the 'Power of Togetherness' and opened with a one day Summit at which the [Belgrade Call to Action](#) and accompanying Action Agenda were launched. Endorsed by 135 civil society organisations from 60 countries (including INTRAC), the Belgrade Call to Action is seeking to put the issue of closing and shrinking space for civil society squarely on the agenda of the UN Special General Assembly and High-Level Political Forum in September 2019. It demands an end to the arbitrary arrest, detention, persecution and killing of civic actors and calls on Member States to take concrete action to enable space for civil society and give full protection to civil society leaders, human rights defenders, gender equality activists, environmentalists, journalists and others under attack.

In a poignant memorial service, those attending the Summit observed a minute's silence and remembered the 321 human rights defenders in 27 countries who, according to data collected by Front Line Defenders, had been targeted and killed for their work in 2018.

The sombre mood contrasted sharply with the lively opening ceremony that took place later that evening. Alongside musical performances and speeches, this featured the comedy of Serbian TV presenter and political satirist Zoran Kesić who skilfully poked fun at the Serbian authorities, world leaders and NGO workers in equal measure.

Over the three days that followed, delegates were free to join panel discussions and side-events organised around the conference themes of: **Bridges** (connecting relevant actors, building alliances and creating sustainable movements); **Stairs** (exploring the most effective ways to connect and scale initiatives); and **Streets** (exploring civic movements and best practice in constituency building).





With the support of outgoing CIVICUS Chair and longtime INTRAC friend [Anabel Cruz](#), Nicole Titera and I facilitated a networking session for individuals and organisations with an interest in extending the range, quality, reach and relevance of organisational development support services to CSOs in the global South. Some 30 people attended.

After demonstrating the power of togetherness (by connecting participants with string) we reflected on some of the mega-trends impacting civil society. Taking our cue from the Belgrade Call the Action, we noted the skills and organisational capabilities that CSOs working at national and sub-national levels will need to support this Call.

Working in groups we brainstormed ideas for how we might collaborate to strengthen local provision of organisational development and training services for civil society. One proposal that INTRAC put forward was to establish a peer-network of values-driven 'civil society change champions' interested in and willing to share learning, good practice, and develop ideas together. We are currently discussing with CIVICUS how we might take this forward with members of CIVICUS' AGNA (Affinity Group of National Associations).

As the ICSW proceedings drew to a close on the 11<sup>th</sup> of April, an estimated 200 ICSW delegates took to the streets of Belgrade for the launch of a global [#FreedomRunner](#) campaign calling on people around the world to run in the name of human rights defenders who are currently jailed, being persecuted, or at risk for their work.



Meanwhile, some 5,000 km away in Khartoum, after months of organised civilian protest, a sit-in at army headquarters culminated in the removal from power of former President Omar al-Bashir, Sudan's long-time President. In the week leading up to that moment, while we were contemplating the 'Power of Togetherness' in the protected confines of our conference venue, more people lost their lives defending their civil and political rights. The estimate of people killed since the 6<sup>th</sup> of April sit-in began varies: from the Central Medical Doctors Committee estimate of 21 deaths and 153 wounded since the protests began; versus the Sudanese authorities estimate of 7 people killed in clashes on 6-7 April, bringing their estimate of those killed since 19<sup>th</sup> December to 46 people.<sup>1</sup>

The quibbling over numbers is a distraction, as tensions arose again this week and the death toll mounts. One death is one too many. As the Belgrade Call to Action declares: "Enough is enough! Stop the relentless attacks on civil society..."

<sup>1</sup> House of Commons Briefing Paper Number CBP08546, 11 April 2019. "Military coup in Sudan" by Louisa Brooke-Holland



**Helen Mealins** joined INTRAC as Chief Executive in June 2017. She has over 20 years' experience of working with politicians, government officials, civil society practitioners and private sector executives in a variety of leadership and consultancy roles.

# Our work



## Reviewing the British Council's Sport for Cultural Relations Initiatives

The British Council recognises the value of sport as a way of bringing people together and inspiring them to fulfil their potential. This takes concrete form in its Sport for Cultural Relations (S4CR) programmes. Rod MacLeod, Sarah Lewis and Alison Carney are carrying out a review of the British Council's S4CR initiatives, focusing primarily on the Premier Skills programme.



Premier Skills is an international partnership between the British Council and the Premier League. It uses football to develop a brighter future for young people around the world. Having started in 2007, it is now approaching the end of its 4<sup>th</sup> three year cycle (2016-19). This review is assessing the impact of the most recent cycle, to inform the direction of an anticipated 5<sup>th</sup> phase.

The process involves:

- A rapid review of the external evidence base relating to the use of sport as a vehicle for social development and change, and a review of key British Council documents (including previous evaluation reports).
- Four 'deep dive' case studies in China, Egypt, India and Uganda. These involve interviews/focus group discussions with Coach Educators and Community Coaches, young people, partners and in-country British Council staff.
- Remote interviews with British Council staff in the UK and 12 countries not visited as part of the deep-dives, Premier League staff and coaches, partners, and individuals involved in previous programmes (including Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls Through Football).

In May 2019, the INTRAC team facilitated a workshop in London reviewing the overall Theory of Change (ToC) for Premier Skills. The next steps are to establish the ToC underpinning the British Council's S4CR work, bring together and analyse the data collected, and write the overall report.

To find out more about Premier Skills, visit:

[https://  
www.britishcouncil.org/  
society/sport/current-  
programmes/premier-skills](https://www.britishcouncil.org/society/sport/current-programmes/premier-skills)



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## Strengthening regional organisations to improve Food security in Mali

INTRAC is delivering training and coaching for the Belgian Development Agency (ENABEL) Capacity Strengthening Intervention in Mali. This intervention (2017-2021) aims at strengthening 20 civil society organisations and local authorities involved in a dynamic of change in the fields of livestock farming, food security, water and sanitation, and local governance. The strategy of the intervention is to support skills development for individuals and encourage cooperation between the agencies. Going beyond training activities, ENABEL is also introducing innovative approaches such as peer exchanges, and action learning groups.

In October and November 2018, we co-created a capacity strengthening toolkit with all the stakeholders to help with their organisational assessments and planning for capacity strengthening. The toolkit was introduced to 27 participants in December 2018 over 3 days. As one participant commented “I’ve never been to a workshop where we actually did the work and put it into practice during the training. It’s a complete change from the usual model in Mali.”



The toolkit and the training emphasised INTRAC principles and approach to capacity strengthening interventions. We believe capacity strengthening interventions are successful when:

- The organisation is leading the process
- Capacity strengthening is aligned with organisational vision, values and strategy
- There is a clear and specific purpose identified for the capacity building
- People are inspired to change

It also gave the organisations confidence that there is a lot they can do on their own or with peers such as sharing good office procedures, or sharing expertise. On the side-lines of the main training, we facilitated a first action learning meeting with a group of women from the beneficiary organisations, which resulted in the creation of two working groups: one on business skills and the other on legal issues facing women entrepreneurs.

Through February and March, INTRAC consultants remotely supported the ENABEL project team and their local consultants in charge of facilitating the development of capacity strengthening plans with the beneficiaries. Then in April, we all met with the beneficiaries’ organisations, to put the finishing touches to the plans, and to learn from the process.

The capacity strengthening toolkit includes simple M&E tools, and we are currently remotely supporting ENABEL with the implementation of these tools. Our support will end in November 2019, with preparing and facilitating an M&E workshop with the beneficiary organisations together with the ENABEL project team.

It has been a fascinating process so far: working with such a diverse range of actors at the local level, from women producers of goat’s milk to the regional water agency, and from pastoralists to the government office for women, children and families.

INTRAC is delighted to be contributing to this project, which reflects our engagement in the localisation of capacity strengthening, whereby we strengthen local consultants and programme staff who accompany civil society organisations in the long term, to achieve objectives these organisations set for themselves.

The ENABEL project team is pleased with the quality of this multi-stakeholder and multi-dimensional process strengthening the capacity of non-state and state actors in the region.

## Learning in the AMiRA programme



Participants in the first AMiRA regional learning workshop, Dakar, November 2018

Does the exchange of information, knowledge and experience between organisations working along the migration trails – taking a route-based approach to supporting migrants – lead to better services and better protection for migrants? This is the overarching question that underpins the learning agenda of the Action for Migrants: Route-based Assistance Programme (AMiRA), which began in April 2018 and covers six countries across West, East and North Africa (Niger, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali, Sudan and Egypt).

AMiRA is a 3-year, £13.5m programme funded by DFID's Safety, Support and Solution Phase II initiative. It involves a consortium of 11 partners - nine National Societies of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) and INTRAC. The programme aims to facilitate access to basic services and the protection of migrants' rights along the migratory routes in the Sahel and East/North Africa, through the provision of humanitarian assistance, protection, information and awareness-raising. Activities are implementing with respect to the Red Cross Red Crescent movement fundamental principles and are based on the specific needs of the most vulnerable migrants irrespective of their legal status.

INTRAC is the AMiRA learning partner. Our role is to support the implementing team at national, regional and programme levels to reflect on their practice, to interrogate key issues and questions emerging through country-level and programme-wide learning activities, to share their learning within their teams and with other actors working on migration, and to adapt their activities based on learning. Since the programme began our team of learning advisors - Rachel Hayman, Anne Garbutt and Marlene Buchy from the UK, and Tidiani Ouedraogo and David Beyi from Burkina Faso - has:

- Assisted the AMiRA monitoring and evaluation team to design and refine the programme theory of change, including major assumptions which provide a point of reference for learning throughout the programme
- Supported AMiRA teams in Burkina Faso, Niger, Guinea, Egypt and Sudan to assess their learning capacity and to develop their own learning plans
- Facilitated a learning workshop in Dakar, Senegal, in November 2018, to build capacity in learning and to identify initial cross-programme learning questions.

Key learning issues that we will tackle as the programme advances include:

- What have we learned about how to identify and reach the most vulnerable migrants and ensure that services are adapted to their needs depending on where they are in their migration journey?
- What have we learned about building trust between service providers and migrants; between host communities and migrants; and between local authorities and service providers?
- What have we learned about the impact of a rapidly changing context on provision of services to migrants and about how to adapt as a result?
- What have we learned that can help with building sustainable services to migrants beyond the AMiRA programme?

In June 2019, the INTRAC team will run a second programme learning workshop in Dakar, bringing together AMiRA country and programme staff from West, East and North Africa.

## Supporting the Westminster Foundation for Democracy

The [Westminster Foundation for Democracy \(WFD\)](#) is a United Kingdom non-departmental public body set up to promote democratic institutions overseas. Since last year, it has been working on a DfID-funded Inclusive and Accountable Politics (IAP) programme to strengthen inclusive, open and accountable political systems, and to deliver sustainable development outcomes in DfID priority countries.



INTRAC has been commissioned to provide semi-independent monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) support to WFD and its partners over the programme period. The inception phase of the work, now completed, has involved working with the WFD team to develop its organisational-level Theory of Change, as well as undertaking a review of WFD's current MEL system and consideration of a range of options for 'portfolio level' monitoring and evaluation. This includes the use of outcome mapping, which WFD has been working with for a number of years. The next phase of work will include identifying 'learning questions' linked to the Theory of Change that WFD will prioritise over the next year, and exploring the generation, analysis and use of case studies as part of the MEL approach for the IAP.

## Bridging the Gaps update

Bridging the Gaps (BtG) is a multi-country HIV/AIDS programme, which focuses on the health and human rights of sex workers, people who use drugs, men who have sex with men, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. It is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and implemented by a consortium of nine Alliance partners, led by the Dutch NGO, Aidsfonds. BtG works towards fulfilling three long-term goals:



1. A strengthened civil society that holds governments to account;
2. Increased fulfilment of human rights of key populations;
3. Improved Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) and fewer HIV transmissions.

The programme launched in 2011 and is now in its second phase (2016 – 2020).

Last year, INTRAC was commissioned to carry out a mid-term evaluation of the programme. This used the BtG Theory of Change (ToC) to focus the key questions, map change stories gathered through a partners' survey, and guide selection of five 'deep dive' case studies. This month, two of INTRAC's MTE team were invited to join a BtG programme meeting in Amsterdam with the aim of consolidating and strengthening learning from the MTE. INTRAC's sessions were designed to support the partners to pick up on and action some of the key recommendations from the MTE, as well as to reflect on learning from the MTE process and share ideas for the design of the final evaluation.

During the MTE, the consortium partners introduced a new approach and template for gathering change stories, linked to the ToC outcomes. These will be reviewed and analysed on a regular basis over the next several months with a view to building a body of evidence against the Theory of Change, that can be further explored and validated through the final evaluation.

For more information about this programme, please visit: <https://hivgaps.org>





## Development in Practice

The latest *Development in Practice* issues of the year, 29.3 and 29.4, are now available to browse [online](#), covering a broad range of development topics from across the world.

A number of the articles are open access, available to freely read and download. Choose from '[Solar energy farming as a development innovation for vulnerable water basins](#)', '[Culture and the politics of sustainable development in the GCC: identity between heritage and globalisation](#)', or '[Scaling up research-for-development innovations in food and agricultural systems](#)'.

You can also browse the whole back catalogue of open access articles from the journal [here](#).

If you are interested in submitting an article to *Development in Practice*, visit <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cdip20/current> to find out more. For any queries on what and how to submit, please contact Adam Houlbrook, Deputy Editor, at [ahoulbrook@intrac.org](mailto:ahoulbrook@intrac.org).

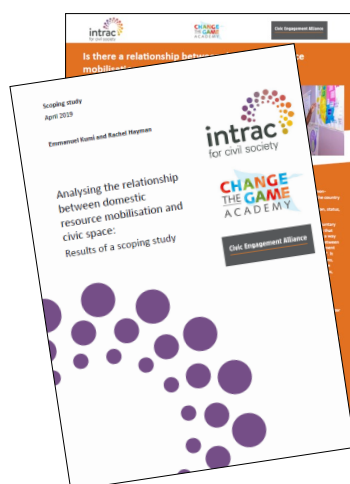


## INTRAC in Central Asia 1994-2018

For 25 years, INTRAC has provided training and capacity building for civil society groups and associations across Central Asia. In December 2018, INTRAC's regional office in Bishkek closed.

With reflections on INTRAC's history and activities in Central Asia, and the impact that we have had, this special bulletin brings together voices from INTRAC staff, associates, partners and friends over the years. Articles consider the changing context for civil society and its future prospects in the region.

Download your free copy here: <https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/INTRAC-in-Central-Asia-1994-2018.pdf>



## Analysing the relationship between domestic resource mobilisation and civic space

Read a new report and brief on the relationship between domestic resource mobilisation and civic space, produced with the Change the Game Academy, and written by Emmanuel Kumi and Rachel Hayman.

To download your free copy of these resources click here: <https://www.intrac.org/resources/analysing-the-relationship-between-domestic-resource-mobilisation-and-civic-space/>

And read the accompanying blog here: <https://www.intrac.org/analysing-the-relationship-between-domestic-resource-mobilisation-and-civic-space/>

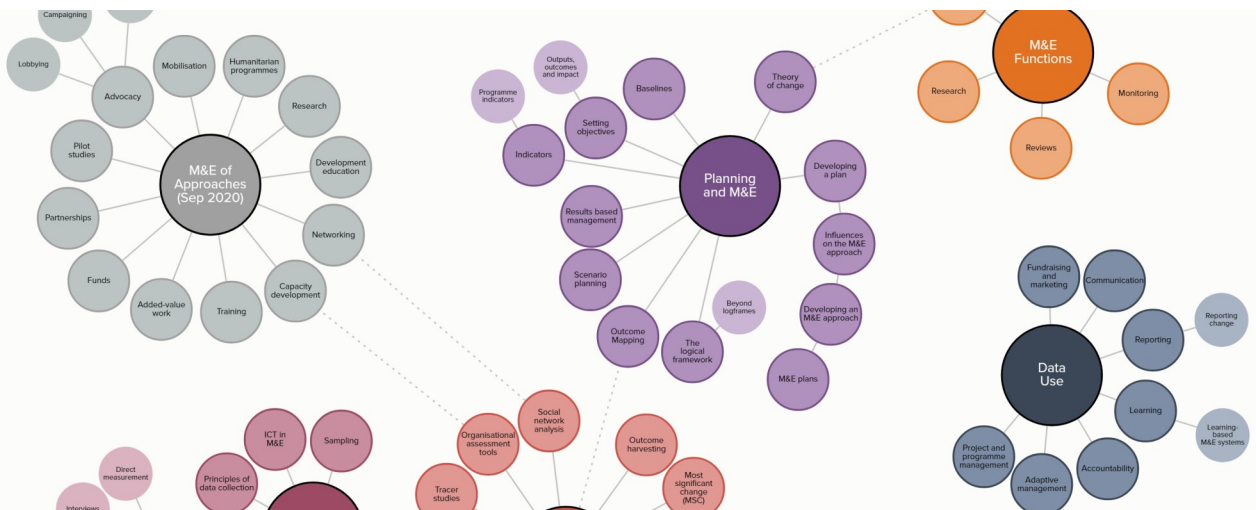


## M&E Universe

This month saw the launch of INTRAC's M&E universe, a free, online resource for development practitioners involved in monitoring and evaluation.

The brainchild of Nigel Simister, and designed to guide practitioners through all aspects of M&E, the M&E Universe draws heavily on the practical experiences of INTRAC staff and consultants, and their work with numerous organisations and institutions.

Consisting of a series of short papers on different subjects related to M&E, it complements rather than replaces other resource. And each paper directs the user to further resources and online libraries.



A huge amount of work has gone into this project, from the initial writing of the papers through to creating the actual Map. You may want to read our [introductory blog](#), which gives a more in-depth overview, before jumping straight in. But, if you can't wait then head over to the [M&E Universe](#) resource page on our website, where you will find a link to the Universe along with guidance on how to navigate it.

Having reached this stage, we are extremely proud to be able to share this resource with you, and it seems that you are equally as pleased with it, given the positive feedback we have already received:

"My twitter feed is exploding with excitement about @intrac\_uk new M&E Universe."

"M&E Universe is such a brilliant resource - thanks @intrac\_uk"

"I hadn't quite appreciated the scale of the endeavour "

"WOW - what a universe! Very cool presentation."

"this looks very valuable, and it's clear and visually appealing"

"Very useful resource for M&E folk!"

# INTRAC training

## Advanced Monitoring and Evaluation

London, 9 – 13 September 2019

Course fee: £1,360

Are you an experienced M&E practitioner facing complex challenges in your work? This 5-day face-to-face participatory course uses case studies and practical examples from the trainers and participants to illustrate and explore issues and build on your and other participants' knowledge. All participants will have previous experience in designing and managing M&E systems.

**Advanced Monitoring and Evaluation course profile**

## Advocacy Strategy and Influencing Skills

Oxford, 23 – 27 September 2019

Course fee: (Residential) £1,615; (Non-Residential) £1,215

Learn how to influence powerful stakeholders and policy processes in a range of contexts. This course will help you understand how to develop and monitor effective advocacy strategies. You will explore tools for analysing where power lies on your issue and who has a stake in it. You will learn how to develop a Theory of Change and how to tailor your advocacy to the interests of those you seek to influence. You will also learn skills in communicating an advocacy message, face-to-face influencing techniques, using the media, public campaigning, and research for advocacy purposes.

**Advocacy Strategy and Influencing Skills course profile**

## Online Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

Online, 2 October – 13 November 2019

Course fee: £675

Our popular online course is designed for people who are relatively new to Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL), whether they are early career professionals, or more experienced practitioners who are switching careers and/or have never received formal training in this field. The course covers the whole MEL cycle, from clarifying the purposes of MEL to planning and selecting the most appropriate indicators and objectives, to collecting data, analysing it, reporting and - last but not least! - learning.

**Online Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning course profile**

To find out more about our other upcoming courses, please make sure to check our [website](#).

For further information, please email us at [training@intrac.org](mailto:training@intrac.org).





### **Liezel Longboan, Training and E-Learning Officer**

Liezel joined INTRAC in April 2019 as Training and E-learning Officer. She has previously worked as a researcher and tutor at the University of Manchester, Goldsmiths-University of London and Cardiff University. At Goldsmiths, she was Postdoctoral Research Assistant for the project 'Humanitarian Technologies: Communications in the Wake of Typhoon Haiyan' which looked at issues of accountability on the part of aid agencies and voice on the part of disaster-affected communities in the aftermath of Haiyan in the Philippines.

Her work has mainly focused on the intersections of voice, participation, technology and disasters. Originally from the Philippines, Liezel has a PhD in Media and Cultural Studies from Cardiff University funded by the Ford Foundation International Fellowships Program. Her thesis examined how migrant indigenous Filipinos explored their identities through online communities. Prior to coming to the UK, Liezel worked closely with local NGOs as a communications and advocacy specialist.



### **Pauline Salin, Consultancies Assistant**

Pauline joined INTRAC in April 2019 as the Consultancies Assistant. She holds a double Bachelor's degree in Cross-border communication and cooperation from the University of Lorraine and the University of Saarland, and a double Master's degree in European and Global Governance from the University of Kent and the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. She also graduated from the College of Europe in Natolin, where she specialised in the EU's Neighbourhood Policy. She speaks French, English, German and Russian.

Before joining INTRAC, Pauline worked on the implementation of EU funded projects in the field of EU external relations and trade. She also took part in a long-term volunteering project in Siberia, aimed at raising awareness about environmental challenges and at promoting eco-friendly behaviours within the local community.

As Consultancies Assistant, she is responsible for supporting the consultancy team in their day-to-day work and for helping to identify and develop new business opportunities.

## **We are recruiting!**

### **Chief Executive**

This is an exciting opportunity to lead INTRAC at a time when the role of civil society is changing rapidly.

We are looking for someone to bring vision, inspiration and dynamic leadership to INTRAC. The Chief Executive will drive forward the next stage of our development and communicate our strategic intent more clearly and widely. The role offers considerable scope to introduce new thinking and forge new partnerships and alliances.

For more detailed information on this vacancy, please download the appointment pack [here](#).



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