

GIAN - OUR WAY OF PROCEEDING

Text approved by Fr. General – September / 2025

PART I - VISION AND CONCEPT

1. The Global Ignatian Advocacy Network (GIAN) is an apostolic platform of collaboration among Jesuit and Jesuit-related institutions approved by Fr. General (Letter to the whole Society, 2022/03).
2. The animation and coordination of GIAN are entrusted to the Secretary for Social Justice and Ecology.
3. GIAN responds to the challenges of socio-political, educational, and ecological injustices by promoting the articulation of advocacy action focused on specific thematic issues.
4. Each GIAN initiative comprises Jesuit and Jesuit-related institutions or organizations (such as regional networks) that share the apostolic mission of the Society of Jesus.
5. They interact and remain in contact for strategic purposes, mutual support, resource exchange, collective action plans, or other commonly discerned advocacy objectives.
6. Each participant institution maintains both the freedom and the responsibility of its involvement in GIAN, without prejudice to its affiliation and obligations to the Region, Province, or Conference of Major Superiors to which it belongs.
7. The essential mandate of GIAN is:
 - i. To share information and create a common global space of thinking, reflection, and advocacy action over common challenges.
 - ii. To offer orientations and/or strengthen capacities for advocacy action at local or regional level.
 - iii. To make and animate global advocacy proposals supporting local or regional struggles and priorities.
 - iv. To help establish international, regional, national, or local strategic alliances.

What is a *JESUIT* Network?

8. A Jesuit network is an apostolic way of proceeding that allows for better collaboration in the service of the universal mission of the Society of Jesus. Through diverse forms of articulation and collaboration, individuals and institutions act as a global and interdisciplinary organism (collective subjects) open to a new level of agency, enabling them to achieve goals that transcend their particular objectives or capacities.

What do we mean by *GLOBAL*?

9. Many problems we see at the local level originate beyond their borders or, at the very least, are strengthened by forces beyond those confronted directly. This is the case with global challenges such as the right to education, forced migration, justice in mining, and integral ecology.
10. In the context of GIAN, 'global' also refers to operating and advocating beyond local, provincial, and conference levels, attempting to present a more comprehensive vision and perspective.
11. Our understanding of 'global' within GIAN also encompasses collaboration among institutions from different regions, provinces, or conferences of Major Superiors.

What do we mean by *ADVOCACY*¹?

12. What we understand as Advocacy is both a process and a tool for social transformation towards justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity. It includes at least one of the following strategic activities or a combination of several:
 - i. Research and documentation, involving direct fieldwork with individuals and communities.
 - ii. Defining and promoting public policies based on critical analysis and discernment of the best alternatives.
 - iii. Awareness-raising through education, mobilization, and community organization.
 - iv. Communication and media work —testimonies, facts, reports, proposals, case studies— with proposals for change.
 - v. Networking and alliance building with people, organizations, and civil society groups sharing common objectives.
 - vi. Develop relationships with key decision-makers.
 - vii. Create opportunities for direct interaction between affected people and power holders.
 - viii. Direct action aimed at influencing companies, politicians, and the general opinion, focusing on specific aspects and concrete challenges.
 - ix. Promote and encourage capacity-building formation processes for advocacy at different levels.
13. The above perspective implies:
 - i. Engaging institutions of governance to empower the marginalized.
 - ii. Creating and using spaces available within the system.
 - iii. Utilizing knowledge strategically, leveraging skills and opportunities to shape new public policy.

¹ A common definition of advocacy, albeit idealized, is: “*Citizen-centered advocacy is an organized political process that involves the coordinated efforts of people to change policies, practices, ideas, and values that perpetuate inequality, prejudice, and exclusion. It strengthens citizens’ capacity as decision makers and builds more accountable and equitable institutions of power.*” *New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The Action Guide for Advocacy and Citizen Participation*, Lisa VeneKlasen - Valerie Miller, 2007.

- iv. Bridging the gap between micro-level activities and macro-level policy initiatives.
- v. Adopting a democratic, peaceful, non-violent means founded on international frameworks, covenants, and UN guidelines.

What does *IGNATIAN* add to Advocacy?

14. The elements particular to the *Ignatian way* of doing advocacy are:
 - i. It is inspired by Christ and our friendship and closeness to the marginalized, as we share their hopes, worries, joys, and sorrows.
 - ii. It has a positive outlook on the world, stemming from Ignatian Spirituality, particularly St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises.
 - iii. It is based on GC 32 (decree 4); GC 35 (decree 3, § 28, 35) and GC 36 (decree 2, § 3-9).
 - iv. It selects the issues to work through discernment based on the Society of Jesus' principles for choosing the mission.
 - v. It aligns with the mission set by the Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus.
 - vi. It promotes and includes capacity building and empowerment, both at the institutional level as well as in community organizations; it walks with the people rather than speaks on their behalf.
 - vii. It recognizes the need for interinstitutional collaboration throughout the Apostolic Mission Cycle: accompany, serve, reflect, sensitize, and advocate.
 - viii. It is done in alliance with other individuals and institutions that share the same concerns.

PART II - GIAN STRUCTURE AND WAY OF PROCEEDING

The GIAN Administrative Council

15. GIAN, as a larger platform for justice's network, should:
 - i. Be firmly rooted in the governance structures of the Society of Jesus.
 - ii. Incorporate the principle of subsidiarity as a way of coordinating within GIAN initiatives and other networks and institutions.
 - iii. Integrate, as far as possible, institutions and networks from different apostolic areas (pastoral, educational, etc.).
16. The members of the GIAN Administrative Council are the same members of the SJES Advisory Committee appointed by the General Superior of the Society of Jesus.
17. The GIAN Administrative Council should meet twice yearly, with meetings held online as needed.
18. The role of the GIAN Administrative Council is:
 - i. Approve annually the strategic guidelines and orientation of each GIAN initiative.
 - ii. Oversee and periodically review the mission and mandate of GIAN.

- iii. Approve any GIAN initiative's consolidation, cessation, or creation.

Core Group Members of each initiative (institutional commitment)

19. The Core Group of each GIAN initiative will consist of “institutional representatives,” so the commitment will be officially assumed by an apostolic work rather than as a personal commitment.
20. The President of each Conference of Major Superiors shall approve/appoint up to two institutions (or regional networks) to represent the Conference in the CORE GROUP of the GIAN initiatives in which the Conference decided to participate, ensuring that they devote the necessary time and resources to such representation.
21. The Director(s) of the institution(s) named will ensure the appointment of a particular person as an official representative.
22. Profile of a Core Group member:
 - i. knowledge, experience, and interest in global networking and advocacy on the thematic issue.
 - ii. Willingness and readiness to act for the good of the Conference of Major Superiors and not just of the institution in which she/he is working.
 - iii. One who will dedicate institutional time and energy to networking and advocacy through the GIAN initiative.
23. Role of Core Group Members:
 - i. To promote communication and collaboration between the GIAN initiative and the apostolic works of her/his Conference of Major Superiors.
 - ii. Identify and explore collaborations and links with other regional networks beyond the Ignatian family that share a common agenda related to the issues addressed by the GIAN initiative.
 - iii. Participate actively in regional and global network efforts and events.
 - iv. Participate in the regular virtual and face-to-face meetings called by the GIAN initiative leader or the SJES.
 - v. Communicate, share, and update information on issues, events, and programs, with the leader’s initiative, other core-group members, and the SJES Secretary.
 - vi. Update and report regularly to the Thematic Delegate (if there is one - for example: the eco delegate) and the Social Secretary of his/her Conference of Major Superiors.
24. With the approval of the core group and the SJES secretary, the leader of a GIAN Initiative can invite to the Core Group representatives of international Jesuit networks, either permanently or occasionally (if they comply with the established profile in no. 22)

Leaders of GIAN Initiatives

25. The leadership of each GIAN initiative will be entrusted to an institution or

network.

26. The SJES Secretary will choose the institution or network to lead each GIAN initiative from among those already participating in it, with the prior approval and support of the respective President of the Conference of Jesuits Major Superiors.
27. Its mandate will last three years, with the possibility of being renewed.
28. The leader of a thematic GIAN initiative will have the same profile as the Core Group members (no. 22) and possess a global vision, skills to work with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds, organizational abilities, interest in collaborating through networking, and a clear commitment to advocacy.
29. Role of the GIAN initiative's leader:
 - i. Leads regular meetings of his/her Core Group and coordinates the team.
 - ii. With the participation of the Core Group, design and carry forward the network's vision, goals, strategy, and action plans.
 - iii. Oversee the implementation of the initiative's plan at the global level.
 - iv. Facilitates advocacy and communication at the global level in coordination with the SJES.
 - v. Identifies and explores collaboration and connections with other networks and groups beyond the Ignatian family that share objectives with the network.
 - vi. Participates actively in regional and global network efforts and events.
 - vii. Participates in the regular virtual meetings and any other face-to-face meetings called by the SJES and/or by the social ministry's secretary of his/her Conference of Major Superiors.
 - viii. Updates and reports to the Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat to follow up on network commitments and engagements.

Role of the Secretary for Social Justice and Ecology

30. The SJES Secretary coordinates the GIAN and is the official liaison with the Society of Jesus at the General Curia.
31. The SJES Secretary may appoint someone as his representative to participate, help to organize, and strengthen each GIAN initiative.
32. The SJES facilitates the functioning of each thematic initiative by:
 - i. Contributing to aligning with other processes within the Society of Jesus (namely UAP, apostolic planning, other networking efforts, apostolic secretariats, etc.) and outside: the Vatican Dicasteries or other offices and global forums.
 - ii. Providing orientation and accompaniment to each initiative.
 - iii. Helping with the governance, development, and management of each initiative.
 - iv. Providing common services to the thematic initiatives, like training and communication.
 - v. Facilitating linkages within the social area, with other apostolic works/areas and their secretariats, as well as with other organizations and

- networks at the global level.
- vi. Identifying and leading opportunities for advocacy at the global level.
- vii. Promoting and sharing learnings, best practices, and valuable experiences between the GIAN initiatives and other networks.
- viii. Supporting resource mobilization, monitoring, and evaluation within each thematic initiative.
- ix. Providing institutional endorsement by connecting the GIAN (and its initiatives) with Fr. General, his council, and the presidents of the Conferences of Major Superiors.

Role of the Conferences' Social Secretaries (CSS)

33. The CSS, who serve as the regular liaison between the SJES Secretary and the Conference of Major Superiors' president, have the apostolic mission of promoting, accompanying, and guiding the participation of the Conference's institutions in the GIAN initiatives.
34. Their function is:
 - i. Help the President select and approve the right institution(s) to lead the presence of the Conference of Major Superiors in each thematic Core Group.
 - ii. Assist and support the thematic initiatives' members in expanding and building connections with other works within the Conference of Major Superiors.
 - iii. Consider inviting the members of the GIAN thematic initiatives to participate in the regular meetings of the social apostolate.
 - iv. Maintain consistent communication with the Conference's representatives in the Core Groups, by requesting regular updates and reports, and monitoring and assessing the apostolic results of GIAN at their respective levels of responsibility.

Evaluation, Modification, Monitoring

35. Any consolidation or cessation of GIAN initiatives, as well as the creation of new ones, must go through processes of collective discernment at various levels; starting with the members of the specific thematic initiative involved in the decision to be taken, followed by the presidents of the Conferences of Major Superiors and the Social Secretaries, then, the GIAN Administrative Council, and -finally- should be approved by Fr. General.
36. This approved mandate of GIAN and its structure should be subject to evaluation and/or partial modification after three years.