ICVA Bulletin

Highlights from February 2017

Key dates in March 2017

ICVA Annual Conference & Members' Meet


Join us on March 28 as we consider questions such as:

- What do we mean by humanitarian civil society?
- Is this space is shrinking or evolving?
- What changes are NGOs witnessing and experiencing? How can more effective engagement between NGOs and host Governments help NGOs in their ability to operate at field levels?

For more information, see the concept note, and provisional agenda, and don’t forget to register.

ICVA's 2017 Conference is the launch of a two-year project to explore how more effective NGO engagement with host governments can strengthen the ability to operate at field levels. For more information, contact James.Schell@icvanetwork.org

2. ICVA's 2017 Members' Meet: 29 March 2017: Come meet NGOs from around the world! Following the Annual Conference is the half-day ICVA Members’ Meet. The meeting offers a unique opportunity to hear about the progress, work and programmes of ICVA. Members will be able to input into ICVA's post-2018 strategic directions, and hear about the preparations for the 2018 General Assembly. All ICVA members are invited to take part in the meeting. Registration is on the same page as the conference registration, or email Secretariat@icvanetwork.org.

Forced Displacement

3. Global Refugee Compact: Following a 30 January briefing on the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) provided to all stakeholders by UNHCR in Geneva, ICVA organized on 8 February a meeting between the UNHCR CRRF Task Team and over 20 NGO delegates, to discuss the CRRF process. Over the next 18 months, ICVA will organize such exchanges regularly. ICVA met with NGOs in Uganda to discuss CRRF awareness and opportunities of engagement on the CRRF. ICVA's meetings in Kampala on 14 and 24 February clarified the main pillars of the CRRF approach and the benefits of a Uganda as a starting point for the CRRF. For information, click here, or contact Jerome.Elie@icvanetwork.org.

4. Consultation on the Repatriation of Afghan Refugees from Pakistan: On 10 February, ICVA co-organized, with the Bureau for Asia and the Pacific at UNHCR Headquarters, a Consultation on the Repatriation of Afghan Refugees from Pakistan for UNHCR, NGOs and other UN agencies. Following opening remarks from UNHCR's Assistant High Commissioner for Operations, Mr. George Okoth-Obbo and ICVA's Head of Policy, Melissa Pitotti, an update on the situation in

Humanitarian Financing


9. Asia-Pacific Regional Dialogue on the Grand Bargain

10. Localization is About More than a 25% Funding Target

11. Survey on Definitions for the Localization Marker of the Grand Bargain

12. Monitoring the Grand Bargain Commitment on Transparency: What does good quality humanitarian aid data look like?

13. UN Agencies Give a First Peak at Efforts Underway to Harmonize Approaches Towards NGOs

14. How Should HRPs be Costed? The IASC Plans Yet Another Review

15. What's New with Needs Assessments?

16. ICVA's Less Paper More Aid initiative

17. It's That Time of Year Again: Planning
both countries was provided in light of the surge of returns in the second half of 2016. Building on those introductions and on consultations held at the field level, a candid exchange of views and information followed, under Chatham House Rules, on UNHCR’s programme for refugees return and reintegration in Afghanistan. As a consequence of the various consultations, the resumption of UNHCR’s voluntary repatriation following the winter pause – initially set for 1 March – was rescheduled to 1 April 2017.

A positive trend seems to be developing, with various UNHCR Bureaux and Divisions expressing their willingness to deepen their engagement and consultations with NGOs in Geneva and in the field, with encouragement from Senior Management at Headquarters and support from the UNHCR Partnership Section. ICVA remains committed to working with UNHCR to facilitate such meaningful discussions, particularly on major issues such as voluntary repatriation. For more information, contact Jerome.Elie@icvanetwork.org

5. UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations: ICVA is pleased to announce that Yamamah Agha will be this year’s Vice-Rapporteur. Yamamah Agha leads the Humanitarian Settlement Services Program at Settlement Services International. She has more than 10 years’ experience assisting refugees and humanitarian entrants, and is playing a key role in the organisation of Australia’s increased settlement of refugees effected by the Syrian crisis. The Steering Committee very much looks forward to working with her. Updates on the Annual Consultations are on UNHCR’s website. Any questions contact ICVA on secretariat@icvanetwork.org or the UNHCR Partnership Section interagency@unhcr.org

6. NGOs Preparing Key Messages for UNHCR’s Standing Committee on Operations: The NGO community is reaching the final phase of preparation of their 10 statements to be delivered during UNHCR’s Standing Committee on Operations, on 14-16 March. The statements will be made available on ICVA’s website once delivered. ICVA will be active on Twitter during the three day meeting @ICVANetwork ; @ICVA_Displaced & @ICVATalks. For any further information on the process and NGO statements, please contact Sophie.Helle@icvanetwork.org

7. Capacity Strengthening Workshop: The Report is now available of the September 2016 Capacity Strengthening Workshop that took place in Bangkok, as part of the High Commissioner’s Structured Dialogue on UNHCR-IFRC-NGO partnership. The workshop brought participants up-to-date on the status of the draft UNHCR operational guidelines and other capacity strengthening initiatives.

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### Humanitarian Financing

8. Just Released: The Grand Bargain Explained: An ICVA briefing paper: Hot off the press!: The Grand Bargain Explained outlines the rationale, structure and process of the Grand Bargain, and unpacks each of the 10 Grand Bargain work streams, highlighting key issues and actions, how NGOs can get involved, and ICVA’s take on each work stream.

9. Asia-Pacific Regional Dialogue on the Grand Bargain: On behalf of the IASC Regional Network, UNOCHA Regional Office for Asia and Pacific (ROAP) and DFID co-hosted this regional dialogue on 28 February in Bangkok. The purpose of the event was to present the Grand Bargain to regional partners and to promote discussion among donors, host governments, NGOs, UN Agencies and ASEAN on how the commitments of the Grand Bargain could be implemented at the...
Four workshops highlighted the topics of Joint Needs Assessment, Cash-Based Programming, Local and National Responders and the Participation Revolution. The workshops provided the practical steps towards developing a regional roadmap for Grand Bargain Implementation. Prior to the dialogue, ICVA organized a consultation with NGO partners from the region and developed a briefing note on Regional NGO Perspectives on the Implementation of the Grand Bargain in Asia which was distributed to all participants in the meeting.

10. Localization is About More than a 25% Funding Target: ICVA is grateful to Switzerland and the IFRC for organizing and hosting a 21 February workshop in Geneva of donors, UN agencies, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, and NGOs, to think through each of the Grand Bargain commitments related to supporting national and local responders. A diverse group of NGOs from around the world made a big impression at the meeting. A feisty discussion honed in on the Grand Bargain’s 25% target to fund national and local responders “as directly as possible” and the development of a “localization marker” to track funding flows. Both the target and marker are important, and conversations have revealed that both will be incredibly complex to implement. In addition, participants also held conversations focused on overcoming barriers to direct funding, better utilizing pooled funds (both OCHA and NGO-run pooled funds), making coordination mechanisms more inclusive, and taking a fresh look at capacity investment. All these Grand Bargain components are important, and connected to other aspects of the Grand Bargain. An official report on the meeting will be shared shortly. In the meantime, ICVA members are invited to review and submit feedback on Humanitarian Outcomes’ rapid mapping of existing relevant initiatives to increase support and funding tools for national and local responders.

11. Survey on Definitions for the Localization Marker of the Grand Bargain: The survey aims to gather the views of local and national actors as well as Grand Bargain signatories and other actors within the humanitarian eco-system as part of the process of building consensus on the definitions and related issues for the Grand Bargain. CAFOD, who is conducting the survey, hopes the results will enable stakeholders across the system to voice their opinions and will feed into a final version of the Definitions Paper. You are invited to participate in the survey by 23 March and encourage circulation as widely as possible in your own networks. The survey takes approximately 10 minutes and is available in English, French, and Arabic.

12. Monitoring the Grand Bargain Commitment on Transparency: What does good quality humanitarian aid data look like? On Wednesday, 29 March from 13.30 until 16.00 at the CICG in Geneva, Development Initiatives and ICVA will be hosting a session on the Grand Bargain Commitment on Transparency. This public, half-day workshop aims to bring together humanitarian data publishers and users to explore the rationale, use and benefits of the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) open data standard and how it can be further enriched to meet and monitor the needs of the humanitarian community. More information forthcoming from Development Initiatives.

13. UN Agencies Give a First Peak at Efforts Underway to Harmonize Approaches Towards NGOs: On 31 January, ICVA co-hosted a workshop for NGOs to learn from UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and OCHA representatives what they have been considering in order to implement the Grand Bargain commitment to “harmonize partnership agreements and share partner assessment information… in order to save time and avoid duplication in operations.” The report is now available on ICVA’s website. Further outreach to the broader
NGO community is expected, including through questionnaires and as part of upcoming UN partnership consultations with NGOs.

14. How Should HRPs be Costed? The IASC Plans Yet Another Review: ICVA attended the 2 February meeting of the Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC) planning group. Participants received an update on the status of Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNOs) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs), a briefing by the “Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) Movement”, and a heads up about the “2017 HPC Review Workshop” to be held in Geneva on 23 March.

One of the most important developments you should know about is the expansion of the “IASC costing group” to include NGOs and other experts. Their first meeting as an expanded group will take place on 8 March. The group’s objective is to find the best way to cost-out Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs). The current HRP costing approach is mostly project-based costing. When the IASC Principals met last December, they were not ready to endorse the proposal by some actors to shift to activity-based costing (or eventually outcome-based costing) of HRPs. Participants in the expanded IASC Costing Group will “explore future options for a light, incremental approach, building on field analyses and lessons learned from current and previous costing approaches, and testing of different methodologies initially through a table top simulation exercise.” We are grateful to IRC for participating in this group, and would welcome additional NGO representatives with expertise in budget/finance and experience in costing Humanitarian Response Plans (HRPs). Whichever approach is taken will have significant implications for NGOs, and their advice for ways to support contextualized approaches capturing real costs would be appreciated. For more information, please contact Melissa.Pitotti@icvanetwork.org.

15. What’s New with Needs Assessments? The Grand Bargain includes an entire workstream dedicated to needs assessments, which have received a great deal of attention in the last month:

- ICVA participated in the 8 February STAIF webinar “Joint Needs Assessments: Doing it right? The role of senior humanitarians in the field” with the DSRSG/HC/RC for Somalia, Peter de Clercq and the Director of Operations OCHA, John Ging. One good question posed by a webinar participant was whether we are now all supposed to do a needs assessment together? The short answer is “no.” To learn more, check out webinar PowerPoint and recording.

- ICVA supported a 22 February meeting between ACAPS, REACH and NGOs on needs assessments. A key focus for NGOs going forward in the needs assessment discussion will be how to maintain humanitarian independence, prioritize resources based on need, and support an “ecosystem” approach that provides for contextualization. Members can read the meeting report.

- OCHA and ECHO hosted a technical workshop on 28 February and 1 March in Brussels. All Grand Bargain signatories as well as specialist organizations and global clusters were invited to join the workshop in order to: 1) come to a shared understanding of the objectives/use of needs assessment in humanitarian decision making and the challenges to date; and 2) agree on pragmatic steps forward to improve needs assessment in practice and which are in line with Grand Bargain commitments. We look forward to a read-out on this meeting.

16. ICVA’s Less Paper More Aid initiative is moving toward a second phase of implementation to help support practical action on recommendations developed during the first phase of the initiative. The current focus is working through the Grand Bargain workstream on donor reporting to co-facilitate with Germany the implementation of a pilot project on harmonized donor reporting. Detailed planning for this pilot will take place during the month of March between donors, NGO partners, and UN agencies, culminating with a pilot launch conference for core participants on 24 March in Berlin. Organizations interested in
learning more, or joining in the pilot, should contact Jeremy.Rempel@icvanetwork.org. ICVA is particularly looking for feedback on the proposed framework for harmonized reporting presented in the GPPi study as the “10+3” approach to reporting (please see page 25 of the study available here). Feedback or comments sent to Jeremy before 22 March can feed directly into the discussion.

17. Planning Commences for the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment – ICVA attended the 2 February briefing on preparations under for the 21-23 June ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment to be held in Geneva. The bulk of the meeting focused on a preview of contents to be included in the Secretary General’s report. Information will be sent shortly on how to apply to organize a side event using the same procedure as last year: eg. by submitting a form, which will be reviewed for coherency with the overall themes. Spots for side events are limited (only 20) and applicants might be asked to join up with others who proposed similar side events.

Humanitarian Coordination

18. IASC Principals: In Geneva on 8 February, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O’Brien, hosted a short meeting in Geneva to begin preparations for an April IASC Principals retreat. During the meeting he raised the following areas for further discussion: refining IASC working practice for Principals; increasing outreach to the diverse humanitarian eco-system; exploring opportunities for IASC engagement with new UN structures, and priority issues on which to engage; agreeing policy priorities for the Principals. While all these areas merit attention and ICVA continues its outreach to NGOs around the world, ICVA also noted strategic areas in which collective Principal action is needed including how to address coming cuts to funding, and how to stand up for humanitarian principles.

19. IASC Emergency Directors Group’s (EDG) February Teleconference: Ahead of 7 March IASC Principals meeting, an EDG teleconference took place on 20 February to discuss the extension of Level 3 Response (L3) for Syria, Iraq and Yemen operations, for which the extension was recommended. Other follow-up actions from the meeting include:
   • Iraq - NGO challenges around registration, visas and work to be taken up as part of broader advocacy with the authorities as appropriate.
   • Syria- Advocacy priorities identified include NGO access constraints and protection of aid worker
   • Yemen - Yemen operation remained in need of considerable engagement and support, including from the Principals level, and particularly in view of the looming risk of famine.
It was also noted that the ability of the system to trigger system-wide L3 surges for other current famine alerts, i.e. Somalia, South Sudan and north-eastern Nigeria, was impacted by the extended designations which remained in place for Iraq and Syria.

20. OCHA Reform: In 2016, the Emergency Relief Coordinator of the UN commissioned a Functional Review of OCHA that provided recommendations on substantive reforms to the office. In early 2017, a Change Management Unit, headed by Dr Bruce Aylward, was established to oversee a work plan including drafting an OCHA Results Framework and consulting with stakeholders on proposed changes within OCHA. Consultation with NGOs is a part of that process and we are pleased to invite NGO CEOs/Directors to a meeting with Dr. Aylward on 30 March at ICVA (dial-in possible) during which your input can be shared. For more information contact secretariat@icvanetwork.org.

21. Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Humanitarian Country Team
(HCT): Revisions were made to HCT’s ToR following last month’s EDG meeting. We thank you for any comments submitted on the last version and the final version will be transmitted to the ERC. For more information contact Emmanuelle.Osmond@icvanetwork.org

22. Upcoming Learning Stream on Humanitarian Coordination: Following the successful humanitarian learning stream on financing, we are now developing our next learning stream on Humanitarian Coordination and the implications for NGOs. Throughout the learning stream, we will unpack various humanitarian coordination structures at national, regional and global levels; and explore how NGOs can most meaningfully engage. Stay tuned for more information or contact James.Schell@icvanetwork.org.

Humanitarian Partnership

23. Post-WHS PACT and Reporting: For those organizations who made commitments at the WHS, the self-reporting process is live on www.agendaforhumanity.org, and will be open until 17 March 2017. OCHA have created a simple guide to help you fill in the self-reporting templates. The documents: ‘Guidance for self-reporting on PACT’ and ‘10 steps to self-reporting’, explain the process quite clearly.

24. Donors Pledge $672 Million at the Oslo Humanitarian Conference for Nigeria and the Lake Chad Region: On 23 and 24 February, the humanitarian community convened in Oslo to discuss how to address the humanitarian crisis in NE Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin. The conference was co-hosted by Norway, Nigeria, Germany and the UN and followed a civil society meeting. In their statement: Seven Steps to Saving Lives in the Lake Chad region conflict, NGOs called for a scale-up of efforts on food, protection, access and education in the region. NGOs and civil society are also looking at how to scale up their own coordination efforts. The ICVA’s Regional Representative in Africa attended the Regional IASC meeting in Senegal, for a debriefing on the Oslo Conference. For more information contact Marco.Rotelli@icvanetwork.org.

25. IGAD Special Summit on Somalia: ICVA will be attending the Intergovernmental Authority on Development’s (IGAD) Special Summit on 25 March 2017 in Nairobi. The Summit on Durable Solutions for Somalia Refugees will galvanize recent developments to reinforce asylum and protection in the region, while also seeking solutions that support infrastructure and stabilization in Somalia to ensure sustainable reintegration. For more information, please contact Marco.Rotelli@icvanetwork.org.

ICVA Updates

26. A New Development for ICVA in Africa: To better cover the continent and carry out its main objectives, ICVA's Regional Hub in Africa will be moving from Dakar to Nairobi in the coming months, under the leadership of Marco Rotelli, our current Regional Representative. ICVA will maintain close links to West and Central Africa through regular visits to Dakar and other key locations. We are pleased to welcome Addis Woldemichael as Deputy Representative for Africa. Addis, based in Addis Ababa, brings a strong coordination background as the Director of Programme for Africa Humanitarian Action, and expertise in key humanitarian issues and policies. From Nairobi and Addis Ababa, the ICVA Africa team will continue to pursue ICVA’s overall strategy on Humanitarian Financing, Forced Displacement, Coordination, and Partnership in the region.
27. Director of Finance and Administration Vacancy: ICVA is seeking a new Director of Finance and Administration. For more information, please look at our Vacancy Notice. The deadline to apply is 16 March 2017.

New and Noteworthy

28. Strengthening civil society engagement with the United Nations. ICVA was pleased to contribute to this recently published collection of articles highlighting areas for action by the UN Secretary-General Guterres. With perspectives from across civil society the document aims to foster stronger relationship between UN and civil society. Download the document compiled by the 1 for 7 Billion campaign

29. European Network on Statelessness (ENS): Registration is now open for ENS’s forthcoming conference on detention of stateless persons, which will take place in Budapest between 4 and 5 May 2017. The conference will launch a new comparative report as well as provide a platform for concerted region-wide advocacy aimed at protecting stateless persons from arbitrary detention. The conference (“Protecting Stateless Persons from Arbitrary Detention”) is intended to facilitate the sharing of information among stakeholders from across Europe - including lawyers, NGOs and academics as well as representatives from governments, inter-governmental-organizations, ombudspersons/monitoring bodies and other stakeholders mandated to work on issues related to immigration detention. The full programme is available on the ENS website. To register please complete the online form no later than 15 March.

30. Norwegian Refugee Council’s (NRC) Considerations for Planning Mass Evacuations of Civilians in Conflict Settings: This recently published NRC Guidance document is a useful resource for a broad range of humanitarian organizations that are involved in evacuations of civilians in conflict settings.


Forthcoming Events

ICVA Meetings and Events

March 28: ICVA Annual Conference, Geneva
March 29: ICVA Members Meeting, Geneva
March 29: ICVA and Development Initiatives half-day workshop on the IATI standard, Geneva
March 30: NGO Symposium, Geneva
March 30: NGO meeting OCHA Change Management Unit, Geneva

Other Meetings and Events

March 14-16: UNHCR Standing Committee on Operations, Geneva
March 25: IGHAD Summit on Durable Solutions for Somalia Refugees, Nairobi
April 5-6: 92nd IASC Working Group meeting, Rome
May 4-5: ENS conference on Statelessness, Budapest
June 4-6: Asia-Pacific Regional Humanitarian Partnerships Forum, Bangkok (TBC)
June 14-16: UNHCR NGO Annual Consultations, Geneva
June 20: World Refugee Day
June 21-23: ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment, Geneva
June 28-30: UNHCR Standing Committee Meeting, Geneva
September 20-21: UNHCR Standing Committee Meeting, Geneva

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