Strengthening NGO Partnership, Practice and Policy

Final Evaluation
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“This document covers humanitarian aid activities implemented with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of the European Union, and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.”
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1. Introduction

1.1 Evaluation Purpose and Objectives

In accordance with the Terms of Reference (Annex IV), the overall purpose of this evaluation is to measure the achievement of the results against the indicators set out in the project proposal (Single Form) submitted to ECHO and to give recommendations for future activities to strengthen ICVA’s role in the regions.

The evaluation will also contribute to further developments in the establishment of the ICVA regional hubs, partially funded by the ECHO action and provide examples of best practice for supporting coordination.

The evaluation has been organized around five main criteria:

1. Relevance: to describe how well actions undertaken by ICVA have addressed the problem stated in the proposal and how well it matches the strategic objectives. (What is the present relevance of the action? Is the action intervention logic holding true? Do all stakeholders support the action?)
2. Efficiency: to evaluate how well the inputs have been transformed into output and outcomes. (How well are the inputs and implementation of activities managed? How efficiently are outputs achieved?)
3. Effectiveness: to measure the degree to which the outputs have provided benefits and contributed to the achievement of the results, based on agreed indicators.
4. Impact: to describe how and to which degree the action has contributed to the solution of the problem and to the achievement of the specific objective. (Is there any indirect impact on beneficiaries? Are there any external factors affecting the achievement?)
5. Sustainability: to measure the likelihood of ongoing benefits produced by the action after the period of external support has ended (financial, economic viability, level of ownership by target group).

1.2 Methodology

The evaluation employed a desk review, semi-structured interviews (face to face or via Skype) and, in a few cases, written responses to questions from key informants.

a) Desk review
The purpose of the desk review was to identify activities undertaken by ICVA, the hubs and other relevant actors in order to establish what outputs have been achieved. It also considered the impact of these activities to the extent that this could be ascertained. Documents reviewed included those provided by ICVA in Geneva and by the hubs, those downloaded from
relevant websites (ICVA, IASC, UNHCR, reliefweb) and the few gathered from key informants.

b) Semi-structured interview
Questionnaires and/or informant interviews involved key stakeholders in Europe, the MENA region and West and Central Africa, including national NGOs, international NGOs, UN agencies, consortia representatives, ECHO and of course ICVA management staff. A sample of the standard questionnaire and a list of informants are included in Annexes V and II. Questions have been tailored according to recipient involvement and level of exposure to the action. Findings from interviews conducted by the ICVA reporting officer in November/December 2014 have been also reviewed and used to a certain extent as resources for this evaluation.

The evaluation was conducted between November 2014 and January 2015, and thus began at a time when several initiatives were still ongoing. While these initiatives may conceivably have significant additional impact, there was not yet evidence to this effect at the time of writing.
2. Executive Summary

The action is extremely relevant and it continues to respond to major gaps in humanitarian response and to actual needs of the targeted beneficiaries. The objective, considering the wide thematic and geographic scope of the action, was quite ambitious for the given timeframe. However positive initial steps have been undertaken to lay solid foundations for the hubs, and ICVA succeeded in breaking out of the “Geneva bubble”, getting closer to national NGOs and consortia thus amplifying the voice of the many agencies that do not have representatives in Geneva. Overall, the action strategy is well supported by key stakeholders though additional efforts in sharing Terms of Reference of the Regional hubs could have enhanced the understanding and further facilitated the achievement of the results.

The initial months of the action were used mainly to set up the hub presence in the regions. A lot of informal networking was carried out at this stage. As a result, the bulk of the activities, in particular in West and Central Africa, were realized in 2014 with several initiatives kicking off only in the last quarter of the year, toward the end of the action. This includes multiple consultancies to conduct studies and research that will definitely boost partnership, policy, and practice of NGOs in the months to come.

In both regions, ICVA representatives have gained trust and credibility and, most importantly, they have “established a bridge between NGOs and global level”, enabling a closer connection to NGO work and providing an effective communication link between the different actors.

Positive opportunities to exchange, to learn from best practices in terms of coordination, to considerably increase links with international coordination mechanisms, and to create communities of practice have been created. Ensuring consistency in this approach, with adequate resources and strategic follow up of initiatives undertaken, is paramount to step up in particular in terms of coordination. The NGO Coordination Resource Center is a great tool to foster partnerships when further advanced.

Extremely relevant outputs have emerged from the learning events in each region. Due to the large scope of the action and the multitude of activities planned, limited time has been dedicated to capitalize on these outputs.

The hubs offered the opportunity to enhance essential dialogue between policy and practice, stimulating contributions and inputs from where humanitarian action is taking place. One of the best examples of this is the MENA Representative’s assistance in reversing UNHCR Lebanon’s deviation from UNHCR’s global policy on partner personnel costs.

The hubs proved to be valuable tools for strengthening ICVA’s mandate and contributing toward the achievement of ICVA’s goal of “making humanitarian action more principled and effective by working collectively and independently to influence policy and practice.”
It is challenging—and possibly too early—to evaluate with evidence the real result of the establishment of the hubs, at both the regional and global levels. Considering the incredibly active role played by ICVA in terms of engagement and delivery of outputs, as well as the quality of tools developed and/or under finalization, one can safely say there is potential for great impact in 2015 and beyond. Additional financial resources will be instrumental to achieve this.
3. **Background**

3.1 **The context**

The grant agreement to implement the “Strengthening NGO Partnership, Practice and Policy for improved humanitarian action” project was signed between ECHO and IRC. ICVA was the implementing partner and acted as the project manager of the action. The action started in September 2013 and lasted for 16 months, ending on the 31st of December 2014.

ICVA is a global consortium of over 75 NGOs and networks, with members based in OECD countries, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. ICVA is a platform for increased collaboration and coordination between NGOs and other humanitarian actors, which aims at improving the lives of communities affected by humanitarian crises. IRC is a member of ICVA and has a representative on its Board.

This action has its roots in the NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project (NHRP) phase I, funded by DFID, and phase II, funded by ECHO and ended in April 2013. These two projects showed the value, in targeted countries, of having dedicated NGO staff close to humanitarian action, supporting the collective response and advocating for improvements. The NHRP initiative acknowledged the roles and responsibilities of national and international NGOs in implementing humanitarian reform and began to focus on their leadership, emphasizing the importance of existing NGO networks. The rationale of this action sits in the increasingly complex context in which humanitarian crises occur and in the growing need to improve the collective ability of NGOs, both national and international, to respond better in terms of partnerships, practice and policy.

3.2 **Intervention logic**

The specific objective of this action was to improve humanitarian action through facilitating and enabling collective NGO efforts to strengthen humanitarian Partnership, Practice and Policy.

This objective was to be achieved through the following results:

1. Strengthened humanitarian partnerships to enable more effective response with equity of national NGO engagement;
2. Improved humanitarian practice by NGOs delivering principled, accountable and better-quality response;
3. Improved humanitarian policy that supports more effective humanitarian partnerships and practice.

The action supported the establishment of two of the three ICVA regional hubs: one in Jordan, covering the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), and one in
Senegal, covering the West and Central Africa region (WCA). Other donors support the Asia hub, which covers the Asia-Pacific region.

4. Findings

4.1 Relevance

The action was in line with the ICVA strategy 2012–2014, which included a specific mention of presence outside Geneva and closer links with national NGOs. In its current strategy (2015-2018), ICVA continues to focus on forced displacement, humanitarian partnerships, humanitarian coordination and humanitarian financing, reflecting the value and relevance of these areas. Moreover it continues to respond to major gaps in humanitarian response, as highlighted in both surveys on the state of humanitarian leadership, coordination and accountability conducted in the framework of this action.

The rationale for the action lies in the need to break out of the “Geneva bubble”, getting closer to national NGOs and amplifying the voice of the many agencies that do not have representatives in Geneva—especially those in refugee situations.

ICVA’s presence in the regions is building on the positive outcomes of the NHRP and on the consultation carried out with ICVA membership and governing body (including the Board) as well as in the regions in 2012 and 2013. This process highlighted the need for improving INGO and NNGO partnerships, promoting access to training and representation opportunities for national NGOs, supporting a constructive, equitable NGO role within interagency mechanisms, increasing access to information, better understanding of humanitarian financing, sharing of good practices on quality and accountability (enhancing good community participation), increased understanding of the regional organizations involved in humanitarian action and last, but not least, an effective two-way information flow.

The action strategy is holding true and is quite well structured, though the achievement of the specific objective, considering the wide thematic and geographic scope of the action, was quite ambitious for the given timeframe. Overall, the action is well supported by key stakeholders and remains very relevant. It responds to actual needs of the targeted beneficiaries, particularly national NGOs and consortia but also to INGOs, as pointed out by many key informants during interviews and as mentioned in feedback/participant evaluations of single events.

The process used to define the hubs’ Terms of Reference (ToR) and overarching work plans—designed through a series of consultations with members and key partners in the three regions—shows a good level of participation from the beneficiaries. However, one respondent felt the decision to establish the hubs was taken as a sudden step and others indicated that the ToR and mandate of the
hubs' representatives could be further clarified and made more explicit. Further sharing of the ToR all along project implementation would have increased understanding and sense of ownership by all actors.

The geographical scope of both regions is very ambitious, especially considering the number of human resources allocated to it. The MENA region is particularly challenging and the local civil society structure, including the Gulf actors, is quite complex. It took some time for ICVA to identify the real added value of the regional hub, specifically in reference to the Syria crisis where, especially at the beginning, there could have been an overlap with existing regional NGO coordination mechanisms put in place by INGOs (SIRF). This risk was not stated in the proposal, though measures were put in place later on to ensure synergies rather than overlapping. In WCA, the geographical coverage was extended during implementation to respond to the changing needs on the ground, showing flexibility but also increasing challenges to consistent coverage.

The action design has successfully taken into consideration the recommendations from the evaluation of the NHRP II, which included representation at national level. The current action built on lessons learnt in order to address concerns linked to structure and personnel arrangements. Management structure in the current design has been simplified. Hub representatives are hosted by employees of member organizations (Save the Children in Amman and Plan in Dakar) and, as such, must follow the procedures of the hosting organization but are 100% dedicated to hub representation and report directly to the ICVA Secretariat in Geneva.

4.2 Efficiency

The initial months of the action, while the grant agreement with the donor was finalized, were used to set up the hub presence in the regions with some time dedicated to sorting out implementation modalities with hosting organizations and between the grant holder (IRC) and the implementing agency (ICVA). A lot of informal networking was carried out at this stage. As a result, the bulk of the activities, in particular in WCA, were realized in 2014 with several initiatives kicking off only in the last quarter of the year (toward the end of the action). This included consultancies to conduct studies and reviews, such as the NGO coordination guide, the review of the NGO Perspectives on Humanitarian Response in Level 3 Crises, the Study on Accountability to Affected Populations, the review of UN project partnership agreements for NGO implementation of humanitarian projects, the review of NGO leadership roles in Clusters and the Review of NGO experience with the Syria-related pooled funds. The time frame of these studies has limited the use of their findings within this action.

It is worth noting that only two regional hubs (MENA and WCA) are covered by the ECHO-funded action, while the Asia hub is funded by other sources. This arrangement has created some challenges in the alignment of the regional hubs'
strategies and approaches\textsuperscript{1}. This is particularly true when it comes to facilitating participation in international events, offering learning opportunities, and travelling to reach out to a wider public. In terms of pure administrative management, this has added unnecessary workload to the Secretariat.

Despite differences in funding sources, exchanges between the three regional hubs have been ensured and cross-learning activities organized in several occasions (e.g. organisation of humanitarian principles and humanitarian financing workshops). As of recently, additional cross-learning is enhanced through the participation of the MENA representative in the joint NGO review of the Ebola coordination mechanisms in affected countries. There is a regular system in place to monitor the implementation on the ground and foster exchanges between the ICVA Secretariat in Geneva and the regions. Hub representatives met at least four times in person during the duration of the action, both in Geneva and/or in their respective locations. Weekly calls are held between the Director of Partnerships and Policy and hub representatives; this has allowed for constructive discussions about deliverables and work-plans. Sometimes the workload limited these exchanges or led to a focus on specific outputs rather than broader approaches and strategies. Internal buy-in from other actors within the ICVA Secretariat has grown with time during implementation.

The action resources are managed in a transparent and accountable manner. There is a clear division of labour between the grant holder and the implementing agency, governed by a Memorandum of Understanding. Grant monitoring and reporting are carried out quite regularly through submission of quarterly reports and informal mechanisms (monthly calls). Turnover of staff in charge of the grant at IRC level seems not to have affected the communication flow or management performance.

Synergies have been created with other existing external initiatives to maximize resources and increase impact. In particular it is worth mentioning:

- synergies between ICVA and InterAction’s work with regards to framework agreement comparative analysis and others;
- partnership with ICRC for the organisation of the learning events around humanitarian principles in both regions;
- engagement with BBR (Building a Better Response) on the development and piloting of training/learning tools.

ICVA has shown a good degree of flexibility in implementing the activities, adapting to changing needs in order to achieve additional outputs. The best examples of this are WCA’s engagement in the Ebola crisis response and the support provided to the UNHCR mission to DRC in the framework of the implementation of recommendations from Structured Dialogue (DRC was not originally included in the ToR of the WCA hub). Moreover, resources dedicated to the regional-level engagement in the consultations around the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) were not originally foreseen in the proposal but

\textsuperscript{1} “This creates disparity in our approach” – from interviews with hubs representatives
were efficiently included in the hubs’ work-plan to respond to the needs of main stakeholders.

4.3 Effectiveness

The action strategy was organized around the achievement of three main results: Partnership, Practice and Policy. Findings in terms of effectiveness are presented accordingly.

**Result 1 - PARTNERSHIP**

Establishing, strengthening and consolidating partnerships require time and energy. Both have been invested by the Regional Representatives to start to build up a network of stakeholders in their regions as soon as they commenced in their positions. Engagement with national NGOs and coordination bodies at national level has been key in achieving this result.

All opportunities have been used to strengthen NGO coordination as well as participation of national NGOs in international and regional consultations and initiatives, building on ICVA’s privileged global-level role in the humanitarian arena (IASC) and with UNHCR. Coordination efforts and initiatives targeting NGO networks at regional and national level contributed to this result, with particular outreach to NNGOs. A large number of those who benefited felt these initiatives created positive opportunities to exchange with actors facing similar challenges, to learn from best practices in terms of coordination, to considerably increase links with international coordination mechanisms, and to create communities of practice. (“Meeting people from other coordination fora who share similar problems – e.g. membership fees, how to engage national/international partners, sign-off procedures—and feeling like there was a community of us all in the same boat”2). Participants have stayed in touch since events were organized and group mailing lists for this purpose have been created. However, formal online groups that could meet virtually have not yet been established.

Examples of national and international NGO partnerships and case studies have been identified, analysed and shared through workshops but further efforts are definitely needed to boost this relationship and to continue to build trust and further programmatic collaborations.

The existing version of the NGO Coordination Guide (2013) was shared before the regional coordination workshops and also translated into French. Feedback from NGOs and consortia to improve/upgrade the existing coordination guide has been gathered by the hubs and at global level. Participants to these workshops stated that the “the process to review and update the NGO coordination guide was very interactive”. The new version of the guide is currently being finalized and will be made available through the NGO Coordination Resource Center. The draft outline of the website —ready at the

2 Evaluation report from coordination events in MENA region
time of the evaluation—is comprehensive and quite well structured. Looking at the potential beneficiaries of the Resource Center, it is important to find a good compromise between the need to provide/share information and avoid overwhelming the reader. The website structure could be simplified to become more user-friendly. The inclusion – as planned- of templates (e.g. including for ToRs for NGOs in HCTs), checklists and other similar tools developed on the basis of the analysis of available documents and experiences is essential to ensure that the Resource Center is useful to its users.

A mapping of the existing coordination networks has been conducted in all regions and results will soon be available on the ICVA Resource Center website. Linkages with regional and national NGO forums have been established in both regions. Regional Representatives have attended NGO fora meetings during their visits to different countries. This engagement highlighted the need for furthering these relations as well as the value of effectively amplifying and engaging a greater number of NGO voices.

In the MENA region, direct support to individual NGO fora has been provided in eight countries through information sharing on ICVA and coordination mechanisms and by contributing to better definitions of forum coordinator job description, forum ToRs, mandate and missions. The impact of specific support provided to individual NGO networks is evident as shown by the case of the NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI). This network benefited from the external facilitation provided by a consultant—in the framework of the ECHO action—to the strategic planning workshop organized in Erbil to review NCCI’s mission and strategic plan. Coordination with the Syria-related INGO forum, SIRF, has been ongoing throughout project implementation. As reported by some respondents, the definition of ICVA’s focus on national actors and national and regional coordination bodies contributed to creating synergies rather than overlap as mentioned in the relevance section. It was also reported “ICVA acts within SIRF more as an observer rather than a player”; a more active role was suggested. It is also worth noting to increase the added value of the hub that the geographical coverage of the ICVA hub is wider than that of SIRF, which focuses only on the Syria crisis.

In WCA it took longer to reach out to NGOs since there was a greater focus on development and networks are less active. In addition, coordination at regional level in WCA proved to be—according to the WCA representative—more challenging due to the absence of a regional coordination network. Outreach to national level fora has been hampered by several factors, including logistics. Consistency in this relationship is very important, hence the need to allocate sufficient time and appropriate resources to follow up on ad hoc initiatives.3

The Ebola crisis showed that the hub was well placed to facilitate coordination between humanitarian actors, increasing involvement of the wider NGO

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3 « Engagement with national consortia requires long term commitments » from an interview with a former network coordinator.
community. One informant mentioned the key role played by the ICVA representative in mobilizing the actors to respond to the crisis, providing useful tools for internal advocacy to stimulate agency engagement in Ebola response. Others appreciated ICVA’s neutrality in meetings and the time and resources dedicated to facilitating coordination, particularly in reference to the Francophonie Summit held in November 2014, in Dakar. The initiative, recently undertaken, to conduct a joint NGO mission to evaluate the coordination of the Ebola response in the most-affected countries (ongoing at the time of writing) has been praised by interviewed actors in the region. However it was noted that, to be able to step up coordination and ensure the success of these initiatives, qualified and adequate resources are needed.

Links between NGOs and HCT/clusters have been promoted through the organization, in November 2014, of a symposium in Geneva attended by representatives of NGOs sitting on HCTs to exchange views on challenges affecting national NGO engagement in HCTs. The opportunity to be exposed to international actors in Geneva was particularly appreciated by national actors. Extremely positive feedback on this event was gathered from participants but also from donors invited to meet with NGOs. The positive effects of this initiative are limited, however, to the 15 participants who attended since no further sharing of the outcomes has been done at the time of writing.

In general, participation from representatives from Francophone African countries in international events has proven to be a challenge due to language barriers.

A full mapping of NGO engagement as cluster co-lead is not yet available to the public, however a study has been commissioned towards the end of the action that will include this information. In the draft report (available at the time of writing), findings show that in recent years international NGO’s providing co-leadership capacity for clusters has gained wide acceptance and endorsement and is increasingly adopted by UNHCR with its sector led coordination mechanisms. One of the main challenges faced in this process seems to be the limited funding allocated for these positions, combined with limited or non-existent understanding and harmonization of ToRs for these roles. As pointed out by one key informant, the knowledge of the humanitarian architecture and capacities of cluster co-leads is often, especially in L3 emergencies, an issue that still needs to be addressed. The study will serve as a good advocacy tool towards the implementation of the Transformative Agenda and NGO participation.

At global level, ICVA has strengthened its engagement with UNHCR, building on its presence in the regions. This partnership in the MENA region was fostered through contributions to the roll-out of the “Framework for Implementing with Partners” resulting in the publication of an extremely useful (according to partners interviewed) list of Frequently Asked Questions. ICVA succeeded in bringing to UNHCR’s attention some extremely relevant operational issues and stimulated—through collective effort—positive steps toward improving partnerships at local level, for example stopping the proposed partner salary limitations triggered by an alert from the Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum.
through the MENA hub. The ICVA regional hub’s role in Amman is acknowledged by UNHCR as valuable in “convening and supporting a network of national NGOs for their voices to be better heard”. However it seems according to some people interviewed that the main interactions are related to issues of concern to INGOs. ICVA’s regional hubs have contributed to the facilitation of Structured Dialogue visits in Asia (not covered by this action but integrating global efforts) and in DRC (Goma and Kinshasa) and Dakar. At the time of writing and from available documents, it is challenging to evaluate the degree to which ICVA contributed to the implementation of Structured Dialogue recommendations in practice since limited follow up to the DRC visit has been conducted.

Training and capacity building opportunities to increase capacity and understanding of national NGOs have been offered internally in the framework of this action (Result 2) but external ones have also been promoted, mainly through e-mail exchanges. The ICVA website and specific regional hub websites have not been fully developed for this purpose. In particular, reference is made to the Building a Better Response e-learning tool—developed by a network of international NGOs and academic institutions and to which ICVA substantially contributed—not appearing in the list of resources on the current ICVA website.

Result 2 - PRACTICE

A number of learning events to improve humanitarian practice by NGOs have been organized globally and in the regions. The choice of themes still reflects the areas of particular interest of the NGO community, as corroborated by evaluations conducted at the end of learning events and from comments provided during interviews. In general, all of these learning events created opportunities for bilateral interactions with experts and decision-makers that were very much appreciated by all stakeholders.

Extremely relevant outputs have emerged from the learning events in each region. Due to the large scope of the action and the multitude of activities planned, limited time has been dedicated to following up on some of these outputs.

More specifically, learning events on humanitarian principles have been conducted in Amman (for NGOs working in Jordan) and in Dakar (for NGOs working in West and Central Africa) (and Indonesia, without ECHO funding) in partnership with the ICRC, reaching out to 51 NGOs (+ 80 in Asia) in the targeted areas. These events contributed to improving participants' understanding of the operational application of humanitarian principles and the Code of Conduct. Participation from a wide variety of actors, including national, international, secular and faith-based organizations, contributed to a very rich debate. The level of exchange and discussion during these events was rated very highly, both by ICVA representatives and by participants in both regions covered by the evaluation. The events provided a platform for bridging perception gaps between actors regarding the principles and their application. Some participants referred to the learning event as “an eye opener” while others, building on the engagement of the MENA representative on the promotion of the Code of Conduct, requested additional trainings on the code of conduct in MENA region.
The Vimeo produced by the MENA region offers a good snapshot of the initiative, showing the impact of the learning event on some participants and it represents a great communication tool for further stimulate discussion on the topic. The partnership with ICRC on the humanitarian principles and engagement with NGOs from the MENA region in particular went beyond the learning event and was highlighted in the event marking the 20th anniversary of the Code of Conduct, held in Geneva on December 5th. Building on this successful experience the MENA hub and ICRC are already planning a similar event in southern Turkey for NGOs working in northern Syria. Unfortunately at global level, a comparative analysis of the outcomes (identifying possible solutions to challenges identified) has not yet been conducted.

To improve understanding of quality and accountability, three workshops were held in Beirut, Amman and Dakar, reaching out to 51 participants. All workshops adopted a participatory approach with a focus on shared learning based on best practices as well as challenges. In Dakar the workshop offered the opportunity to initiate discussion around the WHS and the role of beneficiaries in the related consultations. As a result of this interaction four refugees and a local representative were involved in the consultations in West Africa and delivered speeches in two panels. An interesting study has been commissioned by ICVA to look into Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) through network learning and to capture the global perspective on practice surrounding AAP. The report provided evidence that within the context of current practice, networks “are emerging as important vehicles for learning about and improving Accountability to Affected Populations”. It also offers a good analysis of current examples of networks. Strengthened AAP remains central to the humanitarian effectiveness agenda; the study is a comprehensive and accessible tool for guiding NGO engagement in AAP through networks to be further exploited.

To foster a more in-depth understanding of the financing components of the international humanitarian system, ICVA has engaged in improving learning around humanitarian funding and pooled fund mechanisms by NGOs. A particular effort has been made to enable national NGOs to gain more direct access to humanitarian funding. The “Show Me the Money” conference held in Geneva in the context of the ICVA Conference provided a good platform for 150 practitioners and non-practitioners to share important achievements, present good practices and discuss challenges and solutions.

Building on this inspirational experience Humanitarian Financing workshops have been held in both MENA (Beirut) and WCA (Dakar), reaching 66 participants, in particular national NGOs. These were extremely good opportunities to dialogue with donors and UN agencies. An interesting study was launched towards the end of the action to review and compare various UN partnership agreements for NGO implementation of humanitarian projects. The outcome could be an extremely useful tool for informing future consultations with UN agencies as they update their agreement templates. The report identifies a few best practices found in project partnership agreements and stimulates further discussion within the IASC Task Team on Humanitarian Financing. The draft Matrix comparing different agencies’ policies and
procedures, when and if further detailed and finalized, could represent a potentially-useful operational guide for NGOs as well. The review was well-timed to influence future agreement templates, since consultations were held with UNICEF as it was revising its standard Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) template and OCHA as it was finalizing harmonized Guidelines on Country-Based Pooled Funds.

To better inform discussion within the framework of the Pooled Fund Working Group but also to contribute to the work-plan of the IASC Task Team on Humanitarian Financing, ICVA commissioned a review to analyse NGO experience with the Syria-related pooled funds, both before and after the restructuring of the regional Emergency Response Fund (ERF) into country-based pooled funds (CBPF). The study, conducted under the direct supervision of the MENA regional hub, has identified good practice and limitations of the Fund and drew lessons learnt, offering observations and recommendations ready to be integrated in the implementation of the CBPF. The report, with the thorough analysis provided, has great potential to influence discussion around best options for addressing critical gaps and emerging needs in largely stabilized humanitarian contexts.

Result 3 - POLICY

ICVA has been instrumental in gathering NGO perceptions on issues of concern to humanitarian actors. To inform the global level about challenges and good practice in the consolidation of progress in the humanitarian reform process and in the implementation of the Transformative Agenda, ICVA—in partnership with InterAction—gathered input for two very well-structured and straightforward surveys on NGO views of the Transformative Agenda. This exercise is bringing the voice of a wide spectrum of NGOs to the review of the value of the TA process to date. The second survey has been translated into French and Arabic, reaching out to a wider public (166 feedback/contributions received).

To enhance the learning from the surveys, ICVA commissioned a review of NGO perceptions of the five Level-3 emergency responses in progress during the last year (Syria, Philippines, Iraq, South Sudan and CAR). The major findings of the L3 research were presented at the Emergency Directors’ Group donor meeting and the IASC principals in December 2014.

Various NGO collective advocacy statements (11 in total) have been produced with inputs from NGOs, gathered mainly through the hubs, to feed into policy events at the Geneva and international levels. The majority (7 out of 12) are related to the Syria crisis therefore aim to influence UNHCR policies on forced displacement. As a recognition of the role played by ICVA’s MENA regional hub, the representative was invited to participate in key high-level meetings, namely the Berlin high-level meeting on the Situation of Syrian Refugees and other advocacy meetings around the situation in Iraq, being able to bring inputs directly from the operations. Country-specific advocacy opportunities on forced displacement have been better pursued with the support of the hubs. Follow-up and feedback from participation in these events are provided in specific ICVA
working-group meetings or via e-mails or direct communication to NGOs, but there is no evidence of a systematic follow up to measure the impact of those statements.

In WCA the regional representative has played a role in facilitating coordination of advocacy efforts around the Ebola crisis, raising awareness of the importance of intervention, both regionally and within the international community. Several coordination meetings were held in Dakar and active ICVA participation led to increased attendance from a wider group of INGOs.

Where possible, regional hubs have explored opportunities for greater engagement with regional organizations but there has been little progress towards this indicator, largely because these organizations are not very open to engagement with other actors. However, what was not originally seen in the proposal was the roll-out of consultations leading to the World Humanitarian Summit planned to be held in Istanbul in 2016. The regional hubs have become important players in supporting the regional civil society consultations for this upcoming summit, ensuring engagement of NGOs (particularly NNGOs) and affected populations, and safeguarding the centrality of humanitarian principles in the summit. In the WCA region in particular (as well as in Asia), ICVA played a critical role as a member of the Regional Steering Group and ensured NGO and beneficiary participation in the consultation.

4.4 Impact

As mentioned above, most outputs have been successfully achieved and have contributed to different extent achievement of the three main results. However, it is very challenging—and possibly too early—to evaluate with evidence the real impact of the establishment of the hubs, at both the regional and global levels. Considering the incredibly active role played by ICVA in terms of engagement and delivery of outputs, as well as the quality of studies developed and/or under finalization, one can safely say there is potential for great impact in 2015 and beyond. Thus the hubs can be considered valuable tools for strengthening ICVA’s mandate and contributing toward the achievement of ICVA’s stated goal of “making humanitarian action more principled and effective by working collectively and independently to influence policy and practice.”

In both regions, ICVA representatives have gained trust and credibility as stated by almost all actors interviewed and, most importantly, they have “established a bridge between NGOs and the global level”, enabling closer connection to NGO work and providing an effective communication link between the regions and the ICVA headquarters in Geneva. Moreover, ICVA representatives are increasingly identified as possible entry points for clusters, Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams to reach out to the NGO community (including people from outside the region, e.g. ALNAP, academic researchers, etc.).
Attendance at (and participation in) events, as well as contributions provided to relevant debates show that the hubs have been able to reach an increased number of NGOs, including its membership and beyond, in countries where IASC decisions will ultimately have an impact. Six new members from the Global South joined ICVA during the implementation period and three more are at the application stage. Increased membership in ICVA was not among the objectives of the action but is evidence of the greater exposure of the network and can be considered a result of strengthened engagement at regional level.

ICVA is seen by INGOs an independent voice, and its impartiality in both WCA and MENA has been highly appreciated for different reasons, as commented upon by some of the respondents (“ICVA provides a comprehensive view in the Syria Response”; “neutrality of ICVA in the framework of the Ebola response helped us to realise we are working together”).

One of the challenges in achieving the specific objective of improving humanitarian action is linked to its ambition. In addition to the wide thematic and geographic scope of the action—referred to in the Relevance section of this document—as a network, expanded exposure to stakeholders and issues brings the risk of overly broad/overstretched capacity. It is therefore extremely important for the hubs to narrow their focus in the near future.

As mentioned above, several activities were initiated toward the end of the action, including multiple consultancies to conduct studies and research that will definitely boost partnership, policy, and practice of NGOs in the months to come, although there is no evidence thus far of their impact. However, there are already signs that some of draft studies commissioned are being put to good use. Reference is made in particular to the Comparison of UN Framework Agreements for implementation, which is already considered by agencies when developing their new standard format.

The approach adopted—to concentrate first on deliverables to reach out, engage and build trust—seems correct, although it allowed for only limited time to process information, analyse outputs properly and further build on experience to shape strategies within the project timeframe. The time has now come—as already shown by most recent internal discussions held to draft the ICVA 2015–2018 strategy—to draw on lessons learnt from these intense past 16 months.

Dialogue between policy and operation is essential to speak with more force at the regional and international levels. This action offered the opportunity to enhance this dialogue in practice, stimulating contributions and inputs from where humanitarian action is taking place. Evidence has been gathered from NGOs to influence global and regional humanitarian policies. The ICVA Secretariat, through the hubs, was able to collect contributions to the global-level policy debate more effectively, thus giving a voice to those with less capacity to influence policy at Geneva and global level.

One of the best examples of direct impact related to creating links between national-level issues and global-level policy—which also shows ICVA’s capacity
to interlink policy and practice—is the changing policy regarding UNHCR’s intention to introduce a rigid NGO national staff salary scale in Lebanon.4

4 In late 2013, UNHCR in Lebanon introduced a policy of a rigid salary scale to cap their contributions to their implementing-partner salaries (i.e. for international and national NGO staff per job category and rank, with a maximum monthly lump-sum contribution for expatriates and a set salary scale for national staff). NGOs had serious concerns about the set salary scale for national staff, and discussed it at the national level through the Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF), the coordinator of which then reached out to ICVA’s MENA regional representative for support. As a result, ICVA alerted UNCHR-Geneva of this deviation from UNHCR’s global policy on partner personnel costs, which helped raise the concerns in Lebanon at the HQ level and clarify existing policy. Accordingly, the change introduced by UNHCR Lebanon was not passed.

4.5 Sustainability

During the action, positive steps have been taken to lay solid foundations for the hubs. Based on this attainment, ICVA’s role in the regions must be further consolidated and its added value consistently demonstrated.

Current internal reflections on the use of the tools developed and outcomes achieved are leading to strategic action plans to enhance links between practice and policy and further influence best practices in humanitarian response.

Financial sustainability of a very basic ICVA presence (personnel costs, but no running costs or funding for activities) in the region (to fully exploit existing opportunities created with the ECHO grant) is almost covered through other donor funds and contributions from members showing a good level of buy-in. Additional funds from donors are crucial for further consolidation, building on the 2014 achievements, and will most importantly enlarge the scope of the impact exploiting its full potential.

Strengthened ownership and buy-in not only by ICVA members but also by key stakeholders on the relevance and usefulness of the hubs is pivotal to guarantee sustainability in the long run.

During the evaluation and while conducting interviews, the risk of high personalization of the hubs emerged. The creation of a knowledge-management system is key to the sustainability of the hubs to mitigate the risk of staff turnover.
4. **Recommendations**

- Ensure that plans for consolidating the hubs' presence in the region are focused and realistic. At this stage it is extremely important to identify fewer areas for engagement and to put the emphasis on high-impact activities with a great potential for outreach, such as the NGO Coordination Resource Center;

- Ensure that human resource capacities and time are factored in properly when developing work plans for hub representatives;

- In plans for consolidating hubs' presence in the region, include resources for facilitating translation of the most important documents/resources into French and Arabic;

- Review and update ToR for the hubs, focusing on ICVA's real added value in each region, and consider including a list of priority countries that could be further adapted to changing needs at regional level.

- Share the ToR with key stakeholders (UNHCR, OCHA, ICVA members, etc.) and consider creating advisory groups at hub level to foster internal and external buy-in.

- Continue to ensure regular exchange opportunities between the regional hubs to compare achievements and results and build on respective lessons learnt, while allowing time during this discussion for strategic analysis and thinking;

- Continue investing in the NGO Coordination Resource Center:
  - Making sure that adequate resources are made available at Geneva level to fully exploit its potential;
  - Review the current outline to ensure it is user-friendly;
  - Use the NGO Coordination Resource Center as a tool to increase knowledge and capacities of a wide range of actors;
  - Consider creating a dedicated space to enhance capacity of cluster co-leadership and develop and include a ready-to-use guidance/tool kit for newly-appointed cluster co-leaders;
  - Promote access to existing user-friendly resources such as BBR's online training.

- As already planned, capitalise more on outputs delivered through ECHO support (individual learning events, advocacy statements, recommendations from Structured Dialogue implementation monitoring visits, etc.) and follow up on specific issues of interest, providing feedback to members and key stakeholders.
  - Fully exploit the potential of the ICVA website (linking it with the Resource Center) as platform for humanitarian partners, including
references to regional events, trainings, learning experiences, exchanges, etc. 5;  
  o Invite participants attending trainings, international events and workshops to share their reports and any training/informative materials gathered, and ensure they are further posted on the main ICVA and/or regional hub websites;  
  o Formalise feedback mechanisms on policy statements to measure policy influence.

• Building on the assumption that any initiative to increase capacity at local level is a "drop in the ocean", and in light of the very ambitious geographical coverage, stimulate a reflection on the concrete support that ICVA could realistically provide in the long term to national coordination bodies and NNGOs beyond increasing access to information and knowledge.

• Much greater efforts to engage international and local NGOs as equal partners are warranted. Further increase exposure of national NGOs to international actors, including donors and institutions, continuing to support and facilitate attendance at key regional and global events and strengthen linkages between NNGOs and INGOs, building on positive best practices thus limiting risks of raising competition.

• Building on the findings from the Review of NGO Leadership Roles in Clusters consider:  
  o The establishment, with the support of regional hubs, of NGO co-leadership networks at regional level;  
  o The organization of brief pilot capacity-building events such as webinars for NGO co-leadership roles.

• Ensure the results of the study to review and compare UN project partnership agreements for NGO implementation of humanitarian projects are used – as planned- for future advocacy to foster partnerships;  
  o Consider transforming the matrix developed in this framework into a user-friendly tool for NGOs to improve knowledge of UN implementation modalities and follow up on challenges.

ICVA and the hubs have been instrumental in gathering inputs on the TA survey. Further explore opportunities to contribute to the roll-out of the Humanitarian Reform through similar modalities, building on the greater network created through the hubs;

• Build further on the engagement in the process leading to the WHS and use it as an opportunity to consolidate networks at regional level;

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5 This is also highlighted as a solution to fundraising challenges in the Show Me the Money conference.
• Ensure a system is built around the representatives to ensure continuity. Risks related to staff turnover and personalization of the hubs by their representatives is high in the early stages of consolidation of the hubs. Ensure there is a knowledge-management system (contact list, mapping shared, etc.) in place at hubs and global level to avoid losing information and links.

• It is advisable for hubs to increase their capacities to attract/mobilize additional funding at regional and local level on ad hoc initiatives.
### Annex I

#### Abbreviations and acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAP</td>
<td>Accountability to Affected Populations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBR</td>
<td>Building a Better Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBPF</td>
<td>Country-based pooled funds</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECHO</td>
<td>European Community Humanitarian Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERF</td>
<td>Emergency Response Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCT</td>
<td>Humanitarian Country Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IASC</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Standing Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICVA</td>
<td>International Council of Voluntary Agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International non-governmental organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENA</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNGO</td>
<td>National non-governmental organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHRP</td>
<td>NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project (Phase I and Phase II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIRF</td>
<td>Syria International NGO Regional Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNOCHA</td>
<td>UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commission for Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Transformative Agenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCA</td>
<td>West and Central Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>WHS</td>
<td>World Humanitarian Summit</td>
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Annex II

Key informants interviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tanya Wood</td>
<td>Director of Partnerships and Policies</td>
<td>ICVA Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa Pitotti</td>
<td>Senior Policy Officer</td>
<td>ICVA Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nan Buzard</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>ICVA Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Bennett</td>
<td>Director, Finance and Administration</td>
<td>ICVA Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reza Kasrai</td>
<td>MENA Representative</td>
<td>ICVA Amman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liliane Bitong</td>
<td>WCA Representative</td>
<td>ICVA Dakar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamie Munn</td>
<td>Asia Representative</td>
<td>ICVA Bangkok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiziana Clerico</td>
<td>Partnership Section</td>
<td>UNHCR Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kemlin Furley</td>
<td>Chief Partnership Section</td>
<td>UNHCR Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul-Henri Morard</td>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>CCO (Comité de Coordination des ONG au Tchad)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Kamel Mohanna</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>AMEL Association International (Lebanon)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Mohannad Othman</td>
<td>Representative</td>
<td>Ihsan for Relief and Development (Turkey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noha Yehya</td>
<td>Executive Manager (and representative on Yemen HCT)</td>
<td>Humanitarian Forum Yemen (NNGO forum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katja Laurila</td>
<td>Humanitarian Affairs Officer</td>
<td>IASC Secretariat Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Mary Olsen</td>
<td>International Director</td>
<td>DRC Copenhagen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aurélie Lamazière</td>
<td>Policy advisor</td>
<td>Save the Children Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laia Blanch</td>
<td>Grants Officer</td>
<td>IRC UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abraham Abraham</td>
<td>Liaison Officer to UNOG and International Organisations</td>
<td>INTERSOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gareth Price-Jones</td>
<td>Humanitarian Affairs Representative</td>
<td>OXFAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davide Berruti</td>
<td>Country Representative CAR</td>
<td>INTERSOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marina Throne-Holst</td>
<td>Snr. Inter-Agency and donor Relations Officer (MENA Bureau)</td>
<td>UNHCR Amman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyprien Fabre</td>
<td>ECHO Regional Representative</td>
<td>ECHO Dakar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lejla Hrasnica</td>
<td>Snr. Program Officer (MENA Bureau)</td>
<td>UNHCR Amman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fausto Prieto</td>
<td>ECHO Sector Support Team, Nairobi</td>
<td>ECHO Nairobi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Hazard</td>
<td>Regional Director a.i.</td>
<td>Save the Children Dakar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex III

Documents reviewed

- Project Proposal Single Form – IRC/ICVA
- Intermediate Report SF - April 2014 – IRC/ICVA
- Project update for ECHO monitoring visit – November 2014 - ICVA
- Overview of the progresses on the 14by14 strategy – ICVA
- MENA and West Africa Regional Hubs Consultation Workshops: Overview -1 July 2013- ICVA
- Report of UNHCR Annual Consultation with NGOs
- Workshop Report: “Accountability to Affected Populations” March 2014 - MENA
- Hubs monthly report Jan-December 2014 -ICVA
- Partnership Agreement IRC – ICVA
- NHRP Final evaluation -ICVA
- ToR for a consultancy to review NGO experience with Syria-related pooled funds -ICVA
- ToR for a consultancy on Framework Agreements Comparative analysis - ICVA
- ToR Consultancy to review NGO experience with Syria-related pooled funds -ICVA
- 2014 Annual Conference Report “Show Me the Money”- April 1, 2014 ICVA
- Roundtable on NGO Partnerships in Jordan Summary Report -September 2014
- NGO Perception on the State of Humanitarian Leadership, Coordination and Accountability - ICVA SURVEY 2014
- ICVA Regional Hubs progress and Plans June 2014-ICVA
- Internal Reflections on Democratic Republic of Congo UNHCR-NGO Dialogues in Kinshasa and Goma
- Informal Consultative Meeting /Follow-up to the High Level Segment on Solidarity and Burden-Sharing with Countries Hosting Syrian Refugees - 21 February 2014
- NGO Statement at the High Level Segment on Solidarity and Responsibility-Sharing with Countries Hosting Syrian Refugees Agenda Item 3
- NGO Statement on Africa – Extended Version - STANDING COMMITTEE 59th Meeting 4 - 6 March 2014
- NGO Statement on the Middle East and North Africa – Extended Version- Standing Committee 59th Meeting 4 - 6 March 2014
- Joint NGOs letter to UNHCR on salary issue
- UNHCR’s Enhanced Framework for Implementing with Partners: Most Frequently Asked Questions
- Draft review of the NGO Perspectives on Humanitarian Response in Level 3 Crises- January 2014 - ICVA
- Draft study on AAP - January 2014 - ICVA
- Draft review of UN project partnership agreements for NGO implementation of humanitarian projects - January 2014 - ICVA
- Draft review of NGO leadership roles in Clusters - January 2014 - ICVA
- Draft review of NGO’s experience with the Syria-related pooled funds- - January 2014 - ICVA
Annex IV

Call for Proposals

An ECHO supported project to establish ICVA’s Regional Hubs

Background
ICVA is a global network of humanitarian NGOs with a Secretariat based in Geneva. In 2013, ICVA established three Regional Hubs (in Dakar, Bangkok and Amman). The establishment of the Dakar and Amman hubs was made possible with the support of a grant from the European Commission’s Humanitarian aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO) along with contributions from ICVA members, other key donors, specifically the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NMFA), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The International Rescue Committee (IRC), one of ICVA’s members, is the grant holder for the ECHO grant.

This project is due to end at the end of December 2014. ICVA is therefore commissioning an evaluation of the work carried out under this grant. The specific objective of this project is to “Improve humanitarian action through facilitating and enabling collective NGO efforts to strengthen humanitarian partnership, practice and policy” with the following indicators:

- NGOs in the regions have been supported during the project to develop more inclusive and transparent partnerships between UN and NGOs & national and international NGOs;
- NGOs in the regions have had opportunities to influence mechanisms and approaches of humanitarian practice, including financing, quality and accountability and humanitarian principles;
- Evidence has been gathered through the duration of this project from NGOs to influence global and regional humanitarian policies.

Objective of the Evaluation
To evaluate the achievement of the results of the project as set out in the ECHO proposal, measured against the agreed indicators and to provide recommendations for future activities to strengthen ICVA’s role in the regions.

Scope
To fulfill these objectives the evaluation will be based on reviewing the project’s results to determine how far they went in meeting the objectives and making recommendations for the further development of this project’s work.

Specifically, it will focus on the following questions linked to each of the objectives:

1. Strengthened humanitarian partnerships to enable more effective response with equity of national NGO engagement
   - Where to put the emphasis on improving partnerships? The evaluation will consider the ways the Regional Hubs have contributed to improving humanitarian partnerships with NGOs and UN, between international NGO and national NGOs and other stakeholders including regional organizations and governments. What has been the balance in where the emphasis has been placed and what are the suggestions for moving forward the work of the Hubs in this area?
   - How have the Hubs contributed to improving NGOs role in NGO and inter agency coordination mechanism? The evaluation will consider where the Hubs put the balance
between improving partnerships and influencing NGOs role in formal coordination mechanisms and make recommendations for future support in this area.

2. **Improved humanitarian practice by NGOs delivers principled, accountable and better quality response.**

   - *The value of the learning events to the NGO community* - What has been the value of the regional learning events, how have these contributed to identifying critical collective issues in these areas and what are the lessons learned for going forward with such regional platforms?
   - *The topics for the learning events* – were the right topics selected for right bringing the NGO community together around collective issues to improve humanitarian practice. What is the value of collective platforms at regional and / or country level for supporting humanitarian practice?

3. **Improved humanitarian policy which supports more effective humanitarian partnership and practice**

   - How have the Regional Hubs contributed to improving NGOs influence in the regions towards global humanitarian policies and advocacy? How can this be improved?

4. **Unintended outcomes, scope and continuation:**

   - What are some of the unintended positive outcomes of the project?
   - The project supported two regional hubs, was this right focus for the scope of the project?
   - How can the project activities be sustained and built on?

**Timeframe**

The evaluation should start on the 10 November and conclude on the 15th December 2014, taking into account the following timelines:

- Meeting with ICVA staff and Regional Representatives in Geneva week of 10 November;
- Submission of 1st draft report 8 December;
- Deadline for final report incorporating comments received – 15 December 2014.

**Methodology**

The evaluator will conduct a desk review of project materials and interviews with key informants.

Documents to be reviewed include the concept note, project proposals, monthly reports, donor reports, meetings notes and any other reports and documents produced in connection with the regional hubs’ activities from each country.

- Interviews with key informants will include:
  - ICVA staff;
  - Regional Directors of hosting agencies;
  - Random sample of up to 10 national and international members in each region and HQ.
  - Up to 3 participants from each learning event held in the two regions;
  - Key UN and IASC representatives in the regions and in Geneva;
  - Donors who have contributed to this project.

**Outputs**

The consultant will present their findings in a final report consisting of no more than 25 pages (excluding annexes). The report will include:

- An executive summary (no more than 2 pages);
- A full report including: methodology, findings, lessons learned, conclusion and recommendations;
- Annexes, including: TOR, documents reviewed, list of people interviewed, etc.
The Executive Summary will be made publicly available on the ICVA website.

**Budget**
This consultancy has a maximum budget of 10,000 CHF.

**Experience required**
The consultant will demonstrate the following qualifications and experience:
- Minimum of 8 years relevant monitoring and evaluation experience;
- Knowledge of the humanitarian sector, specifically the humanitarian reform processes and complex emergencies;
- Experience in overall project evaluation;
- Proven ability to conduct interviews with a variety of stakeholders with tact and diplomacy;
- Organisational skills;
- Flexibility to arrange interviews and meetings;
- Excellent English writing skills (and spoken French desirable).

**Proposals should include the following**
- Covering letter/email
- Proposed structure of how the evaluation will be conducted over the period
- An indication of how the final report will be structured;
- CV(s), including a description of past experience in conducting evaluations; and at least one example of a previous evaluation.
- Two references.

**Application**
Proposals should be submitted by October 27, 2014 to: Recruitment6@icvanetwork.org Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted and interviews will be conducted on 31 October 2014.
Annex V

Sample questionnaire for structured interviews

Objective of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to review the impact of the establishment of the hubs at regional and global level in the framework of the initiative to strengthen Partnership, Practice and Policy for improved humanitarian action.

General

1) What is your relationship with ICVA?
2) Do you regularly interact with ICVA at regional or Geneva level?
3) What is the role of ICVA regional hubs?
4) What about the choice of the hubs' location? Do you think the geographical coverage of the hubs is relevant?
5) How would you rate the contribution of ICVA to coordination at regional level?

Result 1.

1) How have the hubs contributed to improving humanitarian partnerships with NGOs and the UN?
2) How have the hubs contributed to improving humanitarian partnerships between international NGOs, national NGOs and other stakeholders?
3) How have the hubs contributed to improving NGOs' role in NGO and inter-agency coordination mechanisms?
4) Is there an increase in national NGOs' attendance of training since the hubs have been established?
5) Have any new members joined this year as a result of the hubs' work?
6) Is there an increased interest from national NGOs?
7) What support is needed in terms of coordination among the national NGOs? And between international NGOs and NNGOs?
8) Are you aware of the revision of the NGO coordination guide? Were you able to contribute to the process?
9) What are the major challenges for NGOs attending the HCT? Are there tools to address them?
10) Are national NGOs aware of the UNHCR structured dialogue on partnership?
11) What was the contribution of the hubs to the annual consultation held in June 2014? And in planning for 2015?
12) How would you rate the partnership between national NGOs (and international) and UNHCR? Is it transparent? Is it inclusive? Has ICVA contributed to improving this relationship? What has changed since the establishment of the hubs?
13) What are the main outcomes of the regional UNHCR consultations?
14) Did you receive any feedback on the role played by ICVA in the field visit to monitor implementation of recommendations from structured dialogue? More generally, what is the role played by ICVA in raising awareness of the new partnership framework?

Result 2:

1) What is the value of the learning events? Have these contributed to identifying critical collective issues? Any lessons learned?

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6 The questionnaire was intentionally kept very general and was adapted depending on the role and relationship of the respondent with ICVA, with the inclusion of more specific questions as appropriate.
2) What do you think participants are doing differently since the learning event?
3) Could you provide an example of how participants have applied what they have learned in the events organized?
4) Were the topics appropriate?

Result 3.

1) What is the role played by the hubs in sharing information and keeping actors updated on the transformative agenda? Are there any briefings published?
2) Did you take part in the survey on NGO perception of the transformative agenda?
3) What is the role in and contribution from national and international NGOs to advocacy statements produced by ICVA? Do you see a change in the contributions from NGOs to policy dialogue? Is there evidence of ICVA hubs’ support to NGOs in engaging with regional organisations?
4) How have the hubs contributed to improving NGOs’ influence in the regions towards global humanitarian policies and advocacy?

Final questions

What would you suggest that ICVA do differently?
Any specific suggestions for moving forward?
Were there any unintended positive outcomes?