ANNUAL REPORT 2014

ICVA

A global network for principled and effective humanitarian action.

The vision of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies is a world in which crisis-affected populations are effectively protected, assisted and enabled to rebuild their lives and livelihoods with dignity.

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2014 was an incredibly busy year for ICVA, as well as for our membership, with everyone stretched by the large-scale and chronic humanitarian crises we were all faced with. It also was a year ICVA focused on establishing the work of the regional hubs in order for ICVA to be closer to members and operations and to further develop our relationships with UNHCR, OCHA and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

The regional hubs have now become an essential component of ICVA and have enabled ICVA to expand its engagement with NGOs, NGO networks and our humanitarian partners in Asia, West Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa. The hubs serve as platforms for collective advocacy, ensuring policy debate is informed through global dialogue, whilst remaining contextually and regionally relevant. We would like to extend our special thanks to Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN), Plan International and Save the Children for continuing to host ICVA’s regional hubs.

2014 saw continued focus on ICVA’s five strategic areas: forced displacement, humanitarian coordination, humanitarian principles, quality and accountability, and humanitarian financing. Work was guided by working groups comprised of ICVA members who regularly met and gave valuable input into the work of the Secretariat. Thank you for all your contributions.

At ICVA’s General Assembly in early 2015, I have the privilege to reflect on my term as ICVA’s chair over the last three years. ICVA goes from strength to strength. The hubs and our continued advocacy have further developed our credibility and influence. ICVA has listened more to its members and moved closer to humanitarian operations. ICVA has remained committed to issues important to its member base and, building off its now global foundation has the potential to do far more in connecting policy to practice and beyond.

With many thanks to all our wonderful secretariat staff under excellent Nan’s leadership and to my Board colleagues in particular over the last three dynamic years.

Best regards,

Penny Lawrence
OXFAM GB
Chair, ICVA 2012-2015
Forced Displacement
Working with UNHCR

Forced displacement - ICVA’s first focus area in 1962 - remains highly relevant today as the ICVA network responds to the overwhelming number of displaced persons. With this focus, ICVA serves as a liaison between the Office for the United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees (UNHCR) and the broader NGO community.

Advocating on policies and conditions affecting those affected by forced displacement

Throughout 2014, ICVA continued to play a key role in coordinating the development of joint NGO statements delivered at UNHCR’s governing board meetings. In 2014, many of these related to forced displacement in the Syria region, including:

- the under-registration of refugees living outside the camps
- bureaucratic impediments that make it illegal for a refugee to earn a living
- the necessity for stronger integration of gender sensitive programming.

Encouraging better partnership between UNHCR and NGOs

As a continuation of the High Commissioner’s Structured Dialogue on NGO-IFRC-UNHCR partnerships, ICVA worked with NGOs in the specific operations to support strengthening operational collaboration with UNHCR. Our work in this area is rooted in a belief that through stronger mutual respect, trust and better understanding of each other’s specific roles and mandates, UNHCR and NGOs can act effectively and efficiently to better assist, protect and contribute to lasting solutions for displaced and stateless persons worldwide.

There has been a call for a number of years for this global gathering to be complimented with more dialogue at national and regional levels. Therefore, as part of the Structured Dialogue process, in 2014 ICVA’s regional hubs convened meetings in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Pakistan, Thailand and Senegal, with UNHCR and national and international NGOs, designed to encourage improved partnership - with a particular focus on information sharing, coordination and joint planning. These regional meetings complemented the global discussions on the Structured Dialogue and gave voice to over 100 NGO representatives.

Dialogue between UNHCR and NGOs
December 2014, Dakar, Senegal
Improving the dialogue between UNHCR and NGOs

Throughout 2014, ICVA has been supporting NGOs to understand the development of UNHCR’s Enhanced Framework for Implementing with Partners. ICVA served, specifically, as a key conduit for NGO communication and input, in an attempt to strengthen policies and procedures related to partner selection and retention; project agreement, design and termination; project monitoring; and other project management tools.

Displacement all too often serves to exacerbate existing inequalities, amplifying the discrimination and hardship faced by women and girls. As such, women’s leadership and participation in crisis situations was the theme of the 2014 UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations, co-hosted by ICVA. Over 480 participants attended the 2014 Annual Consultation, including representatives from 250 different NGOs, and UN and international organizations from over 80 countries. Throughout the consultations, NGOs advocated for:

- improved participation of women in leadership and management structures in refugee and IDP situations
- initiatives that eradicate statelessness
- the promotion of economic empowerment
- addressing gender-based violence as a priority need from the onset.
Humanitarian Coordination

In partnership with its members and UN agencies, ICVA remains committed to improving the effectiveness and quality of humanitarian coordination mechanisms, ensuring they meet the needs of those affected by crisis. Throughout 2014, the humanitarian system has been stretched to its limit, struggling to cope with the surge in emergencies, a record number of people displaced by conflict and disasters, and an increase in dangers for humanitarian personnel.

**Influencing policy on behalf of NGOs through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)**

ICVA remains actively involved in the four key IASC bodies: the Principals, the Emergency Directors Group, the Working Group and the Task Teams. ICVA’s position on these bodies is critical to ensure that IASC policy is influenced by and takes into account NGOs. The gathering of NGO experiences has been considerably strengthened since the establishment of ICVA’s regional hubs, with a more significant reach to national and international NGOs working in the countries where IASC decisions will ultimately impact organizations and affected populations.

In 2014, ICVA conducted a study on NGO perspectives of humanitarian response in Level 3 (L3) declared crises. While acknowledging the significant improvement in surge capacity for leadership and coordination, the results shared with the IASC Principals highlighted more limited progress in improving the speed and coverage of assistance and protection. Increased funding for L3 emergencies has not translated sufficiently into broader operational coverage, while the core issues of protection, gender and accountability have too often been sidelined. Challenging the IASC Principals and members states to provide more substantial support to implementing partners, ICVA continues to work on addressing the limits and adaptability of L3 declarations as a mechanism for emergencies.

**Influencing inter-agency coordination mechanisms at country and regional levels**

In 2014, ICVA conducted a survey on NGO perceptions on the Transformative Agenda with a focus on the state of humanitarian leadership, coordination and accountability. The results reflect a positive trend in the perceived quality of coordination. However, more effort is required to engage international and local NGOs as equal partners, and the management of pooled funds needs to be more transparent and accountable towards affected communities. The survey indicated a clear need to reinforce humanitarian principles and the Principles of Partnership, and underscored the need to explain the relevance of the Transformative Agenda to those working in the field.

Throughout the year, ICVA regional representatives have advocated in their

*National NGOs representatives on HCTs*
respective hubs for national NGO representation on Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs), and for building national NGO capacity, skills and knowledge to improve NGO participation and influence. In November, ICVA brought to Geneva 15 national NGO representatives from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Asia and West Africa who are currently sitting on HCTs.

The two-day event provided a unique opportunity to exchange views on the challenges affecting national NGO engagement on HCTs and identified opportunities for a more impactful contribution.

The number of NGOs in cluster co-leads is steadily increasing. In order to support this positive trend ICVA commissioned a review of NGO leadership in clusters, the results of which will be used as a basis for the advocacy on behalf of NGOs in 2015 and beyond.

Ebola

In 2014, the escalation of the Ebola crisis in West Africa confronted the humanitarian system in new and unexpected ways. This unprecedented outbreak created the need for different forms of collaboration and coordination. ICVA’s West Africa regional hub convened a series of meetings of NGOs in Dakar focused on regional advocacy, in particular calling on government leaders attending the 15th Francophone Summit to commit to concrete and sustainable actions to help eradicate Ebola and prepare West Africa for future crises. The hub later convened additional coordination meetings of senior representatives of NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and donors.

NGO advocacy was also taken up at a global level with a joint consortia letter by ICVA and InterAction to the UN Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER), requesting for a reduction in bureaucratic impediments causing slow disbursement of funds, and stressing the need for stronger liaison with key NGO partners.

The crisis has had a major negative impact on livelihoods, education, food security and women’s rights. Many of ICVA’s members working in the region remain concerned about the long-term effect of this devastation and are working closely with local communities to better prepare them for future health crises.
Supporting effective NGO coordination bodies through peer-support mechanisms

In order to create stronger relationships and provide support to NGO coordination bodies, in 2014 ICVA’s regional hubs convened meetings of various humanitarian NGO coordination bodies in their regions. These were positively received and created stronger links between ICVA and the national coordination bodies, providing opportunities for collective advocacy messages and mutual learning and support. In order to further support humanitarian NGO coordination, at the end of 2014 ICVA developed an online NGO Coordination Resource Centre, which aims to be a “one-stop shop” for NGOs engaged in coordination in humanitarian contexts. Visitors to the site will find up-to-date resources on humanitarian coordination and can share experiences with others through a community of practice.

Engaging in World Humanitarian Summit dialogue:

The World Humanitarian Summit (WHS), to be held in Istanbul in May 2016, aims to set a forward-looking agenda for humanitarian action to collectively address future humanitarian challenges. For the NGO community, the WHS represents a unique opportunity to discuss issues of accountability, power differentials and ethics, and an opportunity to develop common statements and position papers on the future of humanitarian action.

Throughout 2014, ICVA has been engaging in WHS processes through various initiatives. ICVA has supported national NGO participation in WHS regional consultations in North and South East Asia and West Africa, and promoted dialogue with affected populations in WHS proceedings. ICVA remains actively involved in various regional steering committees, in order to ensure a clear representation of NGO perspectives and actively participated in regular dialogue with other NGO networks, including InterAction, VOICE and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR).

“The most useful thing was meeting people from other coordination fora who share similar problems (eg. 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”

National Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI)
Humanitarian Financing

Resourcing humanitarian action remains a prominent and recurring challenge for ICVA members. Too often in humanitarian contexts, intervention strategies are driven by the availability, volume and type of funding. In order to access donors and different funding channels, NGOs are required to navigate and understand often quite complex systems.

Helping NGOs navigate and understand humanitarian financing mechanisms

Throughout 2014, ICVA held various learning opportunities to assist NGOs to increase their understanding of the operational application of humanitarian financing and the different funding tools. The 2014 ICVA Annual Conference “Show me the Money” in April provided a successful platform for humanitarian practitioners to share learning experiences around the current funding mechanisms and suggest new paths forward in resourcing principled humanitarian actions. The diverse group of over 150 participants allowed for a stimulating exchange on different perspectives about funding challenges - and the gap between rhetoric and reality. The conference was followed by a one-day practicum for national NGO attendees to focus on the practical details of accessing country-based pooled funds whilst building partnerships with UN agencies and the private sector.

To complement the annual conference, humanitarian financing workshops were held in Senegal, Thailand and Lebanon. These workshops brought together over 100 representatives from national and international NGOs, UN agencies, and private sector donors, to discuss the challenges and potentials of existing funding mechanisms, with specific focus on improving national NGO access to pooled funding mechanisms.

“As a result of attending ICVA learning events on financing in Dakar and Geneva, AMSS has been able to access funding streams from new donors, through forming coalitions with both NNGOs and INGOs. We thank ICVA for making the links between NNGOs and INGOs to enable these coalitions to form”

National NGO participant from Mali
Strengthening NGO influence in humanitarian financing mechanisms

ICVA represents NGOs as co-chair of the IASC’s Humanitarian Financing Task Team (HFTT). This group seeks ways to make funding more accessible to operational agencies, minimise burdensome donor requirements, bridge relief to development funding and improve the transparency of aid flows. With ICVA as co-chair, participation from NGOs has considerably improved, and comments and feedback from participants at the various ICVA humanitarian financing workshops have also been shared in these forums.

During 2014, the IASC HFTT also met with the Pooled Fund Working Group, an OCHA and donor-led group that ensures country-based pooled funds (CBPF) remain well managed and relevant. At the December 2014 meeting, concerns were raised about the high number of NGOs deemed ineligible for consideration of CBPFs, the heavy capacity assessments and the inequity between the treatment of UN agencies versus NGOs.

In addition to this policy work, ICVA considered how humanitarian financing works in practice and commissioned a report on the Syria Regional Emergency Response Fund (ERF). Findings from the report highlighted the strong appreciation by NGOs of this Fund. However, there remain challenges with limited funding availability and cumbersome disbursement procedures. Further promoting national NGO engagement in ERF mechanisms, ICVA facilitated the participation of 18 NGOs in the ERF pooled fund workshop in Amman, thereby steadily increasing NGOs’ exposure to UN pooled fund mechanisms.

Rethinking alternative approaches to funding

Discussion amongst the humanitarian community reflects collective concern on the future of humanitarian financing and the growing gap between needs and resources.

In collaboration with member organisations CAFOD and World Vision, and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), ICVA hosted two cross-sectoral dialogue events on the Future of Humanitarian Financing (FHF) in Amman and Bangkok. These dialogues are part of a series, convened on behalf of the IASC HFFT, to bring fresh thinking and expertise beyond the humanitarian sector to address the growing costs of meeting humanitarian needs.

“National and local NGOs directly access a tiny share of international humanitarian funding but represent an essential part of the humanitarian response; they have the presence, access and knowledge where international actors often do not. Between 2009 and 2013, local and national NGOs combined received...0.2% of the total international humanitarian response.”

Global Humanitarian Assistance, 2014
Humanitarian principles remain fundamental to the ICVA network, and ICVA members confirm their commitment to humanitarian principles upon joining the network. With an increasing diversity of new actors in the humanitarian sector, ICVA and its members continue to play a key role in raising awareness of the relevance and value of these principles.

Building on the success of previous collaboration with the ICRC on humanitarian principles and the Red Cross/NGO Code of Conduct, the two organizations came together again in 2014 with a diversity of stakeholders to further the discussions around the application of the principles and the Code of Conduct, and in particular to close the gap between the theory and practice of how essential concepts and tools are used. ICVA and the ICRC held three workshops.

The first was in June in Amman, Jordan, attended by 29 NGOs. There was discussion around the relevance and application of humanitarian principles and the Code of Conduct in the changing humanitarian context and their use as an advocacy tool. Case studies were used to highlight tensions between theory and practice and the potential dilemmas and possible ways forward in utilising the principles.

The other workshops were held in Dakar, Senegal, for over 20 French-speaking participants, and in Jakarta, Indonesia, for over 80 NGOs. These events provided useful platforms for bridging the gaps between the humanitarian principles and their application, whilst looking at the similarities between faith-based charters and codes of conduct and humanitarian principles.

“On my return from Dakar, I fed back on the workshops to my colleagues to explain to them the need to put more emphasis on the Code of Conduct during the start-up of our projects. In our orientation workshops early next year we will be sure to reserve sufficient time for explaining the Code of Conduct and humanitarian principles.”

NNGO participant at the Dakar event
ICVA and its members remain engaged in the continuous improvement of quality and accountability in humanitarian action. The ICVA network played an active role in the year’s many debates and reviews of quality and accountability tools and standards. As well, ICVA continued to host the Sphere Project and sit on its Board.

### Applying quality and accountability in humanitarian action

Throughout 2014, ICVA’s regional hubs brought together humanitarian practitioners to critically analyze collective practice around the quality of services and accountability to affected populations. ICVA’s MENA hub hosted workshops in Jordan and Lebanon, with participation by 32 international and national NGOs representatives, to discuss concepts of accountability, quality management and sharing the challenges organisations face as these tools are integrated into their programme cycle.

Similarly, in Senegal, the ICVA West Africa hub hosted a quality and accountability workshop specifically bringing together affected populations to highlight barriers encountered by affected populations with regard to complaints mechanisms. Issues related to the power imbalance between aid providers and beneficiaries were also raised. Participants at this meeting, including representatives from OCHA, stressed the need for affected populations’ representatives to be present at WHS consultations. As a result, four refugees were invited to the WHS consultation in Abidjan to add their voices.

### Highlighting the role of networks in sharing good practice in improving quality and accountability

In April 2011, the IASC Principals confirmed the fundamental importance of Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), which became one pillar of the Transformative Agenda. This pillar specifically provides guidance on how to improve participation, information provision and handling of feedback and complaints from affected people. In the later half of 2014, ICVA commissioned a review into AAP through network learning to capture the global perspective on practice surrounding AAP. The report highlighted the increasing importance of networks, emerging as important vehicles for learning about and improving Accountability to Affected Populations. The study serves as a comprehensive and accessible tool for guiding NGO engagement in AAP through networks.

“As a refugee, I was invited to ICVA’s Q&A learning event along with three other refugees. In the session on the World Humanitarian Summit (attended by OCHA), one of the refugee participants asked why there were no affected populations attending the WHS consultations. As a result, four refugees were invited to the WHS consultation in Abidjan and their voice was heard. It was something wonderful to be invited to this - It was the first time I had been out of Senegal since arriving as a refugee in 1998. Since attending the Q&A event, I feel more motivated to be engaged with the work of NGOs. I think that some NGOs have also upped their engagement with affected populations and proposed new projects as a result of the ICVA event.”

Refugee in Senegal
## Finances
### Balance Sheet as of 31 December

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<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<td>ICVA &amp; SPHERE*</td>
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| Accruals & Provisions (including Membership Received in Advance) | 21'808 | 120'139 | 435'568 |
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| SIDA - Enhancing NGO Coordination | 42'245 | 0 | 0 |
| CWS/ACT - NGO Liaison / Coordination | 9'968 | 0 | 0 |
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| Reserve carry over at 31.12 | 502'166 | 479'197 | 508'563 |
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### Finances

#### Statement of income and expenses

1 January - 31 December  All figures in CHF

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## Finances

**Statement of income and expenses**

1 January – 31 December  All figures in CHF

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<th>ICVA &amp; SPHERE*</th>
<th>ICVA &amp; SPHERE*</th>
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<tr>
<td>Audit, legal fees, taxes &amp; consultancies</td>
<td>98'059</td>
<td>151'927</td>
<td>283'816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank charges, exchange rate adjustments</td>
<td>1'761</td>
<td>2'348</td>
<td>33'958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAT tax charges</td>
<td>16'746</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICVA/Sphere Project partnership (shared costs)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other expenses (memberships)</td>
<td>3'330</td>
<td>3'000</td>
<td>3'250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write-off accrued donor, membership and other income previous years</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>54'045</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>1'556'519</td>
<td>2'620'028</td>
<td>3'101'967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excess of income over expenditure/(expenditure over income)</strong></td>
<td>-22'594</td>
<td>-22'971</td>
<td>29'367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ICVA is grateful to its supportive membership, Board and partners for dues, funding and other contributions and in kind support.

We thank the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN), Plan International, and Save the Children for hosting the regional hubs, and Church World Service for hosting ICVA representation in New York.

We would also like to thank the following governments and organisations for their generous support in 2014:

- Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations’ International Development Fund (IDF)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs Denmark
- European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO)
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- German Humanitarian Assistance
- THE Nansen Initiative
- Disaster-Induced Cross-Border Displacement
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Sweden Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- US Department of State, Bureau of Population and Migration (PRM)
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(as at December 2014)

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- ACT Alliance: Ms Estelle Marais
- Plan International: Mr Roger Yates

The Secretariat
(as at December 2014)

**ICVA Geneva:**
- Ms Nan Buzard, Executive Director
- Ms Tanya Wood, Director of Partnerships and Policy
- Ms Jane Bennett, Director of Finance and Administration
- Ms Melissa Pitotti, Senior Policy Officer
- Ms Fiona Wilkie, Information Officer
- Ms Landy Razanajato, Administrative Assistant
- Ms Manuela Corbolino, Finance and HR Assistant
- Ms Louisa Shea, Programme Analyst

**ICVA Regional Hubs:**

**Asia**
- Dr James Munn, Regional Representative
- Ms Jessica Derby, Programme Officer

**Middle East and North Africa**
- Mr Reza Kasraï, Regional Representative
- Ms Yafa Ajweh, Regional Programme Officer

**West Africa**
- Ms Liliane Bitong, Regional Representative
- Mr Malick Ndiaye, Programme Intern
Members
(as at December 2014)

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Mauritius Council of Social Service (MACOSS)
Médecins du Monde (MDM)
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
Office Africain pour le Développement et la Coopération (OFADEC)
OXFAM
Pastoralist Community Initiative and Development Assistance (PACIDA)
Plan International
Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK)
Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA)
Refugee Council USA (RCUSA)
Refugee Education Trust (RET)
Refugees International (RI)
Relief to Development Society (REDESO) *
Save the Children International
Society of Human Rights and Prisoners’ Aid (SHARP)
Somalia NGO Consortium
Stichting Vluchteling (SV)
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* new/reinstated member in 2014
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ICVA welcomes enquiries about joining the network from NGOs that are involved in humanitarian action and committed to humanitarian principles and standards.

Why join ICVA?
As a unique global network of NGOs, ICVA offers the following to its members:

- **Opportunities to network, connect and exchange within a very diverse global NGO membership** – including international, regional and national NGOs, as well as other humanitarian stakeholders
- **A collective and amplified voice to engage directly on humanitarian issues** – through ICVA’s seats on the IASC bodies, and long-standing working relationships with UN agencies
- **Regional representatives** – able to link field-level humanitarian practice to global policy-making bodies in Geneva and New York
- **Information and analysis for the membership** – on partnership, practice and policy, and on key themes affecting operational developments in the humanitarian domain.

More information about the application process is available at [www.icvanetwork.org](http://www.icvanetwork.org) or by emailing [secretariat@icvanetwork.org](mailto:secretariat@icvanetwork.org)

“Membership of ICVA allows smaller NGOs to have our voices heard internationally, thus bringing to the fore issues close to the hearts of smaller organizations from the Global South”

Dr Faizal Perdaus
President MERCY Malaysia
Chair ICVA 2015-2018
International Council of Voluntary Agencies

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Regional Hubs

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MENA
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Dakar, Senegal