15TH ICVA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Tuesday, 20 March and Wednesday, 21 March 2012
International Conference Centre Geneva (CICG), Geneva, Switzerland

SUMMARY RECORD

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1. Welcome by the Chair

The Chair of the ICVA Executive Committee (EXCOM), Paul O’Brien (Concern Worldwide), welcomed the 32 member participants, thanking them for their attendance and the Secretariat for the preparation of the 15th General Assembly (GA). The Agenda was adopted, and the minutes from the 14th GA were also approved.

2. Report of the Chair on behalf of EXCOM

The Chair presented his report to the membership on behalf of the ICVA Executive Committee and Secretariat. The report was structured around five main themes:
- Changes in the external environment;
- How ICVA has responded to these challenges;
- The IASC and “Transformative Agenda”;
- Developments within the ICVA network; and
- ICVA@50 and the future.

The Chair noted that the core of ICVA’s work remains in humanitarian policy and advocacy, bringing NGO voices to discussions with governments’ missions and UN agencies based on information gathered from members themselves. This valuable representational role requires continued engagement by ICVA with the membership. He went on to explain that the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) is a unique inter-agency forum for coordination, policy development, and decision-making involving the key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners. ICVA is one of three NGO consortia on the IASC, the others being InterAction and SCHR, and ICVA uses one of its seats to bring voices from Southern NGOs to the IASC.

The IASC implemented the Transformative Agenda (TA) to improve and reform the humanitarian reform process as a result of an agreement that the humanitarian response to the Haiti earthquake and Pakistan floods were inadequate. The TA is a set of actions that collectively have the potential to make substantive improvements to the current humanitarian response model, including: deploying strengthened experienced leadership; rapid deployment of humanitarian leaders at all levels; improved planning at the country-level that sets out clear results expected; enhanced accountability of Humanitarian Coordinators and members of the Humanitarian Country Teams for the achievement of the expected results; and streamlined coordination mechanisms. ICVA was invited to present the TA to donors and UN Member States and also proposed four recommendations on how the HCs can better support NGO participation in the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

The Chair moved on to discussing developments within the ICVA network noting that membership growth remains a challenge – as does expanding geographical representation, particularly from the South. Members are invited to provide constructive feedback to the Secretariat and the EXCOM to ensure they are responding to the needs of members. Finally, he congratulated ICVA on its 50th Anniversary on 6 March 2012. ICVA continues to be well placed to take on a leading role in putting national NGOs at the centre of humanitarian responses.

3. ICVA’s Value and Potential

Chair’s Report attached as Annex 1, p. 11
The Chair, along with the ICVA Executive Director (ED), asked members for feedback on how they thought ICVA was doing overall. Members were asked to write at least one thing that ICVA did well on a green note, and at least one thing that ICVA could do better, or improve upon, on a red note. These comments were typed up and shared with the participants (see: Membership Feedback Exercise Annex 2, p. 19).

4. Presentation of ICVA Draft Strategic Plan 2012-2014

Member of the EXCOM, Marian Casey-Maslen (ACT Alliance), and the ED delivered jointly a presentation of the new Strategic Plan (see PowerPoint presentation Annex 3, p. 22). Marian Casey-Maslen reported on the preparatory phase of the planning and drafting process. EXCOM had kicked off the preparations by sending a message to the membership with four questions (see slide 3). Later in 2011, a number of focus group sessions with member organisations were held in different countries. One session in Geneva also involved partners, including representatives from a number of permanent missions and UN agencies, which concluded that ICVA’s convening power is widely appreciated.

The ED explained that following the focus groups, the EXCOM developed three categories of issues: those issues which saw full consensus; those issues which were nearing consensus; and more controversial issues. The rest of the planning process concentrated on the second and third category. The October 2011 EXCOM meeting, which discussed these issues, also agreed on some key messages (see slide 6). A first draft version of the new Strategic Plan was circulated to the membership on 28 November 2011. Following comments from members, the EXCOM discussed a new draft at the end of January. Incorporating another round of comments, the membership received the final draft Strategic Plan in early March. The ED explained that it was expected that this GA would endorse the Strategic Plan. The following morning (Wednesday, 21 March) would see six break-out groups discussing various parts of the Plan with the objective of making suggestions for activities that would in fact contribute to the Plan’s implementation. With regards to measuring progress in the implementation, the ED also noted that the Annual Plan will be more concrete in terms of outputs and outcomes. This Strategic Plan sets the benchmarks. The break-out groups would report on their discussions on Wednesday afternoon, after which the Strategic Plan would officially be adopted.

Questions
Responding to the presentation, International Medical Corps (IMC) made some suggestions for refining the discussion for the group looking at Quality and Accountability (Q&A). Office Africain pour le développement et la coopération (OFADEC) and Plan International raised questions in relation to the new actors and asked for more precision in what is meant by new actors and what their place was in ICVA’s Strategic Plan. Danish Refugee Council (DRC) commented that we needed to be clear on why we want to engage with new actors. In this discussion, it was noted that there are, in fact, two different aspects to the plans with regards to engaging with new actors: one aspect relates to reaching out to those new actors that eventually could become part of the ICVA membership (e.g. new NGOs); the other aspect includes promoting, or advocating on, humanitarian principles or engaging in dialogue to underline the differences between humanitarian and other types of actors (e.g. private sector, the military). It was agreed to make a clearer distinction between these two groups of actors and the different motivations for engaging with them and to separate them in the Strategic Plan in the first and second objective.

5. Proposed Amendments to ICVA Statutes
Misikir Tilahun (Africa Humanitarian Action, AHA), Vice Chair of the ICVA EXCOM, presented the proposed changes of the Statutes. The proposed changes seek to bring the Statutes in line with ICVA’s expanded and consolidated role in humanitarian response, which is also reflected in the new ICVA Vision and Mission Statement. The revised Statutes will be more responsive to the needs of the ICVA network today and make it ready for the challenges of the coming years.

Replacing the partly outdated Preamble with a new Vision and Mission Statement will reflect better and more concisely what the ICVA network is and is trying to achieve. They were proposed by EXCOM and comments where received by the membership.

The structure and objectives have been consolidated in part A of the Statutes.

In part B, the membership issues have been brought in line with changes to the membership by-law during the last three years to reflect what we aspire our membership to be.

Part C has been adapted to current practice around the GA. Mostly, the general policy guidance role in previous Statutes has been broken down to reviewing past activities, adapting the multi-year strategic plan, electing the Board (which replaces the EXCOM), and electing the Chair of the Board, receiving reports from the Board, amending the Statutes, and considering other resolutions.

Part D discusses other structures, with the most substantive change being the renaming of the Executive Committee to a Board, reflecting the evolving role from the implementation of policies to the oversight of ICVA’s operations and finances, as well as of the Secretariat. It is recognised that the executive duties of ICVA’s day to day work are the responsibility of the head of the Secretariat, whose title has been changed from Coordinator to Executive Director (ED) in 2011. In proposed Art. 13, the functions of the proposed Board are also adapted to current practice. The Statutes as proposed now are compliant with requirements of a governing board under Swiss law.

Under Part E, Article 18 on Dissolution has been brought in line with Swiss law requirements, specifically with regards to ICVA’s assets in the case of dissolution, to allow ICVA to retain its tax exempt status.

In reply to questions, the ED explained that the frequency of General Assemblies (once every three years) was decided in 2006 as striking a balance between more frequent meetings (previously every five years) and resource constraints of holding it more often. The annual ICVA conference provides an opportunity for ICVA members to meet more often. Previous EXCOM elections have shown that members elect a mix of new members and members or organisations from the previous EXCOM, thus ensuring a modicum of continuity. The Vice Chair also explained that the Board can set up working groups or task forces as they deem appropriate.

The Chair reminded members to make sure to propose any further changes to the Statutes in time for the next GA in three year’s time. Proposals for the next round of changes included: to clarify quorum for the GA and the Board, including that people not physically present can count; and to retain Spanish as a working language, given the desire to expand the membership in Latin America. Given the lack of input on the Statutes revision from members, it was recommended to review how effective virtual communication is and to include the discussion on possible changes in focus groups with members on the new strategy.

The proposed revisions of the Statutes were adopted unanimously.
Action Points:
• The proposed revisions of the Statutes were adopted unanimously; and
• Members are reminded to send in proposals for Statutes changes at least 60 days in advance of the next GA.

6. PRESENTATION OF EXCOM CANDIDATES

Led by Michael Gallagher (JRS) and John Bingham (ICMC), the nominations committee reported on the nominations process and representatives of the following organisations each presented their nominations to the GA:

• ACT Alliance - (Barbara Wetsig-Lynam)
• Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA) – (Misikir Tilahun)
• Agence d’aide à la coopération technique et au développement (ACTED) – (Luca Pupulin)
• Anatolian Development Foundation (ADF) – (Ahmet Akyürek)
• Church World Service (CWS) – (Furrukh Marvin Parvez)
• Community and Family Services International (CFSI) – (Steven Muncy)
• Handicap International – (Paul Vermeulen)
• International Rescue Committee (IRC) – (Rachel Hewitt)
• Mauritius Council of Social Service (MACOSS) – (Denis Claude Grandport)
• MERCY Malaysia – (Ahmad Faizal Mohd Perdaus)
• Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) – Rolf A. Vestvik
• Oxfam GB – (Penny Lawrence)
• Plan International – (Roger Yates)
• Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK) – (Imaana Fredrick Koome)
• World Vision International (WVI) – (Ian Ridley)

DAY II: 21 MARCH 2012

7. STRATEGIC PLAN BREAK-OUT GROUPS

(Please see Annex 4, p. 27, for guidance on the break-out groups, and item 10, p. 7, for the report back.)

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

The Elections Committee announced the results of the Board election. The following organisations were elected to the 2012-2014 ICVA Board:

• ACT Alliance, Representative: Ms Barbara Wetsig-Lynam

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2 The following two organisations were co-opted to the Board after the General Assembly in order to ensure regional representation and gender balance, bringing the total number of Board members to 11:
• International Medical Corps (IMC), Representative: Ms Mary Pack
• Office Africain pour le Développement et la Coopération (OFADEC), Representative: Mr. Mamadou Ndiaye
• Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA), Representative: Dr. Misikir Tilahun
• Community and Family Services International (CFSI), Representative: Dr. Steven Muncey
• International Rescue Committee (IRC), Representative: Ms Rachel Hewitt
• MERCY Malaysia, Representative: Dr. Ahmad Faizal Perdaus
• Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Representative: Mr. Rolf A. Vestvik
• Oxfam GB, Representative: Ms Penny Lawrence
• Plan International, Representative: Mr Roger Yates
• Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK), Representative: Mr Imaana Frederick Koome

8. REPORT OF THE TREASURER

Dale Buscher (WRC), the Treasurer of the outgoing EXCOM, was unable to attend the GA, and as such, the report of the treasurer was presented by Kathrine Starup from DRC, who was also a member of EXCOM’s Finance and Administration Committee. She presented the financial reports for the years 2009-2011, noting that, once again, ICVA was able to present the audit reports for the full period. She commended the good work done by the Secretariat in the preparation of these reports over the last three years as well as the fact that the report for the third year was available for presentation to the GA.

The first part of the presentation was linked to the income and expenses of the period. Kathrine Starup noted that the membership dues income has remained steady over the period, and that the bilateral funding (government funding) showed an important increase between 2009 and 2010, but remained stable between 2010 and 2011. She also noted the general stability in earmarked project funds, explaining that the type of funding has changed. The most significant change for 2011 onwards is the ECHO funding for NGO and Humanitarian Reform Project, Phase II (NHRPII) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) funding for Enhancing NGO Coordination, which are both multi-year grants. These grants will have a more important impact from 2012 onwards. She noted that membership income represented one-third of the budget over the three-year period, at 38% of overall income, and recommended that this remain a goal for ICVA in the next period.

On the expense side, Ms Starup noted that compared to past years, 2011 showed an important increase in what is considered project activity. The most significant increases in 2011 versus 2010 are: NGOs and Humanitarian Reform (ECHO) at just over 58’000 CHF, Enhancing NGO Coordination (SIDA) at just over 25’000 CHF, NGO coordination (CWS funding 2010) at just over 24’000 CHF and UNHCR (Annual Consultations and Commemorations) at 54’000 CHF. It is these added projects that have also explained the drop in personnel costs between 2010 and 2011, as a certain percentage of personnel expenses linked to personnel was transferred to project activities. She explained that it was important to note that projects include not only those covered by earmarked funds, but also activities that occur that are outside of ICVA’s usual activity. These activities may be funded by a specific donor, such as is the case with the NGOs and Humanitarian Reform project (ECHO), or may be funded by core funds, as was the case with ICVA’s extra seat at the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (now covered by SIDA).

After looking at the expense overview of the three year period, Ms Starup then looked into more detail at the 2011 Statement of Income and Expenditures, with a particular focus and explanation on the allocation of reserves. In October 2011, EXCOM agreed to allocate 5’117 from the reserve to be used for the following costs: establishing an ICVA presence in New York; staff training; and GA costs. As such, this amount was theoretically transferred from the reserve to the expenses, thus covering
some of the deficit. The deficit amount as found in the financial statements was, as a consequence, reduced from 10'074.95 to 4'957.95 CHF.

Ms Starup stated that it was important to present the 2012 budget as validated by the outgoing EXCOM due to the important increase compared to previous years. The budget showed a 69% increase from 2011, with a total projected expenditure of 1.6 million CHF. This increase was mainly linked to project related costs: NHRP and Enhancing NGO Coordination, as outlined in the Strategic Plan. If these project amounts were to be removed from the budget, the total budget for 2012 would be approximately one million CHF, an increase of approximately 5% from 2011. She also drew the attention of the participants to the fact that the personnel costs are a major part of ICVA’s expenses, given that personnel represents ICVA’s core activities; and as such despite the high personnel costs, these costs are not administrative, but operational costs.

When looking at the income side of 2012, it was explained that to date, approximately 70% of the income was confirmed, and that as of 2012, membership income no longer represented one-third of expenditure, dropping to 18%.

**Questions**

After the presentation, there was a short question and answer session. Most questions asked were linked to the 2012 budget, and in particular, income projections. One member asked how much of the funding from the project activities are also funding growth in terms of core costs, and whether or not the Secretariat had analysed the risk when this ear-marked funding ran out. The Secretariat responded that while a formal risk analysis was not done, there was an awareness that that some of the growth was funded by ear-marked grants, but that most of the growth was linked to particular projects and would stop at the end of the funding contract. Another question was asked as to how the Secretariat was planning to respond if the remaining 30% of funding was not found, and if there was a formal fundraising strategy. The Secretariat responded that while there was not yet a formal fundraising strategy, the development of such a strategy was part of the Annual Plan for 2012. If the funding for 2012 was not confirmed – despite the expectations that it would be – there would be an adjustment at the mid-year budget revision that would adapt according to these changes. There was also a discussion with regards to the longer-term nature of the funding: as in the presentation the income streams seemed precarious, a member wanted confirmation that some of the funding was multi-year in nature to ensure sustainability. The Secretariat responded to this question noting that certain donors provided multi-year funding, while others chose not to as their *modus operandi*. As such, it was standard practice to request multi-year funding when possible, taking into account that in 2012, certain multi-year agreements were in the process of renewal. Another member asked about ICVA’s relationship with UNHCR, and the fact that much work is done by ICVA linked to this partnership, but that the funding does not reflect the amount of work undertaken by the Secretariat. The Secretariat responded that until recently, grants from UNHCR were received on an *ad hoc* basis without any formal agreement. In 2012, there will be an attempt to formalise the agreement with UNHCR, to cover different activities by ICVA on behalf of NGOs for UNHCR – and while the hope is that this will not only formalise the relationship but also increase the UNHCR yearly contribution to the Secretariat, that it should not be expected.

**9. Presentation of Candidates for ICVA Chair**

Penny Lawrence (Oxfam GB) presented her candidature for the Chair of the Board. (Please also see Item 13 for further explanation of the Chair election, under new Article VIII. Functions of the General Assembly, new paragraph e.)
10. Reports from the Group Discussions and Adoption of the Strategic Plan

Reports
The six groups discussing various parts or objectives of the Strategic Plan reported on their sessions in the morning. The outcome of these sessions has been presented in bullet point format.

Group I – Strengthening of the ICVA network through better communications
- ICVA should make more use of the new social media (e.g. Twitter) and the new website should be more interactive, including, for example discussion forums;
- Member agencies should be more engaged. Each should have, for example, a focal point for circulating ICVA information within their organisation; they should have the ICVA logo on their websites; and they should also involve their communications departments better;
- When ICVA works on a particular crisis, it should ensure that it makes an effort to involve all members in the relevant region through targeted communication;
- Direct engagement and dialogue with governments was stressed as a priority for ICVA;
- Promote humanitarian principles to new actors from the private sector. In particular, ICVA could work on developing a Code of Conduct for private security firms;
- ICVA should engage with ASEAN and the AU in terms of influencing the development of their humanitarian strategies, or in training exercises;
- ICVA should be clearer in communicating to members what is expects from them and should provide feedback to the membership. Members would like to see what input other members have provided; and
- ICVA’s role in developing the regional hubs and network at the regional level was recognised. These efforts should benefit the Secretariat and members.

Group II – Relevant Policy and Advocacy Issues
- ICVA should engage more with governments as they are in charge of humanitarian operations on their territory. In Geneva (and New York), it should build relationships with all diplomatic missions, not just donors;
- Liaison with regional bodies such as ASEAN would be relevant for ICVA;
- The Secretariat should limit its focus on issues and crises to those of a manageable size. It should set clear targets, determine the relevant interlocutors, and develop advocacy strategies;
- ICVA should continue its role in NGO consultations with, e.g., UNHCR, UNICEF, and IOM;
- ICVA can make better use of its platform function by linking member agencies with similar interests;
- One essential advocacy objective would be to set the vision and direction for humanitarian action in the next 5 to 10 years, which would see international NGOs taking a role which focuses more on delivering support to local agencies, instead of direct implementation; and
- Delivering joint messages on crises such as Syria was also seen as a valuable activity for ICVA.

Group III – Regional Relevance
- The concept of a regional hub should be further developed by looking at the objectives of the regional hub and the role of the member that acts as the host agency, and by developing clear Terms of Reference;
- The host agency function should not always remain with the same ICVA member;
- The role that the regional hub plays in representation, e.g. vis-à-vis regional bodies should be further clarified;
• The convening power of the regional hub is closely related to developing a relevant concrete (advocacy) agenda. The group did not come to a consensus with regards to the question whether this agenda should be based on ICVA’s current advocacy work, or if it should be more visionary by focussing even more on giving a voice to local NGOs;

• The regional hub function should be seen in light of what the ICVA Secretariat can do for ICVA’s members, instead of the other way around; and

• The regional hub should avoid creating another layer. The first pilot should be a light undertaking with a view to learning lessons. The regional hub could help regional networks develop, but then leave the further development of these networks to themselves.

**Group IV – Quality and Accountability**

• ICVA should perform the role of a “constructive friend” in the Q&A coherence discussions. ICVA should not portray itself as the convener of these discussions. The language of the Strategic Plan should reflect the appropriate role for ICVA;

• Before jumping to conclusions or what is seen as solutions (e.g. a merger), ICVA should look at the key questions related to the objective and function of the Q&A initiatives. ICVA could challenge SCHR to do some proper analysis;

• ICVA should avoid excluding other Q&A initiatives by focussing only on HAP, People in Aid, and the Sphere Project. It should focus on promoting the principles of Q&A; and

• ICVA could make a particular contribution in terms of linking humanitarian coordination, especially NGO coordination on the ground, with Q&A.

**Group V – IASC and the Transformative Agenda**

• The need to get more NGO voices involved in the implementation of the TA was emphasised. One way to realise more engagement from NGOs will be to have a guidance document on what the TA means for them;

• The role of NGOs as cluster co-leads should be further clarified through additional guidance. When is it appropriate for NGOs to take on this role? Work on the NGOs as co-leads has been done by individual clusters. This work should be taken into account;

• ICVA should develop a position on the clusters as funding channels;

• ICVA should remain present in the IASC and monitor it, even though it is dominated by the UN and discussions are UN-centric;

• ICVA should select, together with InterAction and SCHR, a top three of issues on which it should engage the IASC;

• ICVA should map which members participate in which IASC meetings, especially in relation to the subsidiary bodies;

• ICVA could collect more experiences on members participating in Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) and work on a system for more consistent participation in HCTs. Such a job is seen as more valuable than monitoring the performance of Humanitarian Coordinators;

• ICVA could invest more in the meetings with InterAction and SCHR to coordinate our work in relation to the IASC; and

• ICVA could organise more meetings on the IASC and related issues with donors, especially around Board meetings.

**Group VI – UNHCR**

• More can be done together with UNHCR at the country level in terms of monitoring performance of the sector and exchanging good practices;

• ICVA could push UNHCR in several ways: UNHCR should clarify the role of its Inter-Agency Unit; UNHCR should elaborate its vision for partnership with NGOs; and UNHCR should make clear what it has to offer in terms of capacity development for local NGOs;
• ICVA could interact more directly with UNHCR’s Executive Committee Member States. It could hold a substantive session in order to brief them on the outcome of the Annual UNHCR-NGO Consultations with NGOs and/or ask members to lobby with governments at the national level;
• ICVA could play a role in monitoring UNHCR’s work in the field. Individual members can help in this role, but they may not be able to report their findings in the same way as ICVA;
• ICVA could engage more with UNHCR on operational issues, e.g. needs assessments or funding, other specific issues; the cessation clause for Rwandan refugees was mentioned as a particular example where ICVA could play a role to alert members in all host countries of potential impact for Rwandan asylum seekers and refugees; and
• The group felt that taking on these suggested activities would provide the work with UNHCR with a more prominent place in ICVA’s activities.

ADOPTION OF STRATEGIC PLAN
Following these reports, the Executive Director noted three specific issues that would need to be adjusted in the Strategic Plan:
1. The “new actors” paragraph should be split up between the chapter on the strengthening of the network (in relation to new NGOs that could potentially be new ICVA members) and the part of promoting humanitarian principles to actors from the private sector or with a military background;
2. The Strategic Plan should highlight the direct engagement with governments as a priority for ICVA; and
3. The Strategic Plan should include the longer term vision for humanitarian response, which, it is expected, will see the role of international actors change from an implementing one to a role that is more in support of local actors.

With these three adjustments, the GA endorsed the Strategic Plan 2012-2014.

Closing

The outgoing Chair of the EXCOM thanked all members present for participating in the GA. He congratulated the new Board and its Chair for their election and expressed confidence that, with them, ICVA was in good hands for the next three years. Finally, he thanked the ICVA Secretariat for organising the meeting and closed the 15th ICVA GA.
Annex 1

Report of the Chair of the ICVA Executive Committee at the 15th General Assembly on behalf of the ICVA EXCOM and the ICVA Secretariat

Trying to reflect and report on the past three years of ICVA’s work in less than 20 minutes is a bit of a challenge, to say the least. Not only have we witnessed conflicts, disasters, and changes in the external environment, but ICVA itself has been busy on all sorts of fronts in the past three years, including the growth of the organisation.

I want to structure this report around 5 areas with you today:

1. Some of the external changes and major events that have occurred over the last 3 years and the challenges that have arisen;

2. How ICVA has responded to those challenges and some of the key areas in which ICVA has delivered during the three year period, particularly in reference to the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan;

3. ICVA’s role in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the “transformative agenda” that the has been led by the Emergency Relief Coordinator over the last year;

4. Developments within the ICVA network and the ICVA Secretariat; and

5. ICVA at 50 and ICVA’s future.

1. CHANGES / MAJOR EVENTS / TRENDS IN THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT DURING LAST 3 YEARS

We have seen major natural disasters in the last three years in Haiti, Pakistan, and Japan. In addition, conflict has played a key role in crises in Sri Lanka, Sudan, Somalia, Cote d’Ivoire, Libya, and Syria. The Arab Spring has brought some change and is still playing out in a number of countries. Crises in Afghanistan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have continued.

Shrinking of humanitarian space
Shortly after this EXCOM took up office following the 14th General Assembly in February 2009, we saw the Government of Sudan expel 13 international organisations and deregister 3 national organisations from Darfur. The consequences of that action are still being felt today. Access to populations in need continues to be challenging. NGOs find themselves unable to speak out too strongly for fear of being expelled. In 2011, following the referendum, South Sudan seceded and formed a separate country; however, this event has sparked a major change in the approach by the Republic of Sudan. After years of predicting that there would be trouble in the ‘disputed areas’ of Abyei, South Kordofan, and Blue Nile if the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was not properly implemented, these predictions came through.

The Large “Mega” disasters
The devastating earthquake in Haiti killed an estimated 220,000 people, injured over 300,000 and left 1.5 million homeless. The response saw hundreds of organisations flood into the country to help, with the result that the coordination mechanisms set up by the humanitarian reform process faced enormous challenges.
The floods in Pakistan in July and August 2010 saw another humanitarian crisis with over 20 million people affected. The response was, again, unable to adequately meet the needs of all those affected. Coordination was again a challenge. The situation was further complicated by the on-going conflict in Pakistan and neighbouring Afghanistan. The use of military assets caused division among humanitarian organisations and there was almost a ‘divide and conquer’ aspect to the crisis that further impacted on the ability of humanitarians to respond.

The massive earthquake in Japan was also a Mega Crisis but it is also an excellent example of how disaster risk reduction can help save lives though building codes and preparation. The damage in Japan was estimated in the region of $210 billion, or 4% of Japan’s GDP.

One big observation that we can make is that **five of the ten costliest natural disasters**, in terms of money rather than lives, were in the last four years. The Thai floods alone last year cost its economy $40 billion dollars. In economic terms, the 2011 natural disasters cost an estimated $378 billion. There seems to be a trend – though fewer lives were lost, the economic cost is much greater. Coordination in the Mega Disasters is very challenging.

The presidential elections in Côte d’Ivoire in 2010 led to violence and the displacement of some half a million Ivorians inside the country and into neighbouring countries. Despite the humanitarian needs, humanitarian organisations were few and far between in their response. Funds were not very forthcoming and humanitarian organisations were slow and inadequate in coming forward. The principle of impartiality on a global level became truly questionable.

**Early warnings require early responses**

The **Horn of Africa response** showed the dismal failure of the humanitarian community to respond timely and adequately to our early warning systems. Despite knowing of the impending famine, it was almost impossible to mobilise adequate funds or response capacity until indicators reached emergency levels. We have still not found the right ways or means to “sell” the benefits of responding before we reach emergency levels. I know there are a number of agencies scaling up for the **current crisis in Sahel** but responding to the inevitable crisis in South Kordofan is much more challenging because of the approach of the Government of the Republic of Sudan.

**Politicalisation of aid continues to deny millions access to aid. We talked yesterday about the donor countries with the anti-terrorism legislation. However, we also have host countries being more assertive** than before with increasingly restrictive legislation. In cases where the government is a party to the conflict, they have been clamping down on access. Governments are building on the examples of other governments in being stricter with NGOs – Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Sudan all come to mind but there are many others. They seem to taking lessons from the past, but NGOs are much slower at learning how to manage these challenges, and the relationships with governments.

There continues to be a **failure to protect civilians** in numerous countries and contexts around the world. Governments and non-state actors continue to be unable, or unwilling, to ensure the protection of civilians on their territories or under their control. Humanitarian organisations can only do so much to contribute to the protection of civilians. Issues around protection of civilians were very evident in Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Cote d’Ivoire.

We talked yesterday about the groups of actors that are being termed as “new,” but recognised that many of them have been around for years. Those of us that are termed more “traditional” humanitarians have not been good at engaging with these other actors. The coordination structures that have been created by the “mainstream” players have not considered adequately how to engage
Others who may have different ways of operating, such as private foundations, charities, or private companies who may also have (much) better access and/or ways to respond to populations in need.

All of the trends mentioned can sound quite negative. But at the same time, we should recognise some of the positive trends in the last three years as well:

- Disaster risk reduction efforts in places, such as Japan, have saved countless lives;
- We have seen some peaceful reform in several countries, as witnessed during the Arab Spring, where people themselves supported victims of the crises;
- We have seen the use of technology and new media to bring about positive change;
- We have also seen the continued outpouring of humanity, in situations like Haiti, Pakistan and the Horn of Africa, where ordinary citizens came forward to support those in need;
- New donors are now providing humanitarian aid;
- Responses have been adapted and changed in reaction to the context, for example, with vouchers and unconditional cash having been used very successfully even in such difficult environments as Somalia, Niger, and DRC; and
- Finally, while security and in particular the threat of kidnappings have increased the aid community has become better at managing crisis incidents and the UN is talking about managing the risks in reports like Stay and Deliver.

2. HOW ICVA HAS RESPONDED TO THESE KEY CHALLENGES AND WHAT ICVA HAS DELIVERED DURING THIS PERIOD IN TERMS OF THE ICVA STRATEGY

The core of ICVA’s work remains humanitarian policy and advocacy. Having a good understanding of the way that members work helps the Secretariat carry out advocacy on a daily basis. Through meetings with government missions or UN agencies ICVA consistently brings an NGO voice into these discussions. ICVA has also worked with the VOICE network, based in Brussels, to produce a joint advocacy statement on Libya and, more recently with VOICE and the Humanitarian Forum, to produce a joint statement on Syria. These examples of joint advocacy are ones that we should continue to work on in the future. It would be interesting to hear your views on these joint advocacy statements – are you happy with the way the EXCOM signed off on them or would you want to be more involved in future?

Humanitarian Reform
One example of ICVA’s extensive work on humanitarian policy is its work on the humanitarian reform process, which has been a process that has preoccupied NGOs both at the country level, but also at the global level. ICVA has been engaged with other members in the NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project and now is in a second phase with funding from ECHO. This will focus much more on capacity development of national and international NGOs and advocacy. The studies and products from the project are seen as useful contributions.

ICVA’s Annual Conference
From a more proactive stance, ICVA has continued to host the annual ICVA Conference like the one we had yesterday. By choosing provocative themes and topics, the Conference has become one that many look forward to each year. However, we must use the Conference to help try and set the agenda as NGOs rather than follow agendas being set by others.

UNHCR
ICVA continues to maintain its privileged position with UNHCR, which allows it to facilitate NGO input into UNHCR meetings and to co-host the Annual HCR-NGO Consultations. Each year, more and
more NGOs come to the Consultations and engage in dialogue with UNHCR. ICVA’s position has been quite useful, for example, in influencing UNHCR to take a hard look at the way in which it leads the Global Protection Cluster.

The Commemorations in 2011 of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1961 Statelessness Convention were important events to further the rights of refugees and stateless persons. The Commemorations also provided an important opportunity for ICVA to bring on board a second Senior Policy Officer to lead ICVA’s work with UNHCR.

Providing Feedback on Crises
During the Horn of Africa crisis, as well as others, ICVA was able to quickly provide members with feedback from key meetings at the international level, along with an analysis that was hopefully helpful to your work. We know that you are often asked for feedback with short turnarounds for meetings at the global level, but we hope that you find valuable the representation and feedback you are thereafter provided!

NGO Coordination
ICVA has continued to support NGO coordination. In Sudan, following the expulsions, ICVA supported the INGO forum. In Haiti, ICVA undertook a joint venture with InterAction to set up an NGO coordination mechanism following the earthquake and particularly sought to work with HAP, Sphere, People in Aid, and RedR/Bioforce to bring together the various elements related to quality and accountability with coordination. There was also support to the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum, with a short mission during the response to the floods.

It became clear that there has not been an adequate body of knowledge or learning created around NGO coordination, which is why we commissioned a number of case studies on NGO coordination. Looking at nine different cases, an overview of NGO coordination was developed and lessons were drawn from the cases. That initial study has formed the basis of a second, ongoing effort to develop an easy guide on NGO coordination that can provide NGOs with ideas of some of the key questions and things to consider when developing an NGO coordination body. That work will also feed into the development of an NGO coordination website where tools and resources can be found in one place.

3. ICVA AT THE IASC PRINCIPALS & WORKING GROUP AND THE TRANSFORMATIVE AGENDA

With so many people here for the first time – we thought we should spend a little more time than usual on this area.

The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) is a unique inter-agency forum for coordination, policy-development and decision-making involving the key UN and non-UN humanitarian partners. The IASC was established in June 1992 by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 46/182 to strengthen humanitarian assistance.

ICVA is one of three NGO networks on the IASC (the other two are InterAction and SCHR). Over the last three years I have attended, on behalf of ICVA, the twice annual face-to-face IASC Principals meetings, and participated in quite a number of Ad Hoc teleconferences on specific emergencies, Sudan, Horn of Africa, Haiti, and Syria – we have discussed them all. It took time to understand exactly how the IASC functions and how things get done. ICVA has used the opportunity to bring in voices from the South, as we are allowed to have two representatives attend each meeting. This has been very powerful and constructive. The Non-UN members of the IASC always meet prior to IASC Principals Meeting to agree positions and tactics. If we are to influence the UN’s policies and
processes, the IASC – in all its complicated forms – we will have to find ways to come up with strong, clear positions from the NGO side that we want the UN to take on board.

**What is referred to as “The Transformative Agenda” – Reform of the Humanitarian Reform Process**

The December 2010 IASC Principals meeting was probably the most memorable. The head of the World Health Organisation (WHO), Margaret Chan, in her welcome reflected on how we responded in Haiti and Pakistan. She said that WHO was not able to fulfil its Global Health Cluster responsibilities. And then, she invited any other organisation, such as MSF (which was at the meeting) – to take it on, because she knew that WHO was not, at that time, in a position to fulfil its responsibilities as Global Health Cluster lead. That statement then kicked off a process, led by Valarie Amos, in what has since become known as the “Transformative Agenda”, but I prefer the description – the Reform of the Humanitarian Reform Process.

The inadequacy of responses in both Haiti and Pakistan showed clearly that challenges still remain in terms of leadership, appropriate coordination mechanisms at various levels, and mutual accountabilities. Furthermore, the application of the cluster approach has become overly process-driven and, in some situations, perceived to potentially undermine rather than enable delivery.

The IASC Principals agreed in December 2011 to a set of actions that collectively have the potential to make a substantive improvement to the current humanitarian response model. These include:

- A mechanism to deploy strong experienced senior humanitarian leadership to guide humanitarian response from the outset of a major crisis;
- The rapid deployments of humanitarian leaders at various levels, to ensure the coordination architecture functions well;
- Improved planning at the country level that clarifies the collective results that the humanitarian community sets out to achieve and identifies how clusters and organisations will contribute to them;
- Enhanced accountability of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and members of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) for the achievement of collective results; and
- Streamlined coordination mechanisms adapted to operational requirements and contexts to better facilitate delivery

Most of the details of the “Transformative Agenda” relates to how the internal procedures and mechanisms within the UN work. ICVA was invited to present this “Transformative Agenda” to the Member States (including the major Donors) here in Geneva on 24th January – a copy of our remarks is available on the ICVA website. There are two specific issues I wish to raise today which are relevant for ICVA members and indeed all NGOs.

1. Engagement with Humanitarian Country Teams: ICVA with the two other NGO consortia at the IASC has proposed a set of four recommendations on what Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) can do to support NGO participation in the HCT; and
2. Engagement with Clusters: Again the NGO consortia have proposed a set of minimum commitments for all cluster participants, whether UN, non-UN, or NGOs.

**4. BROADER DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN ICVA**

Membership
We have continued to be known as a global NGO network, but we have not, unfortunately, expanded in any significant manner since the last GA. While we have new members, we have also lost some old ones. It will be essential for the next Board to find ways to keep ICVA relevant for all its existing members and find new ones. We have to get better at showing the strength of the ICVA membership to the outside world. We need more members to volunteer to come to meetings of the IASC, for example. The proposal in the Strategic Plan to have members act as regional focal points will be an essential step in getting members to talk more about ICVA.

As members, we also need to provide regular feedback – both positive and negative – to the Board and Secretariat so that they can continue to better serve us. If we don’t tell them what we want, they will have a hard time changing!

**Quality and Accountability Initiatives**

We have also been heavily involved in the Sphere Project, and the Secretariat has continued to play an active role, along with a member, on the Sphere Board. The development of the Protection Principles included in the 2011 edition of the Sphere Handbook was led by ICVA.

The more recent discussions about bringing the various Quality and Accountability (Q&A) initiatives closer together is an area we have agreed to support. As an EXCOM, we think it is important to work towards common NGO positions on accreditation and certification. We should not be pressured by governments who want an easy answer to what they deem a problem, post-Haiti. We must instead be leading the way and providing solutions to what we identify as the problem. By ensuring that the Q&A initiatives are more closely aligned, we will strengthen our position as NGOs to show that we are committed and professional. It was in this vein that ICVA worked with IFRC and the Swiss government and OCHA in 2011 to host an international meeting on strengthening partnerships in disaster response, to help governments better understand what humanitarian organisations commit to and can provide.

**GHP**

The Global Humanitarian Platform is an area where we played a significant role, as ICVA. But in the past years, as co-chair of the Task Force, we have fallen by the wayside in moving the GHP forward.

**Highlighting the Work of Our Southern Members**

An area where we have been able to improve, but still need to do more, has been in bringing southern members to a variety of international policy meetings. We have sought and received funding from donors to ensure that southern NGOs are able to access international meetings, just like our larger INGO members. However, we need to expand the number of southern NGOs that engage in these meetings. We must move beyond just the few, usual NGOs that are engaged and find ways to engage the broader southern membership in the various processes at the international level. If you think they are not useful, then we must also find ways to change the agenda so that the meetings are useful to your day to day work.

**EXCOM**

The EXCOM that you elected at the last GA stayed at a total of nine member organisations, four of which are based in the South. We started with four women and five men, but ended with three women and six men as some organisations changed their representatives. The EXCOM met formally on eight occasions, with six teleconferences in between meetings – all meetings were held in Geneva, bar one which was held in Brussels following a joint Board meeting with VOICE. We had two such joint Board meetings with VOICE, in line with Strategic Object 2 of the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan, and they were seen as excellent opportunities to share and better collaborate. We may want to consider future joint board meetings with SCHR, InterAction, or other networks in the future.
ICVA Secretariat Changes
The ICVA Secretariat has undergone a number of changes over the years and has seen a significant expansion. From five full-time staff in 2009, we now have 8 staff working for us. In 2009, the EXCOM instigated an extensive team building process to help the Secretariat consider better behaviour practices and manage the changes associated with a changing team. We are planning on opening a presence in New York, to be kindly hosted by Church World Service. With the recent resignation of the ICVA staff member who was scheduled to move to NY we have to rethink our recruitment strategy for this position.

Finances
I can happily say that this EXCOM is leaving behind a financially strong institution. Over the past years, we have been able to build up a reserve and enough running costs for five months. We cannot, however, rest on our laurels. Fundraising will have to be a priority for the next Board – especially in these austere financial times. While it’s great that we have a bigger and stronger Secretariat, the flipside of that is that it costs more money. So ensuring we raise enough funds – not only from membership dues, but also from external donors – will be an essential priority (the Treasurers Report will go into greater detail on this).

5. ICVA AT 50 AND THE FUTURE

2012 is a significant year for ICVA as we just turned 50 on 6 March 2012. When ICVA was created, I don’t think anyone imagined we would be around 50 years later. While there will always be natural disasters, we should find ways to ensure that disaster risk reduction efforts and national efforts to respond are supported. We talk a lot about supporting national capacity, but we have a long way to go before we can truly say we have succeeded. In the years to come, ICVA is uniquely placed with its global membership to play a leading role in putting national organisations first in humanitarian responses and supporting their efforts. We also need to consider seriously the challenge posed yesterday by Yves Daccord, Director-General of ICRC, that we need to be creative when considering coordination.

We also need to find ways to better communicate among ourselves. Many of us are extremely busy and we receive an incredible number of emails on a daily basis. However, the Secretariat depends on the membership for information and engagement. As members we need to get better at responding to requests for information. In addition the Secretariat needs to get better at the feedback loop. The efforts currently being undertaken by the Secretariat to develop a communications strategy and to improve the ICVA website will hopefully find us all being in touch on a more regular basis, and not just coming together once every three years. As members, we have a lot to learn from each other. Several of the EXCOM members have developed excellent relationships over the last three years and have undertaken visits to each other’s operations to learn from each other. That kind of learning and sharing should be happening across the membership – not just among EXCOM members.

Before closing let me thank specifically my colleagues on the ICVA EXCOM. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with you all; I thank you for your various contributions at our meetings and in between meetings. I have come to know many of you and respect the work you and your organisations do. I expect friendships will go on long beyond the life of this EXCOM. Specifically, I wish to thank Misikir as Vice Chair, Dale (who cannot be with us today) and Kathrine in their work on the Finance Sub-Committee and Marian for her role as HR focal point.

I also wish to thank the ICVA Secretariat. They are the ones who do the day to day work. They are also the ones who know a language I have come to know as “Geneva Speak”. I have great admiration
for the individual knowledge, skills, and attributes of the individual Secretariat members. We have reached a pivotal point in the lifetime of the Secretariat with the imminent departures of Julien and Manisha. I want to thank especially Manisha for her dedication over the last 13 years – she has been incredibly professional in all that she does – she set a very high standard. Ed, I have known now for approximately eight years – Concern was a member of ICVA and left – but I meet Ed in a hotel here in Geneva and witnessed enough to believe it was right for Concern to re-join. Ed’s visit to Pakistan in 2011 to support the PHF was very much appreciated.

In closing, let me say that it has been a real honour and privilege to serve as the Chair of the EXCOM for the last three years – I wish to thank my own organisation Concern for the opportunity and support they have provided for me to carry out this role. It has been a learning experience and it has helped me to better appreciate the powerful position that ICVA holds. If we can improve on our ways to harness and bring the experiences of members to international forums, ICVA will be in a position to better influence policies and practices that can lead to more effective humanitarian responses for people in need.

Thank you.

Paul O’Brien
Chair EXCOM
20 March 2012
Annex 2

Membership Feedback Exercise
15th General Assembly

What Members Like about ICVA

• Excellent communication on humanitarian issues/updates.
• Very good advocacy on key humanitarian issues.
• Representation based on knowledge and experience at Geneva level.
• Good contact (short lines) with ICVA Secretariat.
• Coordination support to Sudan and Haiti.
• Code of Conduct training at the regional level.
• Recently better deadlines for comments (better workable).
• We are learning a lot from ICVA.
• Coordination with InterAction in Haiti.
• Balancing InterAction in Haiti in situation of US/European tensions.
• Keeping information flowing.
• Sought to include southern hemisphere NGOs.
• Very good at bringing field reality/real issues and to some extent “southern” NGO voices to the table.
• Brings southern NGOs to the international table.
• Focus on North-South partnership.
• Trying to involve southern NGOs (both member and non-members) in international forums.
• Involving global South NGOs in international humanitarian dialogue.
• Enables southern NGOs to be active members of the EXCOM – helping to provide leadership.
• Strong advocacy on behalf of members at the IASC.
  • But still needs to bring more local/national voices to this forum.
• Represent NGOs in the IASC.
• Representation at IASC meetings and informing members about reform process.
• To continue support around the humanitarian community.
• Managed the dispute between NGOs over cessation clauses on Rwandan refugees in the NGO statement at consultations/ExCom.
• Works well with UNHCR, with good effect.
• Relatively speedy process for joint statements.
• Making statements on important issues.
• Joint advocacy statements with other networks.
• Secretariat reach out to regions to start “ICVA hubs”.
• Joint statements with VOICE.
• UNHCR consultations – member input.
• Brought collective NGO voice to important global policy debates.
• Development of protection principles for Sphere handbook.
• Access and input on highest levels.
• Expertise.
• Information exchange is prompt/wide.
• Representation is well-done.
• ICVA has done an excellent job in advocacy humanitarian policy.
• Its global membership allows for a wider representation of humanitarian issues.
• Meetings with member States.
• HC meetings in Geneva.
• Rapid convening of meetings with UN HCs and other key actors such as NATO, etc.
• Consistent NGO presence, perspective positioning and voice within global humanitarian architecture.
• Great Secretariat staff and professional public face of ICVA.

What Members Thought ICVA Could Improve Upon
• Look at options for increasing linkages between global action and country level
• Better information and mobilisation of members to strengthen UNHCR-NGOs (ICVA) relationships and collaboration (have received very little info on two initiatives mentioned)
• Follow-up and communicate on some past activities (i.e. work on Code of Conduct workshops, NGO coordination, etc.) where is it going?
• Feed back to members on outcomes/results of meetings/initiatives (also to see if membership inputs have been useful)
• More impact evaluations for ICVA statements
• Case studies/examples of how policy issues are impacting field
• Get NGO dialogue beyond North/South divide
• Strategic filtering of key issues
• Bring members together to work on and exchange ideas/positions on themes/core issues, e.g. protection, humanitarian principles, food security
• Bring together member agencies on thematic issues like migration/refugee issues
• Establish/enable working groups of members around key issues (e.g. protection, sustainability).
• Challenge: bring members together around themes (mutual capacity building and developing joint policy) like ECRE’s core groups, example
  o Access
  o Asylum systems
  o Resettlement, etc.
• Better communications strategy
• Seeking a forum of closer cooperation with ECRE (in the same line as currently with VOICE) as this is a membership organisation too
• Develop a strategy to increase engagement from southern NGOs
• Have a solid and far-reaching fund raising strategy
• Need for more feedback/info on substance of meetings with UNHCR
• Generating communication between members (as opposed to from members to secretariat) (we get little sense of who members are)
• (monthly?) regular updates on current developments with input ICVA members
• NGO statements for UNHCR meetings become routine and not pursuing an agenda effectively
• ICVA could do a better job to promote regional and country level representation
• Establish regional presence to become more relevant at the country level
• Provide feedback of the outcome of the joint advocacy statements
• Promote more South-South collaborations
• Develop linkages at regional levels to engage with and influence regional blocks, e.g. ASEAN
• Website: mails difficult to read
• “Creative coordination” to reinforce NGO value-added during large scale responses
• Promote an “affected populations lens” in interagency processes
• To strengthen into coordination support capacity and to put us in the forefront for the development of new situations
• Feedback on effects/results:
  o Statements
  o (high-level) meetings
• Need to push for better NGO input with key actors other than UNHCR, eg IOM
• Challenge: management of a Secretariat with diverse tasks and qualified/good staff rich in initiatives

• Not sending all e-mails to everyone/every member but rather to cluster by subject (migration/refugees or humanitarian response)
• Engage the national NGOs in the field – both as members and as partners in the advocacy work
• Aggregated positions instead of large papers
• Developing networking specially with regional network
• Challenge: greater engagement of members in establishing regional “hubs” and policy
• Provide forum for sharing learning and experiences, especially in relation to 4 areas of humanitarian reform agenda
• Focus on refugees is being lost – could appoint one member of staff to keep this flame alive
• Articulate ICVA positions more with the ICVA brand
• Helping members understand the processes and issues of global humanitarian system
• Promote humanitarian leadership training
• Participation in cross-agency discussions and decisions
• Need a better understanding of ICVA and its role/benefit to NGO community outside of Europe
• Send Secretariat staff to the field for short missions to learn more about real world of members
• More coordinated advocacy efforts – ICVA can bring NGOs together
• Engage more strategically – with a longer-term vision and shorter-term objectives
• Work with members in “South” to bring the conversation to them – and to bring their conversation to the table
Annex 3

Presentation of ICVA Strategic Plan 2012-2014

Strategic Plan 2012-14

1. The planning process
2. Key messages / elements of the plan
3. Expectations of this meeting
4. Working group activities
Strategic questions to ICVA members

I. What can we do as a network of southern and northern NGOs to further enhance the quality and effectiveness of our work, which we could not achieve as individual NGOs alone?

II. How can the participation of member NGOs be improved to develop more coherent and proactive policy positions so ICVA can be a more effective “global advocacy alliance for humanitarian action”?

III. What should ICVA do in order to improve member-to-member collaboration and how can that collaboration be used to ensure better humanitarian outcomes for those affected by disasters and conflicts?

IV. What should ICVA Secretariat do to improve its communications with members so that you will be encouraged to better engage?

15 member agencies sent replies

Sample of questions to UN and donors

I. How effective has ICVA been in terms of influencing change in the policies, positions and actions of donor governments and the UN in relation to humanitarian action? Any change required?

II. To what extent should ICVA move beyond a policy and advocacy role focused on the UN?

III. Could you envisage ICVA as the 'umbrella' for some quality and accountability initiatives in the future?

IV. NGOs see a need for pooled funds for NGO capacity building at country level and a possible role for ICVA in terms of coordination of such a mechanism – is this a role for ICVA?

V. A suggestion that ICVA should focus more on technical issues and have technical groups. Would donors see this as supporting or competing with the cluster system?
Strategic Plan 2012-14

Emerging issues:

1. Issues on which there is a consensus
   • ICVA’s role in policy and advocacy
   • Strengthening communications and the ICVA Network

2. Issues of ‘near-consensus’
   • ICVA’s role in support of field-based NGO coordination
   • Strengthening ICVA’s relevance at the regional level

3. Outstanding issues
   • ICVA’s added value in quality and accountability
   • ICVA’s role in ‘technical’ issues
   • ICVA’s reach out vis-à-vis ‘new’ actors

Strategic Plan 2012-14

2. Key-messages/elements

• ICVA members will have a stronger sense of being part of ICVA’s global network

• Using our convening power, ICVA can lead on a number of humanitarian policy and advocacy themes

• We will make an effort to address the gap between humanitarian policy and practice (by making our policy and advocacy work more relevant on operational settings)

• We will be more relevant in supporting humanitarian operations

• We will have more capacity
3. Expectations of this Meeting

i) **Endorsement** of the Strategic Plan in its current form

ii) Collectively **consider activities to implement this Strategic Plan** by working in 6 working groups:

   1. Strategic objective 1
   2. Strategic Objective 2
   3. Strategic objective 3
   4. Quality and accountability
   5. IASC and the Transformative Agenda
   6. Reviving advocacy and partnership with UNHCR

4. Working Group Activities

**Questions for Groups 1 to 3** (on Strategic Objectives)

i) Suggest activities whose implementation will mean we are implementing the Strategic Objective –*Keep it concrete!*

ii) What are the activities that you can undertake?

iii) What do you expect from the Secretariat?

**Specific Questions –**

- **Group 1 - Strategic Objective 1:** In terms of the Secretariats communications, we want to go beyond the (bilateral) exchanges with the members by email. Is this realistic?

- **Group 2 - Strategic Objective 2:** What are the policy/advocacy issues that can/should be taken forward by ICVA? (e.g. because of the diversity of the membership)

- **Group 3 - Strategic Objective 3:** how ICVA can best add value to your operations in humanitarian settings.

Group 4: Quality and Accountability
- What is understood by effective humanitarian response?
- How can ICVA help strengthen the link between coordination and response, on the one hand, and quality and accountability, on the other hand?

Group 5: IASC and the Transformative Agenda
- What is the importance/relevance of the IASC and the Transformative Agenda?

Group 6: Reviving Advocacy and Partnership with UNHCR
- What are the main partnership issues regarding UNHCR management at the field level and what needs to change?
Annex 4

Guidance for ICVA Strategic Plan 2012-2014 Break-out Groups

GROUP 1: A Strengthened Global ICVA Network
Strengthening ICVA as a Global Network will necessitate better communication between members, between members and Secretariat, as well as strengthening of the ICVA identity and “brand”.

While the strategic plan defines the “what?” we would like your assistance in defining the “how?” Specifically by answering:
  1. How can the ICVA Secretariat communicate better with its members and what type of platform would you envision to facilitate meaningful inter-member exchanges?
  2. ICVA is committed to engaging with “new actors” in humanitarian action. How could you and other members concretely facilitate the achievement of this objective?

The expectation from the Secretariat is to get from you clear operational guidance, as well as commitment from your organisation in supporting this aspect of the plan. Therefore when answering these questions,
  ➢ Please consider what activities would be undertaken by the ICVA Secretariat, and what would be undertaken by member organisations.
  ➢ Please do not provide a shopping list of ideas or activities but focus on some concrete ways forward.
  ➢ Please try to be as realistic as possible and bear in mind the Secretariat’s and your own organisation’s limited capacity.

GROUP 2: A Consolidated Position as an NGO leader in Policy and Advocacy
Consolidating ICVA’s position as an NGO leader in humanitarian policy and advocacy will necessitate to be more and more driven by operational realities based on members’ operational experiences and analyses.

While the strategic plan defines the “what?” we would like your assistance in defining the “how?” Specifically by answering:
  1. How can ICVA ensure that it engages in the right global policy debates from a member’s point of view?
  2. What, according to you should be the priority areas of focus for ICVA’s global policy and advocacy work in the next three years and why?

The expectation from the Secretariat is to get from you clear operational guidance, as well as commitment from your organisation in supporting this aspect of the plan. Therefore when answering these questions,
  ➢ Please consider what activities would be undertaken by the ICVA Secretariat, and what would be undertaken by member organisations.
  ➢ Please do not provide a shopping list of ideas or activities but focus on some concrete ways forward.
Please try to be as realistic as possible and bear in mind the Secretariat’s and your own organisation’s limited capacity.

**GROUP 3: A Recognised Relevance in Supporting Humanitarian Operations**

Developing ICVA’s relevance in supporting humanitarian operations will mean being more engaged at the Country and Regional levels, drawing attention on significant gaps or issues in specific humanitarian situations. While ICVA does not plan to become operational, it needs to be closer to field realities, through its members as well as through more Secretariat presence (by doing more field visits, for example).

While the strategic plan defines the “what?” we would like your assistance in defining the “how?” Specifically by answering:

1. What do you see as practically needed to successfully implement the ICVA regional hub plan? What support will be needed? What are the pitfalls of such a model?

2. At the country level, how could ICVA practically support your organisation’s humanitarian operation?

The expectation from the Secretariat is to get from you **clear operational guidance**, as well as **commitment from your organisation** in supporting this aspect of the plan. Therefore when answering these questions,

- Please consider what activities would be undertaken by the ICVA Secretariat, and what would be undertaken by member organisations.
- Please do not provide a shopping list of ideas or activities but focus on some concrete ways forward.
- Please try to be as realistic as possible and bear in mind the Secretariat’s and your own organisation’s limited capacity.

**GROUP 4: Quality and Accountability Initiatives**

ICVA has been engaged in the creation and or oversight of much of Humanitarian Quality and Accountability initiatives, such as SPHERE and HAP. ICVA is committed to strengthening its engagement by supporting harmonisation of these initiatives, as well as being active in new debates around quality and accountability of humanitarian response.

While the strategic plan defines the “what?” we would like your assistance in defining the “how?” Specifically by answering:

1. If harmonisation and consolidation of the various Q&A initiatives is the way forward, what should it look like and what should be ICVA’s role?

2. How can ICVA to help strengthen the link between coordination and response, on the one hand, and quality and accountability, on the other hand?

3. The “aid effectiveness” debate is still brewing and has now also entered the humanitarian domain. Real hard data is missing regarding the relative value for money provided in humanitarian response by NGOs, the UN, the Red Cross/ Red Crescent Movement, and the private sector. What is understood by effective humanitarian response? What percentage of a typical operational agency budget is spent servicing donor compliance procedures? How
would you see your organisation contributing to such data collection and dissemination? Should ICVA engage in this discussion?

The expectation from the Secretariat is to get from you clear operational guidance, as well as commitment from your organisation in supporting this aspect of the plan. Therefore when answering these questions,

- Please consider what activities would be undertaken by the ICVA Secretariat, and what would be undertaken by member organisations.
- Please do not provide a shopping list of ideas or activities but focus on some concrete ways forward.
- Please try to be as realistic as possible and bear in mind the Secretariat’s and your own organisation’s limited capacity.

GROUP 5: ICVA, the IASC and the “Transformative Agenda”
An important part of the ICVA Secretariat’s time is taken up by participating in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), engaging in discussions on current emergency situations, as well as on the overall architecture and mechanisms that underpin UN-led humanitarian responses and coordination. In that sense, ICVA has been engaged with the original “Humanitarian Reform” process, as well as with its new recent incarnation, the “transformative agenda”.

While the strategic plan defines the “what?” we would like your assistance in defining the “how?” Specifically by answering:

1. Engagement of field-based NGOs in the “Transformative Agenda” discussions is extremely limited. What would make you more active?

2. It is felt by many that the IASC agenda is over-dominated by UN entities and issues (and related politics). How should ICVA set its priorities finding the balance between its involvement in the IASC processes and being more pro-active on other issues that may be more of a priority to the members? Should ICVA decide not to participate in (parts of) the IASC?

3. The transformative agenda will require more monitoring of Humanitarian Coordinators performance and more engagement in the Humanitarian Country teams. How would you see your organisation getting involved in HC monitoring and/or invest in HCR participation?

The expectation from the Secretariat is to get from you clear operational guidance, as well as commitment from your organisation in supporting this aspect of the plan. Therefore when answering these questions,

- Please consider what activities would be undertaken by the ICVA Secretariat, and what would be undertaken by member organisations.
- Please do not provide a shopping list of ideas or activities but focus on some concrete ways forward.
- Please try to be as realistic as possible and bear in mind the Secretariat’s and your own organisation’s limited capacity.

GROUP 6: Reviving Advocacy and Partnership with UNHCR
ICVA is still engaged with all levels of UNHCR’s governance and operations and remains its main NGO interlocutor. The engagement of the membership (and whole NGO community) could however be
improved. This year has seen the beginning of a new UNHCR initiative to review UNHCR’s partnership culture and issues and ICVA is part of the Steering Group of this initiative.

While the strategic plan defines the “what?” we would like your assistance in defining the “how?” Specifically by answering:

1. What are the main partnership issues regarding UNHCR management at the field level and what needs to change?
2. What would you see as a role for UNHCR to play in the capacity building of NGOs?
3. While UNHCR’s EXCOM will be discussing the role of NGOs in its work in an Informal Consultative Meeting, what should ICVA do, at Geneva and field levels, to further its advocacy positions? Member briefings on specific issues? More direct interface with Regional Bureaus?
4. NGO statements facilitated by ICVA revolve around protection and programmatic issues mostly. Although operational concerns with UNHCR are many, they do not get articulated at Standing Committees or EXCOMs as much as they should. Would that be of interest to your organisation and if so, please provide commitment to assisting the development of these papers.

The expectation from the Secretariat is to get from you clear operational guidance, as well as commitment from your organisation in supporting this aspect of the plan. Therefore when answering these questions,

- Please consider what activities would be undertaken by the ICVA Secretariat, and what would be undertaken by member organisations.
- Please do not provide a shopping list of ideas or activities but focus on some concrete ways forward.
- Please try to be as realistic as possible and bear in mind the Secretariat’s and your own organisation’s limited capacity.
## Annex 5

### Participants General Assembly 20 & 21 March 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family name</th>
<th>First name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Casey-Maslen</td>
<td>Marian</td>
<td>Policy Officer</td>
<td>ACT Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Larson</td>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>Deputy General Secretary</td>
<td>ACT Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wetsig-Lynam</td>
<td>Barbara</td>
<td>Capacity Development Officer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pupulin</td>
<td>Luca</td>
<td>Programs Director</td>
<td>ACTED</td>
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<td>Taylor</td>
<td>Airlie</td>
<td>Information Officer</td>
<td>ActionAid International</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nasib</td>
<td>Mohammad</td>
<td>Chairman</td>
<td>AFGHAN NGOs COORDINATION BUREAU (ANCB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tilahun</td>
<td>Misikir</td>
<td>Head of Programmes</td>
<td>Africa Humanitarian Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mohanna</td>
<td>Kamel</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Amel Association</td>
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<td>Akyürek</td>
<td>Ahmet</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Anatolian Development Foundation</td>
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<td>Ashrafi</td>
<td>Fatemeh</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Association for Protection of Refugee Women and Children - HAMI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arevalo</td>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>Overseas Operations Director</td>
<td>Asylum Access</td>
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<td>Al Madi</td>
<td>Rania</td>
<td>Geneva UN consultant</td>
<td>BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian residency and refugee rights</td>
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<td>Williams</td>
<td>Hazel</td>
<td>Humanitarian Coordinator</td>
<td>Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hartmeyer</td>
<td>Mette</td>
<td>Humanitarian Advocacy Officer</td>
<td>Church World Service - Pakistan/Afghanistan</td>
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<td>Parvez</td>
<td>Marvin</td>
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<td>Church World Service Asia - Pakistan/Afghanistan</td>
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<td>Kekic</td>
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<td>Church World Service, Immigration &amp; Refugee Program</td>
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<td>Mustafa</td>
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<td>Concern Worldwide</td>
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<td>Starup</td>
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<td>Wijnkoop</td>
<td>Myrth</td>
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<td>Harrell-Bond</td>
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<td>Herlemont Zoritchak</td>
<td>Nathalie</td>
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<td>Handicap International</td>
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<td>Van Bodegom Evert</td>
<td>Disaster Management Coordinator</td>
<td>ICCO &amp; Kerk in Actie</td>
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<td>Bingham John</td>
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<td>Le Breton Alexandre</td>
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<td>International Committee of the Red Cross</td>
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<td>Pack Mary</td>
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<td>International Medical Corps</td>
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<td>Vestvik Rolf</td>
<td>Director Advocacy and Information Department</td>
<td>Office Africain pour le Développement et la Coopération (OFADEC)</td>
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<td>Ndiaye Mamadou</td>
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<td>Wood Tanya</td>
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**OBSERVERS**

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<tr>
<td>Ali Degan</td>
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<td>Horn Relief / Adeso (OBSERVER)</td>
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**ICVA Secretariat**

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