ICVA Bulletin #5

ICVA Bulletin #5 - Highlights for May 2016

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World Humanitarian Summit

1. Moving beyond the WHS: The first World Humanitarian Summit on 23-24 May 2016 in Istanbul has now come and gone. The Summit brought together 9000 participants from 173 Member States, 55 heads of state and government, the UN, private sector, and thousands of representatives from NGOs and wider civil society - unfortunately no P5 heads of state were present. The Summit process generated around 1,500 operational, policy and normative commitments to better address the current, and unprecedented levels of suffering and vulnerability around the globe. Eyes now turn to the ratification of various commitments in upcoming intergovernmental processes, and the implementation and monitoring mechanisms of all commitments. The Summit itself was filled with ceremonies, High Level Round Tables (HLRTs), special sessions, side events and bilateral meetings. The WHS website has now uploaded the advance, unedited Chair’s summary along with a range of videos, photos, press releases, key speeches and other information. NGO commitments shared in the lead up to the Summit are available on ICVA’s website. We encourage all NGOs to further share these commitments in the coming weeks.

2. MdM amplify NGO concerns in closing plenary: The President of Médecins du Monde, Ms. Francoise Sivignon participated in the closing ceremony, sharing key messages, including: welcoming the ever stronger involvement of national and local NGOs in the governance of the humanitarian sector; the need to collectively move beyond a centralised system, towards a diversified, inclusive humanitarian ecosystem; the expectation on States to urgently adhere to the Humanitarian Principles, while reiterating NGOs intent to hold States and the UN accountable, as well as ourselves, in the implementation of the 1,500 commitments. ICVA, together with other NGO consortia worked to support MdM and Ms Sivignon in developing these key messages.

3. NGO key messages put to good use: In the lead up to the Summit, ICVA developed a range of ‘NGO briefs’ highlighting key NGO messages for each of the HLRTs. Many thanks to those individuals and members for contributing to these key messages, available here. Though the Summit has passed, these key messages remain ever relevant and applicable in many fora moving forward.

4. NGO meeting post WHS: On Monday 13 June, ICVA will meet with NGOs to share WHS reflections, updates from the IASC Principals meeting and potential next steps. Please contact james.schell@icvanetwork.org for further information.

Forced displacement

5. Upcoming UNCHR-NGO Annual Consultations draws record breaking number of participants. With the 15-17 June Consultations just around the corner, we are expecting a record-breaking 580 participants. The theme is “Youth: the Future is Now”. If you have registered and preparing your visit you can find all relevant documents such as the agenda, background papers for each session, and a guide for NGOs (in English and French) on UNHCR’s webpage. If it is your first time attending the UNCHR-NGO Consultations and you missed the orientation webinar we organized earlier this month we can share the recording with you. ICVA is hosting an
informal gathering for members post the Consultations. For more information about the gathering and/or the webinar recording please contact secretariat@icvanetwork.org.

6. Last call to IOM – NGO Humanitarian Consultations: On 13 June, ICVA and IOM are organizing the second annual consultations focusing specifically on NGOs working in the humanitarian domain. The three focus areas of the Consultations include: 1) enhancing cooperation and dialogue between IOM and humanitarian NGOs, 2) an NGO-IOM Partnership Fair, and 3) the lead-up to the UNGA High-Level Meeting on Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants. It is still possible to register online. Agenda available. For more information, please contact secretariat@icvanetwork.org.

7. UNHCR’s Framework for Implementing with Partners inches forward: ICVA participated in the 4-5 May UNHCR Implementing Framework Network Organization’s meeting in Croatia, hosted by ICVA member IMC. Participants, comprised of UNHCR and NGO staff, discussed policy options related to ethics/investigations, UNHCR contributions to NGO staff salaries, the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing, capacity strengthening and continued roll-out of the Framework. NGOs who want to engage in partnership with UNHCR are encouraged to register on UNHCR’s Partner Portal. ICVA members can read the summary note of the meeting.

8. NGOs gear up for UNHCR’s Standing Committee on Protection: NGOs are preparing statements to be delivered during UNHCR’s 21-23 June Standing Committee meeting on Protection. Our members would like to raise their voices on thematic and country-specific issues related to protection as well as the conclusions process. NGOs who have not received the first draft and would like to be part of this consultative preparatory process can contact secretariat@icvanetwork.org.

9. 19 September SG report: We must now turn our attention from one summit (the World Humanitarian Summit) to another (the 19 September Summit on Addressing Large Scale Movements of Refugees and Migrants). A good starting point for preparations is to read the Secretary General’s report released in early May, called “In Safety and Dignity: Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants.” ICVA members report they are happy with its frequent mention of border security and detention issues, the fact that the report builds on existing frameworks and treaties; as well as the announcement of a UN-led global campaign to counter xenophobia. However, some language still needs clarification, and we are eager to see any bold commitments translated into action that improve the situation at the field level. Members can read the notes from UNHCR’s briefing on the report organized on 11 May. ICVA members are particularly concerned about some Member State efforts to restrict civil society engagement in the process. We have joined forces with ICMC and the NGO Committee on Migration to create a civil society action committee. Its first meeting was held on 3 June. Stay tuned for further information in how to engage, particularly as the Committee begins to draft key messages.

10. Sign on to the #WithRefugees Campaign for World Refugee Day: UNHCR will launch the #WithRefugees Campaign ahead of World Refugee Day on 20 June. The Campaign uses a petition as its primary call to action. You can sign the petition to show your solidarity for people forced to flee, and call on governments to show greater solidarity in finding robust, humane and innovative solutions for refugees. The petition will be delivered at the UN General Assembly in September during the High Level Summit on Large Scale Movements of Refugees and Migrants (mentioned above). Join the campaign and sign the petition on the newly developed website.

11. Germany Launches A New Platform on Disaster Displacement: At the World Humanitarian Summit Germany announced the launch of the new Platform on Disaster Displacement. This is a follow-up to the Swiss and Norwegian-led “Nansen Initiative”. It focuses on people displaced as a result of natural disasters and climate change. The idea is to implement recommendations of the former Initiative’s Protection Agenda, and create a toolbox to better prepare for displacement and respond to situations where people are forced to flee. For more information, visit disasterdisplacement.org.

16. Partnership… Strength and Sustainability, was the theme of the 4th International Forum on Humanitarian Work

17. The Inter-Agency Emergency Preparedness and Response Network for the MENA

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12. **Lake Chad Basin: the worlds most neglected humanitarian crisis:** In the Lake Chad Basin, spanning across Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria, Boko Haram violence has led to Africa’s fastest growing displacement crisis with over 2.6 million people displaced by the crisis, and who desperately need humanitarian assistance.

ICVA West Africa with other NGOs from the region and UN agencies have consistently drawn attention to this crisis. In partnership with Oxfam, NRC and OCHA, they organized a side event at the World Humanitarian Summit on "How to end suffering in the Lake Chad Basin: an interactive dialogue between local communities and the aid community" which was well received.

"The Lake Chad crisis is today’s most under reported and neglected.", Stephen O’Brien, UN ERC said at the opening of the side event in Istanbul on 24 May. "Matching the scale of the needs now is a must'", he added. The ERC shared the floor with Aishatu Marqima, retired nurse having hosted over 50 IDPs in her house since the beginning of the crisis; Kashim Shettima, Governor of Borno State; Yves Daccord, ICRC Director-General; Ertharin Cousin, WFP Executive Director; and Toby Lanzer, Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Sahel. A recap of the event (by OCHA) can be found on Twitter and Storify.

The much awaited high-level Regional Protection Dialogue on the Lake Chad Basin, jointly organized by the Government of Nigeria and UNHCR, takes place in Abuja from 6-8 June. ICVA West Africa coordinated with other NGOs in the region to produce a joint NGO Statement on protection. The Statement, which welcomes the efforts currently underway in restoring security and meeting humanitarian needs in the Lake Chad Basin calls on government and humanitarian actors to strengthen regional coordination to improve cross border protection; ensure all returns of IDPs and refugees are voluntary; greater adherence by security forces to IHL and IHRL; better coordination between security and humanitarian action; and a stronger focus on addressing the underlying drivers of the crisis. NRC presented their latest briefing note: Reaching the most vulnerable? The Protection Crisis in the Lake Chad Region. A ministerial meeting on 8 June is expected to endorse a way forward with an Action Statement — what this space. For more information, contact liliane.bitong@icvanetwork.org.

### Humanitarian coordination

13. **IASC Principals meeting:** The next IASC Principals meeting takes place in Washington on 7-8 June, and hosted by InterAction. WHS follow up is to be the center of the discussion. As a standing invitee to the IASC, ICVA is highlighting the importance for the IASC to demonstrate a willingness to evolve based on the outcomes of the WHS. This transformation must highlight, amongst others, the wish for greater inclusivity and collective responsibility, accountability and strategic leadership. ICVA is also advocating for the necessity of a transparent and inclusive post-WHS process. Our vision is for the humanitarian system to move away from a centralized, one-system-fits-all approach, to an ecosystem of diverse actors, equally sharing risk, with contextualized responses whereby frontline responders receive adequate and timely resources. Agenda and background documents can be found on the IASC website.

14. **IASC Transformative Agenda – review and follow up:** The Transformative Agenda has been a major effort to reform the humanitarian system over the past five years. A recent review, undertaken by GPPI, shows that the effort has resulted in stronger leadership, more global coordination and faster deployment of senior humanitarian staff. The Transformative Agenda, however, has created many new processes that are (in the view of many humanitarian professionals) leaving less time for their real tasks: to save lives and alleviate suffering. Instead of launching a new top-down reform, humanitarians should reduce processes, focus on delivery, pay more attention to the opinions of aid recipients and give them cash wherever possible. Download the full report from GPPI.

### Humanitarian partnership

15. **Newly released paper: Localisation in Humanitarian Practice:** ICVA,
together with the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), has developed a paper on the importance of localisation in humanitarian practice. The paper highlights the necessity for the increased localisation of aid, articulates some of the benefits (as well as some of the perceived concerns) and unpacks the concept of localisation, acknowledging that ‘local’ is not a homogenous entity, but represents a diverse set of actors, working from varying and often distinct ideologies and at different levels. The paper puts forward that, while the localisation of aid must occur, humanitarian action cannot be placed solely on the shoulders of local actors. However, how ‘the international’ engages must change, and look to ‘reinforce, not replace’ local systems, using the comparative advantages of an increasing range of diverse humanitarian actors. The paper discusses key factors blocking concrete steps towards the localisation of aid, notably the resistance of the established humanitarian system to cede power, control and resources. Access the paper here.

16. Partnership… Strength and Sustainability, was the theme of the Fourth International Forum on Humanitarian Work, held in Kuwait City on 8-9 May. The two day meeting, co-organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, ICVA member International Islamic Relief Organization, Qatar Charity, Rahma International, IHH and the International Center for Research & Studies (Medad Centre), and was attended by almost 200 people, about half of whom were from outside Kuwait. The event looked at the reality of partnership with local, regional and international organizations; opportunities of and challenges facing partnerships, and the exchange of experiences for partnership in humanitarian work. Speaking at the event, the ICVA MENA Regional Representative provided an overview of factors contributing to successful partnerships, common challenges, and practical tips. More information about this series of events may be found here (Arabic-only website).

17. The Inter-Agency Emergency Preparedness and Response Network for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA Group) biannual meeting was held in Cairo on 2 June. ICVA’s MENA Hub played an active role both during the meeting and also in encouraging and supporting the participation of NGOs. ICVA members in attendance included: the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Oxfam, Sheikh Taher Al-Zawy Charitable Organization (STACO), Action Contre la Faim (ACF), Save the Children and ICRC. The meeting was organized by OCHA and hosted by IOM. Colleagues from UNHCR, UNFPA, UN Women, World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, UNISDR, and the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing were also in attendance. The agenda was organized around the themes of the WHS, with a particular focus on the way each theme related to the MENA region. ICVA’s MENA Hub representative facilitated the session on “Humanitarian Financing – Investing in Humanity, and Changing People’s Lives – From Delivering Aid to Ending Need” and presented an NGO perspective of the Grand Bargain and ICVA’s Less Paper More Aid initiative. If MENA regional representatives of NGOs are interested in becoming members of the MENA Group or participating in the next meeting, please contact yafa.aiweh@icvanetwork.org.

18. Less Paper More Aid: ICVA launched the results of the “Less Paper More Aid” initiative on donor conditions at the 17 May “NGO Forward” briefing to Member States. Thus far, the report has received much praise (and press coverage!), particularly its startling descriptions of the impacts of reporting, partner capacity assessments and audits on NGOs as well as its practical “Framework for Change”. In terms of next steps, ICVA has offered to support discussions related to the harmonization of UN partnership agreements as well as making reporting requirements more simplified and proportionate. This is a commitment ICVA made at the World Humanitarian Summit. ICVA appreciates the support received for the project from NRC, CARE, ICMC, NGO VOICE, Plan, INTERSOS, DRC, the CHS Alliance, IRC and Handicap International as well as the leadership by project coordinator Cecilia Roselli. Watch this space!

19. Now That We Have a Grand Bargain, What Comes Next? ICVA participated in the fourth and final round of Sherpa negotiations held 9-10
May in New York to achieve a “Grand Bargain” on humanitarian efficiencies in the realm of humanitarian financing. This was featured at a special 23 May event at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. Many have said this Grand Bargain is one of the most concrete elements featured at the World Humanitarian Summit. ICVA members can read our analysis of the good and bad aspects of the Bargain here. The Sherpas will meet for a short stock-taking discussions on the margins of the June ECOSOC meeting, and hold a longer discussion about implementation and monitoring in September. ICVA and others are advocating for a follow-up process that is transparent, inclusive and results-oriented. The final Grand Bargain document is open for endorsement by individual NGOs. If your organization is ready to endorse contact Melissa.Pitotti@icvanetwork.org.

20. The OCHA-NGO Platform on Country-Based Pooled Funds Reconvenes: In December 2015 ICVA handed over the co-chairmanship of this important platform to Oxfam. The next meeting will be held in Geneva on 22 June. It will cover the outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit, options to boost frontline response, partner capacity assessments, fraud sanction procedures and other exciting topics. For further information, please contact Vafa Taghavi (VTaghavi@oxfam.org.uk), Ben Garbutt (BGarbutti@oxfam.org.uk) or to Maria Isabel Castro (castrovelasco@un.org).

21. Launch of NEAR network: ICVA warmly welcomes the creation of the NEAR network, officially launched held the Sunday before the official WHS proceedings commenced. Over 150 people attended the launch, demonstrating the keen support for the newly launched network, with actors – both national and international, calling for the recognition, inclusion of and investment for local actors in humanitarian action. Sema Genel of Support to Life in Turkey – a NEAR network Leadership Council and ICVA member, stressed how the NEAR network "gives organisations like mine the power to negotiate and to challenge the system.” Access the NEAR network’s website www.near.ngo.

22. More than just Luck: Innovation in humanitarian Action: This recent report presents the synthesised findings from 15 case studies, undertaken by ALNAP in partnership with ELRHA's Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF). It is produced as part of a broader research partnership between ALNAP and ERLHA that has sought to define and understand what successful innovation looks like in the humanitarian sector. Read the report here.

23. The Drivers and Inhibitors of Change in the Humanitarian System: Why has it been so difficult to reform the humanitarian system? Simply put, good intentions alone are not enough. A new report from the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi) examines how the full implementation of three long-standing reform proposals – the shift to cash-based programming, accountability to affected populations and protection – would strengthen the positions of some stakeholders, while weakening others. For example, the reforms require fewer and larger humanitarian organizations, and they disadvantage organizations that are small or focused on only one sector of the response. To support the reform effort, GPPi recommends supporting the consolidation of the humanitarian actor landscape and the localization of aid; investing in stronger assessment and analysis capacities; prioritizing support to the cash reform; and engaging more strongly with host governments to ensure their support for the reform efforts. Download the full report at: www.gppi.net/pea.

24. UNHCR’s Global Report 2015 is now available online on the UNHCR public website, and is directly accessible here.

25. Share your thoughts! Unpacking and understanding the humanitarian sector: In the coming months – and continuing into 2017, ICVA is developing a range of webinars, briefing papers, short videos and presentations aimed at demystifying the complex humanitarian sector. This will be largely focused on four key works streams of humanitarian
partnerships, humanitarian coordination, humanitarian financing and forced displacement. As we develop the specific focus for this initiative, we want to hear from you! Please share ‘what does your organization would like to know more about?’ As part of this process, we will amplify existing initiatives aimed at demystifying the humanitarian sector. Contact james.schell@icvanetwork.org for further information and to share your gems of wisdom.

26. Staff updates

ICVA Asia: Our new representative in Asia will will commence in early August and will continue to be based in Bangkok. Waiting for his arrival, James Schell, Programme Coordinator, will travel to Asia the second part of June to meet ICVA members and partners, and to prepare the ground for our new Representative. Please contact james.schell@icvanetwork.org for further information and for anything Asia related.

ICVA MENA: Reza Kasraï, our Regional Representative in MENA, is leaving ICVA at the end of June to work for ECHO in Ankara. After almost three years in the position and instrumental in establishing the MENA Regional Hub in October 2013. We thank Reza for his contributions and achievements at this position, and wish him well in his new adventures.

We are recruiting a new MENA representative for ICVA - see the vacancy notice, - deadline for applications is 30 June 2016.

ICVA West Africa: Liliane Bitong, our Regional Representative in West Africa, will be leaving ICVA at the end of June to work as an independent Consultant. The ICVA West Africa Hub was established in early 2014 and Liliane has led its development since the beginning. We thank Liliane for the vital role she has played as part of the ICVA team - both in this role and in earlier work with ICVA through the NHRP projects (NGO and Humanitarian Reform Projects) and we wish her the very best for her future.

As part of ICVA’s global review of its Regional Hubs in Asia, MENA and Africa, Nan Buzard, ICVA Executive Director and Raphael Gorgeu, Director of Partnership and Policy are visiting Dakar from 8 – 11 June to meet with members and other stakeholders.

Programme Coordinator: We are pleased to inform you that James Schell in his new position within ICVA, will be reaching out to a larger number of NGOs and members in order to increase their access to information and understanding of the humanitarian sector.

Administration and Events Assistant: We are pleased to welcome Mylene Soto, who has taken over from Landy Razanajato as ICVA’s Administration and Events Assistant. Mylene joins ICVA with a wide range of programme and administration experience with NGOs, in the Philippines and in Geneva, and has quickly settled in to her new role with ICVA.

Forthcoming events

7 June: IASC Principals Meeting (Washington DC)
13-15 June: Annual Tripartite Consultations on Refugee Resettlement (Geneva)
13 June: IOM NGO Consultations on humanitarian action (Geneva)
14 June: Consultations with UNHCR on Emergency Preparedness (Geneva)
15-17 June: UNHCR NGO Annual Consultations (Geneva)
20 June: World Refugee Day
21-22 June: Aid & Development Summit (Bangkok)
21-23 June: UNHCR Standing Committee Meeting on Protection (Geneva)
27-29 June: ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment (New York)
19 August: World Humanitarian Day
13 September: 71st Regular Session of the UN General Assembly (New York)
19 September: High-Level Plenary Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees and Migrants (New York)
21-22 September: UNHCR Standing Committee 67th meeting (Geneva)
3-7 October: UNHCR Executive Committee 67th Meeting
25-26 October: IASC Working Group 91st Meeting (tbc)
6 December: IASC Principals Meeting (tbc)
8-9 December: HC’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges (Geneva)

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