2017 is meant to be the year of “action” following the frenzy of international humanitarian meetings held in 2016 to advance humanitarian action. However, one month into the new year, we are seeing deeply troubling signs of apathy (e.g. with regard to Myanmar, South Sudan, and Yemen) and regressive action targeting the most vulnerable people on the planet (e.g. the recent US order suspending refugee admissions). There are some glimmers of hope. Some states are stepping forward to fill gaps in refugee resettlement and funding for reproductive health. Many Grand Bargain signatories are working hard to implement their commitments related to localization, harmonizing and simplifying reporting requirements, and harmonizing UN approaches to NGOs. As the ground shifts beneath our feet, our humanitarian community must try to stay upright, remain vigilant and make our voices heard. Read ICVA’s statement on Responsibility Sharing for Refugees

**Forced Displacement**

**1. UNHCR Standing Committee on Operations:** ICVA is currently coordinating the preparation of the NGO statements, which will be delivered during UNHCR’s Standing Committee on Operations, on 14-16 March. NGOs will focus on the following 10 areas: Follow-up to the 2016 High Commissioner’s Dialogues on Protection; Executive Committee conclusions process; regional updates; emergency preparedness; strategic partnerships; oral update on the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF). For any information on the process and NGO statements, please contact Sophie.Helle@icvanetwork.org

**2. Global Refugee Compact:** More than four months after the adoption of the New York Declaration, the implementation of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) is gearing up, with increased activity and communication from UNHCR.

- UNHCR has i) strengthened the capacity of its CRRF Task Team with additional staff members in charge of developing strategic alliances, external liaison and communication; ii) updated relevant documents (e.g. Factsheet); and iii) issued new documents such as a FAQs, a quick guide, and a visualization of the New York Declaration. These documents are available on the UNHCR’s website.
- Pilot cases of the CRRF implementation have started with the help of Task Team missions to Uganda and Tanzania and the creation of government-led in-country CRRF Secretariats.
- UNHCR has taken a “Whole of Society” approach to the CRRF process calling for new ways of working and the inclusion of new actors. ICVA and its members will work to help unpack the operational meaning of the ‘whole-of-society’ approach at the global and local level. ICVA continues to advocate for meaningful consultation with NGOs to ensure a successful application of the CRRF and to develop a Refugee Compact that brings concrete improvements in the daily experience of refugees.
- Opportunities for NGO engagement will include working with UNHCR at the pilot level as well as regular UNHCR briefings to all stakeholders in Geneva and other locations (e.g., New York and...
Brussels in January); updates and opportunities for NGO joint statements at the March, June, and September Standing Committees as well as at the October Executive Committee; the June 2017 UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations dedicated to the CRRF; and the December 2017 High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges, which will focus on the Global Compact on Refugees.

- ICVA will continue to promote information dissemination and consultations on the CRRF and the Global Compact on Refugees. Articles and statements that relate to the CRRF can be found on ICVA’s website. For more information contact Jerome.Elle@icvanetwork.org

3. UNHCR NGO Annual Consultations: This year, the UNHCR-NGO Annual Consultations will focus on the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework. Preparations for the Consultations are underway. Further information about the Consultations and the registration will follow as soon as it is ready. As an early warning, please note that number of participants cannot exceed 500. The registration process will take place on a first come-first served basis. We therefore encourage you to register as early as possible to avoid any frustration closer to the event.

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

5. Rising to the Challenge: UNHCR newly published 2017-2021 Strategic Directions outlines the overall direction for UNHCR for the next five years. It sets out five core directions that UNHCR will pursue: protection; responding in emergencies and beyond; promoting inclusion and self-reliance; including through the engagement of development actors; the empowerment of the people UNHCR serves; and the pursuit of solutions. It also describes the institutional changes that UNHCR will undertake to pursue these directions.

6. OCHA Policy Dialogue on New Way of Working: ICVA participated in OCHA’s Regional Office for West and Central Africa workshop on 18-19 January in Dakar to discuss the implications of the “New way of working” to humanitarian and development operations in the region. First in a series of policy dialogues organised by OCHA and UNDP, and with the participation of donor, NGOs, UN agencies and academia, discussions focused on strengthening the humanitarian-development nexus, preparedness and localisation. ICVA moderated the panel “Reinforce, do not replace, national and local Systems”, looking at how the implications of a more locally focused approach cuts across a range of issues from financing, coordination, community engagement and the nature of partnerships between local and international organisations. A preliminary “collective outcomes” document is available on the UN OCHA website.

7. Late February Conference to Mobilize Political Support and Financial Resources for Lake Chad. Norway, together with Nigeria and Germany, is hosting an international donor conference in Oslo on 24 February, on the humanitarian crisis in Lake Chad region. The Conference will focus three priority areas: food security; humanitarian protection and access to aid; and education in situations of crisis and conflict. A Civil society meeting the day before the Conference brings together representatives of organisations working in the four affected countries. ICVA members will be attending. More information click here or contact Marco.Rotelli@icvanetwork.org

8. IASC Emergency Directors Group: The IASC EDG in-person meeting took place in Geneva, from 25-27 January 2017. As well as horizon scanning, donor's meetings, and 2017 planning, other agenda items of the
three-day meeting included:

- **Annual operational reviews** of the following countries: Iraq, Yemen, Syria, South Sudan, CAR, Burundi, DRC, Nigeria, Chad, Niger, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Somalia, Mali, Sudan, Haiti, oPT, Myanmar, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Ukraine. EDG identified opportunities for additional support to improve operational effectiveness.

- **Performance appraisals of 29 Humanitarian Coordinators**: NGOs provided their contributions through a confidential ICVA survey.

- **ToRs of Humanitarian Country Teams**. The final version of the ToRs will take into consideration all the comments raised during the session. The ToRs will remain short, simple and tailored for each mission, and are an accountability tool for the HC Team, not just the HC. The four mandatory responsibilities in the ToR are: commitment to the Centrality of Protection; Accountability to Affected People; Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) by humanitarian workers; and Sexual and Gender based Violence. The final version of the ToRs should be in circulation soon.

- **The OCHA change management process** presentation focused on the framework that the team of consultants are looking at in regards to work streams (specific deliverables, structure, management process, and relationship operating partners), and timing. The plan is that the reforms will be implemented by the end of 2017. Consultations with NGOs and NGO consortia are planned. For more information please contact Emmanuelle.Osmond@icvanetwork.org

9. **NRC joining the Emergency Director Groups (EDG) under ICVA umbrella**: NRC was selected to join the IASC under the ICVA umbrella for two years starting in January 2017. NRC will be represented by Mads Almass, NRC Director of Emergency Response. The selection was based on key criteria of motivation, experience and scale in emergency operations, and knowledge of the IASC. Our thanks to the outgoing NGO – IRC and their representative Bob Kitchen – for their commitment. The other EDG NGO member under ICVA’s umbrella is ACF represented by Chris Lockyear, ACF-US Director of Operations.

### Humanitarian Financing

10. **ICVA Launches Less Paper More Aid Phase II**: ICVA's Donor Conditions Task Force met on 18 January to validate a draft concept note for Less Paper More Aid Phase II. This project will directly support NGO engagement in implementing parts of the Grand Bargain related to simplified and harmonized reporting, UN harmonization of approaches towards NGOs, sharing of capacity assessments, and efforts underway to promote transparency (the IATI data standard). NGOs who want to connect to Less Paper More Aid can do so in various ways, including by: 1) joining ICVA’s Donor Conditions Task Force; 2) volunteering pilot a harmonized reporting approach in a few country contexts, and 3) funding Less Paper More Aid Phase II. This is an exciting opportunity, especially since many donors are stepping forward to try a new approach. For more information, contact the project coordinator Jeremy.Rempel@icvanetwork.org

11. **UN Agencies Give a First Peak at Efforts Underway to Harmonize Approaches Towards NGOs**: On 31 January ICVA co-hosted a workshop for NGOs to learn from UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP and OCHA representatives what they have been considering in order to implement the Grand Bargain commitment to “harmonize partnership agreements and share partner assessment information... in order to save time and avoid duplication in operations.” When it comes to due diligence and partner selection, a priority would be to use and adapt UNHCR’s existing Partner Portal. Other topics discussed were options related to partner agreement templates and budgets, reporting, UNICEF/UNHCR shared audits, and designing a process going forward that will allow for meaningful feedback from a wide range of existing and potential partners. Stay tuned for the report on this meeting, and a forthcoming survey to get your ideas.

12. **Humanitarian Financing Experts Roll Up Their Sleeves**: ICVA co-chaired with OCHA/CERF the 25-26 January retreat of the IASC Humanitarian Financing Task Team. This brought together experts from NGOs, UN agencies, ICRC, IFRC, and the World Bank to advance their
workplan related to localization (developing the Grand Bargain’s localization marker, engaging local actors, improving approaches to partner capacity assessments), donor conditions (mapping relevant activities and advancing a pilot to simplify and harmonize reporting, and taking a longer approach (multi-year funding and addressing the humanitarian-development nexus). Particularly welcomed were sessions interacting with the Grand Bargain Facilitation Group and the Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative. We thank all the NGOs who attended for their active participation, and we thank IOM for hosting the event on its premises. A full report on the meeting will be shared with ICVA members in the coming weeks.

13. Developing a Localization Marker Harder than Anticipated: One of the most talked about commitments of the Grand Bargain on humanitarian financing is the one to “develop, with the IASC, and apply a ‘localization’ marker to measure direct and indirect funding to local and national responders.” A process to do this has already been underway for months. ICVA appreciates the leadership of CAFOD, Development Initiatives and OCHA/FCS in co-chairing a growing “IASC+” working group that includes some donors. This group has met monthly by web-ex to learn from the experience of previous markers (like the gender marker) and discuss options. We also want to thank our members who took time to provide feedback on the draft definitions paper meant to clarify three points: 1) who should be considered a national and local responder? 2) how should we categorize funding that is “direct,” “indirect,” and “as direct as possible?” and 3) should we only track financial contributions, or also “in kind” contributions and support for capacity strengthening? Rather than converging towards a consensus position on these questions, the process has underscored the complexity of the task at hand. ICVA has suggested simulating how the marker would play out in some different country contexts, and an options paper be developed for Grand Bargain signatories.

14. UNHCR Issues Guidance Related to Partner Personnel Costs: UNHCR’s new Partner Personnel Guidance was released on 12 January 2017 and posted on ICVA’s website. You may recall the issue of UNHCR contributions to NGO staff salaries was the subject of hours of meetings, multiple papers, and even a 2014 ICVA member survey that showed a divergence of views on the best approach to update UNHCR’s policy. Here are three excerpts from the new policy:

- *The new applicable UNHCR maximum contribution is set at US$ 8,000 per person per month per Partner International Expatriate personnel for a hundred percent engagement under a UNHCR-funded Partnership Agreement, an increase of 33% from the previous level of US$ 6,000.*
- *An additional contribution of US$ 500 per person per month… will be provided for Partner Personnel high-security locations, where the R&R policy applies for UN staff.*
- *UNHCR…will use local rates for the UNHCR contribution towards National Personnel costs established through UN Country Teams (not the UN staff salary scale) or, alternatively, through a survey commissioned by the UNHCR Country Office in consultation with Partners.*

15. Humanitarian Learning:

Demystifying Humanitarian Financing: Private funding – a growing source for NGOs? The fifth topic of ICVA’s Humanitarian Financing Learning Stream focused on private funding. On Friday 27 January, ICVA and PHAP held an interesting webinar, unpacking some of the trends of private funding with Development Initiatives, for example: who gives more to NGOs - individuals or corporates, from where, to which humanitarian crises. We heard from the IKEA Foundation about what trusts and foundations look for when considering support to NGOs; and we heard some very useful tips from Save the Children on how NGOs can best access private funding. Listen to the webinar recording.

The next learning stream webinar is on 3 March on the Grand Bargain and its impact for NGOs. For more information and to register click here.
ICVA Updates

16. ICVA Annual Conference 28 March 2017: How can humanitarian civil society better understand and navigate a changing humanitarian world? Stay tuned for ICVA’s 2017 Annual Conference, to be held on Tuesday 28 March in Geneva, Switzerland. ICVA’s 2017 Annual Conference will discuss How humanitarian civil society can better understand and navigate a changing world, and how more effective engagement between NGOs and host Governments can promote a space for NGOs to operate in humanitarian contexts. Join us on March 28 as we unpack the issue, listen to what NGOs are experiencing, and discuss how more effective NGO engagement with host Governments can protect a space for NGOs to operate. Registration is now open. Visit ICVA’s website to register and learn more.

The Annual Conference will be followed by a Members meeting on 29 March. This half day meeting will be an opportunity for members to hear more about ICVA's work, preparations for the 2018 Genera Assembly, and brainstorm on the post 2018 strategic directions. When registering for the Annual Conference please indicate if you wish to attend this meeting too.

New and Noteworthy

17. World Bank Massive open online Course MOOC on Financing for Development: The World Bank Group is launching a free Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on "Financing for Development: Unlocking Investment Opportunities" on March 1, 2017. Register here. The four-week online course will discuss approaches currently being considered by global leaders to finance the sustainable development agenda. Key concepts, terminology, sources of development finance, and the need for increased use of Official Development Assistance (ODA) and innovative financing solutions will be covered.

18. STAIT Webinar 8 February: Joint Needs Assessments: Doing it right? The role of senior humanitarian leaders in the field. Based on their experience, John Ging (Director of operations OCHA), and Peter de Clercq (deputy SRSG and HC, Somalia) will outline practical steps HCs and HCTs need to take bring together data and information from multiple actors. Click here for more information and to register.

19. ACAPS CrisisAlert App launched: Stay informed on humanitarian situations with ACAP's new app CrisisAlert. With realtime updates on developments in more than 40 key crisis countries, you can choose which countries to follow and which alerts to receive. More information and to download the app go to ACAPS website.

20. Webinar: An introduction to the IATI Standard within the humanitarian context: If you wish to understand what IATI is, how it can benefit the humanitarian community and what it means to be an IATI publisher then the webinar on 23 February is for you. Hosted by Development Initiatives (DI) and the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) Secretariat this two-part webinar supports Grand Bargain signatory organisations to use the IATI Standard to share information on their humanitarian funding and activities. Register here.

21. Latest FMR issue: Resettlement: Forced Migration Review 54, with a major focus on "Resettlement", will be online by 9 February. To shed light on the debates of how, and how well resettlement is managed, the 33 articles look at some of the modalities and challenges of resettlement. To order print copies in English, French, Arabic or Spanish please email FRM at fmr@qeh.ox.ac.uk

Forthcoming Events

ICVA meetings and events

March 3: Learning Stream Webinar - Grand Bargain and its impact for NGOs.
March 28: ICVA Annual Conference
March 29: ICVA Members Meeting
March 30: NGO Symposium

Other meetings and events

February 8: STAIT Webinar: Joint Needs Assessments: Doing it right?
February 23: Webinar: An introduction to the IATI Standard
March 14-16: UNHCR Standing Committee on Operations
June 14-16: UNHCR NGO Annual Consultations
June 20: World Refugee Day
June 28-30: UNHCR Standing Committee Meeting
September 20-21: UNHCR Standing Committee Meeting

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