2015-2018 STRATEGY

VISION - FOCUS - ACTION
A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Established in 1962 by a small coalition of refugee and migration focused non-governmental organizations (NGOs), ICVA has grown into a diverse network of NGOs operating at global, regional, national and local levels. ICVA advocates for principled humanitarian action, enhances recognition by governments and international organizations of the vital role of NGOs and encourages high quality partnerships among humanitarian stakeholders. ICVA promotes a rights- and needs-based approach. ICVA maintains its historical focus on forced displacement while at the same time addressing fundamental and emerging elements of concern to NGOs related to all crisis-affected populations.

THE CURRENT HUMANITARIAN LANDSCAPE

The current humanitarian landscape reflects positive changes: substantial local and national capacity for preparedness and response, more diverse sources of funding, broader use of technology, growing demands to find solutions to protracted displacement, and increased recognition of the importance of national actors, flexible funding, accountability to crisis-affected populations and respectful partnerships.

However, humanitarian action also faces formidable challenges: the largest number of people forcibly displaced and seeking protection from violence since World War II; disregard of obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law; needs outstripping resources; a lack of platforms for the great complexity of actors to exchange on different approaches to humanitarian action; and a growing risk aversion and burdensome requirements hindering NGO action.

Going forward there will be new demands for increasing synergies among a range of actors with questions about ownership and shared values. The multilateral system will remain, but with decreasing scope and influence unless it is more inclusive. NGOs will be judged on their relevance, quality and speed compared to other actors, and financing will continue to be a dominant issue in humanitarian action.
ICVA’S ADDED VALUE

All these changes and challenges require responses that not only adapt to growing complexity, but also embrace it. In this regard, the ICVA network’s diversity is one of its notable strengths: NGOs large and small, secular and faith-based, local and international joined through a common commitment to principled humanitarian action. ICVA’s successes rely on this diversity.

Another of ICVA’s strengths is its presence: over 80 members, affiliates and observers active in over 190 countries, with hundreds of partners. ICVA also leverages its Geneva-based Secretariat’s proximity to key humanitarian organizations and its regional hubs’ proximity to members and stakeholders close to country operations. The hubs link operational realities to global policy centres and bring the Secretariat capacity closer to ICVA members. The hubs create opportunities for regional consultation and collective action on issues of common interest. They also support the sharing of best practice across regions; and result in more effective advocacy for greater inclusion of national NGO voices and leadership in humanitarian practice and policy.

Finally, ICVA maintains its position in amplifying the NGO voice in various humanitarian fora. In particular, it serves as a liaison between UNHCR and the broader NGO community. It also participates in various entities of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

The 2015 – 2018 Strategy seeks to harness ICVA’s diversity, presence and position in advancing NGO priorities in the areas of forced displacement and humanitarian partnership, coordination and financing.

VISION

A world in which crisis-affected populations are effectively protected, assisted and enabled to rebuild their lives and livelihoods with dignity.

MISSION

A global network of non-governmental organizations whose mission is to make humanitarian action more principled and effective by working collectively and independently to influence policy and practice.
**GUIDING VALUES**

- ICVA’s work is based on the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.
- ICVA works towards a system that enables people affected by humanitarian crises to receive equitable access to quality assistance and protection.
- ICVA promotes innovative approaches to humanitarian policy development and implementation, and offers evidence-based, solutions-oriented advocacy.
- ICVA promotes equitable engagement of NGOs and civil society organizations in an inclusive humanitarian system.
- ICVA advocates for governments, the UN and other relevant authorities to fulfil their responsibilities and be accountable to crisis-affected people.

**FOCUS AREAS**

The 2015 – 2018 strategy focuses on four areas: forced displacement, humanitarian partnerships, humanitarian coordination and humanitarian financing. This continues the work on these issues that ICVA has accomplished under the previous strategy and reflects the continued value and relevance of these areas.

Forced displacement was ICVA’s first focus area in 1962 and remains highly relevant today as the ICVA network responds to the overwhelming number of displaced persons. ICVA prioritises refugee protection as well as promoting responses to internally displaced persons, stateless persons and vulnerable migrants.

Humanitarian partnerships, coordination and financing are among the fundamental components of effective and principled action.

Partnership encompasses the quality and basis of relationships among NGOs, the public and private sectors and multilateral organizations. It also involves the sharing and dissemination of knowledge, and engagement with humanitarian principles, and quality and accountability.

Coordination mechanisms are core elements in emergency and protracted operations. Supporting NGOs in understanding, engaging with, and influencing these mechanisms is critically important for ensuring that NGOs are among the decision-makers regarding operational strategies and priorities.

Humanitarian financing concerns reflect the need for adequate and de-politicised funds that are maximally effective for people affected by crisis. While NGOs are essential actors in effective humanitarian work, international NGOs currently only receive a small proportion of multilateral funding, and national NGOs even less.
1. FORCED DISPLACEMENT:
Objective: NGOs strengthen protection, assistance and durable solutions for refugees, IDPs, stateless persons and vulnerable migrants. ICVA will:

- **Support collective NGO advocacy** by facilitating statements, positions and action on critical issues pertaining to forced displacement
- **Improve institutional engagement between NGOs and organizations such as UNHCR** by facilitating partnership initiatives and consultations to better serve displaced persons
- **Influence practice on the ground** by promoting improved understanding of and synergy between global policies and operational realities

2. HUMANITARIAN PARTNERSHIPS:
Objective: NGOs provide leadership in principled humanitarian policy and practice, working in effective partnership with other key humanitarian actors. ICVA will:

- **Advocate for policies that ensure better partnership approaches for NGOs** by engaging in policy development to strengthen partnership approaches in humanitarian work
- **Support strong NGO partnerships based on the Principles of Partnership** by providing platforms for improving NGO partnerships, with particular attention to national NGO capacity support amongst NGOs, UN agencies and other stakeholders
- **Promote learning and dialogue on humanitarian principles** and quality and accountability to foster a humanitarian system with affected populations at the core

3. HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION:
Objective: NGOs actively influence and engage in humanitarian coordination mechanisms to ensure they are inclusive, contextualised and provide effective assistance and protection of those affected by crisis. ICVA will:

- **Influence global humanitarian policy on coordination** and leadership particularly through the IASC
- **Influence inter-agency coordination mechanisms** at country and regional levels by monitoring coordination activities, and providing constructive analysis and advocacy on NGO participation, particularly by national NGOs
- **Enhance NGO coordination** by supporting regional and country-based NGO coordination bodies through peer-support mechanisms, and analysing and disseminating best practice and relevant resources

4. HUMANITARIAN FINANCING:
Objective: Humanitarian financing meets the needs of populations affected by crises, and NGOs – particularly national NGOs – understand, influence, and have better access to humanitarian financing. ICVA will:

- **Influence policy to strengthen financing mechanisms** by promoting NGO engagement on IASC finance platforms and other funding mechanisms
- **Improve NGO access to funding** through research, analysis and tracking of NGO experiences (particularly national NGOs) in accessing humanitarian funding and by promoting best practice
- **Improve NGO understanding of humanitarian financing mechanisms** by providing guidance and learning opportunities for NGOs to better resource humanitarian action
HOW ICVA WILL ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTIVES:

By utilizing the strength and diversity of its worldwide network and the reach of its regional hubs, ICVA will ensure that a strong and multifaceted NGO voice is represented in the key debates and decision-making forums that affect humanitarian action. Specifically, ICVA will:

1. Support a diverse membership of NGOs working on the frontlines of crises, including effective coordination, and promoting equitable partnership among ICVA members.

2. Advocate for greater inclusion of national NGO voices and leadership in humanitarian practice, policy and decision-making, and their improved access to resources.

3. Exchange and analyze information; strengthen the evidence base for policy change and advocacy; influence and develop policy, and carry out advocacy that reflects and represents the interests of ICVA members.

4. Provide forums for consultation, cooperation and collective action among ICVA members on issues of common interest and increase opportunities to amplify NGO influence and leadership at national, regional and global levels.

5. Support and strengthen the role of ICVA members in humanitarian action to enable them to take informed decisions and improve the accountability and quality of their work.

6. Engage in dialogue and interact with organizations and actors that have a role in, and/or whose work impacts, humanitarian action.

7. Raise humanitarian issues in proactive and effective ways and ensure the views of NGOs are heard in global forums.

8. Foster a system that holds at its core the humanitarian principles and the rights of affected populations.

9. Maintain the support and trust of ICVA’s membership and donors while continuing to ensure diversity, relevance and sustainability of membership and other funders.

10. Work through the existing structure of a Geneva-based secretariat and regional hubs and assess ICVA’s capacity, member support and funding sustainability to expand regional support as requested.

The ICVA Board will ensure that the Secretariat aligns its financial and operational capacity and annual work plans with this four-year strategy, including key indicators, targets, routine monitoring and annual reporting, to maintain accountability to members and donors.
ICVA MEMBERS (March 2015)

I. MEMBERS

ACT Alliance
Action Contre la Faim (ACF)
ActionAid International
Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau (ANCB)
Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA)
Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA)
African Development Solutions (Adeso)
African Initiatives for Relief and Development (AIRD)
Afrique Secours et Assistance (ASA)
Agence d’Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement (ACTED)
All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI)
AMEL Association (Lebanese Association for Popular Action)
Anatolian Development Foundation (ADF)
Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network (APRRN)
Association for Protection of Refugee Women and Children (HAMI)
Asylum Access (AA)
Australian Council for International Development (ACFID)
BADIL – Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights
Bridge Asia Japan (BAJ)
Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR)
CARE International
Caritas Internationalis (CI)
Catholic Agency For Overseas Development (CAFOD)
Christian Aid
Church World Service (CWS)
Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST)
Community and Family Services International (CFSII)
Community World Service Asia
Concern Worldwide
Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CCRDA)
Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
Dutch Council for Refugees (DRC) – VluchtelingenWerk Nederland
Foundation for Rural Development (FRD)
Frontiers Ruwad Association
General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS)
Greek Council for Refugees (GCR)
Handicap International (HI)
Human Appeal International (HAI)
Human Rights First (HRF)
InterAction (American Council for Voluntary International Action)
Interchurch Organisation for Development and Co-operation (ICCO)
International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)
International Detention Coalition (IDC)
International Islamic Relief Organisation – Saudi Arabia (IIROSA)
International Medical Corps (IMC)
International Refugee Rights Initiative (IRRI)
International Rescue Committee (IRC)
INTERSOS
Islamic Relief Agency (ISRA)
Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)
Korea NGO Council for Overseas Development Cooperation (KCOC)
Lutheran World Federation (LWF)
Malaysian Medical Relief Society (MERCY Malaysia)
Mauritius Council of Social Service (MACOSS)
Médecins du Monde (MDM)
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
Office Africain pour le Développement et la Coopération (OFADEC)
Organization for Refuge, Asylum & Migration (ORAM)
Oxfam GB
Pastoralist Community Initiative and Development Assistance (PACIDA)
Plan International
Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK)
Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA)
Refugee Council USA (RCUSA)
Refugee Education Trust (RET)
Refugees International (RI)
Relief to Development Society (REDESO)
Save the Children International
Society of Human Rights and Prisoners’ Aid (SHARP)
Somalia NGO Consortium
Stichting Vluchteling (SV)
Support To Life
Télécoms Sans Frontières International (TSFI)
The Border Consortium (TBC)
Welthungerhilfe
Women’s Refugee Commission (WRC)
World Vision International (WVI)
ZOA

II. OBSERVERS

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
Médecins Sans Frontières International (MSF)

III. AFFILIATES

Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP)
Center for Forced Migration Studies (CFMS)
Development Assistance Research Associates (DARA)
Institute for the Study of International Migration (ISIM)
Refugee Studies Centre (RSC)
International Council of Voluntary Agencies

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