ICVA 2030

A Collaborative Future for Principled and Effective Humanitarian Action

Strategy Development Document

ICVA

A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Contents

Introduction

The purpose of this document to is to create working reference for the ICVA 2030 strategy concisely documenting the key data informing decisions made as the strategy is developed. The aim is to have a single reference document for people to easily find key information; it is not the draft strategy itself. That document will only be developed after further consultation with members and other stakeholders

ICVA currently has a strategy agreed that will run until end of 2021 and so the intention with the 2030 process is to take our time and ensure deep member participation towards our collective future, seeking agreement on the final proposal at the ICVA General Assembly on 27th April 2021.

In order to systematically build our view of the future we will be asking the following questions:

WHO IS ICVA TODAY AND WHAT VALUE DOES IT ADD? → **HOW IS THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT EVOLVING** → **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ICVA'S 2030 VISION MISSION & FOCUS** → **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR HOW ICVA IS COMPOSED AND HOW IT WORKS?**

Through this process (see annex 1 for details) we are hoping that the journey and not just the final output will bring the membership closer together through enabling:

- **MEMBERS' ENGAGEMENT:** ICVA members engage at several levels in defining ICVA's long term perspective (not only the NGO's focal point for ICVA Secretariat).

- **LEARNING:** Collective learning around ICVA's diversity through a greater understanding is created by having to listen and try and understand the position of others.

- **CONNECTIVENESS:** Improved internal and external connectiveness in a complex environment sets ICVA's ambitions and way forward including the diversity of perspective and opinion.

- **INNOVATIVE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:** Engaging with other stakeholders in a way which is perceived as innovative and constructive.

ICVA members' engagement

Collective learning

ICVA 2030 - A Long-Term Strategic Vision for ICVA Network

ICVA's ambitions and way forward

Engagement with other stakeholders
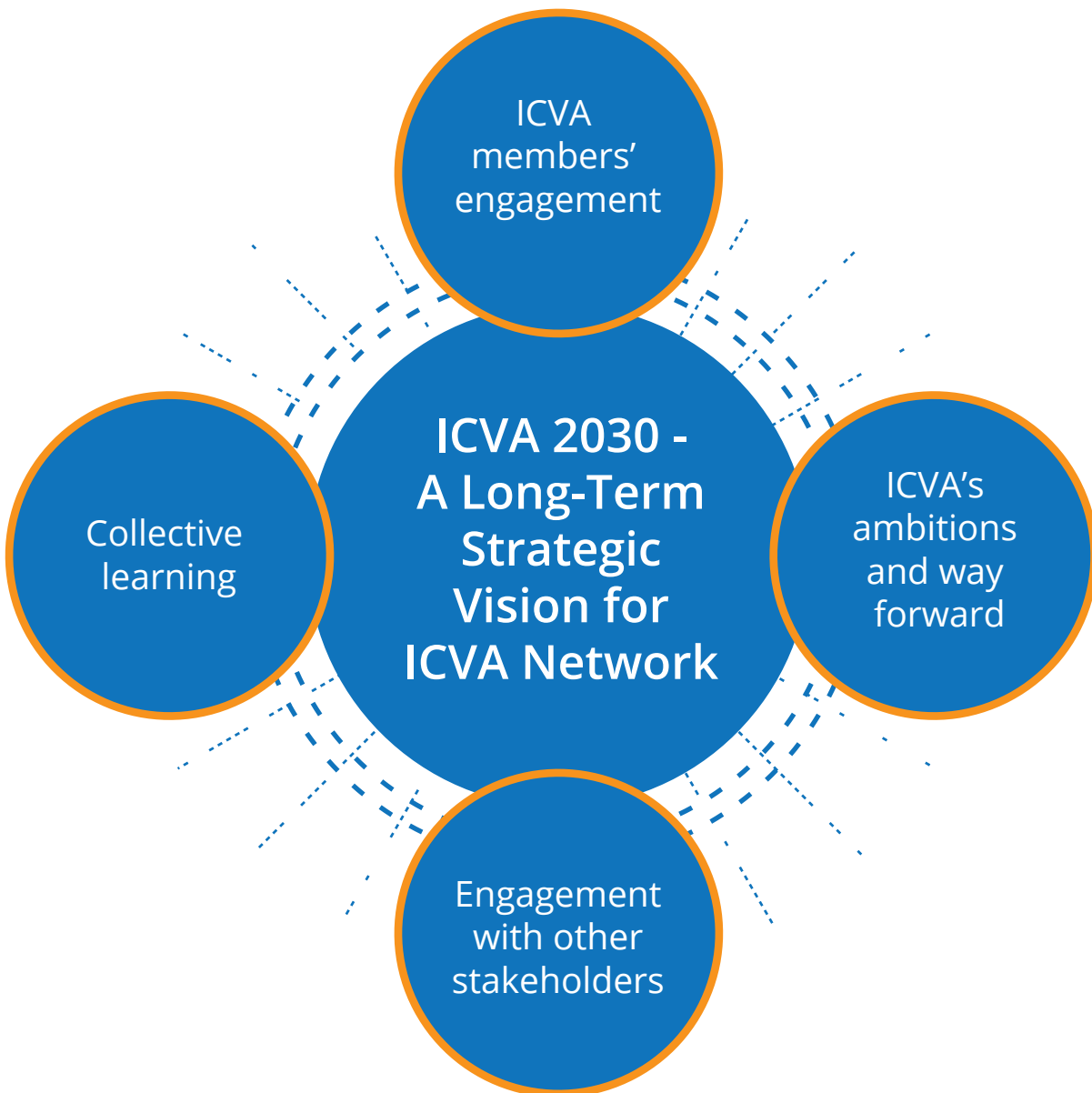
Looking back and around us

2

2.1 What does ICVA look like today?

Established in 1962 by a small coalition of refugee and migration focused non-governmental organisations (NGOs), ICVA has grown into a diverse network of over 100 NGO members operating in 160 countries at global, regional, and national levels. ICVA has an outreach of more than 8'000 humanitarian organisations and the annual operational footprint of its members exceeds 20 billion USD.[1]

VISION

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

MISSION

To make humanitarian action more principled and effective by working collectively and independently to influence policy and practice
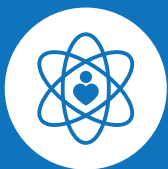
VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

- Our work is based on the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence as well as the Principles of Partnership.

- We work towards a system that enables people affected by humanitarian crises to receive equitable access to quality assistance and protection.

- We promote innovative approaches to humanitarian policy development and implementation, and offer evidence-based, solutions-oriented advocacy.

- We promote equitable engagement of NGOs to make the humanitarian system more inclusive.

[1] See the 2015-2018 impact study for most recent achievements of ICVA https://www.icvanetwork.org/resources/icva-impact-study-2015-2018

The ICVA website provides a concise snapshot of ICVA as follows:

1. WHY DO WE NEED ICVA?

NGOs are critical to the delivery of effective, principled humanitarian assistance. They witness the needs. They implement the majority of projects. They advocate for needed changes. Connecting their voices to policies and operations and investing in their capacities will ultimately improve support for people affected by crises.

2. WHO IS ICVA?

ICVA is a global network of non-governmental organisations whose mission is to make humanitarian action more principles and effective by working collectively and independently to influence policy and practice.

ICVA has over 100 members operating in 160 countries. 75% of NGOs engaged in ICVA activities are southern NGOs, national NGOs, medium-sized NGOs and NGO Fora. The Secretariat is present in Geneva, Africa, Asia and the Middle East and North Africa

3. WHAT ARE ICVA'S FOCUS AREAS?

- Forced Migration
- Humanitarian Financing
- Humanitarian Coordination
- Navigating Change
  (Cross-Cutting Issues: Localisation, Nexus, Shrinking Space, Accountability)

4. HOW DOES ICVA WORK?

- Analyse & Explain
- Influence & Advocate
- Convene
- Support
- Connect

The following diagram taken form the 2019 ICVA impact evaluation, describes the value ICVA adds to its various stake holders:
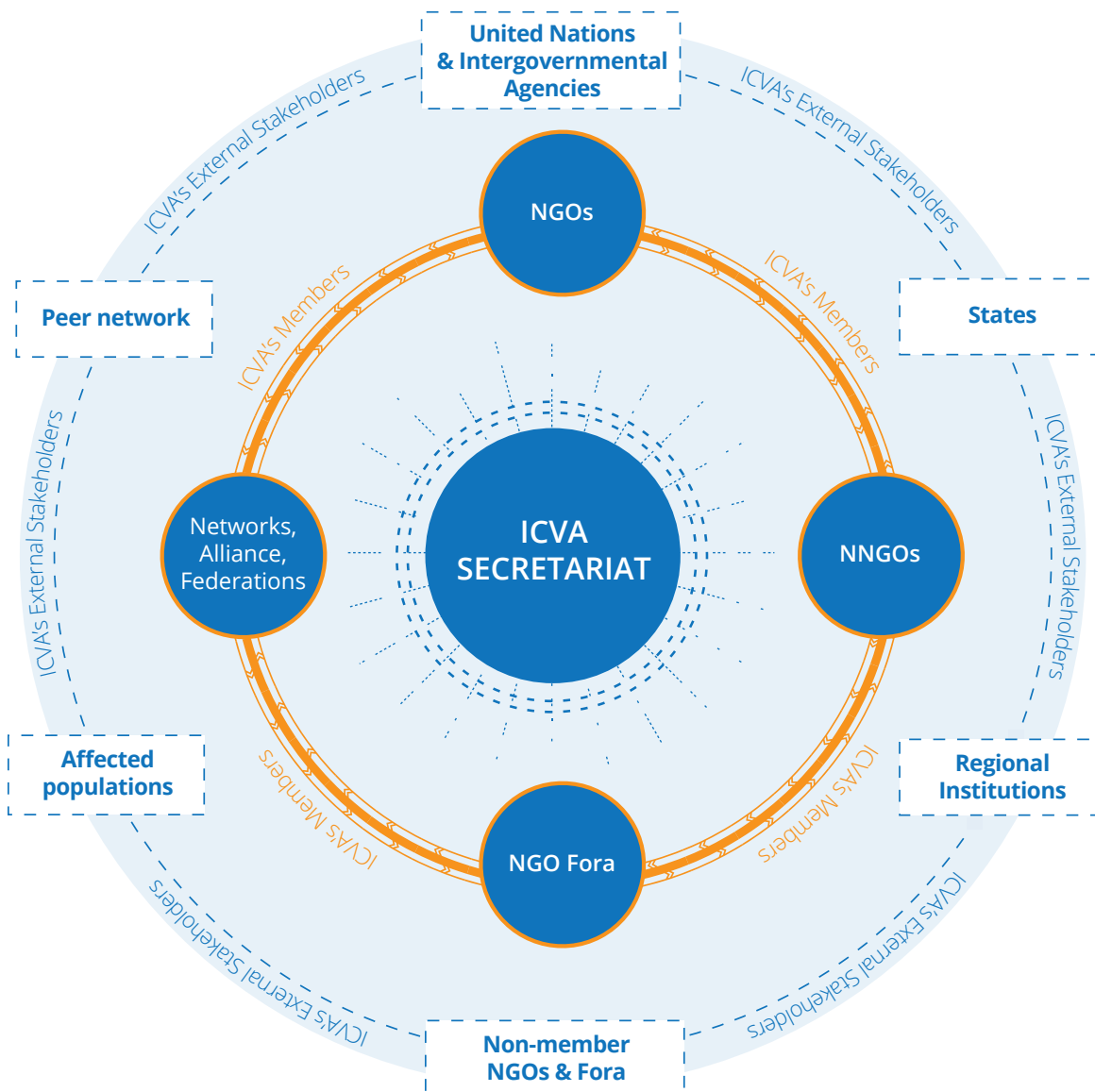
ICVA's Added Value in Humanitarian Action

A. Trusted broker and convener, enabling two-way interaction between UN/intergovernmental agency policy makers and a broad range of NGOs/Networks, connecting policy to practice and vice versa

B. A truly global network, informing and engaging diverse, and often excluded NGOs in key international policy issues at a high-level

C. Provides information, analysis and expert resources for those needing to translate and exchange views on complex policies, standards, initiatives or theoretical ideas into practical guidance

D. Enables access / opens doors for NGOs and creates space for influence, involvement and exchange at country, regional and global level

E. Is a trusted actor among NGOS/Fora creating opportunities for multiple actors to speak with a balanced collective voice on key issues

F. Creates connections to build/strengthen operational capabilities

G. Provides knowhow and practical support for the creation and running of NGO fora

H. Creates links within and between organisations and networks, adapting its approach as needed

I. Provides leadership to support the design, roll out and monitoring of international humanitarian policies and initiatives

Current Focus Areas

ICVA's focus areas are vehicles for members to work together on issues of common concern. While evolving in the way of working and the priorities, Forced Migration and Humanitarian Coordination are historical focus areas of ICVA. Humanitarian Financing is a more recent focus area. The current work per focus area is described below:

FORCED MIGRATION

Forced migration was ICVA's first focus area in 1962 and remains just as critical today. ICVA facilitates NGO statements for UNHCR's governing board meetings and co-organises NGO consultations with UNHCR and IOM.

The aim of the Forced Migration focus area - supported by a theory of change - is to improve protection, assistance and durable solutions for refugees, IDPs, stateless persons and migrants in vulnerable situations. ICVA has invested in improved partnership between UNHCR and NGOs and more recently between IOM and NGOs. Since the adoption of the New York Declaration, ICVA has been a key actor in ensuring NGO understanding of, participation in, and contribution to the process of developing a Global Compact on Refugees, the roll-out of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) and the Global Refugee Forum. Likewise, ICVA has been relevant actor in NGO understanding of, participation in, and contribution to the process of developing a Global Compact for Migration and its implementation and monitoring.

While maintaining its dedication to refugees, IDPs and stateless persons, ICVA strives for more consistency, coherence and complementarity with processes related to vulnerable migrants.

HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION

NGOs operate in a complex space involving many actors. A variety of coordination mechanisms have been created to help different actors operate more efficiently and effectively in relation to one another. However, it can be challenging to understand and engage these mechanisms.

The aim of the Humanitarian Coordination focus area - supported by a theory of change - is to strengthen the collective ability of NGOs to actively engaged in and influence coordination mechanisms to ensure they are inclusive, contextualised and provide effective assistance and protection to those affected by crises. ICVA achieves this by supporting NGO engagement in existing coordination mechanisms at the global, regional and country levels. At the time of writing, ICVA and its members are engaged in the IASC Principals group, the Emergency Directors Group, the Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG), the Working Groups (developing policies) and regional IASC groups. ICVA believes that effective collective action in complex humanitarian contexts is critical.

ICVA intensifies its investments in supporting NGO Fora operating in these contexts to contribute to improving humanitarian operations and will continue exploring alternative models of coordination to strengthen effective and principled delivery of humanitarian assistance. While maintaining its role in relation to existing coordination mechanisms, ICVA intensifies its investments in country level NGO Fora and increase exploration of alternative models.

HUMANITARIAN FINANCING

Two per cent of the global population, that's more than 160 million people, need humanitarian assistance to survive. Climatic shocks, the unexpected spread of infectious disease, and the impact of protracted and often intensifying conflicts have combined to drive needs to unprecedented levels. With the growing needs and the cost of meeting those needs also growing, the humanitarian sector faces a global funding shortfall.

The aim of the Humanitarian Financing focus area - supported by a theory of change - is to ensure humanitarian financing meets the needs of populations affected by crises while ensuring adequate NGO access to principled, quality funding. ICVA achieves this by supporting NGO understanding of, engagement with, and influence related to processes and developments in the financing arena.

Although NGOs are essential actors in delivering aid, they struggle to obtain direct, adequate, accessible, sustainable, and flexible funding. Moreover, conditions attached to funds are increasingly cumbersome. Such challenges are particularly acute for local and national NGOs. Although funding decisions should be driven by the humanitarian imperative they appear to be at increasing risk of politicisation. ICVA promotes NGO collaboration to deepen and widen the resource base for humanitarian action (e.g. through new kinds of partnerships and innovation).

NAVIGATING CHANGE, CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The environments in which NGOs operate are fundamentally changing. In many places, respect for humanitarian principles is eroding, and so too is NGOs' space to operate. The pressure for humanitarians to align with development and peace priorities is mounting. As NGOs compete for scarce resources, schisms in the community have emerged, particularly related to localisation.

These trends require safe spaces for diverse NGOs to come together to discuss their differences, learn from one another, and consider solutions and help one another. The aim of the Navigating Change focus area - supported by a theory of change - is to ensure a dynamic support to NGOs in developing strategic thinking and in navigating change while promoting humanitarian principles and the Principles of Partnership.

ICVA achieves this by: 1) providing various platforms for NGOs for peer exchanges and 2) strategically engaging multilateral partners (e.g. UN agencies and the World Bank), member states, donors, regional bodies, the private sector, and other networks outside the humanitarian sector who can support the network. Key platforms for members to engage will be ICVA's Policy Working Group and Regional Working Groups.

The current 2019-2021 strategy presents theories of change for the four focus areas. The theory of change for coordination is given below, other can be seen at (https://www.icvanetwork.org)

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

To what degree will the current focus areas be relevant for ICVA to stay engaged with over the next decade?

	Not relevant	Relevant for next 1-2 years	Relevant for at least 3-5 years	Relevant for 10 years
Forced migration				
Humanitarian coordination				
Humanitarian financing				
Navigating change				

What other focus areas (if any) should ICVA be considering either as standalone topic or to be integrated into ICVA work?

The current 2019-2021 strategy presents theories of change for the four focus areas. The theory of change for coordination is given below, other can be seen at (https://www.icvanetwork.org).
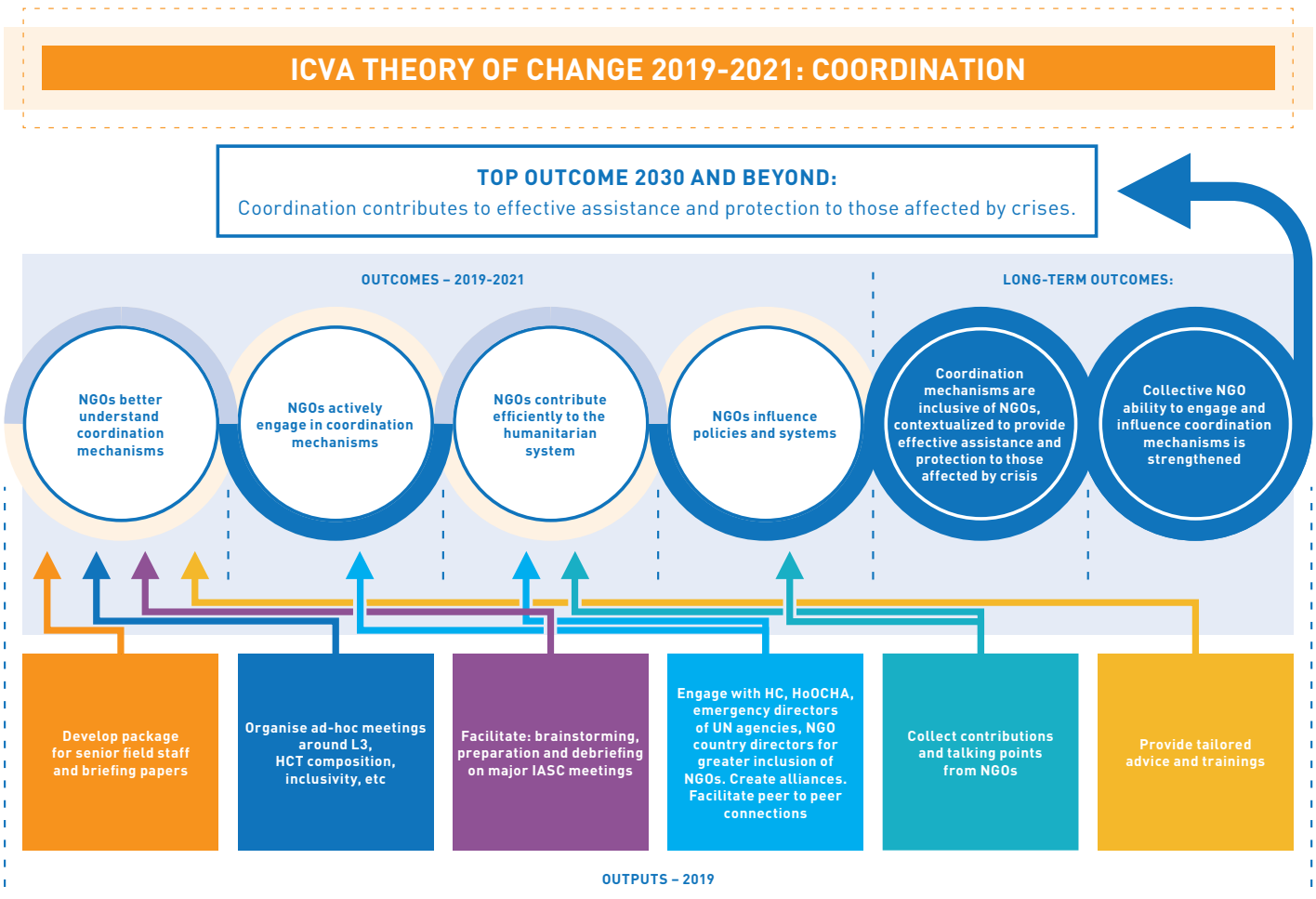
ICVA THEORY OF CHANGE 2019-2021: COORDINATION

TOP OUTCOME 2030 AND BEYOND:
Coordination contributes to effective assistance and protection to those affected by crises.

OUTCOMES – 2019-2021

- NGOs better understand coordination mechanisms
- NGOs actively engage in coordination mechanisms
- NGOs contribute efficiently to the humanitarian system
- NGOs influence policies and systems

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES:

- Coordination mechanisms are inclusive of NGOs, contextualized to provide effective assistance and protection to those affected by crisis
- Collective NGO ability to engage and influence coordination mechanisms is strengthened

OUTPUTS – 2019

- Develop package for senior field staff and briefing papers
- Organise ad-hoc meetings around L3, HCT composition, inclusivity, etc
- Facilitate: brainstorming, preparation and debriefing on major IASC meetings
- Engage with HC, HoOCHA, emergency directors of UN agencies, NGO country directors for greater inclusion of NGOs. Create alliances. Facilitate peer to peer connections
- Collect contributions and talking points from NGOs
- Provide tailored advice and trainings

The 2019 Impact Study and the regular membership surveys are supportive of its perceived relevance by ICVA members. The Impact Study 2015-2018 and the ICVA monitoring system indicate valued outcomes for these three focus areas. **While there is still openness, the initial discussion within the ICVA secretariat and the ICVA Board support the continuation of these focus areas on basis of need expressed by members, legitimacy and existing results.**

Having presented an overview of where ICVA is today, there are many potential questions about the choices ICVA must make for the future. Some points of reflection were captured in the 2015-2018 impact study as follows:

- The long-term positioning of ICVA considering the increasing number of networks emerging

- The degree to which ICVA should become more 'positional' in its own right

- The evolution of ICVA at the regional and field level

- The importance of direct support to NGO Fora and operations

- Balancing the diversification of actions with traditional areas of work, in line with capacity

These serve as a start for the discussion; to frame the full range of questions it is important to start externally and look at how the humanitarian environment is shifting. This is expanded upon in the following section.

2.2 What are the external trends shaping the present and foreseeable future of humanitarian action?

This overview was generated through discussion within the ICVA secretariat and the ICVA board. There is more that could be added so the intention is not to be comprehensive, but to provide a stimulus for adding other external factors relevant for the future of humanitarian action and the role of ICVA.

NATURE OF CRISES
- Environmental issues as a direct driver of natural disasters and an indirect driver of manmade crises
- A continued massive human cost to war
- The impact of shrinking space on the ability to respond to and speak out about crises
- Increasing trend of urban crises
- Chronic wars have and will remain a part of the political landscape
- Wares involving state, international and non-state actors have become and will remain the norm
- The reduced centrality of humanitarian principles to guide response impacts directly on the ability to access populations in need

INCREASINGLY NETWORKED
- Actors are diversifying (local, global, private, government, CSOs, big, small etc)
- Growing numbers of self-organised mass movements
- Trend towards multi-actor approaches
- Nobody can do it all, organisations need to be clear on where they can add value and what they need from others
- Competition between organisations has positive aspects that push quality and negative as each looks to ensure their own sustainability

SHRINKING HUMANITARIAN SPACE / PRINCIPLES
- Increasingly blurred lines between humanitarian actions, peace, development and other political or social goals
- Donors are looking for joined up approaches to initiatives they support at times undermining the space for principled humanitarian action
- Absence of governmental leadership championing the importance of principled action
- Rising non-state actors that do not know or accept humanitarian principles

EVOLVING TRENDS AFFECTING HUMANITARIAN ACTION

IMPACT OF MACRO DISRUPTORS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
- Climate issues a driver in the rise of social movements around a single cause
- Difficulty defining how the humanitarian system should adapt to best address root causes and consequences
- Disconnect between those who are the main cause of environmental change and those who suffer the consequences
- Environmental issues as a direct driver of natural disasters and an indirect driver of man-made crises

SHIFTING POWER
- Decline in multilateralism and the rise of nationalism (trend or pendulum?)
- Increasing demands for accountability for action
- Challenges to the traditional establishment and a polarization of perspectives
- Trend towards valuing local connectedness. Both positive and divisive

INEQUALITY
- Paradox of economic and technological progress leading to growing inequality rather than closing the gap

TECHNOLOGY
- Technology can result in increasing as well as reducing communication challenges
- Technology enables those affected by crisis to be informed and communicate independently – this is power

MACRO DISRUPTORS AFFECTING ALL SECTORS (CIVIL SOCIETY, GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE, INDIVIDUAL)

ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE → Addressing environmental change is an existential challenge for humanity

TECHNOLOGY → Technological advance can rapidly make accepted practice / models obsolete

INEQUALITY → Economic and social progress paradoxically increasing inequality

SHIFTING POWER → Shifting global and local power is fundamentally changing how things get done

While most disruptors have an incremental or gradual effect, others have such a dramatic impact that the systems in which we operate immediately cease to function. These disruptors can be local, regional and global. At the local and regional level the outbreak of war and violence is a powerful example of system collapse, where people lives are radically impacted and humanitarian actors are required to rapidly adapt. At the global level, the 2020 COVID 19 epidemic reminded us that while we are all vulnerable, we cannot stop assisting those most affected during such times. To a lesser degree also the 2008 financial crisis had an immediate global impact and if environmental issues are not addressed, a significant catastrophic event resulting in some form of system collapse is possible.

When such collapse happens, while all people are affected, it is the most vulnerable that are the most quickly neglected and who suffer most. We need to be thinking how to ensure that the humanitarian system is developed in such a way that the consequences of system collapse can be mitigated. The more control people are able to have over assistance provided, the deeper the capacity for local response, the more resilient systems of support and solidarity are likely to be.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

What do you regard as the trends most impacting humanitarian action? (more than one answer allowed)

- Increasingly networked – trend towards multi-sector approaches, nobody can do it alone, growth of self organized mass movements
- Nature of crisis – increasing trend of urban crises, massive human cost to war, prolonged crises,
- Shrinking civic space – blurred lines between humanitarian and development actors, shrinking civic space impacts ability to respond and speak out about crises
- Environmental issues – direct driver of natural disasters and indirect driver of man-made crises, difficulty in defining how humanitarian system should address root causes

- Shifting power -diversifying of actors involved in humanitarian action (local, global, private, government, civil society organisations
- Inequality- growing inequality triggers humanitarian crises, increases the needs of the most vulnerable and increases pressure for people to move from their home settings
- Innovation and technology – can be a positive force, but it can also threaten humanitarian principles
- Other

Do you agree that the following factors are fundamental factors or disruptors that have a radical impact, positive and negative on humanitarian action?

	High impact	Medium impact	Low impact
Inequality			
Technology			
Shifting powers			
Environmental changes			
Other- please specify			

Looking Forwards

3

3.1 What future state for humanitarian action might we imagine when looking towards 2030?

Any future strategy for ICVA must respond primarily to needs and the external environment and so it is important to make some effort to define what this might look like. The analysis so far and the identified **disruptors** raise a number of questions, for example on…

THE ENVIRONMENT

While there is no question of the importance of addressing environmental issues, what do they practically mean for the humanitarian sector and the role of ICVA?
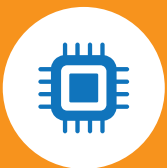
TECHNOLOGY

If technology can be such a game-changer what do humanitarian organisations need and how can ICVA be a part of supporting this?

INEQUALITY

How does this manifest itself in humanitarian need and the system responding to those needs? What does this mean for what ICVA is, what it does and how it does it?

SHIFTING POWER

If power is, and will continue to shift how should ICVA adapt to insure it has the right structures, capacities and ways of working to engage with those that have the greatest influence in ensuring humanitarian needs are identified and met? How will ICVA respond the diversification of humanitarian actors, the multiple coordination systems and powershifts related to resourcing?

From the current state analysis and review of emerging trends presented in the previous section we can anticipate that in 2030:

1. **The pattern of crisis and need** is impossible to precisely predict but we should expect that conflicts, in all its forms and natural disasters will increasingly drive global instability, spread fragility, trigger forced displacement and long-term disruption within societies and social systems and create massive humanitarian needs.

2. **Environmental issues will likely be even greater and more urgent** than today, with direct and indirect impact on humanitarian action

3. **Inequality on a global level is unlikely to have reduced** and may well be worse, with direct implications for the most vulnerable in humanitarian crises

4. **Adequately resourcing humanitarian action** to meet actual needs will still be a challenge for all.

5. **Powers will have shifted** or at the very least rebalanced towards more local power leading to a new power balance in humanitarian institutions and policies. Civic space will still need to be fought for.

6. **The types of actors will be even more diverse** than today and with greater interaction between for- profit work and social impact. Coordination and collaboration between actors and between networks will be key.

7. **The pressure to integrate humanitarian action** into other agendas of peace, development and other political goals will increase, and in turn put further pressure on humanitarian principles.

8. There will be a continued **need to fight for humanitarian space** ensuring access, respect and pushing back against those seeking to politicise and criminalise humanitarian

9. **Technology will continue to evolve, creating new opportunities and threats**, challenging humanitarian agencies to radically adapt and change the way they operate.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Do you agree or disagree with the above scenarios of the humanitarian landscape in 2030?

3.2 How do different strategic elements inform the medium and long-term choices and vision for ICVA and what are the key questions we will need to tackle?

ICVA is the most diverse and global humanitarian NGO network. It has been successful, becoming one of the foremost humanitarian networks in the world and with a near unique position as a key interlocutor between, government, intergovernmental organisations, CSOs and other key actors involved in humanitarian action. Looking towards 2030 there is a need to ask long term questions such as:

- What is the long-term Vision for ICVA as an organisation?

- Does the core mission of ICVA need to change?

- Should ICVA be seeking additional added value?

- Should ICVA be sticking with its traditional areas of focus for the long term?

- Does it need to change the membership and the way in which it is composed?

- Does it need to change the ways in which it works?

Looking towards the next decade ICVA will need to consider external trends that can influence potential changes or adaptations to its historical roles and focus areas. We know, or at least expect the continuation of challenges such as those related to conflict (in all its forms), man-made and natural disasters. The proposition here is to reflect on strategic considerations outside of traditional lines, identifying threats or opportunities for improving principled, effective humanitarian action. The following sections seek to start this discussion reflecting externally and internally within ICVA, welcoming other reflections on other topics.

A. STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

To start this conversation, based on the mega trend analysis the ICVA Board and Secretariat have developed some thinking on three strategic considerations emerging from the external environment and how they relate to principled humanitarian action.

i. **Private Sector Engagement**

ii. **Environmental Change**

iii. **Technology and Humanitarian Innovation Management**

We are sure there are other strategic elements that require consideration, so these reflections are not intended to narrow things so early in the process and so more thinking, writing and inspiration is welcomed by all persons and organisations participating in this process.

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i. Environmental Change

Why is this important?

Addressing environmental issues and in particular, climate change is arguably the single greatest challenge affecting humanity at this time. There are direct and indirect implications for humanitarian needs; climate change and environmental pressure are drivers of natural and man-made crises; humanitarian crises themselves can impact the environment as can the nature of humanitarian response to the needs generated. However, while there is no question of the importance of environmental issues, organisations struggle to find the best way to practically integrate them in what they do and how they do it. There is a case to be made for improving coordination and support to assist humanitarian actors on this journey.

What is the current situation?

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has issued a special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 ºC. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Heads of State and Government and High Representatives pledged included targets in the Sustainable Development Goals related to resilience to disasters and climate change. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction highlighted the importance of promoting "the coherence and further development, as appropriate, of national and local frameworks of laws, regulations and public policies".

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change. The Paris Agreement objectives include, inter alia, "increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production". The Paris Agreement includes the potential interplay between disasters, climate change, environmental degradation, and fragility, the catalytic role of disaster risk reduction in scaling up action on climate adaptation, and the critical role of disaster risk reduction in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. There was a focus on resilience and adaptation at the 2019 UN Climate Summit and the COP25, within the Global Commission on Adaptation's "Preventing Disasters" Action Track and the establishment in September of the Risk-Informed Early Action Partnership. A number of initiatives exist and are being developed including the initiative of the IFRC, together with academic partners, to undertake

research on best practice in the effective integration of disaster risk management and adaptation to climate change. To note also the Disaster laws and policies that leave no one behind resolution adopted at the IFRC conference on 12th December 2019.

The influence on Climate Change issues is coming from non-traditional movements and actors i.e. climate change activists, Extinction Rebellion etc… Youth are playing an unprecedented role in the civil society movements.

Other important contributions in this area to which ICVA and its members are associated include the Platform for Disaster Displacement - PDD, the Climate Action Network - CAN, the Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster Reduction - GNDR, implementation aspects of the GRF and GCM… Others were engagement and/or support to existing civil society engagement should be considered include initiatives with the World Meteorological Organization, the World Bank, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS), national and regional plans among others.

ICVA's potential added value:

- ICVA supports NGO engagement at national, regional and global level in policy, plans and finance mechanisms relevant to climate change and its impacts

- ICVA to connect, convene, influence & advocate, support as well as analyse & explain (ICVA 5 ways of working) for ICVA to adopt a long-term and sustainable approach for NGOs (ICVA members) to partner and connect with those working on climate change in order to better respond to climate issues.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

a) How have member organisations integrated issues related to environmental change into their humanitarian action? What are some examples of how actors are limiting negative environmental impact? How are crises linked to environmental change impacting the scale and nature of interventions and/or advocacy? Are there implications for humanitarian principles?

b) Should environmental change and its impact on the creating and alleviation of humanitarian needs be a core focus for ICVA? If so, how best to frame that focus area and what would be the most urgent issues to address?

ii. Technology and Humanitarian Innovation Management

Why is this important?

There are many aspects to innovation, what it practically means for organisations and the risks or opportunities it presents. Innovation and technology can be a positive force, but it can also threaten humanitarian principles through (for example) dehumanising interaction with affected populations. Humanitarian actors need to find ways to embrace innovation to become more flexible and agile organisations, adhering to humanitarian principles and without losing the human, personal and informal character of NGOs interaction with the populations and communities affected.

What is the current situation?

Digital technology and artificial intelligence are changing the nature of humanitarian action, particularly in relation to digital dimensions of protection, trust and privacy-related issues. There is a growing awareness of the risks and potential harm generated by the introduction of new actors, products and technology along with 'innovation' to humanitarian settings.

Stakeholder inclusion in the implementation of technology and humanitarian innovation management is the main and most positive approach and necessary factor for enabling equality. This includes people who suffer from inequalities, people who champion equality and the designers and implementers of the technology.

There is a need for clear parameters for the kind of humanitarian innovation going beyond technological innovation we want to see. There's also an urgency to translate these parameters into practice, to address real-time ethical dilemmas and to support ethical innovation 'on the ground'. Enabling

equality links to the risks and opportunities for humanitarian principles underpinned by the risk for NGOs to operate.

ICVA's potential added value

- Relying on its "ways of working" seek to offer to the ICVA members understanding of the systems in which innovations are emerging, the actors within them, and the nature of the relationships at play. Such 'systems curiosity' is important for ICVA members to navigate the uncertainty, risk inherent to innovation and respond more promptly and effectively to the changing needs of populations.

- Using ICVA's outreach capacity, on basis of existing work, adopt a set of Principles promoting equal global opportunities for the delivery of new technology and humanitarian innovation management. ICVA's broad constituency would contribute to the roll out of the Principles of Innovation.

- Leverage technology to improve the online visibility of ICVA's messaging/content, the communication streams and learning opportunities offering opportunities to ICVA member organisations.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

a) To what degree do ICVA member organisations invest in a practice and culture that enables innovative solutions and approaches; gaining the benefits and mitigating the risks? What are some examples of such strategies?

b) What role, if any, should ICVA have in the development of, or promoting cross-learning of innovative solutions and approaches in support of principled and effective humanitarian action?

iii. Private Sector Engagement

Why is this important?

There is an increasing number of private sector actors, in their various forms exploring how they can add value to humanitarian response, locally and internationally. This can be positive in the way that it offers a boost to humanitarian capability and humanitarian delivery, but there is also a risk that this undermines principled humanitarian action. It will take proactive engagement and collaboration between NGOs and private sector actors in order to maximize the benefits of this trend.

What are some current examples of this?

Labour rights of refugees are core for an adequate system of refugee protection. The 1951 Refugee Convention refers to the refugee's rights for gainful employment and creating also a legal basis to support entrepreneurship. Yet many years after the Refugee Convention entered into force, refugees are still often excluded from labour markets and face other hindrances to enjoy dignified labour and gain sustainable incomes. Among refugees, specific groups like youth, women or people with disabilities face double barriers to access incomes. Often refugees are hosted in communities experiencing already considerable levels of unemployment. The increased competition for jobs tends to create social tensions between new-comers and their host communities.

NGOs contribute resources and expertise to promote economic opportunities, decent work, job creation and entrepreneurship programmes for host community members and refugees, IDPs and migrants, including women, young adults, older persons and persons with disabilities

While there are investments and contributions done by NGOs on supporting employment and livelihoods, NGOs work is not fully documented and acknowledged (ie. not mentioned in specific in the GCR para. 70-71). Not enough investment is done so far by the NGO sector to document the work and lessons learnt on job and livelihood support of refugees and members of host communities, going beyond specific agencies. Consequently, in some countries and context, even though there is a need, NGOs remain reluctant to get involved in partnerships with the corporates. There are also misconceptions among some NGOs about their role in this regard, with few of them trying to take over roles that are mainly played by businesses or State actors, instead of reaching out and collaborating with them.

The business sector on the other hand, though increasingly aware of the benefits for investments in this direction, is not always supported and its collaboration with the NGO sector remains mainly to financing their activities. There are few joint business & NGO collaborations, for example on employment and livelihood of vulnerable groups, including refugees. These are also not well mapped, documented and analysed. Other important actors, States agencies, including local authorities are often working with business and NGOs, but rarely with them both in supporting employment and entrepreneurship for refugees and members of host communities.

There are other examples of private sector engagement in humanitarian action, but the common denominator is that NGOs have a poor understanding of the scope and nature of this work. This increases risk and creates missed opportunities for positive collaboration and mutual support.

The general direction is for private sector to increase the engagement with humanitarian NGOs, boosting humanitarian capability and humanitarian delivery in a principled manner, including closer to where the crisis is.

ICVA's potential added value

- Contribute for NGOs to better understand the evolving motivations and potential financial and non-financial contributions of private sector actors and for private sector to better understand how the NGOs operate.

- Engage with private sector leadership platforms or networks to offer joint space for NGOs and business community to see how best get involved and what needs to be done to make the involvement as effective as possible.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

a) To what degree is private sector engagement a priority for ICVA member organisations in relation to humanitarian action and what are the approaches being taken? How do they ensure that humanitarian principles are adhered to in cases of collaboration?

b) What role could or should ICVA play in facilitating interaction between the private sector and humanitarian actors? For example, in terms of building mutual understanding, facilitating collaboration, including private sector in events, even going so far as to include a formal way of engaging in the network.

B. STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING ICVA'S MEMBERSHIP AND WAYS OF WORKING

The previous sections focused on the external environment and on ICVA's role in responding to this. This section will deal with the internal environment of how the ICVA network is comprised, how the members and secretariat will work together and interact with other organisations/platforms.

To start this conversation the ICVA Board and Secretariat have developed some thinking on strategic considerations relating to ICVA as a network.

i.   **ICVA's Collaborative Advantage**

ii. **Membership and Member Engagement**

iii. **Regional development of ICVA**

iv. **Resourcing ICVA**

i. ICVA's Collaborative Advantage

Why is this important?

Humanitarian action and the range of actors involved has become increasingly complex and things are unlikely to become simpler between now and 2030. There is a growing need for meaningful collaboration within the humanitarian sector between organisations and between networks and cross sector collaboration with governments, international organisations and the private sector. Looking towards 2030 ICVA needs to position itself to offer its unique added value complementing the efforts and capacities of others. This is an opportunity to review ICVA's organisational architecture to best fit the engagements for increased influence.

What is the current situation and what have we learned from the past?

Global attention is rightly focused on the Sustainable Development Goals. But nowhere are the impacts of the climate change and poverty they are intended to address felt more keenly than on the front line of disaster. An equitable future cannot be achieved by leaving people behind when they are at their most exposed. And we can often find the most radical and effective solutions to our challenges where they are at their most extreme. When everything around us fails we are forced to learn anew how to survive, how to live and how to meet each other's needs.

The humanitarian sector is stretched by rapidly rising demand and must do more to empower affected people around the world and the communities in which they live to cope with the risks and vulnerabilities that they are increasingly exposed to as their own first responders and primary agents of their own change. This depends on re-aligning the actions of all actors in our operating environments so that lines of empowerment can be traced through governance and all relevant stakeholders right the way to affected people themselves.

Forging such alignment requires a wide range of individual focus areas for shared and collective action. This is too important to be left to chance and in an increasingly complex, turbulent, inter-dependent and emergent environment cannot be left to individual institutions acting in their own capacity alone.

To achieve our SDGs, we need effective humanitarian action. To achieve effective humanitarian action requires new approaches to all dimensions of humanitarian assistance geared to unlocking system-wide participation. This will depend upon new expertise, methods, business models, incentive structures, cultures and accountability mechanisms.

Globally, we have the resources we need to make this transition: it is primarily a question of enabling it to happen.

Humanitarian actors should embrace a climate for change in focusing on the lever of collective action to foster a more joined-up and resilient humanitarian system for exponential impact.[2]

ICVA's potential added value

ICVA already connects, convenes, influences & advocates, supports as well as analyses & explains to develop diverse models and forms of engagement and partnerships amongst NGO platforms and system strengthening/changing organisations. This includes reinforcing the ongoing NGO Fora Support Programme.

Looking towards 2030 ICVA must aim at being even more radically collaborative in collective influence of a variety of NGO enabling platforms offering the opportunity to re-think the way of working and increase NGO influence. For example

- While ICVA will keep the focus of its mission as *"a global network of non-governmental organisations whose mission is to make humanitarian action more principled and effective by working collectively and independently to influence policy and practice"*, ICVA must systematically develop diverse models and forms of engagement and partnerships with the increasing diverse range of actors including non-NGOs and non-UN stakeholders.

- The Secretariat can offer value in developing the strategies and engagements with a) private sector (See ICVA 2030 - Private Sector Engagement); b) cities and local governments (platforms), c) Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Donor Countries, d) Regional Bodies (AU, ASEAN, IOC..) and e) other civil society dynamics.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

a) Considering the number of NGO platforms and other NGO networked organisations in the humanitarian sector, what is the unique added value of ICVA that complements the value of others?

b) If ICVA is to maximise the value it adds, how will it need to change the way in which collaborates with other networks both in terms of the Secretariat functioning and the action of members?

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[2] Adapted from *"Creating a Climate for Change - The case for transforming humanitarian action through the System Strengthening Alliance and beyond"*, Paul Skinner, October 2019. Commissioned by Start Network, GroundTruth and ICVA.

ii. Membership and Member Engagement

Why is this important

ICVA is currently the most diverse global humanitarian network, with increasing reach towards regional and local level humanitarian actors. The current model has been successful in many ways and we are yet to fully draw on the individual and collective power of members to fully realise our potential. Acknowledging the current and future trends towards an increasingly complex and diverse humanitarian sector we need to if and how ICVA membership and member engagement will be fit for 2030.

What is the current situation?

While there are networks that can also call themselves global, ICVA is arguably unique to the degree that it combines large global INGOs with many local, smaller members; also in terms of how it works to ensure that all voices are heard and not just those of the largest.

ICVA has a track record of positive impact and value for members in Increasing NGO understanding of the humanitarian sector and its policies; Increasing NGO engagement in policy & advocacy in key issues; Influencing key debates/policies and connecting policies and practices through the strengthening of field-level NGO fora.

At present ICVA has three membership categories:

- Member – International NGOS, Consortia/Networks & national NGOs

- Observer Status – Interested organisations with legal or constitutional limitations related to becoming full members

- Affiliate Membership – Academic and research organisations

While it is expected that the ICVA secretariat provides a centre-point of ICVA's work, there are also expectations towards members in adhering to humanitarian principles, providing leadership, assisting in representations and reinforcing ICVA initiatives through their work.

Considering the increasing diversity of actors, including (for example) semi-governmental, private and social entrepreneurs should ICVA be now considering changing or expanding its membership criteria or introducing other ways of engaging and if so, in what way? What would such a change mean for the rights and duties of new or existing membership categories.

Even if membership does not change, history tells us that we can do better in utilising the power and resources of members in order to reduce pressure to keep expanding the ICVA secretariat. Ambitions are growing and so we need to explore how we can resource those ambitions in a systematic and predictable way through responsible investment in the secretariat and creative use of member support.

ICVAs potential added value

ICVAs offer of membership adds value in creating a community of humanitarian actors. Members gain access to services, information, support, links to each other and having a role in leading or supporting the actions of ICVA. ICVA membership is one of the enablers than help organisations to be more than the sum of their parts.

It is clear that ICVA will continue as a membership organisation, the question is whether ICVAs value would be increased further by changing the nature of its membership, their rights and duties.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

a) Considering the increasing diversity of humanitarian actors, which of the following directions should ICVA take?

i. change the nature of its membership, changing criteria and potentially considering different types of members with different rights/duties... and if so how?

or

ii. keep the same membership and address the diversity of actors through the ways in which ICVA works and engages with others?

c) What changes are needed in how member organisations work to increase the capacity of ICVA to deliver its ambitions, increasing co-ownership of ICVA and reducing pressure for growth of the secretariat?

iii. Regional development of ICVA

Why is this important?

Continuing to invest in ICVA's regional presence and expand to new regions will ensure ICVA remains a network with real representative power and legitimacy.

ICVA's regional presence brings proximity to members in operational contexts, allowing the Secretariat to engage with the operational reality of humanitarian action. Expanding to new regions or consolidating in other regions either directly or through new models of partnerships will allow ICVA to become a truly global network, further increasing our value-proposition and legitimacy. Going forwards the question not whether, but rather how ICVA will invest in regions in future.

What is the current situation and what have we learned from the past?

ICVA's regional representation provides pragmatic support to NGOs, including in operational, policy and support settings. Based on ICVA`s recent impact studies it has shown that ICVA adds real value to the network and is a unique point of difference to other networks.

Regional engagement is viewed as flexible and context specific. ICVA secretariat presence in regions may need to grow (or shrink) at different rates depending on many external factors, resources and emerging humanitarian crises.

ICVA Secretariat's current regional division (with staff presence in Asia-Pacific, Africa and MENA) still leaves representatives covering large and diverse regions with conflicting priorities. A sub-regional focus may be preferred to ensure better coverage of these areas. Even with the existing approach ICVA is thin on resources and so any expansion of the scope or geography of regional work will have resource implications.

New models of partnership should be encouraged to enable ICVA to work in regions that may not require a full-time staff allocation. Such approaches are being piloted in the Pacific and in Latin America.

ICVA's potential added value

ICVA regional presence already adds value through:

- Convening and working collaboratively with humanitarian organisations closer to country operations
- Providing on–the-ground information to inform global policy debates,
- Communicating, translating and building a better understanding of global polices at local and regional level.
- Offering platforms for collective advocacy.

There is potential to go further in increasing…

- The geographical coverage of regional support
- The volume of operational support assisting in coordination for the provision of humanitarian assistance
- The leverage of ICVA member presence to support and potentially act on behalf of ICVA in places where ICVA has no secretariat presence.
- The degree of contextualization or focus ICVA actions and advocacy adapted to regional nuances/interests.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

a) Should ICVA further develop and expand at the regional level and if so, what does this practically mean in terms of the what ICVA does, how it does it and how it is resourced?

b) Should ICVA member organisations take on delegated duties to strategically increase ICVA's reach in regions where ICVA has no regional hubs, formally representing and providing ICVA services/support?

iv. Resourcing the collective ambitions of ICVA

Why is this important

At present, ICVA is primarily resourced through government grants, philanthropic foundations and membership fees. In terms of implementation, while members are engaged in various degrees, much of ICVA's work is carried out by the secretariat. Sustainable and flexible funding along with a more effective collective engagement of Members will be essential, especially if ICVA has ambition to grow in the coming decade.

What is the current situation?

Funding for 2020 is UN 5%, Philanthropic Foundations 10%, membership fees 20% and governments 65%. Between 2012 the ICVA budget fluctuated between 1.5 and 2.7 million CHF, stabilizing to 3.2 million in 2018 and 2019. The core budget has been relatively stable with the main growth investments related to ICVA's regional development. Two thirds of the budget are staff costs with 2 staff in six locations. There has been an increase in multi-year and unrestricted funding, mainly from governments, with a broadening funding base overall with priority given to government donors and philanthropic foundations, focusing on multi-year grants. ICVA has strengthened its communication capacity to better communicate to different target groups and foster engagement of critical stakeholders. This will better enable organisations to understand at once the value and necessity to support ICVA.

Key messages include:

- ICVA's perceived added value in being global and diverse membership

- The perceived quality of the engagement and historical legitimacy

- The importance given on impact (external impact evaluation, case studies, theory of change...)

- Bridging between local, national, regional and international levels to influence policy and practice

Membership fees monitoring has been reinforced with a slight increase of members resulting in a 10% increase in membership fees.

While the trend is positive ICVA consistently fell short in 2019 of its target budget by 10% of target budget (3.5 million). The following trends help explain this trend:

- Some traditional donors are concerned and adjusting the number of contracts they have with "support system organisations".

- Some NGOs going through financial constraints tend to reduce advocacy positions or liaison functions as the impact of their work is more difficult to trace.

- The political agendas of some governments is changing with an impact on funding for humanitarian action through NGOs & NGO networks

- The 'Localisation agenda' is both an opportunity and a threat to the unity of the NGO community (INGO vs National and/or local NGOs).

Looking forwards

When talking about resources, **we should also be considering members engagement**. The strength of ICVA depends on the members engagements, not only in growing the size of the Secretariat. In fact, a very large secretariat with increased independent capacity may risk disengagement rather than engagement of members. We do need a sustainable financial base but levering off the collective ambitions of Members and joining forces to use our collective resources more effectively is probably the single most important factor to positively change the way ICVA action is resourced.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

a) Is the current resourcing model for ICVA adequate?

b) How best to grow the resources for achieving the desired impact of ICVA as an organisation either through increased funding, increasing efficiency of ICVAs work or increasing the role of Members in acting on behalf of ICVA?

3.3 What is the long-term vision for ICVA?

Taking account of the analysis and strategic considerations we will need to define the long-term vision for ICVA. This will be shaped in part by the initial analysis, but more so by the feedback and outcomes of discussions we are able to stimulate across the membership.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

What is your vision for ICVA in 2030 in terms of what it does, how and with whom for improving principled, effective humanitarian action?

In your vision of ICVA in 2030 what are the most important elements to be included in ICVAs added value?

	Not important	Less Important	Important	Very Important
ICVA is a **trusted broker and convener** of NGOS and humanitarian policy makers (UN, governments, other stakeholders)				
ICVA is a **global network** of diverse NGOs				
ICVA produces, **shares and exchanges information**, analyses and learning opportunities				
ICVA **facilitates increased NGO access to important stakeholders** (including UN agencies, members states, regional bodies, private sector, and other networks and sectors)				
ICVA is a forum for **members to collaborate and advocate collectively** common concern				
ICVA works to **strengthen policies and programmes to ensure principled and effective humanitarian action**				
ICVA **strengthens the capacities of NGOs** to engage in the humanitarian system				
ICVA ensures a **strong and multi faceted NGO voice** is reflected in key debates that affect humanitarian action				

ICVA 2030
Your View Counts

4

Help shape the future of ICVA

Your help is greatly appreciated and brings the most important perspective to the ICVA 2030 consultations.

Please help us amplify this perspective further by sharing your opinion, ideas, and input on the future of ICVA.

Between now and September 2020 you can share your feedback in the following ways:

1. **Read the introduction document and discussion papers:**
   These documents provide more information about the ICVA 2030 process and more detailed background thinking and questions as to why ICVA is looking to build a 10-year strategy. The discussion papers propose six strategic considerations including our current focus areas: Engagement with the private sector; Environmental change; Technology and humanitarian innovation management; The regional development of ICVA; Membership and member engagement; and ICVA's collaborative advantage. The aim of these papers is to give a vision for ICVA and to help you frame your own thoughts on ICVA's direction.

2. **Answer the ICVA 2030 Survey:**
   The ICVA 2030 Survey gives you an opportunity to evaluate your past and future engagement with ICVA. Your participation is encouraged and would be appreciated. With no more than 20 minutes of your time, you can tell us what is important to you and to NGO humanitarian action. To complete the survey, click here.

   The deadline for completing the survey is 30 April 2020.

   The survey is also available in French and Arabic.

3. **Talk to us – Record a 90 second video:**
   Whether you are from a member or partner organisation, we would love to hear your voice. To do so, submit a video of you answering the question, "What should ICVA focus on for the 2030 strategy?" You can talk in French, Arabic, Spanish or English. We will share the videos online on our YouTube channel.

There are two options for recording a video:

- You can arrange to be interviewed— Set up a time with ICVA's Communications Officer to have your input recorded (in person or over skype) and turned into a short 90 second video telling us what you would like ICVA to focus on in our 2030 strategy. See examples here.

- Film a short video on your own and send it to us. If you choose to record a video on your own, please follow these guidelines:
  - Record your video in a quiet space, ensuring no (or limited) background noise. You can record your message on your phone, laptop, or video camera.
  - Keep it short. Answer the question, "What should ICVA focus on for the 2030 Strategy?" in 90 seconds or less.
  - Be concise. Make your input as clear and direct as possible.
  - Share your video through google drive, Dropbox, WeTransfer or other file sharing system.

  For more information and for video submissions contact: communications@icvanetwork.org

4. **Write to us:**
   Send us a written submission giving your input for the ICVA 2030 Strategy. You can send your letter to: communications@icvanetwork.org

5. **Attend a workshop, webinar or meeting:**
   Attend one of the members consultations in the ICVA regions to brainstorm on ICVA 2030. More information to follow.

   Additionally, you can plan a meeting within your own organisation to gather input from a larger base and submit your input to ICVA. You can use the questions as outlined in the Strategy Discussion Document. Any submissions can be sent to: communications@icvanetwork.org

Annex 1. ICVA 2030 Process Timeline Dates to highlight at Board Strategy Working Group meeting 20th December

Ref.	Tasks	2019 2nd quarter	2019 3rd quarter	2019 4th quarter	2020 1st quarter	2020 2nd quarter	2020 3rd quarter	2020 4th quarter	2021 1st quarter	2021 2nd quarter	2021 3rd quarter	2021 4th quarter
1	Conceptualisation of ICVA 2030	■										
2	Kick off of the "ICVA 2030"		■									
3	Project planning and resource mobilisation		■	■								
4	Sketch of disruptors, discussion papers, key questions…			■								
5	Key issues/questions for membership engagement		July Board	Nov. Board								
6	Development of communication platform tools			■	■	■						
7	Scan the horizon through existing research, interviews and consultations with other stakeholders.				■	■						
8	ICVA members to share their future thoughts and analysis for NGOs				■	■						
9	ICVA members participate in collective analysis & other contributions (digital material, blogs, written inputs…)				■	■						
10	Key milestone of ICVA member engagement (Memebship Day)				17 March							
11	Drafting of "ICVA 2030" strategy document (with iterations for consultations with different target groups)						■	■				
12	Final draft of the "ICVA 2030" strategy document to be board for presentation to GA							Board 5 Nov.				
13	ICVA General Assembly to adopt ICVA 2030									GA 27 April		
14	ICVA board adopts a shorter "way forward" document for period 2022-25											Board Nov.
15	Increase technology culture and facilitate participation of members (at all issues)				■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
16	Innovate approaches to illustrate /inform for Strategic Vision											
17	Private sector engagement - IMD-ICVA platform for Ceos				■	■						
18	Aidex Ethics and innovation leadership (event in Nov 2019)			■								
19	WEF/DAVOS innovation hub on SDG and humanitarian action (event Jan 2020)				■							
20	Business case for strengthening system platforms - Alliance 1 (Ground truth, Start network/ ICVA)		■									
21	Business case for strengthening system platforms - Alliance 2 (SCHR, InterAction, Voice, ICVA)			■		■		■				
22	Architecture with ICVA engagement in Latin America and Pacific			■	■	■						
23	Others			■			■	■	■	■	■	■
24	External impact evaluation on ICVA's strategy 2019-2021 incl. "ICVA 2030" (yearly case studies – Final Feb. 2022)				■	■			■			■

- **Week 20th January** – finalise guiding document and communication package for membership consultations and consultation of external stakeholders.
- **28th January** – Staff meeting on ICVA 2030 (with Adrio and request for at least one Board Strategy Working Group to join)
- **Week 3rd February** – start of filming external stakeholders and ICVA members
- **Week 3rd February** – meeting SCHR, InterAction, Voice and ICVA with agenda point ICVA 2030 (date tbc)
- **Week 3rd February** – launch of survey (ICVA members and other stakeholders)
- **Week 3rd February** – finalise identification of "regional/national sounding board" (4 to 5 people form ICVA members)
- **Week 3rd February** – start of external stakeholder interviews by ICVA Board Strategy Working Group members
- **Week 3rd February** – planning of Regional and on-line meetings with ICVA members (2nd quarter) and one to one meetings with ICVA members (February to June)
- **Friday 20th March** – at least half a day to "digest" meetings and events of the week influencing on ICVA 2030. "Digestion Day" (after Board Meeting (16th March), Membership Day (17th March), Annual Conference (18th March), Stakeholder Engagement Day (19th March). Meeting to include (on-line but preferably face to face): Board Strategy Working Group, "regional/national sounding board", Adrio/consultant (remotely), Secretariat (3 or 4 staff).
- **23rd and 24th March** – Staff retreat (all ICVA Secretariat staff – including staff working remotely). ICVA 2030 on the agenda.

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