

# CLIMATE CHARTER

## ICVA CASE STUDY #3

### Short summary of the case study:

[The Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations](#) was adopted in May 2021. ICVA is a core part of the Advisory Committee to the Climate and Environment Charter which included a number of humanitarian and climate actors (UN, civil society, academics, Red Cross Red Crescent Movement) led by the ICRC and the IFRC that developed a series of short and clear commitments that could guide our efforts as humanitarians in relation to limiting the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on communities and reducing our own footprint. ICVA together with the ICRC, IFRC and the Advisory Committee conducted consultations on the draft of the Charter.

### Timeline of the initiative:

July 2020 and ongoing

### ICVA's role and influence:

ICVA has been a core part of the process in developing the Charter bringing together ICVA members to shape the Charter and mobilising them to sign the Charter. Through ICVA and our network, we consulted over 40 NGOs from Asia-Pacific (with specific consultations in India), MENA, Africa and Europe and Americas regions. Since its launch in May 2021, 32 ICVA members have signed the Charter (as of 26 October 2021). You can find the most updated Charter Signatory list [here](#).

### ICVA's Annual Conference on "Climate, Environment and Humanitarian Action"

ICVA's [2021 Annual Conference](#) in May focused on the role that NGOs play in adapting the way we work to be better prepared to climate and environment change so that we leave no one behind. This is especially in the humanitarian context when delivering programmes to support refugees, displaced and vulnerable populations. The conference brought together over 1,400 ICVA members, NGOs, NGO fora, States, donors, UN agencies, experts and other climate and environment sector stakeholders to share their experiences, lessons learned, challenges and way forward around these issues.

### How the process and outcome reflected ICVA's priorities, and related to the Theory of Change:

- As a network whose mission is to make humanitarian action more principled and effective by working collectively and independently to influence policy and practice; the Charter

dovetails with the Humanitarian Principles, NGO Code of Conduct and Do No Harm principles that we promote.

When we consulted our members again in 2019, for our 2030 strategy, over 90% of our 130 members - in addition to our partners, highlighted the importance of the intersection between climate, environmental change and humanitarian action. As a result, ICVA's new Strategy towards 2030 presents five transformations, including one that specifically addresses the impact of "Climate Change" on humanitarian action.

- ICVA's 130 members at the General Assembly in May 2021 adopted the Commitment and Motion to Action which will guide the network with the principles set-out in The Charter. Members through the Motion to action committed that they would consider signing the Charter individually and indicate when they will be able to measure their implementation and that they would also share widely existing tools, guidance and lessons learned. The Motion to Action will be reviewed at ICVA's next General Assembly in 2024.
- ICVA is part of various other initiatives that support the implementation of the Charter. This includes the Carbon Accounting Tool, Partner Round Table on Climate Financing focusing on Conflict and Fragile Contexts together with ICRC, IFRC and other organisations that aim to engage and collaborate with as many humanitarian organisations as possible to move this discussion forward and support organisations to achieve their commitments. ICVA has been connecting NGOs with these initiatives and will continue so that they are able to look at ways of implementing the Charter commitments.

### How the work has influenced the humanitarian sector:

Due to the high visibility of the Charter and the Climate topic that ICVA has been taking forward, many more NGOs and partners (beyond the ICVA membership) have been influenced to consider the climate and environment topic as an important one and have been interested and signed up to the Charter as a result. ICVA has also been asked to speak on the topic of climate change and the Charter at many events, foras, high-level panels etc.

#### COP 26 Engagement

ICVA members were engaged in the discussions and negotiations at COP-26. Find below some of the key initiatives:

##### 1. [Statement](#) on behalf of the Climate and Environment Charter Signatories

The statement is also available on the Charter website [here](#) in English.

2. [Key Messages](#) on Climate Change and Human Mobility by the Advisory Group on Climate Change and Human Mobility. ICVA was a contributor to the key messages.

## What has been the positive impact so far?

ICVA has been raising awareness and sending a clear signal that humanitarian organisations and especially NGOs, have a key role to play in addressing this climate crisis – to reduce the impact of climate change on the most vulnerable populations we work with and to minimise our impact on the environment through the way we work (operations, programmes, logistics etc). NGOs have been concluding that we must take urgent and transformative action to help reduce the humanitarian impacts of the climate and environmental crises.

The Charter is designed to galvanize and steer collective action. It represents our sector’s commitment to do our part, work together, ensure that our actions reduce the impacts of the crises, and convince others to do the same – and ICVA has been a forerunner in this front with the ICRC and the IFRC.

Many NGOs have been reaching out to ICVA – both members and non-members, including UN agencies to find out more about the Charter and on what’s happening in the humanitarian sector on this topic and for sharing of lessons learned and best practice on what NGOs are already working on.

- a. Minimum Environment Requirements and Principles – draft was provided input, looking at further consultations

DG ECHO reached out to ICVA Secretariat to get input from ICVA members on the draft requirements and principles. Noting that these requirements will impact NGOs that will benefit from ECHO funding (mainly UN, EU NGOs eligible for ECHO funding) and will be implemented by 2022, they will also impact NGO partners who will be implementing ECHO funded projects on the ground. Further consultations and input to the Requirements are expected in Round 2. DG ECHO was a speaker at ICVA’s 2021 Annual Conference and will also speak during the Climate Change and Humanitarian Action Learning Stream to further discuss the Minimum requirements.

- b. European Humanitarian Forum (EHF) engagement in the climate change panel

ECHO DG has reached out to ICVA at Regional levels and Secretariat (climate change, nexus, humanitarian principles) for consultations with ICVA members and NGOs prior to the EHF. Climate change will be quite a focus in the upcoming Forum with a dedicated panel and a priority in the Asia-Pacific, MENA and Africa regional consultations.

- c. ICVA’s sixth online [Learning Stream on Climate and Humanitarian Action](#) will provide a platform for the broader humanitarian community to better comprehend how we can reduce our impact of climate change by accelerating our own action and increasing our environmental sustainability in-line with commitments of the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations. The Learning Stream includes a series of five to six webinars, starting with an overview of the Charter and looking at practical examples and lessons learned on the commitments. The series will run from September 2021 until mid-2022. The Introductory webinar was held on 28 September and the 1st Topic on Adapting to impacts of the climate and environment crises was held on 14 October. Since the webinars were held,

we have been receiving many requests to learn more about the Charter and the other initiatives ICVA is part of to support implementation of the Charter.

### **What could be further improved?**

Our outreach to members to sign the Charter and further provide support for them to better understand what it means to sign-on and implement the commitments is important. This is a collective effort encompassing ICVA Board, Secretariat staff and NGO members themselves who have signed on to the Charter to promote it and the Call for Motion to Action at the General Assembly.

### **The way forward – some recommendations:**

In addition to the previous suggestions:

An early set of guidance has been developed and made available through the Charter [website](#). This guidance has been drafted by the ICRC and IFRC with the support of members of the Charter’s Advisory Committee and the RCRC Climate Center. It contains explanations of the Charter’s commitments and brief lists of tools and resources. There is now an opportunity to develop this guidance into more robust, expert-led, consultative guidelines that aspire to serve as a sector-wide standard for humanitarian efforts to respond to the climate and environment crises.

The International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) will be a key partner in ensuring that the development of the Guidance for the Charter will be inclusive and the subject of wide consultations. ICVA was instrumental in the development of the Charter and have been champions in promoting adoption among its members and NGOs.

**Check out more information on our [webpage](#).**