

ICVA 18th General Assembly 18 & 19 May 2021 Reaffirmation of Principles

General Assembly expected adoption by consensus

The General Assembly reaffirms for its members the commitment to the set of principles and standards relevant to principled and effective humanitarian response adopted individually when joining ICVA and/or reaffirmed individually in 2017:

1. The [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief](#)
2. The [Principles of Partnership](#).
3. The [IASC Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#), the [Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel](#) as well as the [ICVA GA 2018 Motion to Action](#)
4. The [Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#).

Background

The ICVA membership aims to be a network of NGOs that is recognised for the quality and accountability of their work and members are encouraged to demonstrate, in all relevant situations, a commitment to:

1. Humanitarian principles, including the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief](#).
2. Collaboration with other NGOs and/or partner agencies, in line with the [Principles of Partnership](#).
3. Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse as guided by the [IASC Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#), the [Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN Personnel](#) as well as the [ICVA GA 2018 Motion to Action](#)
4. Quality and accountability in humanitarian action, including use of the [Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#).

All ICVA members have committed to these humanitarian principles and standards as part of the membership criteria.

At latest reaffirmation process in 2017 and/or when joining ICVA network, ICVA members have acknowledged that they are committed to these humanitarian principles and standards and can provide examples of how they demonstrate this commitment.

These principles reflect the commitment to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian action through partnership and require commitment to humanitarian principles and a demonstrated focus on quality and accountability in humanitarian action.

ICVA's role is not in monitoring or enforcing accountability to principles or standards, but supporting members to develop their capacity to put these into practice. ICVA and its members should always be seeking ways to improve the quality and accountability of our work.

These humanitarian principles and standards underpin field practices and inform policy setting and advocacy.

Why these commitments?

1. **[The Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief](#)** : Established in 1992 the Code of Conduct sets out standards for the behavior of humanitarian organisations. It is a voluntary code that all humanitarian organisations can sign up to. It sets out ten core principles and three annexes with recommendations to governments of affected states, donor governments and intergovernmental organizations. As becoming a signatory to the Code does not necessarily imply that its principles are being implemented, ICVA will not require that its members have signed on to the Code, but will encourage them to demonstrate their commitment to the principles by reporting on how they have put the Code into practice.
2. **[Principles of Partnership](#)** : ICVA played a key role in developing the Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP), a forum bringing together the three main families of the humanitarian community - NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and the UN and related international humanitarian organisations. In order to help ensure that there is a common understanding of the concept of partnership, *Principles of Partnership* were endorsed in 2007. The principles of equality, transparency, results orientated, responsibility and complementarity strive to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian action, acknowledge diversity as an asset of the humanitarian community, and encourage building and nurturing of effective partnerships. ICVA encourages all of its members to apply the *Principles of Partnership* in their work and throughout their organisations.
3. **[Commitment and Motion to Action on Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation and Sexual Harassment](#)** : Reducing the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) of persons of concern by aid workers has been a priority for ICVA. In December 2006, a number of UN agencies and NGOs endorsed the [Statement of Commitment on Eliminating Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and Non-UN personnel](#). ICVA encourages its members to support the Statement of Commitment, which sets out the 10 key steps that organisations must take to prevent and respond to SEA by their staff. More recently, at the ICVA 17th General Assembly in March 2018, ICVA members endorsed a commitment to protect the people in the communities in which they work and their employees from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. The Commitment requires that ICVA secretariat and ICVA members have systems in place for preventing, detecting and responding to abuse and misconduct.
4. **[Sphere standards](#)**: **The sphere project was launched in 1997** to develop a set of minimum standards in core areas of humanitarian assistance. Today, the Sphere standards are the most widely recognized humanitarian standards across the globe. They are used as reference tools by humanitarian agencies, advocacy groups, governments, and donors. The Sphere standards and their foundational documents (the Humanitarian Charter, the Protection Principles, and the Core Humanitarian Standard) are collected in the 2018 Sphere Handbook. ICVA has participated in the Sphere Project since 1998, and is currently on the Sphere Board.