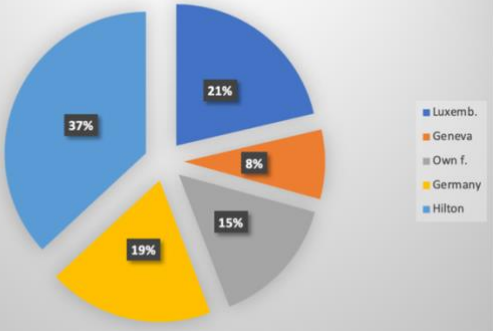


Global Narrative Report

Global Report – Final (1st June 2020 – 31st December 2020)

Strengthening in-country NGO Fora to promote enhanced NGO collective action at field level during the COVID-19 Response

Title of Project:	Strengthening in-country NGO Fora to promote enhanced NGO collective action at field level during the COVID-19 Response												
Geographical reach:	<p>Asia/Pacific: Humanitarian Forum – Indonesia; National Humanitarian Network – Islamabad; Local Resource Centre - Myanmar</p> <p>Africa: Somalia NGO Consortium (SNC); Coordination of Humanitarian INGOs (CHINGO) – Cameroon; Forum des Organisation Nationales Humanitaires et de Development (FONHAD) – DR Congo; Cameroon Humanitarian Organisation Initiative (CHOI); Tanzania Refugee and Migration Network (TARMINET)</p> <p>Middle East and North Africa: The Palestinian NGO Networks (PNGO) – OPT; Jordanian NGOs Forum (JONAF) - Arab Renaissance for Democracy & Development (ARDD) – Jordan; Yemen Local NGO Forum – Yemen</p> <p>Latin America: Humanitarian INGO Forum in Columbia</p>												
Donors and other institutions who funded the Project:	<p style="text-align: center;">NGO Fora support programme 2020 468'483 EUR - Source of funding</p>  <table border="1"> <caption>Source of funding for NGO Fora support programme 2020</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Source</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Luxemb.</td> <td>21%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Geneva</td> <td>8%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Own f.</td> <td>15%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Germany</td> <td>19%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hilton</td> <td>37%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Source	Percentage	Luxemb.	21%	Geneva	8%	Own f.	15%	Germany	19%	Hilton	37%
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Germany	19%												
Hilton	37%												
Timeline Covered for the Funds	1 st May 2020 – 31 st December 2020												
Total Annual Budget for the reporting period:	CHF 450,000 (Four Hundred and Fifty Thousand Swiss Francs)												

Background

The rationale behind this project and its timing during the COVID-19 pandemic brought sharply into focus the increased role for local and national actors on the frontline, which was particularly articulated in terms of the UN's Global Humanitarian Response Plan (GHRP) that was released in July 2020. Importantly, we all faced a situation when the international humanitarian system was forced to localize out of necessity, not by choice. This has brought a very different dynamic to the situation, and one that ICVA has tried to address in a proactive manner. The last eight months have been challenging times for many NGOs, particularly INGOs who struggled to maintain their humanitarian operations and the repatriation of many of their international field based staff.

Through this grant support, the ICVA secretariat embarked from 1st May- 31st December 2020 to support twelve carefully selected NGO fora at country levels in a range of Humanitarian contexts. 12



separate projects were supported to enhance localization/partnership efforts, during the COVID-19 response and under the Global Humanitarian Response Plans (GHRP).

The COVID-19 spread rapidly across the world. With impacts on existing and new humanitarian crises in many countries, was needed for an urgent response across the health, humanitarian and development dimensions. However, the contagious nature of the virus significantly constrained the provision and coordination of humanitarian assistance, and consequently the response to address the rising humanitarian needs at country level in the context of COVID-19 outbreak in many countries, putting national and local actors in the frontlines under additional pressures.

ICVA continued to promote localization as a key approach to address humanitarian needs in country and believes that the localized approach in the context of COVID-19 outbreak are key steps in shifting power and contribute to effective response driven by solidarity and humanitarian principles for affected populations including the most vulnerable. To this, this project on “Strengthening in-country NGO Fora to promote enhanced NGO collective action at field level during the COVID-19 Response” was timely and appreciated by the selected NGO fora in some of the key areas of humanitarian response include collective NGO action, information sharing, capacity building, promotion of learning opportunities and advocacy and guidance on governance and membership-related issues in the context of COVID-19 outbreak.

Project outline:

Overall Objective: *Promoting Principled and Protection-centered humanitarian action for all NGOs*

Specific objectives:

- (1) NGO efforts are supported towards localization, by linking coordination and communicating:*
- (2) NGO Fora advocacy and echoing their views at Global, regional and national levels are strengthened:*
- (3) Operational and conceptual space created for international and local NGOs to exchange ideas/perspectives are enhanced.*

Results:

- (1) At least 10 NGO fora develop a programme to align coordination and communications in a meaningful way and help the interface with the broader environment supporting localization of the COVID 19 response.*
The project reached 12 NGO fora providing them with added capacity for INGOs and NNGOs to better participate and be more integrated especially “local actors” to the COVID-19 pandemic response and coordination structures at country levels. These NGO Fora has allowed ICVA to efficiently bring diverse NGO voices into regional/global policy discussions, especially round “Localisation”.
- (2) NGO Fora advocacy capacity is strengthened. Engagement at global level Geneva through NGO For a requests and contributions enhanced.*
Most of the NGO Fora supported claim having seen improvements in their advocacy capacities at national, regional and global levels with their ongoing connections with ICVA, especially on COVID-19 related humanitarian policy discussions.
- (3) Improved NGO Fora coalition building and collective action. NGO For a develop key messages for advocacy to suit their context and input.*
Many of the NGO For a hired Programme and Advocacy Officer to help them in their coalition building action, and report this was achieved by the support given.



TOP RESULTS ACHIEVED:

- Increased visibility, participation and integration of local efforts in response to the Global COVID-19 pandemic to various humanitarian crisis the world is witnessing, and working with local/national Fora as agents for principled action, enablers of localization and embracing diversity.
- Strengthened the institutional capacities of the 12 NGO Fora through an quick injection of resources to enable to fill critical gaps such as the recruitment of necessary program staff to boost the workload in the NGO Fora secretariats.
- Fighting miss information on COVID-19 at community levels, by sharing of official WHO information to frontline staff and affected communities.
- Kept alive Grand Bargain commitments on “Localizations”, through country level workshops and dialogues, on taking forward the localization discussions forward at country levels.

Reinforcing localisation under this project:

In the early days of the pandemic in March 2020, ICVA issued [The Localisation discussion paper on COVID-19](#) which provided a foundation for dialogue and advocacy on reinforcing local and national action and the initial ideas for design for this project. In fact, as foreseen in the paper, COVID-19 provided a renewed commitment to the localisation agenda. With this momentum, ongoing work by ICVA as for example the profiling of national NGO engagement in international humanitarian coordination structures in the MENA region receive a specific attention and relevance. ICVA also explored this momentum to advocate for more space for national and local actors in regional and global coordination and decision-making mechanisms.

Discussions took place within the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) on how to extend participation and contribution of local and national NGOs in all its Results Groups (RGs). The Somalia NGO Forum, member of ICVA, co-chairs the IASC RG1 work on localisation together with UNHCR. ICVA national members to OPAG ([COAST](#), [FRD](#) and [ACBAR](#)) strongly reflect local concerns in OPAG policy work and advocate for a better bridging between policies and field realities. ICVA discussions on the [UN Reform](#) with UN High Level Official have also provided an opportunity to ask for better engagement by the UN Resident Coordinators and country teams with national and local actors. With ICVA facilitation, national actors’ voices were among the speakers of [2020 Global Protection Forum](#). The [2020 UNICEF- NGO Consultations](#), co-organised by ICVA had also a specific session dedicated to decolonialisation of aid, progress on localisation and efforts to address racisms and all forms of discrimination. This session was co-organised with the Alliance for Empowering Partnership (A4EP), which aims to strengthen locally led responses.

Moreover, to respond to additional challenges of COVID-19, ICVA stepped up its NGO Fora Programme with the support provided under this project. A total of 12 NGO Fora where carefully selected across Africa, Asia, Latin America and MENA received grants of an approximately 15'000 CHF by ICVA to enhance their support and coordination services to their members at country level and continue advocating on their behalf. ICVA also established a virtual support desk for the NGO Fora to help them navigate through the new challenges brought by the pandemic.

In MENA, ICVA engaged into an additional capacity development program targeting networks and civil society organisations (CSOs) in Syria and Turkey. A number of webinars organized by using technology platform with simultaneous translation when needed, proved to be cost-effective and allowed for an increased number of participants. who participated at the on-line events. The aim of the program is to strength the capacity of CSOs inn coordination, joint advocacy, and good governance and in turn, amplify the NGO voice at regional and global levels.



Risk management and duty of care

Risk management

Operational support provided to members and NGO Fora included issues related to risk management and duty of care which were particularly relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic. As planned prior to the pandemic, in addition to its Annual Conference, ICVA discussed risk management by the NGO sector in four other webinars and produced three briefing papers to guide its members practices on the subject. All the relevant information is available [here](#).

Duty of care

In its risk management work and because of the COVID-19, ICVA increasingly paid attention to duty of care and protection of humanitarian personnel. In May 2020, ICVA issued a [Call for Action on Protecting humanitarian workers against COVID-19](#). The call was issued in complementarity to the ongoing IASC efforts to run the Medevac services established in the GHRP, and because ICVA felt the need to prioritise prevention by strengthening labour rights, occupational safety measures and health for all NGO personnel, regardless of status and nationality.

Understanding that progress on duty of care requires system wide engagement, ICVA brought the issue for discussion at OPAG, which decided to convert the ICVA paper into a set of IASC minimum standards and commitments. The [IASC Minimum Standards on Duty of Care in the Context of COVID-19](#) were developed by an OPAG task team, under the co-leadership of ICVA and WFP. Focusing on preventing and mitigating COVID-19 related risks, the standards aim to protect the health and safety of personnel, while ensuring that organizations continue to deliver on their mandates. Attention is paid to non-discrimination and ensuring that all personnel, regardless of nationality or contractual type is equally covered and protected by the minimum standards in the COVID-19 context. It is acknowledged that the implementation of such standards may entail additional costs for organizations, for which a dialogue with donors may be warranted. The endorsement of such a document can also serve the NGO dialogue with donors for further investment by their side in duty of care.

Beneficiaries of this project:

This project supported 12 in-country NGO Fora (including mainly national, but also mixed and International NGO Fora) in contexts experiencing humanitarian crises along side the pandemic.

The project was designed with consultation with NGO fora active in four regions covered by ICVA to support during the COVID 19 pandemic to understand the challenges and role NGO For a in the humanitarian coordination architecture.

Remarks for the NGO Fora Coordinators we interviewed at the end of the project:

*“We liked the way we could design the project based on our needs to fit our context” **Dear Nugra Indonesia NGO Fora***

*“This support helped boost and support the of Local NGO Fora secretariat and its members in Yangon to raise awareness on the pandemic at community levels and translating into local languages key information from WHO” **Coordinator NGO Platform in Myanmar Pansy Tun Thein***

*“Funding helped us recruit an advocacy officer that helped pull together a collective NGO inputs into the UN Humanitarian Response plans for COVID-19 and other Humanitarian situations in the country” **Jose Louis Coordinator Colombia NGO Fora***



*“The support was timely, and enabled PNGO the NGO network in OPT to come together and work together, but also pull information on the COVID -19 response carried out by Civil Society in Palestine. The information compiled on the CSO’s response was used in coordinating with Palestinian authorities to fill gaps” **Samer Coordinator PNGO, OPT.***

*“At the start of the Pandemic, CHINGO the NGO Fora in Cameroon, quickly recruited an officer to help meet the mission of the secretariat to provide timely and useful analysis to it members” **Anne Trehondart Coordinator NGO Fora Cameroon.***

*“We set up a series of key workshops with National NGOs and key Government officials to create the space to discuss and take forward the localization discussions and to advocate to the Tanzanian Government on protecting humanitarian workers on the frontline, and the provision of PPEs”..... **Janemary Coordinator of the National Tanzanian NGO network***

*“The Somalia NGO Fora carried out a mapping of the work being carried out by local CSOs across the country to bring to donors, UN and Government decision making bodies” **Somalia NGO For a Dulmar Farah***

*“Communications to small local NGOs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is extremely challenging and even more during the Covid pandemic, and therefore we used these resources to improve information flows with local NGOs in remote parts of the country” **Emile DRC National NGO Coordinator***

DESCRIPTION OF THE TWELVE (12) SUPPORTED NGO FORA PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

Within the six (6) months of project implementation, the twelve (12) supported mainly National NGO Fora at the start conducted rapid assessments of the impact of the COVID-19 on their members, articulated and carried out capacity strengthening plans based on identified needs, carried out collective actions to government and humanitarian actors in country to influence policies of different clusters plan on COVID-19, the GHRP, advocated for increased participation of national NGOs in the HCT coordination clusters, analysed and shared vital global and national communication to members; and participated in exchange learning to increase knowledge of the Fora secretariat staff and members.

While international NGO Fora are usually well resourced by their members and donors, networks of national NGOs as those supported in the project consistently highlight lack of financial support, resource mobilization, project management, procurement & logistics, organizational development as their key challenges. The ability to secure funding is further linked to aspects of strategic planning, agenda setting and participation in key humanitarian leadership forums.

Engagement with NGO Fora has identified that strategic resource mobilization for these networks is a significant challenge. For most Fora, resources are scarce which means there is limited capacity to support detailed planning processes. Despite the recognition of the critical and growing role these fora play in many humanitarian crises, mobilization of resources is hampered due to lack of experience in engaging donors effectively, overburdened internal management systems, and lack of awareness of funding opportunities, among other factors.



Below is the breakdown of actual activities carried out by the different NGO fora:

Africa Region:

Somalia NGO Consortium (SNC); is the coordination forum for national NGOs working in a very high volatile and complex humanitarian situation. The forum is the meeting point between humanitarian and development NGOs; and SNC coordination capabilities spread across the country. The ICVA's NGO Fora support project provided funds for the recruitment and salary of one programme staff for six (6) months – a staff that was key in providing program direction for the coordination and collective actions of the forum. The program officer alongside a consultant led the survey to map local humanitarian actors and resource allocated to localization activities in Somalia – the results are being used to engage government and other stakeholders on the benefits of Localization agenda for the country. The funds catered for the series of coordination meeting organised by the program officer, to strengthened the engagement of NGOs in the UN's Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) among SNC members Sixty (60) CSOs, and pushed for the inclusion of Civil Society Organizations voices in the humanitarian response plan of COVID-19. The support provided opportunity for the Consortium to hold regular consultative meetings with heads of Somalia civil society groups; to champion for the inclusion, fair representation & equal contribution to decision making; of NGOs in the Humanitarian Country Team. The Consortium alongside other members successfully advocated for the adoption of a unified national capacity assessment tool and development plan – hence, Donor/INGOs will use the unified tool to assess their NNGOs partners. The Consortium coordinated with the Somalia government on the distribution PPEs to frontline humanitarian staffs and supported national Risk assessment on COVID-19 activities.

The **Coordination of Humanitarian INGOs (CHINGO)** is a network of international NGOs working Cameroon; and its members have strategic influence in Cameroon's humanitarian response plans and policies articulation. ICVA's support project fund provided the secretariat an added value in terms of personnel support for the National Coordinator. The Programme Officer supported the strengthening of coordination modalities at field level - with local authorities and Civil Society Organizations, notably in the North-West and South-West regions where populations have faced huge challenges in accessing humanitarian services in the past year. CHINGO's coordination meetings aided to identify and solve any administrative impediments being faced by NGOs (national and international) and ensure efficiency and complementarity are the guiding principles of humanitarian interventions. The extra personnel enabled the secretariat to participate in more national cluster meetings, facilitated all the information exchanges between the forum - twenty (20) NGOs members; and the Cameroonian government, UN and diplomatic community in the country. CHINGO utilized the funds to support its advocacies on duty of care for Humanitarian actors – especially for the inclusion of INGO staffs on Medivac plan and addressed the visa restriction for staffs of INGOs; and media outreaches on COVID-19 in country. A brochure on the mandate and activities of CHINGO members was developed and disseminated in October – the brochure is a monthly bulletin for communication and visibility purposes. Finally, through CHINGO's advocacy working group – which consists of heads of INGOs; led in the release of advocacy statements/notes on some major issues of humanitarian concern in the country, notably, the devastating effect of the floods in the Far North region as well as the attack on Kumba School on the 25th of October. Some of their media releases can be found in this link

Forum des Organisation Nationales Humanitaires et de Development (FONHAD) – DR Congo: is a non-profit platform established in 2010 from an initiative of national NGOs concerned with promoting and facilitating equitable participation and effective collaboration in the management of resources allocated to humanitarian and development response, hence, ensuring a



better quality of life for beneficiary communities. ICVA's support to FONHAD facilitated the recruitment of a programme consultant for the fora's secretariat; as an added capacity to secretariat, and; also the funds sustained the communication and database platforms of the secretariat – paid for the costs of premium package of the webmaster and database manager. The support raised the participation and voice of the forum members at the national stakeholders forums by funding the participation costs for FONHAD delegates in eleven (11) national teleworking cluster meetings – i.e. CROI and Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) meetings, to present the collective decisions of the forum members. The fora through the support strengthened the human capacity of its members on the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for COVID-19, through three (3) Virtual Zoom exchange learning sessions. FONHAD sustained its coordination mechanism by applying some of the funds to organise 15 coordination meetings for its members; through which it presented the forums' achievements and raised awareness on the strategy for reinforcing localization through the commitments of its members to humanitarian actions and localizing aids.

Cameroon Humanitarian Organisation Initiative (CHOI); Cameroon is another Cameroonian forum of NNGOs, that received support to address emerging COVID-19 challenges. CHOI's secretariat conducted a nation-wide rapid assessment to identify Cameroonian CSOs involved in the COVID-19 response – i.e. thematic areas of services, location of service, source of resources used etc. The results of the rapid assessment helped in helping the forum set up a robust consultation process with its members to reduce duplication of services – due limited funds; designed and conducted capacity building sessions for Cameroonian NGOs involved in the COVID-19 response – to address identified capacity gaps of member organizations. The forum's adaption to the new normal was necessitated by the funds, which allowed the forum design and hoist a new website for the forum - <http://www.choi-network.org/>; The website supported timely dissemination of COVID-19 information – compilation of response reports, articles, surveys, etc.; increased the forum's visibility – activities were posted on the website which was linked to other social media platforms; and the voices of its members were articulated through its blogging section and shared at the national stakeholders forum of Cameroonian NGOs. With close collaboration with UN agencies, CHOI was an active participant in the RiskCom stream and in the distribution of WASH materials and PPEs to the rural areas of Cameroon.

Tanzania Refugee and Migration Network (TAREMINET): is Tanzanian mixed network of local organisations – members are from NNGOs, INGOs & Refugee study centre; who through their work among migrants, refugees and asylum seekers; are reinforcing localization dialogue in Tanzanian humanitarian response. The support strengthened the resilience of the national secretariat of the forum by recruiting and paying the salary of program staff for six (6) months. This staff was pivotal in the forum's advocacy engagements with Tanzanian Government on the COVID-19 national response plan. The forum's strategic engagement with the government resulted in the national distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) among the vulnerable population – especially to migrant workers and refugees' settlements. TAREMINET raised awareness on Localization through series of targeted dialogue meetings with high government officials, TAREMINET members, CSOs stakeholders, media practitioners, donor communities and UN agencies – with expert contributions from ICVA Geneva resource persons. The awareness has generated a critical mass of CSO who are pushing for a national commitment from the government on Localization. TAREMINET conducted two (2) national level capacity building workshops – drawing resource persons from the ICVA secretariat. The funds enabled the forum to hold regular membership coordination meeting to present briefs and information on COVID-19; and articulate members resolutions for presentation in HCT. In addition, the forum is currently using part of the resources to coordinate Tanzania CSO contributions to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process, it is expected that TAREMINET will be presenting the CSO position paper during the country review, this year.



Asia & Pacific Region:

The NGO Fora support funds enabled the **Humanitarian Forum – Indonesia**, to finalize some of the forum’s initiatives and continued its targeted program implementations at the community levels. The fora recruited a program staff for a 6months period to support the secretariat; and also supported the development of a dedicated website (www.humanitarianforum.or.id) for dissemination of HFI response reports, published materials and tools for adaption for its members in the COVID-19 response. The website has become a repository of resources and tools. The forum conducted out a study on “Accelerating Localization through the COVID-19 Response in Indonesia” and the result was used to convey a national dialogue session with government officials, UN agencies, INGO and NNGO forums etc. HFI finalized, uploaded and continuously updated its HFI Joint Response Plan on COVID-19 (http://bit.ly/HFIResponsePlanCovid19_Aug2020);. The forum maintained its collaboration with the large Indonesian stakeholders by continuously participating in the development of the HCT-UNCT Multi Sectoral Response Plan and shared progress reports with its members. The fora within the period of the support, contributed immensely to the Risk assessment interventions by developing a concise and simple “Guidance Plan on COVID-19 Resilience at the Community Level (https://bit.ly/HFI_IDN_PanduanKampungSiagaCOVID19); and formulated an Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on camp management in COVID-19 pandemic situation for humanitarian workers and volunteers (http://bit.ly/HFI_IDN_SOPforCMinCOVID19). To promote a principled humanitarian response for its members, HFI conducted a series of e-learning sharing (Peer-to-Peer) – such as bi-weekly webinars, workshops, training, and coordination meetings for HFI members – see link to repository of webinars recordings.

The project supported the **National Humanitarian Network – Islamabad**; to remain resolute in the face of immense challenges, by providing part funds for the salary of the NGO fora’s national humanitarian coordinator. The services of the National Humanitarian Coordinator was retained to lead the survey to identify the gaps, challenges and good practices in the government – civil society engagement and coordination at the district levels: see report here <http://nhnpakistan.org/library/#reports>. The fora invested a large sum of their fund in national awareness raising - risk communication; on COVID-19 by providing essential community led solutions – i.e. developed and distributed COVID-19 toolkit (<http://nhnpakistan.org/library/#covid-awareness-toolkit>); and produced IEC materials in English and local languages. The toolkit is being used to strengthened local resilience and wellbeing of the community members. In support to the national response to bridge the capacity gap of frontline NGO staffs, NHN conducted five (5) webinars on reflective topics, supported the costs of members to participate in five IASC online briefings; and conducted six (6) FAQs session on COVID-19 for members.

The **Local Resource Centre – Myanmar**; was supported to recruit a short-term (6months) national consultant; who coordinated the activities of the fora’s secretariat. The consultant led a national online assessment among 387 CSOs from 14 states and divisions in Myanmar. The findings and results from the assessment were used to develop online training modules; targeted at 150 CSOs through series of structured trainings. The assessment report was used to produce a directory of CSOs in Myanmar, showing their strategic contribution to the COVID-19 response. In addition, this local NGO Platforms sits in the HCT and the Governments COVID-19 response committee, where their members could participate the views of local efforts in response to COVID-19.

Latin Americas Region

The **Forum of Humanitarian INGO in Columbia** is a new forum from Latin America region that was prioritized for support. The fora were supported to recruit an additional staff for the secretariat – an advocacy officer. The advocacy officer with support from the forum’s coordinator; was responsible for designing and implementing the forum’s advocacy actions on Protection issues –

especially for migrants, victims of internal conflicts (IDPs) and Refugees. The funds strengthened the resilience – with the presence of the new staff; of the forum to continue to participate in Columbia coordination platforms – both at regional and national levels. The forum coordinated the collective actions of NGOs in developing a “2021 advocacy strategy” for the region and conducted an advocacy training using the strategy document. The fora engaged with and analysed global scenarios, shared the information with members of the forum and who in turn used the information to carry out their advocacy engagements with the authorities/government agencies in Columbia. The forum established a regional Peer-to-Peer relationship with the INGOs Coalition for Migrants, Displaced and Refugees, Panama – a regional coordination platform for INGOs and NGOs forums.

Middle East and North Africa Region:

The **Palestinian NGO Networks (PNGO) – oPt**; is a civil society forum in oPt with a very active membership base, that is very agile and strives to identify local solutions, to the many humanitarian issues in OPT. The forum applied part of their funds to conduct a capacity assessment and mapping of NNGOs in Occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt). Armed with the research results, the forum embarked on guiding discussions of NGOs engagement and partnership within the WASH cluster. Through the capacity building programme for the local WASH cluster partners, more the forum’s members are more active and engaged in the cluster groups – i.e. strategies, planning, assessments, resource allocation, and project implementation initiatives. This fund supported in data collection which provided them with real-time data they could feed into national coordination structures. The fora conducted series of trainings for NNGOs covering various topics – like Introduction to Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) for WASH Cluster, Health Thematic Groups; and, in collaboration with UNFPA and UNICEF it carried out trainings for the Protection Cluster covering Child Protection/Mental Health & Psychological Support (CPMHPSS WG), Gender Based Violence (GBV-SC), and HPC Introductory Workshop, etc. Finally, with collaboration of OCHA, PNGO held a consultation session on the HPC 2021, in parallel with the Annexation Plan, COVID-19 Pandemic and the challenges of limited resources for NNGOs

Jordanian NGOs Forum (JONAF) - Arab Renaissance for Democracy & Development (ARDD, Jordan): JONAF conducted an evaluation assessment to gauge JONAF’s response to COVID-19 crisis. It was a quick evaluation of the main experiences, available capacities, gaps and achievements as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of COVID-19 response. The evaluation also looked at the existing collaboration between the fora members and on how to improve the fora’s coordination capacity. With the results of the evaluation, it designed and carried out three (3) online training sessions for JONAF members on effective pandemic response – topics were on Networking, Media Engagement and Visibility; and Data Collection and Monitoring. The fund also provided opportunity for the JONAF Steering Committee to meet and review the governance structure and membership criteria/guideline of the fora – developed the JONAF Charter. Finally, JONAF mobilized local NGOs in to support the efforts the government to develop new emergency response plan to address the second wave of COVID-19 – especially developing plans to respond to the anticipated challenges on health, economy and social aspects of life.

The **Yemeni Civil Society Organizations Forum (YCSOF):** is a major coalition of independent CSOs working on humanitarian and development field and actively contributes to humanitarian response efforts in Yemen. This Yemen CSOs forum through the support of the funds continued to reinforce their localisation and partnership agenda during COVID-19 by applying its fund to activities that support institutional development – i.e. development of the for a’s the strategic plan and manual guidance, recruitment of a program coordinator and consultant for 6months. Organized monthly and ad-hoc meetings for it nine (9) members to agree on advocacy and collective actions. It also conducted trainings advocacy, networking and joint coordination. As part of its collective action,



it invested part of the funds to raise awareness and sensitization on Localization for members of the forum.

Other ICVA actions by regions that supported the NGO fora alongside this project:

NGO Fora support in Africa:

- Strengthened links between ICVA and NGO fora across Africa, to support fora through information exchange and both joint and bilateral support, including a particular focus on regular engagement and support to national NGO fora with established regular bi-weekly calls with fora.
- Fed issues and priorities identified by national and international NGO fora into ICVAs global advocacy and policy work.
- Engaged with and supported NGO fora in systematic exchanges at country, regional and inter regional level. This included through calls, side events in institutional processes and briefings. For example: in June 2020, ICVA supported the INGO forum in Mali (FONGIM) to participate on a high-level panel, “Transition Event from Relief to Development” moderated by the UN Assistant Secretary-General, Development Cooperation Office, the panel considered achievements, challenges, and opportunities to strengthen collaboration at country, regional and global levels and In July 2020, the INGO forum in Mali (FONGIM), in collaboration with ICVA, gave a presentation on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in Mali; Burkina Faso scale up, Central Sahel MRT, Nigeria and Somalia NGO bills and COVID 19.
- Hosted online peer-to-peer exchanges between NGO fora on topics including the Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 and Duty of Care, including access to Medevac provisions.
- Extended capacity building support to the Burkina Faso forum (August and September 2020) on Governance.
- Completed two missions to Mali (June 2019 and March 2020), debriefed the outgoing and briefed the incoming Mali NGO fora coordinators, supporting their engagement in key meetings such as the HAS, MRT etc.
- Selected NGO fora in the region for financial support under the ICVA global COVID-19 NGO fora support project.

NGO Fora support in Asia

- Engaged with and supported an increased number of country level NGO fora in Asia to take a strengthened role at country and sub-regional Asia level and enabled connection, cross learning and replication between networks to improve and strengthen their work and outcomes. This included through joint NGO fora workshops and bilateral needs-based support. For example:
 - Direct bilateral support to strengthen the Rohingya Response NGO Platform in 2019. Having previously directly supported establishment of the NGO coordination body, ICVA continued to extend significant bilateral support to the fora resulting in a rapidly established functional NGO coordination body.
 - Organized a series of Inter-regional NGO fora networking meetings on the COVID-19 response (March – December 2020). Three NGO fora virtual meeting were organized focusing on 1) advocacy to donors on funding flexibility; 2) experience exchange on NGO fora roles during COVID responses; and, 3) information sharing on good practices, funding opportunities etc.
 - Through the global NGO fora project supported by ICVA, three national fora from Asia - Myanmar (LRC), Pakistan (NHN) and Indonesia (HFI) - received small grants to strengthen in country coordination work including support for learning events around COVID-19 publication of IEC materials etc.

NGO Fora programme MENA

- Engaged with and supported NGO fora across MENA on governance, strategy, advocacy and policy, including through joint NGO fora workshops as well as bilateral support - with a specific focus on Syria, Yemen, OPT and Libya. For example, in 2020, the MENA team held monthly meetings with the new Yemen National NGO fora director and steering committee members covering topics such as fora governance and advocacy and sharing of key tools and engaged with the Yemen INGO Fora to support the Advocacy and Policy Working Group to mainstream localization as one of the key strategic objectives and acted as a trust broker to facilitate collaboration between the National and International NGO fora.
- Invested in NGO fora connections to support exchange of information and inform engagement and positioning including at the regional and global IASC and donor level. Examples include the Yemen Pledging conference, in June 2020 where ICVA coordinated with national and international NGOs and NGO Fora developing and presenting a statement on their behalf. ICVA MENA was the only actor to raise the voice and priorities of national NGOs, emphasizing localization as a critical priority. In May 2020, ICVA MENA convened a meeting with all MENA NGO fora representatives to exchange and engage on preparedness and response in the context of COVID-19.
- Developed a strategic partnership with UNDP to **support development and capacity of 13 Syrian NGO networks in Syria and Turkey**. The engagement and capacity building programme is focused on strengthening the capacity of networks on coordination, advocacy, governance and strategic planning and in turn amplify the NGO voice at regional and global levels, August 2020.

Main challenges and opportunities:

Opportunities:

- During the Covid-19 crisis, ICVA demonstrated flexibility and agility in how to adapt.
- The COVID-19 Pandemic necessitated changes in the ways ICVA worked in the regions. With travel heavily restricted or impossible through most of 2020 and into 2021, time previously spent travelling, in workshops and engaging at individual country level was and will continue to be reassigned. Remote working has proved effective on many levels – including an enhanced regional dialogue and response on key issues and increased frequency of engagement with many stakeholders and partners – and there is an opportunity now to take stock and revisit priorities and ways of working both through the COVID-19 Pandemic and beyond.
- By reducing the time and resources previously assigned to international travel and country based presence; ICVA has been able to increase engagement in key discussions and processes and deepen relations with individual members and NGO fora through online member and fora meetings and regular online bilateral meetings with NGO fora. This has resulted in increased interaction and enhanced relations than was previously achieved through intermittent country missions.

Challenges:

- Restrictions on international movement of medical and humanitarian personal and goods into affected countries.
- Restrictions by Banks to transfer funds to countries on the counter terrorism list such as – oPt, Somalia, etc; was problematic at the start, causing delays.
- Safety and security of frontline humanitarian and medical workers - duty of care (ability to prevent & control the disease with less knowledge & operational capacity – staffs became infected)
- Some Governments used the COVID-19 to enforce stronger measures without necessarily looking at human rights angle.



- Shrink space for LNNGOs engagement – COVID-19 engagements or intervention were national Govt focused and LNNGOs side-lined. In some instance, LNNGOs had to write strong worded letters to the UNOCHA and National Govts that prompted their involvements – i.e. during the CERF (Bangladesh, Southern Sudan)
- Restriction on Affected Population Accessing Services and Assistance – increased service demand but limited access to communities due to govt policy restrictions,
- National NGO For a often lack the resources to engage meaningfully in-country coordination mechanisms.

Lessons learned:

- Local level coordination mechanisms are very important as internationally-led coordination normally at national level doesn't always trickle down. COAST one of ICVA members for examples have conducted a mapping of local actors' work and what they are doing which had proven very useful for all.
- Where existing local humanitarian coordination mechanisms are working, it may be best to reinforce them first, and then see how they can be adapted to support localization.
- Investing in pooled funds (CBPF or NGO led) is important, this may often be the best way to channel funds as directly as possible to local and national actors, taking advantage of good management systems already in place.
- To support localization, fair funding of core costs of operational local and national NGOs is necessary and urgent, so they can properly support frontline staff.
- INGOs are facing increasing challenges related to fundraising and their operating models in general. COVID-19 may speed up localization process already taking place, particularly in regard to their shift from direct implementation to remote support. Donors can be active partners in this process, including supporting with flexibility as needed.
- During COVID-19 response, much of the work moved on-line, further alienating may small local actors, who lacked the proper IT systems.
- Continued advocacy and coordination is necessary to maintain the momentum that this project has started on highlighting the need for L/NGO representation in key humanitarian coordination mechanisms such as the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and clusters.
- As the global economy begins to re-open, It will be imperative to institute Peer-to-Peer learning platforms – hybrid Community of Practices; and support that promote learning exchanges between regional forums; and institutional strengthening – i.e. staffing, operationalizing for a policies/strategic documents, etc.
- With the role played The NGOs in the HRP for COVID-19 has shown there are inherent institutional and human capacity advantages which can be explored in humanitarian response. ICVA can invest in maximizing the potentials of INGOs and NGOs to respond to their context – national and global; and facilitate their access to in-country pool funds.
- Continuously advocate for or/and connect NNGOs to advocate for inclusion in the national government response and other national coordination mechanisms.
- Cascade information on ICVA membership – showcasing the benefits and opportunities for members
- How quality and accountability will be ensured within programmes, what does effective remote support look like and how donors can support this better.

Future needs:

ICVA, guided by NGO Fora interest and needs, held a series of online-calls with the 12 of the recipient NGO Fora, in mid January 2021 to better understand how NGO forums had benefited from the support and look ahead on future needs. During these calls ICVA collected inputs into how best to support and better understand the work forums are already doing in this realm, and if there are tolls research and best practices that could be applied.



- Empowering local actors through their national NGO platurms to the issues of shrinking humanitarian space in general, and shrinking civic space in particular.
- Continue to support ambitious targets for increasing local and national actors share of Country based pooled Funds
- Promote learning through inter-regional Peer-to-Peer learning mechanism
- Support fundraising to NGO fora
- Information sharing – need to contribute to building the ICT system for the NGO
- Facilitate topical discussion for regional nexus discussions – i.e. development, Peace and humanitarian
- Sustain NGO Fora localization support – by supporting national interventions and collective actions that align to humanitarian principles
- Support in-country Localization Baselineing and Mapping activities – a great opportunity for NNGO forums to identify and prioritize their issues/agendas, develop a roadmap for implementation and set progress indicators.
- As we have moved more into the virtual space, to consider support to local front line NGOs be better connected and engaged.

Expenses narrative notes :

Total overall budget for the programme was: CHF 450,000, covered by following grants from: the Hilton foundation, Etat Geneve, MFA Luxemburg, Germany, and non-Earmarked ICVA`s general funds. A total of CHF 249,200 under Personal costs and CHF 200,800 under Non-Personal costs:

Under Etat de Genève (CHF 40,000 total contribution)

1. Personal Costs:

CHF 15,000 was spent on covering the costs for the Covid support officer for 6 months under implementation of this project.

The Covid support officer, played a central role in the day to day implementation of the project and acted as the focal point for the 12 selected NGO fora. He managed and set-up the criteria and selection processes, coordinated the transfers of funds, put in place partnership agreements, handling and processing the reports from the NGO Fora, and coordinating closely with ICVA regional teams. Learning exchanges across the NGO for a during the course of the project were also set up.

2. Non-Personal costs:

A subtotal of CHF 25,000 was expensed under non-personnel. Broken down as follows: CHF 20,000 covered the grants provided to the 12 NGO For a under this project. In addition, CHF 5,000 covered learning events, in which NGO Fora participated.

German grant: (CHF 104,700 contribution)

1. Personal Costs:

Under Personnel costs, CHF 20,000 covered the balance of the cost of the Covid support officer under this project over a duration of six months.

The Covid support officer, played a central role in the day to day implementation of the project and acted as the focal point with the 12 selected NGO fora. He managed set-up the criteria and slection processes, coordinated the transfers of funds, put in place partnership agreements, handling the reports from the NGO For a, and coordinating closely with ICVA regional teams. Learning exchanges across the NGO for a during the course of the project were also set up.

2. Non-Personal costs

CHF 84,700 covered financial support through small grants to 12 NGO Fora.

Hilton Foundation: (CHF 200,000 total contribution)

1. Personal costs:



A total of FTE CHF 92,000, covered staff time under the implementation of this project over the six-month period of the Executive Director 10% (CHF 4,600), Director of Programmes 19%, Finance and Administration 12% (CHF 13,800), Learning Coordinator 20% (CHF 9,200), and three Regional Representatives based in Bangkok, Nairobi and Amman at 38% (CHF 46,000).

Executive Director: provided strategic leadership engagement at the IASC Principles, Grand Bargain signatories meetings, and in all high level ICVA engagements pertaining to the objectives under this project. He was also responsible for the performance of the ICVA Secretariat, for the quality of the services and products, and for maintaining the credibility and reputation of ICVA.

Director of Programmes: supported the overall NGO Fora programme and its development , its delivery in the regional and national levels, and general oversight of the project including reporting & budget oversight.

Finance and Adminsitration: Was responsible for the day to day operations of ICVA`s finances and human resources under this action. He ensured the Financial and resource management of ICVA`s secretariate in accordance with ICVA policies and work directly with ICVA`s outsourced financial services to produce the reports and prepare for the audits.

Learning Coordinator: lead ICVA`s learning streams contained in this project, and helped reach out to members and NGOs fora to support their access to information and understanding of the humanitarian sector.

ICVA Regional Representatives/deputies: in Asia, Africa, MENA supported this project as part of accompanying and supporting the NGO Fora in their respective regions. They are also responsible for continuing the relations and engagements after the project is completed.

2. Non-Personal costs:

Total CHF 91,000 under non-personnel, was broken down as follows expenditures: CHF 6,400 covered expenses in Learning events, webinars and virtual exchanges. CHF 75,000 was made of the direct small financial grants to 12 NGO Fora. CHF 4,232 covered general office costs and CHF 5,428 for staff travel and transportation related costs.

Luxemburg MFA: (CHF 110,000 total contribution)

CHF 110,000 covered Core staff

Non-Earmarked contributions: (CHF 12,200 total contribution)

Personal costs:

CHF 12,200 covered the balance of Core staff costs.

Annexures:

Developed Resource Materials:

- [http://resourcecenter.nhnpakistan.org/index.php/webinars-records/264-preparedness-response-covid-monsoon-loctus;](http://resourcecenter.nhnpakistan.org/index.php/webinars-records/264-preparedness-response-covid-monsoon-loctus)
- <http://resourcecenter.nhnpakistan.org/index.php/webinars-records/296-covid-effects-vulnerable;>
- <http://resourcecenter.nhnpakistan.org/index.php/webinars-records/293-ceg-covid-20>
- <https://bit.ly/COVID19-HFI>
- <http://nhnpakistan.org/library/#COVID-19-posters>
- Tools developed <http://nhnpakistan.org/library/#toolkit>



- Report: <http://nhnpakistan.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Community-knowledge-perception-and-attitude-survey-report.pdf>
- <http://www.choi-network.org/>
- <https://ardd-jo.org/News-Room/al-maaytah-stressed-the-need-for-a-national-methodology-for>
- <https://ardd-jo.org/News-Room/ionaf-launches-phase-two-of-its-response-plan-to-combat>
- <https://ardd-jo.org/Publications/strengthening-localization-in-jordan-localization-reinforce-and-support-do-not>
- [JONAF COVID-19 Response Assessment](#)

Webinars Videos/YouTube

- <https://youtu.be/zA8WjSm055s>
- <https://youtu.be/dcWEt25Cf0Y>
- <https://youtu.be/fTr-WcXIJS8>

COP Links:

- Governance and Membership: <https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/a44c4272-516f-4fd7-a0e0-03cbcb3d8f95>
- Exchange Learning on COVID-19 Assessments: <https://web.microsoftstream.com/video/fa3013e9-a890-4573-9d63-18add4a18240>