



2009

# ANNUAL REPORT

International Council of Voluntary Agencies  
Conseil International des Agences Bénévoles  
Consejo Internacional de Organizaciones Voluntarias

# ICVA Mission Statement

Adopted by the 12<sup>th</sup> ICVA General Assembly, February 2003

## ICVA – An Advocacy Alliance for Humanitarian Action

*The International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) is a non-profit global association of non-governmental organisations that works as a collective body to promote, and advocate for, human rights and a humanitarian perspective in global debates and responses. The heart of the ICVA mission is to support NGOs to protect and assist people in need, to address the causes of their plight, and to act as a channel for translating patterns and trends into advocacy.*

*ICVA seeks to strengthen NGOs as a part of civil society through the relationships among member organisations from around the world. It facilitates the sharing and creative use of practical experience and strategies to promote and protect human rights, including those of refugees and displaced peoples, and to provide humanitarian assistance from the perspective of justice and sustainable development. ICVA fosters partnerships among agencies for the sharing and dissemination of information to attain consensus among member agencies on prioritised issues in order to effect change, particularly at the international level.*

*ICVA advocates vis-à-vis governments and international agencies for a strong NGO role in efforts to secure human rights, prevent conflicts, prepare for disasters, and improve humanitarian responses to distressed populations. Through its cooperative and catalytic nature, it gathers and exchanges information and raises awareness on the most vital matters of humanitarian concern before policy-making bodies.*

*ICVA has been in existence since 1962. It works to secure the commitment of the world community to address injustice, ensure dignity and rights, and promote international strategies that attend to human needs. Today's NGO members are strengthened in their missions to provide global assistance through the power and persuasion of the ICVA alliance. Tomorrow's members will continue to enrich the network with experience and opinion and will strengthen the impact of this alliance in bringing about a just world.*

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# FOREWORD

2008, in many ways, was a year of changes and challenges throughout the world. It was also a year of changes and challenges for humanitarian organisations in the way they worked, particularly in terms of their ability to gain access to populations in need. Security and access restrictions continued to deteriorate in a number of situations, particularly Somalia, Sudan, Afghanistan, and Sri Lanka. Attacks against aid workers have increased sharply since 2006, with a particular increase in kidnappings. The three most violent contexts for aid work, Sudan (Darfur), Afghanistan, and Somalia, accounted for more than 60% of violent incidents and aid worker victims. The effects of climate change are being felt more. The food price crisis, followed by the start of the global financial crisis threw up even more challenges – the brunt of which will likely be felt particularly by the most vulnerable populations in the months, and possibly years, to come.

Within the humanitarian community, the UN-led reform agenda continued to dominate response in many countries – with the key phrase being that it was no longer a reform, but the “way we do business.” In reality, there continue to be a number of ongoing challenges with the reform agenda, including the involvement of local and national NGOs in response coordination mechanisms, for example.

Challenges were presented to international NGOs in the early days of the Cyclone Nargis response in Myanmar. In the response, ICVA took the step of supporting an NGO Liaison Officer to help ensure improved NGO coordination and engagement – and particularly that of local and national NGOs – in the response mechanisms. The NGO Liaison Officer also played an important role, along with the Sphere Project and the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership

## ICVA'S STRUCTURE

### *General Assembly*

- ◆ Sets the strategic direction of the ICVA network, including adopting a three-year strategic plan (2009-2011 Strategic Plan is available at: [www.icva.ch/doc00003328.html](http://www.icva.ch/doc00003328.html))
- ◆ All ICVA members, meeting once every three years; the 14<sup>th</sup> General Assembly was held on 3-4 February 2009
- ◆ Elects the Executive Committee and the Chair of the Executive Committee
- ◆ Debates relevant policy, advocacy, and operational issues of concern to ICVA within the broader humanitarian context

### *Executive Committee*

- ◆ On behalf of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee (EXCOM) oversees the formulation and implementation of strategies, policy, membership decisions, and ICVA's activities
- ◆ Elects its Vice-Chair and Treasurer who, together with the Chair of the Executive Committee, are responsible for maintaining ICVA's humanitarian identity
- ◆ Adopts and oversees ICVA's Annual Plan and ensures that it is in line with the Strategic Plan
- ◆ Nine members elected by the General Assembly, with up to two co-opted for gender and regional balance
- ◆ Meets physically twice a year and takes additional decisions electronically

### *ICVA Secretariat*

- ◆ Based in Geneva to implement ICVA's strategic and annual plans and related activities on a daily basis
- ◆ Services the membership, including through the analysis and sharing of information in a targeted manner
- ◆ By gathering field-based members' views, the Secretariat aims to provide a “reality check” to policy discussions at the international level
- ◆ Engages proactively in humanitarian advocacy by representing members' views and concerns in various international forums, such as the Global Humanitarian Platform, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, or UNHCR's Executive and Standing Committees
- ◆ Organises meetings on current policy debates or country situations

International, in ensuring that quality and accountability issues did not get lost in the response. Supporting such a function was also seen as a useful role for ICVA to play in the future.

ICVA, of course, continued its central role of bringing the field-based perspectives of its members to international forums in an attempt to influence decision-makers and policy. The information-sharing role that ICVA plays with its members continues to be essential, as do the links that ICVA builds between NGOs based throughout the world.

Building on the successes of the past, and learning lessons from what worked or did not work, ICVA embarked upon the development of its future strategy. With the help of the Humanitarian Futures Programme (based at King's College), ICVA's members undertook an exercise to look at how they can best work together to meet future challenges that will require humanitarians to work more closely together, as well as to develop partnerships beyond the traditional ones. The draft action plan that was developed through the project contributed to the draft Strategic Plan, which was adopted by the ICVA membership at its General Assembly in February 2009.

As ICVA embarks upon its new Strategic Plan, it will be during a time when we will likely see greater impacts of climate change, which will continue to challenge us as humanitarians. At the same time, we will need to continue to work much harder to ensure more effective humanitarian responses – this goal of the Global Humanitarian Platform remains one we must achieve.

Thank you to the outgoing Executive Committee for its hard work, which guided ICVA over the last three years – they have left ICVA in good health. The new Executive Committee, elected at the General Assembly in February 2009, will have to take up that role and ensure that ICVA is able to meet its strategic objectives – ultimately ensuring better humanitarian outcomes for those affected by emergencies. Finally, let me thank the ICVA Secretariat, which continued to serve the membership despite its small size (which, fortunately, was able to grow from four to five full-time staff in 2008). I hope that you will continue to find value in the work of ICVA and that ICVA continues to evolve as a network assisting the humanitarian community to adapt to the changes and challenges ahead. ■

With warm regards,

Paul O'Brien  
Chair, ICVA Executive Committee

### SPARKING THE DEBATE: *TALK BACK*

ICVA's newsletter, *Talk Back*, raises critical and constructive arguments that can be seen as controversial by some, but which try to provoke debate by challenging the system in order to move the humanitarian community forward. *Talk Back* draws on field-based information from its members, as well as on the ICVA Secretariat's interaction with partners. Its articles call the attention of humanitarian actors to pressing thematic issues and country situations in a style that (hopefully) makes for an enjoyable read.

To subscribe to *Talk Back*, send an e-mail with the subject "subscribe" to [talkback@icva.ch](mailto:talkback@icva.ch).

# ICVA SUPPORTS IN-COUNTRY NGO COORDINATION

When Cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar, the challenges to responding to humanitarian needs were enormous – not just in terms of the logistics of reaching affected populations in remote areas, but also in terms of gaining access to the country for international humanitarian agencies in the early days. The scale of the cyclone showed all indications that there would likely be numerous NGOs wanting to provide humanitarian aid.

Almost a year prior to Cyclone Nargis, ICVA had taken a look back at lessons learned and evaluations from previous large-scale emergency responses and what they said on coordination. Several of these evaluations generally highlighted the lack of coordination in many of the responses, which had a negative impact on the delivery of aid. The findings of the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition's *Joint Evaluation of the International Response to the Indian Ocean tsunami*, as well as the *NGO Impact Initiative* report showed that, particularly on the NGO side, coordination in terms of response was weak. One of the recommendations of the *NGO Impact Initiative* was that "INGOs must prioritize coordination as a duty and functional requirement in humanitarian response." Taking this recommendation seriously, ICVA created a fund that could be used to help support (emergency) NGO coordination at the field level for three months. Among the criteria for using the fund would be a request from NGOs for such support.

When Cyclone Nargis hit, some ICVA members responding in Myanmar almost immediately saw the need for some sort of mechanism to facilitate coordination, particularly given the various mechanisms (such as clusters) that were being set up. It was clear that whatever support would be provided it would need to add value to the work of NGOs and not be a burden.

Informal consultations were undertaken by the ICVA Secretariat among a number of NGOs as to the perceived value of having some sort of NGO coordination or liaison function in Myanmar. It turned out (as it often does) that there was no common viewpoint within the NGO community. Some were very keen on having such a position created to facilitate their work. Others felt that there was no need, despite the ICVA Secretariat recalling the recommendations made in previous evaluations.

In the end, there were enough NGOs that were keen on having a person put in place that ICVA was able to go ahead. An ICVA member had identified an available and skilled person who would be able to work closely with both local and international NGOs. In addition, by working with the Sphere Project and Humanitarian Accountability Partnership International (HAP), the person would also ensure that quality and accountability were seen as integral parts of the response.

## ICVA'S WORK AND ADDED VALUE

As the only global NGO network for humanitarian advocacy, ICVA is in a unique position to bring the views of its diverse membership to international humanitarian forums. Based on the broad operational expertise of its members, ICVA provides a crucial "reality check" in coordination and policy-making forums, such as the Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP), the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) governing bodies.

The ICVA Secretariat, which services the membership and carries out the day-to-day activities of the network, engages in proactive advocacy around current humanitarian issues. Some of the issues on which ICVA focuses include, but are not limited to, protection, reform of the humanitarian system, humanitarian principles, humanitarian space, humanitarian financing, quality and accountability, and humanitarian-military relations. ICVA also supports field level responses by facilitating NGO coordination in

A steering committee of ICVA members in Myanmar was formed to supervise the position and the terms of reference for the position were drawn up in consultation with NGOs and other humanitarian actors on the ground by mid-June 2008. In the end, it was agreed that the position would be one that should add value to the work of not only NGOs (local, national, and international, including community based organisations), but also the UN. An advisory role to the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and through him (or another NGO representative) to the Tripartite Group (ASEAN, Government of the Union of Myanmar, and UN) was also built into the terms of reference. The position was based part-time in the Local Resource Centre, which helped to build better links with local NGOs. Save the Children generously facilitated the hosting and management of the NGO Liaison Officer (NGO LO). Oxfam provided funding for the position before the ICVA fund was allocated to the position. Church World Service Pakistan (CWS)/Action by Churches Together (ACT) also generously contributed to ICVA's NGO coordination fund so as to support the work in Myanmar.

The main priorities of the position included: working on relations between international NGOs, national NGOs, and the UN; facilitating communications and information exchange (while working closely with the existing Myanmar Information Management Unit and the Local Resource Centre); promoting humanitarian principles; and working on quality and accountability issues. It was made very clear that the role of the NGO LO was meant "to make the work of NGOs easier and not to add further meetings to their schedules."

While a formal evaluation of the position has yet to be done, accounts of the work done by Kerren Hedlund in the position have been extremely positive – from within the NGO community and beyond. While the position was able to add to "a lasting contribution to NGO operations in the country" there is still a need for continued relationship building with local NGOs. That role will continue, even though ICVA's contribution ended almost a year after it started (the original budget lasted longer than anticipated).

emergency responses, as was done following the cyclone in Myanmar in May 2008 (see *ICVA Supports In-Country NGO Coordination*, p.4). Through its timely and targeted sharing of information and analyses of on-going processes, ICVA provides its members with indispensable tools for their own advocacy and operations. ICVA also supports member organisations to participate directly in forums like the IASC or UNHCR's Annual NGO Consultations.

An important challenge for today's humanitarian system is the gap that exists between the policy-making level on the one hand and the field level on the other. ICVA tries to bridge this gap in both directions, by facilitating the flow of information and by improving direct NGO engagement in policy development. In reality, however, this gap can only be bridged through collective efforts. ICVA continues to do its best in contributing to such efforts.

What has become clear from the experience of Myanmar is that there can be value in having such a position in humanitarian coordination, but that it requires getting the right person in place. Having someone who had previous experience and relationships with NGOs was invaluable. It was also essential to have someone who was considered "neutral," but maintained good relationships with all stakeholders. The next step for ICVA will be to carry out a review of the position, as well as of other NGO coordination positions, to try and learn lessons of how best to move forward in better supporting field responses in the future. ■

# THE STRENGTHENING OF THE HUMANITARIAN

Since the launch of the humanitarian reform process by the UN, ICVA has prioritised the strengthening of the function of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) as the key aspect of this process. Effective leadership in terms of setting a humanitarian agenda and advocating for the basic rights of disaster-affected populations, as well as facilitating a coordinated response, should go a long way in realising better humanitarian outcomes. In a sense, with competent HCs in place, the other reform parts would probably not even have been necessary.

More than three years down the road of humanitarian reform, the time has come to draw a conclusion that in pushing for a significant overhaul of the system for the selection and appointment of HCs, ICVA has largely been fighting a lost battle. It is true that some changes have been made and that 2009 will see the re-creation of a pool with pre-screened candidates for HC positions. Looking at the situation on the ground and the performance of HCs in various countries, however, there is no question that the HC strengthening component of humanitarian reform has been seriously lacking when it comes to real progress.

The main reason for this lack of serious progress is the linkage of the HC with the Resident Coordinator (RC) position, which the UN insists must be the way forward. The differences between the HC and RC functions are quite well-known. An RC is expected to work with the government in putting in place development strategies and plans. An HC, however, must stand up when a government denies humanitarian access to areas or regions where there are urgent humanitarian needs. As many NGOs expect that the UN will provide leadership on humanitarian issues, they feel that advocacy on needs and access should prevail, whatever the political sensitivities are in the UN's relations with a government. In practice, an HC/RC often chooses the easy way out and will play it softly so as not to upset the government in such situations. (see also *Failing Humanitarian Leadership in Zimbabwe*, p. 12).

In 2008, ICVA continued its advocacy to push for more transparent HC appointment processes and for a delinking of the HC function from other, non-humanitarian, UN responsibilities. ICVA Secretariat representatives participated extensively in the HC Issues Group of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). Geneva-based

ICVA members and NGOs met with newly appointed HCs and provided their views for a study on the various HC models. One point NGOs raised in the context of the meeting on the HC models was the fact that HC appointments remain largely a matter of rubber-stamping since the RC too often (almost always, in fact) also wears the HC hat. The RC appointment, which comes first, is a UN-only process over which NGOs have no influence. In an effort to ensure that RCs have knowledge of humanitarian issues, candidates will be recruited for the HC pool from the humanitarian side of the UN system, as well as from external agencies, such as the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and NGOs. With the UN's decision to combine

## YOUR KEY TO INFORMATION: ICVA WEBSITE PASSWORDS

ICVA's website, [www.icva.ch](http://www.icva.ch), is a useful access point for up-to-date information on humanitarian issues. It provides a repository of documents and tools for humanitarian actors. Its "members only" section contains material that is not available in the public domain. It features policy documents and discussion papers in their early stages, as well as meeting reports and other documentation that is relevant to ICVA's members as important actors in humanitarian response. It thus enables them to follow, and engage in, policy debates as they develop. Each staff member of an ICVA member organisation is entitled to a password to the ICVA website. They simply need to send a message to [webmaster@icva.ch](mailto:webmaster@icva.ch) requesting a username and password.

# COORDINATOR FUNCTION: FIGHTING A LOST BATTLE?

the HC and RC functions as standard practice, the chances of these candidates being deployed as HCs will be pretty slim, if they do not also show an interest in being RCs.

Meanwhile, the ICVA Secretariat and members will continue to highlight poor HC performance where it is found. The project to look at the role of NGOs in the context of humanitarian reform (undertaken by a consortium of NGOs, which includes ICVA) will examine experiences and views of NGOs in working with HCs, for example, in the context of a humanitarian country team (see *NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project*, p. 12). ICVA will also continue to emphasise the need for a better performance appraisal system that will ensure that poor performers are screened out. The question remains whether real progress will be possible as long as the RC/HC continues to be a double-hatted role. While ICVA cannot escape the feeling of having lost the battle, we cannot afford to throw in the towel. The efforts to change the HC system must continue for the sake of operational colleagues, not to mention affected populations, who deserve more effective leaders that prioritise humanitarian needs before anything else. ■

## ICVA'S ANNUAL CONFERENCE: *THE ESSENTIAL HUMANITARIAN REFORMS*

The annual ICVA Conference is meant to provide an opportunity to take a day to reflect on issues and challenges affecting humanitarian action. Originally tied to the tri-annual ICVA General Assembly, the Conferences were seen as an important event and have become annual since 2006. The agendas of the Conferences are deliberately framed with provocative themes and panel titles to get people thinking and reacting to the discussions.

The 2008 Conference, entitled *The Essential Humanitarian Reforms*, looked at three recurring challenges in humanitarian response that were not being addressed by the UN-led humanitarian reform process. The Conference opened with a keynote address by Charles Petrie (UN Special Advisor and former Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator, and UNDP Resident Representative, Union of Myanmar) who pointed to the need for humanitarian actors not to be instrumentalised by political actors. He also reminded the audience that humanitarian assistance is provided because people have a right to it.

The first panel of the day looked at how humanitarian responses could better build on existing local and national capacity: *Flipping the System*. While there is often much talk about how the international community should build upon existing capacity, the reality is often quite the opposite. The feeling was that it is less about flipping the system, but more about shifting the balance.

The second panel on the *Perennial Personality Problem* examined the challenge that the humanitarian system is too dependent on personalities, as opposed to ensuring that systems are in place to ensure that the right people get to the right places at the right time. There is a need to invest more in developing staff and leaders within the humanitarian community to overcome this challenge.

The third panel looked at *Organising the Humanitarian Response Effectively*. Generally, coordination structures (like the clusters) are quite fixed and rarely adapt to ensuring that needs dictate how we organise ourselves in order to respond appropriately. It was also highlighted that response is largely a resource-led process because of the way that donors work. There is also a lack of trust in the system, which needs to be improved, so that needs assessments are more readily shared to improve response.

The day was summed up by James Darcy (Director of the Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute) who noted that the discussions highlighted a number of challenges on which we all need to continue working. The question, as always, with the ICVA Conferences, is how much of the thinking and reflection then gets taken up within individual organisations? The best that ICVA can hope to achieve with the Conferences is that the issues raised at least provoked some internal thinking within organisations after the day.

# HIGHLIGHTING THE ROLE OF NATIONAL NGOs IN

The importance of the work of national and local NGOs in humanitarian response is often discussed, but their role in the protection of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is an area where less has been documented. In order to contribute to a greater understanding of their contribution to IDP protection, the ICVA Secretariat worked on a project with the Brookings-Bern Project on Internal Displacement in 2008. It involved travelling to four countries to interview national/local NGOs about their work with IDPs, as well as to discuss this role with international humanitarian organisations. The project also allowed for discussion with the national/local NGOs about broader humanitarian issues, such as humanitarian principles, the UN-led humanitarian reform process, the *Principles of Partnership* (PoP), as well as being able to discuss ICVA's work.

The countries visited were chosen because they were in different stages of an IDP response. Kenya had recently seen internal displacement following the election violence in early 2008. Georgia (at the time the visit took place, which was before the conflict in 2008) had persons who remained displaced for several years. Nepal was a country where the conflict had ended in the not so distant past. The Philippines was a place where displacement and return were continuing in the South.

## ACTIVE UNHCR AND ICVA PARTNERSHIP

One of ICVA's continuing functions remains its facilitating role in relation to UNHCR. In addition to the formal role that ICVA has of coordinating NGO input into UNHCR's governing bodies, ICVA also focuses on other aspects of UNHCR's work and mandate. In addition, ICVA continues to co-host UNHCR's Annual NGO Consultations and to take an active role in the organisation of that event, which allows NGOs and UNHCR to discuss a range of issues and challenges.

In March 2008, the ICVA Secretariat was actively involved in the third NGO-UNHCR Protection Retreat, which looked at protection issues under the cluster approach, the protection of refugees in urban settings, and accountability for protection delivery. The various challenges of IDP protection were raised with suggestions made on ways forward. With regards to the protection of refugees in urban settings, UNHCR was reminded at the retreat of the lengthy process that has been underway for years to develop a revised urban refugee policy. NGOs were able to comment on drafts of the policy following the retreat, but despite numerous (repeated) attempts to get UNHCR to issue a revised policy that better respects the rights of refugees and asylum-seekers in urban settings, the outdated 1997 policy remains in place. The discussion around accountability looked at the roles of UNHCR, its NGO partners, but also States in terms of protection. Among the various suggestions made was the idea of carrying out peer reviews at the field level as a means of improving accountability.

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The in-country work was generously facilitated by ICVA members in each country: Kenya – by the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC); Georgia — by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); the Philippines – by Community and Family Services International (CFSI); and Nepal – by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), with additional support from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

The interviews and discussions with national/local NGOs (NNGOs) showed that there is still a long way to go when it comes to having more equitable partnerships between national and international humanitarian actors. While the situation obviously varied between countries and actors, it can be said that, generally, many NNGOs felt that they were still seen as just implementers, as opposed to true partners.

An interesting finding was that there are different views on what the protection of IDPs means. For some, it was about protecting rights; for others, it was about safety and security; and some even saw it as being about peacebuilding and reconciliation. It was encouraging to see that many

# IDP PROTECTION

knew – and used – the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*. Many felt that they had a strong role to play in protecting and assisting IDPs because they were in the areas where displacement took place and so could respond more quickly.

For those NNGOs that had heard about the UN-led humanitarian reform process (which, in fact, were very few of those interviewed), several found that the number of meetings meant that they could not engage, given their limited size. As a result, it meant that mostly UN agencies and international NGOs (INGOs) participated in the clusters. Given the time taken to attend the meetings, as one NNGO put it, “if we are struggling to survive, we would rather be looking at how to survive than attending meetings.” One regretted the fact that in her country, there was no way to have a real dialogue between the UN and local organisations, which meant that the “UN comes in and does its work without knowing what’s really going on.” In other cases, where NNGOs had a relationship with INGOs, they were often able to feed into various UN coordination mechanisms. In relation to funding, some NNGOs pointed out the difficulty of being able to access donors and suggested that perhaps a percentage of all international funding should be given to NNGOs.

When it came to the *Principles of Partnership* (PoP), the majority of NNGOs had not yet heard of them, but found them and the *10 Practical Ways to Use the PoP* (see p. 13) to be extremely useful. One NNGO remarked that something like the PoP should have been developed long before. As a result of the discussions during the visits, a number of translations were done by NGOs and have been added to the GHP website: [www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org/pop.html](http://www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org/pop.html).

The findings of the interviews are contributing to a study that, following comments by the interviewees, will be published later in 2009 by the Brookings-Bern Project. It will look at some ten countries and provide recommendations for future action related to the role of national/local NGOs and IDP protection. The hope is that the work done on the project will help to contribute to further promoting and supporting the role of local/national NGOs in IDP protection and, hopefully, more broadly in humanitarian response. ICVA remains committed to following up on the recommendations as best it can. ■

<<< Throughout the year, ICVA carries out its responsibility of facilitating the development of NGO statements to UNHCR’s Standing and Executive Committees (its governing bodies), as well as other meetings that UNHCR may hold. In addition, ICVA consolidates the views of NGOs on the draft Conclusions that UNHCR’s Executive Committee (ExCom) negotiates. During the ExCom meeting in 2008, ICVA organised an informal panel discussion on the question, “How should the 1951 Convention be supervised?” The idea of the panel was to take a closer look at Article 35 of the *1951 Refugee Convention*, which commits States to cooperate with UNHCR in exercising its functions and also provides that States shall facilitate UNHCR’s “duty in supervising the application of the provisions of this Convention.” The panellists provided a number of suggestions on how to possibly supervise the Convention, including through the use of national legal systems, possibly setting up a high-level advisory group, or even potentially looking at advocating for the appointment of a special rapporteur on refugee rights. The discussion sparked an interesting debate and many of the suggestions will be further examined by ICVA in the course of 2009.

At the end of 2008, the second High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection Challenges looked at “Protracted Refugee Situations.” A number of NGOs were able to participate in the discussions in their own right, which allowed for a richer contribution from NGOs. The ICVA Secretariat also participated in the discussions, including by co-chairing one of the working groups. The Dialogue resulted in a number of creative suggestions on ways forward to address protracted refugees situations. Some of those are being taken forward by UNHCR in 2009, however, many more of the suggestions could be more robustly pursued by UNHCR and NGOs, not to mention States. The attempt in 2009 to develop an ExCom Conclusion is one good example of a possible way to unblock protracted refugee situations.

# A MORE STRATEGIC DIALOGUE ON HUMANITARIAN

Just as in ordinary life, the issue of financing is of great interest to every humanitarian agency at any moment, but more so of late. Humanitarian agencies tend to be a little bit secretive, or at least sensitive, to holding an open and honest debate about finding the most effective and efficient ways for raising and spending money. There has often been a certain lack of frankness with agencies reluctant to disclose their privileged bilateral relationships with donor governments.

Since the introduction of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), Emergency Response Funds (ERFs), and other pooled funds as new financing mechanisms, the discussion in the humanitarian community on finances and funding has become one that is of more collective concern, in which partnership and equitable access to funding mechanisms of different types of agencies have been higher on the agenda.

2008 saw some important developments in this regard. The year started with the traditional annual retreat of donors in Montreux. While the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP), which used to be the main focus of this annual

## SELECTION OF MEETINGS HOSTED BY ICVA IN 2008

January	Meeting with NGOs and Tim Pitt, OCHA Head of Office, Uganda
January	Informal meeting with NGOs and Ross Mountain, Resident Coordinator (RC) and Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) for the Democratic Republic of Congo
March	Informal donor-NGO meeting on HC System and Cluster Approach
March	Meeting of NGOs with the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of UN Personnel and Premises Worldwide (IPSS)
May	Informal donor-NGO meeting on Haiti with Jean-Louis Lambeau, ActionAid
May	Informal meeting with NGOs and Mark Bowden, RC/HC for Somalia
May	Briefing and discussion with NGOs on the <i>Humanitarian Agenda 2015: Final Report</i> with author Antonio Donini, Feinstein International Center
June	Informal donor-NGO meeting on Afghanistan with Ingrid Macdonald, NRC
June	NGO meeting with David Nabarro, Coordinator of the UN Secretary-General's High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis
September	Informal donor-NGO meeting on the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) process, NGO involvement in the humanitarian reform process, and the future of the IASC and GHP
September	Meeting of NGOs on the IASC Task Force on Safe Access to Firewood and Alternative Energy in Humanitarian Settings (SAFE) with Erin Patrick, Women's Commission
October	Informal discussion on the draft <i>Handbook of Guiding Principles for Peace Operations</i> with the United States Institute of Peace (USIP)
October	Informal meeting with NGOs and Dan Baker, HC for Myanmar
October	Meeting with NGOs and Randolph Kent, consultant on the mapping of HC models
October	Informal meeting with NGOs and Robert Watkins, RC/HC for Georgia
October	Meeting with NGOs and OCHA on the humanitarian situation in Pakistan ( <i>co-hosted with OCHA</i> )
November	NGO Advocacy Strategy Meeting
November	Informal meeting with NGOs and Aeneas Chuma, RC/HC for Kenya
December	Debriefing with NGOs and UN agencies by ICVA Coordinator on his mission to Zimbabwe

This list is not exhaustive, but aims to provide a flavour of the types of meetings that ICVA hosts.

# FINANCING

retreat, continues to be part of the retreat's agenda, the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) process and new financing mechanisms are increasingly receiving more attention. Two studies were undertaken as part of the GHD process on central issues: 1) how the different (new) financing mechanisms serve the GHD principles and 2) the issue of the definition and reasonable size of agency overhead costs. These two studies were launched at a meeting of GHD donor countries and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) in New York in July 2008.

The study on the financing mechanisms, written by Abby Stoddard, is one that particularly deserves close attention and further discussion by the humanitarian community. She makes a number of points, which many in the NGO community could not have argued better. NGOs have generally benefited less from the new financing mechanisms when compared to their UN colleagues. Furthermore, national and local NGOs (NNGOs) continue to be worse off as they have even less access to the new mechanisms than international NGOs (INGOs). The study concludes that donors should not put "all their eggs in one basket," but that they should maintain a diversity of funding tools since different tools have different advantages for different agencies. For NGOs, the large part of their funding continues to come from their bilateral relations with donors. The Stoddard paper stresses that the impact of these bilateral channels on inter-agency coordination should receive much greater attention. It is also noted that some of the new channels, in particular the ERFs and Common Humanitarian Funds (CHFs), hold potential for funding national and local NGOs.

As many of the UN agencies were, unusually, quiet at the New York GHD-IASC meeting in 2008, the three NGO consortia on the IASC (ICVA, InterAction, and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response) pushed several of the issues raised in the Stoddard study onto the agenda of the IASC Working Group (WG) meeting in November. This IASC WG discussion followed an earlier one in June 2008, which looked at the work and recommendations of the CERF Partnership Task Force.

While the discussion in June was quite a productive one that tackled some of the difficult issues around CERF, the November IASC WG meeting was slightly more confused. The attempt from the NGO consortia side was to engage the IASC WG in a broader debate around humanitarian financing, so as to take forward the Stoddard recommendations. This discussion, however, got conflated with a discussion (presented by OCHA) on moving forward on some of the CERF evaluation recommendations (including partnership, which was helpful). In the end, however, the way forward was left quite vague and the result (into 2009) has so far been confusion as to where the broader financing discussions can actually take place. ■

## FOSTERING HUMANITARIAN DIALOGUE

ICVA plays an increasingly frequent role in convening meetings between NGOs and other humanitarian actors in the 'humanitarian capital' Geneva. These meetings take different forms, such as thematic meetings with donors and NGOs; briefings with NGOs on specific issues or country situations by individuals; or meetings with UN representatives and NGOs. Meetings with NGOs and Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs), who often come to Geneva, provide an opportunity to discuss humanitarian challenges directly with the HC. With all the meetings that ICVA hosts, the aim is to create an informal space that encourages humanitarian actors to engage in open, frank, and sometimes off-the-record discussions.

# FAILING HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP IN ZIMBABWE

With a cholera epidemic spiralling out of control, the ICVA Coordinator visited Zimbabwe in early December 2008 to assess UN-NGO relationships and coordination in addressing the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation. Even in the limited space that they have to operate – due to a government that is unwilling to protect and assist its citizens – the humanitarian imperative obliges humanitarian agencies to do their utmost in terms of responding to the increased needs of the Zimbabweans.

Unfortunately, however, the humanitarian response turned out to be less than optimal because of failing leadership and inefficient inter-agency coordination. Responsibility for providing leadership to the humanitarian community in Zimbabwe rests with the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC). Many of the NGO and other agency representatives interviewed had serious questions on the nature of the HC's relations with the government and the outcomes of this interaction. They did not see the HC taking a position on the government's failure to recognise the appalling humanitarian conditions in the country and mobilising an international response to compensate for this failure.

The HC's role in promoting the UN's efforts to provide meaningful protection – to those who had been affected by the violence and/or who were displaced following the March 2008 elections – was also questionable. The HC did not come across as supporting UNHCR's attempts to scale up its presence to take on responsibility for the IDPs. The protection of IDPs is an extremely delicate issue in Zimbabwe, as the government has largely denied the reality of internal displacement and its causes, which are mainly its own policies and practices.

## NGOs AND HUMANITARIAN REFORM PROJECT

In September 2008, ICVA joined six UK-based international NGOs to work on the *NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project* to promote better NGO engagement in delivering aid through the UN-led 'humanitarian reform' mechanisms. Concerns that the current humanitarian system is susceptible to top-down UN bureaucracy have been heard frequently. NGO engagement in that reform process has also been suggested as a key requirement in improving the effectiveness of humanitarian response. While NGOs implement most humanitarian programmes in the field, national and local NGOs have been largely absent from the reform processes, and even international NGOs struggle to engage consistently.

The project focuses on two main aspects of the UN-led reform: the coordination mechanisms around the clusters and the financing mechanisms, such as the CERF and pooled funding. The objective is to develop practical guidance and identify the practices needed to improve the delivery of aid by strengthening engagement – where relevant – of NGOs in the reform mechanisms. The collection of an evidence base of the realities in the field, through a series of mapping studies, was successfully undertaken at the end of 2008 in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and Zimbabwe. These studies asked how the reform mechanisms have so far enabled, or restricted, NGOs' ability to protect and assist populations in need, and, more importantly, the studies form a starting point from which the project can push for change and improvement in the effectiveness of humanitarian response.

Over the next two years, the project will continue to track interactions with the reform process in the field and help to find ways for better NGO engagement. Building upon existing initiatives (e.g. the *Principles of Partnership*) and working with all relevant actors, the project will use these country level experiences to influence international policy, by highlighting where to enhance capacity and how to include national and local civil society. ICVA is also contributing to the project through its own survey of implementation of the cluster approach among NGOs in a wider selection of countries beyond those of the project focus. By combining members' feedback with the knowledge and expertise that ICVA has from on-going involvement with the humanitarian reform, ICVA provides an important channel for strengthening the link between the field and the global level in the context of the project.

To find out more about the project, visit:

[www.icva.ch/ngosandhumanitarianreform.html](http://www.icva.ch/ngosandhumanitarianreform.html) or write to [secretariat@icva.ch](mailto:secretariat@icva.ch).

The six NGOs involved in the project with ICVA are: ActionAid, CAFOD, Care, IRC, Oxfam, and Save the Children.

Under the cluster approach, adopted by the UN in Zimbabwe in early 2008, UNHCR is expected to assume responsibility for leading on the protection of IDPs. In this instance, however, there was at least some suspicion that the most senior UN official in the country was favouring other agencies instead of following UN agreed procedures that would see UNHCR working with IDPs in Zimbabwe.

Another task of the HC – facilitating the effective functioning of the humanitarian country team (HCT) – was found equally wanting. The UN Country Team was divided in their support of the HC, while NGO participation in the HCT was merely tokenistic. The OCHA Head of Office, who had taken some proactive advocacy initiatives without consulting with the NGOs, was eventually moved out of the country by his superiors in OCHA New York.

Effective humanitarian action can never become a reality unless there is accountability for failing leadership. Establishing such an accountability system should be a matter of good humanitarian management. An effective system that ensures and manages proper performance is long overdue. ICVA will continue its advocacy for the establishment of such a system as a matter of priority. ■

## 10 PRACTICAL WAYS TO USE THE PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP (PoP)

1. Make explicit reference to, and use, the PoP in all partnership agreements/memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with the UN, other NGOs, and the Red Cross/Red Crescent (RC/RC) Movement and evaluate how all parties to the agreements/MoUs adhered to the PoP.
2. Report in your annual reports on how you are putting the PoP into practice.
3. Ensure the PoP are part of the terms of reference/modus operandi of all coordination meetings/clusters.
4. In developing project proposals, refer to how the PoP will be used in the project's implementation.
5. In job postings, refer to the PoP and ask about candidates' views on partnership.
6. Ensure that partnership skills are an essential qualification considered when recruiting and appraising staff.
7. Use the PoP to advocate for improved performance from those in other humanitarian agencies and from the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC).
8. Ensure that Common Humanitarian Action Plans (CHAPs) and Consolidated Appeals Processes (CAPs) are developed in line with the PoP and potentially refer to how the PoP will form part of the coordination efforts in the country.
9. When talking to governments and local authorities, ensure that they know you will apply the PoP in your work.
10. When talking to media, refer to partnerships and how you are carrying them out with regard to the PoP.

*The Principles of Partnership are available at: [www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org](http://www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org)*

*ICVA Secretariat  
May 2008*

# GHP: ARE WE ACHIEVING ITS GOAL?

When the Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP) was formed in 2006, the main aim was to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian response. By having a strategic dialogue at the global level on challenges facing the humanitarian system, the GHP was meant to ensure that better partnerships would lead to more effective responses. The GHP's main product has been the *Principles of Partnership* (PoP – [www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org/pop.html](http://www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org/pop.html)), which are meant to guide partnerships between NGOs, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, and the UN and other international organisations.

While looking good on paper, the PoP still have a long way to go before they become part and parcel of our daily work – whether in the field or at headquarters. Many within the three groups of agencies have still not heard of the PoP nor have most organisations incorporated the PoP into their organisational “mindsets.” In an attempt to foster partnerships for better humanitarian responses and to get people to see the practical value of the PoP, two regional GHP workshops were held in May 2008 in Amman, Jordan and in Bangkok, Thailand. Representatives from the three families came together to look at how partnerships affected humanitarian responses and to examine the relationships between the GHP, the PoP, and the UN-led humanitarian reform process. Both workshops looked at practical case studies (Iraq, in the case of the Amman workshop and Cyclone Nargis, in the case of the Bangkok workshop).

The Amman workshop highlighted the need to get to know each other better, which means also understanding each organisation's strengths and weaknesses. The Iraq example, which was discussed in the workshop, highlighted that too many of the relationships between humanitarian organisations were based on contractual arrangements, as opposed to true partnership where organisations are treated equally. While UN agencies often treated international NGOs as contractors, the same was seen to be true in the treatment of national and local NGOs by international NGOs. It was felt that staff needed to be trained on the PoP and that steps needed to be taken to change organisational behaviour.

The Bangkok workshop also found that there was still much work to be done in terms of getting the PoP known within organisations. It was recommended that there be clearer expectations provided as to how the PoP should be used within agencies, as well as providing tools and process notes for how to carry out a dialogue to deepen understanding between organisations. It became clear that relationships need to be built before disasters and armed conflicts and that partnerships must be continuously strengthened, using the PoP as a guideline. The Cyclone Nargis example was used to gather a number of lessons of why the PoP were important, such as being honest about capacity and the ability to deliver (the principles of result-oriented approach and responsibility). A number of clear recommendations were made during the workshop and participants called on the GHP heads of agency to follow-up on the recommendations from the July 2007 GHP meeting and to report back on their status, as well as to report back on the follow-up to the workshop's recommendations after six months.

At the July 2008 meeting of heads of agencies, there were reports of “quiet progress” in strengthening partnerships, with the increased number of NGO seats on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) being cited as a positive

example (see also box on *Increased Opportunities for NGO Participation in the IASC*, p. 18). The PoP had been disseminated throughout many organisations, but only about one-third of the organisations reported (before the meeting, in writing) on how they had promoted the PoP in their own work. The findings and recommendations arising from each of the workshops were taken to the annual meeting of the GHP in July for the heads of agencies to consider. There was recognition that more needs to be done to ensure the full participation of national NGOs. While there had been some changes made within organisations, the relationship between NGOs and the UN or between national and international NGOs was still too often seen as a “donor-implementer” relationship and not a true partnership. Others also pointed to the need to engage with governments more.

A number of steps were agreed at the meeting to better mainstream the PoP, including the development of indicators on how the PoP are being used. The indicators would be used to collect information at the field level so that there could be a more systematic assessment of the impact of the PoP.

It had been foreseen that the heads of agency would engage in a strategic discussion about whether the humanitarian community had worked in partnership to address the humanitarian consequences of the rise in food and energy prices and climate change and how they would work together to prepare for these trends in the future. In the end, however, the discussion seemed to stall a bit, as people talked more about the need for such a strategic discussion than actually engaging in it. The participants reaffirmed their commitment to use the GHP as a place where exciting, strategic discussions – at the CEO level – should take place that could potentially feed into other forums, such as the IASC.

If the GHP is to actually achieve its goal of more effective humanitarian response, there must be greater organisational changes made for the PoP to become part of our daily work. While ICVA’s 2007 Annual Report noted the importance of embedding the PoP into staff values and throughout organisations, it seems that the same can be said in this 2008 report. ICVA has included the PoP in its application form for new members, as a way of getting more organisations to commit to the PoP and to incorporate them in their work. In May 2008, the ICVA Secretariat also developed *10 Practical Ways to Use the PoP* (see box, p. 13). The CEOs of the GHP agencies – as well as humanitarian organisations more broadly – need to start making the PoP part of their “organisational DNA” instead of just coming together and talking about their value each year. Otherwise, the GHP risks becoming a talk shop without achieving its originally stated goal of more effective humanitarian outcomes. ■

Several organisations generously provided (unofficial) translations of the PoP, which were posted by ICVA on the GHP website:  
[www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org/pop.html](http://www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org/pop.html).

The PoP now exist in the following languages, as well as the original English:

- ◆ Arabic
- ◆ Bangla
- ◆ Burmese
- ◆ Filipino
- ◆ French
- ◆ German
- ◆ Indonesian
- ◆ Italian
- ◆ Nepali
- ◆ Portuguese
- ◆ Spanish
- ◆ Russian

# THE FUTURE VALUE OF COLLABORATION

Collaboration is not an option, but a necessity in order to address humanitarian crises more effectively. Humanitarian agencies generally acknowledge that no single agency can respond to humanitarian crises and that, as such, collaboration is an essential element of humanitarian action in order to meet needs. If this view is so widely shared in the humanitarian community, collaboration as a concept should receive much more attention than it has so far. In practice, collaboration is often seen, principally, as participating in coordination meetings, which can be time-consuming for staff and inefficient for organisations. While there is no lack of structures and mechanisms, a debate or process of reflection on the value of collaboration has been sorely lacking.

## NGO ADVOCACY MEETING

One of the biggest challenges for ICVA is not to spend too much time simply following various UN-led or other international processes related to humanitarian response. There is already a prioritisation of the areas in which ICVA should get involved through the development of the strategic and annual plans. At the same time, it is often more challenging to set the agenda. Based on a suggestion from an ICVA member, a first attempt was taken in November 2008 to bring together a group of humanitarian and human rights NGOs to look for common areas of advocacy for the coming year. The idea was that by working on common areas of advocacy, NGO efforts could be complementary and mutually reinforcing.

There was a general feeling that it would be easiest for NGOs – and ICVA in particular – to lead debates on thematic issues, more so than country issues. A number of ideas of where the NGO community could take a stronger lead were floated, including on humanitarian space, humanitarian-military relations, protracted emergencies, and a campaign around Article 35 of the *1951 Refugee Convention*, which foresees a supervisory function in applying the Convention. It was clear that for such advocacy to be effective, collaboration would be the starting point. It was also suggested that ICVA could play a facilitating role by sharing information between NGOs of what each was doing in terms of advocacy, so as to make better links.

The meeting was seen as a positive first effort that should be followed up with some concrete efforts to lead on advocacy from the NGO side. It was also suggested that having a similar meeting on an annual basis could be helpful to get NGOs thinking about the coming year. The challenge, of course, is to now move ahead with the various ideas.

Being essentially a structure to help NGOs collaborate (better), ICVA decided in 2008 to examine collaboration in humanitarian response in the context of its new three-year strategy that would be submitted to the ICVA General Assembly early in 2009. Together with the London-based Humanitarian Futures Programmes, ICVA embarked on a project on *The Future of Humanitarian Collaboration: An ICVA Perspective*, which took a step back to ascertain the real value of collaboration for the effectiveness of humanitarian response. What are the impacts of different forms of collaboration? What are the best means of collaborating to achieve better humanitarian outcomes? What forms of collaboration are most appropriate for different types of organisations to meet needs?

Answers to these questions would clearly not only be of benefit to ICVA in formulating its new strategic plan, but would also assist ICVA members and other organisations in defining their policies and strategies. A more informed approach towards collaboration could see agencies becoming more strategic in their participation in coordination forums and inter-agency mechanisms so that, in turn, these bodies become more effective and productive.

Through interviews, questionnaires, and focus groups with a sample of ICVA members, the project aimed to

obtain a better picture of the forms of collaboration that exist and what value each of those forms can offer. The message many member agencies consistently delivered was that a regional or in-country ICVA presence closer to crisis areas would add value in terms of establishing closer links between policy and practice and would bring

member agencies closer together on the ground. This message was one that fed into the draft *2009-2011 ICVA Strategic Plan*, which was developed in 2008.

Another element taken up by the project was collaboration with actors that traditionally are not seen as part of the humanitarian community: academia, the corporate sector, or, controversially, the military. Of course, such collaboration already happens in many instances. It is felt, however, that it is often ad hoc or takes place without sufficient clarity on (mutual) goals and objectives.

The idea that the importance of collaboration with non-traditional partners will increase is fuelled by the forecasted future: the dynamics and dimensions of humanitarian threats will change exponentially. New crisis drivers, such as climate change, further urbanisation, and scarcity of resources will affect a growing number of people around the world. Present instruments and approaches to address today's crises, including ways in which humanitarian organisations collaborate, might not be adequate to meet those challenges. Not only did the project presume that collaboration with these non-traditional partners would be needed more in the future, but it also explained that such collaboration might see more loose networks and informal collaborative mechanisms.

The main products and outcomes of the project will become available in 2009. One outcome will be a report that will provide the broader humanitarian community with reflections on new dimensions of collaboration, as well as helping to clearly define the varying concepts of collaboration and their values. Another product will be a "definitional matrix" on collaboration that will encourage organisations to anticipate the implications of engaging in collaborative relationships.

Through the project, the broader humanitarian community – and ICVA specifically – should gain a better understanding of the costs and benefits of collaboration so that these efforts can provide a true added-value to populations affected by conflict and disaster. Without constantly pushing ourselves to do better in the humanitarian community – as this project aims to do – those who will suffer from the inefficiencies of collaboration are the populations we are meant to serve. ■

### **ICVA AT FORTY-SOMETHING: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF A MIDDLE-AGED NGO CONSORTIUM**

Since its creation in 1962, ICVA has evolved along with the humanitarian community. During this time, ICVA has lived through its own ups and downs. More than 20 years after the last short history of ICVA was published, the ICVA Executive Committee deemed ICVA to have reached an age when some important lessons could be learned by looking back at its history. Jacqueline Tong was, therefore, commissioned to hold interviews and search the archives to bring to life ICVA's history in a short publication, which is entitled *ICVA at Forty-Something: The life and times of a middle-aged NGO consortium*. The history does not aim to provide a comprehensive overview of ICVA's past, but instead focuses on important events in ICVA's past and looks at how some of ICVA's developments have reflected broader changes taking place at the time. By looking at ICVA's successes and difficult times, the publication traces how ICVA developed into its current role as an advocacy alliance for humanitarian action. The history makes for a quick and captivating read and is available at: [www.icva.ch/celeb\\_40something.html](http://www.icva.ch/celeb_40something.html); hard copies are available from the Secretariat: [secretariat@icva.ch](mailto:secretariat@icva.ch).

## DISCUSSING FOOD SECURITY ISSUES

During the first part of 2008, a steep rise in commodity prices aggravated the already worsening consequences that growing economic instability was having on many vulnerable populations worldwide. The spike in food prices early in 2008 contributed to a mounting number of interconnected needs around health, nutrition, water and sanitation, and rights. Such a combination of problems cannot be remedied with food aid alone and exceeds the normal scope of humanitarian programmes. Responses need to be well-coordinated and international in approach to find solutions that intersect so many areas of need, in addition to mitigating the longer-term effects on livelihoods and dealing with the actual causes of food insecurity. There is an obvious need for including humanitarian organisations in the broader international response to food insecurity, and to get humanitarian organisations to work together on the challenges of doing so. ICVA, therefore, was prompted to monitor and become more closely involved in the discussions taking place around coordination and responses to food prices and insecurity.

ICVA created a *Food Security Issues* e-mail distribution list among its members to try and keep them included in the growing scope of discussions and forums on food security. The list is used to keep members updated on task forces and meetings about (or including agenda items on) food security, food prices, and related issues. In addition, the ICVA 'food' group is approached to solicit suggestions and generate input, which can be consolidated for discussion forums in which ICVA has a voice to ensure adequate representation of NGO views. Members also requested that ICVA share key documents on the website and act as a focal point for information.

Another forum in which ICVA has been involved is the UN High Level Task Force (HLTF) on Global Food Security, which was formed to reinforce and 'synergise' existing systems for tackling food insecurity. David Nabarro (UN System Coordinator of the HLTF), undertook to hold monthly consultations with NGOs in order to encourage a coherent approach to incorporating humanitarian activities at the international level. The NGO consultations have taken place throughout 2008, although not as regularly as initially proposed. The meetings have also suffered from the large number of participants involved, which has limited the scope of the discussions to mainly information sharing and progress updates from the HLTF and not as much on formulating any joint/concrete outcomes.

## INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR NGO PARTICIPATION IN THE IASC

If operational presence were to be the criterion for membership of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), this humanitarian coordination forum at the international level would have had a very different composition than the one it has today. The IASC, however, was established by a UN General Assembly resolution in 1991 as a mechanism for the Emergency Relief Coordinator (now John Holmes) to discharge his mandate and coordinate with the UN system. As a result, the IASC is a UN body, largely dominated by UN agencies and their concerns. The resolution also recognised, however, that there were other agencies outside the UN that are relevant in humanitarian responses, particularly the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the non-governmental community, and that, as a result, the resolution ensured that the ERC should make an effort to reach out to these agencies, which he could invite on a "standing" basis.

Seventeen years later, the ERC reached the conclusion that his invitation to NGOs to participate in the IASC should be extended beyond the three consortia that have represented the NGO community since the early nineties. Perhaps as a consequence of the UN-led humanitarian reform process – in which partnership between the UN and NGOs is frequently put forward as one of its tenets – or as part of the efforts of NGOs in the context of the Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP), Holmes felt the pressure to augment the contingent of NGOs in the IASC. Following proposals from the three NGO consortia, it was decided in April 2008 that the consortia could each bring two member agencies with them to the meetings. One of these members would be able to sit at the table, whereas the other would be able to take a back seat and follow the proceedings (with rotation being possible). ICVA has made use of this new opportunity and has consistently brought members to the meetings of the IASC Principals and its Working Group since that decision. Given that ICVA's membership is a global one, ICVA applies the principle that at least one of the seats should be allocated to a representative from a member agency based in a developing country. Calls for expressions of interest to attend are made when ICVA circulates the meeting agendas and background documents to the membership and these expressions are assessed on the basis of demonstrated expertise of the member agency on a topic that is part of the IASC agenda.

# FINANCES

## Balance Sheet Statement as at 31 December, with comparative figures (all figures in Swiss francs)

	2006	2007	2008
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<i>Petty Cash</i>	1,253.55	1,211.40	1,130.30
<i>Cash in bank accounts</i>	491,765.46	476,346.15	517,126.90
UBS CHF	490,827.21	441,630.54	482,463.09
UBS CHF - Projects	938.25	34,715.61	34,663.81
<i>Accounts receivable and prepaid expenses</i>	200,536.43	145,306.78	133,735.46
Accounts receivable	52,165.69	129,395.00	130,999.43
Taxes on interest income	550.89	769.43	500.03
Prepaid expenses	0.00	15,142.35	2,236.00
US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via International Rescue Committee (IRC)	41,742.25	0.00	0.00
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	10,760.00	0.00	0.00
US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via the American Council for Voluntary International Action (InterAction)	71,390.20	0.00	0.00
Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) via the American Council for Voluntary International Action (InterAction)	23,927.40	0.00	0.00
<i>Guarantee deposit</i>	8,363.60	8,890.15	8,867.05
	<b>701,919.04</b>	<b>631,754.48</b>	<b>660,859.71</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<i>Accounts payable and Provisions</i>	86,828.30	72,212.81	40,532.58
Accounts payable	18,479.30	6,833.20	23,027.70
IM World Aid (member loan due 31.12.98)	60,600.00	26,600.00	0.00
Accounts Payable IM World Aid	0.00	30,000.00	0.00
Accruals & Provisions	7,749.00	8,779.61	17,504.88
<i>Earmarked projects</i>	266,896.17	102,703.02	139,685.03
Foreign Affairs Canada	7,695.20	0.00	0.00
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	39,996.40	36,910.89	36,337.07
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)	33,537.92	44,924.78	33,537.78
Oak Foundation	163,236.30	0.00	0.00
Reach Out Refugee Protection Training Project	22,430.35	20,867.35	2,707.77
NGO Liaison Officer	0.00	0.00	60,489.78
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) ICVA-HFP project	0.00	0.00	258.52
German Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs (German MFA) ICVA-HFP project	0.00	0.00	6,354.11
<i>Reserve (-deficit) carry over at 31.12</i>	348,194.57	456,838.65	480,642.10
	<b>701,919.04</b>	<b>631,754.48</b>	<b>660,859.71</b>

ICVA's full audit report is available upon request from the ICVA Secretariat:  
[secretariat@icva.ch](mailto:secretariat@icva.ch).

# FINANCES

## Statement of Income and Expenditures 1 January to 31 December, with comparative figures (all figures in Swiss francs)

	2006	2007	2008
<b>SUPPORT TO CORE COSTS</b>			
<i>Income</i>			
Membership fees	302,173.14	325,374.11	376,295.93
DANIDA	105,836.00	109,395.00	100,359.00
Norway Ministry of Foreign Affairs	93,073.50	108,159.50	98,708.05
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00
Netherlands-Ministerie Van Buitenlandse Zaken	116,279.00	116,279.00	110,000.00
UNHCR, Switzerland	29,651.50	30,049.14	27,570.00
Stitching Vluchteling, Netherlands project, balance to core	-786.75	0.00	0.00
Wyrwright in-kind donation for website	59,595.50	0.00	0.00
American Red Cross (ARC) Tsunami 2005 contribution	22,089.00	0.00	0.00
Exchange rate gain and bank interest	558.40	646.55	888.35
ICVA's Expenses Invoiced to Projects	194,627.65	81,668.40	7,513.75
Brookings Institute	0.00	0.00	1,691.63
<b>Total income</b>	<b>1,023,096.94</b>	<b>871,571.70</b>	<b>823,026.71</b>
<b>SUPPORT TO CORE COSTS</b>			
<i>Expenses</i>			
Core salaries	388,590.73	452,172.97	465,608.05
Training Courses	0.00	34,586.08	228.20
Consultancy fees	0.00	0.00	0.00
Social charges	110,238.58	95,085.52	86,672.10
Other personnel charges	239.70	-1,803.80	81.85
Website related charges	66,948.60	9,281.68	17,074.36
Executive Committee	15,808.60	18,686.78	10,304.33
General Assembly	40,789.95	0.00	0.00
Office supplies/equipment/maintenance	15,923.25	15,799.17	10,191.29
Travel and representation charges	7,229.69	18,077.19	46,977.33
Publication and translation costs	12,921.85	10,118.07	6,949.76
Office rental and utilities	41,644.15	42,099.30	43,225.75
Postage and telecommunication costs	19,252.25	17,436.70	21,986.75
Audit and legal fees	4,900.00	13,311.70	6,000.00
Bank charges, exchange rate adjustment	580.45	1,196.42	1,440.96
Ad hoc: Sphere Project	24,422.48	12,983.16	5,477.36
Ad hoc: ICVA Conference	31,638.44	22,100.55	17,792.37
Ad hoc: NGOs and Humanitarian Reform	0.00	0.00	562.09
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>781,128.72</b>	<b>761,131.49</b>	<b>740,572.55</b>
<b>Excess of income over expenses</b>	<b>241,968.22</b>	<b>110,440.21</b>	<b>82,454.16</b>

	2006	2007	2008
<b>SUPPORT TO CORE COSTS</b>			
<i>Expenses</i>			
Ad hoc : ICVA Mission	4,007.21	0.00	2,233.65
Ad hoc: Writing ICVA's History	0.00	0.00	11,520.00
Ad hoc: NGO Liaison Officer	0.00	0.00	44,897.06
	<b>4,007.21</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>58,650.71</b>
<b>Excess of income over expenses</b>	<b>237,961.01</b>	<b>110,440.21</b>	<b>23,803.45</b>

#### Increasing NGO Engagement with the IASC

<i>Income</i>			
<b>Fund balance previous year</b>			
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	0.00	33,537.92	44,924.78
<b>Grant received</b>			
Funded by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	121,945.80	99,487.79	0.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>121,945.80</b>	<b>133,025.71</b>	<b>44,924.78</b>
<i>Expenses</i>			
Travel	23,375.22	24,826.38	2,027.03
GHP July meeting	0.00	0.00	7,520.43
GHP Regional workshops	0.00	0.00	1,744.88
Supplies	322.55	34.55	66.71
Workshop ICVA Administration	1,470.11	0.00	27.95
Contribution ICVA Administration	63,240.00	63,240.00	0.00
	88,407.88	88,100.93	11,387.00
<b>Funds available at the end of the year</b>			
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	33,537.92	44,924.78	33,537.78
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>121,945.80</b>	<b>133,025.71</b>	<b>44,924.78</b>
<b>Excess of income over expenses or - expenses over income</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

#### Building Safer Organisations Project

##### *Income*

##### **Fund balance previous year**

##### **Phase I**

US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via IRC outstanding	-25,825.80	-41,742.25	0.00
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	161,686.25	-10,760.00	0.00

##### **Phase II**

US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via InterAction / 57,612 USD	0.00	-71,390.20	0.00
Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) via InterAction / 19,410 USD	0.00	-23,927.40	0.00
OAK Foundation	0.00	163,236.30	0.00
Spent in 2006 to be reported in 2007	0.00	-25,518.80	0.00
	135,860.45	-10,102.35	0.00

# FINANCES

	2006	2007	2008
<b>Grant received</b>			
<b>Phase I</b>			
US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via IRC (2005 - 20,236 USD)	25,825.80	41,742.25	0.00
US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via IRC (Jan/Feb 2006 - 25,371 USD)	32,543.40	0.00	0.00
<b>Phase II</b>			
US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via InterAction (57,612 USD)	0.00	71,390.20	0.00
Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) via InterAction (19,410 USD)	0.00	23,927.40	0.00
OAK Foundation (169,018 USD)	207,773.85	0.00	0.00
AusAid Donation	0.00	146,880.00	0.00
Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance via InterAction	0.00	25,329.94	0.00
US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via InterAction	0.00	129,058.95	0.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	266,143.05	438,328.74	0.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>402,003.50</b>	<b>428,226.39</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Personnel	155,273.00	56,850.50	0.00
Travel	21,119.05	18,191.50	0.00
Workshop expenses	60,367.00	49,409.33	0.00
Handbook supplies	5,842.55	3,270.54	0.00
Bank charges and interest	320.45	49.85	0.00
Handbook Consultancy	16,535.75	6,291.65	0.00
Handbook ICVA Administration, communication, office	89,172.26	16,830.00	0.00
Publication, Translation	46,816.10	8,331.20	0.00
Handbook regional workshops	0.00	0.00	0.00
Evaluation	33,328.35	0.00	0.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	428,774.51	159,224.57	0.00
<b>Transfer project to Humanitarian Accountability Partnership International</b>			
Balance AusAid donation	0.00	143,038.00	0.00
Balance OAK Foundation donation	0.00	127,759.95	0.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	0.00	270,797.95	0.00
<b>Funds available at the end of the year</b>			
<b>Phase I</b>			
US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via IRC	-41,742.25	0.00	0.00
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	-10,760.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Phase II</b>			
US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via InterAction	-71,390.20	0.00	0.00
US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM) via IRC	0.00	0.00	0.00
Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) via InterAction	-23,927.40	0.00	0.00
OAK Foundation	163,236.30	0.00	0.00
Spent in 2006 to be reported in 2007	-25,518.80	0.00	0.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-10,102.35	0.00	0.00
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>418,672.16</b>	<b>430,022.52</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Excess of income over expenses or - expenses over income</b>	<b>-16,668.66</b>	<b>-1,796.13</b>	<b>0.00</b>

NGO Code of Conduct Commentary	2006	2007	2008
<i>Income</i>			
<b>Fund balance previous year</b>			
Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	0.00	39,996.40	36,910.89
<b>Grant received</b>			
Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	41,121.40	0.00	0.00
Development Cooperation of Ireland	0.00	0.00	0.00
	41,121.40	0.00	0.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>41,121.40</b>	<b>39,996.40</b>	<b>36,910.89</b>
<i>Expenses</i>			
Consultancy	0.00	0.00	0.00
ICVA administrative contribution	1,125.00	0.00	0.00
Editing Commentary	0.00	3,085.51	573.82
	1,125.00	3,085.51	573.82
<b>Funds available at the end of the year</b>			
Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs	39,996.40	36,910.89	36,337.07
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>41,121.40</b>	<b>39,996.40</b>	<b>36,910.89</b>
<b>Excess of income over expenses or - expenses over income</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

#### Reach Out Refugee Protection Training Project

<i>Income</i>			
<b>Fund balance previous year</b>			
Refugee Protection Training	0.00	22,430.35	20,867.35
<b>Grant received</b>			
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM)	27,918.85	0.00	0.00
<b>Total income</b>	<b>27,918.85</b>	<b>22,430.35</b>	<b>20,867.35</b>
<i>Expenses</i>			
Administration Cost	1,210.00	960.00	662.33
Postage	775.00	117.00	3.80
Training materials	3,503.50	486.00	17,493.45
	5,488.50	1,563.00	18,159.58
<b>Funds available at the end of the year</b>			
Reach Out Refugee Protection Training Project	22,430.35	20,867.35	2,707.77
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>27,918.85</b>	<b>22,430.35</b>	<b>20,867.35</b>
<b>Excess of income over expenses or - expenses over income</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

# FINANCES

	<b>2008</b>
<b>NNGOs and IDP Protection</b>	
<i>Income</i>	
<b>Fund balance previous year</b>	0.00
<b>Grant received</b>	
Brookings Institute	<u>16,021.13</u>
	16,021.13
<b>Total income</b>	<b>16,021.13</b>
<i>Expenses</i>	
Travel	14,268.26
Other costs	61.24
Balance to core	<u>1,691.63</u>
	16,021.13
<b>Funds available at the end of the year</b>	
Brookings Institute	0.00
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>16,021.13</b>
<b>Excess of income over expenses or - expenses over income</b>	<u><b>0.00</b></u>

	<b>2008</b>
<b>ICVA-HFP The Future of Humanitarian Collaboration project</b>	
<i>Income</i>	
<b>Fund balance previous year</b>	0.00
<b>Grant received</b>	
Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) funding	26,208.20
German Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs (German MFA) funding	<u>44,154.60</u>
	70,362.80
<b>Total income</b>	<b>70,362.80</b>
<i>Expenses</i>	
<b>CIDA</b>	
Activity 1 - Desk top analysis	14,698.85
Activity 2 - Baseline information	8,128.20
Management committee meetings	230.03
King's College administration	<u>2,892.60</u>

	<b>2008</b>
<b>German MFA</b>	
Activity 4 - Focus groups	17,686.84
Activity 6 - Broader collaboration interviews	8,436.57
Management committee meetings	965.48
Advisory group meetings	1,638.48
ICVA staff cost	1,360.00
HFP Senior Research Associate	2,520.41
HFP Administrative staff	2,989.44
King's College administration	2,203.27
	<u>63,750.17</u>
<b>Funds available at the end of the year</b>	
CIDA funding	258.52
German MFA funding	6,354.11
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>70,362.80</b>
<b>Excess of income over expenses or - expenses over income</b>	<b><u>0.00</u></b>

	<b>2008</b>
<b>NGO Liaison Officer</b>	
<i>Income</i>	
<b>Fund balance previous year</b>	0.00
<b>Grant received</b>	
Church World Service Pakistan (CWS)/Action by Churches Together (ACT)	60,489.78
	<u>60,489.78</u>
<b>Total income</b>	<b>60,489.78</b>
<i>Expenses</i>	
Other costs	0.00
	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Funds available at the end of the year</b>	
Church World Service Pakistan (CWS)/Action by Churches Together (ACT)	60,489.78
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>60,489.78</b>
<b>Excess of income over expenses or - expenses over income</b>	<b><u>0.00</u></b>

# FINANCES

	2006	2007	2008
<i>Accumulated carry over previous year</i>	126,902.21	348,194.57 <sup>1)</sup>	456,838.65 <sup>3)</sup>
<i>Total excess of income over expenses or - expenses over income for period</i>	<u>221,292.36</u>	<u>108,644.08<sup>2)</sup></u>	<u>23,803.45</u>
<b>Reserve (deficit) carry over at 31.12</b>	<u>348,194.57</u>	<u>456,838.65</u>	<u>480,642.10</u>

- 1) The accumulated carry over of CHF 348,194.57 from previous years will be used as a reserve for the 2009 General Assembly and Conference, for three months' emergency operating costs for the ICVA Secretariat, and for a fund to start up NGO coordination at the field level, when requested.
- 2) The total excess income over expenses of CHF 108,644.08 in 2007 will be carried over to 2008 for activities not completed in 2007.
- 3) The accumulated carry over of CHF 456,838.65 from previous years will go towards the 2009 General Assembly and Conference, for three months' emergency operating costs for the ICVA Secretariat, and for a staff development fund.

## TUNE IN: ICVA'S E-MAIL DISTRIBUTION LISTS

ICVA maintains targeted e-mail distribution lists to keep NGOs updated on their areas of interest and operation. ICVA members can subscribe to the following lists:

- ◆ **Refugee/IDP Issues:** provides information about issues related to refugee and IDP protection and about UNHCR (e.g. its Executive and Standing Committee meetings, UNHCR ExCom Conclusions, and UNHCR's Annual Consultations with NGOs (Pre-ExCom)), including engagement in the NGO statements to UNHCR's governing bodies;
- ◆ **Food/Food Security Issues:** provides information regarding the High Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis and meetings about (or that include agenda items on) food security, food prices, and related issues;
- ◆ **Humanitarian Issues:** used for messages regarding, and soliciting members' input on, humanitarian policy, coordination, humanitarian reform issues, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), and other messages related to humanitarian issues; and
- ◆ **ICVA General:** for details about ICVA's General Assembly, annual Conferences, ICVA's annual and strategic plans, ICVA's Executive Committee and other ICVA-related matters.

NGOs that are not members of ICVA can also subscribe to the distribution lists on refugee and food security issues to receive a selection of the messages.

If you want to be added to any of these lists, please send an e-mail to [information@icva.ch](mailto:information@icva.ch).

# ICVA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

## *Executive Committee Members (until February 2009)*

**Chair:** Mr. Thomas Getman, *WVI*  
**Vice-Chair:** Dr. Jemilah Mahmood, *MERCY Malaysia*  
**Treasurer:** Mr. Jappe Erichsen, *NRC*

Ms Vivi Akakpo, *AACC*  
Mr. Muzaffer Baca, *IBC*  
Ms Carolyn Makinson, *Women's Commission*  
Mr. Mohammad Nasib, *ANCB*  
Mr. Mamadou Ndiaye, *OFADEC*

Mr. Paul O'Brien, *Concern Worldwide*  
Ms Ann Mary Olsen, *DRC*  
Ms Annie Street (*until October 2008*),  
*ActionAid International*

## *ICVA Executive Committee (elected by the 14<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, February 2009)*

**Chair:** Mr. Paul O'Brien, *Concern Worldwide*  
**Vice-Chair:** Ms Carolyn Makinson, *Women's Commission*  
**Treasurer:** Mr. Paul Nesse, *NRC*

Ms Marian Casey-Maslen, *ACT International*  
Dr. Jemilah Mahmood, *MERCY Malaysia*  
Dr. Steven Muncy, *CFSI*

Ms Kathrine Starup, *DRC*  
Dr. Misikir Tilahun, *AHA*  
Ms Judy Wakahiu, *RCK*

# ICVA SECRETARIAT 2008

By the end of 2008, the ICVA Secretariat functioned on the basis of five full-time staff. The positions at the Secretariat were filled by:

Mr. Ed Schenkenberg van Mierop, Coordinator  
Ms Manisha Thomas, Policy Officer  
Ms Bethan Montague-Brown, Associate Policy Officer (*as of April 2008*)  
Mr. Myke Leahy, Information Officer (*until January 2008*)  
Mr. Rüdiger Schöch, Information Officer (*as of January 2008*)  
Ms Marianne Gémin, Executive Office Assistant

# Principles of Partnership

## A Statement of Commitment

*Endorsed by the Global Humanitarian Platform, 12 July 2007*

The Global Humanitarian Platform, created in July 2006, brings together UN and non-UN humanitarian organizations on an equal footing.

- Striving to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian action, based on an ethical obligation and accountability to the populations we serve,
- Acknowledging diversity as an asset of the humanitarian community and recognizing the interdependence among humanitarian organizations,
- Committed to building and nurturing an effective partnership,

... the organizations participating in the **Global Humanitarian Platform** agree to base their partnership on the following principles:

- **Equality**

Equality requires mutual respect between members of the partnership irrespective of size and power. The participants must respect each other's mandates, obligations and independence and recognize each other's constraints and commitments. Mutual respect must not preclude organizations from engaging in constructive dissent.

- **Transparency**

Transparency is achieved through dialogue (on equal footing), with an emphasis on early consultations and early sharing of information. Communications and transparency, including financial transparency, increase the level of trust among organizations.

- **Result-oriented approach**

Effective humanitarian action must be reality-based and action-oriented. This requires result-oriented coordination based on effective capabilities and concrete operational capacities.

- **Responsibility**

Humanitarian organizations have an ethical obligation to each other to accomplish their tasks responsibly, with integrity and in a relevant and appropriate way. They must make sure they commit to activities only when they have the means, competencies, skills, and capacity to deliver on their commitments. Decisive and robust prevention of abuses committed by humanitarians must also be a constant effort.

- **Complementarity**

The diversity of the humanitarian community is an asset if we build on our comparative advantages and complement each other's contributions. Local capacity is one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build. Whenever possible, humanitarian organizations should strive to make it an integral part in emergency response. Language and cultural barriers must be overcome.

[www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org](http://www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org)

## ICVA's 14<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ICVA held its 14<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (GA) on 3 and 4 February 2009. The GA takes place every three years and provides an opportunity to reflect on the work of the network and to set new goals and objectives. A new ICVA EXCOM was elected (see p. 27), and ICVA's *Strategic Plan 2009-2011*, was discussed and endorsed.

The *Strategic Plan 2009-2011* elaborates five main objectives for the ICVA network:

- ◆ becoming more strategic and proactive in our approach to humanitarian policy and advocacy;
- ◆ supporting network to network collaboration;
- ◆ becoming more relevant at regional and country levels;
- ◆ contributing to improving humanitarian leadership and promoting change in the humanitarian community; and
- ◆ preparing for future humanitarian challenges.

These goals build on ICVA's already realised achievements in policy and advocacy at the international level. ICVA is now planning to increase its relevance at the regional and country levels. ICVA can help to ensure that humanitarian principles and standards underpin field practices and, conversely, that these practices inform policy setting. By strengthening coordination and collaboration among the membership at regional and country levels, and undertaking more activities at the regional and country levels with member agencies, ICVA aims to further narrow the gap between the international policy setting and field-based realities.

# ICVA MEMBERS 2008

- ◆ Action by Churches Together (ACT International), *Switzerland*
- ◆ ActionAid International, *South Africa*
- ◆ Afghan NGOs Coordination Bureau (ANCB)
- ◆ Africa Humanitarian Action (AHA), *Ethiopia*
- ◆ Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA), *UK*
- ◆ All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), *Kenya*
- ◆ All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI)
- ◆ AMEL Association (Lebanese Association for Popular Action) (AMEL)
- ◆ Anatolian Development Foundation (ADF), *Turkey*
- ◆ Asian Institute for Rural Development (AIRD), *India*
- ◆ Austcare, *Australia*
- ◆ Australian Council for International Development (ACFID)
- ◆ BADIL Resource Center for Palestinian Residency and Refugee Rights (BADIL)
- ◆ Canadian Council for Refugees (CCR)
- ◆ CARE International
- ◆ Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD), *UK*
- ◆ Church World Service (CWS), *USA*
- ◆ Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA), *Ethiopia*
- ◆ Coastal Association for Social Transformation (COAST) Trust, *Bangladesh*
- ◆ Community and Family Services International (CFSI), *Philippines*
- ◆ Concern Worldwide, *Ireland*
- ◆ Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- ◆ Dutch Council for Refugees/VluchtelingenWerk Nederland (DCR)
- ◆ Frontiers (Ruwad) Association, *Lebanon*
- ◆ Fundacion Augusto Cesar Sandino (FACS), *Nicaragua*
- ◆ General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS), *Jordan*
- ◆ Human Appeal International (HAI), *United Arab Emirates*
- ◆ HealthNet TPO, *Netherlands*
- ◆ HelpAge International, *UK*
- ◆ Human Rights First (HRF), *USA*
- ◆ Individuell Människohjälp (Swedish Organisation for Individual Relief) (IM)
- ◆ InterAction (American Council for Voluntary International Action)
- ◆ InterAid International (IAI), *Switzerland*
- ◆ Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation (ICCO), *Netherlands*
- ◆ International Blue Crescent Relief and Development Foundation (IBC), *Turkey*
- ◆ International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC)
- ◆ International Islamic Relief Organisation (IIRO), *Saudi Arabia*
- ◆ International Medical Corps (IMC), *USA*

- ◆ International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT), *Denmark*
- ◆ International Rescue Committee (IRC)
- ◆ International Save the Children Alliance
- ◆ Islamic Relief Agency (ISRA), *Sudan*
- ◆ Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS)
- ◆ Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), *USA*
- ◆ Lutheran World Federation (LWF)
- ◆ Marie Stopes International (MSI), *UK*
- ◆ Mauritius Council of Social Service (MACOSS)
- ◆ Médecins du Monde (MDM)
- ◆ Mercy Corps, *USA*
- ◆ Malaysian Medical Relief Society (MERCY Malaysia)
- ◆ Merlin, *UK*
- ◆ National NGO Council of Sri Lanka (NNGOC)
- ◆ Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
- ◆ Office Africain pour le Développement et la Coopération (OFADEC), *Senegal*
- ◆ Oxfam GB
- ◆ Plan International
- ◆ Refugee Consortium of Kenya (RCK)
- ◆ Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA)
- ◆ Refugee Council USA (RCUSA)
- ◆ Refugee Education Trust (RET), *Switzerland*
- ◆ Refugees International (RI)
- ◆ Salvation Army International
- ◆ Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS), *India*
- ◆ Stichting Vluchteling (SV), *Netherlands*
- ◆ Télécoms sans Frontières International (TSF)
- ◆ Thailand Burma Border Consortium (TBBC), *Thailand*
- ◆ Union for Support and Development of Afghanistan (VAF), *Germany*
- ◆ Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, *USA*
- ◆ World Council of Churches (WCC)
- ◆ World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA)
- ◆ World Vision International (WVI)

## PERMANENT OBSERVERS

- ◆ Human Rights Watch (HRW)
- ◆ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- ◆ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
- ◆ Médecins sans Frontières International (MSF)

## AFFILIATE MEMBER

- ◆ Refugees Studies Centre (RSC), *UK*

## NEW MEMBERS IN 2008

- ◆ COAST
- ◆ Marie Stopes International

## MEMBERSHIP

Membership in ICVA is open to non-governmental organisations with human rights/humanitarian programmes that are consistent with the purposes of ICVA as described in ICVA's Statutes and Mission Statement. The following categories of organisations qualify for membership:

- ◆ international NGOs;
- ◆ consortia and networks of NGOs; and
- ◆ national NGOs that have demonstrated a commitment to translating their work to the international level; have country, regional, or other expertise on which ICVA may draw; and/or are based in countries that have no national consortium, network, or group of NGOs.

Details on membership, as well as membership application forms, are available on the "Member Agencies" page of the ICVA website: [www.icva.ch](http://www.icva.ch).

For the current list of ICVA members please see:  
[www.icva.ch/membership.html](http://www.icva.ch/membership.html)

## **International Council of Voluntary Agencies**

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**[www.icva.ch](http://www.icva.ch)**