



#ICVAconference2021

ICVA VIRTUAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE

25 & 26 MAY 2021

CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT AND
HUMANITARIAN ACTION:

HOW CAN NGOs MITIGATE AND ADAPT?

Overview:

During ICVA's 2030 strategy consultations, members and partners highlighted the importance of the intersection between climate and environment change and humanitarian action. The changes taking place are not only threatening humanity and our environment as we know it, but it is also faster and more radical than expected.

ICVA will engage on this theme through our focus areas Forced Migration, Humanitarian Coordination and Humanitarian Financing, working in collaboration and drawing on the wealth of knowledge and experience of ICVA members and our partner networks. For ICVA to realise its full potential in serving humanitarian action, we need to evolve and transform our network building on the strengths of the past. The ICVA 2030 strategy (2022-2030) will be presented for adoption by the ICVA General Assembly the week before the Annual Conference. The Strategy presents five transformations of which one has a focus on addressing the impact of "Climate Change" on humanitarian action. The Annual Conference therefore connects directly with the decisions of the General Assembly to confront and respond to the impact of climate change.

Why is it important to the humanitarian sector, especially to NGOs?

Climate change is an existential threat that is already completely altering the work we do as humanitarian NGOs, and the lives of the people we support. While the humanitarian system is struggling to meet the growing needs, we see this through the intersection of climate crisis in addition to conflicts and complex emergencies. Countries across the globe are also facing the compounded risks from both the ongoing climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. Climate change and COVID-19 require global-to-local risk prevention, responses and solutions consistent with the rights of those affected, leaving no one behind.

The scope and scale of human migration¹ due to climate change will test the limits of national and global governance as well as international cooperation. The 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change to name a few, provide the basis of a blueprint for action. However, the humanitarian sector is grappling with the magnitude of the issue. The change required to adapt and the impact it will have on how we respond to and prepare for these changes will be profound. It will require both organisational change and systemic

¹ In 2018, the World Bank estimated that three regions (Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and Southeast Asia) will generate 143 million more climate migrants by 2050 (Source: Groundswell: Preparing for Internal Climate Migration, World Bank, 2018).

change. NGOs and UN Agencies remain concerned on the inadequacy of existing protection frameworks applicable to vulnerable populations at national, regional and global level.

Humanitarian, refugee and migrants rights NGOs who support those displaced internally and forced across borders will be on the frontlines of the climate crisis. There is an urgent need to mitigate and adapt action to the increasing impact of climate change on humanitarian needs. Furthermore, the humanitarian sector as a whole must seek to innovate in order to minimise the negative impact of our own operations on our climate and environment.

In addition to a new mind set change, we will need to make changes to the current approach to humanitarian action, to our policies, our programmes, our ways of working, skills and operating techniques in order to truly limit the impact our work has on the climate and environment we live in. Many donors are reviewing their policies with an environment and climate lens which in turn will impact future access for NGOs to humanitarian funding. We will only be able to meet the full extent of humanitarian need if the humanitarian community and international donors invest in supporting and empowering local and national disaster and climate risk management, as well as local humanitarian action to build resilience ahead of potential crises.

Objectives:

ICVA's Annual Conference will focus on the role that NGOs will play in adapting the way we work to be better prepared to climate and environment shocks, while leaving no one behind. Especially in the humanitarian context when delivering programmes to support refugees, displaced and vulnerable migrant populations.

The conference will bring together ICVA members, NGOs and NGO fora, States, donors, UN agencies, experts and other climate and environment sector stakeholders to share their experiences, lessons learned, challenges and ways forward around these issues.

New alliances will be required to work outside existing silos and we will creatively explore how the humanitarian, development and climate communities can work together to shape policy, increase resilience, improve practice, and secure resourcing for climate related humanitarian crises and organisational change.

The conference aims to:

- Increase awareness on the challenging contexts under which NGOs already are and will have to operate.
- Enable members and partners to share and learn from each other.
- Create opportunities for exchange and dialogue between ICVA members, NGOs and other actors in the humanitarian and climate/environment sectors on how to mitigate challenges, be prepared and support NGOs to deliver in the future.
- Identify where more collective action and evidence is required, building on partners and membership strengths.

Key questions that will frame the conference:

- What are the challenges posed by climate and environment change to humanitarian action?
- How can NGOs be prepared to face the impact of climate and environment change on our work? What are NGOs currently doing, what more can they do?
- How can we work collectively to improve our preparedness and minimise impact on the climate and environment?
- What changes should we make to policies, programmes and action to adapt to climate and environment change?
- What organisational changes do we need to make in order to do no harm?
- What knowledge and evidence do we need to galvanise the humanitarian sector to work towards mitigating and adapting to climate and environment change?

Expected Outcomes:

ICVA will produce an outcome document capturing key learning from the Annual Conference and which will guide ICVA's work with its members on the subject of climate and environment change and humanitarian action, including incorporating outcomes into a learning stream in 2021-22. ICVA will also ensure increased access to, promotion and use of the different content produced through briefing papers, learnings and the annual conference.

Call for Ideas from members and partners

How can you contribute and co-create?

We would like to hear from you!

Please let us know if you have any ideas around the theme that you would like to contribute to and showcase during the sessions. It can be either in a plenary session or in one of the break-out (World café) sessions. You can share through:

- **Organisational change:** Lessons learned on how your organisation is changing the way you work, your strategies, structures, governance etc. to do no harm and be more climate and environment friendly.
- **Programme and operational change:** how your organisation is adapting programmes and operations to be more climate and environment friendly and improve community capacities to adapt to climate and environment change.
- **Regional and country examples,** experiences and perspectives of how your organisation is mitigating and adapting to climate and environment change (programmes, organisational structure, operations etc.).
- **Initiatives,** tools, guidance, projects, and ways of working related to the theme.
- **Ideas** for other speakers that you think would be interesting to hear from.

Send in a paragraph indicating what it is you would like to discuss and any other suggestions to conference@icvanetwork.org by 22 March.



Format:

The conference will be held online with two 90-minute sessions per day x 2 days:

Day 1 (25 May):

09:30 CEST: Session 1

14:00 CEST: Session 2 (World Café session)

Day 2:(26 May)

09:30 CEST: Session 3

14:00 CEST: Session 4

Participation and language:

ICVA's Virtual Annual Conference will be open to all and will not include any fee. It will be conducted in English with simultaneous interpretation in French, Arabic and Spanish and live captioning (except in breakout sessions during the World Café). While noting that time differences will not enable all NGOs and partners to attend all of the sessions, we plan to hold the sessions in the morning and in the afternoon Central European Time so that participants could attend at least two sessions during the two days. Recordings of all the sessions will be made available on ICVA's website a few days following the conference.