



A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK  
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE  
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019

Subject: **Management response to the Recommendations from the ICVA Impact study 2015-2018**

To: ICVA Board members,

Dear ICVA Board members,

Following our recent ICVA staff retreat, we had the occasion to review as a team the recommendations coming out of the 2015-2018 Impact study. I share with you here some of our internal reflections and the action plan attached to address the six Monitoring and Evaluation recommendations in the report.

The ICVA 2019-2021 Strategy sets a challenging objective (page 13) to have by end 2021 an effective steering system informed by quantitative and qualitative indicators from the focus areas. We committed to measure and report on performance and regularly commission external, independent assessments of ICVA's work and impact.

The study has limitations relating to the interviewee selection and availability but also on the general difficulty in measuring overall impact. While we recognize the limitations, the study gives light to a number of achievements and is a very useful guidance for ICVA's approach going forward building on the Theory of Change 2019-2021.

The study is a valuable contribution in achieving objectives of the ICVA Enabling Strategies:

- Fundraising Enabling Strategy 2019-2021: objective 2 - ("strengthen the understanding of ICVA's value proposition...");
- Membership Enabling Strategy 2019-2021: objective 1 – "engagement of ICVA's members that enhances ICVA's impact and outreach has increased";
- Communication Enabling Strategy 2019-2021 around consolidation (1); increase (2) and leverage (3).

The report provides key information to make people understand what ICVA achieves when working collectively. Alliance building and working collectively is an essential ICVA mandate but not easy to document. In documenting what we are doing to influence, in terms of a network, the ICVA Secretariat plans to do more case studies to better illustrate with concrete examples.

The plan of work indicates sequenced range of surveys to avoid survey fatigue. It also looks into how to collect information for impact study in other ways. We will do away with annual impact study as recommended in the report and focus on doing them every 3 years, to allow to measure long-term objectives, related to how ICVA has Influenced policy /actors etc... which needs to be done long-term.

The report was presented at Board meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019, at the ICVA Annual Conference on 26<sup>th</sup> March and disseminated through the ICVA Bulletin. Focussed and personalised messages are being sent to different stakeholders including a 2-pager of the main points of the report as well as a visual with some of the data (as from mid-May).

I recommend the study be used by board members to contribute to board decision 22 May 2018 for “Board Members to increase visibility of ICVA Vision and Values among membership and promote board interaction and tools”. To this effect, you may find the 7 case studies a good support.

Yours sincerely,



Ignacio Packer  
Executive Director

<b>Response to the Recommendations from the ICVA Secretariat – Recommendations from the 2015-2018 Impact Study</b>			
	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	<b>ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN</b>	<b>TIMEFRAME</b>
1	<p><b>Theory of Change:</b></p> <p>The absence of an agreed upon theory of change (TOC) has been highlighted in previous evaluations. ICVA has recently developed a TOC for the new strategy which is a positive step. As it is still early in the new strategy it is recommended to revisit this, using the findings from this review.</p> <p>An effective TOC can serve as a reference to decide priorities, design action, and determine investments of energy. One way to test the new TOC is by retroactively looking at the 2015-2018 activities/outcomes/impacts asking whether the models provide clarity on the inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes and impacts. A good TOC will usually include various loops and cross connections rather than being completely linear and consider the role of other network organisations in the system.</p>	<p><i>(a) Draft a one pager narrative available for each Theory of Change (for each focus) for better collective understanding.</i></p> <p><i>(b) Consolidate and build on existing Theory of Change (2019-2021)</i></p>	<p>By end of July 2019</p> <p>On-going</p>
2	<p><b>Reduce the frequency of evaluations:</b></p> <p>Undertaking organisation-wide evaluations every year risks overburdening ICVA management and staff. Annual evaluations can probably be replaced with annual objectives planning &amp; monitoring of workplans for individual people and team, without the</p>	<p><i>(a) Improve the existing yearly planning and monitoring system with a special focus on the interdependence of the workplans.</i></p>	<p>Improved monitoring for 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2019</p>

	<p>involvement of external evaluators. The organisation-wide evaluation should ideally be done only once per strategic plan and should be timed so that it informs the next strategic planning process. For additional evaluation needs, ICVA can pursue program- or project-level evaluations, which are more targeted and will require fewer resources.</p>	<p><i>(b) Regional presence - could be a useful exercise to carry our study pieces, on how to reflect better ICVA's reach to members in the regions.</i></p> <p><i>(c) Mandate the next ICVA impact study as part of the end of the current strategy review.</i></p>	<p>Improved planning and monitoring for 2020</p> <p>End 2021/ early 2022</p>
3	<p><b>Data collection for log frame Indicators:</b></p> <p>In this study, there were several indicators which were not feasible to determine. To avoid this going forward, ICVA will need to map the information sources and data collection methods for each of the indicators in the log frame and take steps to ensure that the data is being collected periodically. It is also recommended to reduce the total number of indicators, focusing on at most two indicators per strategic component or pillar. If the approach of this review is adopted, there is no reason why ICVA could not keep track of its initiatives, outcomes and impacts without external help and then feed this into its annual planning cycle.</p>	<p><i>(a) Improve internal coordination with Grant funding proposals with own log frames vs individual workplans.</i></p> <p><i>(b) Increase staff capacity to use the Civicrm</i></p> <p><i>(c) Map sources of information to ensure periodic data collection.</i></p> <p><i>(d) Decentralise data management with overall view of data accuracy.</i></p>	<p>May 2019 onwards</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>May-July 2019</p> <p>End of July 2019</p>
4	<p><b>Appoint M&amp;E Lead:</b></p> <p>Responsibility for M&amp;E is currently distributed to various roles across the ICVA Secretariat. There is no single person responsible for ensuring that data needed for the log frame indicators is identified in advance and collected appropriately. There does not seem to be a strong culture for evaluations in ICVA, which may be in part due to the challenge of attribution in influencing policy. In addition, the indicators of the log frame are mostly shared in common across ICVA's projects which means there isn't a lot of individual ownership over specific indicators either. Sandstone's recommendation is to nominate a M&amp;E lead who is responsible for planning and coordinating M&amp;E data collection processes.</p>	<p><i>(a) Director of Programmes is appointed to lead the M&amp;E processes. M&amp;E Lead - The Monitoring and Evaluation Lead will give guidance and support the team and have scope for developing and executing M&amp;E, learning and knowledge management systems and approaches.</i></p> <p><i>(a) Indicators will be reviewed - once a year. Tracing indicators will be used to</i></p>	<p>April 2019</p> <p>End of each year.</p>

	This change may not require an increase in staff headcount since the work involved is periodic.	<i>reduce the number of indicators to monitor.</i>	
5	<p><b>Monitoring tools:</b></p> <p>ICVA’s CRM tool (CVCRM) was not widely used until 2018 to track engagement with members at events. The value of the tool’s data will be much greater if ICVA also consistently uses the tool to track non-member engagement, for example ICVA’s engagement with NGO Fora. As much as possible, ICVA should use the tool to replace ad hoc spreadsheets which are being used in parallel, making any necessary adjustments to the data fields / categories within the CRM tool as needed to accommodate new requirements.</p>	<p>(a) <i>Increase staff capacity to use the Civicrm tool</i></p> <p>-</p> <p>(b) <i>Instruction are given for all staff to contribute to – informing through Civicrm -</i></p>	<p>May-July 2019</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
6	<p><b>Membership Surveys:</b></p> <p>The nature of ICVA’s work depends on getting input and feedback from its members, which have limited time and capacity. So, it is understandable that the ICVA Secretariat wants to avoid making excessive requests to members. Conducting too many surveys can result in survey fatigue and lower response rates. This has the effect of diluting the value of the survey results and insights because a lower number of survey responses will be less representative of the membership as a whole and more subject to self-selection bias. Sandstone recommends doing fewer membership surveys which are not primarily program/policy-focused (e.g. 1-2 comprehensive membership survey every 3-years to coincide with the strategic planning &amp; organisation-wide evaluation ahead of General Assemblies).</p>	<p>(a) <i>ICVA Integrates questions into existing surveys while avoiding survey fatigue.</i></p> <p>.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>