

Strategic Considerations: Regional Development of ICVA

iii. Regional development of ICVA

Why is this important?

Continuing to invest in ICVA's regional presence and expand to new regions will ensure ICVA remains a network with real representative power and legitimacy.

ICVA's regional presence brings proximity to members in operational contexts, allowing the Secretariat to engage with the operational reality of humanitarian action. Expanding to new regions or consolidating in other regions either directly or through new models of partnerships will allow ICVA to become a truly global network, further increasing our value-proposition and legitimacy. Going forwards the question not whether, but rather how ICVA will invest in regions in future.

What is the current situation and what have we learned from the past?

ICVA's regional representation provides pragmatic support to NGOs, including in operational, policy and support settings. Based on ICVA's recent impact studies it has shown that ICVA adds real value to the network and is a unique point of difference to other networks.

Regional engagement is viewed as flexible and context specific. ICVA secretariat presence in regions may need to grow (or shrink) at different rates depending on many external factors, resources and emerging humanitarian crises.

ICVA Secretariat's current regional division (with staff presence in Asia-Pacific, Africa and MENA) still leaves representatives covering large and diverse regions with conflicting priorities. A sub-regional focus may be preferred to ensure better coverage of these areas. Even with the existing approach ICVA is thin on resources and so any expansion of the scope or geography of regional work will have resource implications.

New models of partnership should be encouraged to enable ICVA to work in regions that may not require a full-time staff allocation. Such approaches are being piloted in the Pacific and in Latin America.

ICVA's potential added value

ICVA regional presence already adds value through:

- Convening and working collaboratively with humanitarian organisations closer to country operations
- Providing on-the-ground information to inform global policy debates,
- Communicating, translating and building a better understanding of global policies at local and regional level.
- Offering platforms for collective advocacy.

There is potential to go further in increasing...

- The geographical coverage of regional support
- The volume of operational support assisting in coordination for the provision of humanitarian assistance
- The leverage of ICVA member presence to support and potentially act on behalf of ICVA in places where ICVA has no secretariat presence.
- The degree of contextualization or focus ICVA actions and advocacy adapted to regional nuances/interests.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- a) Should ICVA further develop and expand at the regional level and if so, what does this practically mean in terms of the what ICVA does, how it does it and how it is resourced?
- b) Should ICVA member organisations take on delegated duties to strategically increase ICVA's reach in regions where ICVA has no regional hubs, formally representing and providing ICVA services/support?