



A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

ICVA Statement at the Afghanistan Conference 2022

In the last six months, ICVA members and local NGO partners have continued to deliver life-saving assistance to people in Afghanistan. Despite an increasingly challenging operating environment, with banking and liquidity constraints, inconsistent policies governing NGOs, drought, humanitarian organisations continue to scale up operations where possible, even in areas that were previously unreachable.

In 2021, 180 humanitarian partners – both international and national – reached 19.6 million people across 397 of Afghanistan’s 401 districts with multisector assistance. In the last quarter, we reached almost double the number of people reached in the year until then. Nonetheless, the sheer scale of needs and increase in negative coping mechanisms, such as child marriage, demonstrate that much more must be urgently done.¹

We call on Member States to immediately and fully fund, with maximum flexibility, the Humanitarian Response Plan so that we can further ramp up delivery of food and agriculture support, treatment for malnutrition, health services, emergency shelter, access to water and sanitation, protection, and emergency education.

These funds must support national NGOs and local CSOs, who are crucial in effectively reaching affected populations. The voices of Afghan communities, particularly women and girls, must be at the centre of our discussions and decision-making.

The funding and strategies that have been put in place to improve the flow of humanitarian funding are welcome, but we can only prevent further worsening of the humanitarian crisis if there is collective agreement on the terms to support the essential functioning of the central bank and open up sustainable financial pathways into and around the country.

The recent announcement by the IEA to extend the ban on girls’ secondary education, demonstrates the increasingly challenging environment facing communities, and the need for ongoing and concerted efforts from the international community.

As a humanitarian community, we must continue principled and considered dialogue and engagement with the IEA to respond to their increasingly assertive approach. Frontline responders must further be supported by the international community to ensure they can operate independently, according to humanitarian need and guided by the humanitarian principles. This will be critical in building confidence and trust in the humanitarian response, and in creating the foundations for long-term development and solutions.

Although we appreciate the scale of needs arising from the Ukraine crisis, we appeal to donors not to ignore the massive humanitarian needs in Afghanistan, with more than 24 million people in dire need of life saving assistance. Pledges made for Ukraine should not be at the expense of other crisis and should be additional to other humanitarian response plans. NGOs stand ready to support Member States deliver on the commitments made today and remain accountable to the people of Afghanistan and their future, including those living in neighboring refugee hosting countries.

¹ <https://afghanistan.un.org/en/173375-team-humanitarian-experts-concludes-mission-afghanistan-and-calls-support-life-saving>