



*A picture captured for Local Syrian Networks in Gaziantep/Turkey that are targeted in ICVA Localisation initiative & the NGO fora Support Program. Nov.2021*

# REGIONAL DIRECTIONS PAPER

MENA Region 2022-2024

**LIVING DOCUMENT**

**Latest update January 2022**



A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK  
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE  
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

# | Table Of Contents

1.	Executive Summary .....	3
2.	Elevator Pitch .....	6
3.	The Evolving Humanitarian Environment .....	7
4.	SWOT .....	10
5.	Focus Area One .....	12
6.	Focus Area 2 .....	13
7.	Focus Area 3 .....	14
8.	Adapting to Change .....	15
8.1.	Localisation.....	15
8.2.	Nexus .....	18
8.3.	Climate Change .....	18
8.4.	Gender in Emergency and Inclusion.....	18
9.	Target Countries, Stakeholders, and Partners.....	19
10.	Section 10: Risk Anticipation and Management .....	20
11.	Human Resources .....	21
12.	Operations Plan .....	21
13.	Communications.....	21
14.	Membership Strategy .....	22
15.	Financing and Resource Mobilization for the Regional Strategy .....	22

## 1. Executive Summary

This 2022-2024 regional strategy sets the direction and focus of ICVA's work in the MENA region. It encapsulates our vision, recognises our diverse membership, and illustrates the engagement between the ICVA Secretariat, ICVA Regional team and members on key focus areas to better enable NGO principled and effective humanitarian engagement. The three years strategy guides ICVA Secretariat's overall workplans and allocation of resources to the region. As an extension of the secretariat, ICVA in MENA regional strategic direction paper is guided by the ICVA 2030 strategy and leads by ICVA's mission and vision:



"To make humanitarian action more principled and effective by working collectively and independently to influence policy and practice".



By 2024, ICVA will have significantly contributed to promoting effective coordination with different NGOs and stakeholders in the humanitarian contexts in the region and supporting people affected by humanitarian crises in the Middle East and North Africa region.

Our focus in the region is to use our collaborative advantage to promote inclusive participation from different local and international actors and to develop complementarity and meaningful partnership among the different actors, leading to an effective response to humanitarian crises.

Our work applies ICVA's core values and ICVA's transformative actions (champion principled humanitarian action, address the impact of 'climate change' on humanitarian action, be globally distributed and locally rooted, be diverse, inclusive, and live our values, and proactively engage in agile collaborative partnerships). As such, the ICVA MENA Strategy reflects a clear alignment with and translation of the ICVA 2030 strategy launched in August 2021.

ICVA in MENA will join forces with its members to influence and advocate, collaborate, convene, connect, analyse, explain and learn. Furthermore ICVA will support capacities of NGO and NGO Fora to further engage and influence positive change in the humanitarian system.

Based upon consultations with ICVA Members, NGO Foras, and external stakeholders that took place in 2021, with the purpose of reviewing priorities to inform the strategic direction of ICVA in MENA for 2022-2024, this strategic direction paper presents a three-year road map for ICVA in the region. It will act as a compass to support the ICVA MENA team to remain focused on specific strategic priorities and clear overarching objectives.

To bring about such long term, transformative change in communities, the ICVA team in MENA will focus its activities around three Domains of Change:

- Promoting an Enabled Inclusive Environment for NGO members.

- Supporting NGO members and NGO Fora's Programmes on their collective advocacy work

- Collecting Evidence based data to influence positive change

In each domain, ICVA's work and engagement with members in the region seeks to address barriers to positive, sustainable, long term change that will assist vulnerable communities in the region. We will work to achieve these domains of change through the following activities.

Promoting an Enabled Inclusive Environment for NGO Members	Support NGO members and to NGO Fora Programme on collective advocacy	Collecting Evidence & Influencing
1.1. Support meaningful participation of members (local and international) and provide access to regional and global opportunities and platforms (webinars, conferences, events, etc)	2.1. Provide support to newly established local NGO Fora and INGOs Fora to strengthen capacities in strategic planning, advocacy, governance, and HR and amplify their voices at the regional and global platforms.	3.1. Analyzing and building an understanding of regional dynamics in the countries of priority.
1.2. Maintain active engagement with ICVA members in the region, create linkages with UN agencies, key regional actors, and donors in order to engage multiple pathways of information from global/HQ level to regional and country level.	2.2. Extend regional learning engagement, and advocacy opportunities for MENA members and key fora on ICVA focus areas such as localisation, the Nexus, Climate change, SEAH and humanitarian space.	3.2. Collate Data and disseminate evidence-based research, case studies, and briefings relevant to members that can be utilized for further advocacy in local, regional, and global platforms.
1.3. Share timely, and relevant information to members and NGO Fora which will support members in making informed decisions.	2.3. Coordinate and influence linkages and learning between national and international Fora as a trusted broker and convenor, through convening webinars, dialogues, sharing information, and other mechanisms.	3.3. Convene webinars, roundtable discussions, and other manners of communication to share knowledge on important topics, influence NGOs, and support collective advocacy.

ICVA in MENA will work in an inclusive participatory manner with its members and key stakeholders on the areas of Forced Migration, Humanitarian Coordination, Humanitarian Financing, and Adapting to Change (Localisation, NEXUS, Climate Change, and PSEA). The ambition for ICVA in MENA is to grow in its reach and influence while empowering NGO and NGO Foras. By 2024, ICVA in MENA will work diligently, effectively, and efficiently towards operationalizing ICVA 2030.

## 2. Elevator Pitch

### MEASURABLE WITH PROGRESS

#### ADVOCATE

ICVA in MENA region works as an effective NGO consortium that focuses on strengthening the collective NGOs advocacy and action to enhance coordination and create a positive impact on the people affected by humanitarian emergencies.

ICVA is a reliable NGO consortium that is able to generate vital briefing papers, case studies, and regional research which display evidence-based information and recommendations that support ICVA members and NGOs fora on their advocacy and policy efforts.

ICVA will be effectively engaged in key advocacy discussions and efforts related to Humanitarian access, the effect of COVID-19 pandemic, protracting emergency impact on IDPs inside Syria and Libya, the space of NGOs, and Famine issues in Yemen.

#### EMPOWER

ICVA builds on over 60 years of legacy working as a consortium with diverse members including INGOs, National, and local NGOs, and NGO Fora to promote and support principled and effective humanitarian action. ICVA in MENA prioritizes working with NGO foras in a complementarity partnership manner, providing its support and multiplying its collective advocacy and coordination efforts.

ICVA plays a vital role in supporting NGOs Fora across the region by sharing timely and relevant information, providing opportunities for engagement at the global levels, connecting, capacity building, supporting learning activities, etc.

ICVA will work on developing and strengthening capacity and providing a platform for exchange on good practices and lessons learned.

#### PARTICIPATE & INFLUENCE

Leveraging its network and influence, ICVA links members to regional and global processes and events, ensuring country-level and regional priorities are reflected at the global policy and advocacy levels. ICVA proactively engages in agile collaborative partnerships and thrives to collaborate with diverse actors recognizing the value and complementarity of local networks in Yemen, Syria, OPt, Libya, Iraq, Gulf countries, Turkey, and other countries in MENA, with a key focus on internal displacement issues, humanitarian access issues, COVID-19 response, and access inequalities, Gender and inclusion, and inclusive decision-making issues in humanitarian protracted emergencies.

ICVA in MENA prioritizes Localisation, Nexus, PSEA, and Climate change as vital cross-thematic areas, that NGOs members and networks are in need of more information, more connections, additional tools, and continuous discussions to capitalize on the different opportunities for engagement and to be able to operationalize certain strategies and approaches.

### 3. The Evolving Humanitarian Environment

In MENA Region, conflict continues to cause crippling humanitarian consequences in the Middle East and North Africa region. Vulnerable people's ability to cope and meet their basic needs is further hampered by the effects of COVID-19, macroeconomic decline and the climate crisis. Over 55 million people across the region need humanitarian assistance, including more than 12 million people who are internally displaced and facing a myriad of challenges. In the countries affected by the Syria crisis, there are over 7 million refugees and 13 million vulnerable members of host communities in 3RP countries that need continuous support.

Operational space for civil society including both national and international NGOs is challenging in many countries across MENA. Organizations require both key skills as well as support for collective advocacy and negotiations to navigate and effectively manoeuvre in contexts of shrinking or threatened space. Barriers to effective engagement of NGOs with host governments in the region to negotiate and resolve operational and bureaucratic impediments are a common problem. Some of the constraints include NGO registration, travel permits, visas for international staff and specialists, project approval, cross-border programming, remote partnership, risk-shifting, lack of understanding of the key areas for adaptations such as Localisation, Nexus, PSEA, Climate Change, and other key issues of interest for NGOs. The severity and complexity of the different crises including those in Syria, Libya, Iraq, OPT, Lebanon, and Yemen, the mounting needs in these fragile states require a rapid and effective response, leaving little time to focus on long-term objectives and priorities such as the Nexus, localization, gender mainstreaming, and principles of partnership.

Disconnect between local NGOs and INGOs is common and due to competition for funds, lack of trust, lack of partnership experiences amongst them, or occasionally related to different backgrounds and expertise. Limited resources allocated to enhancing the capacity for local NGOs and Local NGO Fora has posed a challenge as well in the development and increased responsibility for local actors.

MENA context is complex and each country has its own unique set of identified challenges, gaps, and vulnerabilities. In order to highlight this the following section will be a breakdown of needs by country of focus for ICVA in MENA.

#### WHOLE OF REGIONAL SYRIA

ICVA in MENA focuses on the Whole of Syria which includes inside Syria and the neighboring countries which have hosted refugees from Syria (Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey).

A decade into the crisis humanitarian needs have multiplied. Increased protection vulnerabilities are common due to limited access to basic services and inadequate living standards, the macroeconomic context has deteriorated, and climate shocks affecting natural resources, particularly water have intensified and exacerbated humanitarian impact. According to the Global Humanitarian Review 2022, a total of 14 million people inside Syria are in need, over two million people remain in 1,760 informal settlements and planned camps and a total of 6.9 million IDPs are present. Syria ranked among the 10 most food-insecure countries globally by mid-2021, with an estimated 12.8 million people considered food insecure. In addition to all of this, humanitarian access in Syria continues to be challenged by geopolitical dynamics, periodic border-crossing closures and COVID-19 measures, with just 2 percent of the population fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

## TURKEY

According to the 3RP Regional Strategic Overview 2022, there are 3,739,240 registered Syrian Refugees in Turkey<sup>1</sup>. Refugees in Turkey are currently facing high levels of economic insecurity, which significantly increased as an impact of COVID-19, increased costs of basic services (housing, utilities, food) negatively affecting vulnerable households and their ability to meet their basic needs. Many Syrian households still live in substandard shelters and single, female headed households are most severely affected.<sup>2</sup>

## JORDAN

According to the 3RP Regional Strategic Overview 2022, there are 758,158 Refugees in need<sup>3</sup>. In Jordan, the food security level of Syrian refugees in camps has returned to crisis levels noted in 2014, after years of steady decline (5% in 2019 to 19% in 2020). The deterioration of food security has an impact on other sectors, such as health, education, protection, and more, since hunger impedes growth and development<sup>4</sup>. Given that the unemployment rate is on the rise in Jordan, reaching an all time high of 25% in Q1-2021, with youth unemployment rates reaching an unprecedented 48.1% and women's labour force participation at 14%, economic insecurity is greatly impacting both refugees and host community.

## LEBANON

The unprecedented multi-layered political, economic and public health crises currently facing Lebanon is negatively impacting both vulnerable refugees and host communities<sup>5</sup>. Due to currency depreciation, high inflation, increasing food prices and loss of income, poverty has struck all across Lebanon<sup>6</sup>. Nine out of ten Syrian refugees continue to live below the extreme poverty line, in addition to the fact that 80% of local Lebanese people fall and live under the poverty line.<sup>7</sup> There are negative relations between refugees and host communities, compared to 2018. Relationships are becoming increasingly strained, with pressure points ranging from access to services and job competition to historical grievances between the communities.

## IRAQ

Four years after the conclusion of large-scale military operations against ISIL, millions of Iraqis have yet to recover from the years of extreme violence and widespread displacement. Recovery and reconstruction remain incomplete, social tensions are often high, and security is complex and fragmented. Iraq has faced various challenges in 2021, including the pressured political climate in general, elections, negative economic trends further exacerbated by COVID-19, climate change and challenges facing the protection environment in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I) where the vast majority of Syrians in Iraq reside. Twenty-seven formal camps remain open in Iraq: 25 in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and two in federal Iraq at the time of writing. Only 1 per cent of in-camp IDPs have noted an intention to return to areas of origin in 2022. Some additional camps may close or consolidate in the coming months, and some may see services transferred to the Government. However, all in-camp IDPs are expected to remain in need of

1 [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/3RP\\_Regional\\_Strategic\\_Overview\\_2011\\_31Dec21\\_72dpi.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/3RP_Regional_Strategic_Overview_2011_31Dec21_72dpi.pdf)

2 <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/85061>

3 [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/3RP\\_Regional\\_Strategic\\_Overview\\_2011\\_31Dec21\\_72dpi.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/3RP_Regional_Strategic_Overview_2011_31Dec21_72dpi.pdf)

4 <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/84022>

5 [3RP Country Chapter for Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey.](#)

6 Analysis of the context, crisis and needs Syrian Arab Republic | Global Humanitarian Overview (unocha.org)

7 World Bank, 38 Unicef, UNHCR and WFP (2021) Vulnerability assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon VASyR, preliminary findings: Document - Lebanon - Preliminary Results of the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees - VASyR 2021 (unhcr.org)



humanitarian assistance in 2022.<sup>8</sup>

## THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY (OPT)

It remains a protracted protection crisis, where too many Palestinians struggle to live in dignity, and access basic services. The crisis is characterized by more than 54 years of military occupation, insufficient respect for international humanitarian and human rights law, internal Palestinian political divisions, and recurrent escalations of hostilities between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups<sup>9</sup>.

In Gaza, the humanitarian situation deteriorated in 2021, with the most intense escalation of hostilities since 2014. According to the OPT 2021 Multisectoral Needs Analysis (MSNA), the conflict affected the livelihoods or assets of half of the households in Gaza, including some 8,250 people who remain displaced as a result of the escalation. At the same time, the humanitarian needs in all sectors persist, with the blockade on Gaza by Israeli authorities who cite security concerns, entering its fifteenth year. In the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, 2021 witnessed a spike in Palestinian casualties by Israeli forces, raising concerns about excessive use of force. Threats of forced evictions in East Jerusalem and demolitions or seizures of structures and property by the Israeli authorities in Area C and East Jerusalem have also increased, with several significant mass demolitions recorded.<sup>10</sup>

## LIBYA

Since the ceasefire agreement was signed in October 2020, the number of IDPs decreased nearly 25 percent to 213,000 people compared to some 278,000 at the start of 2021. This is an encouraging trend, but challenges remain in ensuring that returnees and vulnerable populations have access to essential services, such as health care, safe drinking water, and suitable housing. According to IOM's Displacement Tracking Matrix, nearly 598,000 migrants are in Libya. The trend of migrants and refugees attempting the dangerous journey to cross the Mediterranean to seek economic opportunities has continued. By the end of September 2021, the Libyan Coast Guard had intercepted and returned almost 26,000 migrants and refugees to Libya. At the same time, the number of migrants and refugees held in detention centres run by the authorities has increased significantly since the beginning of 2021, as authorities mount security operations to round up migrant populations in Tripoli<sup>11</sup>. NGOs and UN agencies continue to operate from Tunisia and establish a remote partnership with local actors and municipalities in Libya, leading to additional operational challenges.

## YEMEN

The crisis in Yemen remains extremely severe, with over 20.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance. The crisis is fueled by conflict and is further exacerbated by the economy's decline, natural hazards such as floods or drought, and epidemics, notably COVID-19. Millions of people are now in a situation where they can no longer meet their basic needs, suffer from famine and different diseases such as cholera, dengue, malaria and diphtheria. The Large-scale destruction of civilian homes and infrastructure has created shelter needs, including for internally displaced persons. Floods are becoming annual events

8 UN Women & SGDD-ASAM, 2018. Needs Assessment of Syrian Women and Girls Under Temporary Protection Status in Turkey: [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/15.01.2020\\_WOMENS-ECONOMICEMPOWERMENT-IN-PRO-TRACTED-CRISIS-SYRIANREFUGEE-WOMEN-IN-SUTHEAST-TURKEY-FULL-REPORT](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/15.01.2020_WOMENS-ECONOMICEMPOWERMENT-IN-PRO-TRACTED-CRISIS-SYRIANREFUGEE-WOMEN-IN-SUTHEAST-TURKEY-FULL-REPORT).<https://gho.unocha.org/iraq>

9 [https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/OCHAHUMNEEDSOVERVIEW2022\\_161221.pdf](https://www.un.org/unispal/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/OCHAHUMNEEDSOVERVIEW2022_161221.pdf)

WFP. 2020. Impact of COVID-19 in the Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe Update, December 2020. [Iraq | Global Humanitarian Overview \(unocha.org\)](https://www.unocha.org/iraq/global-humanitarian-overview)

10 occupied Palestinian territory | Global Humanitarian Overview (unocha.org)

11 Libya | Global Humanitarian Overview (unocha.org)

that will require contingency planning and response<sup>12</sup>. The operating environment in Yemen has remained extremely challenging related to the bureaucratic impediments that are reported by Humanitarian agencies. The humanitarian response will continue to focus on preventing famine and disease outbreaks; reducing mortality and morbidity; malnutrition; restoring livelihoods; improving the housing situation; enhancing access to basic and public services; providing specialized protection services and assisting civilians in need.

---

12 Yemen | Global Humanitarian Overview (unocha.org)

## 4. SWOT

This SWOT analysis below identified the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats for ICVA MENA. It is the foundation to determine the best opportunities to pursue to achieve ICVA's mission and goals for the MENA region. And also focuses on the strengths to develop to improve our work in the region.

### STRENGTHS

- ICVA is an observer member in NGO Fora's and maintains a robust partnership with all NGO Fora's (local and international). This allows for more effective coordination, avoiding overlap and duplication with those in-country NGOs, and enhances collective action and joint coordination.
- Active engagement in regional platforms such as 3RP, regional UNHCR, regional UNICEF, Regional Gender in Emergency WG, Durable Solutions. This allows ICVA to be updated on key trends and on regional dynamics, and to be able to advocate for more space given to NGOs.
- Frequent and regular information-sharing with members through MENA consolidated reports, individual meetings, etc exposing members to regional publications, training opportunities, webinars, policy updates, etc.
- Collating evidence-based data through different case studies, research, and subjects that are relevant to ICVA members in MENA (I.e. localization, NEXUS, the evolution of local CSO networks, etc.) and contributing to different researches conducted by different ICVA members.
- Providing cross-learning initiatives, exchange, and capacity strengthening and learning programming among different members and NGOs fora at regional and global levels.
- Convening of the NGO community in regional level consultations, surveys, and discussions (I.e. EHF consultations, regional UNHCR consultations, etc.)
- Perceived as a strong lead on the localization debate, - with great credibility in these areas resulting from the active discussion that ICVA is engaged at the regional and country-level, producing research, and contributing as a trusted broker amongst international and local actors.
- Additionally, ICVA's active role at the IASC RG1 on localization and the active role with the NGO Fora in MENA countries has led to increased credibility and efforts on localisation dialogue.
- ICVA has established an opportunity for local NGOs/CSOs voices to be heard at national, regional, and global scenes.

## EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES

1. ICVA works on bringing together NGO Foras (national and international) from different countries for cross-regional learning, talking about key topics that will feed into the regional and global level and ways of working, representing members, collective advocacy etc.
2. Increased opportunities for better engagement and involvement of members on issues related to (climate change, NEXUS, SEAH and localization). More opportunities to engage in research, exchange/facilitate information sharing opportunities, and convene necessary dialogue.
3. Regional engagement with Gulf donors/gulf actors. (i.e. KSA, Kuwait, Dubai).

## WEAKNESSES

- Expectation from members to be involved in country level specifics – maintaining a balance between regional and in-country engagement issues. High expectations from members which sometimes do not correspond to ICVA's mission or priorities.
- Lack of time and resources allocated to fundraising.
- Limited networking with academic, research institutions and media in the MENA region.
- Shrinking space for civil society actors in certain contexts, including and new laws and regulations complicating NGO work.
- Protracted and complex emergencies impacting the MENA region. Terrorism and civil unrest that have the potential to limit physical travel and face-face engagement.
- COVID-19 variants and virus are bringing about new regulations/restrictions which may limit physical travel and in-person engagement.

## 5. Focus Area 1

### Forced Migration

ICVA will support members in their work to improve protection, assistance, and durable solutions for refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants in vulnerable situations. Forced Migration includes many complex interlinkages and will thus be considered within a broader approach of human mobility, calling for further careful navigation of laws, policies and practices in areas of refugee protection, human rights, and state sovereignty.

ICVA in MENA will support both local and international members to access the latest information on forced migration issues and increase the overall understanding on the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF), Global Refugee Compacts (GRF) as well as regional priorities in the area of forced migration. ICVA in MENA will engage NGOs and encourage collaboration, exchange of information, and provide an opportunity to advocate with key stakeholders (e.g. states, UN agencies etc.).

ICVA in MENA will work with Forced Migration team to increase members awareness, enhance access to information, and encourage active engagement of local, national, and international NGOs and NGO Fora in key discussions and events. Also, the ICVA team will support in collating inputs from NGO members to feed into the global, regional, and local frameworks and mechanisms. ICVA in MENA will promote continued dialogue and consultation with IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, OCHA, and other UN agencies and NGOs on key humanitarian issues impacting the regions, such as, climate change and displacement affects in MENA, the dialogue with UN agencies to enhance commitment and partnerships.

Over the next three years, we will diligently and efficiently work towards achieving the specific outcomes for Forced Migration which include:

- NGOs have safe spaces to exchange and strategize, allowing for cross-fertilization (national-regional-global).
- ICVA equips NGOs for engagement in the global compacts and other forced migration policies.
- ICVA further supports collective action and alliances that contribute to policy processes on forced migration issues.
- NGOs collaborate exchange and advocate with key stakeholders (e.g. Member states, UN agencies, etc.).

## 6. Focus Area 2

### Humanitarian Coordination

ICVA will work to strengthen the collective ability of NGOs to actively engage in, influence, or lead coordination mechanisms to ensure they are inclusive, contextualized, and accountable.

Humanitarian action takes place in a complex space involving many actors, including NGOs. A variety of coordination mechanisms continue to be created to help different actors operate more efficiently and effectively in relation to one another. However, it can be challenging for NGOs to understand and engage these mechanisms. An increasing number of diverse actors recognize the need to link humanitarian action to longer-term stability which will require, in the years to come, constant improvement in coordination at global, regional, national, and sub-national levels.

ICVA in MENA will actively engage with local, national, and international NGO Fora in the region in order to provide support for NGOs to gain more space and influence in the different in-country, regional coordination mechanisms.

ICVA will continue providing the required information with its members on the IASC different working streams and working groups with a special focus on localisation, accountability, humanitarian financing, and Nexus. Moreover, ICVA will continue its advocacy efforts to increase the NGO participation at the different global, regional, and in-country coordination platforms.

ICVA in MENA will continue to be a strong advocate to increase the meaningful participation of local actors in the different coordination and decision-making platforms such as the IASC working groups and different mainstream working groups; Global Education Clusters, Global Protection Clusters, Regional 3RP, Regional Gender in the Emergency working group, Humanitarian country team, Clusters working group, and in-country CPF advisory board.

In addition to this, ICVA will continue its support to the NGOs fora across the region. Whilst ICVA will engage with all NGO fora, in 2022-2024 ICVA will have a dedicated focus on extending support and engaging with fora in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen, Iraq, OPT, and Libya, and supporting these fora across the areas of governance, strategy, collective advocacy. ICVA Support to NGO fora will be achieved by sharing tools, share different connection opportunities with other fora and partners for learning exchanges. ICVA will provide different capacity strengthening learning programs targeting the local NGO networks. Finally, ICVA will facilitate cross-learning initiatives with NGO fora in the region (local NGOs together and local and international NGOs as well).

In the upcoming three years, ICVA in MENA will strive to achieve different commitments across our six ways of working on Humanitarian Coordination:

- NGOs influence policies and systems, especially on key areas such as cross border in Syria-Turkey, Humanitarian Access issues, Famine issues in Yemen, pledging conferences that focus on increasing funding and access to NGOs, COVAX and the humanitarian buffer issues, and the lack of participation of NGOs in the leadership and decision-making platforms.
- NGOs increase understanding of coordination mechanisms, through the information that is available and explained in a simplistic manner.
- NGOs and NGO fora actively engage in coordination mechanisms, through ICVA connection efforts and linkages that are provided to the members and NGO fora.
- NGOs and NGO fora contribute efficiently to the improvement in the humanitarian system, through different evaluation and impact review processes.

## **7. Focus Area 3**

### **Humanitarian Financing**

ICVA will work to ensure financing of humanitarian action meets the needs of populations affected by crises while ensuring adequate NGO access to principled quality funding.

This high-level objective will be supported by ICVA with action in three strategic areas: increased efficiency within the humanitarian system to improve the effectiveness of funding; expanded access to new sources of funding for humanitarian NGOs, especially including local and national organizations; and collaboration with stakeholders to better anticipate humanitarian needs and reduce the funding burden on the humanitarian system.

ICVA in MENA will support the work of ICVA's Financing Policy Team by disseminating information (briefing papers, opportunities for consultations, engagements, conferences, podcasts, etc), contributing to the work of Grand Bargain II, and through active engagement in the Grand Bargain Workstream.

ICVA in MENA will engage its local, and international members by sharing information that will lead to an increased understanding of global and regional humanitarian financing issues, including but not limited to; donor conditions and requirements, risk sharing, risk management, Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPF), Pooled Fund Working Groups (PFWG), Grand Bargain II commitment and progress.

ICVA will engage with key actors in the Gulf and throughout MENA on Islamic Financing and Administrative Costs and will facilitate a virtual exchange of learning on how NGOs engage in humanitarian financing.

Over the next three years, we will diligently and efficiently work towards achieving the specific outcomes for humanitarian financing which include:

- The quality of existing funds improves (they are more accessible, sustainable, flexible, etc.)
- NGOs easily access adequate donor funding and comply with a light oversight burden
- Improved risk management & risk sharing across donors & partners
- Focused efforts on Grand Bargain II commitments related to cash, the role of intermediaries and localization

## **8. Adapting to Change**

In the MENA Region, ICVA will respond to the needs of NGOs and play a key role in supporting NGO understanding of global issues with a dedicated focus on localisation, the humanitarian, development, peace Nexus (HDPN), civil society space, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and Climate Change. ICVA will support access to current information and tools to inform and strengthen NGO and NGO fora in these areas factoring in the mounting pressure on NGOs to adapt to changes at global, regional, and country levels. In addition to sharing information, ICVA in MENA will convene and connect members and NGO fora on these topics and encourage debate and discussions from a regional and global perspective.

### **8.1. Localisation**

In the upcoming 3 years ICVA, will focus on the following objectives towards localisation:

#### **i. The Meaningful Participation of Local Actors in Humanitarian Coordination.**

- ICVA in MENA will continue to call for wider and inclusive participation of local actors, in particular women's led and women's rights organizations and other marginalized groups such as disability and youth groups, throughout the global/ regional and in-country leadership and coordination platforms and structures including but not limited to the Regional Gender in Emergency and Humanitarian Setting- GiHA, 3RP, and many others.
- ICVA in MENA will continue to emphasize the active role of local actors at the IASC mainstreams and Task forces and result groups such as RG1, RG4, RG5, and RG1 Subgroup on Localisation and other working groups such as the Grand Bargain WS on Localisation. Furthermore, ICVA will provide the required support and orientation needed to the LNNGOs who join the IASC Taskforces on Localisation.
- Build on the dissemination and discussions around the IASC Guidance and benchmarks for HCs/HCTs on the meaningful participation of local/ national NGOs in IASC coordination structures.



- ICVA will continue to build on the dialogue with key institutional donors, private sectors, and corporates about the importance of supporting complementarity partnerships, and possible ways of advancing the role of local actors.

## ii. Organizational Capacity Strengthening and Support to LNNGO Fora

- **NGO Fora Support programme:** ICVA will strengthen LNNGO fora by providing technical and financial support based on needs to increase the local NGOs coalitions' meaningful participation in-country, regionally, and globally. Some of these organizational capacity development skills include increasing knowledge on Core Humanitarian Standards and Accountability to Affected Populations, institutional and organizational risk management, gender and women's leadership, good governance, collective advocacy, strategic planning, and humanitarian coordination communication and representation. This will be accompanied by coaching sessions and cross-learning and exchange opportunities, expanding the learning by connecting local actors with counterpart NGOs in other countries in the same region or cross-regional in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Furthermore, through its active NGO Fora Support Program, ICVA will continue to facilitate connection and learning exchanges, evidence-building, dissemination of information, and capacity development for NGO Fora. ICVA will focus its support on LNNGO Foras and more specifically Women-led networks and refugee-led initiatives in the region.

## iii. Evidence-based Documentation and Research

- ICVA will support LNNGO coalitions to articulate a clear localisation framework/ baselining that supports the local network to map out different opportunities to advance the role of local actors. Engagement with different stakeholders such as national authorities, donors, UN agencies, INGOs and NGOs is essential in order to operationalize local actors progress in responding to the needs in their country. The localization baselining is articulated in Jordan, Somalia, Bangladesh. The pilot contextualization and rollout of the [Localisation Measurement Framework](#), aimed to further strengthen progress on localisation at the country level through identifying and strengthening areas for collective action. In 2022, the initiative will be replicated in Yemen, Uganda, and Cameroon and different activities will be carried out during the upcoming three years.
- ICVA will continue to present success stories, barriers, and lessons learned in regards to localization as well as to highlight the discussions on the meaningful participation of local actors, deriving the findings and recommendations from ICVA MENA regional research on Localization in Humanitarian Architecture which documented the extent of effective national NGO engagement in international humanitarian coordination structures in the region.

- ICVA in MENA will continue to produce evidence-based research, briefing papers, and analysis connected to localization as one of the core thematic areas. ICVA briefing papers, research, and case studies are valued by different members and stakeholders, ICVA in MENA will continue to focus on developing such evidence-based documents that members will rely on their collective Advocacy and Policy efforts.

#### iv. Collective Advocacy and Coordination Work

- ICVA's approach is to coordinate effectively among all NGO actors, extending an invitation to local actors to different regional and global dialogues in order to further empowering local actors. A few examples are: global and regional conferences such as the Brussels conference on Syria, the Humanitarian Pledging Conference on Yemen, the regional consultation with UN agencies and key donors, different regional discussions on COVAX and humanitarian access, the Global Humanitarian Response Plan-GHRP, European Humanitarian Forum, and many others. ICVA will continue to ensure that local NGOs are given the space and opportunity to share their ideas and concerns.

#### v. Leadership Strengthening for Local Women-led NGOs and CSOs

- Leadership development and capacity strengthening for local NGOs, and for women leaders, in particular, is an identified need that has emerged from a wide range of localization engagement in the previous years. Women leaders are particularly under-represented in humanitarian leadership structures, and this is particularly the case at national and sub-national levels. The Security Council resolution on women, peace and security- 1325 addresses the impact of war on women and the importance of women's full and equal participation in conflict resolution, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response, and in post-conflict reconstruction. Therefore, the role of women-led organizations and the active participation of women leaders is crucial and should be strengthened in humanitarian action. In the years to come, [ICVA will focus on prioritizing channeling the women-led NGOs, focusing on leadership strengthening and professional development, and peer exchange of expertise. Moreover, to provide linkages with global discussions and processes of research and analysis within the humanitarian sector.](#)

## 8.2. Nexus

During MENA members' meetings in 2021, and other consultations with members in MENA, members showed a huge interest to discuss how NGOs can better integrate humanitarian Development and Peace at the strategy and programmatic levels. Different requests were sent to ICVA to support NGOs to better improve their understanding of HDP approach, share tools and recent information, as well as better connect NGOs with active partners who have advanced experience linked to Nexus. ICVA in MENA will continue to support its members and consider Nexus as one of the cross-cutting approaches that are linked to forced migration, humanitarian coordination, financing, and climate change. [Additionally, ICVA in MENA will explore how the Nexus approach in tackling the role of local actors as the bridge among the humanitarian and long-term sustainable development strategy and action.](#)

In the upcoming 3 years, ICVA will focus on sharing information about ongoing/upcoming webinars, trainings, roundtable discussions linked to NEXUS. Also, ICVA will host similar discussions with members, NGO Fora, and ICVA NEXUS Focal Point.

ICVA in MENA will create evidence-based data for advocacy and policy improvement. By mid of 2022, ICVA will launch a comprehensive research in the region, in 7 countries and disseminate the findings and recommendations to all members and stakeholders about key barriers, successes, and recommendations for improvements. ICVA will continue to count on the analysis and data to discuss breakthroughs and advocate for embracing the integrated Nexus approach. Lastly, ICVA will actively and meaningfully participate in different regional working groups that discuss NEXUS, share best practices, and discuss barriers.

## 8.3. Climate Change

The scale and significance of climate change in MENA cannot be ignored. In order to mitigate and adapt action to the increasing impact of climate change on humanitarian needs, ICVA in MENA will work closely with the secretariat, local and international regional members, and other key stakeholders to:

- Increase awareness and knowledge about climate change issues in MENA by sharing and disseminating key information (briefing papers, research, events, and key roundtables and conferences).
- Gathering evidence by developing a briefing paper on Climate Change and Displacement in MENA Region.
- Incorporate climate change discussions in the annual MENA Members Meeting.
- Continue to advocate for signing and adaptation of the climate charter for NGOs.

## 8.4. Gender in Emergency and Inclusion

ICVA membership seeks to represent the full diversity of NGOs and NGO networks engaged in humanitarian action. Recently, ICVA has joined the Regional Gender in Emergency and Humanitarian Setting- GiHA, and a consortium member of the SEAH. ICVA in MENA will engage our diverse members from local and international NGOs and NGO Fora to collectively work together to ensure that we "Leave No One Behind". In order to do this, ICVA in MENA will:

- Support learning, reflection and discussion on gender equality, diversity, intersectionality, and inclusion among members of ICVA
- Increasing the availability of disseminated information in Arabic as well as English. In addition, to increasing opportunity for all to be involved in various events regardless of language barriers.
- Capacity strengthening activities on risk management, duty of care, PSEA, and respect of diversity considerations.
- Supporting an increase of collaboration, and representation in key regional and global events from women-led, refugee-led, and local organizations.

## 9. Target Countries, Stakeholders, and Partners

Priority Countries: In recognition of the [Global Humanitarian Overview 2022](#), the priority countries will include: Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, oPt, Regional Syria (WoS) includes (Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan), and Yemen.

Active Emergency	Others to be Considered
Syria Yemen	Lebanon – in relation to the whole of Syria Response and more attention in terms of the deterioration in the socio-economic and political collapse inside the country.
Libya	Jordan – in relation to the whole of Syria Response.
Palestine	Tunis – small caseload of persons in need of protection – from the Libya
Iraq	Turkey – in relation to the whole of Syria response

Priority Regional Organizations or Intergovernmental Agencies

In 2021, ICVA MENA will establish a focus on the following regional and country level organisations, regional coordination platforms, and agencies of interest include:

- International Charitable Organization in Kuwait (IICO)
- Regional 3RP
- Regional Durable Solution coordination platform
- Regional Gender in Emergency GiHA
- Regional Sub MENA SEAH, ICVA is a member in the consortium in the next three years
- Regional ECHO
- King Salman Humanitarian center

ICVA will work with the following in country NGO fora: Libya INGO fora: PNGO local NGO Network in OPT, INGO fora inside Syria- DINGO, and INGO Fora inside OPt-AIDA, Local CSO in Yemen, INGO Fora in Yemen, Regional INGO fora on Syria- SIRF, Syrian NGO Networks in Turkey mainly (SNA,SNL, We CAN), North-West Fora- SYR, North-East Fora- SYR, Turkish Refugee Council, NCCI in IRQ, JIF and JONAF in Jordan, LHDF and LIF in Lebanon.

**Priority Regional Donors:** ICVA MENA will continue to build regional and, where possible, country level relationships with key donors to support policy and practice. Key donors include: UNDP, GAC, ECHO, IIOC - Kuwait, Dutch MoFA and SDC. In addition, ICVA team in MENA will contribute and participate in the process of developing concept notes and proposals or any discussion with key donors and supporters to ICVA's work.

**Priority UN Agencies:** ICVA MENA will continue to build regional and, where possible, country-level relationships with key UN partners to support policy and practice including UNOCHA Regional Office and Country Offices, UNHCR Regional Office (Amman) and UNHCR Libya (Tunisia), IOM Regional Office and the Country Offices in key contexts, UNICEF, RCs and ESCWA.

## **10. Section 10: Risk Anticipation and Management**

### **External Factors**

- Differing priorities and needs between local NGOs and INGOs.
- COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 travel restrictions on humanitarian actors: impacting on the ability of ICVA MENA to undertake country missions and engage face-face with members and partners.
- Extensive competing needs resulting from multiple ongoing L3 responses.

### **Mitigation Strategies**

As a diverse membership organization, ICVA will continue to represent and support its membership, ensuring a focus and balance on the needs and priorities of all members, in line with the ICVA 2030 strategy. Where travel restrictions prevent face-face engagement at the country level, ICVA MENA will ensure a range of options for remote engagement for example webinars, virtual meetings, hiring in-country coordinators /consultants when possible, and regular opportunities for verbal and written engagement. ICVA has identified the priority country focus for ICVA in 2022, this will guide the allocation of resources and efforts in a complex region.

### **Internal Factors**

- Varying interests, needs and expectations of MENA members including wide variations between local, national and international NGO members.
- Risk of information overload resulting in depleted engagement or response.
- The need for effective communication and coordinatopm among ICVA hubs and ICVA colleagues, and being so sensible about the different files and priorities for each department and each person.

## Mitigation Strategies

ICVA MENA will be guided by the ICVA 2030 global strategy and by this strategic direction paper for the MENA region. These core guiding documents are based on member engagement and build on identified needs and priorities. Members both existing and new will be briefed in both, setting the road map for key areas of focus.

At the same time ICVA MENA will ensure regular and effective engagement with all members, including opportunities to reflect and feedback on ways of working and gaps seen. This will be complimented by introduction of an annual ICVA MENA meeting for members and key NGO fora that will act as a platform for connection, collaboration, and networking.

ICVA will represent members equally and collectively and ensure support to both national and international members. ICVA MENA will focus on areas of mutual interest and collaboration amongst the membership as well as targeted support and engagement to different categories of members.

To avoid information overload, ICVA MENA will be intentional with both the type and quantity of information shared. All communication will be relevant to the MENA region, be credible and up-to-date. Where possible, email communication will be minimized by combining content into weekly and monthly summary messages. Where gaps in the MENA regional hub team arise, ICVA HQ will ensure the continuity of engagement with both members and partners.

## 11. Human Resources

The ICVA MENA hub is supported by a Regional Representative and a Deputy Regional Representative. ICVA MENA team will draw on the capacity and expertise of global ICVA colleagues and focal points. Where relevant and required, ICVA will engage consultants to deliver certain priority outputs and processes. In addition, ICVA Representatives in MENA will reach out to ICVA members to engage them and seek their support when possible.

## 12. Operations Plan

1. ICVA MENA is hosted by ICMC Jordan and the hosting agreement has been extended until December 2022. The renewal of this agreement will be reviewed in October/November 2022 with the secretariat.
2. The MENA regional workplan and budget are set in collaboration with ICVA Geneva and updated quarterly. [Please refer to the detailed workplan and budget for FY2022 – annex 1 and annex 2 to this strategic direction paper.](#)

## 13. Communications

ICVA MENA will work in line with the global ICVA communications strategy to ensure members and partners have better access to relevant and up to date information about ICVA work in the region and its impact. This will be achieved through:

1. Maintaining up to date regional mailing lists for members, NGO fora, UN agencies, international organisations, donors, regional actors, research bodies etc.
2. Sharing the global monthly ICVA Bulletin in both English and Arabic languages.
3. Developing periodic consolidated MENA update for members and key fora.

4. Translating all key documents, including briefing papers, strategy documents etc., into Arabic availing them to members as soft and hard copies.
5. Cooperating with the ICVA Communications Officer and membership engagement director in the HQ to support events and processes.

Equally, ICVA MENA will be cautious to avoid information overload by limiting the amount of email communication sent and combining multiple subject and topics where possible.

## **14. Membership Strategy**

In line with the global ICVA membership strategy, ICVA MENA will take steps to ensure a diverse, engaged and growing membership in the MENA region. A specific focus will be placed on effective communication and opportunities for collaboration with and between members. Equally ICVA will be proactive in reaching out and maintaining effective communication with INGOs and NGOs Fora for an impactful, diversified and wider representation for NGOs. This will be achieved through:

1. Regular communication both at the collective and individual level with members and targeted fora supported by up-to-date contact lists.
2. Engagement and briefings with new members to ICVA from the region.
3. Supporting the ICVA Secretariat with following up on new requests for membership from MENA.
4. Convening MENA members and key fora in the region through both virtual and face-face MENA regional engagement meetings.

## **15. Financing and Resource Mobilization for the Regional Strategy**

This strategy is accompanied by a work plan and budget. The activities will be financed from the core ICVA MENA budget, agreed in collaboration with ICVA Geneva. During the period of 2022-2024, ICVA MENA will build on previous regional resource mobilization efforts and will aim to secure funding partnership based on the efforts led by the regional team. This will serve two purposes: to diversify funding to contribute to the sustainability of the work of ICVA in MENA and to strengthen partnerships and collaboration in the region. Resource mobilization in MENA will focus on regional funding opportunities or in-country collaboration to support local NGO networks, collective action required by ICVA members, and any other opportunities based on the needs assessment and coordination with ICVA members in the region. ICVA MENA team will continue to follow up with key donors in which previous relationships were established, SDC, UNHCR, IIOC – Kuwait, King Salman Centre, and UNDP-Turkey.



A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK  
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE  
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

## Regional Hubs

### **Africa**

Nairobi, Kenya  
Dakar, Senegal

### **Asia-Pacific**

Bangkok, Thailand  
Islamabad, Pakistan

### **MENA**

Amman, Jordan

### **Latin America**

Guadalajara, Mexico  
(Representation)

## Geneva Office

Humanitarian Hub, La Voie-Creuse 16, 1202 Geneva  
[secretariat@icvanetwork.org](mailto:secretariat@icvanetwork.org)  
[www.icvanetwork.org](http://www.icvanetwork.org)