



A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK  
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE  
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

# 2022-2024 **IMPACT REPORT**

March 2025

## Acknowledgements

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## Section 1: Executive Summary

The 2030 Strategy of the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) was finalised in 2021 just before the end of the last strategic cycle. The approach taken was to divide the ICVA’s 2030 long-term strategy into shorter, three-year periods during which ICVA would define strategic priorities, ensuring an adapted, evolving journey through the period.

This impact study evaluates the first three-year cycle, and the strategic priorities set for 2022-2024. Those priorities were aligned with the three focus areas and five transformations that underpin ICVA’s 2030 Strategy as follows:

Focus Areas	Transformations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Forced Migration</li> <li>❖ Coordination</li> <li>❖ Financing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Champion principled humanitarian action</li> <li>❖ Address the impact of climate change on humanitarian action</li> <li>❖ Be globally distributed and locally rooted</li> <li>❖ Be diverse, inclusive, and live our values</li> <li>❖ Proactively engage in agile collaborative partnerships</li> </ul>

While the focus areas are related to the core content of ICVA’s work, the transformations are elements that should be integrated into everything that ICVA does.

This impact study asked three key evaluation questions. They are noted below with brief highlights of main findings. The full picture can only be appreciated by going through the study report or at the very least the main summaries and conclusions in report sections 5 and 6.

### 1. To what extent, how, why and for whom did ICVA bring about changes of what kinds during the 2022-2024 period?

- ❖ ICVA is a key interlocutor in the highly complex ecosystem that is humanitarian action today.
- ❖ The value ICVA brings is characterised by its ways of working: Collaborating, Influencing and Advocating, Convening, Supporting, Connecting and Brokering and Analysing, Explaining and Learning.
- ❖ ICVA’s impacts can be connected to these ways of working. They include community building within the humanitarian system, policy change, strengthened knowledge and capacity, improved access to quality funding, equitable partnership agreements, more inclusive, fit-for-purpose coordination structures, among other things.
- ❖ The ICVA team is small but organised to provide global, regional and at time county level support, working alongside and collaborating with members, non-members and other complementary networks.
- ❖ ICVA’s impact is in part delivered through the secretariat and in part by its membership network. This collaborative approach is central to the culture of ICVA and essential for maximising leverage off the capacity of members and limiting growth of the secretariat.
- ❖ ICVA does not provide direct assistance, nor is it a donor, so its impact is defined by the degree to which it applies its ways of working to the focus areas. ICVA works in a deeply collaborative way to provide thought leadership, help channel the most legitimate voices to where they need to be to generate the best outcomes, with collective ownership, getting results, but also building a community along the way.

- ❖ While impact has been considerable, it is hard to fully attribute the outcomes in this study to ICVA alone. This is indicative of the way ICVA always works closely with others and in this regard, can be seen as a strength.
- ❖ Considering ICVA's reach, convening power, access to all levels of the system, together with the calibre of their team, while direct attribution may be difficult, it is clear that a humanitarian system without ICVA would be much the poorer and the community more fragmented and less inclusive.

## 2. Was ICVA successful in achieving the objectives outlined in its 2022-2024 strategic priorities?

All ICVA's focus areas have delivered well in the 2022-2024 strategic period.

- ❖ The **forced migration** (displacement) focus area has interfaced with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Office for Migration (IOM), the World Bank (WB) Group and others to influence policy and practice using mechanisms that both address common areas of concern and build communities in the process. They have created alliances with concrete initiatives such as the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) such as the multistakeholder pledge for locally led action linked to the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR). This global work has been complemented by regional and country work on mobility issues including in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA, e.g. Gaza, Syria, Yemen) in Asia (e.g. Afghanistan and Myanmar) and Africa (South Sudan) and Latin America (Cartagena +40 process).
- ❖ The **Coordination work** has delivered through multiple dimensions (hands-on, policy advocacy, training) to enhance principled and coordinated NGO interventions, with particular investments in negotiating access. The work on humanitarian principles has been extensive but the reality of some of the most politicised conflicts has exposed cracks in terms of adherence of warring parties to the humanitarian principles and law and the preparedness of the sector to speak out against it. ICVA can do a lot, but only as far as the members allow it. The COVID-19 objective was of its time and was delivered in the first half of the period. The team invested regionally and particularly at country fora level to improve the inclusivity and capacity of coordination. Compared to the last strategic period the number of surge interventions or hands on support increased which speaks to the trust the humanitarian community has in ICVA, though such interventions have tested ICVA's capacity.
- ❖ **The financing work** has invested heavily in improving access to quality funding, particularly (but not only) in the area of pooled funding with one initiative leading to another in a positive flow. This work has contributed to a recognition of the positive impact of pooled fund mechanisms on localisation objectives, the potential for increased learning and innovation among Funds, as well as required areas for further improvement, including increasing access for local and national actors and more effective risk sharing. ICVA has also delivered with regards to effective partnerships and risk management between UN actors, international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and local and national NGOs. Partnership terms and conditions have been adapted, and local and national actors in particular have been empowered through greater understanding of what equitable partnership terms and conditions are and what they are entitled to be demanding.

## 3. To what extent is ICVA making progress towards its 2030 Strategy centred on promoting principled and effective humanitarian action?

- ❖ ICVA has and continues to **champion principled humanitarian action**. A lot has been done, but as mentioned under coordination above, these principles are under fire.

- ❖ ICVA has advanced **climate change** issues, related on one level to the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations and establishment of the secretariat ICVA is hosting; on another level there has been deep engagement on the impact of climate change on humanitarian crises in regions most impacted (Africa and Asia-Pacific (AP)).
- ❖ On being **globally distributed and locally rooted**, ICVA has made major strides, in how it is organised internally and how it uses its reach to connect with the contexts in which humanitarian crises are happening.
- ❖ On being **diverse inclusive and living the values**, ICVA has demonstrated its capacity to convene, connect, support and bring in diverse voices, improving legitimacy and the quality of outcomes while building communities in the process. The cross-cutting work on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) has also reinforced translating values into practice.
- ❖ On **proactively engaging in agile partnerships**, ICVA has excelled in terms of the volume, the nature and the connectedness of the relationships they develop. ICVA is visible, but without seeking primacy over others, focusing on what can be achieved together rather than on attribution.

## Looking forward: Points of consideration

### On Forced Migration

- ❖ Some interviewees mentioned that while there is good follow-up in many areas, recommendations created at the UNHCR consultations are not followed up or tracked. A retrospective analysis of what was implemented and what not, could be helpful for learning and for identifying gaps to work on.
- ❖ Feedback encourages ICVA to continue its efforts to be less UNHCR and Geneva focused without losing the key UN interlocutor role they have. It is noted however that this is already very much taking place.
- ❖ Encouragements were provided to continue to ensure meaningful rather than tokenistic involvement of diverse voices. Clear progress has been made since the last impact study, but it must be a point of constant attention, in particular related to deliberate and meaningful inclusion of organisations led by forcibly displaced and stateless persons.

### On Coordination

- ❖ While ICVA added enormous value through their coordination work, the reality seems to be, when looking at Sudan, Gaza and Ukraine as examples of the more visible and politicised crises, that humanitarian principles are as 'under fire' as they ever were, and all the signs are that this will continue. Coordination on statements that risked upsetting certain donor groups was reported to result in a lack of boldness, a lack of living by the principles for which humanitarian action stands, and at times silence, where there should arguably have been protest.
- ❖ Some interviewees were encouraging for ICVA to stay bold in this area to hold up the mirror to members, donors, UN agencies, governments and other stakeholders involved. This would allow ICVA in part to be champions of the fundamentals of humanitarian action and in part to be a nuanced and reality-based voice for popular trends that are more challenging in practice than in concept.
- ❖ Probably the biggest challenge for ICVA is not one of improvement, but one of capacity. No matter how much is done at the country level, it will likely be a drop in the ocean of what is needed. This supports their focus on national fora and choosing carefully where they go beyond this to a more hands-on approach.

- ❖ Equally, ICVA will not be able to compensate for every breakdown in coordination and yet their role has been key at moments of greatest disruption, even more so than in the last strategic period. There was a question then and the question remains as to whether this should be a purely reactive role or whether ICVA should be planning for these hands-on support roles more proactively (including through funding).
- ❖ Meeting humanitarian needs requires the capacity, access to those affected and the funding. While ICVA is working on funding, access and coordination, ICVA's work doesn't seem to explicitly include a view on whether the system is generating sufficient capacity (the relevant means, ability to mobilise at scale, should funding be available). It is one thing aspiring to have enough funds to meet needs, but it is important to keep in mind what funds are most needed for, what the gaps, the unmet needs are, the places where funds are not being attracted. This may be something for ICVA to connect to (if it is not already), or if there are already others addressing this, for ICVA to track it.

### On Financing

- ❖ ICVA has momentum on several topics that are relevant, especially related to pooled funding, risks, partnerships and administrative burdens. The agile approach of evolving topics and combining collaborative and critical engagement is compelling.
- ❖ The Grand Bargain struggles to advance further towards its stated objectives with input for this study suggesting there seems to be little donor appetite to really fundamentally change how they fund. While many would like to see the Grand Bargain reinvigorated some interviewees were not optimistic. ICVA will need to stay engaged, balancing energy between some of these slower moving structures and new initiatives that may move faster, but risk undermining established structures.
- ❖ Some member feedback indicates a desire for bigger picture, horizon scanning for ICVA, a discussion for ICVA to have with both its members and donors, in terms of how member capacity could be more effectively engaged in this regard, or donor support increased.
- ❖ The situation at the time of writing in early 2025 indicates that finance challenges will deepen as many donors are cutting their budgets dramatically, including the US government, the European Union, the United Kingdom and others. As with the promotion of humanitarian principles, the positioning of ICVA members, and by extension ICVA on this alarming situation will be crucial. Inputs to this study suggest that funding concerns have led many NGOs to self-censor even when confronted with blatant breaches of humanitarian principles and humanitarian law. ICVA by extension can only speak with the mandate given by members. While this is a broader issue than just finance, it does suggest there is something at the financing interface that might need attention.

### Other Points of Note

- ❖ Linked to the point made on coordination, humanitarian principles and support for international assistance of all kinds as well as the infrastructure underpinning is arguably at a crossroads. Positioning of the sector in it in relation to how it will work with and the degree to which it will confront some of the current trends will require sensitive but important discussion.
- ❖ ICVA has a deep understanding of the realities of the humanitarian system. Some interviewees were encouraging ICVA to be bold and blunt on defending principles and to be nuanced, pragmatic and to provide reality checks on new ideas or trends that come up that may be a challenge to implement in practice.
- ❖ Reflections on the IASC, including OPAG, Grand Bargain and other very high-level platforms considered them high profile, but bureaucratic and slow organs. While it is crucial to remain connected, the energy dedicated to them needs balancing with the things that deliver 'real' impact. This speaks to the current approach of ICVA focused on realising implementation of policies rather than creating more policy/paper promises that can be a fig leaf for real action.
- ❖ When confronted with established but slow-moving structures, there may at times need for choices to be made between working more slowly and reinforcing the established structures or developing something outside of them to move faster, but risking undermining the existing set-up. Both paths are possible provided the consequences are well thought through.
- ❖ The progress on integrating the ICVA team is bringing results, but it will be a point of constant attention especially at times of turn over.
- ❖ ICVA's published theories of change remain quite simple and quite linear and while logical, they do not do full justice to the 'ecosystem' approach ICVA applies to its work. With increasingly integrated ways of working, this may be something to work on.
- ❖ The calibre of staff in terms of attitudes, experience and knowledge is key to ICVA's success at all levels. This should remain another point of constant attention whenever there is turn over in a small team.
- ❖ While ICVA has many practical relationships and collaborations, these do not always translate into relationships with institutions. The same applies for relationships with Geneva liaisons (i.e. they don't go beyond Geneva). If this rings true and if this is considered an issue, it would be something to consider for the next strategic period.
- ❖ Some stakeholders that are currently working with ICVA would like to diversify how they work with ICVA. This links to the previous point on the need to reflect on which are the key institutional relationships ICVA should entertain and for what purpose.
- ❖ Donors providing input were keen to have more informal updates convened by ICVA on the key crises and issues, which is an interesting idea. But even sessions aiming for low preparation would need capacity to do well.
- ❖ When comparing the membership survey with the data, while the feedback is positive overall, member views on ICVA's progress on partnership and inclusion do not reflect the very positive impression provided by the detailed evidence from the initiatives. It may be useful to use this study to communicate actual progress.



## Section 2: Introduction

This impact study report is divided into six sections: Section 1 provides an Executive Summary of the study report. Section 2 offers an overview of the main evaluation framework, methodology and limitations. Section 3 gives an overview of ICVA’s 2022-2024 strategic priorities and recent organisational developments. Section 4 delves into impact study findings following ICVA’s focus and transformation areas. Section 5 provides summary conclusions of progress towards 2022-2024 and 2030 objectives and addresses key evaluation questions. Finally, section 6 offers points for future consideration to support ICVA’s work going forward.

This impact study was conducted by Sandstone Consulting with support from ICVA. It aimed to:

1. Document changes that have taken place for ICVA members, other NGOs, NGO networks, consortia other stakeholders and the wider humanitarian community as a result of ICVA’s actions and collaborations during the 2022-2024 period.
2. Test overall progress towards achieving ICVA’s [2022-2024 expected outcomes](#);
3. Examine overall progress towards achieving [ICVA’s 2030 objectives](#).

## Evaluation Framework

The impact study 2022-2024’s central enquiry tested whether, how, why and for whom ICVA’s initiatives across the forced migration, humanitarian coordination, humanitarian financing and five transformation areas brought about changes of what kinds.

### Main Evaluation Questions

1. To what extent, how, why and for whom did ICVA bring about changes of what kinds during the 2022-2024 period?
2. Was ICVA successful in achieving the objectives outlined in its 2022-2024 strategic priorities?
3. To what extent is ICVA making progress towards its 2030 Strategy centred on promoting principled and effective humanitarian action?

## Methodology

The methodology is outlined below. The list of interviewees written response participants in provided in [Annex I](#).

1. Collation and analysis of existing MEL evidence	• <b>Collate and conduct light review</b> of existing internal and external evidence (from ICVA’s bulletins, reports, programme documents and databases, and members and other stakeholders’ programme and policy documents)
2. Collection of additional evidence: Surveys	• <b>Collect additional evidence</b> on impact from members, NGO fora, other stakeholders using surveys (administered online or face-to-face) and <b>conduct light review</b>
3. Collection of additional evidence: Interviews and written responses	• <b>Conduct interviews</b> with ICVA’s high-level external stakeholders and solicit written responses to interview questions from other external stakeholders
4. Case Study development	• <b>Co-develop 3 case studies with ICVA staff</b> reflecting ICVA’s progress and results across the 3 focus and 5 transformation areas
5. Input Analysis	• <b>Collate and analyze</b> all evidence collected
6. Final evidence request	• <b>Reach out to relevant stakeholders</b> with information requests to address evidence gaps
7. Study draft report	• <b>Draw main findings</b> addressing assessment questions based on the evidence collected and analysed and <b>draft impact study report</b>
8. Validation Workshop	• <b>Present report findings</b> to ICVA staff and seek feedback to incorporate into final version of report
9. Finalise Report	• <b>Finalise impact study report</b>



## Limitations of this study

Several factors need to be considered when reading this Impact Study report:

- ❖ **Interpretation of impact:** For the purpose of the Impact Study, impact was broadly defined as changes (positive or negative, intended or unintended), whether immediate, intermediate or long-term, that have been triggered by ICVA's actions and collaborations during the period under review. While impact refers to the long-term effects produced by an intervention, it rarely happens without a chain of short and mid-term changes that enable longer-term effects. The impact study has considered all changes produced and zoomed in on impact when it was observed.
- ❖ **Interview selection and availability:** Interview and written response participants were nominated by ICVA staff due to their knowledge of project stakeholders. It is likely to have introduced positive bias. However, the evaluation team aimed to mitigate this occurrence by seeking perspectives from different stakeholder types to improve data triangulation.
- ❖ **Member survey:** A comprehensive member impact survey was administered to ICVA members and NGO fora to gather quantitative data on progress towards 2022-2024 outcomes, as well as document examples of key initiatives and perceived impact. The lengthy questionnaire led to partial survey completion, which may have introduced some analysis bias.
- ❖ **Attribution of impact:** Attribution of impact to ICVA's actions and collaborations, particularly when there are multiple actors involved, or the work focuses on advocacy and influencing is challenging. The impact study therefore focused on surfacing ICVA's contributions to impact and the change processes leading to impact. Where possible, it also attempted to describe external factors that might have influenced impact.

## Section 3: Background

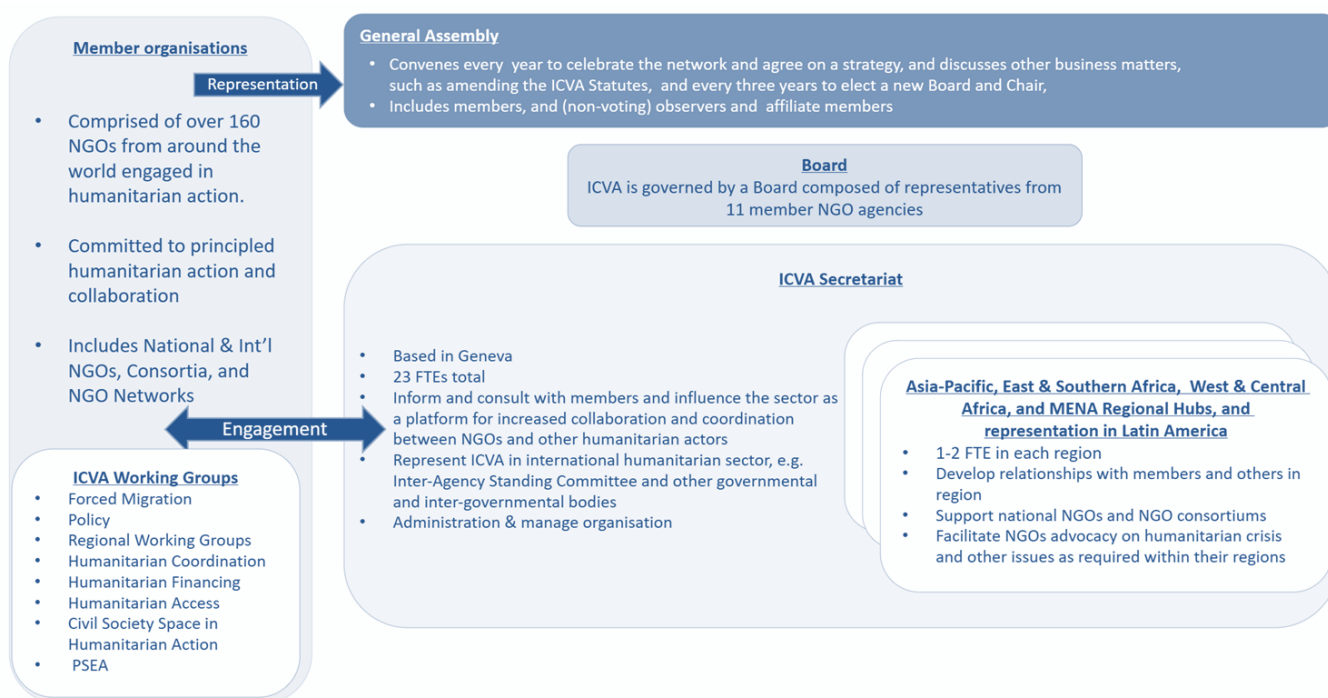
This section gives an overview of ICVA related to recent organisational developments and the 2022-2024 strategic priorities.

### Organisational context

During the period under review, ICVA transitioned to a new Executive Director (in November 2023) and Board (in March 2024). Its organisational structures were adapted to strengthen member engagement and establish deeper connections between policy and advocacy work. New positions were filled while others were closed, bringing the total of Full-Time-Equivalent (FTEs) positions at the end of 2024 to 29 (79% of female staff and 21% of male staff). A total of 11 FTEs were based in regions and held by staff from the regions.

ICVA's General Assembly now convenes every year instead of on a three-year basis, providing more opportunities for member engagement.

### Structure of the ICVA Network



### ICVA's 2022-2024 Strategic Priorities

This Impact Study has taken a holistic approach to assessing progress and results against ICVA's 2022-2024 strategic priorities and 2030 Strategy. Following the adoption of ICVA's 2030 Strategy in 2021, ICVA set out to implement its strategic framework through a series of three-year strategic priorities and plans that detail the direction of travel across ICVA's three focus areas (Forced Migration, Coordination and Financing) and five transformation areas (principled humanitarian action, climate change and humanitarian action, global distribution and local rootedness, diversity, inclusion and value, and agile partnerships) as incremental contributions to achieve the 2030 strategic outcomes.

The 2022-2024 strategic priorities and logframe contain 9 strategic priorities, 14 expected outcomes and 17 expected outputs that map ICVA's strategic direction during the period. An overview of ICVA's strategic priorities is available in [Annex II](#).

This impact study has deep dived into ICVA's strategic priorities and expected outcomes during the period under review. It has not focused on specific grant objectives, nor did not conduct a detailed assessment of each initiative implemented by ICVA or provide a comprehensive review of ICVA's organisational set-up. Finally, it did not focus on ICVA's organisational enablers (membership, funding, human resources, communication).

ICVA's vision is 'A world in which crisis-affected populations are effectively protected, assisted and enabled to rebuild their lives and livelihoods with dignity'. Their mission statement positions ICVA as 'A global network of non-governmental organisations whose mission is to make humanitarian action more principled and effective by working collectively and independently to influence policy and practice.

The core elements of ICVA's work are its focus areas of forced migration, coordination, and financing. While recognising the interconnectedness between them, they are also ICVA's channels through which to realise identified transformations across its network in the areas of principled humanitarian action, climate change and humanitarian action, global distribution and local rootedness, diversity, inclusion and values, and agile partnerships.

ICVA's Theory of Change posits that forced migration, humanitarian coordination and humanitarian financing outputs contribute to achieving ICVA's strategic objectives by increasing or improving NGOs and other stakeholders' awareness, knowledge, and/or skills on forced migration, coordination and financing issues, ensuring NGO representation and/or participation in key forced migration, coordination and financing discussion and decision-making fora, enhancing NGOs' voice through engagement and collaboration, and influencing forced migration, financing and other humanitarian laws, policies, and practice, contributing to strengthening principled and effective NGO action to better protect and serve people and communities affected by crisis.

ICVA implements its strategic priorities through six main ways of working to achieve its expected outcomes:

1. **Collaborating:** Secretariat and members work together to deliver the added value of ICVA. The Secretariat and members work with other networks to reinforce issues and initiatives in common
2. **Influencing and Advocating:** Secretariat ensures a strong and multi-faceted NGO voice is reflected in key debates and decision-making
3. **Convening:** Secretariat facilitates, organises and convenes meetings, workshops, discussions and debates for members and other stakeholders to exchange experiences and information, collaborate on common issues, leverage expertise and bring together various perspectives
4. **Connecting and Brokering:** Secretariat facilitates increased interaction between important stakeholders, including multilateral partners, member states, donors, regional bodies, the private sector, and other civil society networks beyond the humanitarian sector
5. **Analysing, Explaining and Learning:** Secretariat produces, shares and exchanges information, analyses and promotes learning
6. **Supporting:** Secretariat strengthens the capacities of NGOs and NGO fora to engage in the humanitarian system

## Section 4: Findings

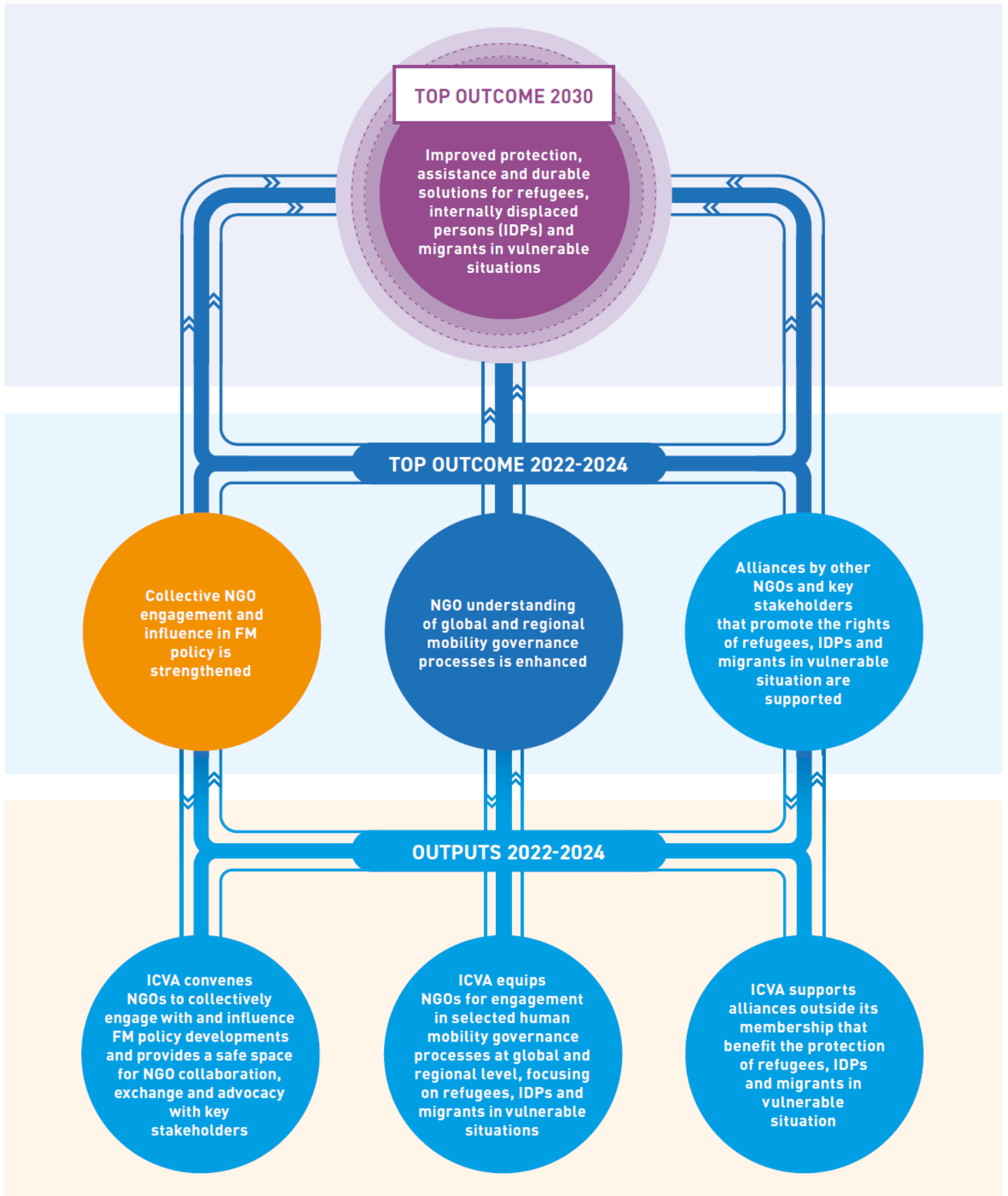
This section presents the detailed findings of the impact study. For each of the three focus areas, this section provides:

1. **Overview:** An overall framing of the focus area and the objectives
2. **Findings:** Description of the various initiatives and analysis of the results and outcomes
3. **Case study:** Recap of a specific initiative or theme which illustrates ICVA's impact

In addition, this section also highlights the main initiatives conducted under each of ICVA's five transformation areas. Summary conclusions for all areas will be provided in section 5 and suggested points for future consideration in section 6. The main analysis frame is centred on individual or groupings of ICVA initiatives implemented between 2022 and 2024. An inventory of initiatives or groupings of initiatives is presented below.

Focus/Transformation Area	Initiative
<b>Forced Migration</b>	UNHCR-NGO consultations
	Engagement with UNHCR governance processes
	Engagement with other UNHCR stakeholders
	Engagement with IOM, World Bank and other Forced Displacement stakeholders
	Global Compact on Refugees and Global Refugee Forum
	Un Action Agenda on Internal Displacement
	Cartagena +40 Process
	Other engagements and collective action on regional or country mobility processes
	Strengthening locally led action in displacement and statelessness responses
<b>Coordination</b>	Strengthening NGO coordination and engagement on humanitarian access issues
	Improving preparedness to address the impacts of COVID-19 and future pandemics
	High-level representation in IASC and other global and regional coordination structures
	NGO fora support
	Building members' resilience
	Emergency deployment for coordination support
	Building system's resilience
<b>Financing</b>	Grand Bargain framework
	Pooled Funds
	Other engagements on humanitarian financing at global and regional level
	Reducing administrative burdens in UN partnership agreements
	Strengthening NGO organisational capacity on risk management
<b>Transformation 1</b>	Championing principled humanitarian action
<b>Transformation 2</b>	Addressing the impact of climate change on humanitarian action
<b>Transformation 3</b>	Being globally distributed and locally rooted
<b>Transformation 4</b>	Being diverse, inclusive and living our values
<b>Transformation 5</b>	Proactively engaging in agile collaborative partnerships

# ICVA THEORY OF CHANGE 2022-2024: FORCED MIGRATION



## Focus Area 1. Forced Migration

### Overview

Forced migration is an area in which ICVA has been engaged since its formation and had been a cornerstone of its role in the humanitarian system. It is the foundation of ICVA's long-standing relationship with UNHCR.

A Theory of Change was defined for this area linking the current strategy with ICVA's 2030 goal. This review sought to identify if this was achieved in practice. The following presents a summary of ICVA's initiatives, what was achieved and inputs received from stakeholders as part this impact study.

Box 1 shows main results of an impact survey conducted to give a sense of how ICVA members have perceived progress on the forced migration work.

#### Box 1: Member Survey Feedback on Forced Migration

With regards to forced migration work, most significant progress was noted against outcome area 2 pertaining to **enhanced NGO understanding of global and regional mobility governance processes**, with 43% of respondents declaring a good to significant level of progress (21% declared this outcome area not applicable and 19% did not know how to assess progress).

The second outcome area registering higher levels of good to significant progress pertained to **supported alliances by other NGOs and key stakeholders promoting the rights of the forcibly displaced or stateless persons** (42% versus 21% of "don't know" and 19% of "not applicable" responses).

The last forced migration outcome area pertaining to **strengthened collective NGO engagement and influence in Forced Migration policy** registered 47% of medium to good progress (23% of "not applicable" and 19% of don't know" responses). For more information, please refer to Annex 3.

### Findings

#### Findings on: Engagements on forced migration policy

##### UNHCR-NGO consultations

- ❖ UNHCR is one of the leading organisations providing protection, humanitarian assistance and solutions to forcibly displaced and stateless persons. UNHCR's protection, humanitarian assistance and solutions work are provided either directly or indirectly through partnerships with other UN agencies, governments, NGOs and the private sector. With a budget of over 10 billion USD in 2024 and 40% of annual expenditure allocated to partners, it is a crucial funding partner for NGOs working to provide assistance to forcibly displaced and stateless persons.<sup>1</sup>
- ❖ ICVA partners with UNHCR to act as a convenor and facilitator and enhance NGO partnership, interaction and exchange with the agency. Between 2022 and 2024, ICVA continued to co-organise global (in 2022 and 2024) and regional consultations (in 2023) between UNHCR and NGOs, culminating in the participation of 126 local and national and international NGOs, networks and other civil society organisations (CSOs) in [2024](#) (over half of NGO participants were local and

<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.unhcr.org/about-unhcr/our-partners/non-governmental-organizations>

national partners).<sup>2</sup> Online consultations were also facilitated throughout the period to maintain regular dialogue.

- ❖ Learning-based efforts to strengthen the consultation methodology and make this space a more dialogue-oriented avenue between UNHCR and NGO partners are evident in the period under review. UNHCR with ICVA's support has now successfully institutionalised an annual consultation approach that alternates between global and regional consultations as a key process enabling more participation from a diverse range of UNHCR staff and partners from across the world, and consultation discussions and recommendations more grounded in local contexts and experiences. This is noted by both NGO and UNHCR participants when they highlight the consultations' success in ensuring diverse perspectives and concerns on key issues affecting forcibly displaced and stateless persons are considered. It is also noticeable in the more technical, targeted and practice-oriented nature of the recommendations that derived from the 2022 and 2024 processes.
- ❖ Additional improvements contributing to more meaningful participation of NGOs were introduced in the 2024 consultations. The novel pre-consultation survey containing targeted questions on experiences and solutions to support inclusion and gender equality (the themes of the 2023-2024 consultations) was completed by over 80 NGO and UNHCR representatives and in itself offers a rich repository of global practices in these areas. Main survey findings were used to pre-draft consultation recommendations further discussed in an interactive session during the consultation event, another addition to the 2024 consultation process that stimulated dialogue, co-creation between NGO and UNHCR partners, and stronger ownership of the consultation outcomes.

### Engagements with UNHCR governance processes

- ❖ ICVA also partners with UNHCR to coordinate NGO statements (process, representation and quality) presented to UNHCR's [Executive Committee](#) and [Standing Committee](#) meetings, comprised of UNHCR and Member States (110 States as well as observer States in 2024). UNHCR's Executive and Standing Committees respectively annually review and approve the agency's programmes and budget and periodically examine the agency's activities and programmes.
- ❖ Between 2022 and 2024, ICVA coordinated the delivery of 32 NGO statements to the Executive and Standing Committees on general debate as well as regional issues, partnership, budget/financial and international protection items. It also facilitated reporting on the UNHCR-NGO consultations during the annual Executive Committee meetings. Finally, it hosted three Executive Committee side events on topics related to the meetings' agenda items. These outputs serve to raise NGO issues of common concern about particular forced displacement and statelessness situations, urge action from UNHCR and States through targeted recommendations, as well as allow for a more in-depth exploration of forced displacement themes (for instance the side event on exploring refugee protection and self-reliance in 2023).
- ❖ ICVA's role in this engagement revolves around identifying NGO rapporteurs on the UNHCR-NGO consultations, identifying members or other organisations to lead the drafting of NGO statements, gathering NGO inputs for statement drafts, the provision of technical support to members involved etc.
- ❖ ICVA members involved in UNHCR consultation and governance activities reported several benefits for their organisation as well as the humanitarian system from these initiatives: On the one hand, ICVA members use both the processes and the participation in UNHCR's governance meetings to assert their organisation's thought leadership, or develop, test, or refine forced displacement strategies, whether they are programmatic or advocacy focused in support of advocacy actions at national level for instance. They also use these opportunities to distil their organisational priorities into system-wide policies and practices.
- ❖ On the other hand, while the impact study has not been able to directly attribute NGO contributions to UNHCR processes with more systemic changes in forced displacement policies or practices

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<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.icvanetwork.org/uploads/2024/10/2024-NGO-UNHCR-Global-Consultations-ExCom-Speech.pdf>



(whether at UNHCR, State or global level), both ICVA members and UNHCR staff highlight the perceptible trend of ICVA and UNHCR strongly promoting localisation, age, gender and diversity approaches and refugee participation, and in doing so fostering more inclusive and effective forced displacement policies and practices. The 2023 Global Refugee Forum's<sup>3</sup> Multi-Stakeholder Pledge on Advancing Localisation in Displacement and Statelessness Responses, co-convened by UNHCR and ICVA, and 2024 UNHCR Executive Committee meeting during which a refugee-lead organisation (RLO) for the first time delivered a statement to the Committee on behalf of the NGO community are good proxies for this trend.

### Engagements with other UNHCR stakeholders

- ❖ ICVA also created opportunities for its members to engage with other UNHCR stakeholders at global or regional level, such as a webinar on local solutions for refugees with the Division of Resilience and Solutions, online dialogues with UNHCR's Regional Bureau for Europe in 2023 and 2024, high-level dialogues with UNHCR stakeholders in the East and Southern Africa (ESA) region (2024), or a 2024 UNHCR Evaluation Office consultation with ICVA members on UNHCR evaluation themes and strategic direction for 2026 (with opportunities to submit 2026 evaluation theme inputs and join an Evaluation Reference Group). ICVA members generally highlight the benefits of being able to access policymakers or technical divisions through ICVA (particularly for those smaller organisations that do not enjoy the same opportunities for access without the network) but also their interest in reaching out to “non-traditional” actors within UNHCR and beyond, and their limited knowledge of how to navigate these actors.

### Engagement with the International Office for Migration, World Bank and other Forced Displacement Stakeholders

- ❖ During the period under review, ICVA built or consolidated entry points with other forced displacement stakeholders with a role in policy development, implementation or monitoring for forcibly displaced and stateless persons. **IOM** is the newest of “large” forced displacement actors ICVA's forced migration team is consolidating relations with. In its role as the conveyor of NGO's voice in key debates and decision-making, ICVA represented its members in IOM's NGO humanitarian consultations (2023), International Dialogue on Migration (2024), and the 115<sup>th</sup> Session of the Council (2024), sharing relevant insights and advocacy messages.
- ❖ ICVA deepened its engagement with the **WB Group** between 2022 and 2024 as it sought to bridge development and humanitarian perspectives on forced displacement. ICVA members were provided with opportunities to discuss the WB's work and priorities on forced displacement, development approaches for refugee responses and sustainable programming (co-organised with InterAction), Africa's untapped migration potential, and Latin American displaced communities' needs through at least 5 convenings with global and regional WB stakeholders. Additionally, ICVA and InterAction contributed NGO inputs to the [WB's World Development Report 2023](#) focused on migrants, refugees and societies through two consultation meetings.
- ❖ Other important stakeholder engagements included informal member dialogues with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and the UN Special Advisor on Solutions to Internal Displacement. Early results from these engagements can be found in contributions to in-depth analyses and good practice reviews of displacement and statelessness.
- ❖ Recurring feedback shows that there is a real appetite from ICVA members to engage more deeply with forced displacement actors beyond UNHCR, with stakeholders cited including States, IOM, donors, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs, the UN Special Advisor on Solutions to Internal Displacement, and the WB. It is also worth pointing out that some of these requests come from ICVA members balancing humanitarian and development work for forcibly

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<sup>3</sup> The Global Refugee Forum is the GCR's four-yearly global international cooperation arrangement designed to support the practical implementation of its objectives through a global convening and the development of concrete pledges.

displaced populations. In the upcoming strategic period, ICVA should therefore seek to build bridges between its members and key States and donors, while continuing to deepen engagement with IOM and the WB.

## **Findings on: Participation in global or regional events and dialogues on mobility governance processes**

### **Global Compact on Refugees and Global Refugee Forum**

- ❖ ICVA partners with UNHCR to engage NGOs in the implementation of the **GCR**. The GCR, adopted in 2016, presents a global framework to increase predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing and find sustainable solutions to refugee situations. Between 2022 and 2024, ICVA worked on the **2019 GRF** follow-up (the first GCR four-yearly global international cooperation arrangement) and GCR implementation activities as part of its own pledge to support NGOs' engagement in GCR implementation.
- ❖ ICVA played a key role in the **2023 GRF** preparations as part of the UNHCR-convened NGO Reference Group. ICVA notably (i) regularly shared information to NGOs following UNHCR-convened informal briefings, (ii) gathered NGO inputs on the 2023 GRF concept note and expressions of interest on thematic areas and pledges, (iii) prepared members and NGOs at global and regional level to strengthen their participation in 2023 GRF 2023 (in the AP region, members were notably engaged on two multistakeholder pledges focused on Afghan and Rohingya refugees), (iv) developed supporting resources on Asia-Pacific (AP) refugee solutions for 2023 GRF advocacy (on the Support Platform for Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees), (v) coordinated messages, delivered 5 collective NGO statements, facilitated the participation of NGOs (including local and national actors) in 2023 GRF preparatory meetings and in the 2023 GRF, (vi) co-convened, with UNHCR, a [Multi-Stakeholder Pledge on Advancing Localisation in Displacement and Statelessness Responses](#) (see **Case Study 1: Strengthening Locally-Led Action in Displacement and Statelessness Responses**), (vii) hosted 2 events at the GRF on locally-led action in displacement and statelessness responses and the multi-stakeholder pledge bringing together 270 participants, (viii) convened 1 linked event on meaningful refugee participation (ix) hosted a full day of NGO linked events at the CIGG and (x) facilitated participation of representatives from 2 local NGOs and 1 RLO. In addition, ICVA's AP regional hub published a [GRF 2023 outcomes for the AP](#) region document and conducted several dissemination events with members and partners to raise awareness on the GRF state of play for the region.
- ❖ ICVA members noted the strength of ICVA's collective NGO statements at the GRF as testament to the network's capacity to closely collaborate with and galvanise organisations. Local and national members supported by ICVA to participate in the 2023 GRF praised the important connections they were able to make and discussions about their displacement contexts they were able to have at the GRF. As importantly, members and other stakeholders highlighted ICVA's role in crafting a space for NGOs, particularly RLOs, in significant and complex displacement policy processes such as the GCR and GRF. A UNHCR stakeholder pointed out that NGOs are now well integrated into GCR processes as the second largest contributing entity<sup>4</sup>, while ICVA members clarified that even if limited, the space for NGO voices is there in GCR processes, which is difficult to obtain in multilateral policy processes.

### **UN Action Agenda on Internal Displacement**

- ❖ During the period under review, ICVA dedicated resources to follow up on the implementation of the recommendations of the **UN High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement**, tasked by the UN Secretary General with prompting action to prevent, respond and solve internal displacement crisis.

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<sup>4</sup> This is backed by data on number of pledges made at the GRFs: As of February 2025, from 3,322 pledges made since 2019, 40% were made by States, followed by CSOs and faith-based organisations with 23% of total pledges made.

ICVA had previously contributed NGO inputs to the panel's deliberations and analysis, culminating in a report and the development of an **Action Agenda on Internal Displacement**.

- ❖ ICVA and InterAction members [provided feedback](#) on the Action Agenda draft document in 2022, highlighting specific areas of work to ensure its implementation. Regular convenings between members and the UN Special Advisor on Solutions to Internal Displacement also served to brief ICVA and InterAction members on progress made in driving collective UN action at global and country level through pilot countries where strategies, coordination and financing frameworks were expected to be set up to support IDPs. Several ICVA members joined groupings on the Action Agenda commitments, as well as participated in the Special Advisor and team's country visits.
- ❖ ICVA and InterAction also collaborated in the production of a [supporting resource on the Action Agenda](#), and in 2024, the final year of the Action Agenda, joined the Special Advisor's Steering Committee tasked with developing Guidance on Solutions to Internal Displacement, providing inputs to the guidance to be published in 2025.
- ❖ The NGO community has been advocating for large-scale action on internal displacement for years and has been heavily engaged in the work of the panel and the Action agenda. For ICVA members that actively participated in above activities, NGOs provided substantive inputs into the Action Agenda, setting the stage for more appropriate solutions for IDPs. The consultation process with the Special Advisor, and more largely the space that NGOs were able to carve in an UN-led policy process, shows a collective recognition that civil society needs to have a seat at the table.

### **Cartagena +40 Process**

- ❖ The Cartagena Declaration on Refugees is a significant instrument of international refugee law in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) context, adopted in Cartagena, Colombia, in 1984. It is a non-binding framework that responded to regional legal and humanitarian problems regarding international protection, expanding the definition of refugees by extending protection to people forced to flee in situations other than those covered by the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. Since then, efforts under the Cartagena Process have been ongoing and aimed to strengthen the international system for the protection of refugees, forcibly displaced persons, and stateless persons. 2024 marked the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the framework.<sup>5</sup>
- ❖ ICVA, through its LAC regional hub, made contributions to the **Cartagena +40 Process** during the period under review. This work was particularly important for ICVA as it has extended its presence in the region since 2018 through a pilot hosting mechanism with a member organisation (FM4 Paso Libre), ICVA resources in the region are more limited, and therefore it aims to build a broad network of NGOs that can effectively work together on issues of common concern with less impulsion from ICVA.
- ❖ Thanks to the relationship ICVA enjoys with UNHCR in the LAC region and beyond (UNHCR has been acting as the Technical Secretariat of the Cartagena +40 Process), the network was invited to lead NGO consultations towards the development of the 2024-2034 Chile Declaration and Plan of Action, a new 10-year regional strategic plan. In 2023, ICVA hosted the Latin American Academic Network on the Law and Integration of Refugees (LAREF) to work on a report providing recommendations and reflections on the Chile Declaration's scope and challenges. The "[40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees](#)" report was published in October 2024.
- ❖ Furthermore, ICVA convened NGOs early 2024 to develop common positioning with regards to the Chile Declaration and upcoming consultation process. ICVA led the first of the three official preparatory consultations focused on social inclusion, resettlement and return mechanisms with civil society stakeholders. In keeping with its objective to promote NGO leadership, ICVA sought the support of the LAC RMD Coalition, a regional network of International NGOs, to further advance the consultation processes, with ICVA playing an enabling role, sharing key information and documents and supporting the Coalition as it gathered inputs on protection and solutions to contribute to the Chile Declaration and Action Plan. Finally, ICVA engaged key stakeholders to enhance support for

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<sup>5</sup> See <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/Cartagena%2040%20-%20MSP%20update%20June%202024.pdf>

displacement-affected communities, seizing opportunities to present its report notably to UNHCR and the Chilean government.

- ❖ Through the Cartagena Declaration and Action Plan work, ICVA created opportunities for LAC NGOs to work together, build their visibility and play a leading role in a significant regional policy process on displacement.

### Other engagements and collective action on regional or country mobility processes

- ❖ ICVA, notably through its **MENA regional hub**, actively engaged key processes pertaining to the Gaza, Syria and Yemen crises during the period under review, notably by (i) convening members and NGO fora (on Gaza, Syria and Yemen), (ii) organising side events and sessions during regional and international conferences (on Syria and the region), (iii) producing resources on priorities and recommendations ahead of high-level meetings (on Yemen), (iv) amplifying NGO voices and good practices in regional and international conferences and other high-level discussions (on Gaza, Syria and Yemen), and (v) supporting joint NGO statements (on Gaza and Yemen).
- ❖ ICVA, notably through its **ESA and West and Central Africa (WCA) regional hubs**, also actively engaged key processes pertaining to the South Sudan and Sudan crises and regional mobility during the period under review, notably by (i) convening discussions with the UN Special Advisor on Solutions to Internal Displacement on the Action Agenda and its application in East and the Horn of Africa, (ii) facilitating WB Group informal consultations on the African migration potential and (iii) amplifying NGO voices in regional conferences and other high-level discussions notably with the African Union (AU) and the West African private sector.
- ❖ Finally, ICVA contributed to regional mobility processes **in the European context**, notably through the development of resources on the Ukraine refugee response, co-convening a conference on the integration of refugees in Europe, and amplifying NGO voices and messages in high-level discussions notably on the implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive.
- ❖ Stakeholders' experience with ICVA's work on mobility processes at regional level or on country-specific displacement issues speak to the opportunity provided to build a collective NGO voice, reach the broader humanitarian system, accept NGOs as a required and useful interlocutor, and the provision of humanitarian inputs from ground realities on forced displacement issues.

### Findings on: Supporting alliances promoting the rights of refugees, IDPs, and migrants in vulnerable situation

- ❖ ICVA's forced migration work during the period under review shows sustained efforts to bring an ecosystem of key actors together to advance protection and solutions for forcibly displaced and stateless persons.
- ❖ ICVA has used its standing partnership with UNHCR to contribute to progressively carving a seat and a role at the decision-making table for RLOs, organisations led by stateless persons and other CSOs working at the frontline of displacement and statelessness. This is evident in their increased participation in GCR processes and leadership roles in the 2024 Executive Committee meeting and 2023 GRF proceedings. ICVA members and other stakeholders, in particular from the Global South, repeatedly say that access to decision-making spaces and decision-makers matters because it supports trust-building, improves awareness and understanding, builds visibility, legitimacy and credibility, and ultimately allows more appropriate solutions to solve increasingly complex forced displacement issues.
- ❖ ICVA has also built a non-traditional coalition of State, UN, NGO and CSO actors as part of the co-convening of the Multi-Stakeholder Pledge on Advancing Localisation to notably advance the meaningful and equitable participation of local and national actors in decision-making and their access to quality funding. This experience has been highly successful in developing a set of solutions addressing the priorities of the different stakeholders involved while ultimately being

highly responsive to the needs of the target beneficiaries. The various sets of expertise, experience and expectation brought together created fruitful grounds for addressing a complex forced displacement issue through complementary but differentiated solutions.

- ❖ ICVA has also been astute at using developments in forced displacement discourse to reorient its alliances strategically. ICVA's growing relationships with the WB Group and IOM are indicative of this trend and have been valued by members, who are nonetheless asking ICVA to double down on other strategic relationship building such as with States.
- ❖ Finally, ICVA's forced displacement work, as with other focus areas and cross-cutting topics, could not be delivered to the extent and quality frequently noted by members and stakeholders without the collaborations and partnerships forged with members, other NGOs, academic institutions and other stakeholders. The forced migration and regional hub teams have worked closely with organisations such as InterAction, LAREF, LAC RMD Coalition, the Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, or the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network to co-create initiatives and resources, realise economies of scale by pulling together expertise, and other financial or technical resources and advance common strategic priorities.

### Case Study 1:

#### Strengthening Locally Led Action in Displacement and Statelessness Responses

The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) presents a global framework to increase predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing and find sustainable solutions to refugee situations. The GCR recognises that multi-stakeholder and whole-of-society approaches are key, hence civil society actors play a central role in the implementation of its four objectives. Since the GCR's adoption in 2016, ICVA has supported NGO engagement with the implementation of the GCR and follow-up to the first and second Global Refugee Forums (GRF) through information dissemination, collective mobilisation and advocacy, and fostering NGO engagement on specific pledges and GCR initiatives. ICVA is also the founder of the GCR NGO Reference Group.

In parallel, and aligned with its 2030 strategic priorities, ICVA has advanced momentum on localising humanitarian action more broadly, through engagement with the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit and the Grand Bargain. In the forced migration focus area, there has also been an increased recognition of the key role played by NGOs in providing responses to displacement and statelessness, which was notably reflected in the recommendations from [UNHCR's 2022 Global Consultations with NGOs](#).

It was against this background that in 2022, ICVA and UNHCR developed the idea to facilitate activities - in collaboration with key stakeholders - for one collective multistakeholder GRF pledge on localisation. The multistakeholder pledge committed to enhance the capacity and ownership of local and national actors, and to develop stronger and more equitable partnerships with them, fostering contextually relevant, efficient, effective and sustainable solutions that will improve the lives of refugees, other forcibly displaced and stateless persons. Centrally, it is an enabling pledge, contributing to the implementation of all four objectives of the GCR.

In March 2023, a Reference Group composed of over 20 members was set up by ICVA and UNHCR to co-create with diverse stakeholders, including NGOs, organisations led by forcibly displaced and stateless persons, UN Member States, international organisations and UN agencies a [Multistakeholder Pledge on Advancing Localisation in Displacement and Statelessness Responses](#) as part of the 2023 GRF.



Three Working Groups were formed composed of the pledge Reference Group and nine additional stakeholders elected through an inclusive process to contribute to the elaboration of pledge commitments. The Working Groups addressed following themes:

1. **Funding:** Significantly improve the accessibility, quality, quantity and tracking of funding to local and national actors.
2. **Decision-making:** Promote and facilitate safe, inclusive, meaningful and equitable participation of local and national actors in decision-making processes and structures.
3. **Capacity-sharing:** Enhance capacity-sharing, including by promoting local knowledge and mutual learning between local and national actors and other stakeholders.

The three thematic commitments are underpinned by an overarching commitment on policy and cross-cutting commitment on partnerships. This process resulted in the development of 8 main commitments and 33 sample commitments on policymaking, partnerships, decision-making, capacity-sharing and funding in support of locally-led displacement and statelessness responses.

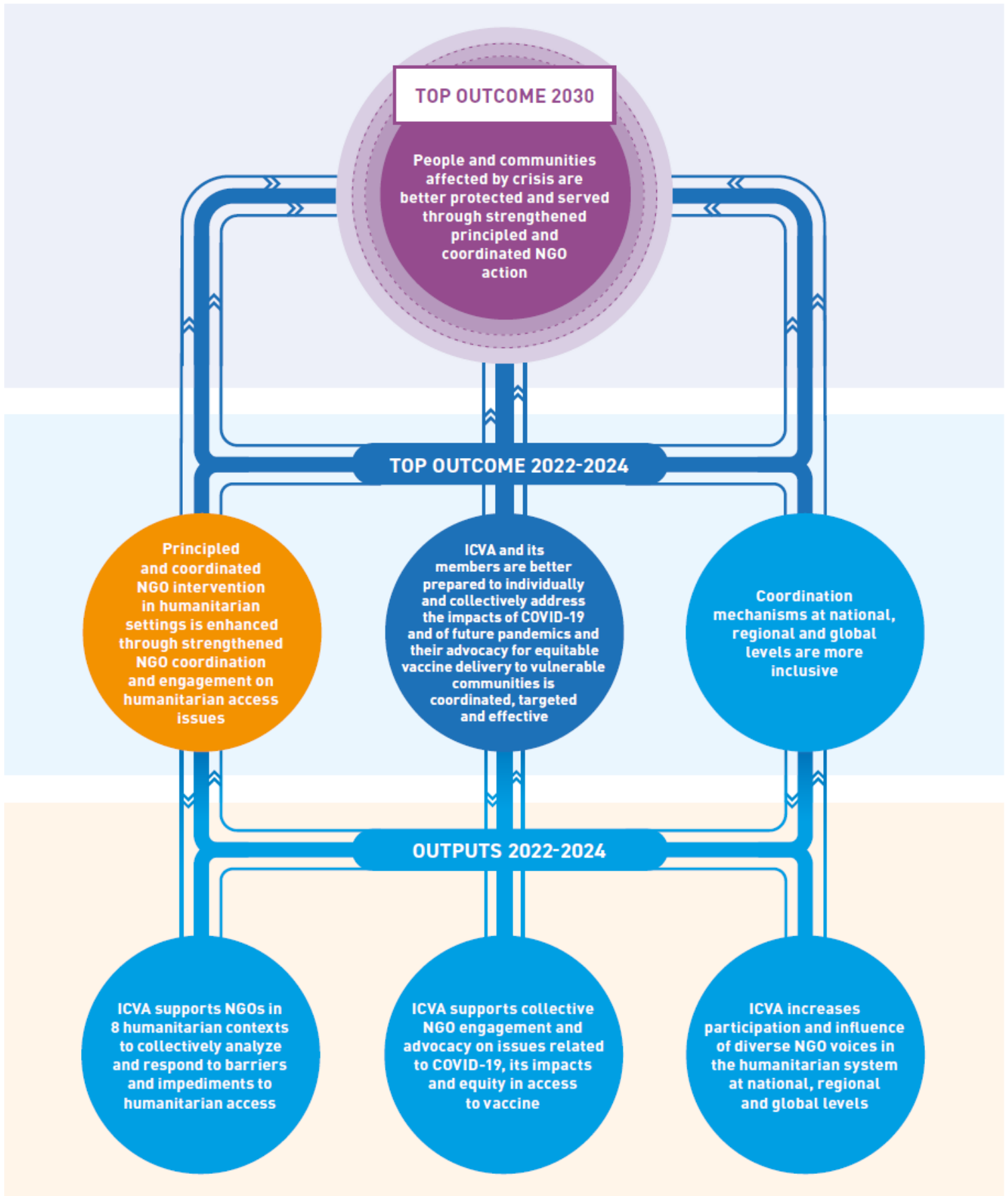
The work was guided by the Advisory Board to the UNHCR Task Team on Engagement and Partnership with organisations led by displaced and stateless persons, the GCR NGO Reference Group and other NGOs, and the Age, Gender and Diversity Group of Friends.

The multistakeholder pledge was presented at the 2023 GRF and garnered some 43 supporting pledges from national and international NGOs, UN Member States, international organisations, and the private sector. More than 475 CSOs across the globe (estimated value of pledges at over USD 100 million) will be supported through the pledges, including 209 organisations led by forcibly displaced or stateless persons. 24% of the pledges support women-led organisations while 74% commit to capacity-sharing activities.

Since the conclusion of the GRF in 2023, ICVA and UNHCR have continued to work together with the Reference Group to advance the pledge. ICVA, together with UNHCR, has sought the endorsement of the Reference Group to continue in their role until the end of 2025 and the Reference Group's Terms of Reference have been updated accordingly. Progress in pledge implementation is being monitored through indicators that have been developed specifically for the pledge, and which will remain in use until the third GRF in 2027.

ICVA, UNHCR and the Reference Group will continue to galvanise further individual pledges under the umbrella of the multistakeholder pledge and to seek synergies with similar initiatives. To further promote the pledge, including as part of the GCR's main arrangements for follow-up and review, the 2025 High-Level Officials Meeting, a 'Roadmap towards the 2025 High-Level Officials Meeting' was developed with key milestones to be rolled out. Finally, the complementarity of the pledge with localisation commitments under similar initiatives create important opportunities for cross-fertilisation and collective action which will be pursued.

## ICVA THEORY OF CHANGE 2022-2024: HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION





## Focus Area 2. Humanitarian Coordination

### Overview

Humanitarian coordination is central to enabling all actors in humanitarian crises to achieve impact which is greater than the sum of their parts, while upholding or defending the principles representing their values and ensuring they have the space to support and work with those affected. As a membership organisation, it is natural that ICVA has coordination as a focus area. Its network of members, non- members, international organisations and other NGO networks enables them to convene and connect in a way that few can.

A Theory of Change was defined for this area linking the current strategy with ICVA's 2030 goal. This review sought to identify if this was achieved in practice. The following presents a summary of ICVA's initiatives, what was achieved and inputs received from stakeholders as part this impact study.

Box 2 shows main results of an impact survey conducted to give a sense of how ICVA members have perceived progress on the coordination work.

#### Box 2: Member Survey Feedback on Coordination

With regards to Coordination work, most significant progress was noted against outcome area 1 pertaining to enhanced principled and coordinated NGO intervention through strengthened NGO coordination and engagement on humanitarian access, with 54% of respondents declaring a good to significant level of progress (28% declared good progress, 26% noted significant progress, with 18% marked this outcome area as not applicable).

The second outcome area registering higher levels of good to significant progress pertained to inclusive coordination mechanisms at national, regional and global levels (54%, with 44% of good progress, 10% of significant progress, and 23% of medium progress).

The last Coordination outcome area pertaining to improved preparedness to individually and collectively address the impact of COVID-19 and future pandemics and coordinated advocacy for equitable vaccine delivery registered 44% of good to significant progress (23% of "not applicable" and 23% of don't know" responses). For more information, please refer to Annex III.

### Findings:

#### Findings on: Strengthened NGO coordination and engagement on humanitarian access issues

- ❖ During the period under review, ICVA worked through a number of approaches at country, regional and global level to **strengthen members and NGOs' capacities, voices and actions to address constraints to humanitarian access** impeding their ability to deliver principled and effective humanitarian response.
- ❖ At country level, ICVA developed and applied an approach and methodology for joint NGO/ICVA analysis on humanitarian access. This approach was applied through workshops or other technical support to analyse access impediments in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Colombia, Pakistan, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen. Furthermore, ICVA, with the Centre for Competence on Humanitarian Negotiations, delivered a total of 8 workshops in 8 countries to over 160 NGO representatives on successful humanitarian negotiations. ICVA's regional hubs also convened members and NGO fora and engaged in discussions with key stakeholders on access impediments in specific country contexts such as Afghanistan, Gaza and Myanmar. The Sudan INGO Forum invited ICVA to take part in its members' convening in 2024 notably to discuss the humanitarian

crisis and regional implications. Member meetings were also organised with permanent missions, IASC or other United Nations (UN) stakeholders on access issues for instance in Afghanistan.

- ❖ ICVA, notably through its AP regional hub, also actively engaged key processes pertaining to the Afghanistan and Myanmar crises during the period under review, notably by (i) convening members to keep them up to date, discuss priority areas and ICVA support needed, (ii) organising a roundtable on Myanmar with key humanitarian stakeholders, (iii) conducting a mission to Bangladesh in response to increasing protection concerns related to the Rohingya refugee crisis, (iv) supporting members and NGO fora in preparation for a Peer-to-Peer mission for Myanmar, (v) co-producing resources on and supporting engagement with the Support Platform for the Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, (iv) and amplifying NGO voices in regional conferences and other high-level discussions. As these two country contexts shifted from development back to humanitarian work, particular support was extended to the NGO fora for a successful transition.
- ❖ At the regional level, member and NGO fora convenings and engagements with key stakeholders were delivered notably in WCA (sessions on access and humanitarian principles, dialogue on humanitarian diplomacy with the UN Special Coordinator for the Development in the Sahel, organisation of high-level briefing on Central Sahel crises, participation in the WCA Regional Access and Humanitarian Principles Task Force and organisation of workshop), and MENA (convenings with NGO fora from the MENA region on Gaza).
- ❖ At the global level, ICVA advanced its thought leadership and collective action in several high-level fora, such as IASC's Task Force 3 on Preserving Humanitarian Space, the Civil 7 Engagement Group of the Group of 7 (G7), and IASC's Advocacy and Communications Team (ACT). With the Task Force 3, ICVA spearheaded the development of indicators on Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments (BAI), the [IASC BAI monitoring framework](#), developed reports tracking implementation of the framework and supported the roll-out of the framework through peer-to-peer missions. The Civil 7 Engagement Group produced 3 communiqués on principled humanitarian assistance between 2022 and 2024 to coincide with the Germany, Japan and Italy G7 Presidencies. The ACT took part in global campaigns such as World Humanitarian Day and an [open letter](#) to UN General Assembly Member States calling for the protection of civilians and NGO staff, signed by over 400 aid agencies. ICVA, as part of its IASC Principals' engagement, also contributed to 10 IASC Principals' Statements on the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gaza, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Somalia, and Sudan during the period under review.
- ❖ ICVA also organised several high-level convenings, such as the [workshop on the Participation Revolution](#) co-organised with CHS Alliance during which 31 participants from 27 national and international organisations discussed advancements in people-centred approaches in the IASC system.
- ❖ Finally, ICVA produced various resources on humanitarian access and principled humanitarian action, as well as continued to share information and react to developments as part of its Humanitarian Coordination, Humanitarian Access and other Working Groups. In 2023, ICVA set up the Principled Humanitarian Action Steering Committee with NGOs and NGO fora representatives, notably leading a session during ICVA's 2024 Annual Conference on trust to develop and agree approaches to humanitarian dilemmas and upholding humanitarian principles.
- ❖ Humanitarian access technical support and thought leadership have proven a worthwhile investment for ICVA and partners, with NGOs noting the safe spaces ICVA manages for a variety of stakeholders to engage on complex issues, identify solutions to enhance principled humanitarian action. They also report more confidence in dealing with challenges related to humanitarian access constraints or people-centred approaches, and the application of knowledge and skills to improve operational context analysis, engagements on access in country coordination structures and humanitarian negotiation facilitation.

## **Findings on: Improved preparedness to address the impacts of COVID-19 and future pandemics**

- ❖ During the COVID-19 pandemic, ICVA demonstrated flexibility and agility in how it adapted its plans, action and member support. ICVA integrated COVID-19 related initiatives into its work with the notable aim to improve preparedness to address the impacts of COVID-19 and future pandemics.
- ❖ The provision of regular updates to members and NGO fora on COVID-19 continued in 2022, notably focused on COVID-19 vaccine delivery roll out, continuation of essential services, equitable vaccine access, vaccine funding, and the coordination and funding for delivery of COVID-19 vaccines in humanitarian settings (COVAX humanitarian buffer initiative). ICVA also contributed resources, such as a report on “[Principles of Effective COVID-19 Vaccines and Delivery in Humanitarian Settings](#)” and engaged inter-agency platforms to ensure NGOs could receive information on COVID-19 response decisions and have a say.
- ❖ In 2022, ICVA also continued to offer specific support to NGO fora in Africa to prepare for upcoming COVAX missions.
- ❖ In 2021, ICVA focused significant efforts on building relationships and NGO engagement with the COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Partnership<sup>6</sup> (CoVDP) to promote better vaccination coverage in humanitarian contexts.<sup>7</sup> In early 2022, the CoVDP appointed ICVA as a member of the CoVDP Steering Committee on COVID-19 vaccinations in humanitarian settings. The Steering Committee aimed to conduct a joint convening on the rollout of COVID-19 vaccinations in humanitarian settings to review progress and identify bottlenecks and promising practices in COVID-19 vaccine outreach to populations of concern in humanitarian settings.
- ❖ The Steering Committee established three Working Groups with the aim of developing an action plan on COVID-19 vaccination and pandemic preparedness to be firmed up during the joint convening. The Steering Committee appointed ICVA and the Global Health Cluster<sup>8</sup> as co-chairs of Working Group 1 on leveraging humanitarian architecture, which convened seven structured meetings with high-level health and humanitarian stakeholders to develop key recommendations for the action plan. ICVA also strongly advocated for NGO engagement, enabling member INTERSOS to be selected as co-chair of the Working Group 3 on health systems strengthening and pandemic preparedness together with the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.
- ❖ The joint convening took place in early 2023 and built on the work of the Working Groups. ICVA and the Global Health Cluster helped ensure that over 25% of attendees to the joint convening were from NGOs. The joint convening led to the development of a concrete and practical [COVID-19 vaccinations in humanitarian settings action plan](#) with contributions to broader pandemic preparedness. This marked one of the last significant COVID-19 contributions by ICVA.

## **Findings on: Coordination mechanisms at national, regional and global levels are more inclusive**

### **High-level representation in IASC and other global and regional coordination structures**

- ❖ The IASC is the highest-level coordination forum of the UN system and works to formulate policy, set strategic priorities, and mobilise resources in response to humanitarian crises. Between 2022 and 2024, ICVA took part in the workings of all of the key IASC structures at global and regional levels, such as the IASC Principals, IASC Deputies Group, IASC Emergency Directors Group, IASC Operational Policy and Advocacy Group (OPAG), IASC Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation Steering Group, IASC Task Force 3 on Preserving Humanitarian Space, IASC Task Force 5 on

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<sup>6</sup> The COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery Partnership was put in place in January 2022 by the United Nations World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, as a time-bound mechanism to support COVID-19 vaccine delivery in countries with the lowest coverage rates.

<sup>7</sup> See ICVA’s [Annual Report 2022](#). ICVA for example joined CoVDP’s high-level mission to South Sudan.

<sup>8</sup> The Global Health Cluster supports health cluster and/or sectors in countries.

Localisation, the Global CoP on the Nexus, as well as the WCA regional IASC, the Asia-Pacific IASC Regional Directors Group, the Asia-Pacific IASC Emergency Preparedness Working Group, the Asia-Pacific Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Working Group, the MENA IASC Emergency Working Group and the LAC Regional Group on Risk, Emergencies and Disasters. In the ESA region, ICVA facilitated the launch of monthly consultations between UN agencies, Regional Directors of international NGOs and NGO fora. ICVA at global and regional levels also took part in coordination mechanisms outside of the IASC structure. Prior to meetings, ICVA consults NGOs and NGO networks represented in these structures, as well as its members, to develop positions. It also disseminates information after the engagements (sometimes through debriefing sessions).

- ❖ Some notable ICVA contributions within these platforms during the period under review include:
  - The direct participation of at least 11 ICVA members and NGO fora in IASC meetings as part of the additional NGO seats allotted to NGO consortia, with for instance Islamic Relief Worldwide co-leading discussions related to the IASC Deputies' priority area on addressing lack of acceptance and the erosion of trust in 2023.
  - Contribution to at least 10 IASC Principals' statements on the need for urgent action in different emergency settings, and one joint statement on the Horn of Africa famine.
  - At the global level, contribution to (and in some cases spearheading) significant processes, frameworks, guidance or reviews (new cash coordination model, the BAI monitoring framework, [guidance on the provision of overheads to local and national partners](#), [guidance on advancing the nexus approach](#), [synthesis report summarising good practices in the implementation of the HDP nexus approaches](#), [the independent review of humanitarian responses to internal displacement](#), and [good practice case studies on localisation](#));
  - At the regional level, NGO participation in the WCA regional access roadmap, spearheading of AP regional response efforts on Myanmar, local NGO support on contingency planning and emergency preparedness, review of Syria collective responses etc.
  - Contributions to at least seven IASC EDG missions, 11 peer-to-peer support missions, two operational peer review missions and one Deputies' visit (through direct ICVA representation and/or support to member representation).
  - Contributions to Afghanistan, Yemen, Ethiopia, Somalia, Turkey/Syria and Ukraine inter-agency humanitarian evaluations, IASC annual review of operations and management responses.
  - Contributions to UN Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator recruitments, appraisals of UN Humanitarian Coordinators, and strengthening of UN Humanitarian Coordinator candidates' pool.
- ❖ ICVA also convened its members to dialogue with high-level representatives within or outside the IASC structures, such as with the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, UN Resident Coordinators, Humanitarian Coordinators and Deputy Humanitarian Coordinators. World Bank representatives and diplomats were engaged in the WCA region to discuss humanitarian crises in Central Sahel. [ICVA's 2024 Annual Conference](#) on Rethinking Coordination – Accountability, Credibility and Trust in Principled Humanitarian Action, gathered over 250 ICVA members and State, UN, academics and other stakeholders.
- ❖ Finally, ICVA regularly participated in high-level events advancing discussions and decision-making on humanitarian topics, such as the European Humanitarian Forum (in 2024, it facilitated the participation of 26 national NGO leaders in the Forum), the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Weeks (HNPW), the AU Summit and Humanitarian Symposium, as well as regional and country-focused events.
- ❖ Stakeholders interviewed note ICVA's strength as a galvaniser of NGO voices and experiences. They highlight ICVA's ability to bring to the fore the "NGO angle", while also making good use of the sizeable network of national organisations it represents to channel national realities into global humanitarian agendas. National organisations are deeply appreciative of ICVA's membership, which has opened global and regional discussion and decision-making spaces to make their voice,

and the voices of those they represent, heard. Participation in IASC high-level coordination structures also gave them momentum to advance similar discussions with NGOs, UN and other stakeholders at national level. While it was difficult for stakeholders to say whether ICVA influenced major policy changes during the period under review, they certainly pointed to the high quality of the inputs provided and the usefulness of the outputs developed together with ICVA.

### NGO fora support

- ❖ Over the past decade, ICVA has worked to increase the presence of independent NGO coordination fora in humanitarian contexts as critical conveners of NGOs for effective humanitarian action.
- ❖ In the 2022-2024 period, ICVA formalised NGO fora support notably through an “NGO fora resource hub and support desk”, catering for on-demand support from NGO fora in areas such as humanitarian coordination, how to engage the humanitarian coordination system, and fora governance for forum Directors and Steering Committees. Support is provided either in-person or remotely by ICVA’s Geneva humanitarian coordination team or regional hubs.
- ❖ In the 2022-2024 period, ICVA supported national, international and mixed NGO fora in at least 34 countries as well as two regional networks. ICVA’s support to NGO fora ranged from information-sharing to convening, support missions, financial support (at least 10 fora received small grants and 3 fora were provided with financial support), governance support (to NGO fora in at least 13 countries), strategy development support (for instance an advocacy strategy for the South Sudan NGO Forum), formal capacity strengthening efforts (for instance training on improved and efficient coordination with country level IASC structure extended to NGO fora from at least 6 countries), Forum directors’ briefings, support during sudden onset emergencies (for instance through surge deployments in Gaza in 2023-2024), connections to the humanitarian coordination architecture and stakeholders in-country, participation in global or regional coordination or other decision-making processes (such as in IASC OPAG meetings) and peer exchanges (3 NGO fora leadership exchanges, regional NGO fora exchange workshops, 1 NGO consortia exchange). In the LAC region, NGO fora supported by ICVA, notably through annual meetings, have subsequently advanced the promotion of dialogue and collaboration amongst humanitarian actors, while in the AP region, ICVA provided significant technical support to NGO fora in Afghanistan and Myanmar for successful transition from development back to humanitarian context.
- ❖ NGO fora were also offered technical support to conduct research (on situational analysis, localisation) and to build a forum capacity building program for forum members. Finally, ICVA’s capacity strengthening and financial support was also extended to Forum members (8 forum members notably received small grants).
- ❖ With its NGO fora support, ICVA continued to contribute to setting up NGO fora, with one regional forum established in WCA (West and Central Africa NGO Forum, FONGA) and one in the process of being established in Iraq. ICVA also deployed a short-term Consultant to assist with establishing a new NGO forum for the earthquake response within Turkey in 2023. ICVA finally deployed a coordination surge capacity expert in Ukraine at the request of its members in 2022 who laid the groundwork for the set-up of a mixed national and international NGO coordination structure, the Humanitarian NGO Platform in Ukraine, in January 2023. A subsequent ICVA support mission to the forum in 2023 helped strengthen the forum’s governance.
- ❖ Small grants and technical support contributed to official forum registration and the development of forum governance structures in Mali.
- ❖ ICVA also continued to strengthen forum operations and the capacities of forum secretariats and memberships through the provision of targeted capacity strengthening and other technical support. Supported fora report (i) improved individual knowledge, (ii) strengthened forum leadership, (iii) strengthened operational capacity, (iv) enhanced coordinated NGO voice on humanitarian issues, (v) strengthened coordination at country-level, (vi) new or improved legitimacy and relations, and (vii) strengthened members as some of the main outcomes of ICVA’s capacity support.
- ❖ Finally, ICVA connected NGO fora with each other to build a cadre of NGO forum leaders and foster learning within and across regions. NGO fora leaders report that these exchanges contributed to (i)



building or strengthening their awareness and knowledge on humanitarian topics, (ii) provided them with opportunities to connect with other fora, national, international NGOs, UN agencies, and donors, and engage with them on priorities, challenges and support needs related to the humanitarian sector in their country or region, (iii) improved their ability to represent humanitarian NGOs at national, regional, global level, and (iv) Improved their ability to promote humanitarian principles.

### **Building members' resilience**

- ❖ ICVA used several avenues to build members' resilience with respect to humanitarian crises and coordination during the period under review. ICVA's support missions to Afghanistan, Ukraine, Pakistan, Yemen, or Chad notably aimed to support NGO coordination. ICVA's regional hubs convened NGOs from Ethiopia, Libya, Mali, Iraq, South Sudan, Myanmar or the WCA region amongst others to discuss humanitarian contexts, coordination, IASC peer-to-peer support missions and/or collaboration between NGOs.
- ❖ ICVA also conducted capacity strengthening activities during the period under review, reaching members and NGO fora members across all the regions it covers with capacity support on the humanitarian architecture, humanitarian coordination, leadership, engaging with IASC, resource mobilisation, collective advocacy, Protection Against Sexual Abuse (PSEA), localisation, and climate change and humanitarian action, amongst other themes (see the transformations section for details).
- ❖ ICVA members report outcomes at individual, organisational and system levels from these initiatives, including improved individual understanding and knowledge, strengthened organisational policies, programmes or operations, and enhanced collective NGO voice and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP).

### **Emergency surge deployment and support**

- ❖ In instances where NGO coordination capacity is limited, ICVA has deployed or supported dedicated coordination expertise in sudden onset emergencies. This coordination surge capacity has proven key to establish or enhance NGO coordination mechanisms and improve coordination efforts in the first months following the onset of these emergencies (**see Case Study 2: Emergency Deployments for Coordination Support**).

### **Building system's resilience**

- ❖ Finally, ICVA has worked on resources and solutions to strengthen inclusive, fit-for-purpose and effective humanitarian coordination. The development of resources, such as the "[Guidance for NGO Speakers: OCHA Member States Briefings](#)" contribute to building knowledge and skills to support meaningful participation. ICVA's [Speakers Bureau](#), with over 120 registered national humanitarian speakers, was set up in 2023 to make a pool of speakers available to humanitarian stakeholders, as ICVA was regularly requested to identify NGO speakers by members, States or UN agencies for national, regional or global events such as the UN Member States' briefings.
- ❖ Since 2023, ICVA supported the development of leadership capacity in collaboration with OCHA's Humanitarian Leadership Strengthening Section (HLSS). OCHA's HLSS has developed a curriculum for the onboarding of all new Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs, the leading IASC coordination structure in-country). ICVA has joined the onboarding process, providing the NGO perspective during three onboarding sessions to new UN, NGO, donor, and Red Cross Red Crescent movement HCT members.
- ❖ Finally, based on learning from the emergency surge deployment and support, ICVA has been working on an approach to support global coordination of emergency response during emergencies through NGO networks. The approach was developed in 2024 and will be refined and socialised starting in 2025.
- ❖ ICVA's interventions to strengthen NGO participation have been noted as important and complementary to other efforts to strengthen coordination by stakeholders.

## Case Study 2:

### Emergency Deployments for Coordination Support

Coordination is vital during sudden onset emergencies to ensure the limited means available at the start of a crisis are put to their best use. However, the focus on operations and immediate response are often a barrier for NGO engagement in coordination systems. Starting in 2021 and based on lessons learned from several ad-hoc deployments of the ICVA team, the network started offering structured emergency coordination support in sudden onset emergency settings where existing NGO coordination structures are overwhelmed:

- ❖ In 2022, ICVA contributed to strengthening NGO coordination in the Ukraine response through the deployment of NGO coordination expertise for the response, as well as through partnerships with national NGOs focused on localisation. The scale and complexity of the humanitarian response required NGOs to rapidly adapt to the changing situation. In this context, ICVA supported NGOs' understanding of and engagement with various coordination mechanisms. It also strengthened collaboration between NGOs and worked towards improved advocacy in support of localisation efforts in the response.
- ❖ In 2023, ICVA supported deployments to Turkey to establish an NGO forum for a major earthquake response, and to Gaza and Jerusalem to support NGO coordination functions within the international and national NGO fora supporting the Gaza response.
- ❖ In 2024, ICVA supported three consecutive deployments in Gaza on behalf of the INGO forum. Based in the coordination hub in Rafah and seconded to the NGO forum, the deployed resources provided vital information on field operations and linked NGO operations to the larger coordination efforts led by OCHA. ICVA also deployed a remote resource (based in Amman) to support the INGO forum in Lebanon as part of the Lebanon response. Seconded to the forum Director, the ICVA resource notably supported coordination efforts with a specific focus on logistics and mine action. This deployment was conducted in parallel with the deployment of security management capacity from ICVA member the Global Interagency Security Forum.

Evidence shows that ICVA did provide a high-quality and essential coordination service during these deployments. In some instances, such as the Ukraine support, a mixed national and international NGO coordination structure, the Humanitarian NGO Platform in Ukraine, was set up in 2023 following ICVA's in-country deployment as well as remote technical assistance. However, such outcomes are only possible in very enabling contexts where conditions are also ripe.

### 2024 and beyond: Support to NGO Coordination in Sudden Onset Emergencies

ICVA's emergency deployments evolved based on learning from deployment successes and challenges and changing contexts. In 2024, to address shrinking resources and escalating crises, ICVA began consultations to adapt its existing deployment model. Discussions highlighted the need for an approach intentionally designed responsive and agile, and supporting local actors and local coordination networks operational in any given context. As a result, ICVA is now building on recent operational support work to develop a multi-agency NGO-led emergency and crisis coordination mechanism.

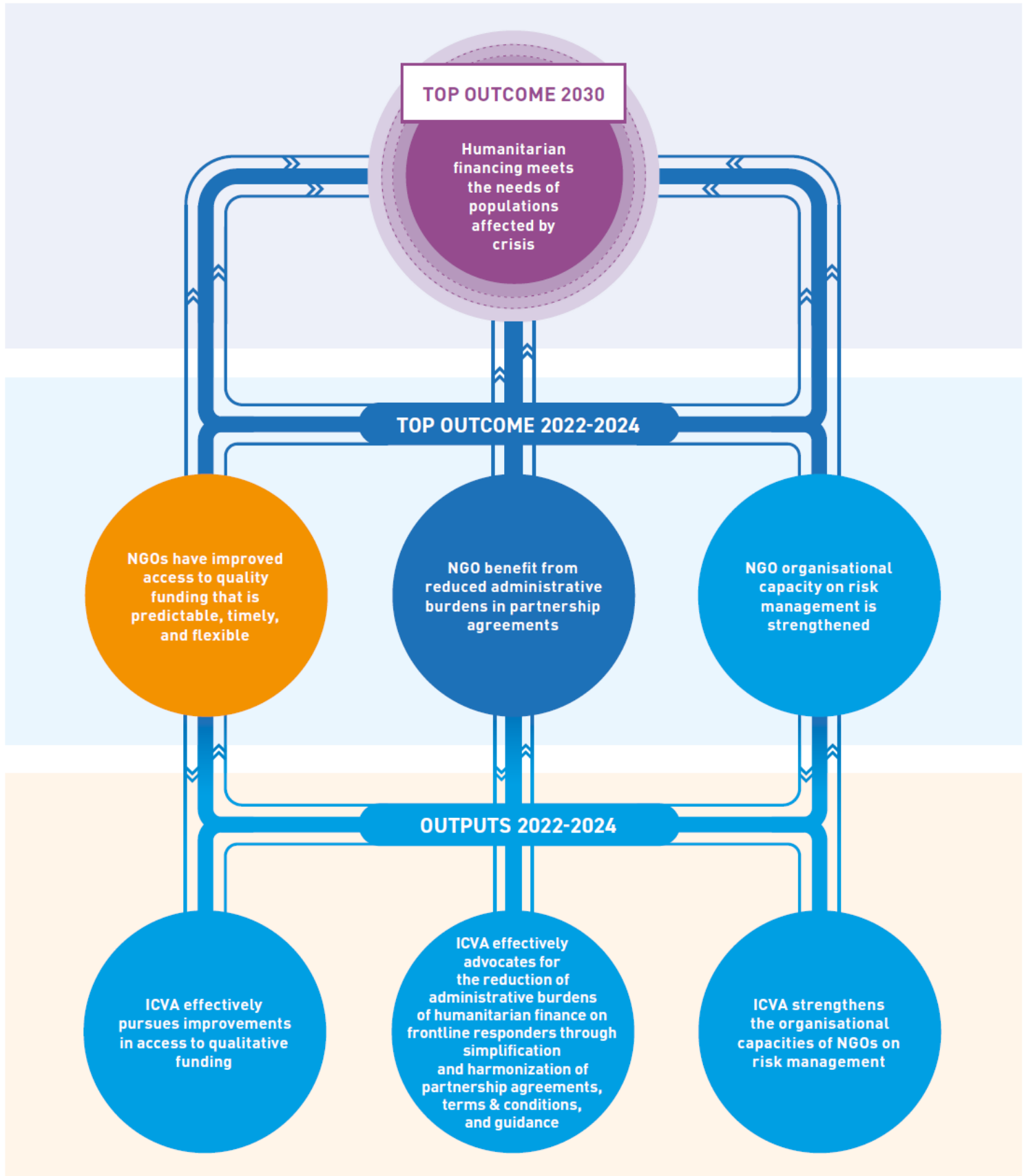
This mechanism is intended to support global coordination of emergency response assistance through NGO fora, and to enable the provision of highly tailored and agile coordination services and technical



support to in-country NGO fora during emergencies. Utilising a shared and collaborative model, the mechanism will draw on specialist expertise from humanitarian NGOs and coordination bodies to provide in-country and remote support during critical emergency phases.

The novel approach aims to leverage the capabilities of ICVA members, complement and not replace local capacities, and provide flexibility to better adapt to operational realities. ICVA will coordinate and facilitate the multi-agency NGO-led emergency and crisis coordination mechanism, working with NGOs towards combining resources and addressing critical gaps.

# ICVA THEORY OF CHANGE 2022-2024: HUMANITARIAN FINANCING



## Focus Area 3. Financing

### Overview

ICVA's financing work seeks to ensure humanitarian financing meets the needs of populations affected by crises. The network collaborates with NGOs, particularly local organisations, to build an understanding of how the system works and to influence it.

A Theory of Change was defined for this area linking the current strategy with ICVA's 2030 goal. This review sought to identify if this was achieved in practice. The following presents a summary of ICVA's initiatives, what was achieved and inputs received from stakeholders as part this impact study.

Box 3 shows main results of an impact survey conducted to give a sense of how ICVA members have perceived progress on the financing work.

#### Box 3: Member Survey Feedback on Financing

With regards to financing work, most progress was noted against outcome area 1 pertaining to **NGOs' improved access to quality funding that is predictable, timely and flexible**, with 37% of respondents declaring a medium to good level of progress (26% marked this outcome area as not applicable).

The second outcome area showing most medium to good progress pertained to **strengthened NGO organisational capacity on risk management** (31%, with 17% of medium progress, 14% of good progress and 26% of "not applicable" responses).

The last financing outcome area pertaining to **reduced administrative burdens in partnership agreements for NGOs** registered 31% of medium to good progress (20% of medium progress, 11% of good progress and 26% of "not applicable" responses). For more information, please refer to Annex III.

### Findings

#### Findings on: Facilitating improvements in access to quality funding

##### Grand Bargain engagements

- ❖ The Grand Bargain, launched during the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, is an agreement between donors and humanitarian organisations that have committed to shrink humanitarian needs, deepen and broaden the resource base for humanitarian action, and improve aid delivery. ICVA is a Signatory of the Grand Bargain and has been active in the Grand Bargain governance and technical structures, making significant contributions in 2022 to the establishment of a global Cash Advisory Group as a member of the Caucus on Cash Programming, as well as supporting the work of the Caucus on Quality Funding.
- ❖ In 2021, ICVA took on the NGO representative role within the Facilitation Group for a two-year period. The Facilitation Group, composed of two donors, two UN agencies, the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) / International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and two NGO consortia, was tasked during the period under review with facilitating the development of the future Grand Bargain framework.
- ❖ A lot was at stake given the slow progress achieved notably in increasing and localising humanitarian aid. To support the Grand Bargain international NGO constituency (and more broadly the NGO community), ICVA, *inter alia*, (i) gathered information on Grand Bargain developments from Grand Bargain Stakeholders, (ii) disseminated information, analysis and synthesis to the

international NGO constituency, ICVA's Humanitarian Finance Working Group (HFWG), donors, NGO networks and other stakeholders, as well as during high-level events (ICVA's 2023 Annual Conference, 2023 European Humanitarian Forum), (ii) gathered inputs from ICVA members, other NGO networks (the Alliance for Empowering Partnership (A4EP), representing the local and national NGO constituency) NGO fora on NGO Grand Bargain positioning, and (iii) engaged the Grand Bargain Facilitation Group, donor Signatories and Grand Bargain on NGO Grand Bargain priorities.

- ❖ Grand Bargain stakeholders closely involved in the development of the new framework pointed to ICVA's strong voice in the negotiations, particularly on the need for the Grand Bargain to continue beyond the one-year extension suggested by some constituencies to be able to achieve any meaningful outcomes. Stakeholders mentioned that the donor constituency was often influenced by evidence provided to frame their decisions, and the international NGO constituency provided some of that evidence.
- ❖ The Grand Bargain initiative is a complex global humanitarian framework involving multiple stakeholders with competing priorities, and as comments in previous sections also noted, these are difficult processes for NGOs to influence. Evidence shows that should ICVA and A4EP not have consistently engaged the Facilitation Group on NGO priorities, the [Grand Bargain beyond 2023 framework](#) adopted in 2023 would not have been the same. As such, the ability by ICVA to have some influence in the Grand Bargain's latest iteration can be commended, while ICVA should take note of feedback on the need for less technical and more targeted positions in the Grand Bargain space.
- ❖ The new Grand Bargain structures were being set up in 2024, and many stakeholders commented on the fact that they were less accessible and useful. In the 2024 Annual Grand Bargain meeting, ICVA advocated for more localisation and transformed humanitarian financing for frontline workers, instilling, as an ICVA member pointed, a renewed sense of urgency for the Grand Bargain to accelerate the pace of reforms before the end of its mandate in 2026.

### **Pooled Funds**

- ❖ As a potential significant source of funding for frontline responders, ICVA made significant contributions to **pooled funding research, engagements and solutions** during the period under review. ICVA was a member of OCHA's Pooled Fund Working Group (PFWG) and OCHA Country Based Pooled Fund (CBPF)-NGO Dialogue Platform Advisory Group between 2022 and 2023, two important platforms to ensure accessibility of funds to various actors at country level, where ICVA provided feedback to inform the strategic direction and management of OCHA's CBPFs. In 2022, following contributions to the revised CBPF global guidelines, ICVA supported the roll out of the guidelines, notably disseminating information on requirements. Since 2022, ICVA is also an observer member of the Sahel Regional Fund, hosted by ICVA member the Danish Refugee Council and since 2024 it has supported the strategic thinking of the Aid Fund for Syria, managed by Adam Smith International.
- ❖ ICVA demonstrated its thought leadership on pooled funding by producing three significant and complementary **research outputs on pooled funding** between 2022 and 2024 ([Pooled Funding at a Crossroads: Comprehensive Review and Analysis](#), [Pooled Funding Models: Governance Systems – A Comparative Study](#), and [ICVA-NGO Perspectives on Pooled Funds](#)). These research pieces aimed to map the different types of pooled funds available in various contexts, identify different types and good practices in pooled funding governance, and document NGOs' experiences, challenges and recommendations for more accessible and effective pooled funds. The research work was iterative, knowledge gaps in one theme triggering further research, and offered a comprehensive overview of options and good practices for establishing or strengthening Pooled Funds.
- ❖ Engagements with NGOs, donors and UN stakeholders in 2024 used the evidence generated through the Pooled Funds' research work to advocate for enhancing pooled fund accessibility and efficiency. ICVA also supported several convenings during the period under review, notably in the AP region where there are already innovative humanitarian financing structures that could influence both pooled funding and broader innovative funding work elsewhere, and where new Pooled Funds

are under discussion. ICVA also contributed expertise and member inputs to a [donor guidance on promoting inclusive and locally-led action through humanitarian Pooled Funds](#).

- ❖ Two significant ICVA initiatives were borne out of the pooled funding research and work with OCHA's Pooled Funds' governance structures and ICVA members: **The CBPF Resource Facility**, and the launch with the Start Network of the **Community of Practice (CoP) on Pooled Funds** (in late 2023-2024). Both initiatives address gaps in pooled funding governance and management, with the Resource Facility supporting local actors' engagement in OCHA's CBPF Advisory Boards and the PFWG through financial assistance and technical accompaniment, and the CoP gathering pooled fund managers for exchange, learning and advocacy.
- ❖ ICVA's pooled funding work during the period under review helped address significant gaps in knowledge and its application to develop concrete solutions to improve access to quality funding. Through this work, ICVA supported its members to successfully advocate for alternative Pooled Funds as complementary to existing ones, raised their profile (either at the individual or regional level) on their alternative and innovative financing endeavours, and contributed to building the humanitarian financing system with the objective to make it more inclusive and fit-for-purpose.

### **Engagements in IASC and other humanitarian fora on humanitarian financing**

- ❖ ICVA co-chaired the **IASC's Result Group 5 on Humanitarian Financing** between 2019 and 2022. With members' inputs, ICVA notably contributed to drafting the [IASC's Guidance on the Provision of Overheads to Local and National Partners](#), published in 2022. ICVA also facilitated the selection of permanent NGO representation on the global Cash Advisory Group. ICVA also actively engaged the **IASC Deputies Group** on closing the funding gap during the period under review.
- ❖ Between 2022 and 2024, ICVA members also provided analysis to the Working Group of **OCHA's Central Emergency Response Fund's Underfunded Emergencies** to contribute to decision-making on funding to priority emergencies.

### **Other engagements on humanitarian financing at global and regional level**

- ❖ During the period under review, ICVA mobilised **donors, funding intermediaries (such as the UN), and other decision-or policymakers** on funding for emergencies, the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) nexus, climate change and humanitarian action and other innovative financing, underpinned by a strong push for access to quality funding for NGOs. It did so through the development of resources (for instance the [Funding Well report](#) with the CHS Alliance), participation in high-level events, bilateral convenings, briefings, joint statements, as well as supporting the participation of NGOs in meaningful discussions (for instance during ICVA's 2024 annual events, including a lobby tour for West African national NGO fora with European institutions).
- ❖ Highlights include (i) several ICVA high-level initiatives focused on quality humanitarian funding (such as the 2023 Annual Conference or the Joint Call for Action on the Loss and Damage Fund), (ii) ICVA's regional hubs advocating for adequate financial support in such platforms as the third High-Level Conference on the Lake Chad region (WCA) or the Horn of Africa High-Level Pledging Conference (ESA), (iii) ICVA and members' engagement with the Good Humanitarian Donorship Forum, (iv) ICVA lending its support to the CALP Network on Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), contributing its expertise, co-convening events and sharing policy recommendations on locally-led CVA with donors and partners, (v) support to governments in the conceptualisation of Funding Facilities, such as the Nexus Funding Facility, designed to create a Fund with a regional governance body to support nexus programming.
- ❖ ICVA members note successes in improving donors' understanding on humanitarian funding needs, and the opportunities ICVA engagements on humanitarian funding offer to engage donors in a coordinated way, enhancing the collective NGO voice.

### **Findings on: Reducing administrative burdens in partnership agreements**

- ❖ During the period under review, ICVA engaged the UN's Children Fund (UNICEF), UNHCR, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and OCHA on harmonisation and simplification of NGO partnerships. This work is conducive to improved consultation processes and strengthened partnerships between UN humanitarian intermediaries and NGOs, a clearer understanding of systemic issues by NGOs and UN agencies alike, incremental improvements in partnership agreements, and smoother NGO operational processes (**see Case Study 3: Partnerships in ICVA's Humanitarian Financing Work**).

### **Findings on: Strengthening NGO organisational capacity on risk management**

- ❖ Since 2019, ICVA has been supporting NGOs to **better understand, identify and manage risks**, thereby paving the way for donors to place greater trust in partners, allocate more funds, over longer periods of time, with reduced oversight burdens. ICVA's work on risk management and sanctions regimes was nested in its participation in IASC's Task Force 3 on Preserving Humanitarian Space until mid-2024, when the Task Force was disbanded. Participation in the Task Force opened up several engagement and advocacy opportunities which ICVA pursued.
- ❖ ICVA for instance followed up and engaged on advocacy processes related to UN Security Council Resolution 2664's adoption and reporting requirements and processes. With the Resolution, opening humanitarian carve outs to UN sanctions regimes, likely vetoed in the Security Council, ICVA lobbied Security Council Member States on the value of a cross-cutting humanitarian exemption and called for Member States' unconditional support to the initiative. Once the Resolution was adopted, ICVA and InterAction focused their attention on the Resolution's reporting requirements and process, as the Resolution required beneficiary organisations to put in place and report on due diligence and risk mitigation measures. ICVA engaged OCHA with NGO feedback on the safety, security and political risks that would be associated with reporting obligations for the Resolution, and contributed to addressing pressing NGO risk management considerations, in particular related to data security. ICVA continued engaging with Resolution 2664 in 2024, supporting IASC webinars on bureaucratic challenges.
- ❖ Through the Task Force, ICVA also made contributions to renewal of EU exemption for Syria sanctions.
- ❖ In addition, ICVA dedicated resources to building knowledge of - and a body of evidence on risks, that culminated in the development of systems-building solutions to support long-term changes in risk management in the humanitarian sector. ICVA organised awareness raising and capacity strengthening events on risk management (1 regional session attended by 23 MENA NGO fora representatives) and quality partnerships (4 regional workshops attended by 112 NGO representatives) between 2023 and 2024. They contributed to raising members and NGO fora's understanding on risks and identifying most common challenges linked to risk management in sanctions regimes and due diligence processes in multiple settings. The knowledge generated from these capacity-and learning exchanges was channelled towards the development of a global workshop on risk-sharing, offering concrete solutions and good practices to address key risks through risk-sharing among actors in the humanitarian delivery chain. A project co-implemented with other humanitarian stakeholders also materialised from ICVA's risk management work, aiming to reduce due diligence burden procedures for local and national NGOs in Burkina Faso. Finally, the CoP on due diligence was formed with a consortium of ICVA partners to advance a coordinated approach to advance momentum on due diligence process reform.
- ❖ Once again, the ability of ICVA to seize opportunities created by developments in risk management at international level to address evidence gaps, advocate for derisking solutions and carve out significant spaces for facilitated dialogue on the topic is noted. ICVA staff underscores ICVA's agility in the principled partnerships' work that opened up risk-sharing avenues. ICVA members and NGO fora report being better equipped to react, including through risk-sharing, to risks in humanitarian operations.



### Case Study 3:

#### Partnerships in ICVA's Humanitarian Financing Work

“Agile and collaborative partnerships” is one of the five transformation areas of ICVA's 2030 Strategy and an essential way of working of the network's financing workstream. Partnerships are critical to efficient and effective humanitarian assistance.

People-centred humanitarian assistance depends on a multiplicity of actors. Very often, the NGOs providing protection and delivering assistance on the frontlines of emergencies do not have direct donor engagement. There may be several actors down a line of tender processes, due diligence assessments, partnership agreements, and procedures. These critical processes determine who is contracted, and how an intervention is designed, budgeted and implemented, and ultimately its success or failure. Power imbalances, international and national regulatory environments, the complexity of humanitarian contexts, and the sheer multiplicity of partnerships and partners foster a labyrinth of relationships which must be effectively navigated.

ICVA's partnership work is multi-faceted. The network creates safe spaces and provides guidance to enable international, local and national NGOs to collectively articulate their partnership challenges and develop proposed solutions.

In 2023 and 2024 for example, ICVA [convened a series of workshops](#) engaging 102 local, national and international NGOs and NGO fora to advance good partnership practices, guided by the Principles of Partnership. Similarly, between 2022 and 2024, ICVA served as the key intermediary between UNICEF, UNHCR and their NGO partners. During this period, ICVA collected detailed clause-by-clause feedback on UN partnership terms and conditions to support evidence-based advocacy. This anonymised feedback was shared with relevant UN agencies, serving as the basis for further partnership discussions.

In 2024, ICVA co-organised the UNICEF-NGO consultations focused on partnering for children in the climate crisis, and UNHCR-NGO Global Consultations focused on solutions, inclusion, and gender equality.

Finally, to further provide clarity on complex partnership provisions, ICVA worked with its members notably through the HFWG while UN agencies widely consulted with NGOs through ICVA.

#### Improved skills and tangible partnership improvements

The results of the partnership workshops can be seen in improved NGO knowledge and skills on advancing quality partnerships.

The UN-NGO consultation events are valuable for international and local and national NGO partners alike. They provide a rare opportunity for these organisations to have their voices heard by the agencies' global leaderships, and advocate for the changes needed to strengthen and sustain their response in the context of ever-growing humanitarian needs.

With regards to UN partnership engagements, UNICEF agreed to significant amendments to the revised Partnership Cooperation Agreement introduced to partners early 2023, for instance the revised definition of support costs for organisational capacity to include headquarter support costs.



Similarly, ICVA and members also engaged WFP on their Field-Level Agreement (FLA) review, contributing to the introduction of new measures in 2023, such as increased budgetary flexibility, simplified budget templates, multi-year FLAs and improved escalation pathways.

Building on consultations with partners, UNHCR procedures on partnership management have evolved in the past years, noted for instance in the introduction of a Global Partnership Agreement (GPA) at headquarter level, multi-year Partnership Framework Agreements, annual project workplans, simplified project financial plans and reports, and single annual assessment or monitoring and evaluation workplan per operation.

Very often the challenge may not be the clauses themselves – but rather the inconsistent interpretation at UN field office level. The monthly meetings and online discussions of ICVA’s HFWG enable members to compare experiences and arm themselves with the knowledge necessary to push back on negative partnership practices, develop solutions or claim rights which they may have been unaware of. They also support system strengthening efforts, as ICVA is able to consolidate feedback and experiences and identify systemic issues that can be addressed at individual – or multiple agency level.

## ICVA's Transformations

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ICVA is dedicated to transforming its network for impact and creating positive change in the humanitarian sector. The five transformations are established as part of ICVA's DNA together with the values, mission and added value the network brings: (i) Championing principled humanitarian action; (ii) Addressing the impact of climate change on humanitarian action; (iii) Being globally distributed and locally rooted; (iv) Being diverse, inclusive, and living our values; and (v) Proactively engaging in agile collaborative partnerships.

While transformation work is integrated into the focus areas, there are also other initiatives that are primarily linked to the transformations while still complementary to the focus area work. This section covers these initiatives.

Box 4 shows main results of an impact survey conducted to give a sense of how ICVA members have perceived progress on the transformations' work.

### Box 4: Member Survey Feedback on Transformations

With regards to ICVA's transformations, most progress was noted against transformation 3 pertaining to **global distribution and local rootedness**, garnering 54% of good to medium progress (31% of good progress, 23% of medium progress) and 17% of significant progress.

The second transformation area showing most medium to good progress pertained to **principled humanitarian action**, with 57% of respondents assessing progress levels as medium to good (40% of good progress, 17% of medium progress, 14% of "not applicable" responses, 11% of significant progress).

The third transformation area showing most medium to good progress pertained to **climate change and humanitarian action**, registering 57% of responses (34% of good progress, 23% of medium progress, 23% of "don't know" responses). The outcome area pertaining to **agile and effective partnerships with diverse stakeholders** garnered 54% of good to medium progress (37% of good progress, 17% of medium progress, 20% of "don't know responses"). Finally, the outcome area pertaining to **diversity, inclusion and values** registered 40% of medium to good progress (20% of good progress, 20% of medium progress, 31% of "don't know" responses).

See Annex III for more information.

## Transformation 1: Champion Principled Humanitarian Action

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In line with its 2030 Strategy, ICVA sought to **champion principled humanitarian action**, advocating for respect and protection of the humanitarian space and supporting the effective, appropriate translation of principles into practice.

During the period under review, ICVA:

- ❖ Built **spaces** for dialogue and reflection on principled humanitarian action, such as the PHASC, the Humanitarian Access Working Group, or ICVA's 2024 Annual Conference.
- ❖ Built **collective momentum and advocacy** in support of principled humanitarian action, for instance mobilising its members' support towards the [Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas](#), supporting the *Open Letter to the Member States of the UN General Assembly* calling for the protection of civilians and NGO staff and signed by over 400 humanitarian organisations, or producing [a statement](#) on the need to respect the mandate of UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East), or [a statement](#) on the need to go further in reforming the humanitarian system and shifting power as part of the 2024 annual Grand Bargain meeting;
- ❖ Contributed its thought leadership through **resources** (for instance the report on "[Hidden Hurdles, Unravelling the Complex, Cumulative Effects of Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments on Crisis-Affected Populations and Humanitarian Response](#)", or contributions to the revision of the Core Humanitarian Standard and Professional Standards for Protection Work Fourth Edition) and **engagements** in key IASC and non-IASC structures such as the IASC Task Force 3 on Preserving Humanitarian Space, the Civil 7 Engagement Group, IASC ACT or the African Union Humanitarian Symposium;
- ❖ **Strengthened** members, NGOs and NGO fora's capacities on the Principles of Partnership (4 workshops delivered to 112 representatives from 102 organisations across the AP, ESA, MENA and LAC regions), AAP (1 workshop delivered to 31 participants from 27 national and international organisations from across the world), risk-sharing, successful humanitarian negotiations (8 workshops targeting over 160 representatives), or diplomacy (high-level briefing on crises in Central Sahel);
- ❖ **Contributed expertise and insights** to its members' principled humanitarian action initiatives (CARE International's Global Humanitarian Advocacy Meeting, INTERSOS' Rome Humanitarian Congress, World Vision's training of international advocacy staff, the Asia-Pacific Development, Diplomacy and Defence Dialogues' consultation with AP NGOs).

Many ICVA stakeholders were asked whether they better understood principled humanitarian action or felt better able to promote humanitarian principles following their engagement with ICVA. Responses are unanimously positive. Stakeholders note ICVA's role in ensuring organisations' programmes and services are aligned with best practices and meet the evolving needs of the communities served.

## Transformation 2: Addressing the Impact of Climate Change on Humanitarian Action

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In line with its 2030 Strategy, ICVA seeks to address the impact of climate change on humanitarian action by exploring collaborative efforts to enhance resilience to climate-related humanitarian crisis. ICVA, its members and the humanitarian sector also seek to innovate to minimise the negative environmental impact of their operations.

The 2022-2024 period marked a strategic shift in the implementation of ICVA's climate and humanitarian action initiatives with the establishment, in 2024, of the Secretariat of the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations (the Climate Charter), hosted by ICVA until the end of 2025, and further mainstreaming of climate and humanitarian action initiatives in ICVA's core work programme.

Between 2022 and 2023, ICVA carried out a range of activities in support of climate action for humanitarian outcomes:

- ❖ It promoted and raised awareness on the Climate Charter and its commitments with members and wider humanitarian community at events, through publications, calls for action etc. as a member of the Climate Charter's Advisory Committee with ICRC and the IFRC. For instance, in 2022, following the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP), ICVA compiled a document on "[COP27 Engagement: Analyses, Key Messages, Announcements and Resources](#)". During ICVA's 2023 Annual Conference, a panel discussion raised awareness on climate financing, gaps in climate financing in humanitarian contexts and implications for humanitarian action. The 2023 and 2024 RHPW co-organised by ICVA in the AP region held several sessions on climate action including on the Climate and Environment Charter. Finally, ICVA and the Climate Action Network International co-led a [Joint Call for Action by Humanitarian, Climate and Development organisations on a Loss and Damage Fund](#). Over 200 organisations had signed up to the Joint Call at the end of 2023. It also encouraged its members and other stakeholders to sign up to the Charter.
- ❖ It contributed technical guidance to support humanitarian organisations implement the Charter commitments, notably a [learning stream](#) on Climate Change and Humanitarian Action, and a [Climate and Environment Action Compendium](#) developed in July 2022 with inputs from ICVA members and partners, updated since in November 2023.
- ❖ It supported the development of tools, standards, and other guidance to strengthen humanitarian responses to the climate and environment crises. In 2023, ICVA's Climate and Environment Action Compendium was used to develop the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) "Implementing the Climate Charter – Analysis and mapping of expertise available to signatories on the implementation of the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations"<sup>9</sup>. ICVA also supported the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHA) Alliance, Groupe URD and the Sphere Alliance on the CHS revision process, supporting the incorporation of climate change and environmental sustainability consideration into the revised CHS<sup>10</sup> notably by co-facilitating consultation processes with CSOs.
- ❖ It engaged in significant climate and environment global discussions and collective advocacy as part of its role as a member of IASC's Sub-Group on the Climate Crisis, but also through its contributions to the COPs. In 2023, ICVA supported the IASC Sub-Group on the Climate Crisis to develop an [IASC Climate Crisis Roadmap](#), facilitating consultation with over 90 NGOs across multiple regions.

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<sup>9</sup> See [https://www.climate-charter.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Groupe-URD\\_Final-report\\_OF08\\_DG-ECHO-Climate-Charter\\_Expertise-mapping-and-analysis.pdf](https://www.climate-charter.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/Groupe-URD_Final-report_OF08_DG-ECHO-Climate-Charter_Expertise-mapping-and-analysis.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> See <https://www.corehumanitarianstandard.org/>

- ❖ Finally, it sought additional funding to enhance its institutional investment and capacity in facilitating and supporting collective NGO action to combat climate change, notably with the Robert Bosch Stiftung Foundation, the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). ICVA, together with the ICRC and IFRC, convened and regularly updated the 13 Charter Supporters<sup>11</sup> on initiatives related to the Charter and Charter-related funding challenges.
- ❖ Since 2024, ICVA hosts the Climate Charter Secretariat, established with the support of USAID and DG ECHO, in collaboration with ICRC and IFRC. The Secretariat coordinates and acts as a referral hub to support Charter signatories implement the Charter commitments. In 2024, the Secretariat received 94 support requests from 79 Charter Signatories, ranging from assistance in developing and reviewing targets for the implementation of Charter commitments and action plans to referrals to specific expertise, guidance and tools. As at the end of 2024, 89% of support requests were addressed.
- ❖ In addition, climate and humanitarian action initiatives within ICVA's core work programme were implemented during the period under review, including:
  - The [2022 UNHCR-NGO global consultations](#), focused on localisation and climate action, and UNHCR-NGO quarterly consultations in 2022 and 2023 covering inter alia climate action topics;
  - NGO convenings in the ESA region on climate impacts and locally led responses, including a meeting with the Office of the UN Special Advisor on Solutions to Internal Displacement on the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement and challenges in its application due to climate-related displacements;
  - Facilitation of a joint NGO statement calling out the climate injustice in the Horn of Africa as part of the 2023 Horn of Africa High Level Pledging Conference.
  - The delivery of capacity strengthening and other support to NGO fora and NGOs in the ESA region on local humanitarian action to respond to climate-induced emergencies climate change impacts;
  - Partnerships in the AP region with the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network (ADRRN) and ICVA member All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) on publications, convenings and the development of climate action strategies for 2025;
  - Co-hosting of the [2024 UNICEF-NGO consultations](#) focused on equitable partnerships and quality funding in the climate crisis;
  - In the AP region, recognising the increasing impact of climate change on displacement, ICVA deepened its engagement with climate actors such as IOM, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, UNFCCC and regional thinktanks. Knowledge-sharing was also facilitated through newsletters, digital resources and webinars. These efforts ensured that NGOs had access to the latest tools and frameworks on climate-related displacement and were able to present their views to multiple stakeholders through events such as the Asia Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and the AP climate week.

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<sup>11</sup> As of 08 April 2024. See <https://www.climate-charter.org/signatures/#supporters>

## Transformation 3: Being Globally Distributed and Locally Rooted

ICVA seeks to create an environment where the diversity of humanitarian NGOs can meaningfully contribute to discussions and decision-making. ICVA operates as a globally connected network with deep local roots, fostering diversity. ICVA's localisation and inclusive humanitarian leadership work is embedded in its focus areas.

During the period under review, ICVA supported a holistic approach to promoting localisation and humanitarian leadership:

### **Strengthening the enabling environment for a more inclusive and effective humanitarian system for NGOs including local and national actors:**

- ❖ ICVA amplified NGO voices on the localisation agenda in the IASC and non-IASC humanitarian coordination structures in which it takes part;
- ❖ It co-chaired the IASC Task Force on localisation until May 2024, supporting the development and implementation of guidance on measurable localisation targets, progress tracking and best practices to operationalise localisation;
- ❖ ICVA promoted and raised awareness on localisation in at least 11 high-level events such as the AU Humanitarian Summit or the Annual Grand Bargain meetings;
- ❖ It also led the WCA Regional CoP on localisation with NGO fora, coordinating localisation initiatives at national levels, analysing common challenges and developing advocacy priorities
- ❖ It supported, with the Humanitarian Advisory Group (HAG) and local and national organisations and /or NGO fora, the development of 5 humanitarian localisation baseline reports for Ukraine, Yemen, Iraq, Mali and Burkina Faso. Furthermore, it supported the production of a localisation baseline progress report for Ukraine. Humanitarian localisation research has also been launched in Niger, Cameroon, Nigeria, Chad, DRC and CAR during the period under review. Finally, it supported further mapping of Women-lead Organisations (WLOs) in South Sudan.

### **Improving local/national actors' access to quality humanitarian funding:**

- ❖ ICVA amplified local and national NGO voices on access to quality humanitarian funding in key fora, such as the Grand Bargain initiative, IASC structures, UNICEF-NGO consultations, UNHCR-NGO consultations, WFP's Annual Partnership Consultations, OCHA CBPF governance/advisory bodies etc.
- ❖ ICVA launched several initiatives supporting local and national actors' access to quality humanitarian funding, such as the project co-implemented with other humanitarian stakeholders in Burkina Faso on reducing due diligence burden procedures for local and national NGOs or the establishment of the CoP on due diligence;
- ❖ ICVA directly supported national NGO fora and local and national NGOs with small grants and other financial support to advance key organisational or operational initiatives.

### **Improving local and national actors' capacities for quality humanitarian responses at scale:**

- ❖ During the period under review, ICVA supported NGO fora to develop localisation baseline reports, localisation strategies, working groups, and/or organise national events on localisation;
- ❖ Trainings, workshops, roundtables with NGO fora and their members and focused on localisation were organised in at least 3 countries;



- ❖ ICVA's Women Humanitarian Leadership Training Programme targeted 49 local women leaders from 19 AP, ESA and MENA countries. In addition, ICVA financially supported the local women leadership and Training of Trainers trainings targeting 30 WLO leaders in South Sudan.

### Enhancing the meaningful participation and influence of NGOs, including local and national actors, in humanitarian leadership

- ❖ ICVA contributed thought leadership on the meaningful participation of NGOs, including local and national actors, in humanitarian decision-making through resources (such as reports on "[Cracks in Coordination – Trust and Engagement in Humanitarian Country Teams](#)", "[Localisation in Humanitarian Leadership](#)" or guidance for NGO speakers) and solutions (the Speakers' Bureau, the Women Humanitarian Leadership Training Programme, the NGO fora resource hub and support desk or the CBPF Resource Facility). Furthermore, evidence from convenings on the Principles of Partnership or risk-sharing was used to ensure the voice of local and national actors can be used in ICVA's programming and policy work moving forward;
- ❖ ICVA also directly supported the participation of local and national members, NGOs and NGO fora in IASC structures at global and regional level, IASC missions, or high-level events, through the provision of financial, technical and/or administrative support;
- ❖ In the AP region, ICVA facilitated members' participation in key regional events, such as the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction 2024, ensuring their contributions to policy discussions were considered. The Regional Humanitarian Partnership Week - Asia Pacific 2024 (RHPW), co-hosted by ICVA, the Asian Disaster Reduction and Response Network, Community World Service Asia and OCHA, brought together over 400 participants from 300 organisations across 61 countries to share best practices, rejuvenate partnerships, and explore sustainable, community-driven solutions to humanitarian challenges. 37 sessions offered to participants resonated with the event's 2024 theme: "Sparking Global Change through Local Solutions in Humanitarian Action".
- ❖ ICVA members and other stakeholders note the important task of ICVA as the facilitator of NGO's representation in high-level humanitarian discussion and decision-making spaces to enable the voices of those having the closest proximity to crises to be heard, and to reduce power imbalances. They also highlight the impact that this improved access to decision-makers has on their legitimacy that allows leadership doors to remain open to them without ICVA's intervention.
- ❖ ICVA's supported research on localisation has had tangible effect on the localisation agenda at local level, stimulating debates, influencing the development of NGO and UN localisation strategies, and empowering local and national actors to demand and track localisation progress.
- ❖ Other evidence tracked by ICVA points toward improvements in the representation of local and national actors across many coordination entities including HCTs, UN clusters, Inter-Cluster Coordination Groups, UN clusters, and cluster Strategic Advisory Groups, the result of collective advocacy by many stakeholders, including ICVA, on strengthening inclusive humanitarian leadership.

## Transformation 4: Being Diverse, Inclusive and Living our Values

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In line with its 2030 Strategy, ICVA sought to be inclusive, diverse and live its values, notably by protecting the rights of people and promoting best practices for safeguarding, ensuring PSEA (Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) and fulfilling a duty of care.

During the period under review, ICVA:

- ❖ Contributed its thought leadership through **resources** (co-development with One Future Collective of an [online course on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) (DEI), reports on “[Partnerships and PSEA](#)”, “[Progress Towards the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#)”, collaboration with the CHS Alliance and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response on the 2024 UN-led global PSEA survey, amongst others);
- ❖ Co-led, with UNHCR, the [Interagency PSEA Community Outreach and Communication Fund](#). The Fund supports NGOs worldwide to develop and disseminate PSEA outreach and communication materials. Between 2022 and 2024, 31 grants were awarded to NGOs in 26 countries worldwide. A review of the Fund conducted in 2023 concluded that the Fund is achieving its stated aim of increasing awareness among diverse rights holders, while supporting local actors in bringing change to the communities they work with, putting people at the centre and adapting to challenges and changes;
- ❖ Engaged in key global and regional **PSEA fora**, such as the Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub, the IASC Technical Advisory Group on Protection against Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment (PSEAH), the Asia-Pacific Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Working Group etc., making these systems more accessible to NGOs, and contributing to policies, guidance, practice and other efforts to integrate safeguarding into humanitarian response (such as the Inter-Agency SEA referral procedures, the IASC SEA Risk Overview, or the IASC PSEAH Strategy review);
- ❖ Strengthened NGO and NGO fora capacities on PSEA or gender mainstreaming, delivering at least eight workshops or learning exchanges in the AP, ESA and WCA regions. ICVA also provided training, mentorship and expert consultations to CSOs in South Asia as part of the Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub. Finally, ICVA supported two online consultations with UNICEF and NGOs on the impacts of nutrition insecurity on the rights of children (ESA region) and addressing children’s needs through UNICEF partnerships (Europe).

## Transformation 5: Proactively Engaging in Agile Collaborative Partnerships

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- ❖ During the period under review, ICVA partnered or collaborated with over 60 local and national and international NGOs (including many members), civil society organisations, international organisations including UN agencies, multilateral organisations, NGO fora and networks, donors, research institutions, and other collaboratives. ICVA has a bird's eye view of the work happening in the humanitarian sector thanks to its own member groupings and representation in key humanitarian fora and collaboratives at global and regional level. This provides ICVA with an in-depth knowledge of developments in the system in order to identify areas and actors for collaboration within its strategic objectives, which supports complementarity, limits duplication and enables the mutualisation of resources (financial, operational, and expertise).
- ❖ ICVA partners and collaborators report many benefits from their undertakings with the network, including the access to a large forum of diverse NGOs from across the world and associated ability to tap into evidence and experience grounded in reality. They also highlight the numerous connections ICVA enjoys across the humanitarian sector at global, regional and country level, enabling impactful joint interventions. Finally, they note the high level of expertise, professionalism and flexibility of ICVA staff, making any collaboration worthwhile.
- ❖ In addition to actively working through partnerships and collaborations, ICVA has throughout the years conducted various activities to promote the Principles of Partnership and their application. The Principles of Partnership were developed in 2007 in the framework of the Global Humanitarian Platform which was established by leaders of NGOs, UN agencies, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and the WB Group<sup>12</sup>. They consist of five principles that articulate the core elements governing partnerships and relationships among humanitarian actors: Equality; Transparency; Results-Oriented Approach; Responsibility and; Complementarity.
- ❖ During the period under review, ICVA conducted four regional workshops focused on the Principles of Partnership in order to advance good partnership practices and solutions to overcome key challenges. The workshops were attended by 112 participants from 102 local and national and international NGOs and NGO fora (68% of participants came from local and national NGOs). The workshops also included representatives from donors and UN agencies as guests to contribute to relevant discussions. They delved into the Principles of Partnerships, successes and challenges in the safe dialogue spaces created by ICVA. The workshops were warmly received by participants. The principles were regarded as a valuable tool for both individual and collective advocacy as well as guidance to frame partnership conversations and find solutions to challenges.
- ❖ Finally, ICVA continued to promote transformative partnerships during the period under review, notably by pursuing the HDP nexus agenda through its Nexus Working Group, membership in high-level fora such as the IASC Task Force 4 on Humanitarian-Development Collaboration and Linkages to Peace and the Global Community of Practice on Nexus (which ICVA was co-chairing), and contributions to resources such as the [IASC Guidance Note](#) on advancing the nexus approach, the [IASC 2024 Synthesis Report](#) focused on good practices to implement HDP nexus approaches. ICVA also engaged in numerous climate change and humanitarian diplomacy initiatives (humanitarian diplomacy notably in the WCA region).

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<sup>12</sup> See <https://www.icvanetwork.org/transforming-our-network-for-impact/principles-of-partnership/>

## Section 5: Summary Conclusions

This section reflects on the detailed findings presented in section 4 to offer summary conclusions related to the three key evaluation questions of this impact study as below. Points for future consideration are presented in Section 6.

1. To what extent, how, why and for whom did ICVA bring about changes of what kinds during the 2022-2024 period?
2. Was ICVA successful in achieving the objectives outlined in its 2022-2024 strategic priorities?
3. To what extent is ICVA making progress towards its 2030 Strategy centred on promoting principled and effective humanitarian action?

### 1. To what extent, how, why and for whom did ICVA bring about changes of what kinds during the 2022-2024 period?

- ❖ ICVA is a membership organisation, with a secretariat that coordinates and drives the work across a number of thematic focus areas and geographies. ICVA does not deliver humanitarian assistance and is not a donor, though it has provided small grants and other financial support to NGOs and NGO fora over the years as per its strategic priorities. However, this impact study has demonstrated that ICVA's actions and collaborations have furthered thought leadership, policy and practice that have positively affected its members, the wider NGO community and the humanitarian sector as a whole.
- ❖ In all of its focus areas, ICVA has furthered policy, thought leadership and practice, collaborating with others. In this strategic period there have been particular efforts to work on realising existing policies rather than pushing only for new policies that too often create just more promises rather than action.
- ❖ The body of work created, and the publications are impressive, but probably more impressive is the fact that everything created is part of a bigger plan and designed process. In all the focus areas, ICVA has shown a capacity to move with the times and to build new initiatives on the back of past work.
- ❖ Regarding the how, while ICVA's theories of change are quite simply documented, the practice is far more nuanced. ICVA teams work in an integrated manner navigating an ecosystem with established ways of working (Collaborating, Influencing and Advocating, Convening, Supporting, Connecting and Brokering and Analysing, Explaining and Learning). All ways of working are constantly in play, but what stands out is ICVA's convening and collaborating work. Using its knowledge capital, ICVA is able to bring together people that others would struggle to connect to or reach without the network. ICVA is able to manage an incredible range of collaborations for such a small staff.
- ❖ At the root of ICVA's collaborations is their attitudes and ability to foster trust. It may be hard to attribute outcomes to ICVA alone, but that is to their credit, as they are always working with others. In terms of a value add, some points worth stressing are listed below:
  - Perceived utility': Collaborative and participatory approaches build relevance to need and fitness for purpose for members and other actors
  - 'Social capital': building relationships, trust, and shared values, which contribute to effective processes, support cooperation, reinforce champions and reduce transaction costs
  - 'Peer learning': Creating an environment where stakeholders perceive each other as having 'peer' experience and expertise, which builds mutual Identification; credibility and trust
  - 'Galvanising effect': Able to generate a critical mass of humanitarian expertise is brought to bear which addresses complex issues within the humanitarian system

- ‘Whole of sector effect’: Multiple types of humanitarian expertise, resources and authority are brought to bear which address multiple aspects of complex issues within the humanitarian system
  - ‘Knowledge capital’: Producing ‘information capital’ (relevant data) enables data-led and evidence-informed programs
  - ‘Purposeful process design’: ICVA’s understanding of actors, roles institutions and contexts enables purposeful design of convening, collaboration and brokering processes
  - ‘Human capital’: Building human capital contributes to expertise and self-efficacy for individuals and organisations
  - ‘Feedback systems’: Assessment, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, operate as feedback systems within ICVA and the membership, enabling course corrections and quality improvement (this has advanced considerably since the last impact study)
- ❖ The feedback is very positive, but there were some flags raised, notably to remain vigilant about not being too UN focused, to keep in mind that relationships with individuals do not always mean that communication or relationships penetrate into their organisations (at the strategic or leadership level).
  - ❖ With regards to ICVA members, this impact study has shown that the results of ICVA’s initiatives can be seen in the development or strengthening of knowledge, skills, connections, influence, and organisational strategies, policies or practice. In turn, these enabled members to work more effectively and improve their humanitarian activities. The impact survey conducted as part of this study asked ICVA’s members and other NGO fora to assess ICVA’s contribution to improvements in their organisation’s humanitarian activities during the period under review. Using a scale from not at all to a very large extent, 44% of respondents stressed that ICVA had contributed to a moderate extent to improvements in their organisation’s humanitarian activities, while 25% thought ICVA had contributed to a large extent. Reasons set forth to explain ICVA’s contribution spoke to the network’s role in enhancing capacities, triggering strategy or program changes, active participation in fora addressing humanitarian issues, the adoption by donors of simplified reporting and more overhead coverage, or sharing of good practices and learning.
  - ❖ ICVA’s impact is not limited to its membership, as the policies and practices it positively influenced, for instance within UN partnerships, coordination support, or forced migration/displacement processes, reached a much wider group of NGOs and CSOs.
  - ❖ Institutional actors who have collaborated with ICVA during the period under review (UN agencies and donors amongst others) have also been vocal about the efficiencies they have been able to realise thanks for ICVA’s actions, whether they concern their ability to consult with a large number of NGOs at once, meaningfully consult with NGOs, identify systemic issues to be resolved, identify appropriate or innovative solutions to humanitarian issues, or make evidence-based decisions.
  - ❖ Finally, ICVA’s other collaborators (academics, collaboratives) realise efficiencies and economies of scale when they partner with ICVA by avoiding duplication and mutualising resources, including expertise.

## 2. Was ICVA successful in achieving the objectives outlined in its 2022-2024 strategic priorities?

### **Forced Migration**

- ❖ Considering the breadth and depth of ICVA’s initiatives and the outcomes achieved, it appears that they have fulfilled their key 2022-2024 outcome 1 related to **engagement and influence on Forced Migration Policy**. In particular, through interfacing work with the UNHCR (consultation and governance processes), but also through engagement with key policy influencers. Based on the feedback given by UNHCR for this study, people were very positive about the attitude of ICVA, their

collaborative approach, unique ability to connect to a wide range of NGOs and ability to also be a constructive critical partner where needed.

- ❖ Related to outcome 2 on **building NGO understanding of global and regional issues**, in addition to the global work, there are solid examples of the regional work done in MENA (e.g. related to Gaza, Syria, Yemen) Asia (e.g. related to Afghanistan and Myanmar), Africa (South Sudan) and Latin America (Cartagena +40 process). The outcome of building NGO understanding on mobility issues, not just in theory but related to actual crises has been well met. The seamless connection between global and regional levels speaks to a positive collaboration with the ICVA team itself.
- ❖ Outcome 3 related to **developing alliances promoting the rights of displaced persons** was fully integrated into their influencing work as very little of the initiatives were ICVA acting alone. Considerable efforts made to include a diverse range of actors create opportunities for local NGO voices to be heard. The case study on the GRF pledge presented is a standout example of a focused initiative to realise concrete change, but it is not alone. Those interviewed for this study were very appreciative of how ICVA enabled them to realise their own organisational priorities through the network's initiatives, enabling a more integrated initiative rather than stand alone. Many mentioned that while events created have a value, the process of preparing them was as, if not more important for building a sense of alliance and community around topics.
- ❖ It was noted how ICVA approaches its work through purposeful design, seeking value in individual initiatives, but also continuity where possible, seeking to use one initiative as a feeder for a new idea and follow up rather than just isolated events.
- ❖ The 2030 outcome of improved conditions for displaced persons is a high-level ambition. The efforts made between 2022 and 2024 have established progress towards this.

## Coordination

- ❖ ICVA's approach has so many dimensions and has been so thoughtfully constructed that it provides the network with a humanitarian system oversight that is arguably unique. The following reflects on the detailed findings in section 4 and connects to the expected outcomes.
- ❖ Outcome 1 on enhanced principled and coordinated NGO intervention through strengthened NGO coordination and engagement on humanitarian access issues has been addressed on a number of levels, in part through capacity support initiatives, in part by policy influence, and in part by a more hands-on coordination approach. Added to this dimension, ICVA's work has targeted country, regional and global levels in their actions and collaborations.
- ❖ The examples of country level work include targeted workshops on negotiated access that took place in countries in all the regions ICVA operates.
- ❖ In addition to the country level work, ICVA also convened gatherings at the regional level to cover issues cutting across the contexts, again with considerable focus on access and humanitarian principles.
- ❖ The regional and country level work has been complemented by a raft of global actions including participating in the IASC Task Force 3 on Preserving Humanitarian Space and focusing on addressing 'Bureaucratic and Administrative Impediments', and with the IASC's ACT around World Humanitarian Day advocacy and contributing to IASC Statements on the DRC, Gaza, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, Somalia, and Sudan.
- ❖ ICVA also engaged with other networks such as Interaction and the CHS Alliance, again demonstrating the collaborative approach they take.
- ❖ Outcome 2 on the **COVID-19 and future pandemics preparedness** were more relevant in the early part of the strategic period (2022 and 2023) when COVID-19 vaccination was still highly relevant. The work then focused on collaboration to identify needs and ensure vaccines were reaching places of greatest need and related to humanitarian settings in particular.
- ❖ ICVA sought to **increase the inclusivity of coordination mechanisms at all levels** (outcome 3). They realised this in part through high-level representation in the IASC and other global and



regional structures and through supporting national coordination fora. The work on NGO fora was particularly extensive.

- ❖ Throughout the initiatives described, it is clear that ICVA was extremely proactive in trying to include member voices whether it was in IASC initiatives already referenced above, member and NGO fora participation in IASC meetings or NGO participation in regional access initiatives (WCA), regional response efforts (AP), EDG peer-to-peer support missions and UN Humanitarian Coordinator recruitment and appraisals. It is hard to do justice to the sheer volume and range of work done in a short summary, the detail is provided in Section 4 and annexes.
- ❖ Lastly and importantly, there is the work referred to in the case study related to hands-on support to coordination in key humanitarian crises. ICVA is not an implementing agency and so the value of such interventions is best judged in the value they brought in the moment and their effect in catalysing a more effective coordination. ICVA's aim was to assist and not pretend to provide a permanent solution for these challenges.
- ❖ The ICVA 2030 goal speaks to populations being better protected and served by improved coordination and progress is being made on this. However, some spoken to for this study talked about the humanitarian system's lack of response in major crises. This will be in part a money and access issue, but it is also likely to be a capacity issue. Looking across ICVA's focus areas, while there is work on financing, access and coordination, there is less visible emphasis on the scale and nature of needs and whether the capacity (relevant means at scale and on time) of humanitarian actors is aligned to those needs.

## Financing

- ❖ ICVA has worked on **NGOs' improved access to quality funding** (outcome 1) on multiple levels. ICVA has continued to work closely with the Grand Bargain initiative and facilitated NGO contribution to the new framework that's in place. That said, those interviewed seem sceptical that the Grand Bargain can overcome its history of slow-moving bureaucracy.
- ❖ ICVA has invested a lot of energy in pooled funding including through its work as co-chair of the IASC Result Group 5 and its work with OCHA on the PFWG and the CBPF NGO Dialogue Advisory Group. Speaking to agencies who have co-chaired some of these initiatives highlighted the quality of the technical expertise provided and highlight that that the engagement of diverse stakeholders in the right way would not have been possible without ICVA. Pooled funding is another example of where ICVA has effectively built on its efforts, including its publications leading to the launch of the CBPF Resource Facility, the CoP of Pooled Fund Managers, support to the development of the Guidance note for donors: Promoting inclusive and locally-lead action through humanitarian pooled funds, and support to the Working Group of OCHA's Central Emergency Response Fund's Underfunded Emergencies.
- ❖ In addition to this structured work, the findings point to ICVA taking multiple opportunities to help generate timely, quality funding for emergencies, as well as collaborations with other networks (Start Network, CHS Alliance, CALP). ICVA has used its Annual Conference and its regional presence to also draw attention to the key issues and to create calls for action. While any discussion of funding generates high expectations that are largely outside of ICVA's control, ICVA's members found great value in the help received to build understanding on how to be involved.
- ❖ Related to outcome 2 on **reducing administrative burdens in NGO partnership agreements**, ICVA actively and in a sustained manner engaged UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP and OCHA effectively. The nature of this work is expanded upon in the case study presented in section 4.3 and resulted in some concrete achievements.
- ❖ Regarding outcome 3 on **strengthening NGO organisational capacity on risk management**, ICVA has again been working through multiple channels. Its engagement with the IASC Task Force 3 on Preserving Humanitarian Space until mid-2024 involved advocacy together with InterAction and other networks related to reporting, risk management and due diligence requirements.

- ❖ ICVA has partnered with others to build a body of reference material related to risk management and mitigation and has carried multiple workshops at regional and ultimately the global level to put this into practice, including critically understanding risk perceptions and risk sharing needs from the perspective of local and national NGOs.
- ❖ The ICVA 2030 goal of having '**humanitarian financing meet the needs of populations in crisis**' is like the UN Sustainable Development Goals, highly aspirational, framing a direction of travel, rather than being achievable in itself. Overall, donors are dramatically cutting humanitarian funding, while needs are increasing. These forces are outside of the power of ICVA. ICVA however plays a critical role in helping its members navigate these funding shifts, continue to work for quality funding, and grow alternative sources of financing, including for local and national NGOs.

### **3. To what extent is ICVA making progress towards its 2030 Strategy centred on promoting principled and effective humanitarian action?**

The strategic priorities included both the focus areas and the five transformations. Much of the latter was integrated into the focus areas work but there were also some initiatives that were primarily linked to the transformations while still be complementary to the focus area work. This section covers these initiatives.

#### **Transformation 1: Champion Principled Humanitarian Action**

- ❖ A lot has been done through many channels from global to local level and ranging from advocacy to conferences and training workshops. There is a lot to applaud, supported by the membership survey indicating progress as medium to good.
- ❖ There are however some challenges. Contributions received for this study point to principled humanitarian action and by extension respect for international humanitarian law being under as much if not more threat than ever. Crises such as the Ukraine and Gaza are examples of where assistance has been highly politicised and, especially in the case of Gaza, one can question if the humanitarian sector truly stood up for its principles effectively. While there were clear breaches, many were not prepared to speak out for fear of upsetting donors and donors themselves were also not always taking a clear stand. ICVA acts on behalf of its members and so this also led to a certain level of censorship. Credit though goes to those that worked on the UNRWA statement emphasising the mandate and not getting drawn into the accusations being made by parties to the conflict. This seems to be a very effective way of having raised the issue.
- ❖ The situation is not improving and so some reflection with members on how ICVA and the sector should position themselves going forward may be valuable. ICVA can champion, but if the membership itself seeks a cautious approach, ICVA's power to act and speak will be limited.

#### **Transformation 2: Address Impact of Climate Change on Humanitarian Action**

- ❖ This was covered extensively under section 4.4 and summarised in section 5.2. Like many organisations and different sectors, it is challenging to find the most effective entry point to impact a phenomenon that affects the entire planet and every person on it. ICVA has stayed true to this mandate by working on 1) climate as a causal factor of humanitarian crisis and 2) responsible behaviour of the sector to minimise its negative environmental and climate impact.
- ❖ Climate issues have been present in ICVA's work at all levels, from IASC work through to the Climate Charter work with the Red Cross Red Crescent movement, hosting the new Climate Charter Secretariat and many initiatives at local and regional level in the places most impacted by direct and, or indirect consequences. The membership survey indicates a generally positive impression with 57% seeing medium or good progress.
- ❖ This integrated way of working with targeted tools and guidelines, focusing practical efforts in the places most effected, seems like the best way to continue working with the climate theme.

#### **Transformation 3: Be Globally Distributed and Locally Rooted**

- ❖ This is an area where ICVA has taken great strides, building off an already strong track record as a diverse organisation. As an organisation with a relatively small staff, ICVA has further adapted its ways of working and structures to reduce silos and promote seamless and nuanced working between focus area leads with thematic responsibilities and the regional leadership that has the role of adapting to and being adapted by context. This goes together with the senior executive and policy leadership that drives the macro-level relationships between ICVA and others. This interface between the secretariat, members, other local actors and the broader network is at the heart of the globally distributed and locally rooted structure and way of working.
- ❖ Looking at all the initiatives detailed in the findings of section 4, there are many examples of how ICVA has facilitated the most meaningful voices being included in advocacy, policy and leadership, working group processes and action. The attitude of opening doors, connecting and convening is at the very heart of ICVA's culture. Things can be designed, but without these attitudes they would not be happening.
- ❖ Those interviewed and providing input greatly appreciated the opportunities ICVA gave to enable voices to be heard. At the other end of the table, donors and UN stakeholders appreciated the ability to reach people and achieve a local rootedness in their initiatives that would not have been possible without ICVA.
- ❖ While 54% of members ranked progress as good or medium is acceptable, it doesn't do full justice to the evidence of how well ICVA is doing.

#### **Transformation 4: Be Diverse, Inclusive and Live Our Values**

- ❖ Diversity is a historical strength of ICVA. The step change in 2022-2024 has been the progress on meaningful inclusion, which overlaps a little with the realisation of local rootedness mentioned above. ICVA's achievements go beyond simply giving a voice to the under-represented. The latter notion is somewhat patronising, implying the value is for the new voice included. Based on the feedback received, the value realised is for all involved. Taking some of the UN interactions as an example, the inclusion of diverse stakeholders increased the quality and legitimacy of outcomes, gave UN stakeholders (often detached from on-the-ground-reality) access to perspectives and contacts they lacked, and, through robust process design, built communities and relationships beyond any single initiative.
- ❖ ICVA seems to be increasingly collaborating with its members, including them in representation, leveraging capacity and strengthening peer-peer connections.
- ❖ Another aspect of inclusion has been the way ICVA runs its working groups and representation. Chairs, co-chairs and representatives are not always ICVA and this is greatly appreciated. ICVA not being the sole centre points ensures that others take on work and ownership, providing some offload to ICVA. It was a little surprising to see that many members answered 'don't know' when asked, and only 40% mentioned good or medium progress.
- ❖ A workstream linked to living values related to this transformation is the PSEA and DEI work detailed in section 4. This is another example of ICVA being a part of policy development and then seeing it through to practice.
- ❖ Looking forward, ICVA still would like to broaden its membership, particularly with RLOs and organisations led by displaced persons. While accepting that progress has been made, ICVA would still like to do better with its inclusion agenda.
- ❖ Another area to continue exploring is the broader notion of inclusion towards community building. Donors' feedback recognised ICVA's convening power, and requested updates, be they thematic or context related, where ICVA brings together stakeholders to discuss key topics of the day or updates. Some suggested a monthly exchange with low preparation needs and an informal tone, but relevant.

#### **Transformation 5: Proactively Engage in Agile Collaborative Partnerships**

- ❖ Probably one of the most impressive aspects coming through this impact study is the way ICVA manages so many collaborations and partnerships simultaneously and with such purposeful process design. The word agility is overused these days, but it rings true for ICVA's work. A quick scan across the findings shows how ICVA partners with NGOs, NGO fora, major NGO networks (Interaction, CHS Alliance, Start Network, SCHR, etc), UN agencies and bodies, academics, and broader collaboratives.
- ❖ This excellence in partner and relationship management is only possible with an extremely high calibre of staff. This impact study is not designed to review individuals, but without exception, interviewees expressed how much they appreciated the knowledge, thoughtfulness and attitudes of their ICVA counterparts. This was a comment in past impact studies and while ICVA has had significant turnover in its leadership, this has been retained and furthered.

## Section 6: Points for Future Consideration

In light of impact study findings, the following are some suggestions of points for ICVA to consider as it goes forward into its next strategic period. While the priorities are already set, they may still be useful to keep in mind.

### On Forced Migration

- ❖ Some interviewees mentioned that while there is good follow-up in many areas, recommendations created at the UNHCR consultations are not followed up or tracked. A retrospective analysis of what was implemented and what not, could be helpful for learning and for identifying gaps to work on.
- ❖ Feedback encourages ICVA to continue its efforts to be less UNHCR and Geneva focused without losing the key UN interlocutor role they have. It is noted however that this is already very much taking place.
- ❖ Encouragements were provided to continue to ensure meaningful rather than tokenistic involvement of diverse voices. Clear progress has been made since the last impact study, but it must be a point of constant attention, in particular related to deliberate and meaningful inclusion of organisations led by forcibly displaced and stateless persons.

### On Coordination

- ❖ While ICVA added enormous value through their coordination work, the reality seems to be, when looking at Sudan, Gaza and Ukraine as examples of the more visible and politicised crises, that humanitarian principles are as ‘under fire’ as they ever were, and all the signs are that this will continue. Coordination on statements that risked upsetting certain donor groups was reported to result in a lack of boldness, a lack of living by the principles for which humanitarian action stands, and at times silence, where there should arguably have been protest.
- ❖ Some interviewees were encouraging for ICVA to stay bold in this area to hold up the mirror to members, donors, UN agencies, governments and other stakeholders involved. This would allow ICVA in part to be champions of the fundamentals of humanitarian action and in part to be a nuanced and reality-based voice for popular trends that are more challenging in practice than in concept.
- ❖ Probably the biggest challenge for ICVA is not one of improvement, but one of capacity. No matter how much is done at the country level, it will likely be a drop in the ocean of what is needed. This supports their focus on national fora and choosing carefully where they go beyond this to a more hands-on approach.
- ❖ Equally, ICVA will not be able to compensate for every breakdown in coordination and yet their role has been key at moments of greatest disruption, even more so than in the last strategic period. There was a question then and the question remains as to whether this should be a purely reactive role or whether ICVA should be planning for these hands-on support roles more proactively (including through funding).
- ❖ Meeting humanitarian needs requires the capacity, access to those affected and the funding. While ICVA is working on funding, access and coordination, ICVA’s work doesn’t seem to explicitly include a view on whether the system is generating sufficient capacity (the relevant means, ability to mobilise at scale, should funding be available). It is one thing aspiring to have enough funds to meet needs, but it is important to keep in mind what funds are most needed for, what the gaps, the unmet needs are, the places where funds are not being attracted. This may be something for ICVA to connect to (if it is not already), or if there are already others addressing this, for ICVA to track it.

## On Financing

- ❖ ICVA has momentum on several topics that are relevant, especially related to pooled funding, risks, partnerships and administrative burdens. The agile approach of evolving topics and combining collaborative and critical engagement is compelling.
- ❖ The Grand Bargain struggles to advance further towards its stated objectives with input for this study suggesting there seems to be little donor appetite to really fundamentally change how they fund. While many would like to see the Grand Bargain reinvigorated some interviewees were not optimistic. ICVA will need to stay engaged, balancing energy between some of these slower moving structures and new initiatives that may move faster, but risk undermining established structures.
- ❖ Some member feedback indicates a desire for bigger picture, horizon scanning for ICVA, a discussion for ICVA to have with both its members and donors, in terms of how member capacity could be more effectively engaged in this regard, or donor support increased.
- ❖ The situation at the time of writing in early 2025 indicates that finance challenges will deepen as many donors are cutting their budgets dramatically, including the US government, the European Union, the United Kingdom and others. As with the promotion of humanitarian principles, the positioning of ICVA members, and by extension ICVA on this alarming situation will be crucial. Inputs to this study suggest that funding concerns have led many NGOs to self-censor even when confronted with blatant breaches of humanitarian principles and humanitarian law. ICVA by extension can only speak with the mandate given by members. While this is a broader issue than just finance, it does suggest there is something at the financing interface that might need attention.

## Other Points

- ❖ Linked to the point made on coordination, humanitarian principles and support for international assistance of all kinds as well as the infrastructure underpinning is arguably at a crossroads. Positioning of the sector in it in relation to how it will work with and the degree to which it will confront some of the current trends will require sensitive but important discussion.
- ❖ ICVA has a deep understanding of the realities of the humanitarian system. Some interviewees were encouraging ICVA to be bold and blunt on defending principles and to be nuanced, pragmatic and to provide reality checks on new ideas or trends that come up that may be a challenge to implement in practice.
- ❖ Reflections on the IASC, including OPAG, Grand Bargain and other very high-level platforms considered them high profile, but bureaucratic and slow organs. While it is crucial to remain connected, the energy dedicated to them needs balancing with the things that deliver 'real' impact. This speaks to the current approach of ICVA focused on realising implementation of policies rather than creating more policy/paper promises that can be a fig leaf for real action.
- ❖ When confronted with established but slow-moving structures, there may at times need for choices to be made between working more slowly and reinforcing the established structures or developing something outside of them to move faster, but risking undermining the existing set-up. Both paths are possible provided the consequences are well thought through.
- ❖ The progress on integrating the ICVA team is bringing results, but it will be a point of constant attention especially at times of turn over.
- ❖ ICVA's published theories of change remain quite simple and quite linear and while logical, they do not do full justice to the 'ecosystem' approach ICVA applies to its work. With increasingly integrated ways of working, this may be something to work on.
- ❖ The calibre of staff in terms of attitudes, experience and knowledge is key to ICVA's success at all levels. This should remain another point of constant attention whenever there is turn over in a small team.
- ❖ While ICVA has many practical relationships and collaborations, these do not always translate into relationships with institutions. The same applies for relationships with Geneva liaisons (i.e. they



don't go beyond Geneva). If this rings true and if this is considered an issue, it would be something to consider for the next strategic period.

- ❖ Some stakeholders that are currently working with ICVA would like to diversify how they work with ICVA. This links to the previous point on the need to reflect on which are the key institutional relationships ICVA should entertain and for what purpose.
- ❖ Donors providing input were keen to have more informal updates convened by ICVA on the key crises and issues, which is an interesting idea. But even sessions aiming for low preparation would need capacity to do well.
- ❖ When comparing the membership survey with the data, while the feedback is positive overall, member views on ICVA's progress on partnership and inclusion do not reflect the very positive impression provided by the detailed evidence from the initiatives. It may be useful to use this study to communicate actual progress.

## Annex I: List of Interviewees and Providers of Written Input

**Table 1: List of interviews conducted:**

Name	Position	Organisation
<b>Jameel Abdo</b>	CEO	Tamdeen Youth Foundation
<b>Martin Anderson</b>	Chief of Policy and Practice	Refuge Point
<b>Joanna Babb</b>	Geneva Representative	Church World Service
<b>Jose Luis Barreiro</b>	Coordinator	Foro Humanitario Colombia
<b>Elise Baudot</b>	Head of Financing	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
<b>Francesca Bonelli</b>	Director of Partnership Division	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>Laura Brinks</b>	Senior Policy Officer	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands
<b>Giancarlo Cirri</b>	Director, Geneva Global Office	World Food Programme
<b>Remo Fambri</b>	Senior Inter-Agency Coordinator	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>Lina Gomez</b>	Regional Representative, Latin America and Caribbean	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
<b>Eman Ismail</b>	Regional Representative, Middle East and North Africa	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
<b>Tamara Kajtazovic</b>	Former Lead	Grand Bargain Secretariat
<b>Fatoumata Konata</b>	Interim Regional Representative, West and Central Africa	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
<b>Unni Krishnan</b>	Global Humanitarian Director	Plan International
<b>Barbara Lecq</b>	Senior Humanitarian Advisor	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, United Kingdom
<b>Jamie Munn</b>	Executive Director	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
<b>Pascal Richard</b>	Deputy Head of Humanitarian Multilateral Unit	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Switzerland
<b>Keya Saha-Chaudhury</b>	Regional Representative, Asia-Pacific	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
<b>Davina Said</b>	Head of Forced Migration	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
<b>Mirela Shuteriqi</b>	Director of Policy	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
<b>Marina Skuric Prodanovic</b>	Chief, System-wide Approaches and Practices Section, Coordination Division	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>Addis Tesfa</b>	Regional Representative, East and Southern Africa	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
<b>Pierre Vischioni</b>	Senior Policy Advisor, Financing and Partnerships	Danish Refugee Council
<b>Jeremy Wellard</b>	Head of Coordination	International Council of Voluntary Agencies

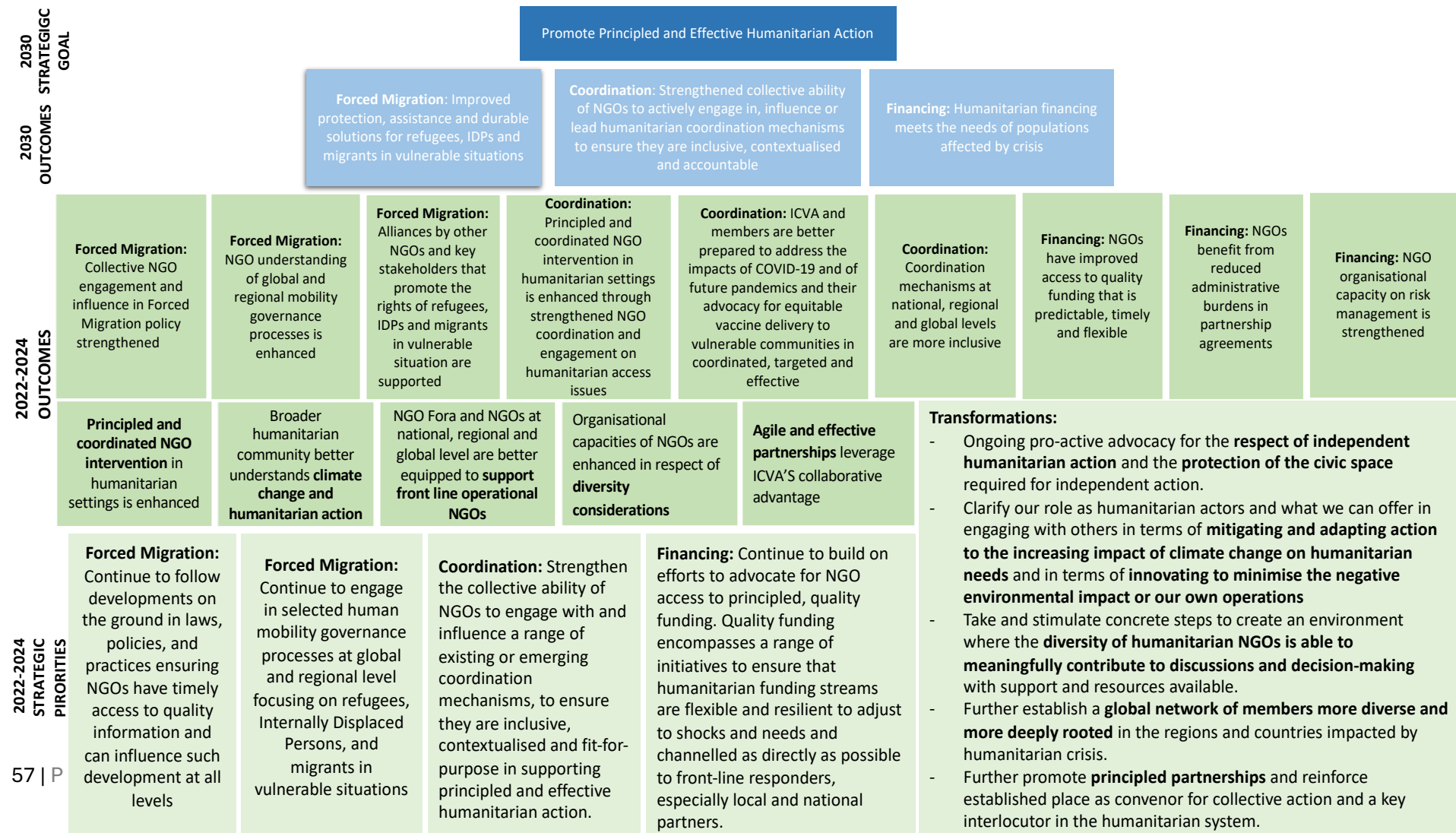
<b>Alexander Widmer</b>	Project Officer	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Switzerland
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**Table 2. Written Input received**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
<b>Members</b>	Steering Committee	Latin American Network on Refugee Law and Integration
<b>Mazen Fadel</b>	Deputy Executive Director	Field Medical Foundation
<b>Andrea Núñez-Flores Rey</b>	Senior Humanitarian Advocacy Adviser	Save the Children
<b>Mathes Rausch</b>	Associate External Relations Officer	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>Enzo Tabet Cruz</b>	Forced Displacement Policy and Advocacy Advisor	Plan International
<b>Elena Wallraff</b>	Portfolio and Knowledge Management Lead	International Rescue Committee
<b>Cian Kristian Wittrup</b>	Policy Officer	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

# Annex II: Overview of ICVA Strategic Priorities & Logical Framework

ICVA's Logical Framework [is available here](#).



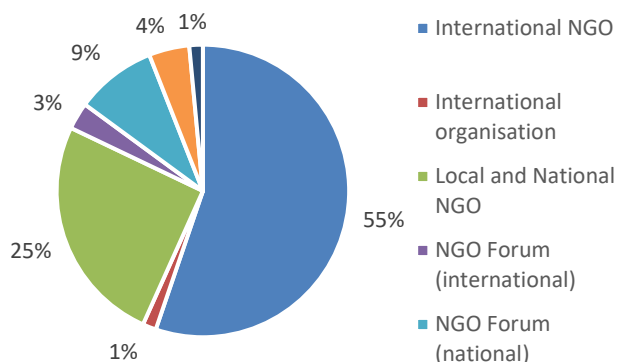
## Annex III: Member Consultations

In order to gather ICVA members’ perspective on the implementation of the 2022-2024 strategic priorities, an impact survey was designed to document progress against strategic priorities, including capturing changes brought about by ICVA’s actions and collaborations. The survey was also opened to NGO fora as key recipients of ICVA’s support.

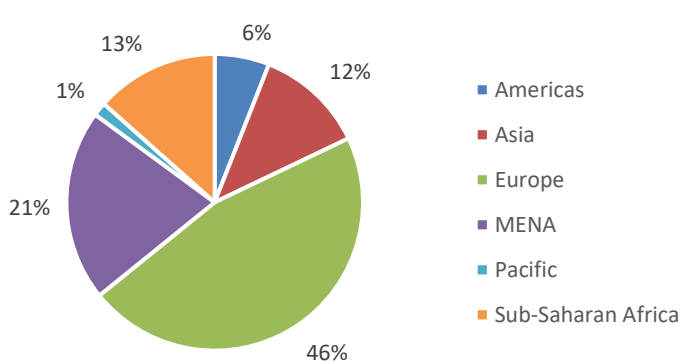
The survey was available for completion for approximately 30 days between mid-December 2024 and mid-January 2025 in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. It contained around 60 questions pertaining to each of ICVA’s focus and transformation areas, requesting respondents’ opinions on progress against outcomes, examples of involvement in ICVA’s initiatives and observed outcomes and impacts, and perspectives on areas of strength and improvement.

67 questionnaires were fully or partially completed. 51 organisations took part in the survey, identified as international NGOs (55%), Local/National NGOs (25%) and NGO fora (14%, see figure 1). Respondents, (51% male and 49% female), were based in Europe (46%), MENA (21%), Sub-Saharan Africa (13%), Asia (12%) and finally the Americas (6%, see figure 2). They were most commonly employed in senior management roles (47%), followed by technical roles (32%). Finally, 90% of respondents were ICVA members.

**Figure 1: Type of Organisation**



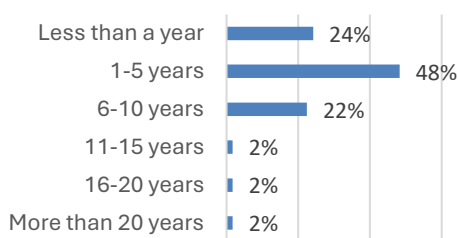
**Figure 2: Region of Attachment**



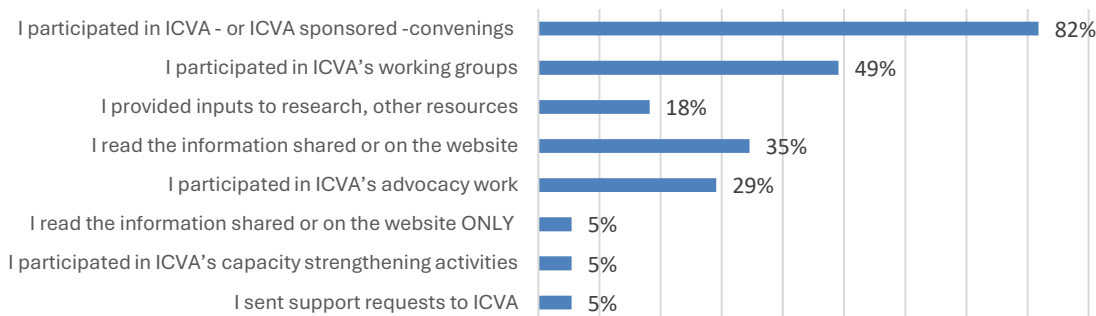
### 5.1 Relationship with ICVA

With regards to respondents’ length of engagement with ICVA, 48% had been engaging with the network over the past 1 to 5 years, versus less than a year for 24%, and 6 to 10 years for 22% (see figure 3). Frequency of engagement between 2022 and 2024 ranged from between 2 to 5 times a year for 35% of respondents to more than 20 times a year for 19% of respondents. They engaged most commonly in ICVA – or ICVA sponsored – convenings (82% of responses), followed by participation in working groups (49%), the provision of inputs to research or resources (36%), and availing of the information shared (35%, see figure 4).

**Figure 3: Length of engagement with ICVA**

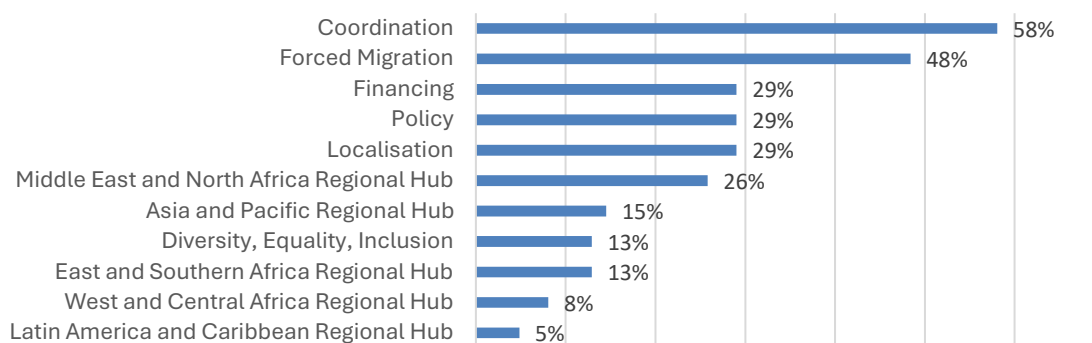


**Figure 4: Nature of engagement with ICVA**



Finally, teams most cited as part of their ICVA engaged included the coordination team (58% of responses), followed by the forced migration team (48%), the financing team (29%), the policy team (29%) and the localisation<sup>13</sup> team (29%, see figure 5).

**Figure 5: Engagements with ICVA teams**



## 5.2 Progress Against Strategic Priorities

### Forced Migration

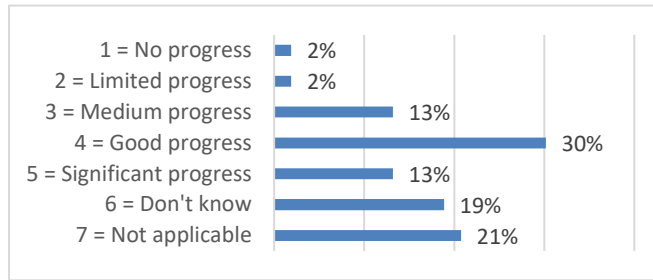
Respondents were asked to assess how much progress ICVA had made against each of the outcome areas contained in ICVA's 2022-2024 logframe, as well as to provide examples of most significant initiatives across ICVA's focus and transformation areas. Overall, responses across the focus and transformation areas point to respondents that have had only partial exposure to the breadth of ICVA's work, as the high levels of "not applicable" or "don't know" responses attest. This is further substantiated through survey comments that speak to only partial knowledge of ICVA's work. Responses below are presented with focus on the progress scale, from no progress to significant progress, while indicating levels of "no response".

With regards to Forced Migration work, most significant progress was noted against outcome area 2 pertaining to **enhanced NGO understanding of global and regional mobility governance processes**, with 43% of respondents declaring a good to significant level of progress (21% declared this outcome area not applicable and 19% did not know how to assess progress, see figure 6). The second outcome area registering higher levels of good to significant progress pertained to **supported alliances by other NGOs and key stakeholders promoting the rights of the forcibly displaced or stateless persons** (42% versus 21% of "don't know" and 19% of "not applicable" responses, see figure 7). The last Forced Migration outcome area pertaining to **strengthened collective NGO engagement and influence in Forced Migration policy** registered 47% of medium to good progress (23% of "not applicable" and 19% of don't know" responses, see figure 8).

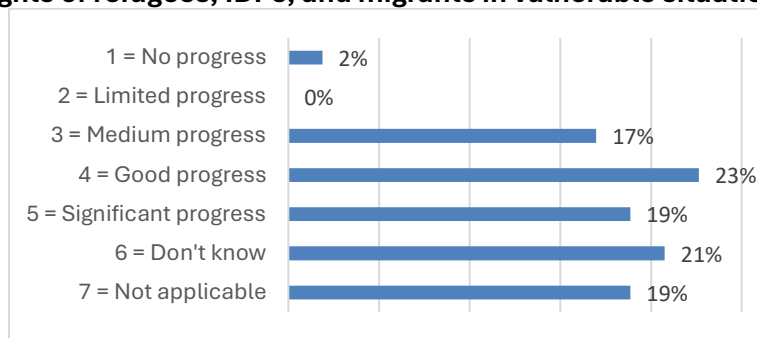
<sup>13</sup> The localisation team was likely represented by members of several teams.



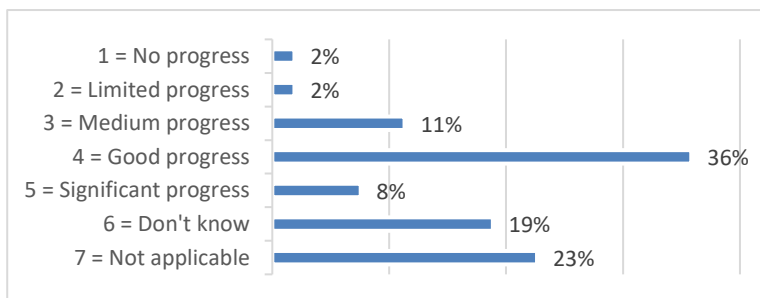
**Figure 6: Forced Migration Outcome 2 Progress: "NGO understanding of global and regional mobility governance processes is enhanced"**



**Figure 7: Forced Migration Outcome 3 Progress: "Alliances by other NGOs and key stakeholders that promote the rights of refugees, IDPs, and migrants in vulnerable situation are supported"**

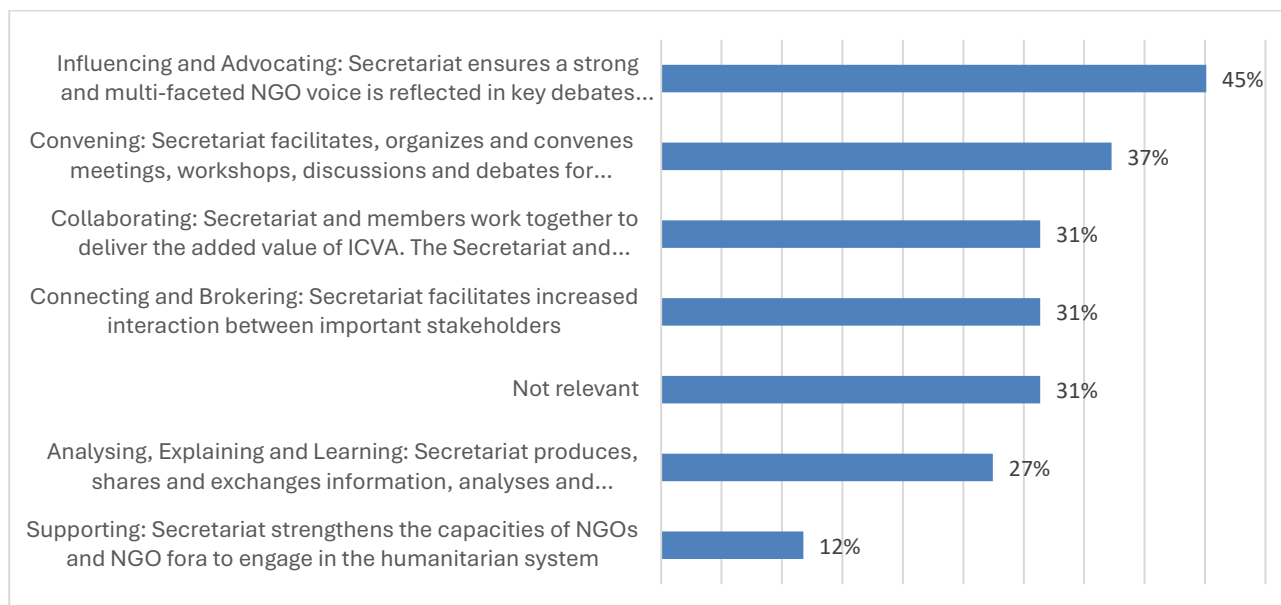


**Figure 8: Forced Migration Outcome 1 Progress: "Collective NGO engagement and influence in Forced Migration policy is strengthened"**



Respondents were asked which of ICVA’s ways of working contributed the most to advancing these Forced Migration outcomes. ICVA’s “influencing and advocating” role was the most cited response (45%), followed by the network’s “convening” power (37%) and its “collaborating” and “connecting and brokering” roles (31% of responses each, see figure 9).

**Figure 9: ICVA's contributions to Forced Migration Outcomes**



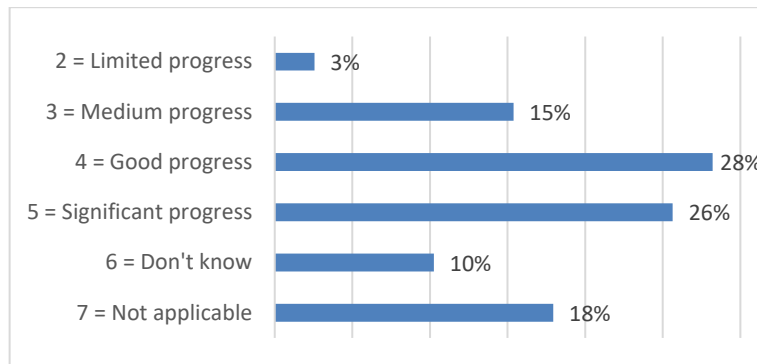
Finally, respondents were invited to share examples of significant ICVA-lead Forced Migration initiatives they had been involved in during the period under review (62% of respondents had been involved in a Forced Migration initiative linked to the outcomes). Examples provided ranged from ICVA’s UNHCR engagements, to the network’s dialogues with the UN Special Advisor on Solutions to Internal Displacement, to regional engagements as part of the Cartagena +40 process or the Support Platform for Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees, or the GRF Multi-Stakeholder Pledge on Advancing Localisation in Displacement and Statelessness Responses. Members and NGO fora described their active roles in these initiatives such as the provision of inputs, institutional memory, the review of statements, the organisation of side events or the proactive participation in dialogue.

They identified many outcomes and impacts from these initiatives at the individual, organisational or systems level, such as improved understanding, access to decision-makers or decision-making processes, improved organisational legitimacy, leveraging NGO expertise in humanitarian policies or processes, to the development or strengthening of organisational strategies, policies or practices, and contributions to more appropriate or innovative solutions to complex forced migration issues.

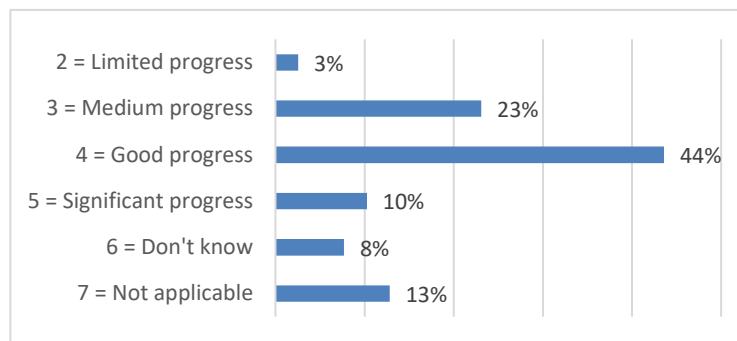
### Coordination

With regards to Coordination work, most significant progress was noted against outcome area 1 pertaining to enhanced principled and coordinated NGO intervention through strengthened NGO coordination and engagement on humanitarian access, with 54% of respondents declaring a good to significant level of progress (28% declared good progress, 26% noted significant progress, with 18% marked this outcome area as not applicable, see figure 10). The second outcome area registering higher levels of good to significant progress pertained to inclusive coordination mechanisms at national, regional and global levels (54%, with 44% of good progress, 10% of significant progress, and 23% of medium progress, see figure 11). The last Coordination outcome area pertaining to improved preparedness to individually and collectively address the impact of COVID-19 and future pandemics and coordinated advocacy for equitable vaccine delivery registered 44% of good to significant progress (23% of “not applicable” and 23% of don’t know” responses, see figure 12).

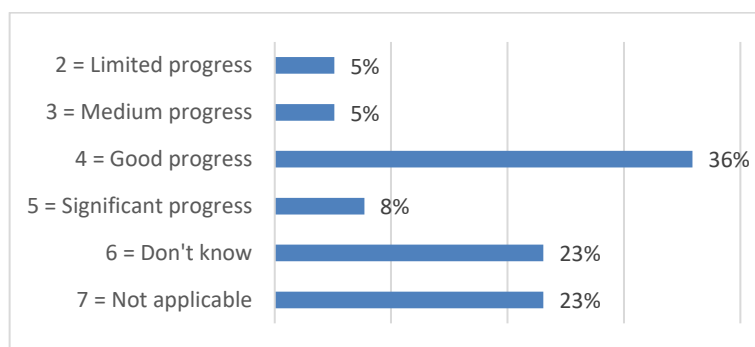
Figure 10: Coordination Outcome 1 Progress: "Principled and coordinated NGO intervention in humanitarian settings is enhanced through strengthened NGO coordination and engagement on humanitarian access issues"



**Figure 11: Coordination Outcome 3 Progress: "Coordination mechanisms at national, regional and global levels are more inclusive"**

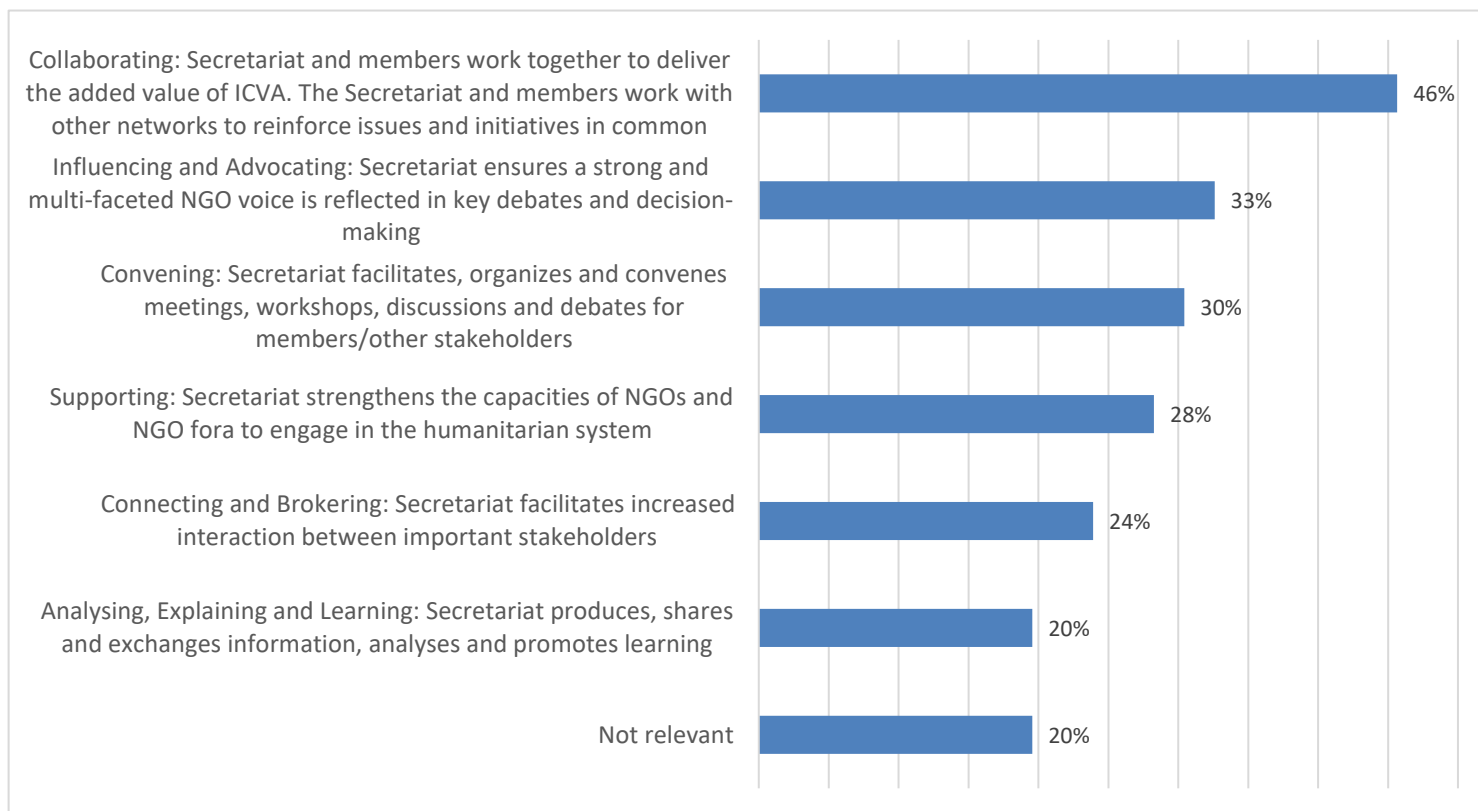


**Figure 12: Coordination Outcome 2 Progress: "ICVA and its members are better prepared to individually and collectively address the impacts of COVID-19 and of future pandemics, and their advocacy for equitable vaccine delivery to vulnerable communities is coordinated"**



Respondents were asked which of ICVA’s ways of working contributed the most to advancing these Coordination outcomes. ICVA’s “collaborating” role was the most cited response (46%), followed by the network’s “influencing and advocating” related actions (33%), its “convening” power (30%) and its “supporting” work (28%, see figure 13).

**Figure 13: ICVA's Contributions to Coordination Outcomes**



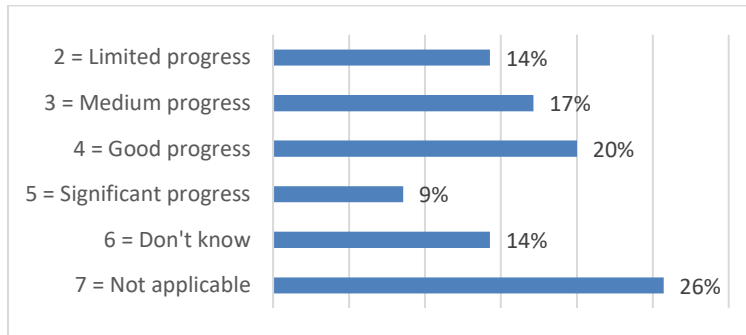
Finally, respondents were invited to share examples of significant ICVA-lead Coordination initiatives they had been involved in during the period under review (41% of respondents had been involved in a Coordination initiatives linked to the outcomes; however, survey length might have negatively impacted completion for this set of questions). Many examples provided pertained to NGO fora support (for instance training of forum Steering Committee members, other forum capacity strengthening activities, supporting forum set-up). Other examples were linked to high-level engagements (with the ERC, EDG), ICVA’s high-level events, COVID-19 work, and the PHASC. Members and NGO fora described their active roles in these initiatives such as the active engagement at country level in NGO forum coordination, exchanging experiences and learning among NGO fora, requesting forum trainings, gathering and analysis of evidence, as well as active participation in meetings.

They identified many outcomes and impacts from these initiatives at the individual, organisational or systems level, such as improved understanding, skills, relationships amongst NGO fora, strengthened fora, fora leadership, strengthened Local/National actors, coordinated voice on humanitarian issues, strengthened coordination, contributing to decision-making processes, improved organisational legitimacy, improved humanitarian policy outcomes, AAP, and more effective humanitarian responses.

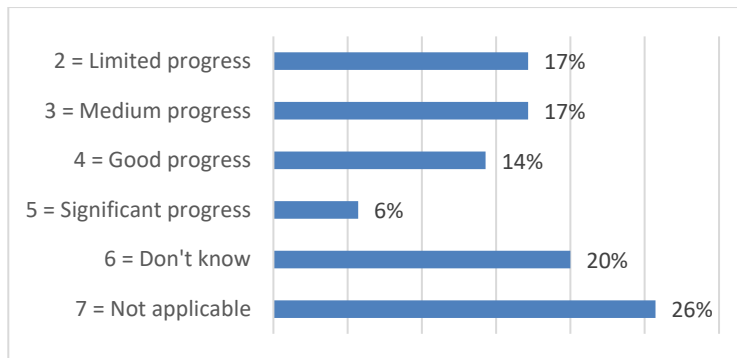
### Financing

With regards to Financing work, most progress was noted against outcome area 1 pertaining to **NGOs’ improved access to quality funding that is predictable, timely and flexible**, with 37% of respondents declaring a medium to good level of progress (26% marked this outcome area as not applicable, see figure 14). The second outcome area showing most medium to good progress pertained to **strengthened NGO organisational capacity on risk management** (31%, with 17% of medium progress, 14% of good progress and 26% of “not applicable” responses, see figure 15). The last Financing outcome area pertaining to **reduced administrative burdens in partnership agreements for NGOs** registered 31% of medium to good progress (20% of medium progress, 11% of good progress and 26% of “not applicable” responses, see figure 16).

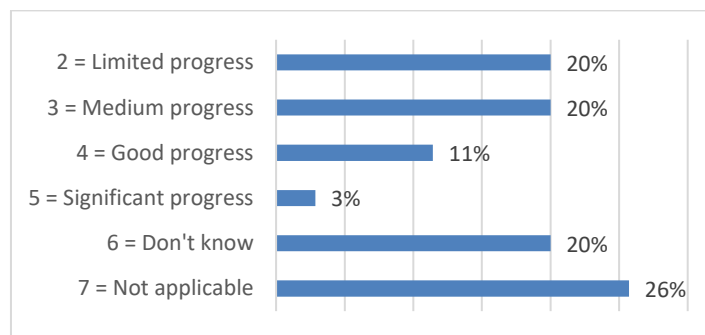
**Figure 14: Financing Outcome 1 Progress: "NGOs have improved access to quality funding that is predictable, timely, and flexible"**



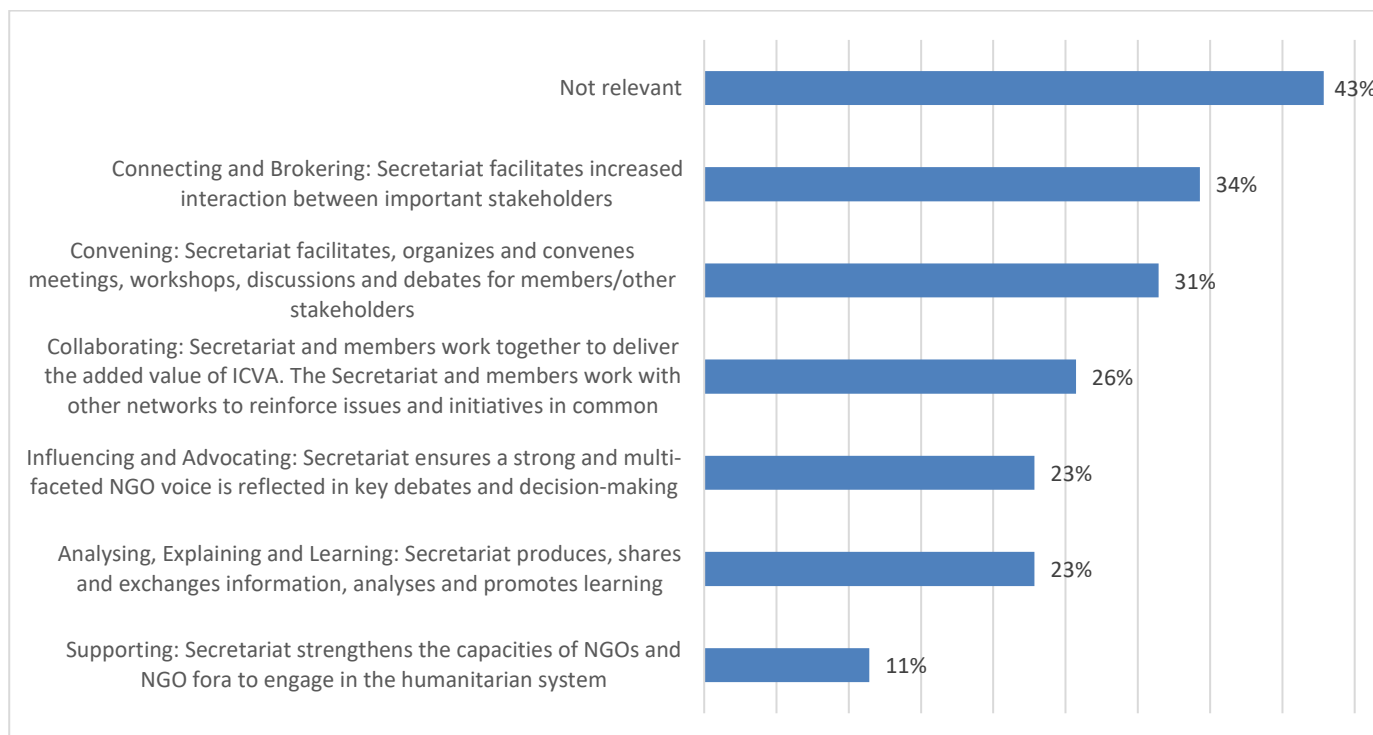
**Figure 15: Financing Outcome 3 Progress: "NGO organisational capacity on risk management is strengthened"**



**Figure 16: Financing Outcome 2 Progress: "NGOs benefit from reduced administrative burdens in partnership agreements"**



Respondents were asked which of ICVA’s ways of working contributed the most to advancing these Financing outcomes. After “not relevant” (43%), ICVA’s “connecting and brokering” role was the most cited response (34%), followed by the network’s “convening” power (31%), its “collaborating” role (26%) and its “influencing and advocating” related action (26% of responses, see figure 17).

**Figure 17: ICVA's Contributions to Financing Outcomes**

Finally, respondents were invited to share examples of significant ICVA-lead Financing initiatives they had been involved in during the period under review (14% of respondents had been involved in a Financing initiatives linked to the outcomes; however, survey length might have negatively impacted completion for this set of questions). Examples provided ranged from the Grand Bargain and GHD initiatives, to the global risk-sharing workshop, to work on alternative sources of funding.

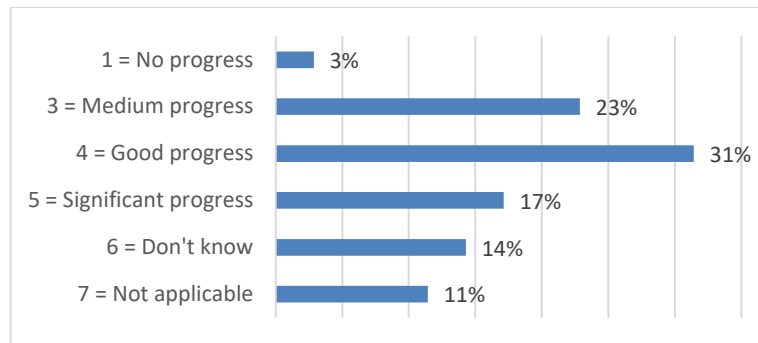
They identified several outcomes and impacts from these initiatives at the individual, organisation or systems level, such as improved understanding, skills, strengthened visibility with stakeholders, enhanced NGO coalitions, and coordinated voice on humanitarian issues.

### Transformations

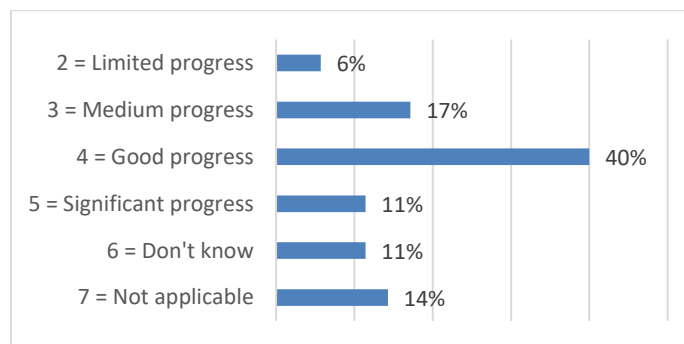
With regards to ICVA's transformations, most progress was noted against transformation 3 pertaining to **global distribution and local rootedness**, garnering 54% of good to medium progress (31% of good progress, 23% of medium progress) and 17% of significant progress (see figure 18). The second transformation area showing most medium to good progress pertained to **principled humanitarian action**, with 57% of respondents assessing progress levels as medium to good (40% of good progress, 17% of medium progress, 14% of "not applicable" responses, 11% of significant progress, see figure 19). The third transformation area showing most medium to good progress pertained to **climate change and humanitarian action**, registering 57% of responses (34% of good progress, 23% of medium progress, 23% of "don't know" responses, see figure 20). The outcome area pertaining to **agile and effective partnerships with diverse stakeholders** garnered 54% of good to medium progress (37% of good progress, 17% of medium progress, 20% of "don't know responses", see figure 21). Finally, the outcome area pertaining to **diversity, inclusion and values** registered 40% of medium to good progress (20% of good progress, 20% of medium progress, 31% of "don't know" responses, see figure 22).



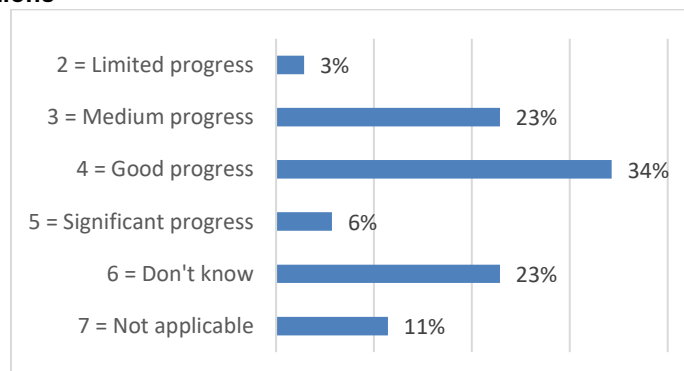
**Figure 18: Transformation 3 Outcome Progress: "National and international NGO Fora and NGOs at national, regional and global level are better equipped to support front line operational NGOs by placing a special focus on strengthening local leadership including the transfer of funds, ownership and decision-making power to local partners"**



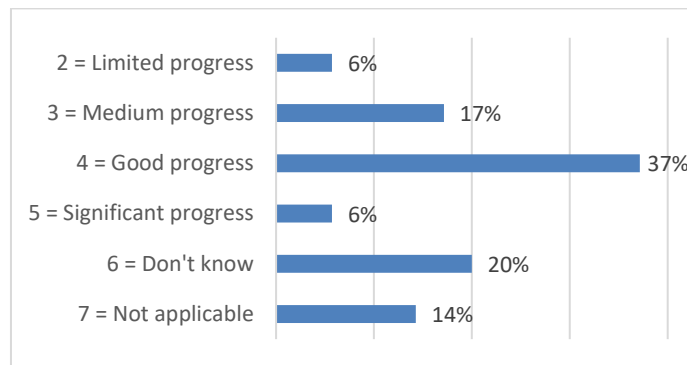
**Figure 19: Transformation 1 Outcome Progress: "Principled and coordinated NGO intervention in humanitarian settings is enhanced through strengthened NGO coordination and engagement on humanitarian access issues"**



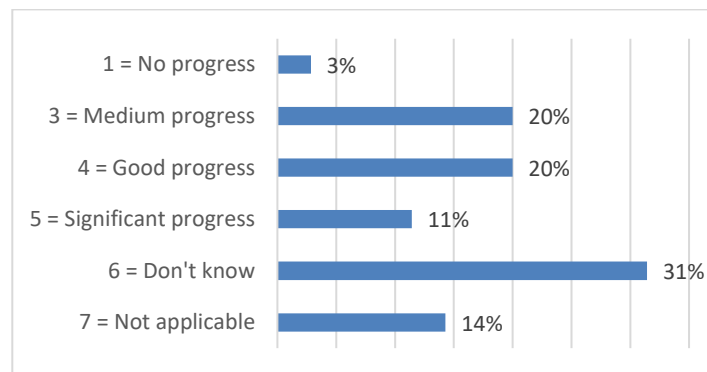
**Figure 20: Transformation 2 Outcome Progress: "Broader humanitarian community better understands how NGOs can reduce their impact of climate change by accelerating its own action and increase its environmental sustainability in line with commitments of the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations"**



**Figure 21: Transformation 5 Outcome Progress: "Agile and effective partnerships with diverse stakeholders leverage ICVA's collaborative advantage"**

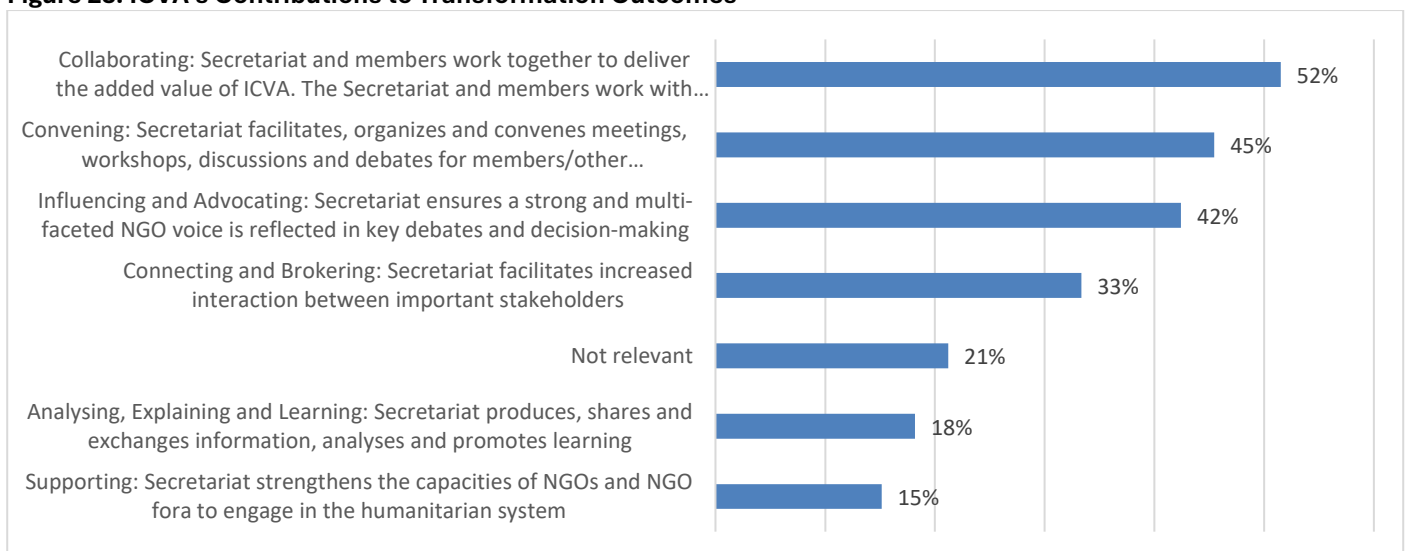


**Figure 22: Transformation 4 Outcome Progress: "Organisational capacities of NGOs are enhanced in respect of diversity considerations"**



Respondents were asked which of ICVA’s ways of working contributed the most to advancing these Transformation outcomes. ICVA’s “collaborating” role was the most cited response (52%), followed by the network’s “convening” power (45%), its “influencing and advocating” related actions (42%) and its “connecting and brokering” role (33% of responses, see figure 23).

**Figure 23: ICVA's Contributions to Transformation Outcomes**



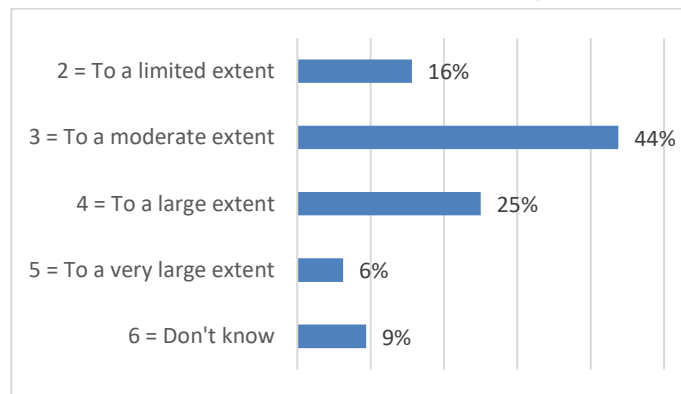
Finally, respondents were invited to share examples of significant ICVA-lead transformation initiatives they had been involved in during the period under review (11% of respondents had been involved in a transformation initiative linked to the outcomes, however survey length might have negatively impacted completion for this set of

questions). Examples provided included ICVA’s knowledge products on localisation or climate to more specific localisation initiatives. Outcomes and impacts observed at the individual, organisational or systems level from these initiatives included improved understanding, skills, coordinated voice on humanitarian issues, improved AAP, and contributing to improved humanitarian policy outcomes and more effective humanitarian responses.

### **ICVA’s contribution to improved humanitarian activities**

Respondents were asked to assess ICVA’s contribution to improvements in their organisation’s humanitarian activities during the period under review. Using a scale from not at all to a very large extent, 44% of respondents stressed that ICVA had contributed to a moderate extent to improvements in their organisation’s humanitarian activities, while 25% thought ICVA had contributed to a large extent. Reasons set forth to explain ICVA’s contribution spoke to the network’s role in enhancing capacities, triggering strategy or program changes, active participation in fora addressing humanitarian issues, the adoption by donors of simplified reporting and more overhead coverage, or sharing of good practices and learning.

**Figure 24: ICVA’s Contribution to Members and NGO Fora’s Improved Humanitarian Activities**



## Annex IV: Impact Study 2022-2024 Assessment Framework

### IMPACT STUDY PURPOSE

ICVA's 2030 Strategy has as a goal the promotion of principled and effective humanitarian action through work delivered across three focus areas and five transformation areas, expected to contribute to the following long-term outcomes:

- **Forced Migration focus area:** Improved protection, assistance and durable solutions for refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants in vulnerable solutions;
- **Coordination focus area:** People and communities affected by crisis are better protected and served through strengthened principled and coordinated NGO action;
- **Financing focus area:** Humanitarian financing that meets the needs of populations affected by crisis;
- **Transformation 1:** Championing principled humanitarian action;
- **Transformation 2:** Addressing the impact of climate change on humanitarian action;
- **Transformation 3:** Being globally distributed and locally rooted;
- **Transformation 4:** Being diverse, inclusive and living our values;
- **Transformation 5:** Proactively engaging in agile, collaborative partnerships.

ICVA's strategic framework is implemented through a series of three-year strategic priorities and plans that detail the focus of the work across the focus and transformation areas as incremental contributions to achieve the 2030 strategic outcomes.

In its 2030 Strategy, ICVA sets out to monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of its work and the perceived value for its members, including through the commissioning of independent reviews and evaluations to ensure objectivity. ICVA has previously conducted independent impact studies to measure progress and results against its three-year strategic plans. This assessment framework will guide ICVA's impact study covering the 2022-2024 strategic period.

The impact study will broadly look at the changes (positive or negative, intended or unintended), whether immediate, intermediate or long-term, that have been triggered by ICVA's actions and collaborations during the period under review. While impact refers to the long-term effects produced by an intervention, it rarely happens without a chain of short and mid-term changes that enable longer-term effects. The assessment will consider all changes produced and zoom in on impact when it has been observed.

The impact study 2022-2024 aims to:

- Document changes that have taken place for ICVA members, other NGOs, NGO Fora, NGO networks, other stakeholders and the wider humanitarian community as a result of ICVA's actions and collaborations during the 2022-2024 period;
- Test overall progress towards achieving the ICVA's 2022-2024 expected outcomes;
- Examine overall progress towards achieving ICVA's 2030 objectives;
- In doing so, the impact study will attempt to provide insights on the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the work program delivered to support the realisation of the three-year plan and longer-term objectives and highlight where adaptations could be useful for the work program to remain aligned to 2030 ambitions.

The impact study 2022-2024 will be utilising the organization-wide Theory of Change (ToC) that underpins change mechanisms towards mid-term and long-term objectives. ToC change pathways towards the three-year objectives will be tested. This process will help refine change pathways towards 2030 strategic objectives to be tested in the next strategic period.

The impact study will take a holistic approach to assessing progress and results against ICVA's 2022-2024 strategic priorities and 2030 Strategy. As such, it will not deep dive into grant specific objectives, will not provide a detailed assessment of each initiative implemented by ICVA during the strategic period, will not provide a comprehensive review of ICVA's organisational set-up, and will not focus on ICVA's staff performance.

### **IMPACT STUDY KEY QUESTIONS**

The impact study 2022-2024's central enquiry will test whether, how, why and for whom ICVA's initiatives across the forced migration, humanitarian coordination, humanitarian financing and five transformation areas brought about changes of what kinds.

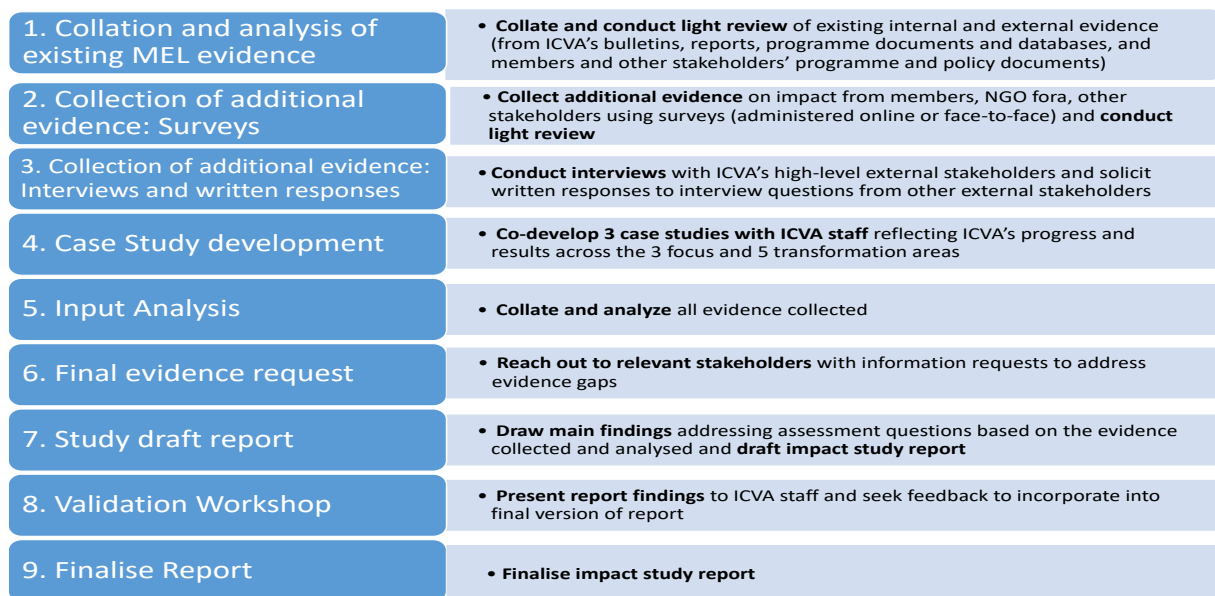
Specific impact assessment questions are outlined below:

1. To what extent, how, why and for whom did ICVA bring about changes of what kinds during the 2022-2024 period?
  - a. What types of changes, if any, has ICVA achieved through its work program during the period 2022-2024 (this includes positive and negative, intended and unintended changes on the humanitarian system structures, policies and practices and its actors, and contributions to members and other stakeholders' principled and effective humanitarian action) How did these changes happen?
  - b. Who benefitted from the changes achieved through ICVA's work program?
  - c. What are some demonstrable effects of ICVA's efforts on the humanitarian activities of its members, other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), NGO fora, and/or other humanitarian stakeholders?
  - d. What contributed to those changes taking place? To what extent have ICVA's ways of working (collaborating, influencing and advocating, convening, connecting and brokering, analysing, explaining and learning, supporting) facilitated the changes achieved?
2. Was ICVA successful in achieving the objectives outlined in its 2022-2024 strategic priorities?
  - a. Were ICVA's 2022-2024 objectives reached (testing progress and results against ICVA's 2022-2024 logframe)?
  - b. What can be learned about the pathways to realising the 2022-2024 objectives?
3. To what extent is ICVA making progress towards its 2030 Strategy centred on promoting principled and effective humanitarian action?
  - a. To what extent is ICVA influencing principled and effective humanitarian action?
  - b. Is ICVA on the right track to achieving its 2030 strategic objectives? What are ICVA's pathways to 2030 outcomes and strategic objectives?
  - c. What else can ICVA do, or do differently, to achieve its 2030 strategic objective, including more direct impact on principled and effective humanitarian action?

### **IMPACT STUDY ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY**

The impact study will apply a mixed-methods assessment approach that will test the change mechanisms in the organization-wide ToC using existing internal and external Monitoring, Evaluation

and Learning (MEL) evidence as well as additional evidence collected for the purpose of the study. The assessment methodology is presented in the diagram below:



Stakeholders targeting as part of the additional evidence collection process will be purposeful and will aim at ensuring representativity from local and national and international NGO members, active versus less active members, and a diversity of perspectives on ICVA’s impact from external stakeholders.

Data Analysis: The impact study will make use of the quantitative data collated or collected for the assessment to quantify progress towards the 2022-2024 strategic priorities using progress scales. It will make use of the qualitative data collated and collected to illustrate progress and the changes that took place for whom, how and why. The meta-analysis will then focus on links between progress, changes, strategies and objectives to develop conclusions and recommendations on ICVA’s 2022-2024 and 2030 progress and current and future pathways to impact.

### IMPACT STUDY DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables are expected as part of the impact study process:

1. Repository of documents containing relevant internal and external bulletins, reports, databases, programme and policy documents etc.
2. ICVA initiatives’ stocktake: List of main initiatives delivered by ICVA across the 3 focus areas and 5 transformation areas, with indication of MEL evidence available and relevant stakeholders for potential interviews
3. Impact study database: Collation of all evidence used as part of the impact study
4. Impact study MEL tools: Survey, Key Informant Interview (KII) guides
5. Impact study analysis framework
6. 3 case studies showcasing ICVA’s work and results across the focus and transformation areas
7. Impact study report: Should be maximum 50 pages in length excluding annexes and contain:
  - An Executive Summary
  - Introduction including methodology
  - Background on ICVA



- Study findings by focus and transformation areas
- Strategic reflections and future considerations
- Recommendations and conclusion
- Annexes, including case studies

8. Validation workshop presentation

### **IMPACT STUDY TIMELINE**

Tasks	Timeline
Kick off meeting	19/11
Development of assessment framework	By 25/11
Set up of document repository	By 29/11
Development of ICVA initiatives' stocktake document	By 29/11
Set up of study database	By 29/11
Light review of existing evidence	By 02/12
Development of survey tool and KII guide	By 02/12
Survey administration	By 03/12
Briefing of ICVA staff on survey tool for face-to-face administration during Asia-Pacific partnership week	By 09/12
Discussions on study case studies with ICVA staff	By 20/12
Scheduling of KII	By 23/12
Drafting of case studies and ICVA staff review/consolidation	By 10/01
Conduct KII	By 25/01
Treatment, analysis of collated/collected evidence	By 01/02
Final evidence collection based on data gaps	By 01/02
Evidence analysis and drafting of impact study report	By 14/02
Sharing of draft with key ICVA staff for inputs	By 14/02
Organisation of validation workshop with ICVA staff to gather feedback	By 21/02
Finalisation of impact study report and case studies	By 28/02

### **IMPACT STUDY USE**

The impact study 2022-2024 will be used externally to fulfil reporting requirements of ICVA's core and grant donors. It will also be disseminated widely using ICVA's bulletin, website and social media to communicate on ICVA's work, results and learning.

Internally, the impact study process will support discussions and decision-making on ICVA's work program and ways of working in the next strategic period. It will be used to refine ICVA's organisation-wide ToC based on learning from tested change pathways.

### **IMPACT STUDY MANAGEMENT**

The impact study 2022-2024 will be co-developed and co-implemented by ICVA and Sandstone Consulting as the independent evaluation service provider. ICVA has worked with Sandstone Consulting on previous impact studies and is therefore confident of the depth of expertise and ICVA institutional knowledge the organisation will bring to the impact assessment process.

ICVA, through its MEL Officer, will perform the following tasks to support the impact assessment process:

- Collation of ICVA work program documentation and internal and external MEL evidence
- Set up of impact study document repository
- Development of initiatives stocktake document
- Support to development of impact study MEL tools (survey, KII guides)

## 2022-2024 ICVA Impact Study

- Support to set up of impact study database
- Support to administration of impact study survey, KII and written responses
- Support to development of impact study case studies

Sandstone Consulting will perform the following tasks to facilitate the impact assessment process:

- Finalisation of impact study assessment framework
- Design of impact study MEL tools (survey, KII guides)
- Administration of impact study survey and KII
- Administration of requests for written responses
- Review and feedback on ICVA and external MEL evidence collated and collected
- Impact study data review and analysis
- Contribution to development of impact study case studies
- Draft impact study report
- Impact study presentation to ICVA staff
- Final impact study report

ICVA, through its Chief Operating Officer and MEL Officer, will maintain regular contact with Sandstone Consulting during the impact study development process to communicate on progress and discuss challenges and adaptations.

## Annex V: List of Acronyms

A4EP – Alliance for Empowering Partnership

AP – Asia-Pacific

AU – African Union

CBPF – Country-Based Pooled Fund

CSO – Civil Society Organization

DG ECHO – European Commission’s Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

EDG – Emergency Directors Group

ESA – East and Southern Africa

HCT – Humanitarian Country Team

HFVG – Humanitarian Finance Working Group

GCM – Global Compact for Migration

GCR – Global Compact on Refugees

GRF – Global Refugee Forum

IASC – Inter-Agency Standing Committee

ICRC – International Committee of the Red Cross

ICVA – International Council of Voluntary Agencies

IDP – Internally Displaced Person

IFRC – International Federation of the Red Cross

IOM – International Organisation for Migration

KII –Key Informant Interview

LAC – Latin American and Caribbean

MENA – Middle East and North Africa

NGO – Non-governmental Organization

OCHA – United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

OPAG – Operational Policy and Advocacy Group

RLO – Refugee-Led Organisation

UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UN – United Nations

UNICEF – United Nations Children’s Fund

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

WB – The World Bank Group

WCA – West and Central Africa

WFP – United Nations World Food Programme



A GLOBAL NGO NETWORK  
FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE  
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

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Dakar, Senegal

### **Asia-Pacific**

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Islamabad, Pakistan

### **MENA**

Amman, Jordan

### **Latin America**

Guadalajara, Mexico  
(Coordination)

## Geneva Office

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