

ICVA SPEAKERS BUREAU



CONCEPT NOTE

Overview

The International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) is committed to elevating the voices and perspectives of national and local humanitarian aid workers and ensuring their meaningful participation in high-level events and decision-making processes at national, regional and international levels. ICVA is regularly requested to identify speakers by members, governments and UN agencies for national, regional and global events, such as UN Member State Briefings, the European Humanitarian Forum, as well as ICVA and member events.

To facilitate this, ICVA in partnership with the Hilton Foundation will provide training and support for national humanitarian aid workers to join the ICVA Speakers Bureau. The ICVA Speakers Bureau will serve as a bridge between national humanitarian aid workers and decision-makers, fostering dialogue, collaboration, and better understanding. The initiative will:

- Develop a diverse database of compelling and knowledgeable national humanitarian speakers who can effectively advocate for the needs, priorities, and perspectives of affected communities.
- Provide expert training opportunities to enhance the communication and public speaking skills of selected speakers, including guidance on effective message development, storytelling techniques, and engaging with diverse audiences.
- Coordinate with NGO Fora, UN agencies and donors, and facilitate the participation of speakers in member state briefings, high-level events, conferences, and panel discussions.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the ICVA Speakers Bureau?

The aim of the Speakers Bureau is to elevate the voices and perspectives of national and local humanitarian aid workers and ensure their meaningful participation in decision-making processes at national, regional and international levels.

To achieve this, the ICVA Speakers Bureau will establish a database of national humanitarian aid workers with the expertise to represent the NGO community and crisis-affected populations at high-level events. While ICVA regularly identifies excellent speakers and facilitates them to participate at national, regional and global events, the Speakers Bureau will broaden the pool of speakers, systematize the identification of speakers, provide training and ultimately provide opportunities to a greater diversity of national voices.

2. Who is eligible to join the ICVA Speakers Bureau?

National humanitarian aid workers from either a national or international NGOs can register for the ICVA Speakers Bureau. The NGO must be either a member of ICVA or a member of their national or international NGO Forum. Female representatives are strongly encouraged to apply.

3. How do I sign-up to the Speakers Bureau?

If you are interested in receiving training and joining the database, please complete the [Speakers Bureau Survey](#) by 31 August COB.

You will be asked to upload a high-quality head and shoulder photograph of yourself, information about your experience, as well as links to videos of you speaking. Your bio, photograph and contact details will be shared with UN agencies and donors that have requested speakers.

4. How many staff per agency can sign up to the Speakers Bureau?

Two staff members per agency per country. Priority will be given to national NGOs who are ICVA members and female representatives.

5. Do I have to be an Executive Director or Country Director to sign up?

A range of backgrounds will be considered. The Speakers Bureau is seeking confident and experienced humanitarian aid workers that can represent the work of their organization and speak compellingly about the humanitarian issues in their contexts. Humanitarians with thematic expertise such as Health, Forced Migration, Protection, Food Security & Hunger and WASH, to name but a few sectors are also encouraged to apply.



NOTE: If you are not the Executive Director or Country Director of your organization you will need to request your ED/CD to send a signed letter via email to speakers@icvanetwork.org to inform ICVA that they recommend and approve your selection.

6. Is my selection in the Speakers Bureau guaranteed?

ICVA will conduct a selection process including verifying that you are approved to represent your organization and review your experience. Training will be provided for interested members. Participating in the training and joining the Speakers Bureau database does not guarantee that you will be selected for specific events, such as Member State briefings. Please see more details on selection criteria for events below.

7. What kind of events will the selected Speakers participate in?

The ICVA Speakers Bureau coordinates with UN agencies and donors, and facilitates the participation of speakers in member state briefings, high-level events, conferences, and panel discussions. Speakers will also be invited to participate in social media events.

8. Once I've joined the Speakers Bureau, what is the process for getting selected to speak at events?

A range of speaking opportunities arise and ICVA will endeavour to have as broad and diverse a range of speakers representing over time. Many events, such as Member State briefings, can only accommodate one or two NGO speakers.

- ICVA will prioritise speakers based on the following criteria:
- The objectives of the event and the target audience
- Expertise and reputation of the speaker

- Quality of the representational and speaking skills
- Diversity and inclusivity
- Logistics and availability

For Member States briefings and other external high-level events, ICVA will connect with the national and international NGO fora with the list of vetted speakers to identify the best placed speaker. ICVA maintains a list of who has spoken at events in order to ensure a variety of speakers.

For ICVA events, ICVA will review the speakers list and select speakers based on the above criteria on a rotational basis.

Members, journalists, donors and UN agencies are also likely to reach out for specific speakers for other communications and media pieces. ICVA will connect them directly to relevant speakers.

9. As a member of the Speakers Bureau, who am I representing?

In most instances, you are representing your organization. For Member State briefings and other global high-level events, given the need to elevate the issues impacting crisis affected populations and the humanitarian community, it is important to consult with the NGO forum and fellow NGOs to develop your interventions and represent the collective.

10. Will training be provided?

Yes, ICVA will provide expert training with a cohort of speakers based on need and interest at regional level.

11. Do I need clearance from my organization to join?

Yes, you need written approval from your organization authorizing you to represent your organization. If you're not the Executive Director, please upload a signed letter from your ED/CD stating that you are approved to join the Speakers Bureau.

12. Will I receive payment?

No, this initiative is entirely voluntary. You will also not be expected to pay to participate. In some instances, ICVA can facilitate travel costs. This is done on a case-by-case basis and is budget dependent.

13. What benefits do speakers gain by joining the ICVA Speakers Bureau?

Speakers accepted into the ICVA Speakers Bureau will have the opportunity to receive expert training to enhance their public speaking skills. The Speakers Bureau will also facilitate their participation in high-level events, conferences, and panel discussions.

14. How long will I be on the ICVA Speakers Bureau roster for?

You can opt out of the Speakers Bureau at any time by sending an email to the address below. ICVA will strive to do an annual update of the speakers on the roster to ensure continued diversity, maintain the latest contact details, and identify additional training needs.

15. Will interpretation services be provided for potential speakers who are not fluent in English?

French, Arabic and Spanish translation is often provided for high-level events. ICVA will endeavour to provide interpretation services as needed on a case-by-case basis.

16. Do you have additional questions? Want to know more?

Please email speakers@icvanetwork.org for more information.

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FOR PRINCIPLED AND EFFECTIVE
HUMANITARIAN ACTION

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