Collaborative learning for all humanitarians

Core strategy for facilitating access to learning platforms, resources and tools for all individuals and organisations
Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge Dalberg Global Development Advisors and Oliver Wyman for their contributions in developing this strategy.

We would also like to thank our Academy staff for their hard work developing this strategy including our new Centres who will be realising this strategy for the sector.

“Our mission is to support a faster, more effective and efficient humanitarian response with increased local participation and ownership.”
Natural disasters, humanitarian crises and conflicts are posing an increasing threat to human populations. Although funding to humanitarian organisations has grown over recent years, increasing natural and man-made disasters cause an incremental need for a professional response from the sector. Humanitarian organisations, local communities and non-traditional responders need further support to develop the capacity to handle crises of these magnitudes.

To respond to this humanitarian challenge, the Humanitarian Leadership Academy works to create a faster and more effective humanitarian response with increased local participation and ownership.

The Academy is a global platform of learning connecting both humanitarian professionals and non-traditional responders. We will facilitate local participation in humanitarian preparedness and response by strengthening capacities among local responders and humanitarian organisations. The Academy strives for local responders and humanitarian organisations to adopt appropriate best practices and innovations for humanitarian preparedness and response. In addition, we aim to create sustainable learning provision in the sector by supporting actors that provide learning opportunities.

The objectives of the Learning pillar are to ensure:

- Local responders access and use the high quality learning content made available by us and our partners. Local responders should also be able to receive international recognition for their skills and experience.
- Humanitarian organisations use the learning content and skills framework developed by us and our partners to identify and fill internal capacity gaps. Humanitarian organisations should also use the international skills framework as a quality standard for their learning and skills recognition programmes.
- Learning and development providers provide training and skill building that more effectively address needs. Learning and development providers should also operate with more sustainable business models than currently.

To reach the objectives of the Learning pillar, we will focus on five key activities:

1. Providing content by aggregating existing learning materials, adapting them to the local contexts and investing in new content where gaps are discovered.
2. Enabling access to high quality learning by finding effective ways of encouraging learning through both online and offline platforms, tools and learning resources.
3. Recognising skills, experience and learning in the humanitarian sector through improved international skills frameworks and standards.
4. Supporting organisations involved in providing learning and development to assess and improve their operational, financial and learning provision models. In addition, humanitarian organisations will be supported to identify and fill their internal capacity gaps.
5. Strengthening local learning networks. The Academy Centres represent us regionally and link local learners to learning opportunities. Strong partnerships with academia, learning providers and humanitarian organisations will also be key to identifying, developing and reaching out with learning opportunities.

Executive Summary

We aim to achieve our outcomes by operating through three interlinked pillars:

- **Learning**
- **Knowledge**
- **Innovation**

**Learning pillar** focuses on transforming the knowledge of best practices in the humanitarian sector by supporting its dissemination and uptake, and forms the core part of our operational strategy.

**Knowledge pillar** relates to establishing and disseminating knowledge and evidence around effective learning approaches and their value for humanitarian preparedness and response.

**Innovation pillar** seeks to identify and provide opportunities for incubation and acceleration of new ideas in capacity strengthening. Each pillar is guided by a strategy that supports the our overall objectives.

This document explains the strategy for the Learning pillar, its objectives and its role in supporting the core mission of the Academy.
Weather and climate-related disasters are posing an increasing threat to human populations. Over the past 30 years, natural disasters have been on the rise. The average number of disasters per year has increased from around 150 in the 1980s to nearly 350 in the 2000s¹. Besides increasing frequency, more people than ever live in areas that are exposed to natural disasters. This means that disasters today affect more people and produce greater economic losses. Developing countries are the hardest hit as their capacities for disaster preparedness and risk management are more limited. Over 95% of deaths from natural disasters occur in low and middle-income countries². These numbers are expected to continue to increase as climate change creates more extreme weather events in the future³.

Major conflicts and humanitarian crises in the world over recent years have compounded the need for a global response to humanitarian issues. The conflict in Syria has led to a regional refugee crisis as nine million Syrians have fled their homes, of which three million have crossed into neighbouring countries⁴. At the same time, disease outbreaks have put strain on disaster management capacities in several regions. This happened most recently in the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa in which 30,000 people were infected and more than 10,000 died, leaving many affected families behind⁵. These protracted crises require a coordinated humanitarian response stretching over several years.

Although funding to humanitarian organisations has grown over recent years, increasing natural and man-made disasters cause an incremental need for a professional response from the sector. Between 2008 and 2013, global humanitarian funding more than doubled from around USD seven billion to over USD 16 billion. The number of humanitarian workers employed around the world has also increased as a result of the Syrian and the Ebola crises: the humanitarian personnel employed increased from 220,000 in 2008 to 450,000 in 2013. To ensure a high quality and effective response, these developments must be accompanied by tailored skill building.

Humanitarian organisations need support to develop the capacity to handle crises of this magnitude. Capacity-development efforts in the humanitarian sector can be strengthened to consistently meet professional quality standards and to be firmly evidence-based. In addition, more can be done to ensure that locally relevant learning is accessible to humanitarian responders around the world. Supporting these improvements could help build long-term sustainability of humanitarian skills and expertise building, which would enhance the quality and confidence of humanitarian response⁶.

Beyond humanitarian organisations, local communities and non-traditional responders need support to strengthen their preparedness and ability to respond effectively to disasters. Today, local non-governmental organisations working in humanitarian disasters receive only 0.2% of global humanitarian funding⁷. Yet the preparedness for disasters at the local level can radically reduce the impact of a natural disaster. As an example, Bangladesh has worked over the past 50 years to strengthen early warning systems, develop shelters and evacuation plans, and to raise awareness at the local community level about best practices to prepare for and respond to cyclones. This has led to a drastic decrease in the number of casualties from storms: in 1970, a cyclone killed over 500,000 people, by 1991 a cyclone of similar severity killed 140,000 and in 2007, the death rate for a cyclone with wind speeds exceeding the previous two had gone down to just over 4,000⁸.

The Rationale for a Global Learning Academy
Our Approach

To respond to the humanitarian challenge of the coming years, our vision is to support a faster, more effective and efficient humanitarian response with increased local participation and ownership. We are a global broker of learning for humanitarian professionals and non-traditional responders to prepare for and respond to disasters. We aim to act as a platform and network, more efficiently connecting learning demand to the supply, including investing in content, delivery mechanisms and innovations where appropriate.

We strive to support the learning needs of individuals, organisations and communities by aggregating and engaging existing knowledge to fill core competency gaps among humanitarian professionals and local responders. Learning will be made more accessible, professional and locally relevant. The end objective is to localise preparedness and response. Learning will be made more effective and efficient humanitarian action. The digital services will include a learning platform that provides access to learning materials and programmes as well as interactive spaces that facilitate connections between humanitarian professionals, local responders and learning and development providers.

Through both in-person and online outreach, we work actively to build partnerships with academia, humanitarian organisations, corporates and learning and development providers to increase knowledge sharing, spread the use of international standards for accrediting skills and expertise and develop sustainable learning and development models.

Our strategy and objectives can be synthesised in a learning model that provides an overview of the desired impact and outcomes and the activities necessary to achieve them. The learning model provides a summarised overview of our strategy. The components of the learning model are described in the Core Strategy below, which delves deeper into those that are most relevant to the Learning pillar.

Detailed operational definitions, indicators and proxies for measuring each output and outcome will be provided in the monitoring and evaluation plans.
Our work is guided by nine principles

**Be collaborative**
Building partnerships with academia, training providers, humanitarian organisations and non-traditional organisations is a core part of our theory of change.

**Design with the user**
The development of both Academy Centres and learning resources is undertaken in close collaboration with learners and feedback is continuously integrated to improve our offer.

**Be needs driven**
We will stay relevant as a learning institution by keeping abreast of needs and trends in learning across the humanitarian sector.

**Understand the Ecosystem**
Through partnerships and regional Academy Centres, we will strive to work with a strong understanding of the sector, country and local community that we operate in.

**Be innovative**
We will push for new thinking, methodologies and tools to make learning more engaging and accessible.

**Build for sustainability**
We will work to make our activities and the activities of our partners as sustainable as possible, for example by supporting learning and development providers to develop sustainable financial models.

**Reuse and improve**
We will always build on existing knowledge and expertise where it exists. This is especially relevant as we develop learning materials, which we will do by aggregating first and creating last.

**Use open source and open licences**
Our objective is to make learning more accessible, and we will therefore always strive to make learning materials and resources openly available.

**Design for scale**
Our objective is to democratise access to learning. Through regional Academy Centres and the global digital platform, all developed products are designed to be taken to scale.

**Our Learning Model**

**Humanitarian response is faster and more effective, with increased local response**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local responder networks (individuals)</th>
<th>Humanitarian organisations</th>
<th>Learning and development providers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Local responders access and use training materials available online and offline</td>
<td>- Humanitarian organisations: have adopted locally appropriate best practices and innovations for humanitarian preparedness and response</td>
<td>- Operate sustainably to provide comprehensive training packages that are well adapted to local contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Local responders receive accreditation for their expertise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Provide content**

- Aggregates and analyzes real-time information from emergencies
- Produces insights from best practices from peer reviews, evaluations and research

**Enable access to learning**

- Launch a global digital platform
- Establish worldwide communities of practice
- Provide learning opportunities in 10 Academy Centres
- Partner with L&D providers to provide learning opportunities

**Recognise skills and experience**

- Create a framework of international humanitarian standards for accreditation
- Develop quality assurance systems for organisational learning

**Support organisations**

- Support learning and development providers in developing their business models and sustainability
- Support humanitarian organisations in identifying their skills and capacity gaps

**Activities/Outputs**

- PROVIDE CONTENT
  - Knowledge
  - Learning
  - Understanding
- ENABLE ACCESS TO LEARNING
- RECOGNISE SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE
- SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

**Long-term outcomes**

- Policymakers and donors have increased focus on local preparedness and response that includes improved national resilience planning, increased resources channelled to local response from national and international sources, and increased involvement of local and national organisations in humanitarian decision-making.

- Humanitarian organisations have adopted locally appropriate best practices and innovations for humanitarian preparedness and response.

- Learning and development providers operate sustainably to provide comprehensive training packages that are well adapted to local contexts.

**Intermediate outcomes**

- Humanitarian organisations use content and frameworks to identify and fill capacity gaps.
- Humanitarian organisations implement international quality standards for their learning and accreditation programmes.

**First five years**

- Humanitarian organisations have adopted locally appropriate best practices and innovations for humanitarian preparedness and response.
- Learning and development providers provide training and skill building that conform to international quality standards and have adopted more sustainable business models.

**Directly relevant to the Learning Strategy**

- Humanitarian organisations
- Local responder networks
- Policymakers and donors
- Humanitarian organisations have adopted locally appropriate best practices and innovations for humanitarian preparedness and response
- Learning and development providers operate sustainably to provide comprehensive training packages that are well adapted to local contexts.
This section outlines how we will deliver on our Core Strategy. The following paragraphs will first describe the objectives of our Core Strategy and link these to the long-term outcomes sought by us. Second, we present the different models of learning that our Core Strategy uses to reach scale and sustainability. Third, the specific activities and outputs that are necessary to achieve our objectives and our Core Strategy are outlined.

OUTCOMES OF OUR CORE STRATEGY
To accomplish its mission, we will work with and seek outcomes across four stakeholder groups: local responder networks (individuals and communities), humanitarian organisations, learning and development providers, and policymakers and donors. We seek that:

- **Local responder networks** will adopt locally appropriate best practices and innovations for humanitarian preparedness and response. Activities under the Learning pillar will contribute to this outcome by providing at least 100,000 local responders with access to learning materials, defined learning pathways and recognition along the pathway. It is expected that 75% of the participants that start a learning programme online will finish it successfully and receive recognition. In addition, the objective is for the skills and expertise of an additional 15,000 local responders to be recognised through more formally recognised programmes.

- **Humanitarian organisations** will adopt locally appropriate best practices and innovations for humanitarian preparedness and response. In particular, we will work through the Learning pillar to create a skills framework that maps to the learning pathway and a tool for assessing the quality of learning programmes. With our support, the intermediate objective is for 15 humanitarian organisations to have assessed the quality of their learning and accreditation programmes. In addition, 40 organisations are expected to have implemented international quality standards and adapted their learning programmes to the learning pathway proposed by us. This work strives to make it easier to recognise the levels of expertise of humanitarian professionals worldwide.

- **Learning and development providers** will operate sustainably to provide comprehensive and high quality training packages that are well adapted to the local context. Work under the Learning pillar will support this outcome by developing a system for assessing the quality of learning programmes. In addition, we will work with humanitarian partners to develop the Humanitarian Passport Initiative (HPI) – a framework of the skills, competencies and learning necessary for humanitarian workers at different levels. This can be used by learning and development providers to support the design of new learning opportunities. In the intermediate term, it is expected that 25 learning and development providers will provide training and skill building that maps to the HPI skill framework and adhere to international quality standards. Furthermore, we will support learning and development providers to assess their financial and operational models in order to develop more sustainable practices. At least 60 sustainable business models will be implemented by learning and development providers as a result of our Core Strategy.

- **Policymakers and donors** will focus increasingly on local preparedness and response. This includes improved national resilience planning, increased resources channelled to local response from national and international sources and increased involvement of local and national organisations in humanitarian decision-making. The implementation of our Core Strategy will provide a source of evidence on the effectiveness of learning and development provision on humanitarian responses. Impact assessments of the learning practices carried out as part of the Learning pillar will provide data that can be
REACHING SCALE AND SUSTAINABILITY

To reach the outcomes sought from the Learning pillar, we recognise that all activities need to be scalable and sustainable. Under the Learning pillar, this means that the provision of learning must be designed for global reach and driven by the needs of learners. The learning models need to be flexible and match learners’ interests, potential time commitment and learning style. This is why we will work to provide learning opportunities at three levels, ranging from simply providing open access to content, through to an in-depth engagement with the learner in a more traditional training setting:

Level 1 – Open and self-guided learning. At the first level, we will provide open access to self-guided learning. In this model, learners access resources and materials at their own pace and based on their own needs and interests. This type of learning will take place using resources made available online and through the formation of communities of practice. We will encourage the creation of communities of practice consisting of both traditional and non-traditional humanitarian responders. These will serve to exchange knowledge and experiences in forums that are driven by individuals’ interest areas.

Level 2 – Structured and supported learning. At the second level, we will provide a framework of humanitarian skills that guides learners through a learning pathway based on the Humanitarian Passport Initiative. According to the level and experience of different learners, the skill framework will suggest the appropriate programme to follow on our online systems, in particular the Kaya learning platform. The programmes build on each other to allow participants to move upwards from one level to the next. In this more engaged form of learning, online services will enable participants to share and exchange learning and experiences with others on their programme. Participants will also be encouraged to give and receive feedback from peers and online coaches. Once a programme is finished, learners receive certification of their new skills and expertise through online badges. We will seek to promote this level as it provides effective learning through interactive feedback and coaching yet is easier to bring to scale than in-person training.

Level 3 – Localised and in-person learning. At the third level, learners will take part in a blended learning approach that includes both self-study and face-to-face training in a highly engaged and contextualised setting. These learning opportunities are provided by quality assured institutions that use the skill framework to provide learners with training and accreditation of their skills and expertise. Our Academy Centres and partners will be key to linking learners with local learning and development providers. In addition, the online platform will also provide links to quality assured skill and expertise building institutions.

OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

To reach our objectives, we will focus on seven key activities that enable us to effectively aggregate, develop, and share learning materials. These activities are closely relevant to humanitarian responses, in a way that builds a stronger and more professional sector. In the following section, each activity group will be described, giving particular weight to the activities that are directly relevant to the Learning pillar. The seven activities are to: provide access to content, enable access to learning, recognise skills and experience, support organisations, strengthen academy centres and partnerships, undertake evidence-based advocacy and build an innovation incubator.

I. Provide access to content

Providing knowledge and learning content will be the joint focus of the Knowledge and Learning pillars. Through the Knowledge pillar, data and research on best practices in humanitarian preparedness and response will be aggregated and analysed. This will feed into, among other things, case studies of locally appropriate best practices and innovations in humanitarian preparedness and response. Through the Learning pillar, we will aggregate and contextualise existing learning materials, and where needed, supplement additional development of new learning material to fill gaps. In particular, the specific activities to provide content under the Learning pillar will be to:

- **Aggregate existing resources.** We will identify sector needs by mapping the available training materials and resources. This will allow for an assessment of the main underserved audiences and topics that are lacking high quality learning materials. This work has already been started: to date, over 400 learning resources have been mapped and classified according to their subjects and target audiences. This work will continue over the coming years. As Academy Centres and partnerships are strengthened, these will form a source of insights into the landscape of learning supply versus demand in the humanitarian sector as well as future opportunities for aggregating and supporting the development of learning materials.

- **Assess resources.** A robust assessment process will assess the quality, relevance and effectiveness of content aggregated by us. This will be done using a Learning Assessment & Evaluation framework that allows us to assess how impactful, effective and satisfactory learning is for users.

- **Contextualise existing resources.** We aim to support the adaptation of existing training materials to the local context to ensure that it is relevant and accessible, for example by translating it into local languages. These materials will be made available through all Academy Centres, partners and online. The 100 case studies developed under the Knowledge pillar will be a key source for contextualising resources to provide locally relevant learning content.

- **Develop new content for key gaps in learning material and resources.** After building on existing resources and identifying their gaps, we aim to fill these gaps by working with partners. After an initial assessment of available humanitarian learning materials, a number of priority gaps have been identified at the global level:

- **Six topics where learning materials are lacking:** (i) children’s needs, (ii) food security, (iii) emerging issues, (iv) needs assessment, (v) coaching, leadership and change management and (vi) managing donors and partners.

- **Four audiences lacking adapted learning resources:** (i) national staff, needing flexible trainings that can be carried out at an individual person’s own pace, (ii) remote managers, who need particular support for managing projects at a distance, (iii) community responders, who engage in the crucial first response to a disaster and (iv) senior staff, who need support in continuing their professional development.

- **Ensure quality through rigorous evaluation of learning content.** We will help to ensure that high-quality and effective learning materials are being made available to the sector through our platforms. Periodic impact evaluations, strategic reviews, timely monitoring feedback and deeper dive learner assessments will probe the effectiveness in driving change, better humanitarian response in action and practice.

II. Enable access to learning

Once learning materials and resources have been developed, finding effective ways to share them and encourage learning will be among the key work areas undertaken through the Learning pillar. To enable access to learning, we will work via four channels:

1. Digital services, in particular through the Kaya learning platform
2. Global communities of practice
3. Academy Centres
4. Learning and development providers working in partnership with us.

Each of these channels is described in greater detail in the following sections.

1. Digital services.** The two main objectives of the Academy’s online learning offer is to (i) encourage flexible learning, at the level and pace that suits each individual humanitarian, and (ii) provide a space for sharing and exchange between individual humanitarians, humanitarian organisations, and learning
and development providers. Specifically, we will work to provide learning materials, online courses, interactive forums, coaching, and a marketplace for training.

• Learning materials will be openly accessible and can be used for self-paced learning at the level deemed suitable by the learners. The materials will be both international (as adapted/developed by the us under the Learning pillar) and locally adapted (as adapted/developed by each Academy Centre and local partner organisations). The Academy Centres will have access to their own portal that they can fill with content tailored to the specific needs of their learners. This is part of our work to support learners at Levels 1, 2 and 3.

• Learning programmes will be invested in for more engaged learners. We will support partners to develop bespoke programmes for bespoke needs where this reduces barriers to access. These have a set curriculum that maps onto the international humanitarian skills framework (read more about this under Recognise skills). The learner can choose a programme depending on their level, and the skills and expertise acquired is recognised at the end of the programme by a learning badge. This is part of our work to support learners at Levels 2 and 3.

• Interactive forums will be set up to provide learners with opportunities to engage with others in the same programme. Participants will be encouraged to exchange their experiences and knowledge and to give and receive peer-to-peer feedback. This is part of our work to support learners at Levels 1, 2 and 3.

• Coaching and mentoring for humanitarian personnel will be provided to encourage humanitarian responders to think of their work and learning as part of a humanitarian career. This is part of our work to support learners at Levels 2 and 3.

• A marketplace for learning opportunities that provides a comprehensive online catalogue of quality assured learning resources, programmes and training providers. It will enable learners and humanitarian organisations to reach out to learning providers that offer solutions specific to their learning and development needs. This is part of our work to support learners at Levels 1, 2 and 3.

2. Communities of practice. Continuous sharing and learning will be facilitated through exchange between humanitarian responders, both traditional and non–traditional. Based on specific areas of interest, these communities of practices will share knowledge and solutions in a learning environment that is entirely driven by the interests of individuals. We will facilitate the creation of these communities by providing meeting places on the digital platform and in person at the Academy Centres. This is part of the Academy’s work to support learners at Levels 1, 2 and 3.

3. Academy Centres. The Academy Centres will be the key in–country sources for supporting individuals and organisations at the national and regional levels to access and use learning materials and resources. Their role will be to:

• Identify and analyse needs in the region and more efficiently connect the demand to the supply, including investment in building high quality resources and programmes

• Make locally adapted materials available at the centre and on the online learning system

• Assist traditional and non–traditional humanitarian workers to find the resources that are suited to their learning needs and desired level of engagement

• Communicate with other Academy Centres to exchange lessons learned and data that could be utilised to improve understanding of what works

• Operate with respect to the local environment. This entails working with existing training providers to enhance the quality learning on offer to meet local, national and regional needs.

This is part of our work to support learners at Levels 1, 2 and 3.

4. Learning and development providers. We will partner with quality assured learning and development providers to deliver learning opportunities to traditional and non–traditional humanitarian workers. The training provided will map to the humanitarian skill framework (read more about this under the section Recognise skills). Partnering with qualified
learning and development providers will allow us to reach a larger segment of the humanitarian sector and build on existing learning and development providers’ experience in training and skill building. This is part of our work to support learners at Level 3.

III. Recognise Skills
We strive to support the professionalisation of the humanitarian sector where both traditional and non-traditional responders’ expertise and skills can be recognised globally. To achieve this, we will undertake three activities to recognise skills and experience:

• **Map existing frameworks and identify gaps.** Understanding the landscape of the existing frameworks is the first step to improving the global recognition of humanitarian skills and experience. We have already completed some of this work, as eight relevant skills and quality assurance frameworks were identified and assessed. This work will continue to identify opportunities for improvements that we can work to fill.

• **Develop frameworks.** Based on the existing frameworks and the core gaps that were identified, we will work with partner organisations, academic institutions and learning and development providers to develop frameworks that can be scaled and adapted to local expectations, norms and needs. We have already started this work and, initially, two distinct frameworks will be created over the coming five years:
  - **The Humanitarian Passport Initiative (HPI).** Led by Enhancing Learning and Research for Humanitarian Assistance (ELHRA) and in collaboration with RedR UK, Bioforce, Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection (PHAP), Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability Alliance (CHS), Pearson, etc., we have launched work to develop a framework of international humanitarian skills. The framework will provide an overview of the expertise that humanitarian workers need at different levels of seniority. This framework can be used for two main purposes: (1) to develop learning pathways for improving humanitarian skills and expertise and (2) to recognise the skills and expertise that humanitarians acquire. Since each step of the learning pathway builds on the last and is mapped to the levels of humanitarian workers, the framework can also help humanitarians to think of their learning as part of a career path.
  - **Quality assurance system for learning and development.** We will develop a system for assuring the quality of learning and development programmes and certifying trainers. This will be constructed as a practical tool that is disseminated online to provide an international quality standard for assessing learning and development initiatives.

• **Open Badges.** Through its digital services, we will support an Open Badge Passport platform for learners to manage a portfolio of their learning, skills and experiences as interoperable and verifiable digital badges that map to the HPI framework.

• **Ensure adoption.** International quality standards and skills frameworks are only useful if they are adopted and utilised broadly across the humanitarian sector to standardise and assess humanitarian competencies. The standards developed need to form a trusted and well-known brand of quality assured trainings and individual accreditation to create a global standard for learning and development programmes. Work under the Learning pillar to provide access to high quality learning resources aims to support local responders and humanitarian professionals in gaining accreditation according to the skills framework. Furthermore, we will also encourage humanitarian organisations to adopt the skill framework to help them recognise the level of skills and expertise among their personnel. Learning and development providers will also be encouraged to adapt their learning programmes to the humanitarian skills passport and to live up to the requirements of the quality assurance system. (Read more about this under Support organisations)

“The Academy Centres will be the key in-country sources for supporting individuals and organisations.”
IV. Support Organisations
To achieve its impact objectives, we will support two types of organisations: first, humanitarian organisations will be assisted in assessing and filling their internal capacity building needs and secondly, learning and development providers will be supported to improve their operational and financial models as well as their learning and development programmes.

1. Humanitarian organisations
- **Provide on-demand advisory services.** We will use the learning resources and materials developed, networks with quality assured learning and development providers and the humanitarian skills framework to provide advisory services to traditional and non-traditional humanitarian organisations. The objective will be to identify the key capacity gaps within organisations and present actionable recommendations for filling them. This might include the creation of web-portals, or providing them with tools to adapt our content to their specific needs.

2. Learning and development providers
- **Identify stakeholders and their needs.** Key learning and development providers will be identified by Academy Centres in their regions. This will be done through an initial needs assessment process when the Centre is set up that is followed by continuous monitoring of trends in the learning landscapes of the countries where the Centre operates. Particularly promising institutions that provide high quality learning and development programmes but are limited in their scale by financial or operational constraints will be prioritised for further support.
- **Provide a platform.** Providing access to market information and a platform to enable more efficient and scalable delivery of learning by existing learning and development providers.
- **Provide active organisational support.** We will work with learning and development providers through the Academy Centres to strengthen both their financial and operating model and their learning and development provision. Building on their existing learning programmes, the Academy Centres will help providers tailor them to the local audience. The objective is to develop quality products and services that humanitarian sector workers want to buy and that are financially sustainable. In addition, the providers’ business model will be analysed and input provided to ensure that a long-term model is achieved. The goal of this exercise is to move the sector away from short-term, reactive training initiatives after disasters and towards continuous and cumulative training programmes that can be recognised internationally.

IV. Support Organisations
To achieve its impact objectives, we will support two types of organisations: first, humanitarian organisations will be assisted in assessing and filling their internal capacity building needs and secondly, learning and development providers will be supported to improve their operational and financial models as well as their learning and development programmes.

1. Humanitarian organisations
- **Provide on-demand advisory services.** We will use the learning resources and materials developed, networks with quality assured learning and development providers and the humanitarian skills framework to provide advisory services to traditional and non-traditional humanitarian organisations. The objective will be to identify the key capacity gaps within organisations and present actionable recommendations for filling them. This might include the creation of web-portals, or providing them with tools to adapt our content to their specific needs.

2. Learning and development providers
- **Identify stakeholders and their needs.** Key learning and development providers will be identified by Academy Centres in their regions. This will be done through an initial needs assessment process when the Centre is set up that is followed by continuous monitoring of trends in the learning landscapes of the countries where the Centre operates. Particularly promising institutions that provide high quality learning and development programmes but are limited in their scale by financial or operational constraints will be prioritised for further support.
- **Provide a platform.** Providing access to market information and a platform to enable more efficient and scalable delivery of learning by existing learning and development providers.
- **Provide active organisational support.** We will work with learning and development providers through the Academy Centres to strengthen both their financial and operating model and their learning and development provision. Building on their existing learning programmes, the Academy Centres will help providers tailor them to the local audience. The objective is to develop quality products and services that humanitarian sector workers want to buy and that are financially sustainable. In addition, the providers’ business model will be analysed and input provided to ensure that a long-term model is achieved. The goal of this exercise is to move the sector away from short-term, reactive training initiatives after disasters and towards continuous and cumulative training programmes that can be recognised internationally.

V. Establish Academy Centres & Partnerships
A cross-cutting priority for us is to strengthen the regional Academy Centres and build strong partnerships with academia, training providers and humanitarian organisations.

1. **Academy Centres.** Over the first five years, we will establish 10 Academy Centres, operating in 40 countries. The relationship between us and our Academy Centres will be two-way: we will provide resources and support to the Centres, and the Centres will help the Academy achieve its objectives by providing locally relevant learning opportunities to humanitarian responders. A summary of the different activities that will be required from the Academy Centres for each part of the Learning Strategy can be found in Annex I – Engaging with The Academy.

2. **Partnerships.** In accordance with our guiding principles, collaboration and building on existing knowledge will lie at the heart of all activities. Partnerships are key to all parts of our Core Strategy, whether to develop and share content, recognise skills or support organisations. Our role will be to create linkages between the supply and the demand side of humanitarian learning. Specifically, we will link learning and development providers (training providers, academic institutions or humanitarian agencies) with traditional and non-traditional responders who have learning and development needs, with Academy Centres, and with partners. A summary of
VI. Engage in evidence-based advocacy
We aim to influence policymakers and donors to focus increasingly on learning and development of skills and expertise among both traditional and non-traditional humanitarian responders. As a first step, it will be key to provide solid and convincing evidence for the effectiveness of learning and skill building as a means to improving humanitarian outcomes in disaster situations.

This activity will be the main focus of the Evidence pillar, under which we will aggregate, analyse and disseminate information on learning practices. However, evidence-based advocacy is also closely linked to the Learning pillar. As part of the Learning pillar, we will develop and implement an impact measurement system of learning on humanitarian responses. This will serve to collect data on the effectiveness of different learning practices. This data can feed into the analysis on good learning practices (undertaken as part of the Evidence part of the Knowledge & Evidence pillar). The results of these analyses can then be fed back into the improving the learning programmes.

VII. Promote Innovation through an innovation incubator
We will act as a resource for and incubator of new and innovative ideas related to learning for humanitarian disasters. In particular, we will set up an incubator that can provide resources and support to test, evaluate and scale up new ideas. Most of this work will take place as part of the Innovation pillar. However, the identification of promising ideas may arise from the Knowledge & Evidence or Learning pillars and the scaling of effective models may form part of rolling out new learning programmes under the Learning pillar.

The innovation strategy will include:
1. Innovative learning experiences, boot camps and conferences – including bringing together humanitarian practitioners, academics, technology experts and other private sector partners
2. Support network for coaching and mentoring
3. Crowd-sourced funding mechanisms.

“We will aim to influence policymakers and donors to focus increasingly on learning and development of skills and expertise.”

NEXT STEPS
This strategy will enable our Centres and partners to work with us to implement our plan of increasing accessibility, scale-up and build sustainable models of learning as well as ensuring that we engage partners with a user-centred approach to developing effective learning.

This strategy will be reviewed annually in order for us to remain flexible and relevant.
Annex 1: Engaging with the Academy

We will collaborate closely with Academy Centres and external partners from humanitarian organisations, academic institutions and learning and development providers. This Annex details the specific tasks and areas for which we will be looking for support from Centres or partners.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMY CENTRES</th>
<th>Responsibilities of the Academy Centres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Our objective</strong></td>
<td>Provide content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enable access to learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support organisations</td>
<td>Recognise skills and experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support organisations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Our objective**: Provide content
- **Provide content**: Academy Centres will help the Academy understand the local learning landscape. Their needs assessments support the Academy in identifying gaps where learning materials need to be contextualised or developed.
- **Enable access to learning**: Academy Centres will play a proactive role as platform provider and will support the identification, analysis and more efficient connection between supply and demand of learning. They will provide offline and online resources that are adapted to the needs and audiences of their local contexts. The Centres can play a particularly important role in fostering partnerships for sharing knowledge and experiences at the local and regional level by setting up events and creating opportunities for humanitarians to meet and share knowledge and experiences.
- **Support organisations**: Academy Centres will identify promising learning providers in their regions that may need organisational support. This will be done through an initial needs assessment as well as continuous monitoring of the learning landscape in each country. Quality assessment of learning and development programmes will be carried out by the local Academy Centre as well as the advisory support to learning and development providers (with the support of the global Academy).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS</th>
<th>What we are looking for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Our objective</strong></td>
<td>Provide content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provide content</strong></td>
<td>Undertake evidence-based advocacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Our objective**: Academic institutions are an important partner for the Academy as they offer academic rigour in programme development and delivery. In addition, academic institutions can provide thought-leadership on trends in learning needs that are important to understand for the Academy. Academic institutions can also support the Academy in keeping abreast with new approaches to learning that are piloted or practiced outside of the humanitarian sector.
- **What we are looking for**: Academic institutions can form important partners in generating rigorous data and analysis on the importance of effective learning practices for improving humanitarian outcomes in disaster situations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS</th>
<th>What we are looking for</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Our objective</strong></td>
<td>Provide content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provide content</strong></td>
<td>Enable access to learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recognise skills and experience</td>
<td>Support organisations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Our objective**: The Academy will collaborate closely with learning and development providers to understand how learning and development materials and knowledge can be aggregated, depending on the willingness of learning and development providers to share. Where knowledge and audience gaps have been observed, the Academy can invest in the development of material with an experienced learning and development provider.
- **Enable access to learning**: Quality assured learning and development providers will provide distance (level 2) and in-person (level 3) learning for both non-traditional and traditional humanitarian responders. Before partnerships can begin, Academy Centres will determine that the training provision is of high quality and corresponds to local training needs.
- **Recognise skills and experience**: Evaluations of learning and development programmes by both participants and external evaluators will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that quality remains high. The Academy’s role will be to link qualified learning and development providers with learners, both via Academy Centres and the online platform.
- **Support organisations**: The quality assurance system of learning and development programmes needs to be clearly communicated to providers to support them in adapting their existing programmes and reaching the standards. Early adopters will be essential to providing the Academy with feedback for improving the applicability of the quality assessment. In addition, partnerships with key learning and development providers will aim to ensure that their learning and development programmes can be mapped to the humanitarian skills framework to build recognition of programmes affiliated to the Academy.
- **What we are looking for**: The Academy will work closely with a set of promising learning and development providers to strengthen business models as well as their learning and development provision. The Academy will provide the link between both traditional and non-traditional humanitarian workers and learning providers. Through these partnerships, flagship programmes will be identified and promoted to humanitarian organisations and non-traditional actors.
1. The Guardian (2014) Eight ways climate change is making the world more dangerous
2. IPCC (2012) Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation
3. Swiss Re (2013) Mind the risk: A global ranking of cities under threat from natural disasters
8. Haque et al. (2012) Reduced death rates from cyclones in Bangladesh: What more needs to be done?
9. This includes, but is not limited to, conflicts, famines, weather-related events, etc.
11. Dalberg (2015) Learning and development landscape mapping
12. Dalberg (2015) Learning and development landscape mapping
13. An initial database of learning and development providers has already been established, and includes over 400 learning and development offerings. Partnerships with other organisations, such as the Network on Humanitarian Action (an academic partnership focused on humanitarianism) will also feed into the market place. The Network on Humanitarian Action has an online register of European humanitarian organisations and training providers and this partnership will be continued to ensure that the Academy’s database is as comprehensive as possible.
14. Eight relevant frameworks have been identified and analysed by the Academy so far: (i) the Consortium of British Humanitarian Agencies’ framework for humanitarian competencies, (ii) the European Universities’ Professionalisation on Humanitarian Action’s framework to classify academic degrees, (iii) Redr UK and Bioforce’s competency building guide to humanitarian training, (iv) Médecins Sans Frontières’ framework to articulate standards for internal staff, (v) the United Nations’ competency framework, (vi) the Professional Association of Diving Instructors’ qualification pathway, (vii) the Policing Professional Framework and (viii) Cisco’s career pathway framework.
15. This has already taken place to some extent, as the Humanitarian Professional Development Framework is set to be developed in partnership with ELRHA (Enhancing learning and research for humanitarian assistance) and draw on inputs from the competency frameworks of the Consortium of British Humanitarian Agencies (CBHA) and the European Universities’ Professionalisation on Humanitarian Action (EUPRHA).

References

“We will act as a resource for and incubator of new and innovative ideas”
Humanitarian Leadership Academy
We are a global learning initiative set up to facilitate partnerships and collaborative opportunities to enable people to prepare for and respond to crises in their own countries.

For more information contact: info@humanitarian.academy
humanitarianleadershipacademy.org
@AcademyHum
/HumanitarianLeadershipAcademy