Imagine a world where disaster-affected communities lead their own emergency response. A world where solutions are locally driven and expertise locally sourced. Imagine a world where communities at risk of disaster build their own resilience and are drivers of innovation and, when faced with disaster, have the capacity and capability to effectively respond.

CDAC Network is the global alliance of many of the world’s biggest humanitarian and media development organisations – including UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, NGOs, media and specialist communications organisations – committed to putting the power in humanitarian action back in the hands of communities.

We believe that, when communities have the information and the resources to make their own decisions, they have the capacity to find solutions to even the most challenging problems. We work to enable them to do this.

**Our areas of action for more effective participation and accountability using a Communication and Community Engagement approach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengthen collaboration for collective action</th>
<th>Reinforce and sustain capacity and surge support</th>
<th>Advocate for systemic change; influence policy and practice</th>
<th>Build the evidence; strengthen learning</th>
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</table>
| **Convening and collaboration**  
At the local, regional and global level, organise and facilitate new fora; create new communities of practice and cross-sector connections; showcase and adopt good practice. | **Guidance, tools and good practice**  
Develop, synthesise and curate evidence-based strategic and operational guidance.  
**Capacity development and surge support**  
Strengthen capacity at the individual and agency level by highlighting and providing training and peer-to-peer learning opportunities around the world, and maintaining a roster of skilled deployable experts. | **Community voices**  
Directly and through better and more inclusive feedback systems, amplify the voices, communication needs and feedback of communities affected by or at risk of crisis to improve policy and practice. | **Evidence-based research**  
Build the evidence base around: communicating and engaging with communities; the role of communication in crisis; impactful use of appropriate communication technologies; community-led innovation; and effective institutional and policy change. |
| **Support common services**  
Invest in country-level and inter-agency multi-stakeholder preparedness and response platforms and common services. | **Mainstream technology**  
Mainstream inclusive technology approaches, and build technological capacity; use digital solutions to better serve communities. | **Information**  
Strengthen the business and ethical case for providing timely and accurate information, utilising evidence-based advocacy approaches. | **Library of resources**  
Create a searchable, curated library featuring case studies, best practice, and tools in diverse languages. |
| **Introduce innovation models and tools**  
Facilitate better interconnections and co-creativity around innovation processes that involve communities affected by disaster both as the end-user and as the innovator or co-innovator. | | | |

**Providing coordination services for the humanitarian system**

As a global network, CDAC plays an essential role in the sector: it convenes the Communication and Community Engagement Initiative (CCEI); is an active contributor in the Participation Revolution Workstream and IASC Results Group 2 on Accountability and Inclusion; an official partner of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster; a member of ALNAP; and, works in close cooperation with GSMA, the CHS Alliance, and a number of other humanitarian, development and communication networks. Our extended network comes with connections to the private sector, civil society groups, communities and national governments.
We build a coalition for community engagement

On the ground, in global fora, and across the humanitarian system, we champion closer cooperation with communities affected by disaster and build strong alliances to make this happen. We facilitate collective movements of working at the national level and response-wide.

Our annual conferences connect those working on Communication and Community Engagement (CCE) across the humanitarian space, and evolve best practice and drive new thinking. We operate an expert pool of CCE professionals who can be deployed at short notice during the early phase of a humanitarian response to provide technical support and spearhead CCE coordination. We convene the sector-wide Communication and Community Engagement Initiative (CCEI), and are one of the driving forces of working at the national level and in strong alliances to make this happen. We facilitate a comprehensive curriculum designed to equip complete specialists and support staff with the skills needed to ensure that Communication and Community Engagement is at the heart of humanitarian action.

Innovation to support local leadership

We want innovation to work better for people affected by humanitarian crises. To this end, we co-led the UK Aid’s Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme (DEPP) innovation programme with Start Network that has seen four innovation labs set up in communities facing or at risk of disaster in Bangladesh, Kenya, Jordan and Philippines. The labs support local, scalable solutions to protect communities living in disaster-prone environments and advance innovation in the sector by involving people in crisis at all stages of the process.

Each lab followed a human- or user-centred design approach. Over 90 groups or individuals progressed through a structured curriculum, accessing specialist expertise in business development, social entrepreneurship and the sectors and markets they were looking to enter. The resulting portfolio is diverse, detailed, and demonstrating preparedness among communities hardest hit by disasters. These locally-rooted solutions offer long-term benefits for those communities.

We strengthen capacity and provide surge

Communication and Community Engagement requires specialist expertise. Our comprehensive curriculum is designed to equip complete specialist and support staff with the skills needed to support those looking to integrate CCE into their humanitarian skillset and to train the next generation of CCE leaders and coordinators. Addressing one of the biggest challenges to the sector is the lack of provision guidance on the tracking of rumours and the management of harmful ones. Download our Rumour Management Guide at www.cdacnetwork.org.

We support countries to be disaster-ready

Preparedness in Bangladesh and the Pacific

The Bangladesh National Platform called Shongjog ('linking'), is a national, multi-stakeholder platform, and has received support from the UN Telecommunications Cluster and a number of UN agencies they understand and channels they are familiar with at the outset; they need to be involved in programme design from the get-go.

Which is why we have facilitated the creation of over 20 innovative platforms and interventions in disaster-prone countries – from Syria to Bangladesh, South Sudan to the South Pacific. When a disaster happens, relationships have already been formed and responsibilities assigned, translation services have been prepositioned and feedback channels are already operational and embedded in National Disaster Management Agencies, or relevant authorities at various times of decision-making.

The most appropriate approaches are used to listen to communities’ needs, formulate complaints, and assist with rumour tracking and management.

The collective service augments local capacities so that national responders are better prepared in future responses.

All humanitarian responders are held to account by affected people through visible and predictable means.

In Fiji and Vanuatu, together with Ground Truth Solutions and funded by Australian DFAT, we have embarked on a localisation programme working with the National Disaster Management Authority and building national platforms on CCE for more systematic engagement with communities.

Find out more about all our national platforms at http://preparedness-response.cdacnetwork.org.

We establish an evidence base and shape the debate

The evidence is clear: we are not successfully including communities and people affected by disaster in humanitarian response. A recent perceptions survey on the state of CCE by the our member Group Truth Solutions noted that 20% of stakeholders were not confident that their opinion had been taken into account by aid providers. Conversely, having tracked and produced insights, 80% of stakeholders said that understanding the impact of Communication and Community Engagement in every major humanitarian intervention since the 2010 earthquake in Haiti, we have produced evidence base that demonstrates that embedding CCE into humanitarian programming makes aid more sustainable, equitable and effective.

We influence national and global policy

At the national level, across the UN, and in line with global commitments linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework, and the World Humanitarian Summit Grand Bargain, we influence policy in collaboration with our partners.

In 2018, we established the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) and as an official partner of the Emergencies and Disaster Management Results Groups and as an official partner of the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster, we ensure that Communication and Community Engagement is central to global humanitarian policymaking.

Providing thought leadership

Our ongoing policy engagement is complemented each year when CDAC Network brings together its members and diverse strategic partners to discuss critical issues at our global conference. In recent years, the discussions have been focused around the following topics: Accidental and Intentional Humanitarian Innovation: valuing what’s there. Keeping people safe

Working closely with communities brings additional responsibilities and requires a safe space for engagement. The term ‘safeguarding’, while ubiquitous in policymaking, is not fully explained or communicated to crucial audiences unfamiliar with or new to this area - staff, local partners and people accessing aid. Organisations’ policies and procedures can be overwhelmingly complicated and inappropriate reporting and safeguarding frameworks. As part of our work on innovation, and in coordination with safeguarding experts, we have produced a suite of tools and guidance to make safeguarding clear for everyone.

Download them now at: www.cdacnetwork.org.

The resulting portfolio is diverse, detailed, and demonstrating preparedness among communities hardest hit by disasters. These locally-rooted solutions offer long-term benefits for those communities.

We establish a disaster-resilient infrastructure to those countries at risk of disaster.

But where no platform exists, we continue to respond to emergencies, and have provided coordination and technical support to CCE efforts in a number of recent disasters.

During the response to Hurricane Maria in the Caribbean, we flew a CCE coordinator to Dominica to cover the acute phase and put communities at the forefront of decision making. As part of the Cyclone Idai response in Mozambique, we deployed a Portuguese-speaking Communication, Community Engagement and Accountability Coordinator whose work was funded by the H2H Network and hosted by OCHA. More recently, we deployed a CCE expert to Burkina Faso to support the status of response-wide Communication, Community Engagement and Accountability capabilities.

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Has your organisation specialist CCE expertise?

JOIN US as a member, strategic ally or corporate partner in advancing Communication and Community Engagement systematically to ensure people living in crisis situations have the information and resources they need to manage the challenges they face and access assistance.

Members of the CDAC commit to deliver the Network’s agenda by participating in Network activities. Through flexible collaboration, through and beyond our Communities of Practice, members’ capacities are quite literally networked to incubate new approaches and ideas, dramatically magnifying the power and value of those efforts and building greater change than would be possible working alone. The Network also has secretariat capacity to support members’ change agenda and to contribute to delivery.

Download the membership application form, or email CDAC Executive Director, Marian Casey-Maslen (Marian.Casey-Maslen@cdacnetwork.org) for more information.

CDAC FULL MEMBERS
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Anthropoloca
BBC Media Action
Community World Service Asia
DAHLIA
Deutsche Welle Akademie
First Response Radio
Fondation Hirondelle
Ground Truth Solutions
The International Committee of the Red Cross
International Media Support
InsightShare
Internews
International Organisation for Migration
NORCAP
The Peace and Conflict Journalism Network Asia
Plan International
Smile Again Africa Development Organisation
Save the Children
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Translators without Borders
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United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
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Leonard Doyle, Director, Media and Communication Division, Chief Spokesperson, the International Organization for Migration
Marina Skuric Prodanovic, Chief, System-wide Approaches and Practices Section at the Coordination Division, OCHA.

CDAC SECRETARIAT
CDAC’s global secretariat is based in London, in the UK.