



# 2020

## Annual Report

JUNE 2021



# 2020

Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities





N E T W O R K

# 2020

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## FOREWORD

*In years to come*, historians will look back on 2020 not as a year of great clarity and great vision, but as a year of terrible loss, widespread disruption, and pervasive fear. Humanitarians, used to compartmentalising crises in a single geographical region, suddenly found humanitarian need was truly global. Border closures, travel restrictions, social distancing and lockdowns barricaded most international staff from humanitarian operations, putting national staff – who make up 90% of humanitarian personnel – firmly in control of their own responses. Localisation, that Grand Bargain term that, being used bereft of action to the point that it risked becoming undermined, was thrust upon international organisations. At CDAC, which has long championed locally-led response strategies, we were proud of our national coordinators in Burkina Faso, Fiji, Sudan, Vanuatu and Zimbabwe who continued to facilitate more coordinated communication and engagement with communities as part of a wider-than-health response. With the prospect of a long and slow economic recovery in most advanced economies, and with it the inevitability of a reduction in international aid, the trust and reliance on local expertise, local solutions and local leadership is increasingly thrust on our sector, and we will continue to be vocal in nurturing and supporting such approaches in a responsible and professional way.

CDAC has long advocated for localisation through communication with and the engagement of communities. Indeed, it is possible to see, even at this early stage, that those countries and regions with an operating national platform on communication and community engagement have better sustained a locally-led and informed responses. When crises in the form of Severe Tropical Cyclone Harold hit Fiji and Vanuatu during a COVID-19 lockdown, the CDAC-supported national platforms were tested, and were found to be largely effective (for more information see page X). What is less clear is whether advanced economies – states whose governments insist on effective communication and engagement with communities in humanitarian response – have learned sufficiently from these principles they require others to adhere to. Communication and community engagement during the pandemic was an area in which many Western governments fell, and continue to fall, short (find out more about CDAC's webinar on this subject on page X). Indeed, the global nature of the pandemic has also reframed the humanitarian landscape: no longer is catastrophe confined to areas of the world that are economically vulnerable. Catastrophes can happen anywhere, impact everywhere, and even simultaneously. If COVID-19 has taught us anything, it's that the world is inextricably interconnected: no one is safe until we're all safe.



One consequence of the pandemic is that CDAC's annual events went online. The Annual General Assembly, habitually held in-person, and due in 2020 to be held in Geneva, went virtual and, as a result, became accessible to a large new audience. More than 350 people joined the event *Accountability in the Age of the Algorithm: Championing Pathways to Inclusion in Tech-Driven Futures* in October 2020, and many more listened to the keynote speeches and discussions recorded and available on CDAC's YouTube channel (find out more about the event on page X). What struck me is that the pandemic has not only accelerated localisation, but has also accelerated discussions – which have a long history – about the legacies of the humanitarian endeavour. Decolonising aid may seem like yet another humanitarian slogan, but it speaks to the radical imbalances of power and the very real structural injustices that have long been tolerated, shamefully so, in humanitarian work. Anasuya Sengupta, in her brilliant and brilliantly provocative keynote during the forum, suggested, “those who caused the problem cannot lead the solution”. For too long the humanitarian sector has reflected the economic and social power structures that are reflected in the world at large. And this has to change. We cannot confidently believe and claim that we are understanding the voices of communities if our own experiences are so far from their realities. To this end, towards the end of last year we launched an initiative to increase diversity on the CDAC board and we look forward to welcoming a new cohort of global humanitarian leaders to the CDAC Network to help shape the future of this network.

No one had an easy 2020. And no one will look back on last year with great fondness. But it is just possible that it took a global pandemic to reshape a humanitarian sector that has, until now, been resistant to reform. CDAC plans to remain at the forefront of this reform, and will be launching its 2022-27 strategy in the coming months to better support those organisations, institutions and actors working to reimagine a humanitarian system so that it works for those most in need, is responsive to those most marginalised, and is inclusive of the diversity of human experience. We look forward to you all joining us on this journey.

**Geoff Loane**  
**Chair, CDAC Network Board**



Communicating with Disaster-Affected Communities

The 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, and media and specialist communications organisations – committed to putting the power in humanitarian action back in the hands of communities.

A list of all our members and our Board of Trustees can be found on the back page of this report.



Credit: OCHA/Cynthia Cano



Credit: CARE/Valerie Fernandez 2020



Credit: Fiji Red Cross



Credit: CARE/Valerie Fernandez 2020



Credit: CARE/Valerie Fernandez 2020



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.



Credit: OCHA/Eve Sabbagh

## Strengthening Collaboration For More Effective Communication And Community Engagement

### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Read the Policy Paper: The Role of Collective Platforms, Services and Tools to support Communication and Community Engagement in Humanitarian Action – in Arabic, English, French and Spanish](#)
- » [Read the How-To Guide on Collective Communication and Community Engagement in Humanitarian Action – in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish](#)
- » [Read the latest status update, which details all of the national platforms supported, their composition and lead contact details](#)

### Systematically Localising Communication, Community Engagement And Accountability

National platforms for Communication and Community Engagement (CCE) are essential for making progress toward greater participation and accountability in humanitarian response. These platforms are innovative coordination mechanisms that bring together communication and community engagement activities and sit within, or influence, overall response leadership and ensure community engagement efforts are coordinated, systemic and locally-led. They are led by Government (where possible), with participation from local NGOs, Red Cross/Crescent Societies, UN Agencies, INGOs, Media Development agencies, specialist communications entities and private sector.

CDAC supports a network of over 35 national platforms globally, and facilitates the creation of new platforms as need arises. And need arose in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, during which coordinated communication and community engagement faced new challenges in the face of restrictions on travel, social distancing measures and the rapid spread of misinformation about the virus.



## Building And Supporting National Platforms In 2020

Africa was particularly hard hit by rumour and scepticism over the risks posed by the COVID-19 virus. To this end, and with funding from the H2H Network which is supported by UK aid from the UK government, CDAC set up three new national platforms to support the responses to complex humanitarian emergencies in the context of COVID-19 in three African countries deemed most at risk: Burkina Faso, Sudan and Zimbabwe.

### Burkina Faso

In December 2019, prior to COVID, CDAC undertook a *situational analysis* to assess the status, current strengths and needs related to response-wide Communication, Community Engagement and Accountability in the country. A CDAC National CCE Coordinator was recruited in March 2020 and took up the six-month position in April. Remote accompaniment was provided by the CDAC Secretariat.

Despite challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the CEA Working Group was established in March and met fortnightly or monthly (as the need arose), with more than 20 active participant organisations working around clearly-defined ToRs, an agreed action plan and coordination with the clusters, HCT, government and NGOs. In the third quarter of 2020, two regional Burkina CEA working groups were established in the Centre Nord and Est regions. Coordination was also established with the Burkinabe Government's COVID-19 response working group on Risk Communications and Community Engagement.

A [portal for the Burkina Faso CEAWG](#) was developed on the Humanitarian Response website, where key documents from the initiative can be found. In September, a CEA organisational capacity survey conducted as a self-assessment by around 50 national/international organisations operating in Burkina Faso demonstrated the following gaps:

- » CEA in the humanitarian response
- » Accountability questionnaire designs and data analysis
- » PSEA complaints management
- » Complaints management
- » Rumour management

In response, a three-day CEA workshop, in collaboration with OCHA, took place in October 2020 in Ouagadougou. The training addressed the challenges and opportunities of systematically embedding communication, community engagement and accountability (CCEA) in a humanitarian response in West Africa. It equipped participants with a basic understanding of the key principles of humanitarian response, community engagement and accountability through the combination for learning modules and practical exercises. At the end of the workshop, participants gained valuable, practical, and contextualised knowledge on various CCEA related topics, including perception surveys, multi-sector needs assessments, and feedback and complaints management.



#### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Find out more about achievements of the Burkina Faso national platform by reading this case study – available in both English and French](#)
- » [Watch a brief introductory video on the Burkina Faso CEA Working Group](#)
- » [Check out the recordings of a training workshop on collective services, held in Ouagadougou in October 2020 – in French](#)



Credit: OCHA/ Jyne Tinashe Mache



**Cyclone Idai food assistance project in Chimanimani District, Zimbabwe; funded by FAO and implemented by World Vision.**

## Zimbabwe

As part of the CDAC H2H COVID-19 response, a CDAC National Coordinator for Zimbabwe was recruited in June 2020, hosted by OCHA Harare. The Community Engagement and Accountability Thematic Working Group (CEA TWG) was established in August 2020, after a review finding a lack of robust coordination of community engagement in humanitarian response in the country, including on issues relating to COVID-19 and in spite of the good work of the RCCE Pillar lead from the Ministry of Health. The Working Group was endorsed by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) in September 2020 and comprised of UN agencies, I/NGOs representing various clusters (Health, Food Security, Protection-GBV and Child Protection, Education, Nutrition, WASH and Shelter/CCM). The co-chairs represent NNGOs (Musasa) & INGOs (World Vision). The CDAC Coordinator participated at COVID-19 coordination meetings and the RCCE pillar to document community engagement practice in the COVID-19 response. In order to integrate community voices in the Humanitarian Needs Overview, the coordinator engaged national NGOs that work in hard-to-reach areas to hold a series of dialogues with communities, based on a questionnaire developed by CDAC/IASC tools and guidelines for that purpose.

The CDAC Zimbabwe project ended in January 2020 and, despite our best efforts, additional funding was not available to continue to support the CDAC Coordinator position. It is hoped that the co-chairs who represent NNGOs (Musasa) & INGOs (World Vision) will continue to support the work of the group. The absence of the TWG and a related Coordinator in the HNO makes fundraising for such positions difficult. CDAC will be issuing a lessons-learned paper in 2021 looking more deeply at key lessons on Communication, Community Engagement and Accountability from previous and current epidemics and pandemics.



Credit: OCHA/ Charlotte Cans

### Sudan/Ethiopia (Tigray)

As part of the H2H COVID-19 response, a Senior CDAC National CCE Coordinator has been in place in Sudan since June 2020, hosted by OCHA. In September, an AAP/CEA Working Group was established following numerous consultative meetings and discussions. Convened by OCHA with CDAC support, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and UNHCR co-chaired the Working Group on rotational basis. During the Coordinator mission to Darfur on 8-16 December, a Community-Based Complaint and Feedback Mechanism (CBCFM) mapping was undertaken in West and Darfur Central States in consultation with AAP/CEA humanitarian partners who were implementing various forms of Complaints and Feedback Mechanism (CFMs) - these included agencies such as UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNFPA, WHO in addition to MOSWA and N/INGOs.

The Khartoum-based Sudan AAP/CEA Working Group is now supporting the Tigray response. Building on the Sudan project, the new H2H Tigray project is providing surge support to the setup of emergency coordination of CEA for the Refugee Response. CDAC liaises with UNHCR on the tools and approaches and leverages CDAC's independent position to help establish an effective community engagement collaborative consensus among all those involved in the emergency response. In early 2021, the CDAC National CCE Coordinator for Sudan visited the Gadaref and Kassala refugee sites to support collaboration between the national CEA coordination in Sudan and the refugee site and, alongside UNHCR and OCHA, to ease information sharing and lesson learning, particularly in relation to previous work undertaken concerning COVID-19. In addition, they addressed the priority AAP/CCE skills gaps and learning needs among responding partner organisations for developing capacity building programmes, including the rapid mapping of existing capabilities and actions related to Community-Based Complaints and Feedback Mechanisms relating to refugees from Tigray. Building on this, the coordinator, both on-site and in Khartoum, will continue to provide expertise in community consultation efforts that enable communities to articulate their problems and concerns for appropriate response and solutions.

**Ula Arba Health center, Ziway Dugda woreda, Arsi zone, Oromia region, Ethiopia. Severely malnourished children with complications are admitted in this health centre for treatment.**



Credit: GOAL/ Anteneh Tadele

**Harikewa Kebele, Hawzen Woreda, Tigray Region, Ethiopia.**



Credit: Fiji Red Cross



Credit: Fiji Red Cross

The CCE Working Group co-lead FCOSS was a key partner, utilising its divisional and district-level partners to engage communities in COVID-19 advocacy.

## Building Preparedness Capacity In Disaster-Prone Countries

Year three of CDAC's implementation of establishing and operationalising preparedness platforms in Fiji and Vanuatu – alongside Ground Truth Solutions (GTS) and supported by the Australian Government – continued on track despite both countries being battered by a series of crises beyond the COVID-19 pandemic: the devastation of Tropical Cyclone (TC) Harold in April 2020 and the Category-Five Severe Tropical Cyclone Yasa, which made landfall in December 2020, killing four people in Fiji. It was one of the strongest cyclones ever recorded in the Pacific. This was followed at end of January 2021 by Tropical Cyclone Ana.

### Fiji

In the third quarter of 2020, a CDAC Humanitarian-Development Interface Advisor was recruited in Suva to work alongside the CDAC Senior National CCE Coordinator, who facilitates the work of the national platform. They liaise with the NDMO, Ministry for Communication, DFAT Post, and co-chairs FCOSS (National NGO Network), UNICEF and other stakeholders, with technical support from GTS on surveys/feedback. A Regional CCE Technical Advisor supports their roles (and those of coordinators in Vanuatu) with additional hosting support from Partners In Community Development, Fiji.

In Fiji during 2020, CDAC supported the development of the COVID-19 message vetting systems, in an effort to improve the timeliness and efficiency with which approved health messages are disseminated to communities. The CCE Working Group co-lead FCOSS was a key partner, utilising its divisional and district-level partners to engage communities in COVID-19 advocacy. The Working Group approved a proposal from FCOSS for a two-way community engagement initiative using Facebook, as a joint CCE WG action. The project, funded by CDAC, aimed to provide a steady source of credible information to the community throughout the year (during disasters and in 'peacetime') from local experts in agriculture, gender, psycho-social support, microfinance, nutrition, youth empowerment, governance and from faith-based organisations. It also piloted a feedback loop for those involved in CCE work in Fiji, providing insights into communities' information needs.

The Suva-based CDAC Humanitarian-Development Interface Advisor, embarked on a round of face-to-face advocacy visits with partners and stakeholders in the Central and Western Divisions during September and October in 2020. This was an opportunity to continue to advocate for systematic and consistent two-way communication with disaster affected communities including at high levels of the Fiji government.



Credit: CARE/Valerie Fernandez 2020

## Vanuatu

In Vanuatu, in the second half of 2020, the CDAC/DFAT project was complemented by the CDAC H2H Vanuatu project which provided emergency CCE funding for the Cyclone Harold response. CARE Vanuatu continued to host the CDAC National Coordinator, who sits at the NDMO working in tandem with the NDMO team, other Government Ministries and sub-cluster leads and wider stakeholders. In Vanuatu, CARE provided additional CCE Technical Advisory and Secretariat support, with technical support from GTS on surveys/feedback. Later in the year, the NDMO Director approved the Feedback Mechanism concept, which also incorporates strategies for efficient delivery of information to communities as part of two-way communication, as an approach to be further developed for ongoing preparedness and use in future disaster responses. Along with the greater focus on communication with communities through the Tropical Cyclone Harold and COVID-19 responses to date, this commitment indicates that the value of communication and community engagement is increasingly being acknowledged by the NDMO and, as the lead of Vanuatu's National Cluster System, within the broader humanitarian architecture.

## Learning From Fiji And Vanuatu

A successful two-day joint Fiji-Vanuatu learning event was held in Suva on 5-6 March. The event was opened by the Fiji NDMO Director with a keynote address by the Deputy Australian High Commissioner. There was good representation from national and International agencies and great support from the OCHA Fiji team and OCHA Asia-Pacific.

### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Read the case studies on the Fiji and Vanuatu platforms](#)
- » [Watch a brief video about the Fiji platform](#)
- » [Watch a brief video about the Vanuatu platform](#)
- » [Read the Learning Report for Fiji and Vanuatu](#)

### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Read the 2020 Fiji and Vanuatu Learning Event Report](#)



## Measuring The Success Of National Platforms

### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Download the full Success Framework and summary – in French and English](#)

CDAC's *Framework for Assessing Success of National CCE Platforms* was designed to clearly lay out the different elements that combine to build a complete platform. Each element in the framework includes measures that can be used to assess whether the part is complete and performing as expected.

It was developed in cooperation with a number of in-country teams. The framework draws from the principles of a locally-led approach using a new kind of narrative, and a less top-down approach, for how we describe and assess success of collective models on the ground. The success framework defines a series of success measures, framed as questions and allows for local adaptation rather than being a prescriptive or top-down MEAL model. It is an ongoing piece of work and will be disseminated widely learning from the many national platforms across the globe. This document was published in English in October 2020, and in French in January 2021.

## Ensuring The Provision Of Information Management Functions In National Platforms

### MORE FROM CDAC:


- » [Download Guidance: Information Management Functions of an Inter-Agency AAP/CCE Working Group](#)

Last year, to support the rapid creation of national platforms in crises, CDAC published a document to articulate the role of an Information Management Officer in supporting a platform and enabling a common understanding of the information management functions and needs.

The document also served to orient an AAP/CCE Coordinator as to the information management tasks that they may need to complete, in the event that an Information Management Officer (IMO) is not available or deployed. In this situation, tasks would need to be prioritised and/or remote support provided to enable the coordinator to fulfil their coordination responsibilities, in addition to the information management functions. This document was supported by funding from UNICEF.

## Contributing To Communities Of Practice On In-Country Coordination And Collaboration

Over the course of 2020, CDAC convened with members and other key partners a total of five Community of Practice on In-Country Coordination & Collaboration calls with over 90 field and headquarter humanitarian practitioners joining throughout the year. Topics discussed included the Ebola response, the response to COVID-19, the Asia-Pacific typhoon season, the hurricane season in the Americas and emergencies the responses in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, Venezuela, Yemen and Zimbabwe.



The success framework defines a series of success measures, framed as questions and allows for local adaptation rather than being a prescriptive or top-down MEAL model.



## Advocating For Systemic Change To Put The Voices Of Communities At The Heart Of Humanitarian Preparedness And Response.

Currently, CDAC and UNHCR are leading a review of current approaches to determine the minimum set of questions and guidance for the next stage of development.

### CDAC Advocacy In Key Forums

#### **IASC Results Group 2 (RG2) On Accountability And Inclusion**

While contributing the work of the wider group, CDAC also co-lead, together with UNHCR, one of the RG2 sub-groups on community-based complaints and feedback mechanisms. Currently, CDAC and UNHCR are leading a review of current approaches to determine the minimum set of questions and guidance for the next stage of development.

#### **Grand Bargain Participation Revolution Workstream**

In February 2021, CDAC provided a detailed summary of activities to the Grand Bargain Participation Revolution workstream and accepted an invitation to present the Burkina Faso work at the most recent workstream meeting. This was well received as an example of innovative approaches to promoting AAP at a community level and localisation through staffing.





### Humanitarian Networks And Partnership Week (HNPW)

In February 2020 – while it was still possible to attend in-person events – CDAC joined the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW) organised by OCHA in Geneva. Alongside participating in the Inter-Network Day, advocating for the prioritisation of engaging and communicating with communities before, during and after a response during the interactive exhibition and at the Communication and Community Engagement Initiative (CCEI) event, CDAC’s main session, held on February 6, focused on national platforms. The event, titled *Operationalising the Participation Revolution through government-led preparedness platforms: Getting it right in situations of natural hazard*, was moderated by the UK Mission in Geneva and with speakers including the Heads of the Australian and Fijian Missions in Geneva and a senior representative from IFRC’s Americas programme. Panellists had an open and frank discussion on successes and challenges in coordinated, collective models.

CDAC has long been an active participant in the planning for the HNPW, and in 2021 we co-collaborated on the AAP priority topic, successfully advocating for the AAP priority theme be focused on ensuring that AAP is discussed within other priority topics in addition to a focused discussion. The CDAC-run session is titled *Peer pressure: how deepening digital access is transforming communication as aid* discussed the risks and opportunities in the digital transformation of humanitarian action with an all-star, all-female panel that included Anasuya Sengupta, founder of Whose Knowledge, Connie Moon Sehat, Director at Hacks/Hackers and Senior Fellow at the World Economic Forum; Nancy Groves, Chief of Digital Strategy at UNEP, and Irene Scott, Global Project Director, COVID-19 Rooted in Trust at Internews.

#### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Read a summary of the discussions and key lessons learned](#)
- » [Watch the event as it happened on CDAC’s YouTube Channel](#)

#### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Watch a recording of Peer pressure: how deepening digital access is transforming communication as aid](#)



## Algorithmic Accountability And Inclusive Technology

### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Watch all sessions and keynote speeches from the public forum](#)
- » [Read the background paper of the 2020 CDAC public forum](#)

The last quarter of 2020 saw the realisation of CDAC's first online public forum – *Accountability in the Age of the Algorithm: Championing Pathways to Inclusion in Tech-Driven Futures* – which attracted a global audience of many hundreds of humanitarians, communication and tech enthusiasts, futurists, policymakers and donors as we radically re-imagined digital humanitarian policy to make it more centred around community agency, knowledge and needs.

With more than 30 panellists from across six continents bringing their diverse expertise and experiences to bear on the responsible and ethical use of emerging technologies within humanitarian systems, the discussion was inspiring, challenging and provoked much discussion around ensuring that technological futures do not exacerbate past inequalities.

The forum was recorded, and all five sessions, along with the two keynote speeches, can be found on CDAC's YouTube channel.

### Imagining A World Beyond White Privilege

To what degree does the aid sector perpetuate the injustices and inequalities of the colonial past? What's the role of white privilege in upholding these injustices? And if we are to decolonise aid – what does this look like?

These were just some of the questions that the 2020 CDAC public forum attempted to answer in October 2020. One of the resulting reports from the event - *Imagining a World Beyond White Privilege* – brings together the voices, opinions and the vast trove of learning to which attendees were exposed. From the role that technology plays in both connecting but also identifying people of diverse SOGIESC, to the way in which technology confers power onto those that control platforms and have access to data, this brief report summarises a discussion that looks set to inform much of the humanitarian policy debate for some years to come.

### Making Technology Inclusive Fair And Accessible

The theme of CDAC's 2020 public forum was inclusive technology, and this was a rich source of discussion for those working humanitarian sector – which has traditionally been a laggard in adopting new technologies in its work.

The forum speakers quickly recognised that technology, while neutral, was not deployed as such and emerging digital technologies could create significant power inequalities. Furthermore, advances in digital technology could be seen to create deep strategic tensions between those who would advance technology use and those who wish to control its risks. All could agree that the improvements in efficiency and effectiveness that technology conferred had to be coupled with the intentional inclusion of communities and groups that are often excluded from participation in the creation and use of technology. But how to ensure this? The second report to result from the public forum, *Is Technology Broken*, summarises these discussions.

### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Read Imagining a World Beyond White Privilege](#)

### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Read Is Technology Broken?](#)



## The Impact And Opportunities Of Digital Technologies: The 2021 CDAC Public Forum

CDAC's 2021 annual public forum, will be held the week of October 4. After a year of events, including sessions at the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum, interrogating aspects of the future of communication and community engagement, the public forum will bring together these diverse streams of thinking into one global conversation, scheduled to be accessible to the different regions. For three days, across three regions, we will bring together local innovators, global thinkers, and those whose ideas have the potential to revolutionise community engagement and bridge the growing digital divide. The full programme and registration details will open in September 2021





## Strengthening Learning And Support The Production Of Evidence About Communication And Community Engagement.

### Responding To COVID-19

#### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Check out CDAC's COVID-19 Resource Portal](#)

As the COVID-19 spread around the world, and its impact became ever-more apparent, the CDAC Network worked fast to put together a comprehensive portal of materials related to COVID-19 in humanitarian settings and pandemic-related communication and community engagement tools and resources for its members, partners and the wider humanitarian system. The portal went live in late March 2020, and has been continuously updated since then.

### Improving The Response To COVID-19

Work began in June 2020 on the development of a CDAC Lessons Paper on COVID-19 and CCE, which was concluded in early October. The paper, titled *Improving the Response to COVID-19: Lessons from the Humanitarian Sector around Communication, Community Engagement and Participation*, outlines learning from the humanitarian aid sector in accountability around two-way communication, community engagement, and the participation of affected people, and how this can be applied to support the COVID-19 response. It points to eight key areas where the global pandemic response is falling short, along with lessons from the humanitarian sector to help remedy them. These lessons may also help to minimise the impact of future health emergencies and humanitarian crises in all countries. The document was published in November 2020.



Credit: IOM/Muse Mohamed

## The West And The Rest: Launching The COVID-19 Lessons Paper

The launch of the COVID-19 lessons paper was marked with a webinar, held on 3 December 2020, in which some of the world's leading public health thought leaders interrogated the West's response to this crisis, and in particular the series of failures in communication, community engagement and accountability – referring to measures developed by the humanitarian sector, largely funded by Western donors, but largely ignored in their own responses.

## Sharing Learning From National Platform Case Studies

Much of the last quarter of 2020 was spent documenting the learning from the national platforms that CDAC had been supporting. Case studies on the Fiji and Vanuatu national platforms were published, along with introductory videos for both. The case study detailing the innovative approach to local and global model of cooperation as used in the Burkina Faso national platform was published in both English and French in January 2021, alongside a video introducing the work of the platform. Furthermore, a capacity bridging event held for partners of the Burkina Faso platform was recorded and made available online.

### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Download and read Improving the Response to COVID-19](#)
- » [Read the related blog, “How hard-fought lessons from the last decade of humanitarian assistance in crisis situations can help the global response to COVID-19 be more responsive to the needs of real people on the ground”](#)
- » [Watch the recording of The West and the Rest](#)
- » [Watch Learning on communicating & engaging with communities in the context of COVID-19 – a public session from the CDAC 2020 AGA](#)

### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Read the case studies on the Fiji and Vanuatu platforms](#)
- » [Read the Learning Report for Fiji and Vanuatu](#)
- » [Read the Burkina Faso national platform case study – available in both English and French](#)
- » [Watch a brief video about the Fiji platform](#)
- » [Watch a brief video about the Vanuatu platform](#)
- » [Watch a brief introductory video on the Burkina Faso CEA Working Group](#)



Credit: WFP/Saiyina Bashir

**World leaders need to coordinate better to ensure a more effective and coherent global response to COVID-19 and to put vulnerable people at the centre of what we collectively do to prevent, prepare and respond to all current and future crises. Narrowing the accountability gap should be a priority for us all. - Improving the Respones to COVID-19, CDAC Network 2020**

## Communication & Community Engagement Capacity Bridging

For those committed to improving two-way communication and community engagement for greater accountability to people affected by crisis, the CDAC Network refreshed its training package in 2020 to better serve its members and partners, with all trainings being made available online or remotely. Each module provides practical advice on how to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian aid efforts by involving affected communities in the response. The new training package is as follows:

### **Basic Technical Training In Communication, Community Engagement And Accountability (CCEA)**

This is an introductory CDAC Network course in the use of CCE tools and techniques. It gives participants a foundation knowledge in the use of community communication and community engagement in humanitarian programming, particularly with regards to the benefits of two-way communication and better accountability. This course is recommended for those with limited or no experience of communicating with communities. This course can also provide a lead into the advanced technical training course outlined below.

## Advanced Technical Training In CCEA

This Advanced Technical Training has been designed for field and technical staff who have completed the CDAC Network basic technical training in community engagement (see above) who will be responsible for managing the implementation of community engagement activities at scale. It would also be useful for senior staff or those on deployment rosters with awareness of CCE, but who need a deeper knowledge to increase the effectiveness of programme outcomes, especially when it comes to allocating or budgeting resources.

## Training For Senior In-Country CCE Coordinators

The coordination of Communication, Community Engagement and Accountability (CCEA) among implementing partners has often been highlighted as a key success factor in the successful implementation of community engagement and accountability. However recent CDAC Network [research](#) has noted that the soft skills needed to undertake coordination more effectively are wide-ranging and subtle, and not always easily learned. This training has been developed in response to this research and is designed to give people who will work in CCEA coordination, or for surge personnel who will need to do so at short notice, the key skills they will need when acting as coordinators, so they can build more resilient cooperative embedded partnerships in community engagement.

## Bespoke Advanced Training In CCEA

While the Advanced Technical Training in CCEA will improve skills, the CDAC Network is also able to develop and deliver bespoke training for organisations looking for training tailored specifically to their needs. Examples could include creating training tailored for work involving climate resilience, specific groups of vulnerable people, sectorial-focused work or for training to be integrated within a wider programme of capacity development.

## Briefing Module

In this two-hour module, participants receive an overview of what communication and community engagement is, why it is important, and how it feeds into improving accountability and participation.

## Online CDAC E-Learning Course: Communication Is Aid

An introductory, and free, three-hour e-learning course that introduces the concept of communication as aid. It takes participants through a number of interactive scenarios to teach the basic elements of how to engage and provide information for affected communities and establish communication mechanisms for dialogue. This training is hosted on the Kaya portal by the Humanitarian Leadership Academy, this course can be taken on its own or as a precursor to other courses.

To commission training or provide feedback on our training opportunities, email [training@cdacnetwork.org](mailto:training@cdacnetwork.org)

Each module provides practical advice on how to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian aid efforts by involving affected communities in the response.

### MORE FROM CDAC:

- » [Visit CDAC's training page and find out more about all of the above trainings](#)



Credit: IOM/Abdullah Al Mashrif

**COVID-19 showed the failure of governments to engage and communicate effectively with communities and find means for them to participate actively in the response has had devastating – and avoidable – consequences. This impact has been disproportionately felt by the most vulnerable and marginalised people, who often felt they were being overlooked. Improving the Respons to COVID-19, CDAC Network 2020**

## 2020 Capacity Bridging Services Offered

### **Training Review And Training Of Trainers In Community Engagement And Accountability For NORCAP**

In 2020, CDAC provided three technical assistance packages to NORCAP programmes (CashCap, Lake Chad SCO, Climate Services) to reinforce their experts' knowledge and skills on CEA. In 2021, CDAC will undertake a review of the previous trainings and develop a bespoke training of trainers (ToT) package for NORCAP to train their own experts. The ToT will enable NORCAP's roster to be trained internally by a NORCAP specialist. The project will end in July after the new team are being mentored to deliver their first training.

### **H2H Get Ready Fund**

In December 2020, CDAC was successful in its joint submission for the H2H Get Ready Fund with Translators Without Borders, with the project "Building Bridges in Surge Capacity for Community Engagement and Accountability". CDAC will provide in-country surge expertise in CCEA with localised team members; selecting and training potential national coordinators and providing high level mentoring and training. In addition, there will be a pilot training package for community engagement-based enterprises and companies who are able to assist in the humanitarian response. This pilot project could provide a sustainable resource of in-country technical expertise. The trainees for the national coordinator training went through a competitive process with trainees eventually being selected from Burkina Faso, Bangladesh, Venezuela, Zimbabwe and Sudan. The pilot company undertaking community engagement training is FAMA films, which is a media production company based in Burkina Faso, where they will eventually work with the CEA working group as part of the pilot.





## Ensuring CCE/AAP Expertise Into The Future

COVID-19 made communicating and engaging with communities in humanitarian contexts ever more urgent as the virus spread. The CDAC Network tried to ensure the response – both that to the pandemic, and the associated wider-than-health response – was staffed with communication and community engagement (CCE) experts.

In 2020, three generic terms of reference (ToR) were developed for surge deployment to support Accountability to Affected Populations and Communication and Community Engagement in humanitarian operations. It involved harmonising existing CDAC surge ToRs and consulted with global and in-country experts, including the IASC Results Group 2 and CHS Alliance. The ToRs reflected the three most common AAP/CCE roles that are requested by humanitarian responses, which are:

- » An agency focused Technical Officer role to improve agency performance on AAP/CCE.
- » An inter-agency Coordinator role, facilitating a working group or similar platform on AAP/CCE.
- » An inter-agency Senior Advisor role focused on supporting the humanitarian architecture and senior management in the development of a collective approach to AAP/CCE.

Lack of coordination skills training was identified as a priority gap during the surge consultations. Building on CDAC's existing training package, an advanced Coordinator-level training was developed and piloted in Nairobi 21-24 January 2020, with 25 participants from UN agencies, INGOs, Red Cross/Red Crescent, and community-based organisations. This will be further built on over the coming months.

It involved harmonising existing CDAC surge ToRs and consulted with global and in-country experts, including the IASC Results Group 2 and CHS Alliance.

# Outlook for 2021



Using the collective clout of the network, CDAC seeks to reverse the focus of humanitarian and development decision-making – moving from global to local.

As the final year of operationalising its 2016-21 Strategic Plan, 2021 will be a period of reflection and redirection for CDAC. In October 2020, CDAC began the process of listening to humanitarian coordinators, humanitarian practitioners and, most importantly, to the communities whom we support in order to better understand how we could better support the implementation of measures to strengthen communication, community engagement and accountability. To this end, we contracted an international strategic planning expert to assist with the development of CDAC's new strategy. After consulting many hundreds of people across all regions, the following vision and strategy became apparent.

## **Vision – The World We Want To See**

Our vision is that communities will have the information and resources they need to determine their own solutions and be central stakeholders in humanitarian and development decision making.

Using the collective clout of the network, CDAC seeks to reverse the focus of humanitarian and development decision-making – moving from global to local. This is done through deep engagement with local bodies to strengthen sustainable communication and engagement ecosystems. These national and sub-national platforms support universal access to the decision-making apparatus and the intentional inclusion of marginalised voices.

## **A Focus On Intentional Inclusion And Accountability**

CDAC is uniquely positioned to advance an approach to CCEA that contributes to greater inclusion of diverse people and entities in decision making and practice. We can help ensure that national and sub-national level CCEA is championed in the global system and that inclusion is central to CCEA planning, advocacy, debate, decision making and publications.

### Strategic Aim 1: Enable Local Drivers Of CCEA

Support efforts to place national governments, local civil society, local communities, and private sector actors at the center of CCEA initiatives that empower local communities.

**Context:** Crisis response will increasingly be led and delivered by a broad collaboration of national, community, civil society, and private sector actors. This transformed approach to humanitarian action will build on informed communities that are empowered to guide their own actions and shape the overall crisis response.

### Strategic Aim 2: Provide A Strategic Global Voice For Inclusive CCEA

In the global system, champion a national and sub-national level approach to CCEA that ensures greater representation and inclusion in decision making policy and practice.

**Context:** Transformational changes in crisis response will require existing international aid sector actors to reshape their roles and strategies. Key to this transformation will be new policies and practices that leverage best practice approaches to CCEA.

### Strategic Aim 3: Responsibly Leverage CCEA Digital Technologies

Identify, promote, and guide efforts to responsibly leverage new digital technologies in CCEA efforts.

**Context:** Over the next five years, technology advances and growing availability will make technology a transformative tool for advancing CCEA and enabling crisis response. These opportunities will come with challenges linked to broad accessibility, privacy, and ethical use of technology.

### Strategic Aim 4: Sustain And Grow CDAC's Impact

Assure that CDAC has a sustainable foundation of support to continue its efforts and to expand its reach to more communities.

**Context:** The need for CCEA is not limited to a few geographies or contexts. There will be growing need for CCEA to be integrated into all areas of the world and across the humanitarian-development nexus

In addition to readying the secretariat team to operationalise this new strategy, during 2021, we will simultaneously be holding a series of events on the future of communication, community engagement and accountability in contexts experiencing the fast democratisation of digital technologies. We'll be creating online space for these discussions at the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW), the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum, at our annual public forum in October, and during a number of other significant events, webinars, and online discussions. These events will bring together humanitarian thought leaders, communities, drivers of digital transformation and futurists to reimagine the opportunities, and discuss how best to overcome the challenges, of this brave new world. *See you there!*

# Financial Statements

CDAC Network's total income for 2020 was £1,002,221. 2020 was the CDAC Network's third year operating as an independent entity. The financial results and balance sheet, opposite, are extracts from the full statutory accounts.

**In summary;** the CDAC Network Ltd total income for 2020 was £1,002,221 (2019: £608,997) with a total expenditure of £790,697 (2019: £484,072). Income from Charitable activities was £998,621 (2019: £570,856); £145,000 from membership fees, £469,469 from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for Fiji and Vanuatu, £299,881 from DFID/Danish Refugee Council under the H2H Fund Mechanism and £85,810 from Norwegian Refugee Council (NORCAP/CASHCAP). A small amount of 2019 special initiative income was returned in 2020, £1,539.

CDAC Network Limited ended 2020 with total reserves of £420,638 (2019: £209,114); £109,915 unrestricted (from Membership) and £310,723 restricted (from Charitable activities' funders).

**CDAC Network Limited**

**Statement of financial activities** (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

**For the year ended 31 December 2020**

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2019 Total £
<b>Income from:</b>							
Charitable activities							
Membership	2	145,000	-	145,000	139,198	-	139,198
DFAT – Fiji and Vanuatu	2	-	469,469	469,469	-	346,641	346,641
DRC (H2H)	2	-	299,881	299,881	-	32,635	32,635
NRC (CASHCAP/NORCAP)	2	-	85,810	85,810	-	-	-
Member Special Initiatives	2	-	(1,539)	(1,539)	-	52,382	52,382
Other income		3,600	-	3,600	38,141	-	38,141
<b>Total income</b>		<b>148,600</b>	<b>853,621</b>	<b>1,002,221</b>	<b>177,339</b>	<b>431,658</b>	<b>608,997</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>							
Charitable activities							
Membership	3	84,144	-	84,144	135,888	-	135,888
DFAT – Fiji and Vanuatu	3	-	311,433	311,433	-	239,472	239,472
DRC (H2H)	3	-	327,225	327,225	-	51,243	51,243
NRC (CASHCAP/NORCAP)	3	-	47,713	47,713	-	-	-
Member Special Initiatives	3	-	20,182	20,182	-	30,661	30,661
Other expenditure	3	-	-	-	26,809	-	26,809
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>84,144</b>	<b>706,553</b>	<b>790,697</b>	<b>162,697</b>	<b>321,375</b>	<b>484,072</b>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>64,456</b>	<b>147,068</b>	<b>211,524</b>	<b>14,642</b>	<b>110,283</b>	<b>124,925</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>							
Total funds brought forward		45,459	163,655	209,114	30,817	53,372	84,189
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>109,915</b>	<b>310,723</b>	<b>420,638</b>	<b>45,459</b>	<b>163,655</b>	<b>209,114</b>

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 27a to the financial statements.

**CDAC Network Limited**

**Balance sheet**

Company no. 10571501

**As at 31 December 2020**

	Note	£	2020 £	£	2019 £
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Debtors	9	98,810		57,999	
Cash at bank and in hand		522,935		333,409	
			<b>621,745</b>		<b>391,408</b>
<b>Liabilities:</b>					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	10	(201,107)		(182,294)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			<b>420,638</b>		<b>209,114</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<b>420,638</b>		<b>209,114</b>
<b>Total net assets</b>			<b>420,638</b>		<b>209,114</b>
<b>The funds of the charity:</b>					
Restricted income funds	13a		310,723		163,655
Unrestricted income funds:					
General funds		109,915		45,459	
Total unrestricted funds			109,915		45,459
<b>Total charity funds</b>			<b>420,638</b>		<b>209,114</b>

Approved by the trustees on 30 June 2021 and signed on their behalf by

Geoff Loane  
Chair

Laura Collier-Keywood  
Treasurer



### How You Can Join The CDAC Network

You can become a part of the CDAC Network as a member, strategic ally or corporate partner. You can help advance 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 CDAC commit to deliver the Network's agenda by participating in CDAC 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 CDAC Network also has secretariat capacity to support members' change agenda and to contribute to delivery.

#### For more information on CDAC membership, visit:

- » [cdacnetwork.org/members/](http://cdacnetwork.org/members/)
- » email [info@cdacnetwork.org](mailto:info@cdacnetwork.org)

# Who We Are

## CDAC FULL MEMBERS

- » ActionAid International
- » Anthrologica
- » 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 Organization for Migration
- » NORCAP
- » The Peace and Conflict Journalism Network Asia
- » Plan International
- » Smile Again Africa Development Organisation
- » Save the Children
- » Thomson Reuters Foundation
- » Translators without Borders
- » United Nations Population Fund
- » United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- » United Nations Children's Fund
- » United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- » World Association for Christian Communication
- » World Vision International
- » World Food Programme
- » World Health Organization

## CDAC AFFILIATE MEMBERS

- » EarthX
- » FilmAid
- » InWhatLanguage
- » Lifeline Energy

## CDAC GOVERNING BOARD

- » Geoff Loane, Chair, Independent
- » Laura Collier-Keywood, Treasurer, Independent
- » Jonathan Mitchell, Transformation Director, Overseas Development Institute
- » Caroline Nursey, Executive Director, BBC Media Action
- » Rosie Parkyn, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Internews Europe
- » Jamo Huddle, Director of Humanitarian Design, Monitoring, and Evaluation, World Vision International.
- » Laura Walker McDonald, Senior Director, Insights and Impact, the Digital Impact Alliance
- » Ledrolen R. Manriquez, Projects Coordinator, The Peace and Conflict Journalism Network
- » Leonard Doyle, Director, Media and Communication Division, Chief Spokesperson, the International Organization for Migration
- » Marina Skuric Prodanovic, Chief, Systemwide Approaches and Practices Section at the Coordination Division, OCHA.

## CDAC SECRETARIAT

CDAC's global secretariat is based in London, UK



## Acknowledgements

2020 was a busy year, and we are grateful for the unflagging support from our board, members, partners and supporters. It has been their generosity of time, expertise, resources and finance that has helped ensure that the CDAC Network remains resourced and able to help organisations put communities in control of the assistance they receive in humanitarian response.

A special thanks to our members for their annual membership fees which are invaluable to the operations of the secretariat. Particular thanks go to the following donors for their generous financial support for programmes: the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT); the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO); the H2H Network; NORCAP/CASHCAP/NRC and UNICEF.

CDAC's work in 2020 would not have been possible without the additional capacity support of the CDAC Expert Pool, whose work across the globe enables the full implementation of the CDAC multiyear strategy. We are hugely grateful for your hard work and continued commitment: Thank you!

CDAC Network is the global alliance of more than 30 of the world's biggest humanitarian and media development organisations – including UN agencies, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, NGOs, media and communications organisations – committed to putting the power in humanitarian action back in the hands of communities.

Hyperlinks: if you are reading a hard copy of this Annual Report, please note that links to all of the articles, papers and documents referred to can be found in the online version at

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