

Learning without limits

humanitarian
leadership
academy



Bi-Annual Report
2019-2020

Acknowledgements

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There are sadly too many partners to name that we’ve worked with in 2019–20, but we couldn’t have achieved this much without your invaluable support!

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"It was a global crisis that brought home the importance of the people around us. Instinctively, it was those in our own communities we rallied around or looked to for support."

Rachel O'Brien, Director of the Humanitarian Leadership Academy

Never closer together

Never more apart, never closer together. This was the paradox of 2020 and its defining crisis: the Covid-19 pandemic. As lockdowns forced us into isolated bubbles for months at a time, we found ways to meet the deep human need for connection – connection to support, to information, to each other.

It was a global crisis that brought home the importance of the people around us. Instinctively, it was those in our own communities we rallied around or looked to for support. If any year made the case for local people taking the lead in responding to the crises they face, it was 2020.

At the same time, technology made distance meaningless, bringing us closer than ever to people on the other side of the planet. The possibilities for sharing experiences and knowledge across boundaries seemed limitless.

This report shows why the Humanitarian Leadership Academy is all about building just these kinds of connections. It covers two years – 2019 and 2020 – and two teams: Save the Children UK's Humanitarian Capacity Building team and the Humanitarian Leadership Academy, which merged under the banner of the Humanitarian Leadership Academy in January 2021.

In the pages that follow, you'll read how we expanded and improved the range and quality of the learning we offer. You'll discover how we responded rapidly to the Covid-19 crisis, launching a new Covid-19 learning

pathway. You'll see how we tapped into the world's most exciting new advances to offer education in groundbreaking new formats – from virtual reality to interactive multiplayer games. And you'll find out how we stepped up our drive to provide humanitarian professionals with opportunities for professional development and the recognition their expertise deserves.

The report sets out our unmatched learning offer, including our programmes to help humanitarian organisations better prepare for disasters. It explains our passion for localisation – a shift from an international, top-down system of humanitarian aid to one led by local responders. And it shows how our approach promotes that shift through a global network of regional centres, which put learning experts in the parts of the world they're needed most.

In 2019–20, as humanitarians stepped up to the challenge of Covid-19 and other ever-more frequent and complex crises, demand for our services surged. Our award-winning online platform, Kaya, ended the year with 281,000 users – a figure that doubled in the space of 2020 alone. The excellence of our pioneering new courses was recognised with a series of awards, and some of the world's leading non-governmental organisations took Kaya and moulded it to their needs.

Most importantly of all, as you'll read in this report, hundreds of thousands of people from Bangladesh to Mozambique to Yemen took the skills, tools and knowledge we offer and applied it in their own communities. A new generation of local humanitarians, responding to some of the worst humanitarian crises on earth.

Rachel O'Brien
Director of the Humanitarian Leadership Academy



Going local

A world where local humanitarian players play a leading role in emergency response – a process commonly referred to as localisation – is not a distant utopian dream. It is an increasingly urgent necessity.

An unprecedented number of humanitarian crises – compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic – left an estimated 167.6 million people in need of humanitarian aid in 2020. And with the pandemic still far from over, the outlook for 2021 looks just as bleak.

Meeting this growing need costs an estimated \$30 billion per year. A struggling global economy and shifting national priorities have made it difficult if not impossible for the international community to generate these funds.

Re-engineering the global humanitarian system is now an urgent priority. The top-down approach to emergency response – the parachuting in of overseas expertise and resources to fix the problem – is not efficient nor effective. It's too reactive, with too little emphasis on planning and preparation.

Putting the power into the hands of local humanitarian players makes far more sense. They do not need to be flown in. They speak the language, understand the culture and know how things work in the places they live. They don't leave after the relief effort wraps up – they, and their skills and resources, are a permanent part of the community, ready to move into action again at a moment's notice. They are the humanitarians of the future.

It is time to invest in these humanitarians properly. We need to build on the skills and wealth of knowledge they already have about how to prepare for emergencies ahead of time, respond when they strike and lead the recovery effort in the aftermath.

The Grand Bargain* committed to provide at least 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders – a commitment the world is actually further away from reaching in real terms than it was in 2016.

But investment in localisation isn't just about money. It involves helping local humanitarian organisations to build critical skills and understanding so they no longer need to rely upon international agencies to make decisions and respond to crises. It means providing them with relevant learning they can integrate and share among their partners and networks.

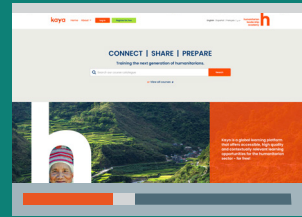
Accessing such learning, based on a deep understanding of the local context and communities' needs, is a critical part of the shift towards localisation. It is something the Humanitarian Leadership Academy has worked hard to provide through our diverse portfolio of programmes (see p18).

We've also supported localisation by building and developing our regional centres and network members, enabling them to provide the learning most needed in their regions. We are proud to have regional centres in East & Southern Africa, West & Central Africa, Asia and the Middle East, as well as network members in the Philippines, Bangladesh and Lebanon (see p32).

**The 'Grand Bargain' is an agreement between the biggest donors and humanitarian organisations to get more means into the hands of people in need, and to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian aid.*



2019–2020 Highlights



281,000+

people using Kaya to access
online learning

in



190
countries



4

Expansion of our Regional Centres and

660,000
course enrollments



3

Network Members

8

humanitarian responses directly supported through
our reactive capacity-strengthening work



3

Award winning products:

FIELD
Safeguarding VR
The Business Continuity Programme



44

courses delivered
(face-to-face and remotely)

946

participants reached directly



94%

of those direct participants
came from disaster-
affected countries



880,000+
social media followers

19

client organisations
worked with us



21

consultancy and advisory
projects delivered to other
organisations and
Save the Children members



12,700
HPass users worldwide

and



37,000+
digital badges claimed

The evolution of our platforms

Kaya: our global learning marketplace

After a complete upgrade, we relaunched our award-winning online learning platform Kaya in June 2019, adding extra features and functions to enhance our users' experience. Kaya now offers a sector-leading global learning marketplace for learning providers and learners alike. And when the Covid-19 pandemic hit, and humanitarians across the world looked for ways to meet this rising challenge head on, Kaya came into its own.

Demand skyrocketed. The number of users doubled in 2020, rising by 143,000 to 281,000 by the end of the year. At its peak, up to 15,000 new users were signing up every month.

They were able to access courses either adapted or created in response to the pandemic. The upgrade meant they could also:

- find relevant courses more easily
- receive course recommendations based on profiles and preferences
- enjoy new course designs and formats
- better track their progress.

More than 450 online courses in a total of 12 languages are now available on Kaya. They cover everything from disaster risk reduction, to coaching and mentoring, to psychological first aid for children. We introduced Spanish as a full platform language in March 2020 as we seek to make learning available to everyone who needs it, no matter where they live.

Crucially, though, it's the countries in the grip of humanitarian crises where most learners are to be found – showing that Kaya is used by the people, communities and organisations who need it most. Of the top ten countries accessing Kaya, eight are in the global south: the Philippines, Bangladesh, Kenya, Syria, Nigeria, Iraq, Yemen and Uganda.

In large part this is because the knowledge humanitarians gain through Kaya can readily be applied to their own local context – even, or especially, in the toughest places in the world.



Kaya in numbers

- 281,000 Kaya users*
- 143,000+ new users in 2020 alone
- up to 15,000 new users per month
- 450+ online courses now available on Kaya, in up to 12 languages

*as of 31st December 2020

"Kaya seemed like the perfect fit"

In one of the world's most marginalised communities – the Palestinian refugee camps of Jordan – Khaled Al Shaka'a runs a humanitarian organisation called One Love. Khaled has been using Kaya's online courses to boost the skills and knowledge of his humanitarian volunteers. He speaks highly of Kaya's relevance and accessibility.

"We needed to start building the capacity of our core team of volunteers, and Kaya's range of courses seemed like the perfect fit," says Khaled. "[Our volunteers] are keen to develop their skills and learn applicable knowledge that supports their experience as both refugees and volunteers in their communities."

"Most humanitarian standards are developed in the West. One of the biggest challenges facing the sector is the difficulty in then applying these standards to real-life, local situations. We understand the scenarios because we live them every day, but simple, locally focused learning resources are hard to find."

"Exposure is also a huge issue: we have travel restrictions and can't keep waiting for experts to visit us to be able to benefit from transfer of knowledge and experiences. Kaya has helped us by offering locally applicable learning resources in a virtual environment that allows everyone to feel more connected."

"We've started off with the basics such as the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), the humanitarian principles, and we hope to gradually move on and introduce these principles to other groups in the community, allowing more people to use our spaces and to learn."



"You can really see the impact Kaya has on people's knowledge as their discussion points and perspectives improve throughout the sessions. We're grateful to have access to these free resources and look forward to helping spread this essential knowledge even further."

Making Kaya work for organisations

Flexibility is one of the key principles of Kaya. Organisations can use the platform and content in a way that works for their employees and helps them achieve their aims.

In 2019, we officially launched our portfolio of [Kaya products](#), from entry to mid to comprehensive portal solutions – Kaya Curate, Create, Share and Prepare. Organisations are able to integrate the Kaya portals they create with their existing systems, using Single Sign-On and HR Synchronisation. The adaptability of Kaya saw us gain a host of new clients in 2019-20, including:



What organisations have to say about Kaya

"Now that we have started offering learning through Kaya, we do see that people are often surprised by the amount of free, high quality online learning available."



Leonie Meijerink, Learning Organisation Manager, War Child Holland

[Read more](#)

"Since Rescue Academy launched on Kaya, over 11,000 staff have joined the platform, and at the end of 2020 we had 9,100 active users based in 60+ countries. They completed over 24,000 courses since we launched and over 16,000 completed in 2020 only."



Mary Jilek, Deputy Director, Talent Management at the International Rescue Committee

[Read more](#)

"Kaya's mission to enable people to better prepare for, respond to and recover from crises through free learning really resonates with CTG. We want to support our staff in the field as best we can, and providing them with free access to e-learning specifically catering to the situations they are faced with was incredibly appealing."



Vanessa McCulloch, Communications Director, Committed to Good

[Read more](#)

HPass: recognising skills and experience, raising humanitarian standards

One of our key ambitions is to support humanitarians to have their skills and experiences recognised by future employers – making recruitment easier, and helping organisations to recruit people with the right competencies. HPass is part of that aspiration, helping provide humanitarians with consistent professional development opportunities, and recognising their skills and experience. The two key elements of HPass are:

- digital badges, which provide this recognition to individuals
- sector-developed standards to drive up the quality of humanitarian learning and assessment services.

HPass digital badges provide at-a-glance evidence of humanitarians' skills, experience and qualifications. The badges enable them to formally and verifiably demonstrate their expertise in a range of technical areas – from cash transfer programming to monitoring and evaluation to project management.

Humanitarian organisations can create HPass digital badges and issue them to their staff and volunteers to recognise they've completed specific courses or assessments. This motivates staff to accelerate their

learning and professional development – ultimately improving the quality and effectiveness of the humanitarian sector. They can set up a [myHPass profile](#) and display the badges they've earned so they can be viewed by potential recruiters.

The HPass quality standards – which comprise the Humanitarian Learning Standards and the Standards for Assessment of Humanitarian Competencies – were developed by and for learning providers. Drawing together best practice in humanitarian learning, the standards were drawn up in consultation with 400 organisations from across the global humanitarian sector – the first time such an exercise has been undertaken on such a scale.

Available in the form of handbooks, the standards are used by organisations to review and improve the quality of the humanitarian learning and assessment they provide.

At the end of 2020, 10 organisations were using the quality standards. Thanks to the appeal of our digital badges and quality standards – as well as the global demand for high-quality humanitarian learning standards created by the Covid-19 pandemic – HPass is gaining momentum and popularity. The numbers below tell their own story:

HPass in numbers

- 12,700+ MyHPass profiles created*
- 8 of our top 10 countries are based in the global south
- 500 badges created by learning providers
- 37,000 badges issued
- 10 organisations using the HPass quality standards



*as of 31st December 2020

"Each year, around 200 people from across our network will earn the Disaster Management Foundations badge. It's a really great motivating factor for our staff, to celebrate their achievements. They can put it on their performance appraisals and gain a sense of progression."

Ashley Inselman, Global Humanitarian Surge Capacity Development Adviser, World Vision International

[Read more](#)

"HPass-certified status provides a recognition for AUAF's efforts to provide world quality education in Afghanistan."

Dr. Victoria Fontan, Vice President of Academic Affairs, American University of Afghanistan

[Read more](#)

"The HPass offer allowed us to reach certification and high-quality learning provision without depending on partners or project funding."

Alaa Albakour, Youth and Women Empowerment Manager, Violet Organisation

[Read more](#)

World Vision



[Find out more about HPass](#)

An unmatched learning offer

We augmented an already vast and rich learning offer with a series of new courses and features on Kaya in 2019–20, including some award winners!

Safeguarding We launched our interactive online Safeguarding Essentials course in four languages, which used realistic scenarios to help users understand what safeguarding is and its importance in the humanitarian sector. The course was developed in collaboration with more than 20 organisations and leading subject-matter experts.

We then gave participants an accessible and safe way to practice what they'd learned on the course through Safeguarding VR. We developed the 15-minute real-time immersive learning experience to train aid workers on how to handle conversations with survivors of safeguarding incidents. Through a VR headset, the experience gives learners the opportunity to re-live an intervention from the survivor's perspective by 'Bodyswaps' – swapping virtual 'bodies'.

More than 33,000 learners signed up to the online course, which filled an important learning gap, and Safeguarding VR won several awards.

New Kaya apps Safeguarding VR was just one of three new mobile apps we launched in 2019–20, all available on iPhone and Android. Kaya Mobile, which was downloaded onto 4,500 devices across 172 countries, allows learners to access all our online courses via their smartphone or tablet, so that they can continue to learn wherever they are – even without an internet connection. While Kaya VR hosts virtual-reality experiences developed in partnership with local organisations to immerse humanitarians in crisis simulations and build empathy through storytelling.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) Our MOOCs allow large numbers of people to learn in an interactive way. MOOCs are free of charge on Kaya, cover specific topics and are accessible anywhere in the world with internet connectivity. We launched two new MOOCs on monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning in 2019–20, as well as one covering humanitarian essentials. We also created a MOOC toolkit to help organisations create their own MOOC.

We added these other noteworthy courses during 2019–20 too:

- **Introduction to International Humanitarian Law** one of our most popular online courses, created by the International Committee of the Red Cross
- **Learning Design playlist**, a selection of courses and resources to help humanitarian organisations design and deliver learning
- **Humanitarian Curriculum**, which provides recommended humanitarian learning for all Save the Children staff, partners and humanitarian professionals, in English, French and Arabic
- **Learning Pool courses** to boost leadership, management and workplace skills.

These new courses add to an already wide range of high-quality, blended contextual learning developed to support the professionalisation of humanitarians, including:

- Public Health in Emergencies
- Humanitarian Operations
- Training of Trainers
- Cash Transfer Programming
- Child Protection in Emergencies
- Education in Emergencies
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
- Coaching and Mentoring

These programmes are what we call our Preparedness Portfolio – and some are covered in-depth on p19–21. They range from accredited diplomas to short courses, and are developed and delivered in partnership with non-government organisations and local government agencies.

Award winners



Our Safeguarding VR experience won the awards 'Best Project in Training and Education' and the 'Grand Prix' Award at Virtuality 2019; the 'Future of Work Culture' Award hosted by the International Data Corporation (IDC); and a Bronze Award for the 'Most Innovative New Learning Technologies Product' at the Learning Technologies Awards.

"We see a lot of VR in this category, but few with the emotive impact of Bodyswaps. Building empathy really is a great use of VR and using it to tackle such a sensitive subject [sexual misconduct in charities and NGOs] is highly impactful. Bodyswaps literally puts you in another person's shoes and allows you to see the impact your unconscious body language and tone can have in a sensitive conversation. We can see this project doing a lot of good."

The Jury at the Learning Technologies Awards 2020

[Access the immersive experience](#)

The FIELD Programme won two Bronze Awards at the Learning Technologies Awards: 'Excellence in the Design of Learning Content – Public & Non-profit Sector' and 'Best Online Distance Learning Programme'.

"Superb design of the platform and content. Bright, clean, easy to navigate and reflecting the diversity of the target audience perfectly. The use of user-created content to support other learners was great to see. Great collaboration and ingenuity shown to deal with issues thrown up on site."

The Jury at the Learning Technologies Awards 2020

[Access the programme](#)



The Business Continuity Planning (BCP) programme, run in partnership with Unilever, won the 'Barclays Developing Resilience' Award at the 2019 Business in the Community Awards ceremony.

"The initiative evidenced that it is truly developing resilience in the broadest of terms."

The Jury at the Business in the Community Awards.

[Find out more](#)



Our Preparedness Portfolio

A major element of our unmatched learning offer is our Preparedness Portfolio. It's a series of online and face-to-face learning programmes designed to help a wide range of humanitarian organisations and frontline aid workers be better prepared when disaster strikes. It addresses what we see as the critical areas in humanitarian response, like public health, humanitarian operations, education in emergencies and child protection – where gaps in skills and resources so often lie.

Public Health

National health systems can be pushed to breaking point by disasters and conflict, leaving people exposed to disease, malnutrition and a host of other health risks. To make sure health services remain available to those who need them, we work with humanitarians in crisis-hit countries to develop critical health, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) skills. As Covid-19 spread with terrifying speed, for example, we rapidly developed a training package to help community health workers protect themselves against the virus, reduce the spread in their communities, and continue their other day-to-day work. We piloted the training package in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh, home to over 867,000 Rohingya refugees, where Save the Children had set up a Covid-19 infectious treatment centre. Developed in collaboration with Save the Children, the e-learning package was designed to improve adherence to good hygiene and sanitation practices.

We also designed and delivered two remote training courses through RECAP, a project we ran in collaboration with various academic institutions to strengthen research capacity in humanitarian crises and epidemics. One of the courses, for Save the Children staff in Somalia, covered cost-effectiveness analysis, and the other was developed in collaboration with the Refugee Law Initiative and covered qualitative research methods and research ethics for Save the Children employees in Bangladesh.*

*These trainings were supported by UK Research and Innovation as part of the Global Challenges Research Fund, grant number ES/P010873/1.

Equipping Field Managers

Field managers play a pivotal role in humanitarian response, but many lack experience and often have to learn on the job.

The **Field Managers in Emergencies Learning and Development (FIELD)** free online learning programme was developed by humanitarians for humanitarians. Created in partnership with World Vision, it aims to fill crucial knowledge gaps for mid-level field managers. It's designed to be as accessible and inclusive as possible, so anyone who needs it, anywhere in the world, can use it.

Since November 2019, FIELD has reached 6,782 learners, about a third of whom are women, from 165 countries – most prominently crisis-hit Nigeria, Yemen, Kenya, Somalia, and Bangladesh. It has also won several awards (see page 17).

When the coronavirus pandemic hit, a 'Covid-19 resource grab bag' was co-created rapidly with our network to provide field managers with specific pandemic response resources.

"The cross-cutting subjects pathway can be taken by anyone local or international as they help in times of untimely catastrophe like the cyclone Idai which befell my country Zimbabwe without preparations. If my friends take this course, they will be able to help in a greater way in times of need."

Nour, FIELD participant



Education in Emergencies

In times of crisis education is a lifeline to children and their families. It can help protect their physical and mental health, allows them to continue to learn and develop, and offers them a sense of normalcy and hope for a better future. Delivering timely, high-quality Education in Emergencies (EiE) requires staff with the right competencies – our sector-facing EiE Professional Development Programme (PDP) aims to develop these.

The EiE PDP includes the following courses:

- **EiE Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS)** – a comprehensive 450-hour blended learning experience accredited by the [University of Geneva](#) – which has reached 138 learners since its launch in 2017, all of whom went on to deliver training in their own contexts, reaching a further 699 people.
- **EiE Online (Intermediate)** – a 200-hour self-directed intermediate-level online course developed in collaboration with a range of organisations, including INEE, Plan International and the Lego Foundation. The first module was launched at the end of 2020 and is already reaching 1,076 learners, with other modules due to follow in the first two quarters of 2021.
- **EiE Fundamentals** – a 50-hour facilitated course which aims to equip country office education and EiE staff with the fundamental competencies to be part of initiating, designing and implementing a quality EiE response in their context. Since its launch in early 2020, EiE Fundamentals has reached 259 learners in five countries, and aims to reach 150 more in 2021, including through its new programme in the West & Central Africa (WCA) region.



Humanitarian Operations Programme

The Humanitarian Operations Programme (HOP) covers the essential elements of setting up and running a humanitarian response. It blends face-to-face with distance and simulation learning, and aims above all to be relevant to the context in which the participants work. It provides humanitarians with a platform for a successful career, allowing them to gain theoretical knowledge and practice the skills they need to respond to the kind of emergencies they face – skills they can then share with others.

These skills are finding their way to the places they're most needed: 94% of HOP's French-speaking learners are based in countries affected by disaster.

The **HOP Fundamentals** online learning programme, which we launched in 2019 in English and in 2020 in French, has, along with our standalone online modules, attracted 35,000 users from around the world.

We created a **guided HOP Fundamentals course** for 58 humanitarians in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, providing a streamlined learning journey, and blending self-paced learning modules, live webinars, and a discussion forum. Every one of the graduates who responded to an evaluation survey said they found the course materials applicable to their humanitarian work.

Our **HOP Core residential training** provided 84 humanitarian workers from 24 different national and international organisations in South Sudan, Nigeria, Zambia and Burkina Faso with the skills they need to respond to emergencies in their own communities.



Transformation of Training

Developed in partnership with World Vision International and Plan International, our Transformation of Training programme helps humanitarian workers gain the skills they need to confidently design and deliver training programmes. The skills they learn are adaptable, allowing participants from a range of organisations to work in roles from across the NGO community in the future, whichever career path they choose. A robust assessment process makes sure our graduate trainers deliver consistently to the highest standards.

We delivered our Transformation of Training programmes in 16 countries in 2019–20, including in Bangladesh, Jordan, Somalia, Niger and Ethiopia. We trained 276 people at foundation level, and 102 through our technical programmes.

Adamu Saidu, a programme officer at an organisation supporting underprivileged people in Nigeria, took the foundation course. "I used to conduct training without paying much attention to the needs, dynamics and diversity of my audience," he told us. "But I now [after the course] understand how important this is to help my training be effective as possible." Adamu's next step is taking the Transformation of Training professional pathway.

In 2019, we launched the [Transformation of Training digital pathway](#) globally. All our foundation- and professional-level workshops and learning pathways are fully delivered virtually, so anyone with internet access anywhere in the world can take them.

"The knowledge and learning of the training as well as the way it was organised and conducted was very good."

Adamu, Transformation of Training participant



Transformation of Training

Child Protection in Emergencies

The Child Protection in Emergencies Professional Development Programme (CPiE PDP) aims to increase the child protection skills of humanitarian workers, especially when it comes to immediate emergency response. It is aligned with the 2019 [Child Protection Minimum Standards](#), and covers child protection principles, risks, strategies, contexts and cross-sector cooperation.

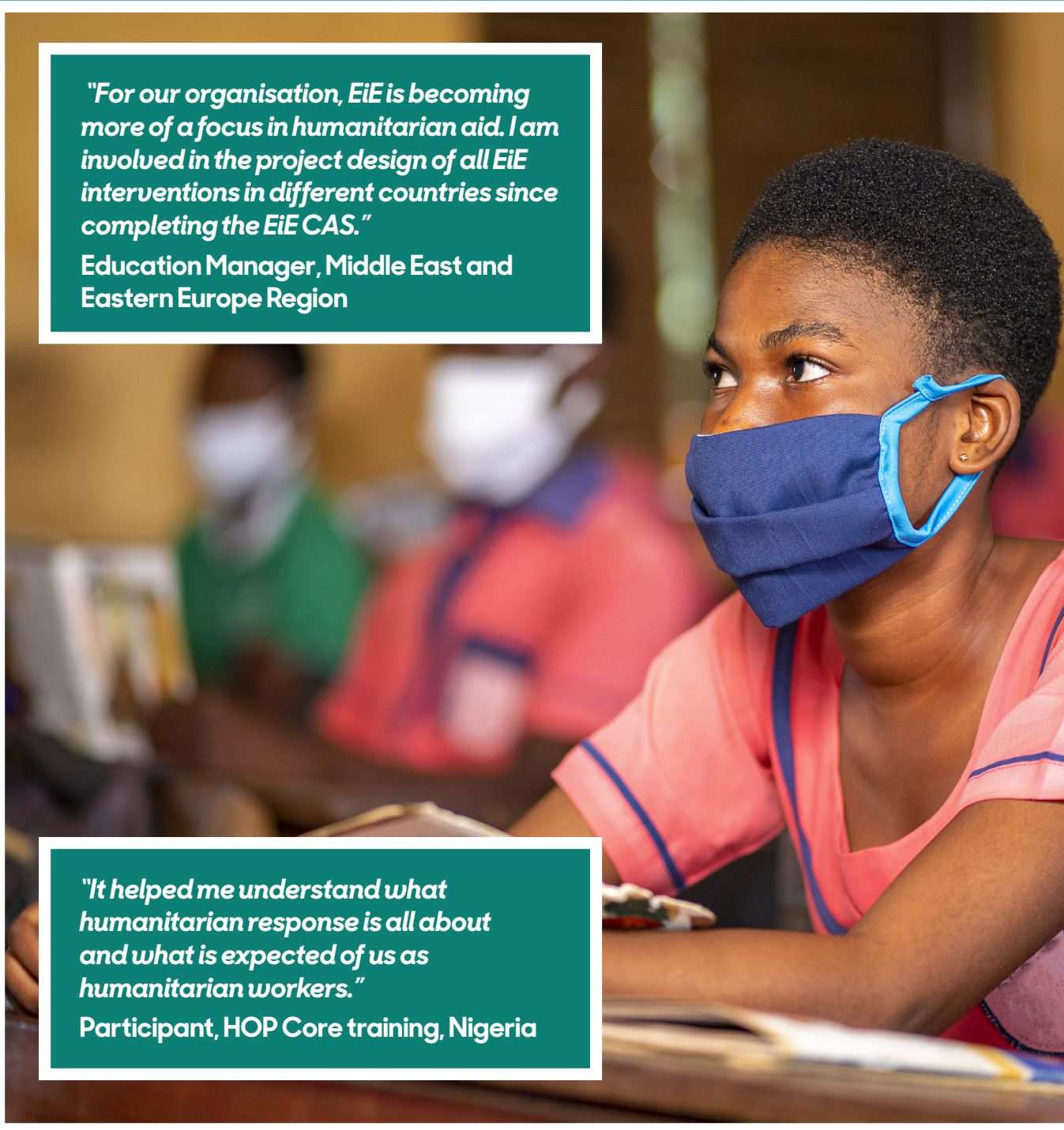
In 2020, we trained 163 child protection practitioners from 40 countries and 39 organisations as part of the programme. We enrolled a further 81 new participants, from North, East and Southern Africa and the Asia-Pacific region. Those who graduated went on to teach another 2,288 people what they'd learned through workshops and training courses.

Many of our graduates found an almost immediate real-life application for their new-found learning. For example, 60% of the graduates from the Asia-Pacific programme and 40% from the Middle East and Eastern Europe programme report having been directly involved in humanitarian work since they took the course – deployed to responses ranging from Bali's Mount Agung eruption to the mass displacement crisis in the Philippines to the Georgia-Russia conflict.

As people faced travel restrictions because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we adapted the programme to be fully digital. We also built a new open-access Kaya site in 2020 to share free [Child Protection in Emergencies](#) learning content with the entire sector.

"The programme is rich in theory, translates the theory into practice and provides actual exposure to demonstrate the learning through simulation and other practical techniques."

Graduate, CPiE PDP, East and Southern Africa



"For our organisation, EiE is becoming more of a focus in humanitarian aid. I am involved in the project design of all EiE interventions in different countries since completing the EiE CAS."

Education Manager, Middle East and Eastern Europe Region

"It helped me understand what humanitarian response is all about and what is expected of us as humanitarian workers."

Participant, HOP Core training, Nigeria

Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic

In March 2020, as the world was waking up to the rapidly escalating threat of Covid-19 and whole countries went into lockdown, we were quick to pivot – changing our workplans to deliver high-quality tools and products to help humanitarians get to grips with this new challenge.

We identified the **five areas of learning** that most urgently needed support to tackle the pandemic:

- public health
- cash transfers to affected populations
- monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning
- leadership in crisis
- mental health and psychosocial support.

We rapidly designed and rolled out new or updated learning programmes in each area.

Our Regional Centres developed and delivered new learning interventions, from basic essential skills training to specialist knowledge provision, to help Save the Children staff tackle the pandemic.

Our programme portfolio was adapted for remote delivery and with Covid-sensitive content. And our public health courses were all updated and organised more clearly by target audience with a primary focus on community health workers, clinical staff and programme managers.

By April 2020, humanitarian workers worldwide could access Save the Children's [COVID-19 learning pathway](#) on Kaya in four languages. It covered public health, child protection, gender, cash transfers, and mental health and psychosocial support, as well as soft online skills for humanitarians adapting to remote ways of working. The content helped equip more than 10,300 learners from 165 countries to respond to the global pandemic.

We designed a series of [webinars](#), helping more than 2,000 people learn new humanitarian skills and apply them to the Covid crisis, without needing to leave their homes. And we made the [Stop COVID-19 course](#) from humanitarian training specialists Bioforce available on Kaya in French, English and Arabic, along with digital badges for graduates. Designed for frontline health workers, it covered the essentials of Covid-19 prevention and control in countries where health systems are already fragile and confining the population is impossible.



"Thank you so much for all the resources helping us to acquire all skills and knowledge to respond actively to this pandemic! I am very interested."

Joseph, Kaya learner



"Thank you for supporting the communities that are working hard at grassroots level during this frightening time. Bravo!"

Amir, Kaya learner

The Mobile Learning Project

To reach marginalised communities often cut off from crucial information about Covid-19, we piloted three different low-tech mobile-phone solutions in Yemen, Bangladesh, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Lebanon and Uganda.

WhatsApp groups: We provided the Covid-19 learning pathway via smartphone to WhatsApp groups of community health workers protecting Syrian refugees in Lebanon, as well as to students and community members in Afghanistan.

SMS and audio recordings: We delivered courses on child protection and Covid-19 to humanitarian workers in Yemen, South Sudan and Bangladesh via text messages and audio recordings sent to their smartphones.

WhatsApp course: We used the Arist platform to provide courses covering Covid-19 and water, sanitation and hygiene to Save the Children staff in Uganda.

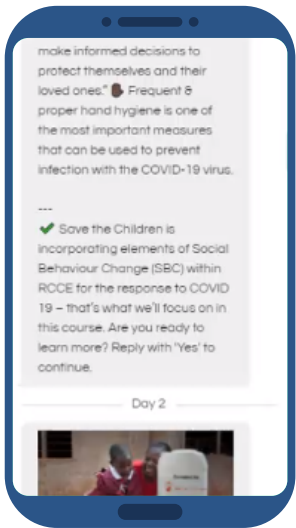
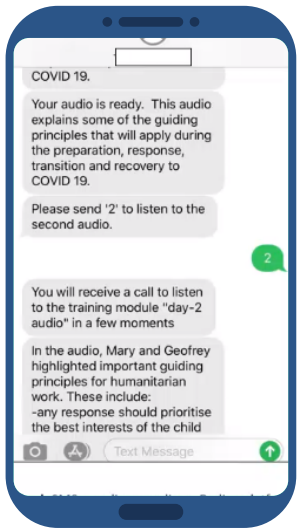
These three courses reached **1,500 people** in total. Each was tailored to the context the relevant groups were working in,

getting knowledge to where it was most needed and into the hands of those who could understand it best and use it to make the biggest difference – localisation in action.

We found that the audio recordings were the most accessible format for learners – they come with no need for data top ups, no word count limits, no messaging backlog, no data storage issues and no literacy barrier. **73%** of learners found the content clear and easy to understand and **78%** found the mobile 'audio + SMS' style of learning simple to navigate.

A Mobile Learning Toolkit was produced as a result of the pilot, which takes learners through the technical and design steps to launch learning on a basic mobile phone. We are particularly excited about the future potential of using mobile phones to deliver learning in a lo-tech, high-impact way.

Thank you to On Our Radar, the American University of Beirut, the American University of Afghanistan, Save the Children Bangladesh, Yemen, South Sudan, Uganda for taking part in the pilot.



"I was also able to advise my neighbours to play their roles in protecting their children during this period of pandemic by avoiding crowded places such as football stadiums and market centres."

A participant from the Mobile Learning Project in South Sudan

Supporting humanitarian organisations

We aim to help humanitarian organisations improve every stage of their work: from preparedness to immediate response to recovery. We tailor our support to reflect the different needs of and demands on frontline humanitarians. We achieve all this through the Organisational Learning Service, the Reactive Capacity Strengthening Programme, and Coaching and Mentoring.

The Organisational Learning Service

The Humanitarian Leadership Academy knows the value that learning can have in helping an organisation achieve its mission. Our Organisational Learning Service (OLS) helps organisations to understand and put in place concrete, practical steps to strengthen how, and what, their staff, partners and volunteers learn. The service has been designed to work for a wide range of organisations, and for different stages of an organisation's learning journey –

from a light touch, self-guided approach, which uses our open-source materials, through to an intensive, multi-year programme that requires significant Academy support to implement a full 'learning ecosystem'.

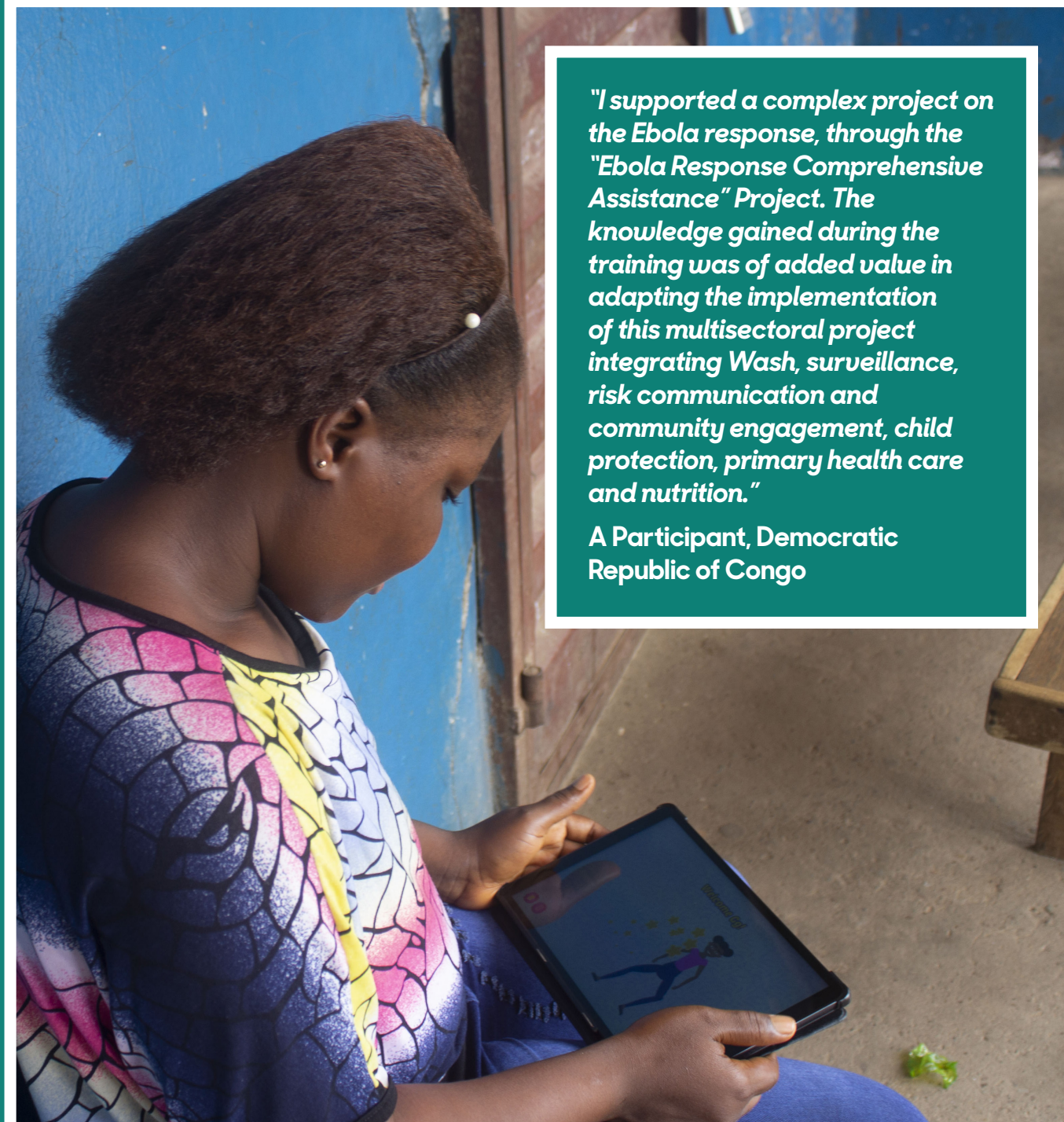
One example of our OLS in action is the **Supporting Effective Humanitarian Partnerships (SEHP)** learning programme, a multi-pronged approach that has been locally adapted and implemented in South Sudan and Yemen. It puts local organisations in the driving seat, co-creating their own journey to ensure that any learning solution is accessible, sustainable and scalable. It allows organisations to self-assess their existing learning capabilities, which might involve, for example:

- enabling them to develop a shared competency framework to define the skills and experience they need
- bespoke guidance to set up organisational systems and processes that help foster an effective learning environment.

Launched in April 2019, the programme had reached nearly 100 local organisations by the end of 2020.

"National NGOs have always been willing, open and ready to learn and wanting to improve the competencies of their own staff. So for me the SEHP project was perfect in that sense."

Dr Pius Ojara, Director of the South Sudan NGO Forum



"I supported a complex project on the Ebola response, through the "Ebola Response Comprehensive Assistance" Project. The knowledge gained during the training was of added value in adapting the implementation of this multisectoral project integrating Wash, surveillance, risk communication and community engagement, child protection, primary health care and nutrition."

A Participant, Democratic Republic of Congo

Reactive Capacity Strengthening

The early stages of an emergency or the later stages of a protracted crisis are often when people are at their most vulnerable.

When a disaster hits, people may be caught unprepared and humanitarian organisations may lack the experience to respond effectively to that particular emergency, because every crisis is different. Protracted crises, on the other hand, can overstretch or drain staff and resources.

We share our expertise, supporting responders from across the sector at these stages of an emergency, when they're at full stretch.

In 2019–20, **we trained over 350 humanitarians** working in seven category 1 and 2 emergency responses – in Bangladesh, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia, Mozambique, Syria and Yemen. We helped them develop the skills to minimise the impact of emergencies and create safe, healthy environments before, during and after disaster strikes. Here are some of the highlights:

- **In Syria** we funded and supported the delivery of two 'infant and young child feeding in emergencies' (IYCF-E) training courses in Gaziantep and Amuda. We also developed and launched five short education in emergencies learning videos in Arabic and English.
- **In Indonesia** we developed a long-term mentoring programme, helping around 200 Save the Children Indonesia staff and 40 partner and local government workers to support the Sulawesi response.
- **In Mozambique** we delivered training on monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) in emergencies to 21 MEAL professionals, and designed and delivered a two-day introductory operational humanitarian training programme (EmCore) to another 21 humanitarians working on the Kenneth/Ildai response.

- As soon as the threat posed by the **Covid-19 pandemic** became clear, we swiftly redirected resources from across our work to develop the Covid-19 pathway on the Kaya platform (see p22). We rapidly adapted the content of our preparedness portfolio to make it fit for purpose for frontline humanitarians responding to this new global crisis. As people were forced to work remotely, and demand for our online learning services skyrocketed, we developed new content and new courses to keep pace.

Coaching and Mentoring

We believe it's important for the humanitarian sector to move away from top-down hierarchical leadership, to a structure that is more free-flowing, agile, creative and innovative, allowing all staff to express their talents in the best way possible.

Since 2019, we've been developing a coaching and mentoring approach designed specifically for the humanitarian sector, and have worked with colleagues across the Save the Children Movement and the humanitarian sector to develop and – where relevant – implement toolkits, resources and training to bring this important skill set to humanitarian organisations.

We have developed a community of coaches, mentors and advocates who can better leverage the incredible expertise and talent that we have in the sector and further increase our impact. Our 12-month postgraduate **Leader as Coach programme** was launched in 2019, helping establish a network of 20 professional senior humanitarian coaches across five organisations. They support the development of leaders and senior staff, helping them make more effective decisions.

Another important Academy coaching initiative, the **Across Organisational Mentoring Programme**, was developed in collaboration with 15 non-governmental organisations, and has built a pool of technical mentors, spanning 66 countries, who have mentored 200 humanitarian workers.



Coaching and mentoring online game

We augmented our free online coaching and mentoring offer for emergency response workers in 2019 with a new game-based learning experience on Kaya. Developed with Gamoteca, the 30-minute game allows aspiring coaches to put into practice the skills they learned on the course, as they role-play coaching with another person.

This crucial new interactive dimension made the learning feel true to life: "This is a cool way to teach a skill that people often find boring," one participant told us.

"When learning doesn't have a two-way engagement, the receiver often feels she/he is not contributing anything to the learning process. Also, in this game you get to engage with mentors across the globe."

"This is definitely a fun and interactive way to learn," said another. "This could be a great tool to use in our work when we train young people on relationship building. I definitely see myself using this in my training."

Supporting NHS leaders during the Covid-19 pandemic

Senior leaders came under pressure like never before during the Covid-19 crisis. They faced crucial daily decisions with a direct, immediate impact on the safety and wellbeing of patients and staff – with no time to step back and reflect.

Starting in June 2020, Save the Children UK's pro-bono network* of coaches gave us their time to create a coaching programme to help 32 senior NHS leaders deal with this highly complex crisis. The programme created the space for them to stop, breathe, stand back and reflect – so they were better able to take effective and compassionate decisions in the service of others.

Each of our coaches committed to supporting one NHS leader during 2020, and some continued to do so into 2021.

**The Save the Children UK pro bono network are qualified coaches who have been supporting senior leaders across the Save the Children movement for over 10 years. The network has grown to more than 100 volunteer coaches.*



Our Global Network

Highlights from our Regional Centres

The learning we provide must be relevant and applicable to the local context in which humanitarians work. That is why the Academy has established a global network that puts learning experts in the parts of the world that need them the most. Our 4 Regional Centres and 3 Network Members tailor the learning they provide to the needs of individuals and the demands of the crises they face, using formats ranging from simulations to mentoring, from online distance learning to face-to-face training, and from group work to one-to-one coaching.

Middle East & Eastern Europe Centre

- Delivered the first distance learning phase **Child Protection in Emergencies – Principles and Risks** in Arabic
- Translated and launched **the FIELD Programme in Arabic**
- Translated and launched **the Humanitarian Curriculum in Arabic**
- Concluded the **Education in Emergencies – Certificate of Advanced Studies** with a 10-day residential in Amman, followed by the final assignment in which 26 learners planned and delivered their own training in their contexts, reaching an additional 305 participants
- Successfully piloted the new **Education in Emergencies Fundamentals** courses in Turkey.

Asia Centre

- Delivered **essential capacity strengthening support to over 1,200 staff** through online and face-to-face training, as well as coaching and mentoring sessions.
- Rolled out **remote Accelerating Development Improvement training** for 80 practitioners who graduated in 2020
- Rolled out **Project Management Methodology training** for 41 participants who graduated in 2020
- Provided 80 staff with **Emergency Response Training**
- Enabled 21 participants from Save the Children India to successfully complete an 8-week long extensive training course on **Education in Emergencies**

West and Central Africa Centre

- Delivered **Humanitarian Operations Programme (HOP) Core training** in Nigeria (English) and Burkina Faso (French) for Save the Children staff and partners
- Supported the translation and launch of the **HOP Fundamentals online platform in French**
- Supported the **online SHIP pilot** (Save the Children's humanitarian intermediate training programme)

East and Southern Africa Centre

- Delivered **Humanitarian Operations Programme (HOP) Fundamentals training**, an Education in Emergencies short course and Transformation of Training
- Translated the **FIELD** module on finance and grants into Portuguese targeting Mozambique, now available on **Kaya**
- Launched the **East and Southern Africa Humanitarian mentoring programme**
- Concluded the **Education in Emergencies Certificate of Advanced Studies** with a 10-day residential in Kenya, followed by the final assignment in which 26 learners reached an additional 200 participants

Our Global Network

Highlights from our Network Members

Lebanon – Global Health Institute at the American University of Beirut

- Launch of a **Humanitarian Leadership Diploma** designed specifically for new managers and as a refresher for existing managers working in the MENA region
- The Diploma consisted of 8 digital learning modules, accredited through the American University of Beirut and HPass.
- 151 certificates of completion were issued, and 12 scholars from diverse educational and sociocultural backgrounds received the Diploma.

Philippines – Center for Humanitarian Learning and Innovation

- Influenced the inclusion of Business Continuity Planning as a mandatory requirement for cooperatives under a new law (the Cooperative Development Agency Charter)
- The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Education (DepEd) – two of the largest governmental agencies in the Philippines – as well as a corporate Foundation, are now using Kaya for their internal capacity building.
- Around 200 cooperatives and micro, small and medium-size enterprises developed business continuity plans to make them better prepared for the next emergency.

Bangladesh – BRAC

- Launched a **Scoping Study on Humanitarian-Development-Nexus** (HDN) in the Rohingya humanitarian crisis response
- Conducted two regional Sphere orientation workshops with 65 local NGO staff and media representatives in Rangpur and Satkhira, in collaboration with Sphere, Islamic Relief, Start fund and ACF.
- Designed and developed session plans, contextualised learning content and materials for a Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) training course. Facilitated two batches of three-day HPC training sessions for 40 managers in Cox's Bazaar.

"We undertook this learning needs assessment (LNA) of local humanitarian aid workers engaged in the Rohingya humanitarian crisis response in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, as part of our efforts to promote humanitarian competencies and professionalisation amongst current and future staff working in Cox's Bazar."

Suman Ahsanul Islam, Director, Humanitarian Leadership Academy Bangladesh



Staying ahead of the curve

New technology is irreversibly reshaping the way people consume information and access learning – a trend accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2019–20 we aimed to ride the wave of these changes, harness cutting-edge technology, and open up new possibilities for learning to our users.

Immersive/VR films

Working with the likes of [Quicksand](#), [CoLABorate](#), [SixerVR](#), [All We Can](#) and [L.A.C.E.S](#) we used low-cost, low-tech virtual reality to help immerse humanitarian volunteers and staff in virtual crisis situations. These experiences allowed users to build empathy with those caught up in emergencies, and better understand what to do to help them. Here are just some of the experiences we launched in 2019–20, which are available on the Kaya VR app.

Ebola Choices draws on the harrowing experiences of frontline emergency workers during Liberia’s 2014 Ebola epidemic. In 2019–20, an interactive film confronted users with the life-and-death choices involved in responding to the outbreak, preparing them to navigate a future public health crisis.

Through the Lens is an animated VR experience that presents first-hand accounts from the Rohingya refugee crisis, from aid workers to refugees themselves. It highlights the importance of localisation in humanitarian response.

Gender in Conflict is an immersive 360-degree documentary, available in Arabic and English, which looks at how gender affects people during times of conflict. Narrated by both Syrian women and men, we hear their impressions of how their gender has played a role in their experience as refugees – helping users develop a greater sense of empathy.

Camp 2029 warns of a dystopian humanitarian future we must work to avoid. The VR experience allows participants to adopt the role of a refugee and future humanitarian worker. The experience is not optimistic: the aim is to provoke thought about the unintended consequences of technology, and to work towards a future where there is opportunity, empowerment, and security for everyone.

Online games

Gamification introduces role playing, storytelling, scenarios, peer-to-peer feedback and simulation exercises to create richer and deeper learning experiences. Learners can make active decisions, solve problems, and are given time to reflect on their experiences. The games range from testing your quick-fire decision-making during a flood to challenging your assumptions around gender.

We also conducted [research about game user experience](#) in Jordan and Kenya, to support the design of serious games for humanitarians.

Innovative toolkits

We developed several online toolkits in 2019–20, which allow humanitarians to develop their own user-driven, innovative learning resources. These were downloaded by over 2,000 people on our website. **The concept building toolkit** allowed users to create learning content from scratch. They can then develop whatever concept they come up with using three other toolkits:

Our chatbot building toolkit enables the creation of an automated, interactive chatbot programme that can hold a conversation with a user, often helping answer their questions about relevant issues.

Our immersive film toolkit enables learners to create simulated learning experiences using immersive virtual reality (VR) digital technology.

Our gamification toolkit allows users to develop game-based innovative learning content, using features like point scoring and competition to heighten engagement.

Innovation workshops

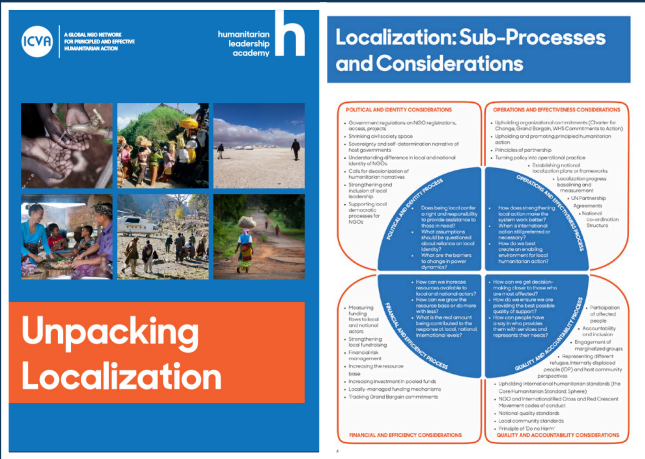
We conducted a [series of workshops](#) with our partner Quicksand in India to analyse present and potential future humanitarian crises – and the learning and capacities needed to address them. The workshops brought together key groups to co-create educational resources that can better equip humanitarian professionals.

Pioneering publications

- **The Role of Private Sector in Humanitarian Action**, a whitepaper published with HSBC made the case for collaboration between the private and humanitarian sectors.



- **Unpacking Localization**, co-developed with ICVA, was an attempt to respond to widespread calls for a definition of localisation and what it means to the people it most concerns.
- **The Future of Skills in the Humanitarian Sector** explored what we must learn today to prepare for the unforeseeable crises of tomorrow, so we can build the future we want to see.
- **Trends and Demands for Humanitarian Capacity Building**, commissioned by Save the Children’s Humanitarian Capacity-Building Team, sketched a vision of what humanitarian capacity building efforts might be needed during 2019–21.



The power of social media

At its best, social media can provide a network of mutual support, a source of shared information and even a sense of community. This was never more the case than during the Covid-19 pandemic, which sent already stratospheric engagement levels even higher. Over half the population of the planet now uses social media.

We are building a social media community that lets humanitarians from across the world facing a multitude of different crises share experiences, learning and encouragement. As of 31 December 2020, we had more than 880,000 followers across all our social media channels – up from 563,000 in 2018. Here are some of our social media highlights:

- Our **LinkedIn** followers surged from 25,000 in January 2020 to 109,000 by the end of the year, with people keen to access learning from home during the pandemic. They used our LinkedIn page to display

their certificates and digital badges, come together as professional communities to share tips and stories, and encourage their networks and friends to use our learning material.

- Our **'I am a humanitarian'** campaign saw learners on our online social media platforms share their amazing stories from the field, describe what it means to be a humanitarian, discuss their favourite Kaya courses and talk about how Covid-19 has impacted them.
- We used **Facebook Live** for some of our webinars, and made them all available on **YouTube**, providing unlimited access to learning.
- We launched our **Instagram account** in June 2020 to reach out to new, younger audiences, and share content in a different format (e.g. Insta stories) – gaining 1,621 followers. Engagement levels increased continuously with people posting and sending direct messages asking about our courses and how to sign up to Kaya. It proved particularly popular in East Africa.

"Being a humanitarian means that I'm always helping and trying to improve the lives of other people. During the lockdown, I managed to undertake a course on how to address gender-based violence (GBV) in emergencies. It expanded my knowledge and I was able to help the victims of GBV with a lot of confidence."

Sharon, Kaya learner, Uganda

"Being a humanitarian is about altruism, compassion, love, kindness, warmth...healing, helping and serving others especially those affected by conflicts or natural disasters. What I loved most about Kaya is the fact that I can learn using my phone anywhere, anytime. My favourite course is the FIELD Programme (Logistics). Thank you Kaya."

Mohammed, Kaya learner, Yemen



"I am a humanitarian"

In July 2020 we launched a social media campaign to reach a new, broader audience of humanitarians, and help them access support and training.

We also wanted to reach people who may not necessarily see themselves as humanitarians, including those stepping up to respond to the Covid-19 crisis, who could play a vital role in future emergencies.

We received hundreds of emails and comments from humanitarians across the world, telling us what being a humanitarian means to them. Many also described how they have used Kaya to develop their skills and respond to crises in their communities.

The campaign targeted audiences in particular countries – from Syria, Yemen, Iraq and Afghanistan, to Europe, to Bangladesh and India. In one target country, Nigeria, we saw Kaya registration grow by a third – from 8,000 to 12,000 – in just the few months after the campaign's launch.

Watch our animation



The next stage in our journey...

This report has covered two of the most tumultuous years in recent history. But, in the midst of upheaval and disruption, our mission remains unchanged. We are committed to making high-quality, accessible and locally relevant learning accessible to all humanitarians – and to making that learning certified, accredited and recognised.

Our unmatched learning offer and capacity-strengthening support is designed to provide humanitarians with opportunities for continuous learning and professional development, and to be better prepared when disaster strikes – and we want to make them as widely available as possible.

As a new team with a broader and more comprehensive remit, we aim to make more impact.

That's why, over the next five years, our ambition is to reach 1 million humanitarians with high quality, high impact learning opportunities. We're committed to building a world where local humanitarians play a leading role in responding to crises in their own communities. Diversity and inclusion will be at the heart of this work – both in how we support communities and in everything we do as a team.

We'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to our mission so far. We're excited about what the future holds for us, and invite you to join us on this new phase of our journey. Together we can help individuals and communities across the world to prepare for and respond to crises in their own countries.

Our commitment is to:

- Provide a range of quality, accessible and relevant learning opportunities to suit the needs of individuals
- Strengthen the capacity of organisations to prepare for and respond to crises
- Influence and amplify the reach and quality of learning in the humanitarian sector

Get in touch: partnerships@humanitarian.academy

Over the next five years,
our ambition is to reach

**1 million
humanitarians**

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