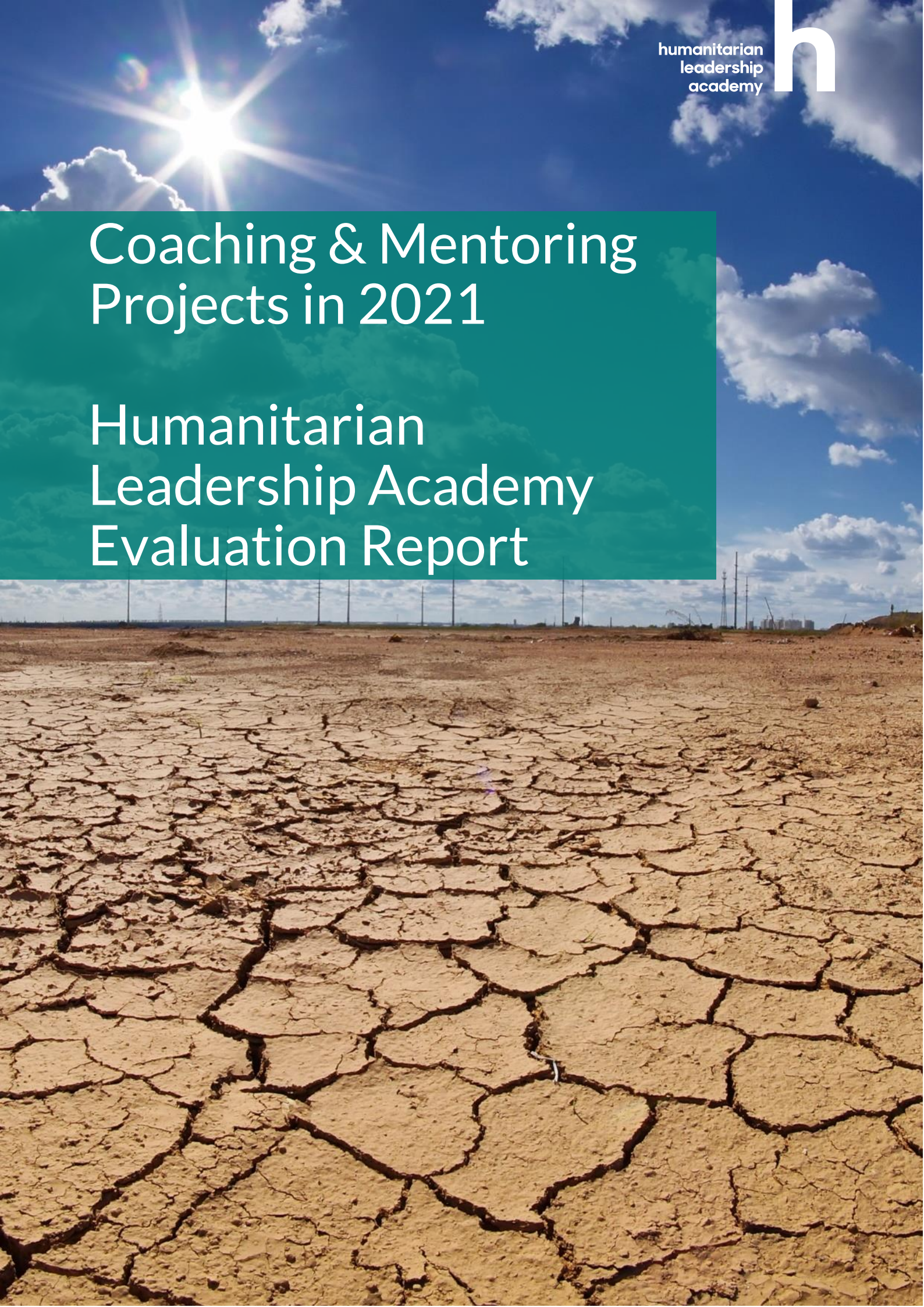


Coaching & Mentoring Projects in 2021

Humanitarian Leadership Academy Evaluation Report





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Introduction

Over the last ten years, coaching and mentoring has seen a huge area of growth and interest in the humanitarian sector. Constant change and unpredictability are a natural manifestation of the humanitarian working environment and this has never been more evident than through the unprecedented global scale crisis of Covid 19. Research from Grant Thornton has shown that coaching is adding real value by providing leaders with time to think during this period of global disruption.¹ Senior leaders respond to the survey that the value they are getting from coaching now is 24% higher than pre-COVID.

In the Humanitarian Leadership Academy (HLA), coaching and mentoring is seen as an important aspect of professional development; a vital capacity-strengthening tool that can empower learners to achieve their full potential at an individual and at an organisational level.²

As one of the HLA's four key areas of focus, their coaching and mentoring vision is to build on the success of their existing coaching and mentoring programmes and to work in collaboration with key stakeholders across the movement and sector to implement a wider integrated coaching and mentoring system as part of their broader learning offer; a learning offer that can provide focussed support and achieve greater impact and scale as part of our response to a crisis. Their work and overall offer is brought together under the umbrella of 'localisation', with coaching and mentoring as a cross-cutting area of focus in the HLA 2022 – 2024 strategy.

There is a Learning and Development (L&D) Inter-agency Working Group that includes representatives from across the sector with expertise and/or involvement in developing coaching and mentoring initiatives. The group is a community of practice that works together to share ideas, access and share resources, seek input from others on capacity building and collaborate on mutually agreed projects. This group also enables members to come up with and drive forward C&M initiatives for the sector as a whole, and are working towards the following group outputs:

- To scale up the delivery of coaching and mentoring workshops and learning programmes (e.g. Coaching Skills for Managers; Across Organisations Mentoring Programme)
- To further develop the foundation, professional and mastery learning pathways of the coaching and mentoring framework
- Further develop the coaching and mentoring resource library hosted on [NGO Coaching & Mentoring website](#)

The HLA is chair of the L&D Inter-agency Working Group and was the lead agency involved in the design and delivery of both the following inter-organisational and cross-organisational coaching and mentoring projects, often in collaboration with partners in the sector. In particular, the [NGO Coaching & Mentoring website](#), which was developed by the HLA team in 2021 and has so far received over 1,000 user visitors to its site.

The purpose of this evaluation is firstly to review the evidence gathered from coaching and mentoring programmes and projects the HLA delivered or co-delivered in 2021, through analysis of the existing data in combination with the interviews of key stakeholders to address evidence gaps. Secondly, to evaluate the sustainability of the impact of these coaching and mentoring learning offers, and thirdly, to provide key recommendations to help shape the design and delivery of future

roll-outs within the HLA, across the Save The Children Movement and wider sector, as well as aim to create a linkage with the Humanitarian Leadership Academy’s Coaching and Mentoring offer.

Methodology

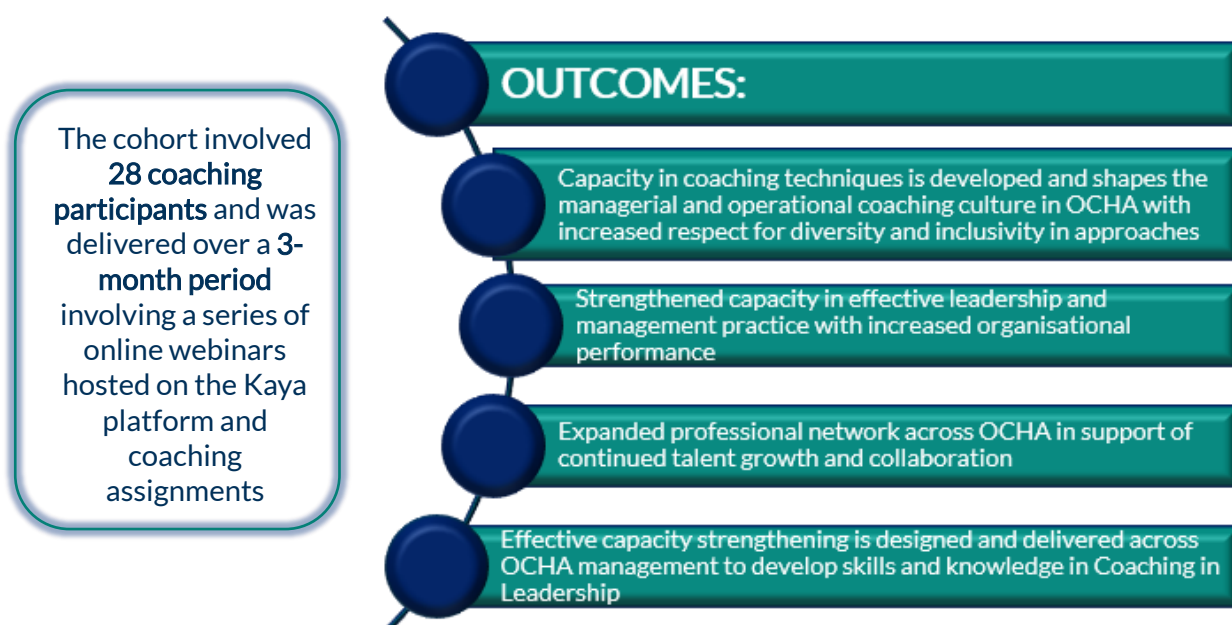
Desk-based analyses of data and evaluation reports that were made available from each programme for this study were carried out. Key stakeholders were also identified and invited to participate in semi-structured interviews, of which three interviews were conducted with two HLA staff members and one staff member from UNOCHA.

Overview of HLA’s coaching & mentoring capacity building initiatives in 2021

FOUNDATION LEVEL

I. OCHA Coaching Skills For Managers

As part of UNOCHA’s new People Strategy in 2018, and in the context of meeting their diversity and inclusion goals, UNOCHA have scaled up coaching in their organisation particularly aimed at the executive level. Previous evidence has clearly showed that the coaching component was most particularly impactful in terms of changing attitudes as well as developing the necessary coaching skills. In 2021, the HLA formed a partnership with UNOCHA to implement its first in-house tailored training in coaching skills aimed at senior field managers working within its organisation, with all resources then being made accessible through the [NGOCoachingmentoring website](#) to other organisations to run their own internal coaching skills programme



Based on some of the post-training feedback from some of the coaching participants and their line managers:



The UNOCHA programme team conducted post-training evaluations for this programme, to assess the application of skills and knowledge by coaching participants from this training, in the form of self-assessment surveys and key informant interviews.

The overall results showed that the programme successfully met its objectives and was relevant and effective to the needs of the coaching participants.

There were notable positive changes in regard to developing the knowledge and confidence in coaching skills. The baseline and end-line surveys that were completed by the coaching participants **demonstrated an increase in their knowledge and abilities, which were rated as “excellent” and “good”** after their participation on the programme. Furthermore, respondents reported specific improvements in skills such as:

- Self-awareness
- Knowledge on how to coach
- How to utilise the coaching style of leadership
- Understanding a coaching culture

The overall satisfaction rate for quality, approach and content shows that over **92 % of respondents ranked the programme as between “good” and “excellent”**. The follow up surveys sent to participants 6 months post-training demonstrates the sustained effectiveness of the programme in strengthening leadership and management practices. Respondents also reported being able to apply the coaching skills with reference to active listening, empowering staff to find solutions and being inclusive. **62% of line managers reported positive changes in their staff’s overall performance.**

(All the information above is extracted from the lessons learned report³ produced by the UNOCHA programme team.)

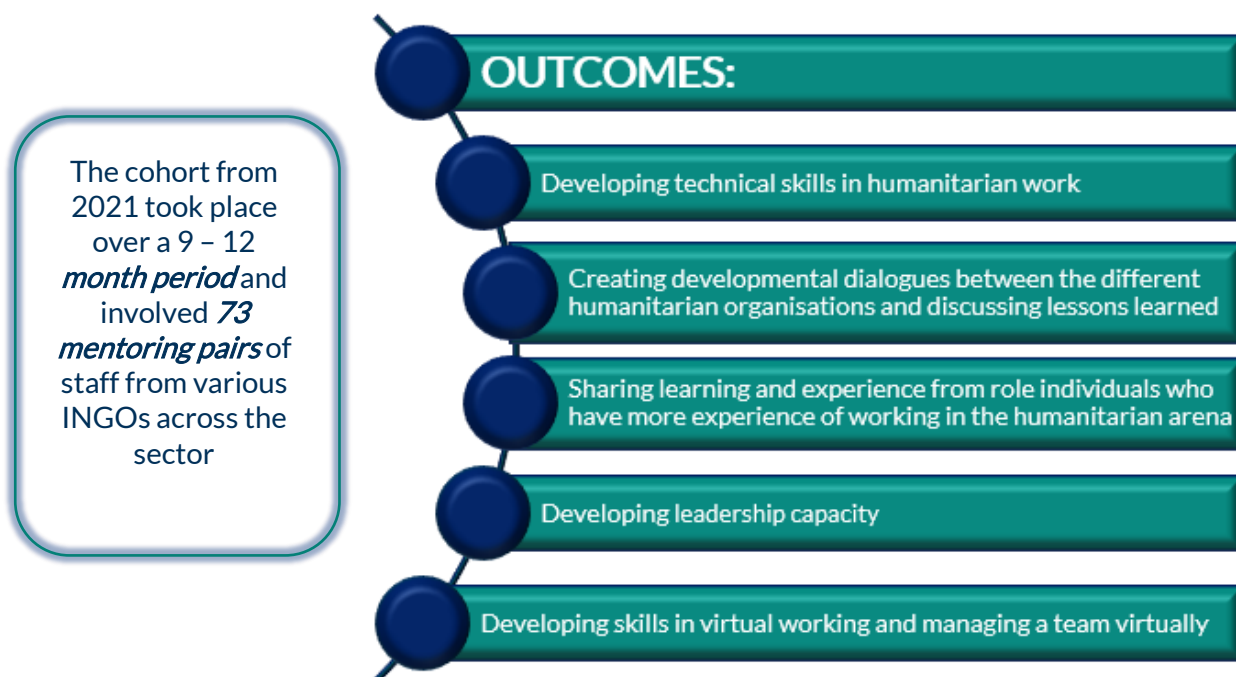
PROFESSIONAL LEVEL

II. Across Organisational Mentoring Programme (AOMP)

The AOMP has been established to connect individuals across participating humanitarian / development organisations, drawing on experience across the sector to support professional development through mentoring. The programme is aimed towards building trusted collaborative relationships in the humanitarian/ development sector, capable of delivering transformational change at the individual, organisational and environmental level through mentoring.

The programme to date which is shared across many international non-governmental organisations (INGO) and humanitarian-based organisations runs between a 6 – 12-month period and has successfully delivered several cohorts since 2016. Participating organisations include **Save The Children, World Vision, Plan International, British Red Cross, CAFOD, War Child, WaterAid, and UNICEF** amongst others.

The programme has seen an increasing number of participants based in international organisations that work globally taking up the mentoring programme which is delivered through webinars, virtual sessions and extra resources hosted on the Kaya platform and [NGOCoachingmentoring website](#).



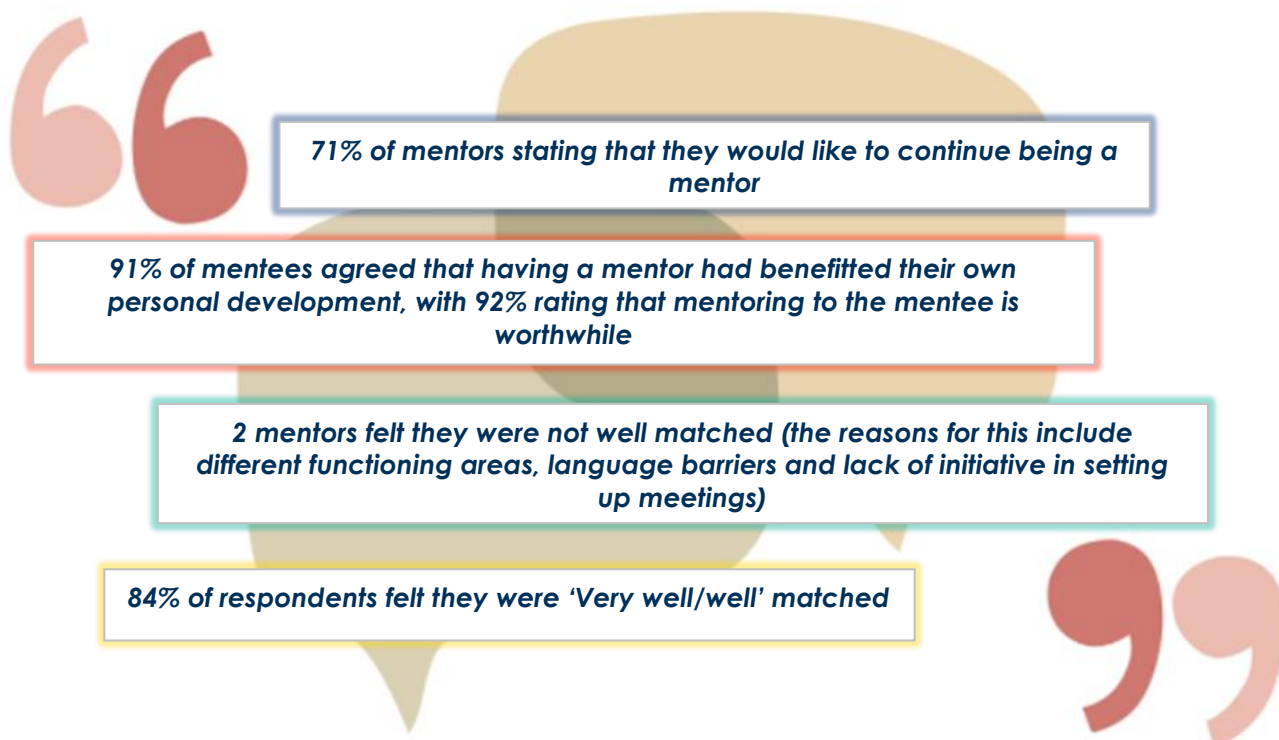
Due to insufficient data, only reach figures can be reported on for 2017 to 2019.

The information below was pulled from the **2020** and **2021** final programme evaluation reports.^{4,5} Below is a table listing the number of mentoring pairs formed in each cohort of the AOMP since 2017:

Year of cohort	Length of cohort	Number of mentoring pairs formed
2017	3 months	20
2018	3 – 6 months	81
2019	3 – 6 months	46
2020	6 months	56
2021	9 – 12 months	73

Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the participants in the 2021 cohort, many have still managed to meet virtually and continue mentoring.

Based on feedback from the mentor and mentees from the 2021 cohort (28 from mentors and 36 from mentees), both groups appeared to have benefitted from the programme:



This particular programme differs from the other schemes and programmes in this evaluation in that it is cross-organisational: mentees are matched with mentors from different organisations.

Both groups felt that the benefits of this type of programming provided:

- Wider perspectives
- Cross fertilisation of ideas
- Growth of talent
- Strengthened collaboration - building healthy/productive relationships, a community
- Building connections / sharing experience between organisations
- Embracing diversity - different contexts and cultures / understanding alternative approaches

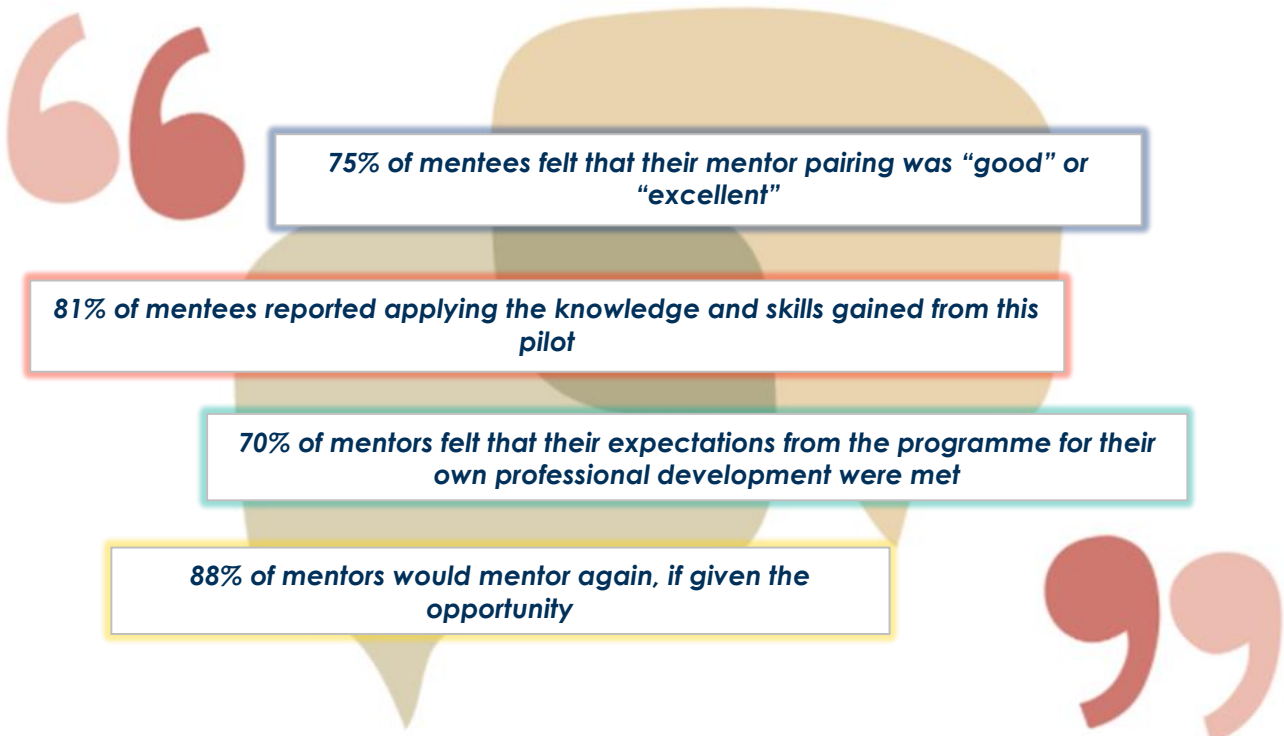
III. East and Southern Africa (ESA) Mentoring Pilot

This mentoring scheme was designed and rolled out by the Save The Children ESA Regional Office (ESARO) in collaboration with Lis Merrick from Coach Mentoring consultancy. The participants that took part in this pilot were Save The Children staff based in the ESA region in 2021. The main purposes of the scheme are to:





Based on feedback from the mentor and mentees (8 from mentors and 16 from mentees):



63% of mentees reported having been directly involved in a humanitarian response as a result of this pilot programme and the knowledge/skills gained from it. One mentee reported that the mentoring scheme coincided with their deployment to Tanzania as a Refugee Response Field Manager, so the mentoring enhanced and strengthened his skills and competencies in managing complex humanitarian work:

“Apart from the confidence I gained from the mentoring, I improved some key skills such as critical thinking skills.... collaboration and networking [skills], negotiation skills, team building and creativity skills.”

This mentee further reported that for him the results of the mentoring scheme were measurable and acknowledged that with the support and engagement from his mentor he *“was able to bring underperforming projects back on track with no discrepancies”* as well as scoring green on all his key performance indicators.

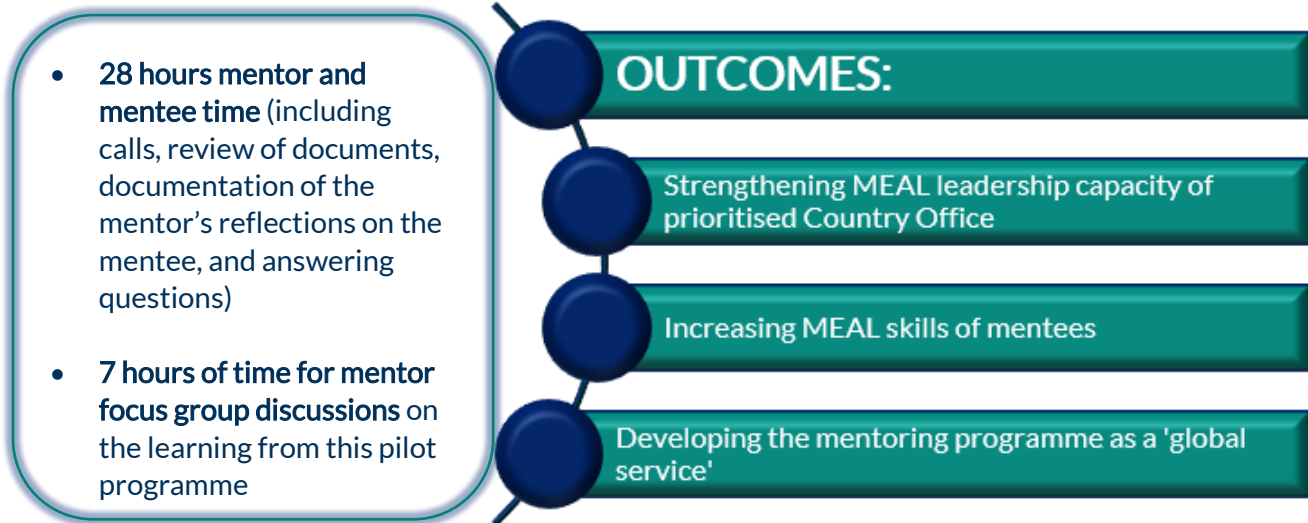
One main area for improvement is that some mentors and mentees found the virtual elements, such as virtual ones, a challenge, and felt that face-to-face mentoring could be more preferable.

IV. MEAL Mentoring Pilot

The MEAL Capacity Building Technical Working Group (TWG) have been working to create a more unified and strategic approach to the professional development of Save The Children global MEAL technical staff. With the help of funding from the Covid-19 Award and collaboration from the HLA, the MEAL TWG were able to pilot a mentoring programme involving staff based globally across the SC movement.

This pilot mentoring programme was delivered over a 3-month period, and was composed of 5 mentoring pairs:





At the start of the pilot, mentees were asked to self-assess themselves against the MEAL Technical Competency Framework (TCF) and it was discovered that none of them had applied it to their work or even discussed the MEAL TCF with their line managers.

“80% of mentees felt that their match with their mentor was “excellent” and 20% was “good” - mentees generally felt that their mentors were supportive

Mentees also reported that this pilot increased their confidence and motivation to find different areas to specialise in MEAL, as well as staying in Save The Children

One mentee specifically expressed that the pilot created a greater visibility with their own line manager around the areas they would like to develop

“It’s all about relationship building. I hope to keep my connection with my mentor after this pilot because it’s the first time I have truly connected with someone in MEAL at a global level. I now have access to more people’s experiences and resources than I did before” - Mentee

After the training, a positive change was observed in that *all the mentees reported feeling more motivated to* use the MEAL TCF in the future to guide their technical growth in other areas.

Overall, the general feedback from mentees and their line managers was that they felt that this *mentoring scheme is a “must-have” and fundamental professional development option* for MEAL staff in Save The Children.

(All the information above is taken from the final evaluation report⁶ conducted by the MEAL Mentoring programme team.)

MASTERY LEVEL

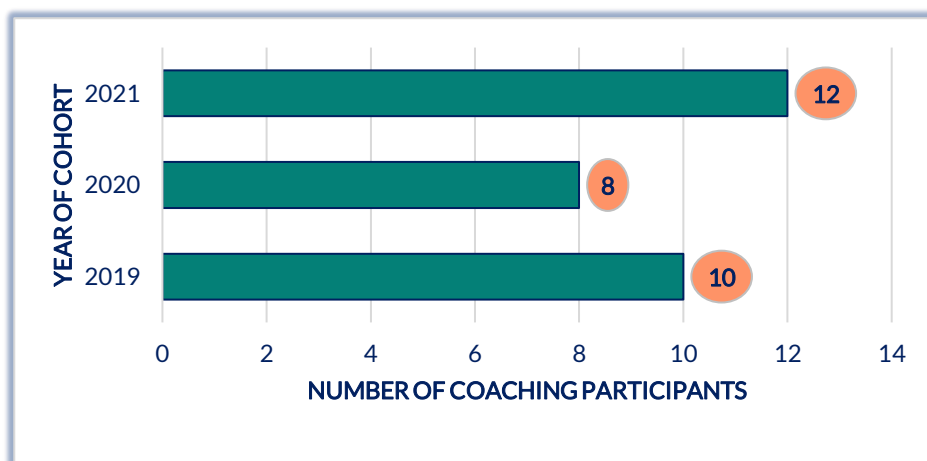
V. Leaders As Coach

Recognising the importance of a professional coaching relationship and the need to better leverage the incredible expertise and talent within the sector, the HLA piloted the ‘Leaders As Coach’ post graduate certificate. **The programme was aimed at targeting senior/executive staff level**, and designed to develop highly effective internal coaches and mentors who are:

- competent to work within their organisations and
- are able to provide a trained coaching and mentoring resource internally

Validated at post graduate level by the Leeds Business School in the UK and in partnership with Coach Mentoring consultancy group, the 12-month programme was piloted in January 2019 with subsequent roll-out of cohorts for 2020 and 2021. Participants who enrolled in the 2021 cohort were from international organisations such as **Save The Children, United Nations, Water Aid and War Child** amongst others.

This highly recognised programme was delivered over 3 modules and 10 senior leaders from 3 organisations started and completed the training.



Due to insufficient programme data, it was not possible to carry out a full evaluation of this programme. Only reach figures can be reported on for 2019 to 2021.

However, it is possible to report that one participant who had enrolled on the 2019 cohort found *“huge personal value”* in the programme and having been able to apply the learning from it as part of her role, would now call herself a coach: *“when the course ended, I knew that coaching would be part of my job.”*

The participant, who is now a member of the [European Coaching and Mentoring Group](#), also felt that the postgraduate diploma qualification accredited by the Leeds Business School provides an extra incentive for participants to apply for the programme, and whilst there is a greater level of time commitment required to participate and engage fully to the whole programme, *“the potential outcome was definitely worth it.”*

“For me, this is all based on how you interact and [how] you work with other people. So there was a lot of skills development and there was also the way in which the course was delivered that you know you learn...and then you go off and practice it....and that was like so valuable. It allows you to like take your own path”

VI. Constellation / Systemic Coaching

This particular programme ‘**Constellation/Systemic Coaching**’ was designed and offered to coaching participants who had completed and graduated from the ‘Leaders As Coach’ programme.

The objective of the programme was to embed a systemic coaching approach that would enable organisations and the wider sector to take a holistic approach that recognises organisations to be complex entities, comprising of interconnected parts. This involves the application of a particular technique called **“constellation”**.

A constellation is defined as a practical intervention, the objective of which is to illuminate invisible dynamics behind relationship difficulties, stuck issues and challenges. The creation of a constellation enables participants to identify patterns and dynamics in service of resolving issues. System constellations can help organisations deal with complex leadership situations and are increasingly used in organisations to analyse complex situations and find solutions when other methods of organisational development fail.

The 2021 cohort involved **19 coaching participants mainly from Save The Children**, and was delivered over a 3-day workshop designed to enable coaches to have the tools to support individuals and teams in the following ways:

- To overcome organisational defensiveness
- To establish or improve relationships
- To uncover hidden truths or facts

Due to insufficient programme data, it was not possible to carry out a full evaluation of this programme. Only reach figures can be reported on for 2021.

However, a reflection from one participant who participated in the 2021 cohort felt that the constellation technique approach *“was such an eye-opening experience”* and *“quite effective especially....in looking at shaping organisational culture”*. It is a coaching method that can achieve very quick results.

The participant also reported using the tools and applying the coaching method on her own coaching participant which has led to *“some significant breakthroughs”* where the individuals have themselves become more aware and empowered in their own workplace to take steps forward in resolving situations that were difficult for them.

“I think what this coaching approach can do is help us to reshape our conversations and reshape the way that we look at relationships and constellations.... I actually believe we can start shifting the power”

Collective Impact

The 6 coaching and mentoring learning offers that were rolled out in 2021 produced a total of **95 mentoring pairs** and **59 coaching participants** globally. The breakdown per learning offer can be seen in this table:

2021 Cohorts	Programme length	Number of participants
Across Organisational Mentoring Programme (AOMP)	6 – 12 months	73 mentoring pairs
East & Southern African (ESA) Mentoring	6 - 9 months	17 mentoring pairs
MEAL Mentoring	3 months	5 mentoring pairs
OCHA Coaching Skills For Managers	3 months	28 coaching participants
Leaders As Coach	9 months	12 coaching participants
Constellation / Systemic Coaching	3 days	19 coaching participants

Looking across the portfolio of these programmes, it is evident that these capacity strengthening initiatives have each had an impact on all the recipients. In general, on the mentoring programmes both mentees and mentors reported that their expectations from the programme they had participated in were met. As described by a mentor on the ‘AOMP’:

“This initiative is highly valuable and positively impacts and builds capacity of more junior staff (the mentee), as well as refreshing the skills and knowledge of senior staff (the mentor).”

Clearly mentoring is a mutually beneficial process where learning is interchanged as well as exchanged between mentees and mentors.

The benefits of cross-organisational mentoring have been particularly impactful in a positive way with beneficiaries from the 'AOMP' reporting on building connections and sharing experiences amongst organisations that has produced new learning, alternative approaches, and a better ability to understand different contexts and cultures. Similarly, with the mentoring programmes that focused more on specific areas such as developing either humanitarian response skills or MEAL competency skills from the 'ESA Mentoring' and 'MEAL Mentoring' programme pilots respectively, most mentees reported being able to apply these knowledge and skills in their workplace. The analysis of the coaching interventions delivers similar findings. One key objective of the 'UNOCHA Coaching Skills for Managers' programme is around developing coaching techniques that shape the coaching culture within OCHA with increased respect for diversity and inclusion in their approaches. **'Diversity and Inclusion'** are key topics which many organisations in the sector are looking to adopt as part of their organisational strategy. UNOCHA want to adapt their training to its staff in the context of meeting their diversity and inclusion goals *"with a focus on supporting women in the humanitarian sector and those from the Global South"* as explained by Janette Moritz, Head of the Learning and Development Unit under the Executive Office in UNOCHA. Leadership and management continue to be areas of high demand to ensure, as she describes it *"that the workplace is really harmonious, respectful and inclusive."* Janette emphasises that people can be promoted to managerial-level roles without having the necessary people skills in place (skills which can often be overlooked) – role models are needed, hence the priority to design a training programme that targets the upskilling of managers in coaching skills and techniques, and this is a part of UNOCHA's own People Strategy.

The impact of this programme has not just been at an individual level but also at an organisational level – **62% of line managers reported positive changes in their staff's overall performance**, and in the post-training feedback specific reference was made to the active use of coaching skills **resulting in enhanced engagement with teams, more systematic approaches and more confidence.**

Furthermore, the reported feedback on **strengthened leadership and management practices** demonstrated the effectiveness of the programme in contributing positively to the coaching culture within the organisation.

The roll out of the accredited 'Leaders As Coach' programme in 2019 and the 'Constellation / Systemic Coaching' programme in 2021 by the HLA also addresses the upskilling of senior and/or executive level staff to develop highly effective coaches and mentors that are able to provide an internal trained coaching and mentoring resource within an organisation, whilst simultaneously strengthening the leadership capability and capacity. By developing its own senior leaders to unlock their own passion and potential as a coach, the HLA are creating a community of humanitarian coaching advocates both within Save the Children and through developing our partners who are inspirational leaders of change across the sector.⁷ With this programme having completed delivery of three cohorts since its pilot in 2019, the need for such capacity strengthening coaching initiatives is increasing.

Due to the inconsistency of data collected across the portfolio of these programmes, it is impossible to give a completely accurate picture of the impact (outside of reach figures) that some of these programmes bring to the collective, but there is enough evidence to demonstrate that these programmes individually achieved most of their overall outcomes and have been impactful at both an individual and organisational level.

Lessons Learned & Recommendations

The data and lessons learned feedback from across all of these programmes, although generally very positive in terms of the learning and impact, also identified areas for improvement or consideration.

1. Duration of programme

For the mentoring-based programmes that spanned a 3-month period (AOMP cohort 2016, and MEAL Mentoring Pilot), overall both mentors and mentees felt more time was needed than this to really get the most out of the mentoring relationships or be able to achieve the objectives fully. Factors such as conflicting work priorities, time zone differences, technology/connection issues, and the impact from the Covid-19 pandemic changing some focuses and goals made it challenging in some cases. Some participants from both groups felt the need for more time to really

overcome these challenges and get properly settled into their mentoring relationships. An evaluation in October 2021 of the AOMP 2021 cohort recommended to increase the duration of the AOMP programme to 12 months for the 2022 cohort that will open for applications in mid-February 2022.

RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider setting the duration of future programmes to 6 months or more depending on availability of mentors, capacity, and resources. • Have joint introduction sessions with all mentors and mentees together to ensure they both understand the approach, expectations, and timelines on both sides

2. Language considerations

As most of these initiatives involved participants from all over the globe, it is important to remember that language can pose a barrier to learning, especially if English is not a first or native language. This also includes the language of the programme content material and resources. As an example, in the MEAL Mentoring pilot, some French-speaking mentees were given the opportunity to take part in this mentoring scheme, therefore mentors were also selected based on these language needs. However, an unforeseen circumstance of one mentor/mentee pairing was that even though the pair could converse in English, the in-country content that needed to be reviewed and improved was not in a language that the mentor could speak in, resulting in the pair not being able to work on the intended actual product needed for that country programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that language preferences are included in the application process • To have a mixture of language capabilities in the mentor pool • To ensure that all resources and tools are translated into different relevant languages

On the flip side though, one mentee reported that they were able to practice their English writing and speaking skills and viewed it as a better way to become connected to the rest of the SC MEAL community.⁶

This issue of language has also been identified in other humanitarian capacity strengthening initiatives that were included in the [HLA Covid-19 Capacity Strengthening Response Review 2020-2021⁸](#), and this finding re-iterates the importance of delivering in appropriate languages in humanitarian learning.

3. MEAL data collection and management

This evaluation process has highlighted the inconsistencies in the data collection methods and tools for most of these programmes. For example, there was very limited data on the AOMP cohorts, therefore it was impossible to evaluate either of these programmes fully outside of the reach they brought. In comparison, it was easier to evaluate MEAL Mentoring, ESA Mentoring and OCHA Coaching Skills for Managers programmes, as the necessary frameworks and tools had been developed prior to programme delivery.

It is important to note that a robust MEAL plan, process and data collection tools must be developed and implemented from the start of a programme, as well as having a dedicated MEAL focal point that can monitor the roll out of the tools at the relevant times during the programme cycle.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Ensure that a robust MEAL plan is designed and developed (prior to delivery) with clear timelines on when data collection tools must be rolled out**
- **Design appropriate data collection tools that can measure all KPIs as stated in the MEAL plan. (Adaptable templates are available in the HLA REMEAL Toolbox hosted on SharePoint)**
- **Have clear roles and responsibilities on who will collect and manage the data collection**
- **Conduct training and/or refresher training on 'how to be a mentor', as well as provide a resource library such as guidance and handbooks on mentoring.**

4. Accountability in the mentor/mentee relationship

Looking across the 3 mentoring programmes (MEAL Mentoring, ESA Mentoring, and AOMP), feedback from both mentees and mentors showed that in some cases there were difficulties maintaining an effective mentoring relationship due to lack of attendance, missed and/or the postponement of meetings on both sides, as well as lack of mentee proactiveness or clarity on their objectives. In the MEAL Mentoring pilot, it was reported that not all mentors and mentees had the same understanding of which topics are most suited to mentoring in comparison to other types of professional development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **An initial meeting or introduction sessions with all mentors and mentees together to ensure they both understand the approach, expectations, and timelines so there is accountability on both sides**
- **Conduct training and/or refresher training on 'how to be a mentor', as well as provide a resource library such as guidance and handbooks on mentoring.**

5. Shifting culture and performance through coaching

The benefits of coaching can be seen at both an individual and an organisational level.

The main objectives of introducing coaching activities are to:

- Improve individual, team and organisational performance
- Increase productivity and
- Develop skills

Creating a coaching culture at senior leadership is important. By providing the knowledge, skills and techniques through targeted coaching offers such as Leaders As Coach and Constellation/Systemic Coaching, organisational performance has the potential to be improved and enhanced.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Buy-in and engagement from the senior leadership to promote a coaching culture in the organisation**
- **Coaching needs to be introduced from the top down with the senior leaders educated and consistently role modelling coaching skills and behaviours**

Conclusions

In essence, the relevance and need for coaching and mentoring capacity strengthening initiatives in the sector are continuously growing. With the roll-out of programmes like the AOMP in 2016 and Leaders As Coach in 2019, the demand and level of interest has increased in the last several years as reported by Samantha Davis, HLA Head of Regions and also a member of the L&D Inter-agency Working Group:

“There has been no communication around our programmes [AOMP and Leaders As Coach]. There has been no big comms package or marketing...it's literally been word of mouth, so the interest that I'm getting, whether it's [from] a leader or whether it's a programme officer all asking for details on how they can engage is organic and it's growing, and that's fantastic to see.”

The evidence is also there from seeing reports of higher cases of people leaving the sector due to burn out as well as the need for mental health and psychosocial support – both coaching and mentoring is seen as a very reflective practice that puts the emphasis on the learner and is very much around creating an inclusive and open environment where the coaching participant or mentee feel in control of their learning and is able to take direction in the way they want rather than be led by an instructor or facilitator.

So as the sector shifts towards ‘localisation’ what does this mean for coaching and mentoring? Samantha Davis says that at the HLA:

“We are ahead of the game in so many ways in terms of thinking and being able to roll out initiatives [like these] that we can start small, but [where] we can also gain traction.... we've got a really key role to play in terms of thinking about how approaches and processes such as coaching, mentoring support that localisation shift.”

The HLA's provision of coaching and mentoring initiatives encourages innovative solutions to today's problems. Through developing these skills throughout their coaching and mentoring programmes, they have leveraged leaders and technical experts' abilities to provide 'guidance from experience' to support both individuals and teams achieve their full potential and achieve transformational change. Collaborating with partners in the sector has been particularly beneficial as this provides a platform to share knowledge, expertise and experiences to design, implement and deliver such initiatives as well as expanding their ability to reach more beneficiaries in the sector. The AOMP is a great example of the benefits of working not only cross-organisationally with partners (such as World Vision International, CAFOD and War Child) but also with subject matter experts in this field (Coach Mentoring Ltd consultants) to produce and roll out a mentoring scheme that invites mentees and mentors from different organisations to be paired, and thus broadening the depth of the shared learning and knowledge.

One mentee on the 2021 AOMP cohort stated:

"It's just the benefit of having someone external to the organisation who does not have an agenda in terms of what I need to be delivering for my organisation but rather just for my development. The fact that we both come from similar working contexts (women or colour from the 'Global South' leading mostly white colleagues in Europe) gave me a strong sense of solidarity in the uniqueness of our leadership challenges, and the cultural nuances we constantly have to navigate. There is so much reflection just on this alone."

Similarly, a mentor on the same cohort reported that it gives them *"a window to see how different NGOs operate and how the mentees are dealing with the challenges in various settings."*

It is important to continue this kind of collaboration moving forward. Groups such as the L&D Inter-agency Working Group serves as a great consortium of leaders and experts in the learning and development sector, that can help steer and shape the coaching and mentoring culture in the wider sector. *"This can be achieved by continuing to work collaboratively with other organisations to develop the core skills of coaching and mentoring, sharing and providing access to resources"* - a point that is rightly embedded within the HLA's Coaching & Mentoring Pillar's strategic narrative for 2022 - 2024.

Differences between ‘coaching’ and ‘mentoring’

To understand the value that coaching and mentoring can provide, it is important to understand what they both mean. Samantha Davis, HLA’s Head of Regions and certified coach of 8 years believes that coaching and mentoring are processes that are both considered as thorough reflective practices putting the emphasis on the learner much more than on the trainer:

“These processes are about creating an environment where the individual feels that they are in control of their learning and are able to take direction in the way that they want, rather than be led by an instructor or trainer.”

Professional **coaching** focuses on setting goals, creating outcomes and managing personal change. Coaching aims to produce optimal performance and improvement at work and focuses on specific skills and goals.

The coaching process does not include advising or counselling and focuses instead on individuals or groups setting and reaching their own objectives, and typically lasts for a defined period of time or forms the basis of an on-going management style.⁹



A **mentor** is an expert who provides wisdom and guidance based on their own experience. Mentoring may include advising, counselling, and coaching. Mentoring in the workplace tends to describe a relationship in which a more experienced colleague shares their greater knowledge to support the development of an inexperienced member of staff. It calls on the skills of questioning, listening, clarifying and reframing that are also associated with coaching.

An effective mentoring relationship is a learning opportunity for both participants, encouraging sharing and learning across generations and/or between roles and peers. One key distinction is that mentoring relationships tend to be longer term than coaching arrangements.⁹

The **benefits** of coaching and mentoring are multiple and can have effects at both the individual and the organisational level.²





Further reading

1. Research report by Grant Thornton: [“The surprising value to coaching in a crisis”](#)
2. NGO Coaching & Mentoring website: <https://ngocoachingmentoring.org/framework/>
3. OCHA Coaching Skills for Managers Programme Lessons Learned report (draft version)
4. ‘AOMP 2020 Mentoring Programme – Final Evaluation, October 2020’ produced by Lis Merrick, Coach Mentoring Ltd
5. ‘AOMP 2021 Mentoring Programme – Final Evaluation, October 2021’ produced by Lis Merrick, Coach Mentoring Ltd
6. Save The Children UK’s MEAL Mentoring Pilot Report: ‘Key takeaways for a more scaled up and sustainable approach’ written by Linda Steinbock and Ian Simcox-Heath
7. HLA Transformation of Training (ToT) IKEA Foundation 18-month programme report (1st May 2018 – 1st Nov 2019)
8. [HLA COVID-19 Capacity Strengthening Response Review 2020-2021](#), October 2021 produced by Lucy Hall and Pawel Mania
9. CIPD website: <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/people/development/coaching-mentoring-factsheet#gref>

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