



Enhancing Surge Capacity in CCEA – What is CDAC doing?

Applying active commitments to Communication, Community Engagement and Accountability (CCEA) improves the outcomes for people affected by disasters, whether from natural hazards, situations of armed conflict and violence or in public health crises. Maximising impact of collective action on CCEA requires specialist expertise in the right place at the right time.

The context of COVID-19 has sharpened the focus on the need to better understand capacity and capabilities in CCEA at a response level. The very nature of experiencing the pandemic in combination with other chronic and acute crises has deepened the importance of CCEA and also widened the gap in capacity. The opportunity to brighten the spotlight on AAP and CCEA more broadly must be accompanied by a doubling down on coherence and complementarity of approaches.

While national organisations have significant expertise and capacity in CCEA, and many international humanitarian organisations now understand the need and benefit for CCEA, there is still a gap in operationalising it so that it can be implemented effectively in-country. The Enhancing Surge Capacity in CCEA programme recognises the need for clear and concise tools that prioritise specialist expertise in the right place in a response.

CDAC Network is a growing platform of more than 30 members of UN, Red Cross/ Red Crescent, Media Development, NGOs, and specialised agencies - is dedicated to promoting local leadership models and ensuring humanitarian assistance is more effective through better two-way communication, community engagement and accountability.

The CDAC Secretariat supports Standby partners to embed CCEA across their rosters and also manages a CDAC Expert Pool of leading specialists on CCEA to support the roll out of its ambitious Network Strategy.



Background

Humanitarian reform processes and their resulting policy improvements have seen commitments to collective, response-wide community engagement in emergencies, feeding into humanitarian architecture and leadership. Grand Bargain commitments, Humanitarian Country Team compacts, global and country COVID-19 plans and donor funding conditions now call for this. Yet many staff and coordination structures remain ill-equipped to listen to, engage and act upon feedback from communities.

Surge can contribute to ensuring expertise is available in times of acute need. Recent analysis has identified critical gaps in coordination, technical delivery and leadership when it comes to CCEA. This is particularly the case when it comes to comprehensive, collective systems and strategies complete with feedback that systematically informs decision making, programming and strategy. From 2014 to 2018, in 23 IASC support missions and Operational Peer Reviews identified weak or non-existent collective AAP systems.¹ Linking community expertise with individual agency action is a vital role of humanitarian coordination system. Until this is appropriately embedded surge will be a priority.

Over the past decade, CDAC Network (CDAC), through its collective and individual member work, has developed a comprehensive understanding of the capacity and capabilities needed to be effective. It has done this through:

- rigorous CCEA learning assessments of medium- to large-scale responses;
- developing, testing and refining capacity tools at the local and global level;
- adapting approaches to changing situations in-country (accessibility and COVID-19-related) and meeting new global commitments (e.g., localisation, participation revolution) that agencies need support to implement.

¹<https://odihpn.org/magazine/coordinating-revolution-critical-role-response-leadership-improving-collective-community-engagement/>

What do we mean by surge capacity and capability?

CDAC interprets the term '*surge capacity*' as the ability of the humanitarian sector to scale up to provide adequate and high quality CCEA support during emergency events that exceed the limits of the normal day-to-day humanitarian response. It can span preparedness, response and recovery. Put simply, it is about having the right capacity in place: enough people, the right skills, the right understanding in a specific culture and context.

CDAC distinguishes surge capacity from surge capability.

'*Surge capability*', from a CDAC perspective, is the collective ability of humanitarian agencies to ensure an effective and coordinated CCEA response-wide in-country which goes beyond individual organisational programmes.



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[CDAC's surge assessment report](#), in 2018, made a number of recommendations to boost CCEA surge capacity and capability and increase the quality and predictability of response-wide community engagement in disaster management. The Enhancing Surge Capacity in CCEA programme supports activities in CDAC's wider capacity bridging work, to deliver these recommendations.

Working at the inter-agency response level, the programme aims to enhance Standby Partner surge capacity through existing partners and embed a future-proof systematic approach to aiding the sourcing and training of personnel, addressing specific identified gaps in the fulfilment of global CCEA commitments.

The systems and tools developed as part of the global programme support implementation of the [IASC Results Group 2](#) on Accountability and Inclusion work plan and the [Grand Bargain Participation Revolution](#) Workstream. Ensuring outputs complement and add value to these and other commitments, such as those enshrined in the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS), is central to their success.

Areas of action

Determining need and requesting surge capacity in CCEA:

- **Develop generic CCEA ToRs to support effective and efficient recruitment:** Though CDAC used standard ToRs prior to this, creating coherent profiles across a range of crises and to suit all standby partners was identified as a priority for bringing efforts on CCEA surge together. Following partner consultations 3 key roles were identified and finalised in 2019. These roles serve to speed up deployment time and serve as a basis for understanding the range of functions and responsibilities needed in crisis situations.

Three generic ToRs reflect these consultations are now available for collective CCEA:

- *Technical Officer* (to improve agency performance on CCE)
- *Coordinator* (to facilitate a working group or similar platform on CCE)
- *Senior Advisor* (to advise senior humanitarian management in-country and develop the collective approach to CCE)

Since their finalisation in 2019, a number of deployments were initiated using the ToRs. Learning from these deployments identified additional support needed to improve usability, and to increase adaptability for different contexts.

- **Support decision makers to identify surge capacity needs at response level:** To support the uptake and utilisation of the ToRs, CDAC is developing a surge capacity checklist. This tool will support decision makers, at interagency response level, to determine the need, gaps and opportunities for additional capacity. By considering the scale and complexity of a given context, the checklist will support the developments of the profiles needed to optimise capacity – in turn providing a clear ask to standby partners in the short and medium term.



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As well as supporting response leaders to analyse gaps, the checklist and associated tools will identify where questions of capacity are supported by, are complementary to, or risk duplicating, initiatives underway in parallel. Understanding how surge can contribute to great collaboration is particularly important to maximise gains made on AAP through the IASC RG2 and specific initiatives in contexts of public health emergency.

Promoting expertise in CCEA deployable personnel

- **Future-Proof CCEA Information Management (IM) capacity:** *'Orientation: Information management for coordinated community engagement'*, outlines the information management functions of an inter-agency CCEA working group and is available on CDAC's website. It serves to orient an CCEA Coordinator as to the information management tasks that they may need to complete, in the event that an Information Management Officer (IMO) is not available or deployed. The guidance is a resource developed for AAP/CCE Information Management Officers, CCE practitioners and decision-makers requesting AAP/CCE surge support (as an advocacy tool around the need to deploy IMOs to support the CCE Coordinator).

Work continues on revising IM training tools targeting those with limited IM knowledge and for those already IM competent. 2021 will see IM tools incorporate CCEA IM needs in humanitarian and public health crises. The outputs of which will support training materials for deployable staff.

- **Ensure access to Guided Coordinator Training for CCEA:** The lack of coordination skills training was identified as a priority gap during the surge consultations. Building on CDAC's existing training package, an advanced Coordinator-level training was developed and piloted in Nairobi in 2020, with 25 participants from UN agencies, INGOs, Red Cross/Red Crescent, and community-based organisations. The Coordinator training updates reflected the outcome of a pilot in 2019 and a further pilot involving the participation of a number of senior national coordinators, in particular those who worked in 2019-2020 in Burkina Faso, Sudan and Zimbabwe. *A detailed outline of the training is available on the CDAC website.*
- **Invest in an accessible and advanced training platform:** In 2021, CDAC has transformed the CCEA Coordinator Training, adapting it from the original classroom design approach to a more tailored, interactive seminar and tutorial approach which better serves the needs of leadership and negotiation skills that are critical for coordination. Moving this training to the CDAC Virtual Learning Environment has advantages for inclusion as well as supported learning. Online and facilitated ensures that participants still benefit from the experience of the facilitator and the other participants. People are able to learn whilst working, making it easier to attend but also ensuring that learning can be applied and discussed during tutorials.
- **Work closely with standby partners to build capacity to respond:** Consultations with the Standby Partners Secretariat and targeted SBP members are ongoing to mobilise demand for



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the CCEA profiles. CDAC is an active participant in the IASC RG2 and the Grand Bargain and each area of work is part of an ongoing collaborative process to support respective action plan implementations. Standby Partners will receive training in 2021 to increase the availability of the right skills.

Testing and learning from innovative approaches to CCEA collective action at country level

- **Undertake Country Scoping Studies to improve collaborative action in CCEA:** Triggering demand for CCEA where needs are not being addressed is high on the global programme priorities. In this year of the Enhancing Surge Capacity programme CDAC is piloting a number of scoping studies. Scoping studies, in collaboration with CDAC members, are in progress in Sudan and Colombia and planned in Papua New Guinea later in the year, to better target CCEA collective added value for affected people.
- **Prioritise locally-led coordination of CCEA:** CDAC as a collective, continues to advocate for pre-positioning of CCEA capacity and capability in disaster-risk countries. Work continues on innovative-locally led CCEA platform models in [Fiji and Vanuatu](#) - while CDAC technical assistance will commence to the Disaster Management Team in Papua New Guinea in 2021. Addressing CCEA commitments in Humanitarian Response Plans (HNOs) and COVID-19 Plan, CDAC continues to deploy Senior National Coordinators where response-wide gaps are identified, such as in Burkina Faso, Sudan and Zimbabwe in 2019-2021.

Donors

CDAC's Global Surge Programme has been funded by UNICEF through its USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) funding stream, the H2H Get Ready Fund, and CDAC Member Annual Fee contributions, supported by country-specific funds for the Pacific by Australian DFAT.



CDAC's global training offer

Other training offers suitable for emergency deployment roster/surge staff include:

Coordinator Training for CCEA

Facilitated online. Designed to give people who will work in CCEA coordination, or for surge personnel who will need to do so at short notice, the key skills they will need when acting as coordinators, so they can build more resilient cooperative embedded partnerships in CCEA.

Bespoke Technical Training in CCEA

Online or face-to-face. We develop and deliver training for organisations or rosters looking for training tailored specifically to their needs. Examples include creating CCEA training tailored for work involving: cash, climate resilience, or sectorial-focused work.

Technical Training for Practitioners, CCEA

Online or face-to-face. This training has been designed for in-country and technical staff who already have a basic understanding of the concepts. Participants are likely to be involved in designing and implementing programmes.

Basic technical training in CCEA

Online or face-to-face. This is an introductory CDAC Network course in the use of CCE tools and techniques. It would suit senior management and practitioners in non CCEA areas.

CDAC E-learning course: Communication is aid

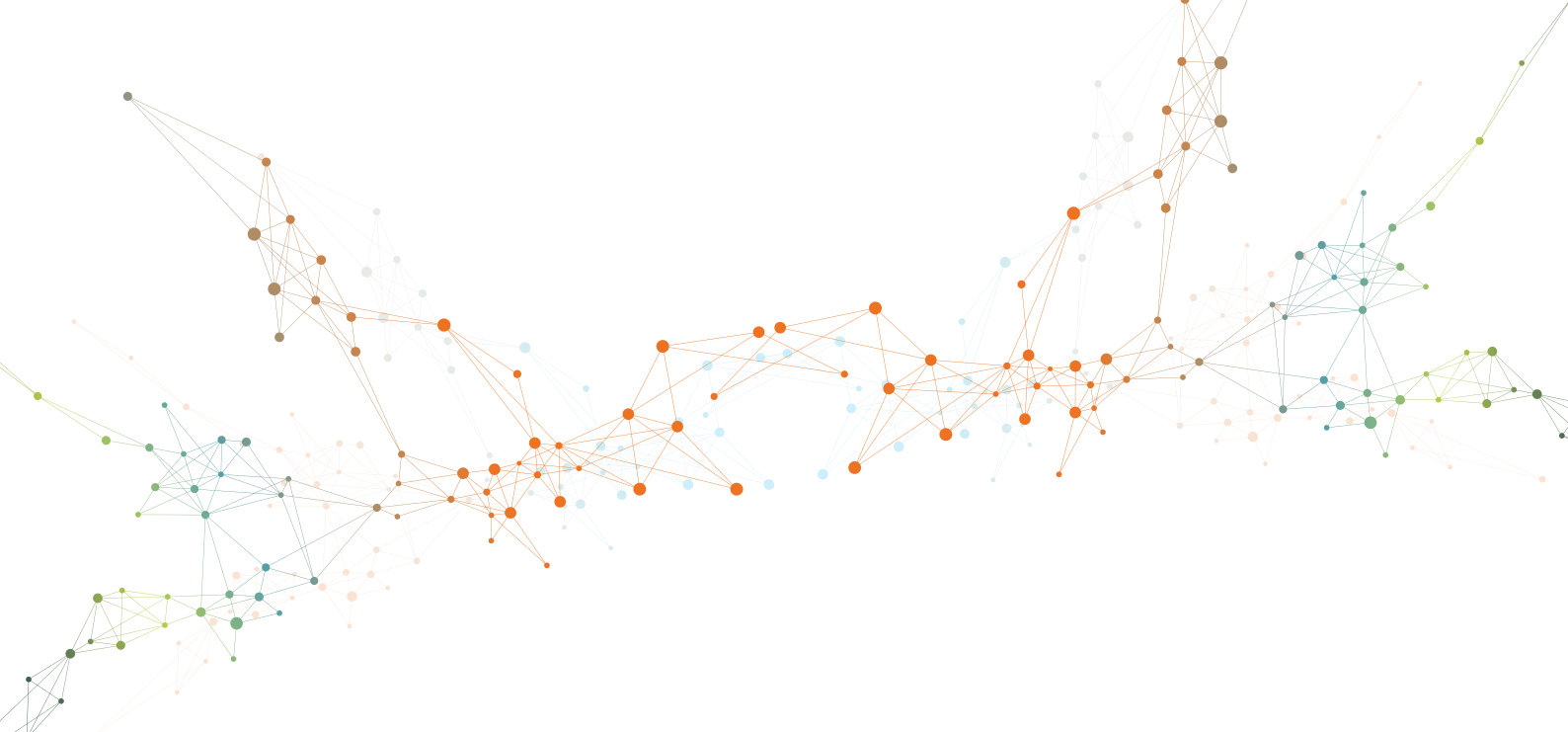
Self-guided, online. An introductory, three-hour e-learning course that introduces the concept of communication as aid. It takes participants through interactive scenarios to teach the basic elements of how to engage and provide information for affected communities and establish communication mechanisms for dialogue. This course can be taken on its own or as a precursor to other courses. Find out more: <https://kayaconnect.org/course/info.php?id=768>

Briefing Module

In this two-hour module participants receive an overview of what communication and community engagement is, why it is important and how it feeds into improving accountability and participation. [Download the Briefing Module](#)

Please contact training@cdacnetwork.org for more information about each training and any related costs.

If you would like to know more about CDAC's enhancing surge capacity programme, please contact Rosie Jackson at rosie.jackson@cdacnetwork.org



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