A comprehensive, dynamic staff development approach enabling organisations to recognise, refine and improve individual skills, strengthen behaviours in their staff, and raise standards and quality in future humanitarian responses.
Introduction

Context is a staff development initiative born out of the Consortium of British Humanitarian Agencies (CBHA)*.

Context’s two staff development programmes accelerate and improve the quality of emergency response by increasing the numbers and expertise of potential leaders, and enhancing the skills of all current personnel.

Context’s materials will be freely available to the humanitarian sector from Spring 2012. They have been designed for easy information access, cost-effective use and - above all - simple copying for wider distribution and use. This includes material design, workbooks, tools, templates, posters, banners, leaflets and certificates.

* For further information, visit: www.thecbha.org
Potential benefits of **Context** to staff and their organisations

Evidence from the 2011 pilot shows that **Context’s** two programmes provide participants with positive affirmation about their roles in humanitarian work, help them feel better prepared for the future, and better able to see their own role in a wider context.

Delivery of the long-term learning programmes offers a credible, ready-made staff development and/or Talent Management facility for emerging leaders in the organisation. The inter-agency format allows inter-organisational comparisons, relationship building and networking.

This, in turn, makes participants:

- More ‘rounded’ humanitarians with a ‘broadened outlook’ and an understanding of the ‘big picture’ of humanitarian work beyond the limitations of the usual technical inputs;
- More confident about ‘doing the job’ and their own abilities;
- More assertive and vocal, even in the most difficult situations;
- Brave enough to enter new spheres and take on new responsibilities;
- Less inclined to rely on red tape; and
- More able to provide good leadership.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Core Humanitarian Competencies Framework</th>
<th>Additional Behaviours, Skills and Knowledge</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding the humanitarian context</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the phases of humanitarian response, including preparedness, response, and recovery.</td>
<td>Analyse and exercise critical judgment to achieve program goals.</td>
<td>Understand the humanitarian context and apply this in practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborating and working with others</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the phases of humanitarian response, including preparedness, response, and recovery.</td>
<td>Adapt to pressure and changing situations.</td>
<td>Work effectively and efficiently within humanitarian contexts.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Managing financial, procurement, and supply chain activities</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the phases of humanitarian response, including preparedness, response, and recovery.</td>
<td>Use negotiation and conflict resolution skills to influence others.</td>
<td>Support creative and innovative ways of working.</td>
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<td><strong>Managing personal safety</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the phases of humanitarian response, including preparedness, response, and recovery.</td>
<td>Understand the humanitarian context and apply this in practice.</td>
<td>Work effectively and efficiently within humanitarian contexts.</td>
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<td><strong>Adapting and coping with change</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the phases of humanitarian response, including preparedness, response, and recovery.</td>
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<td>Work effectively and efficiently within humanitarian contexts.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrating leadership in humanitarian response</strong></td>
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<td>Use negotiation and conflict resolution skills to influence others.</td>
<td>Support creative and innovative ways of working.</td>
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<td><strong>Ensuring programme quality and impact</strong></td>
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Opportunity for the sector

Continuing from a very promising pilot we have the opportunity to take to scale a quality, long-term staff development initiative for national staff across the sector, by:

A. building awareness of the Core Humanitarian Competencies Framework and galvanising attitudinal change in staff development and,

B. supporting countries to run Context, two quality learning programmes, for the widest range of staff responding to emergencies from NGOs, their local civil society partners, national government partners and the United Nations.
Context aims to develop i) core humanitarian competencies and ii) leadership and management competencies of existing staff at national level.

It comprises two learning programmes;

1. **Core Skills Development Programme**
   A 6-month inter-agency programme providing continued professional development to national agency staff in their current roles; focusing on an introduction to the key concepts and skills of humanitarian programming.

2. **Management & Leadership Skills Development Programme**
   A 9-month inter-agency programme providing continued professional development to national agency middle/senior management staff, in their current roles, that examines key aspects of management and leadership in emergency situations.

The learning programme format encourages and facilitates each participant’s investment in applied and reflective learning whilst "on the job", as part of a coherent and high quality staff development programme.

For both programmes, learning methods include:

- coaching
- face-to-face workshops
- learning on the job
- self-directed learning
- group work
- practical course work

Throughout the staff member is actively supported by their agency and line manager. The individual owns their own learning.

These programmes are based on the **Core Humanitarian Competencies Framework**. This platform offers a unique opportunity to share best practice and establish a common, high quality learning experience for staff across humanitarian agencies and in different parts of the world.
Acknowledgements

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Thanks are due to many people involved in the ideas, development, piloting and realisation of two learning programmes and their content. These include advisers, facilitators, coaches, the 2011 programme participants and staff from Bangladesh, Bolivia, Indonesia, Kenya, Somalia and South Sudan.

The Context initiative will be available from Spring 2012. Documentation is centered around a comprehensively written Programme Guide together with supporting material on both DVD and online.

Promotional material, including posters, banners, charts and prints have also been created to complement these programmes.

Copies of this Context Introduction Leaflet are available now and may be requested by contacting The Consortium of British Humanitarian Agencies (CBHA) on:
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