

START
NETWORK

ANNUAL REVIEW 2020



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Front cover credit: PRO-VIDA, Alert 422 in El Salvador (Gender-based violence)

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FOREWORD

2020 has been one of the most turbulent years in living memory. So much so, it is difficult to summarise or even make sense of the deeply contextual, individual, and personal way it has played out for each of us, our families, and our communities.

For Start Network, 2020 marked our ten-year anniversary as a positive disruptor in the humanitarian sector. And in many ways the pandemic, global economic crisis and social unrest has only deepened that resolve. It is a year that has brought new urgency to our case for change. Reinforcing the need for local, highly contextual solutions to humanitarian problems. Heightening the need for proactivity, flexibility and speed when managing disasters. And intensifying our conviction that agility, openness, and ethics must replace the cumbersome, centralised, and colonial practices of our sector to date. In that respect, 2020 only compelled us to double down on our change agenda and drive forward our vision:

- We began the incubation of five national and regional hubs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guatemala, India, the Pacific region, and Pakistan. These hubs are now accessing funds and working with us on risk financing and innovation programmes.
- We approved 5 and inducted another 12 new members into the network. 14 of which are local and national NGOs, which brings our diverse membership total to 55 civil society organisations.
- We awarded £35.8 million in emergency funds to our members, reaching 9 million people across six continents through our global Start Fund, Start Fund Bangladesh, Start Fund COVID-19 our Migration Emergency Response Fund, ARC Replica and DRF Pakistan programmes.
- We hosted our first [virtual assembly and AGM](#), and ran 36 sessions over four days for 350 registered member participants across 61 countries.
- As part of our anniversary, we marked a [decade of positive disruption at Start Network](#), and [celebrated inspirational change makers from across the sector](#).
- Internally, we have grown the team by almost one-third, focusing on equity, diversity and inclusion in our hiring, speaking openly about difficult issues such as racism and colonialism, and committing to staff wellbeing.

The impressive achievements documented in this annual review are a testament to the power of shared vision and collective action. We are indebted to the Start Network team, which has remained motivated and resilient throughout a difficult year, without losing their creativity, curiosity, and sense of humour. We are inspired by our evolving hubs, who have challenged us and inspired us at every turn. And we are grateful to our growing and increasingly diverse members for demonstrating that we are better together.

We know that 2021 will be marked by the residual effects of COVID-19 on economies and communities. We also know that our impact as a network will rely on our ability to let go of the outdated practices that drove us pre-pandemic to create fresh foundations for redressing power imbalances and radical change.

CHRISTINA BENNETT

CEO



SUZANNE LYNE

CFOO



WHAT IS START NETWORK?

Start Network is a global membership of more than 50 organisations, working across six continents, to tackle what it sees as the biggest systemic problems in the humanitarian sector.

The current global system is not accountable to people affected by crises.

PROBLEMS WE'RE ADDRESSING

- DECISION MAKING IS **CENTRALISED**, AND PRIORITIES ARE **DISCONNECTED** FROM THE END USER.
 - IT IS **REACTIVE, FRAGMENTED, AND INEFFICIENT**.
 - THE SECTOR'S INCENTIVES AND WAYS OF WORKING ARE **OUTDATED, INFLEXIBLE AND RESISTANT TO CHANGE**.
-

MISSION, VISION, AND THEORY OF CHANGE

Start Network's vision is for a locally led humanitarian system that is accountable to people affected by and at-risk of crises. We aim to achieve this vision by making systemic-level shifts in the way humanitarian assistance is approached and delivered by:

OUR SOLUTIONS

- **SHIFTING POWER AND DECENTRALISING** DECISION MAKING TO **LOCALLY LED** NETWORKS AND ORGANISATIONS.
 - CREATING A GLOBAL FINANCING SYSTEM THAT **REDUCES RISK, ANTICIPATES AND ACTS AHEAD** OF PREDICTABLE CRISES.
 - **INCENTIVISING AND INFORMING INNOVATIVE, CONTEXTUAL, AND SUSTAINABLE** SOLUTIONS FOR CRISIS-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES.
-

START NETWORK

THEORY OF CHANGE

Our theory of change is based on evidence that a locally led system is best placed to minimise suffering, loss of life and livelihoods. It promotes sustainable and dignified responses in crisis contexts. And it accepts that such change requires focused financial investment in locally led organisations and structures to enact and sustain systemic change.

PROBLEMS

The global humanitarian system is not accountable to people affected by and at risk of crisis, and fails to adequately support them, because it is:

Centralised and power imbalanced

Reactionary and slow

Inflexible and resistant to change

STRATEGY

Catalysing a locally led **network of networks** for equity in power, decision making, access to resources and voice

Expanding a **family of funds** and financial services for timely, proactive and risk informed crisis action

Promoting a **culture of innovation and learning** for continuous evolution, experimentation and iteration

NETWORK OUTCOMES

Locally led decisions and actions drive solutions to crises

Risk informed, flexible financing models respond to neglected and predictable emergencies

Shared ideas and peer learning drive **contextual, sustainable approaches** to humanitarian action

SYSTEMIC CHANGES

A humanitarian system that is increasingly **locally led**

A global financing system that is **risk-informed**, needs-based and increasingly focused on reducing risk, anticipating and acting ahead of predictable crises.

A global humanitarian system that is informed, flexible and **context-specific** in its mindset, approaches and behaviours

VISION

A **locally led** humanitarian system, **accountable to people affected by and at-risk of crises**

IMPACT

A more effective humanitarian system in which people receive better quality support, **maintain their dignity and are protected from suffering and harm**



IMPACT & ADDED VALUE

SCALE



5 HUBS



55 MEMBERS



9 MILLION

People reached



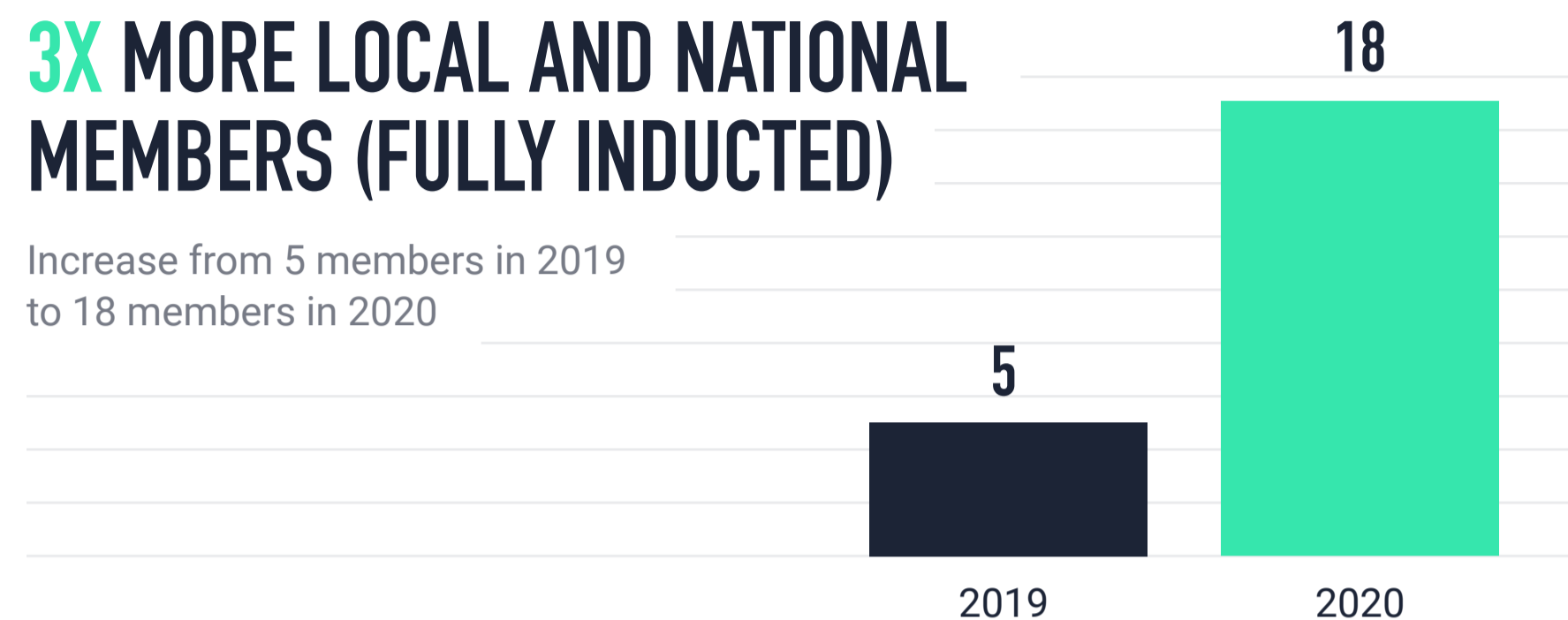
35.8 MILLION

Humanitarian funding awarded through Start Network programmes

CHANGE

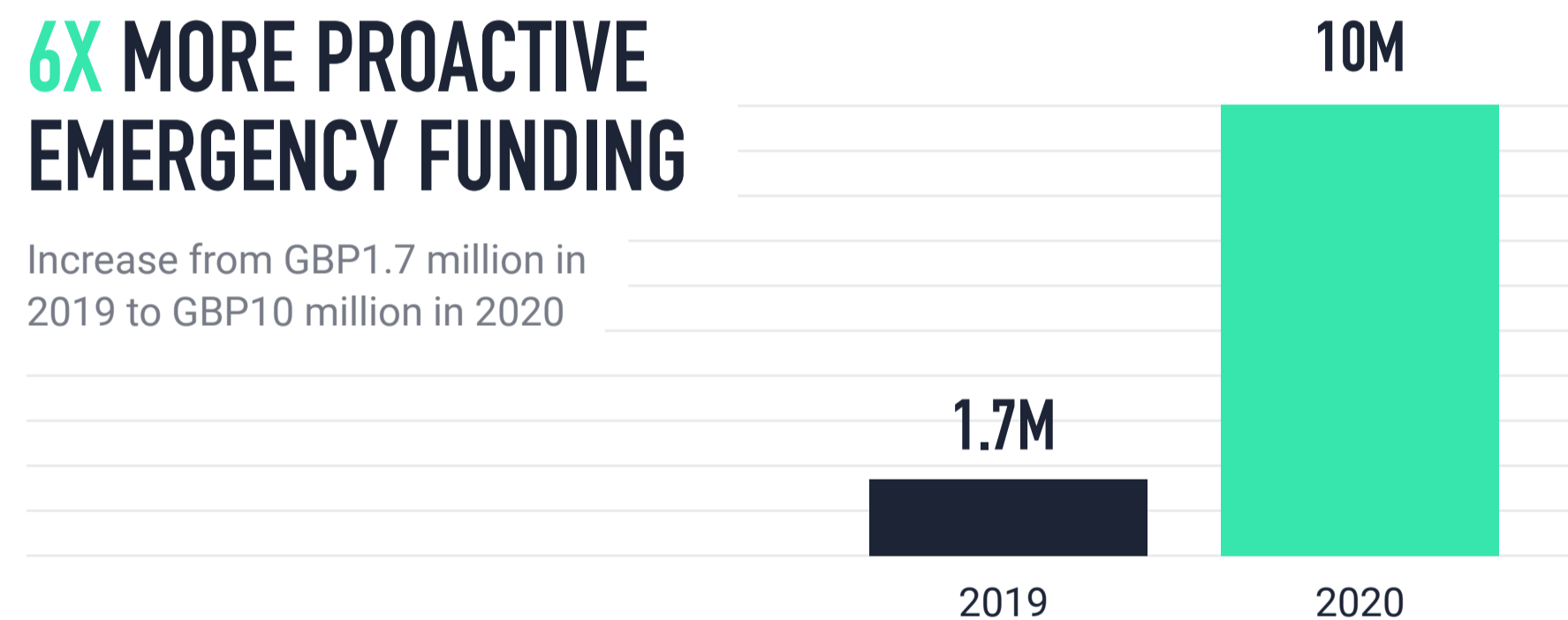
3X MORE LOCAL AND NATIONAL MEMBERS (FULLY INDUCTED)

Increase from 5 members in 2019 to 18 members in 2020



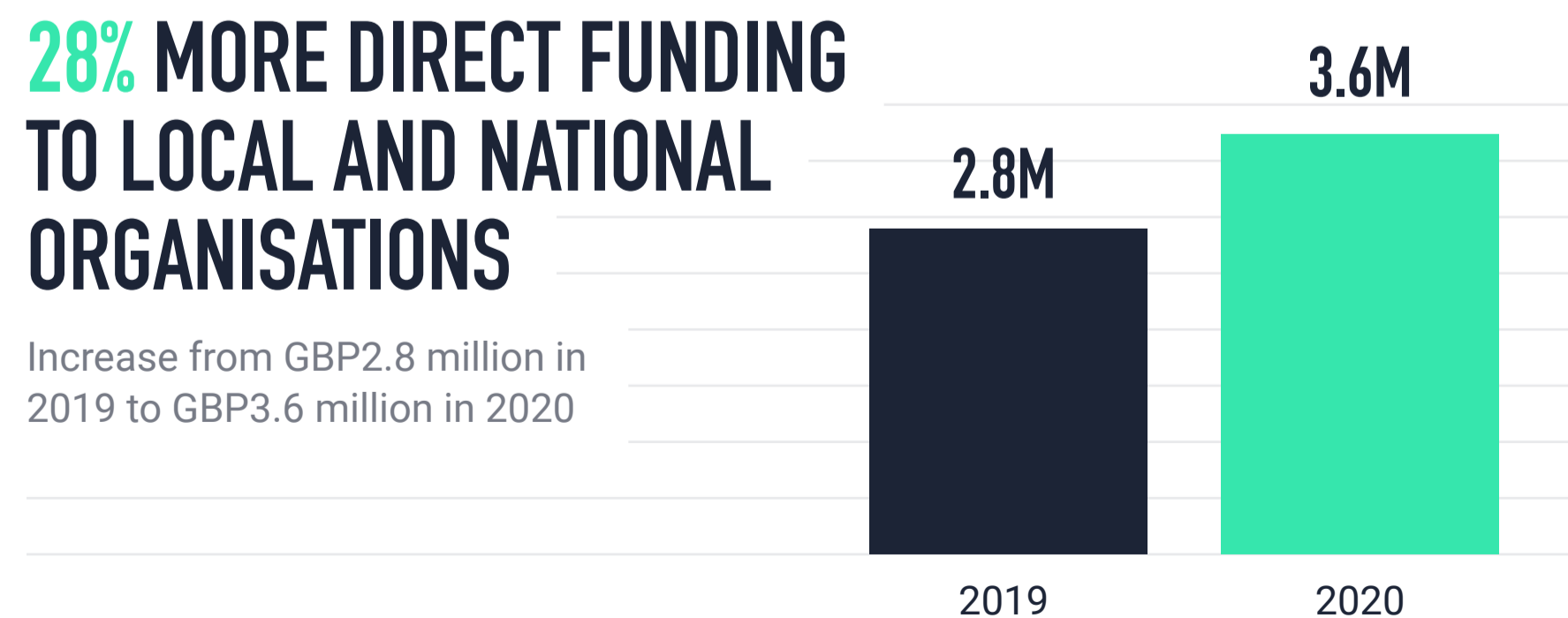
6X MORE PROACTIVE EMERGENCY FUNDING

Increase from GBP1.7 million in 2019 to GBP10 million in 2020



28% MORE DIRECT FUNDING TO LOCAL AND NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Increase from GBP2.8 million in 2019 to GBP3.6 million in 2020

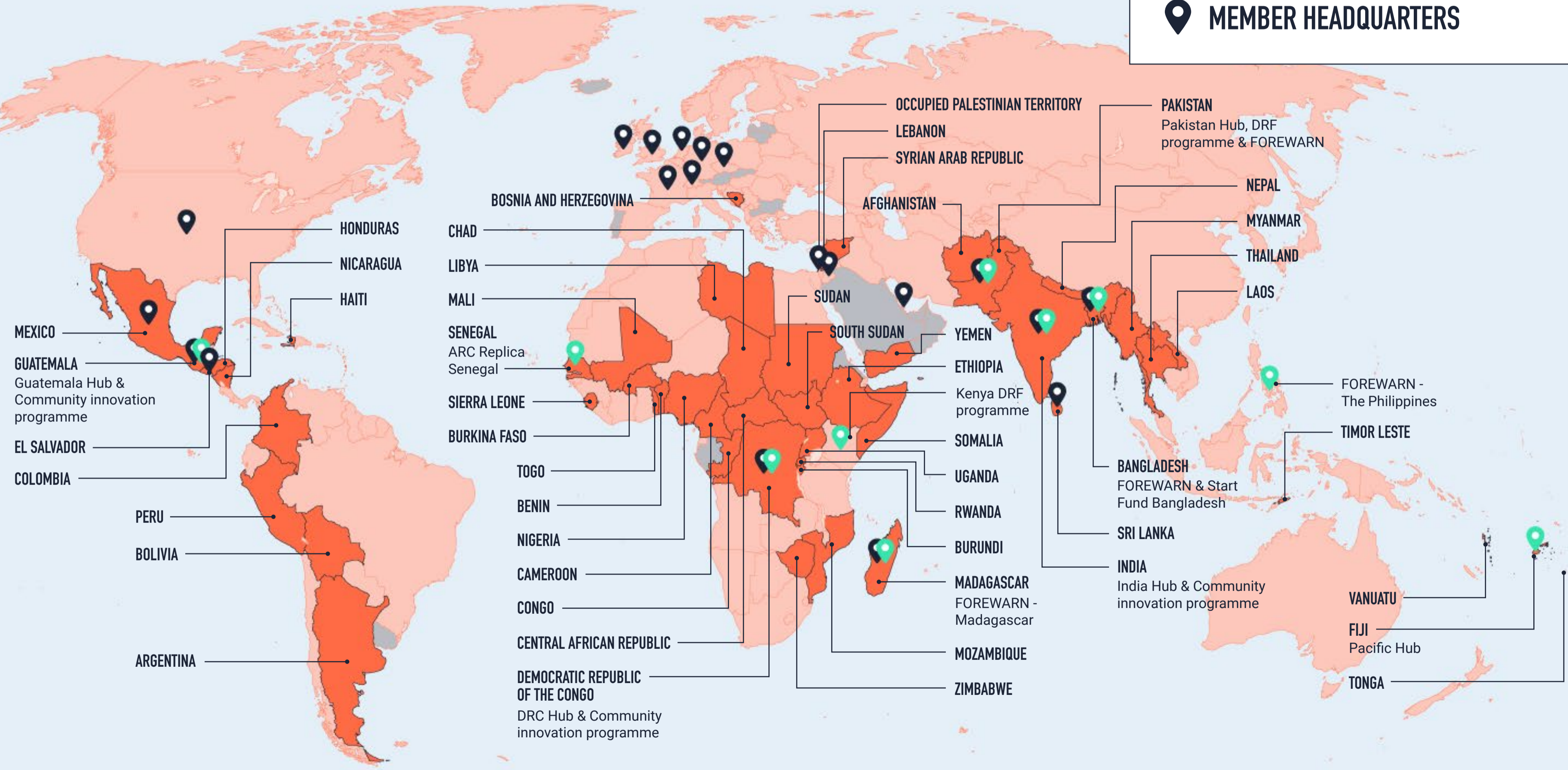


START NETWORK'S REACH

51 COUNTRIES

With Start Network activities

- **CRISES RESPONDED TO IN 2020**
(including Start Fund, Start Fund COVID-19, Start Fund Bangladesh, ARC Replica, DRF Pakistan and Migration Emergency Response Fund)
- **MEMBER OPERATIONAL PRESENCE**
- 📍 **NETWORK AND PROGRAMME LOCATIONS**
- 📍 **MEMBER HEADQUARTERS**



MEXICO

GUATEMALA
Guatemala Hub & Community innovation programme

EL SALVADOR

COLOMBIA

PERU

BOLIVIA

ARGENTINA

HONDURAS

NICARAGUA

HAITI

CHAD

LIBYA

MALI

SENEGAL
ARC Replica Senegal

SIERRA LEONE

BURKINA FASO

TOGO

BENIN

NIGERIA

CAMEROON

CONGO

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO
DRC Hub & Community innovation programme

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

SUDAN

SOUTH SUDAN

ETHIOPIA
Kenya DRF programme

SOMALIA

UGANDA

RWANDA

BURUNDI

MADAGASCAR
FOREWARN - Madagascar

MOZAMBIQUE

ZIMBABWE

AFGHANISTAN

YEMEN

SUDAN

SOUTH SUDAN

ETHIOPIA

SOMALIA

UGANDA

RWANDA

BURUNDI

MADAGASCAR
FOREWARN - Madagascar

MOZAMBIQUE

ZIMBABWE

OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

LEBANON

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

PAKISTAN
Pakistan Hub, DRF programme & FOREWARN

NEPAL

MYANMAR

THAILAND

LAOS

FOREWARN - The Philippines

TIMOR LESTE

BANGLADESH
FOREWARN & Start Fund Bangladesh

SRI LANKA

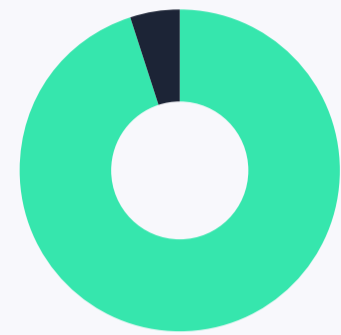
INDIA
India Hub & Community innovation programme

VANUATU

FIJI
Pacific Hub

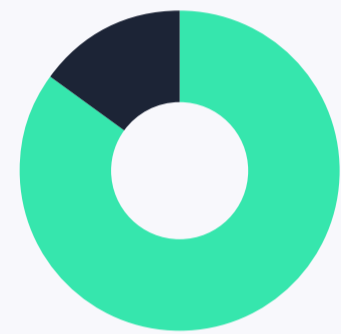
TONGA

VIEWS FROM ACROSS THE NETWORK



95%

member representatives
satisfied with their membership
(membership survey)



85%

local partners felt they had
decision-making ownership during
Start Network projects (local
partner survey)



“The most exciting aspect of Start Network is the spirit of coordination and coherence across the different NGOs. There was this vacuum in the humanitarian sector, and I think Start Network filled that vacuum by getting all the NGOs on the same page.”

CATALINA JAIME

Red Cross Climate Centre, UK



“Start Network aims to shift the humanitarian system by action and not by words. By practice not just research. From funding to financing. And creating the balance of co-creation between all parts of the humanitarian ecosystem.”

OENONE CHADBURN

Tearfund, UK



“There are not many organisations working on humanitarian response and disaster response here in Mexico. But we have got to know many that we didn’t know existed through the Start Fund. Some have helped us improve our protocols around security, and we have gone on to lead workshops for other organisations on how to incorporate these into practices relating to gender-based violence. This is really new in our country.”

ABRIL PÁEZ

CADENA, Mexico



“We engaged with the Start Network when we were rethinking our emergency relief strategy, and trying to be a practical and efficient emergency relief donor. We saw how humanitarian financing isn’t structured in the best way – it can take quite some time before emergency relief funding reaches people in need, and that it wasn’t geared to the local structure already hard at work. Financing the Start Fund is a way for us to place decision making and funding right at the center of communities. This being just one of many financial innovation mechanisms Start Network is exploring and piloting, we hope to contribute to better humanitarian financing and anticipatory humanitarian action.”

PER HEGGENES

IKEA Foundation, The Netherlands



“Start Network has enabled communities and people affected by crisis to respond to emergencies effectively and timely, and to receive assistance that is appropriate and relevant to their needs since they are at frontline and have been empowered to make their own decision. The fund has saved many lives as we liaise with other actors for support. It kickstarts hope for communities in its true sense as the name suggests.”

JANE KIGEN

Actionaid, Kenya



IT'S A PLATFORM WHERE YOU CAN ACCESS FUNDS, RAISE YOUR VOICE IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG, SHARE YOUR LEARNINGS AND OVERCOME CHALLENGES.

IMAMUL SHAHI
BRAC, Bangladesh



A DECADE OF POSITIVE DISRUPTION

In 2020, Start Network was proud to celebrate its ten-year anniversary and the change the network has delivered in that decade. A decade of challenging conventional practices, behaviours and habits of a century-old sector, in order to bring bold thinking, brave solutions, and positive alternatives to humanitarian action.



CHANGE MAKERS

Driving systemic change is a hard, long process, with challenges and failures along the way. As part of Start Network's ten-year anniversary, we celebrated individuals and organisations that are making a considerable impact within their community, country, region, organisation, or wider system, and that are driving positive change within the humanitarian sector.

INTRODUCING OUR CHANGE MAKERS



FASTER & EARLY ACTION

Alfredo Mahar Lagmay

University of the Philippines Resilience Institute/Northwest Organization for Animal Help (NOAH) Center



COLLECTIVE INNOVATION

Ben Ramalingam

Overseas Development Institute



LOCALISATION

The Union for Promotion & Protection of Human Rights Defence and the Environment



PUTS PEOPLE FIRST

Andrea Coché Mendoza

MAIA



BRAVE

Jessica Dewhurst

The Justice Desk



Due to security risks, we are unable to identify the Change Maker from Mercy Corps, Syria



OPERATES COLLECTIVELY

The Feminist Humanitarian Network



INCLUSIVE

Heba Abu Jarbou

Islamic Relief Palestine



OPEN

Jahin Shams

Uttaran



LASTING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Rice Watch Action Network



IMPACTFUL LEADER

Mrs Boubou Aisatu

The Cameroon Indigenous Women Forum



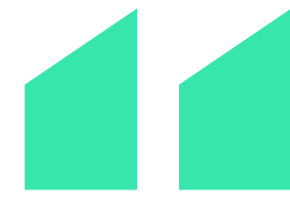
I DON'T THINK THE HAZARDS WILL STOP, BECAUSE THEY ARE NATURAL. WHAT IS NOT NATURAL ARE DISASTERS, BECAUSE THEY ARE THE RESULT OF POOR PLANNING . . . DISASTERS ARE REALLY A FAILURE TO ANTICIPATE THE IMPACTS OF THE HAZARDS. IN THE FUTURE, IT WILL BE A FAILURE TO ANTICIPATE CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS. SO AS EARLY AS NOW, WE HAVE TO MAKE ALL OF THESE PREPARATIONS.

CHANGE MAKER: FASTER & EARLY ACTION: ALFREDO MAHAR LAGMAY

University of the Philippines Resilience Institute/NOAH Center, Philippines

In addition to the overall Changer Makers, a number of people received 'Special Mentions'. See a full list of all those honoured on the Start Network website. www.startnetwork.org/change-makers.

To select the Change Makers, we invited members and other stakeholders to openly nominate colleagues and organisations. A diverse group of network stakeholders, including members, donors, and partners from the Global North and Global South sat on the final selection panel.



THE WOMEN OF MY COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY INDIGENOUS WOMEN, ARE RELEGATED TO TRADITIONAL ROLES THAT PERPETUATE SYSTEMS OF POVERTY. AND WE WANT TO SHOW, AND WE ARE SHOWING THAT THIS IS NOT THE CASE, THAT **LIFE IS MUCH MORE THAN THAT, THAT THERE ARE MANY MORE OPPORTUNITIES AND THAT WE TOO CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.**

**CHANGE MAKER: PUTS PEOPLE FIRST
ANDREA COCHÉ MENDOZA**

MAIA, Guatemala

LOCALLY LED ACTION



LOCALLY LED ACTION

The humanitarian system's current concentration of power, influence, and resources within the Global North has led to the exclusion and disempowerment of local and national organisations. But it is these organisations that are deeply rooted in communities and which are responsible for the vast majority of humanitarian responses. Over the years, local leaders have sparked a global movement towards a more locally led humanitarian system, and this shift is at the centre of Start Network's vision for change.

BECOMING A NETWORK OF NETWORKS

In 2020, we took a pivotal step towards becoming a locally led network, by beginning to incubate five founding hubs, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Guatemala, India, the Pacific region, and Pakistan. Each hub has been founded by collectives of organisations in those countries and regions, and are working with Start Network to build a distributed and connected network. The support processes are detailed in the following section, alongside highlights from each of these five hubs.



FROM DAY ONE OF THE INCEPTION OF THE HUBS, ALL MY COLLEAGUES FROM INDIA, DRC, PAKISTAN, GUATEMALA, HAVE ALL COME TOGETHER AND ADVOCATED FOR THE SAME THING: RELATIONALITY. IT'S ABOUT LOCAL ACTORS DETERMINING THE LOCAL AGENDA.

AKMAL ALI

Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organizations (PIANGO), Pacific Hub, Fiji

To become an increasingly locally led network, our hubs became our centres of gravity, taking on leading roles in shaping Start Network's future structure. Chaired by Akmal Ali of the Pacific Hub, the Governance Design Working Group brought together representatives from the hubs, the Board, Start Network members, Start Network's team, and independents to design the governance framework for the future decentralised network of hubs. See page 61 for more information.

DIVERSIFYING MEMBERSHIP

Start Network worked with the five founding hubs to fully induct 14 local and national organisations from DRC, Guatemala, India, and Pakistan into the network. By increasing the intake of local members, we hope that there will be greater diversity in membership, which will in turn strengthen the voice and visibility of hubs within the network.

FUNDING LOCAL AND NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

We have supported these new members through a range of services, including dedicated funding. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we ring fenced funds for new

members, [eight of which accessed this fund to cover critical responses in India, DRC, and Pakistan.](#)

Many of the wider COVID-19 responses involved partnerships with local and national organisations. 47% of the projects funded by Start Fund COVID-19 directly or indirectly funded local and national organisations. While there is still much to be done to ensure equitable access to funding for local and national members, it is a marked improvement. And it demonstrates the potential to channel larger amounts of funding directly to local organisations.

Start Fund Bangladesh (SFB) provides a powerful model for even greater equity in funding through a national funding mechanism. In 2020, 80% of SFB's funding went directly to local and national organisations (the global equivalent in 2019 was only 0.5%), which improved both effectiveness and efficiency. More information on Start Fund Bangladesh is on page 43.

NEXT STEPS

Looking ahead, our ambition is to deepen our commitment to becoming a locally led network, whilst influencing the wider sector to similarly champion and support local leadership. We will be working across the network and with the wider sector to put locally led humanitarian action at the centre of the change we hope to see.

To do this, we'll continue to support the founding hubs to become independent entities and drivers of change, engage new prospective hubs, and tell the story of change through learning and reflection. It also means ensuring our programmes and new financing mechanisms are locally led and locally-contextualised. The change also requires Start Network to begin shifting its role from a centralised secretariat, to a service provider to the hubs.

START NETWORK HUBS

Hubs are locally led collaborations between a diverse group of organisations. These are local, national and international NGOs, as well as leaders from the academic and private sector. Each hub designs and owns its initiatives, membership, and identity. Together, these independently governed hubs will form a globally-connected network, bringing decisions closer to communities at-risk of and experiencing crises. They will generate efficient solutions that are locally appropriate, and foster innovation and shared learning to enable more contextual humanitarian responses.

In March 2020, Start Network began actively incubating five hubs. Each hub developed their vision for change and articulated their unique value offer within their

contexts. They began forming their governance and leadership structures, developing membership protocols, and designing programmes. Some hubs engaged with potential and existing members, and focused on building their secretariat function. Additionally, some hubs have prioritised developing programmes to deliver as a collective.

Hubs have all made clear calls on how Start Network, and the wider humanitarian sector, should change and adapt. We saw examples of this during joint sessions during the Start Network Annual Assembly, as well as [a call to action sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic](#).

There are positive signs that hubs are driving Start Network to become a more distributed, power-balanced, collective, community-focused network. Key lessons from the process to date are documented in a learning paper: [Hub Proof of Concept: Six Lessons in Six Months](#).

We have learned that hub development is not linear. It is a journey that is complex, politically and emotionally charged, and only made possible through visionary leadership and drive of hub representatives. We are committed to adapting and challenging ourselves to be allies and not the leaders of change.

The following section details the ambition, progress, and future plans of each of the five founding hubs, as told in their own words.

SIX OUTCOMES OF THE HUBS



DISTRIBUTED



COLLECTIVE



DRIVING CHANGE



POWER BALANCED



CONNECTED



FINANCIALLY AGILE

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC) HUB

The DRC Hub is working to build a model of a humanitarian system that is more inclusive, independent, proactive, locally led, and with shared collective responsibilities. We bring together nearly 60 local, national and international organisations, and plan to include the public sector, private sector and academia.



START NETWORK SHOULD NOT WALK ALONE ON THE LOCALISATION JOURNEY. THIS IS OUR FEELING FOR THE MOMENT. THERE ARE TOO MANY NETWORKS WORLDWIDE THAT CAN ALSO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THIS RESPECT, BUT I WONDER WHY THEY ARE STILL DRAGGING THEIR FEET. TIME TO JOIN IN IS NOW AS TOMORROW MAY BE TOO LATE.

GANG KARUME AUGUSTIN

Rebuild Hope for Africa and member of the DRC Hub Leadership Team

2020 PROGRESS

In 2020, the DRC Hub made significant progress across membership, governance, and programmes. We were the first hub to access the Hub Incubation Fund to invest in our structures, activities, and leadership. We put a provisional Hub Realisation Leadership Team in place to begin developing the governance model and statutes, and the membership protocol. These supported four local and national organisations as they went through the Start Network Due Diligence pilot to become official members of the network. We also worked to expand presence across DRC by engaging members across a larger number of provinces.

The DRC Hub also initiated designs for a number of humanitarian programmes to put our vision into action. The first was a Community-led Innovation Partnership (CLIP) programme to support community-led solutions to prevent, prepare, anticipate, and respond to crises. The second was focused on addressing disaster risk and improving preparedness to predictable crises.

The DRC hub has also been an active member of the wider hub collective, demonstrating leadership and camaraderie across hub-wide initiatives. We have been vocal champions for change within Start Network, its membership, and the wider humanitarian sector.

FUTURE PLANS

The DRC Hub has outlined a key set of key priorities. These include:

- **Holding a national workshop with our constituency to validate the business plan and establish longer-term governance and leadership structures.**
- **Registering the Hub as an independent entity.**
- **Putting our communication strategy into action and beginning a fundraising campaign.**
- **Identifying a longer-term host of hub funds, and providing capacity strengthening support to local members –particularly if they are to host the funds.**
- **Beginning implementation of the innovation and risk financing programmes that were designed in 2020.**

INDIA HUMANITARIAN HUB

The India Humanitarian Hub (IHH) is prioritising local action and leadership by bringing together local, national and international humanitarian agencies that are operational in India. The Hub aspires to reflect on, mobilise and act in ways that have not been done before, and are beyond the scope and culture of the current humanitarian architecture. To achieve these changes, the Hub is built upon three pillars: knowledge and innovation, localisation, and new funding and financing mechanisms.



I AM ALSO AWARE OF THE INEQUITY IN ACCESS THAT EXISTS WITHIN THE SECTOR. THAT CAN BE DEALT WITH BY CONTINUING TO INVEST IN AND HARNESS THE ABILITIES OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS, WHICH START NETWORK IS COMMITTED TO.

MANU GUPTA

Co-Founder, Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS).
SEEDS is part of the moderating team in the India Humanitarian Hub.

2020 PROGRESS

Over 2020, the IHH invested in developing many of its core foundational structures. This included convening potential members through regional consultations to ensure greater participation of sub-national and local NGOs. We also worked to define the Hub's governance structures, guiding documents and ways of working.

In addition, the IHH has been shaping its knowledge and innovation work. We held a series of consultations on humanitarian innovation with members, and began drafting a proposal to bring our collective vision to life.

The IHH also supported several local and national organisations to officially join Start Network as members, and access services and resources directly. Two of those organisations used funding from the Start Fund COVID-19 sub-pot to support local communities through the pandemic.

We also developed a plan for the Hub's future, which we consolidated in an application for Hub Incubation Funds from Start Network.

FUTURE PLANS

The IHH has outlined a set of important next steps. These include:

- **Formally establishing the IHH by reviewing and finalising its governance structures, recruiting staff, and developing a website.**
- **Establishing an innovation platform and quickly rolling that out within the context of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as well as other crises.**
- **Continuing to convene and engage members, which includes holding additional regional consultations, bringing in local members, and conducting system mapping of local response systems.**
- **Advocating for key issues affecting the IHH and its areas of work, such as due diligence.**
- **Designing a pooled fund mechanism that particularly focuses on local donors.**

These activities will be supported by the successful granting of Hub Incubation Funds, selecting a fund host, and developing a Hub business development plan.

GUATEMALA HUB

[This section has been translated from Spanish, you can read the original version here.](#)

The Guatemala Hub works to support cohesive communities with mutual solidarity, and to participate in and actively advocate for their rights to humanitarian preparation and response. This is grounded in a vision of holistic, integral, and harmonic connection between human beings, mother earth, the cosmos and everything that surrounds us. We have 10 members, all community-based, local or national organisations. The Asociación de Servicios Comunitarios de Salud (ASECSA) serves as our secretariat and is a member of Start Network.



[WE JOINED THE HUB TO] ADVOCATE AND CREATE ALLIANCES TO CHANNEL INTERNATIONAL AID, AS LOCAL ORGANISATIONS HAVE DIRECT CONTACT WITH COMMUNITIES AND THEIR SITUATION.

ASOCIACIÓN DE GUARDIANES DE LA SALUD (AGUASACH)

Member of the Guatemala Hub

2020 PROGRESS

This year the Guatemala Hub put a lot of energy into bringing people together, understanding each other and creating a shared vision. This began by speaking with organisations who wanted to become part of the Hub, and building a shared understanding and joint vision.. We connected the members with Start Network, highlighting the value of working together to address emergencies in Guatemala, and creating alliances between local, national and international organisations.

We also worked to build the structure of the Hub. ASECSA is the secretariat, and we have put in place a dedicated team of three to realise the hub's collective vision. ASECSA became a member of Start Network and received Hub Incubation Funds to invest in the Hub.

The Guatemala Hub also designed a programme to support communities in mutual solidarity – a community-led innovation partnership (CLIP) project. This project aims to create a model that values innovative solutions made by indigenous communities and connects with national networks and systems. We developed this programme in partnership with our community-based members across five regions in the country.



ASECSA Guatemala

FUTURE PLANS

Moving forward, we have a lot of plans for our Hub:

- **We will launch our innovation programme by recruiting staff, working with rural and indigenous communities, and learning and reflecting as we progress.**
- **We will deepen engagement with our members by holding monthly meetings, developing member profiles, and establishing governance and membership systems.**
- **We will look at expanding our membership by exploring engagement with international NGOs, as well as academia.**
- **We will be an active contributor to the hub family by sharing experiences, learning from each other, and being directly engaged with Start Network.**

PACIFIC REGION HUB

In defining the change that forms the backbone of the Pacific Hub, context is fundamental. The name of the Hub itself is deeply rooted in the Pacific – “Humanitarian FALE” – Humanitarian Facility Aiding Locally led Engagement. Fale is a word in the Pacific that refers to a house that is meaningful and has a purpose when it is occupied by people. The Pacific Humanitarian FALE is working to engage locally led humanitarian actors, to provide services that ensure that the lives of our people are safeguarded in any crisis. The Pacific Islands Association of Non-Government Organisation (PIANGO) serves as the secretariat for the hub, bringing together civil society members across all 24 countries and territories in the Pacific region.



IT'S ABOUT TIME. IT'S ABOUT TIME WE PUSH BACK. IF YOU WANT TO SUPPORT US, LET US TAKE THE LEAD.

EMELINE SIALE ILOLAHIA

PIANGO, Pacific Hub

2020 PROGRESS

Cross Hub Solidarity through co-creation and co-design

In 2020, Start Network supported all hubs to shape their vision and theory of change. We focused on the impact we sought to create - a rapid, quality, efficient, and inclusive humanitarian response that meets the needs of affected people through innovative, locally led coordination. This peer learning has established a solidarity between the All Hub Family to reflect on changes that are not only necessary for our own Hub work, but also for the wider network to consider.

Influencing Start Network's strategy

1. Chairing the Governance Design Working Group, which designed a brave vision for the future governance of Start Network (more on pg 61).
2. Conducting policy discussions on partnership, due diligence, governance, humanitarian localisation, and more.
3. Co-leading Hub sessions during the Start Network Annual Assembly in October 2020.

Membership of Start Network

PIANGO began the process of joining Start Network, and our membership was approved during the Annual Assembly in October 2020.

PIANGO Executive Director
Emeline Ilolahia, at the 1st UN
Pacific Forum on Business and
Human Rights



FUTURE PLANS

The next phase of our work will include consulting with our vast membership to validate our business case and plans, establishing a clear governance structure, and exploring engagement with a wider set of stakeholders beyond PIANGO's membership. We will deepen our advocacy on decolonisation and champion local leadership, and look to support members across the countries and territories to further localise the Hub.

PAKISTAN HUB

The Pakistan Hub aims to create a proactive, resilient, people-centred, locally led and innovative humanitarian ecosystem. We plan to do this by addressing emerging challenges through strengthened preparedness and predictable response to any crisis. Our initiative is jointly owned by the communities, civil society, the Pakistan National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and others. It is guided by a National Steering Committee (NSC), including international NGOs, national NGOs, and representatives of two major national humanitarian and development networks and consortiums.



WE WANTED TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE START NETWORK BECAUSE OF THE SHIFTING THE POWER INITIATIVE... WE'RE LOOKING FOR AN EQUAL SYSTEM WHERE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS CAN WORK IN HARMONY AND CAPITALISE ON THEIR EXISTING STRENGTHS.

MUHAMMAD AMAD

IDEA and member of the Pakistan Hub National Steering Committee.

2020 PROGRESS

Over the past year, the Pakistan Hub has delivered several major achievements:

1. We have established a fully operational disaster risk financing (DRF) system to improve disaster preparedness and anticipatory responses in Pakistan

This programme brings together all national and international members, as well as non-members, to improve preparedness and anticipatory response. This process was led by the National Steering Committee, who worked on the design and ensured that it is linked up with national and provincial disaster management authorities. The details of this programme are outlined on pg 51.

2. We have demonstrated strong and consistent leadership with delegated sub-committees

In 2020 we held elections to expand the NSC – the decision-making body for the Pakistan Hub. The NSC also worked to delegate operational, administrative and coordination functions to six subcommittees and four technical working groups to ensure smooth delivery across its areas of work.

3. We have generated wider engagement with the Hub and grown its reputation

We have worked to increase the Pakistan Hub's profile, and the success of the DRF programme has served as strong motivation in generating interest amongst local, national and international organisations to join the Hub. The Hub has also engaged external stakeholders, with formal linkages to the Pakistan Humanitarian Forum and the NDMA. In addition, the Hub regularly advocates for and participates in Hub-related issues with the National Humanitarian Network, and the national and provincial disaster management authorities.

FUTURE PLANS

Over the coming year, we hope to expand the Hub membership by engaging more local members. This requires establishing formal membership criteria and due diligence process. We also plan to invest in and formalise the Hub through in country registration and by recruiting support staff. Our long-term goal is to bring existing Start Network funding mechanisms into the Hub, as well as new financing instruments. This will provide a continuum of funding that will enable all of our members to better protect vulnerable communities at-risk and affected by crises.

COLLECTIVE INNOVATION & LEARNING



COLLECTIVE INNOVATION & LEARNING

Traditional humanitarian programmes often fail to recognise that communities affected by and at-risk of crises are best placed to determine how to deliver programmes even better. Start Network aims to address this by supporting an adaptive, locally led culture of learning and innovation across our membership. We also need to recognise that the transition to a locally led humanitarian system requires a major systems innovation in itself. To do this will need a systems thinking approach and complex systems tools to help us support the change. This includes embedding community-led innovation design into our programming and testing radically new systems and structures. This transition will lead to a humanitarian system that is locally led, relevant, flexible, and context-specific in its approaches and behaviours.

PERFORMANCE, ACHIEVEMENTS, IMPACT, AND LEARNING

In 2020, we worked with hubs and members to facilitate local problem definition and develop appropriate local solutions by people affected by crises. We supported them with the skills, finances, mentorship, and space needed to change humanitarian action.

- Three hubs supported to build community-led innovation programmes
- Nine teams and projects supported with tech, coaching and funding opportunities

COMMUNITY-LED INNOVATION

In 2020, Start Network worked with the DRC and Guatemala hubs to design a community-led innovation programme. The programme focuses on working with communities affected by crises, to lead the development of their own solutions to their prioritised problems. Communities are provided with resources and support to develop, test and scale their solutions, which then have the potential to be adopted more widely in their context, the network or taken to market for wider use. Our India Hub has also started to design a community-led programme, which will strengthen the ability of local innovators to respond to emerging humanitarian challenges and create sustainable impact.

- Over 40 local innovators will be supported over the next couple of years through the community-led innovation programmes in DRC and Guatemala.

ASECSA INNOVATION PROGRAMME

PERIOD OF REFLECTION AND ITERATION

3 MONTHS Oct - Dec '20	6 MONTHS Jan - Jun '21	JUNE	6 MONTHS Aug - Jan '22	FEB	6 MONTHS Mar - Aug '22	AUG - SEP	6 MONTHS Sep - Feb '23	1 MONTH Mar '23
LAUNCH Recruit staff Establish team culture and practices Prepare materials Establish relationships with service providers Reflect on the initial phase	CYCLE ONE: CENTRO Potential focus: Landslides and winds that throw the crops 15 teams 5 finalists \$50,000 grants (\$10k x 5)	CYCLE TWO: ALTA VERAPAZ Y PETEN Potential focus: Floods and migration 30 teams 10 finalists \$100,000 grants (\$10k x 10)	CYCLE THREE: BAJA VERAPAZ Y OCCIDENTE Potential focus: Floods and droughts 30 teams 10 finalists \$100,000 grants (\$10k x 10)	GROWTH PERIOD Connect teams to partnership and growth opportunities, and focus on visibility of community innovations	CLOSE Final reflection Reports Program closure			

MENTORING AND COLLABORATION TO PROMOTE INNOVATION

In October 2020, Start Network launched the Working Differently Challenge (WDC). This enabled hub members and their local partners to develop their emerging innovations through different ways of working. The challenge demonstrated that coaching, experimentation, and reflection are effective tools in developing local solutions to humanitarian problems. In addition, we provided ongoing support with coaching and funding opportunities for six of the innovation teams, funded through the past programme [Disasters & Emergencies Preparedness Programme \(DEPP\) Innovation Labs](#).

- As part of the working differently challenge, three teams accessed coaching, technical support and funding in Mexico, Ethiopia, and Philippines.
- Teams received 12 weeks of coaching support and a budget of around £15k each.

OUR AMBITION

In 2021, we will continue to:

- **Invest resources** in hubs and members to enable **collective problem solving** for the development of **durable, locally led solutions** to locally prioritised problems.
- **Officially launch** the two-year **community-led** innovation programme in partnership with the DRC and Guatemala hubs.
- **Support the launch** of the innovation platform Launch a **hyper-local fund** initiative in the India Hub, to support local innovators to **develop appropriate solutions** for their own community.
- **Run a scaling fund initiative** to support some of the innovators who took part in the DEPP Labs in **scaling their ideas** and **generating sustainable impact**.



THEY HELPED US FIND NEW IDEAS, THINK OUTSIDE OF THE BOX, AND BE AS EFFICIENT AS WE POSSIBLY CAN. MEETINGS ARE AMAZINGLY EFFICIENT, WITH GOALS AND CLEAR OBJECTIVES AND TIMELINES, AND THE IDEA OF MAKING LITTLE EXPERIMENTS BEFORE IMPLEMENTING A PROJECT.

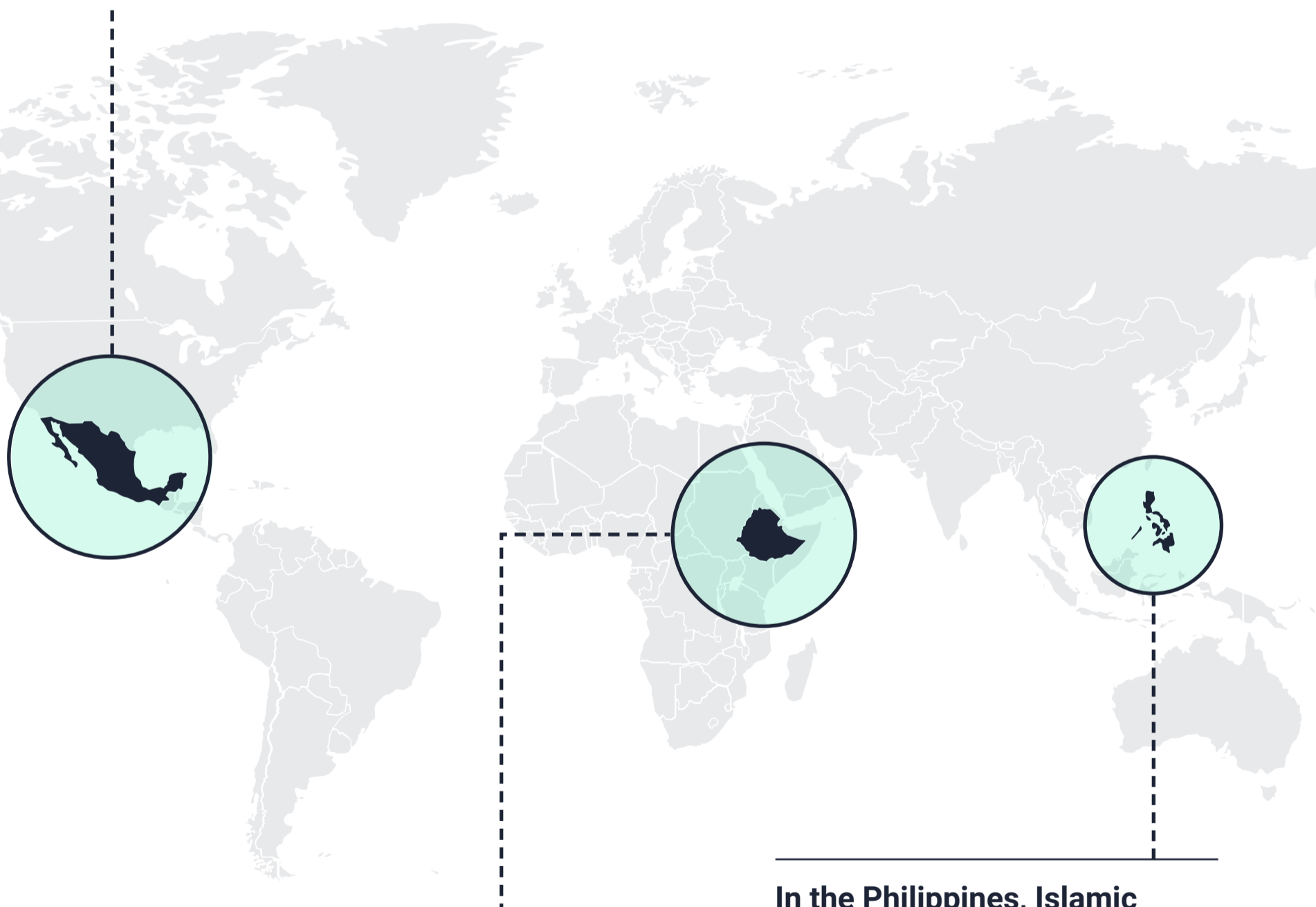
LIORA PUOKO

Sustainable Project Coordinator, CADENA, Mexico- participant in the Working Differently Challenge

WORKING DIFFERENTLY CHALLENGE

In 2020, we ran the Working Differently Challenge. Members, hubs, and their partners were invited to submit innovative solutions that address the wider problems within humanitarian agencies or local communities. The winning teams were from Cadena, Islamic Relief, and Tearfund.

In Mexico, CADENA launched the next phase of its successful KOL platform—a low-cost WhatsApp and call centre-based IT solution which responds to COVID-19 by helping vulnerable people access medical, psychological and spiritual support, general information and referrals to other services.



Tearfund created a new Community Inclusion Currency (CiC) in Amara, Ethiopia, to mitigate the negative effects COVID-19 has had on Self-Help Groups (SHG), local economy, liquidity and livelihoods.

In the Philippines, Islamic Relief looked at how to strengthen Barangay local government units' resilience and capacity in the response to and recovery from COVID-19.



THE CONCEPT IS INNOVATIVE AND ESSENTIAL FOR TARGET COMMUNITIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO HAVE A DIFFERENT PRODUCT. MOST OF THE SELF HELP GROUPS WERE INVOLVED IN VARIOUS BUSINESSES AND TRIED TO GET OPPORTUNITIES TO SELL THEIR PRODUCT BUT UNFORTUNATELY STRUGGLED WITH MARKET LINKAGES. THUS THIS PILOT PROGRAM WILL BE HELPFUL CONCERNING CREATING MARKET OPPORTUNITIES SPECIFICALLY FOCUSED ON SHGS. DURING INITIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE TARGET COMMUNITIES, THEY HAVE BEEN EXCITED ABOUT THE COMMUNITY INCLUSION CURRENCY CONCEPT AND SEE ITS POTENTIAL TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVELIHOODS. WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT START NETWORK HAS FACILITATED A NEW AND UNIQUE APPROACH THAT WILL BENEFIT LOCAL COMMUNITIES THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT TO HAVE SECURED FUNDING FOR.

DAVID BEBB

Tearfund, UK

CASE STUDY

WORKING DIFFERENTLY CHALLENGE

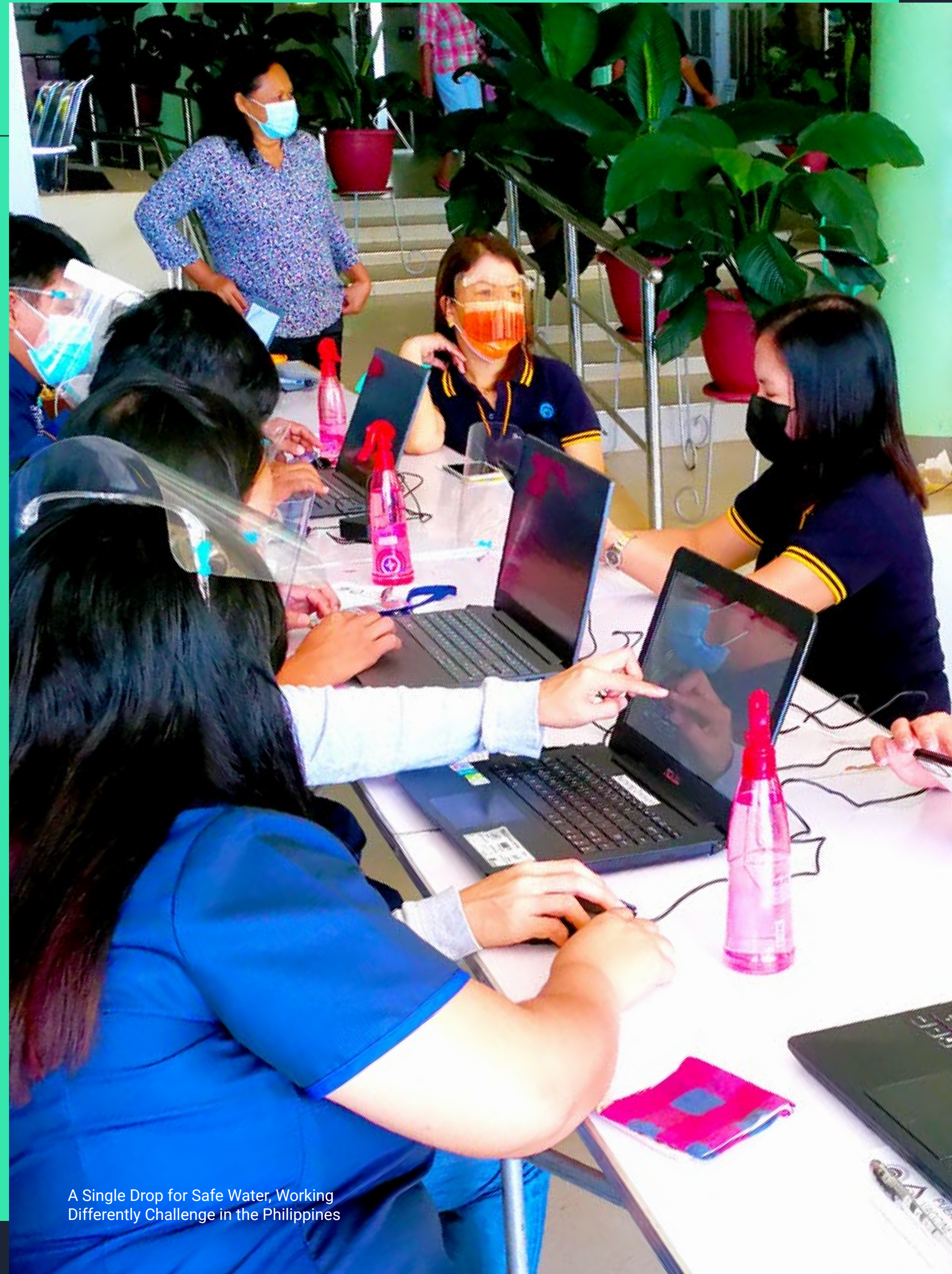
The winning team in the Philippines –including Islamic Relief and A SingleDrop for Safer Water – developed an information management system, which is now used by the local authority of Puerto Princesa to support COVID-19 vaccine roll out. This was an excellent example of how supporting innovation, local action, and flexible funding enables organisations to take advantage of unplanned outcomes and quickly repurpose their ideas.



WITH THE INITIAL CALLS, THE SUPPORT ON DESIGN THINKING DEFINITELY HELPED THE FIELD TEAMS PILOTING. WE THEN WORKED ON THE DATA MANAGEMENT AND MORAL SUPPORT, AND THEIR EXPERTISE IN THIS FIELD ALLOWED US TO THINK MORE BROADLY AND HAS PUSHED US INTO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

KEVIN LEE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ASDSW, Philippines, participant in the Working Differently Challenge



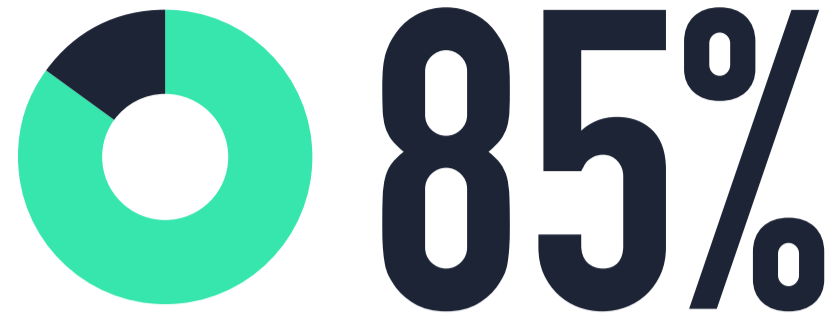
DUE DILIGENCE

Local actors play a critical role in humanitarian action. However, stringent and onerous due diligence requirements act as a barrier for many smaller organisations. In addition, due diligence in the humanitarian sector is inefficient and duplicative, often requiring tremendous amounts of human and financial resources.

Start Network has developed a tiered due diligence framework to enable more local organisations to become members of the network and access funds. Instead of the traditional pass-fail model, our framework enables organisations to pass at different tiers. Members gain access to varying portfolios of Start Network products and services, depending on the tier they have passed at. We also aim to make the framework 'passportable', so it is recognised by international and local actors alike.

PILOTING THE FRAMEWORK

The framework, developed in partnership with TechSoup, was piloted between October 2019 and August 2020. As part of the pilot, 12 local and national organisations from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, India and Pakistan successfully joined the network at the end of 2019, and were fully inducted in 2020. A further five organisations went through the process in Q4 of 2020 (one local organisation in Guatemala, one regional organisation in the Pacific, and three international NGOs).



Of the 14 local and national organisations that have gone through the tiered framework, 12 (85%) would have had difficulty meeting the requirements of our previous 'pass-fail' model of due diligence and may not have had access to funding.

Benefits cited by new members undergoing due diligence and becoming part of Start Network:

- Improved **Policy** and **Practice**
- Increased **Partnerships** and **Funding Opportunities**
- Increased Level of **Confidence**



BELONGING TO START NETWORK IS VERY USEFUL BECAUSE IT HAS OPENED US UP TO OTHERS. THE DUE DILIGENCE EVALUATION STIMULATED US TO IMPROVE MORE. WE BENEFITED FROM THE SUPPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE DUE DILIGENCE ASSESSMENT. THE RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE ENABLED US TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICES IN THE VARIOUS INTERVENTIONS THAT WE HAVE IN THE FIELD, PROGRAMMATICALLY AND FINANCIALLY. THEREFORE, BELONGING TO START NETWORK HAS ADDED GREAT VALUE TO WHAT WE DO.

JEAN MARIE VIANNEY KANAMUGIRE

Caritas Goma, DRC



TECHSOUP'S PARTNERSHIP WITH START NETWORK TO CREATE A MORE NUANCED, RISK-BASED APPROACH TO DUE DILIGENCE IS A RESPONSE TO TWO KEY BARRIERS TO LOCALISATION AND THE DEMOCRATISATION OF AID AND PHILANTHROPY: ACCESS AND RISK. THE TIERED DUE DILIGENCE FRAMEWORK SEEKS TO REDUCE TIME SPENT BY NGOS ON COMPLIANCE AND DUE DILIGENCE AND ENABLE FUNDERS TO CONFIDENTLY SUPPORT MORE LOCAL AND NATIONAL NGOS.

CAROLINE BURRAGE TechSoup, USA

DUE DILIGENCE

REDUCING THE BARRIERS TO ACCESS FUNDING

Building on the successful pilot of the framework, we established another pilot in March 2020 to evaluate the impact of directly funding members that had met a particular tier of the due diligence framework. Those members were given access to up to GBP 30,000 via the Start Fund, with the support of Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Irish Aid, Jersey Overseas Aid, and the Start Fund COVID-19, with the support of two other private donors.



240,000

Eight local and national members received GBP 30,000 each for COVID-19 response as part of the localisation pilot, with a total amount of GBP 240,000 awarded.



204,207

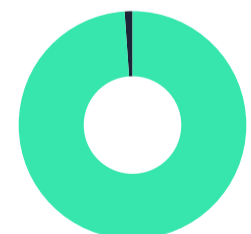
people reached directly.

Community members rated the locally led response highly
(based on survey of 600 people)



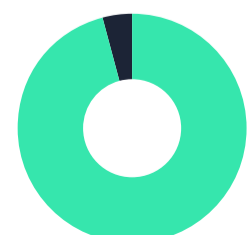
100%

of respondents rated the quality of assistance as good or very good.



99%

of respondents were satisfied with the assistance received.



96%

of respondents reported that assistance was appropriate to their needs.



I WENT TO THE DISTRIBUTION SITE NEAR THE HOSPITAL TO RECEIVE MY FOOD PACKAGE AND THE NGO STAFF SHARED INFORMATION ABOUT COVID-19... I WAS NOT PRACTICING ANYTHING BEFORE, BUT AFTER THAT SESSION I STRICTLY FOLLOWED ALL THE GUIDELINES. I INSTRUCTED EVERYONE AT HOME TO WASH HANDS REGULARLY, WEAR MASKS, USE SANITISERS AND KEEP SOCIAL DISTANCING. I HAVE KEPT ONE SANITISER WITH ME AND WHENEVER I GO OUTSIDE WITH THE CHILDREN, I SANITISE THEIR HANDS BECAUSE THEY TOUCH DIFFERENT THINGS.

COMMUNITY MEMBER ASSISTED BY BRIGHT STAR DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY BALOCHISTAN

Pakistan



NEXT STEPS

Start Network will continue to develop our approach to due diligence as we learn more through the pilot. In 2021, we will expand our organisational strengthening work to support members to move through the tiers. We will also explore the development of a global digital platform to promote sector-wide due diligence passporting to enhance efficiency and improve the assessment experience.

Despite the success of the framework so far, the perception of risk in the sector means that compliance still represents a challenging reality for humanitarian organisations. In 2021, we aim to reframe the debate by developing an alternative accountability model, which we will expand into a risk and accountability framework.

Catholic Relief Services, ARC Replica in Senegal





NEW FORMS OF FINANCING

NEW FORMS OF FINANCING

 **35.8 MILLION** humanitarian funding awarded through Start Network programmes

 **9 MILLION** people reached

 **26%** disbursed to local and national organisations

 **29%** disbursed before a crisis hit

By providing fast, collaborative funding based on need, and not on media headlines or political will, we can support responders and communities to become better prepared to act in a crisis.

The traditional, reactive response to emergencies is too slow and many crises remain overlooked and underfunded. There is increasing evidence that shifting the focus from reacting to crises, to proactively protecting at-risk people and communities with pre-agreed plans and finance, is a faster, more dignified, and more cost-effective approach to disasters and crises.

By developing and delivering assistance through a diversity of risk-based, anticipatory, and rapid response financing mechanisms, Start Network has demonstrated the effectiveness of proactive crisis management, and driven the shift from a reactive to a proactive model.

PERFORMANCE IN 2020

This last year has prompted us to increase support for Start Network members to develop, test and implement proactive and scalable approaches to managing crisis risks. Key achievements include:

- Continuing to optimise and scale the Global Start Fund, responding to **67** crises, seven of which were anticipatory responses, and reaching **4,500,152** people.
- Implementing a first of its kind, **USD10.6 million** drought insurance pay out through our African Risk Capacity (ARC) Replica programme, to protect vulnerable communities in Senegal (see page 49).
- Supporting hubs in the development of their own proactive financing capabilities. This included a multi-hazard risk finance system, launched by the Pakistan Hub in January 2020, that had already triggered its first alert by May.
- Working with our members, donors, and technical partners to deliver a minimum viable product for the Start Financing Facility – the future financial infrastructure for Start Network. This enables us to connect and scale our efforts going forward.

RESPONDING TO COVID-19

The COVID-19 crisis highlighted the importance of contextual, locally led, and community-based responses in getting ahead of a fast-moving disease. Start Network drew on its experience in this area to rapidly mobilise the COVID-19 Fund, which was active by April 2020. We generated evidence from these projects and used our advocacy capabilities to draw attention to the need for more localised and proactive ways of managing these types of crises. Read more on page 41.

TECHNICAL SERVICE SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIPS

In 2020, we supported emerging Start Network hubs, and other networks of NGOs at country level, to design and implement their own proactive finance systems. This meant arranging technical support from entities like Jeremy Benn Associates, Reading University, and London School of Economics and Political Sciences to equip members with the data needed to analyse and quantify risks, and trigger the release of funds. We are particularly proud of the technical and operational support provided to the network of NGOs who have been working to put a drought forecast-based-financing system in place in Madagascar.

NEXT STEPS

Start Network will continue to scale support to hubs and other locally led civil society groups to develop and implement their own financing strategies and systems in their contexts. We will also continue to scale our flagship global Start Fund, including its anticipatory capabilities, and support the growth of national funds, such as Start Fund Bangladesh.

Most importantly, we will bring this work together into a single financial infrastructure – the Start Financing Facility (SFF) – which marries the proven success of the Start Fund with our growing portfolio of risk-based financing products. This will enable faster, more efficient and more effective global humanitarian action for those crises that are difficult to predict, while enabling the network to ‘layer’ financing instruments for more predictable crises in a way that makes money work harder and stretch further.[1]



GERMANY IS PROUD OF BEING A KEY PARTNER TO START NETWORK IN 2020. ANTICIPATORY ACTION IS CONDUCIVE TO SAVING LIVES AND REDUCING THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIETAL COSTS OF DISASTER. IT IS ONE OF THE CORNERSTONES OF OUR HUMANITARIAN STRATEGY. START NETWORK IS THE LEADING NGO NETWORK ON ANTICIPATORY ACTION. ITS INNOVATIVE APPROACH ENABLES NGOS TO ACT BEFORE DISASTER STRIKES. THIS CAN SAVE LIVES AROUND THE GLOBE – AND IT FURTHER PAVES THE WAY FOR A PARADIGM SHIFT TOWARDS FORESIGHTED HUMANITARIAN ACTION.

SIBYLLE SORG

Director General for Crisis Prevention, Stabilisation, Peacebuilding and Humanitarian Assistance at the German Federal Foreign Office

[1] <https://startnetwork.org/resource/start-financing-facility-quantitative-analysis-risk-poolingfurther>

START FINANCING FACILITY

In parallel to Start Network's shift towards a dispersed network of hubs, we have been working on a design for a global financing function to ensure greater efficiency and predictability of funding across the network.

The urgency of this work is more important now than ever before. As climate change creates new, increasingly frequent and challenging crisis situations, it is crucial that we connect and scale our efforts to proactively manage and support communities to adapt and build their resilience to crisis risks.

The Start Financing Facility (SFF) is a financial infrastructure that will scale up our proven innovative crisis financing mechanisms to enable faster and more efficient global humanitarian action at-scale. It has two key components:



KEY MILESTONES IN 2020

- **Developed and tested** an interactive SFF prototype with a range of users, including frontline NGOs and donors.
- **Commissioned** the UK Government Actuary Department to **analyse and advise** on the financing structuring of the Start Financing Facility. We discovered that by holding funds in one place and pooling risks, **we can cover four times more people** and **ensure our funds stretch further**.
- **Submitted the SFF design** for independent review by the Centre for Disaster Protection.



START NETWORK'S AIM TO DEVELOP A RISK-INFORMED AGGREGATOR PLATFORM IS HIGHLY AMBITIOUS AND INNOVATIVE, AND A LARGE STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION TOWARDS A MORE STRUCTURED APPROACH TO RISK-INFORMED HUMANITARIAN ACTION...

CENTRE FOR DISASTER PROTECTION

Quality Assessment Review of Start Financing Facility, 2020



WE NEED CHANGE, AND THE SFF IS THE ONE. WE SHOULD TRY THIS, TEST AND REFINE OUR APPROACHES. IT IS WORTH THE INVESTMENT

AMAD MOHAMMAD

Initiative for Development and Empowerment Axis (IDEA), Pakistan

NEXT STEPS

We are mobilising partnerships and funds to launch the facility in 2021. The SFF presents a significant opportunity to support community-based adaptation and climate finance commitments which will be made at the Climate Conference of Parties (COP) 26.



START FUND



16.3 MILLION

pounds in funding awarded for humanitarian crises



4.5 MILLION

people reached



26%

disbursed to local and national organisations



11%

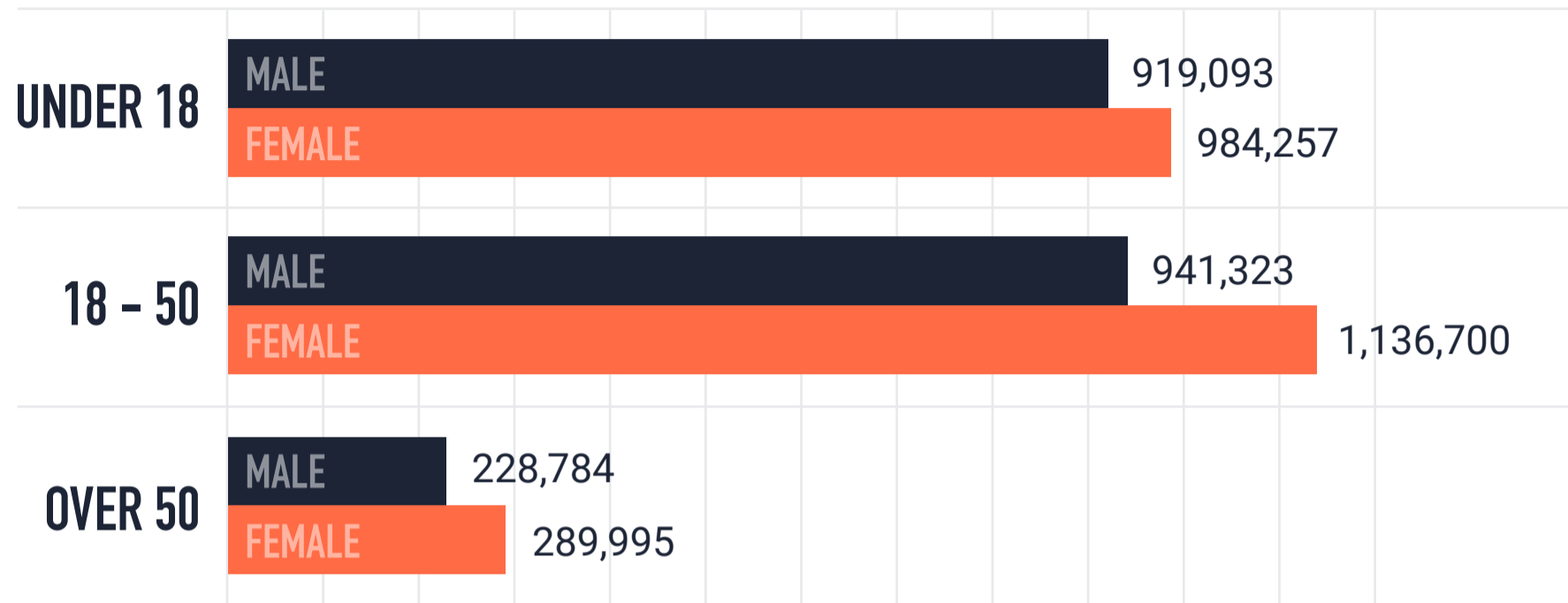
disbursed before a crisis hit

CARE International, Alert 417 in Vanuatu (Cyclone)



START FUND

PEOPLE REACHED: 4,500,152



SPEED OF THE START FUND

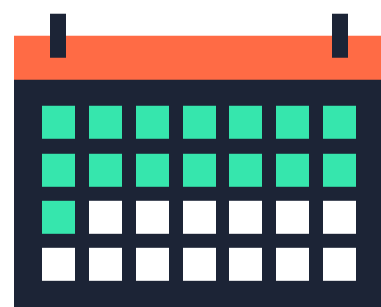
66 HOURS

Average time between alert and selection of projects

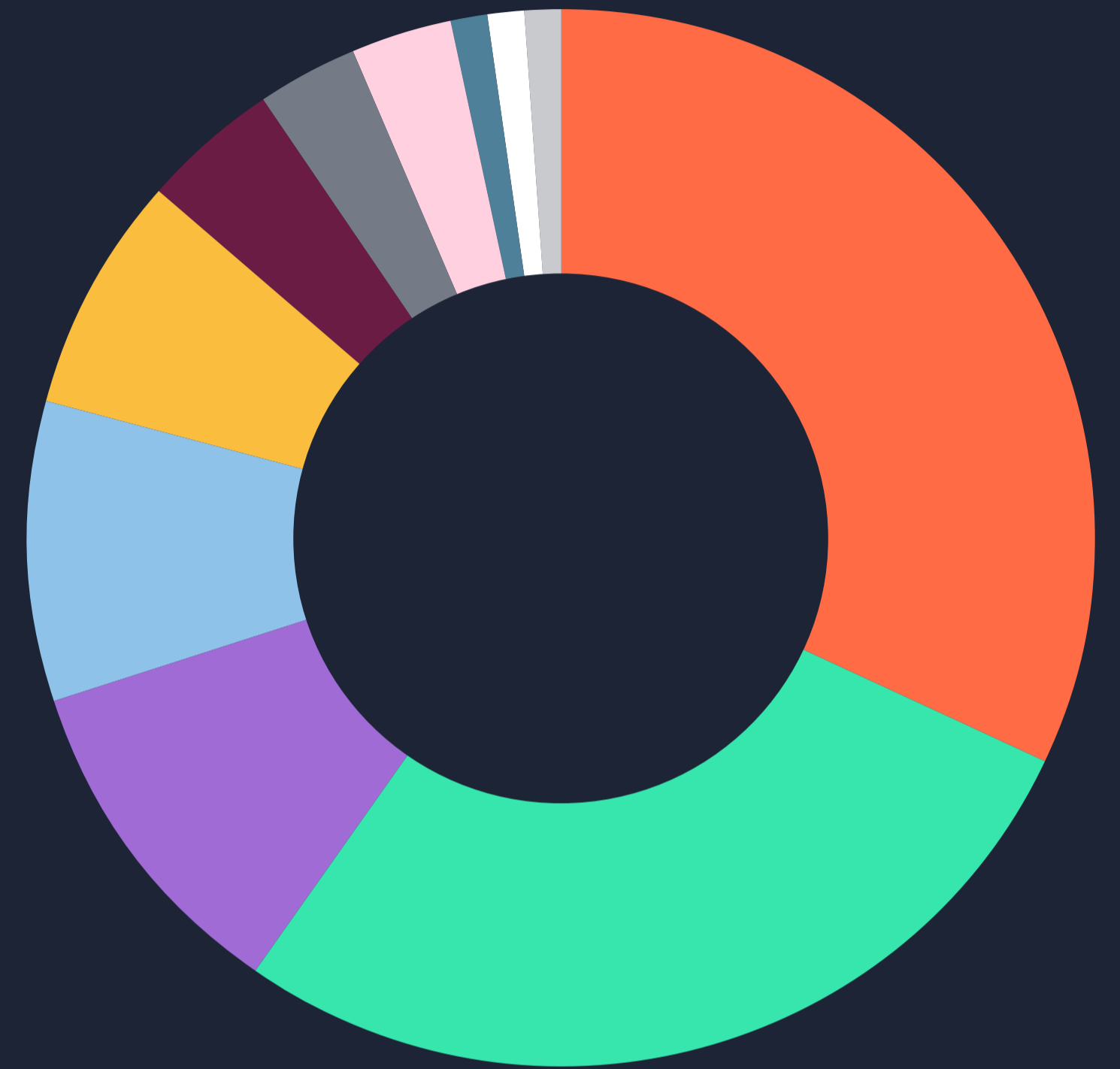


15 DAYS

Average time between projects' start date and reaching people.



Many projects were undertaken under COVID-19 restrictions, which delayed numerous core aspects of implementing humanitarian projects.



CRISIS CAUSE %

Flooding	31.3%
Conflict/Civil Unrest	26.9%
Cyclone	10.4%
Disease Outbreak	9.0%
Storm	7.5%
Hurricane	4.5%
Drought	3.0%
Other	3.0%
Tropical Storm	1.5%
Fire	1.5%
Wildfire	1.5%

IN TOTAL **51** PROJECTS OUT OF **117** (OR **44%**) USED SOME FORM OF CASH PROGRAMMING.



START FUND

The Start Fund provides rapid, flexible funding to support people affected by small-to-medium-scale crises, underfunded emergencies, and spikes in chronic humanitarian crises. Funding is disbursed in less than 72 hours of a crisis alert, which enables agencies to respond ahead of, or in the first days of a crisis, filling a critical gap in the global humanitarian response system.

Collectively owned and managed by Start Network members, all Start Fund governance and decision-making is member-led, and processes have been developed to be both transparent and accountable.

In 2020, the Start Fund was made possible by funded partnerships with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, German Federal Foreign Office, Irish Aid, Jersey Overseas Aid, UK Aid, and the IKEA Foundation.

Since the Start Fund's inception at the end of 2014, more than 20 million people have been assisted with GBP 77.5 million in funding through the global Start Fund.

ADDED-VALUE OF THE START FUND

- Speed and agility
- Balancing and gap-filling
- Member-led
- Acting early and pre-emptively



Overall, 86% of stakeholders believe that the Start Fund has had an impact on the areas of collective knowledge sharing and learning, reaching more vulnerable communities, providing more flexible funding and increased coordination in the humanitarian sector.



SPEED IS THE MOST CRITICAL ASPECT OF ANY EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND THE START FUND IS ONE OF THE FASTEST FUNDING MECHANISMS. YOU COULD COME LATER WITH GBP 1 MILLION, BUT IT WOULD NOT HAVE SUCH A BIG IMPACT AS A SMALLER AMOUNT PROVIDED STRAIGHT AFTER THE CRISIS.

SOANE PATOLO

MORDI, Tonga



THE START FUND'S ANTICIPATION GRANTS HAVE HELPED TO PREVENT HUMANITARIAN NEEDS BECOMING ACUTE; FOR EXAMPLE, THE PROJECT ON RISK MAPPING IN MONGOLIA FOR THE EXTREME WINTER AND DROUGHT TRIGGERED THE PROVISION OF LIVESTOCK FEED AND SOME CASH ASSISTANCE, PREVENTING AN ESCALATION OF HUMANITARIAN NEEDS.

DONOR

2020 Start Fund External Evaluation



ENABLING LOCALLY DRIVEN HUMANITARIAN ACTION: THE POWER TO DECIDE

Decisions about how funds are distributed aren't made by donors, but by Start Network members with local knowledge. And project selection processes take place at national level with the support of a multi-lingual Start Fund team. In 2020, we launched a decision-making review to ensure that more power is held closest to where crises happen. Several member agency representatives worked together to generate new ideas for how decision-making could be designed and developed concepts could be tested. These have subsequently been trialled and the changes will be rolled out in 2021 with the support of the Start Fund's governance bodies.

TECH-ENABLED IMPROVEMENTS

Following the launch of our innovative Start Fund portal in 2017, we have invested further in technology:

- In 2020, we rolled out digital reporting forms to enable our team to **support more alerts** and the **Start Fund growth**.
- We invested in a **new data visualisation** and analytics platform to **better report** on our impact.
- We **replicated and adapted** our digital systems to support the **rapid roll out** of the Start Fund COVID-19.
- We **mapped existing processes** to understand how technology can **better support** the scaling of the Start Fund.

OUR AMBITION

Start Network's ambition for the Start Fund is to scale and power more locally led humanitarian action, enabling network member agencies to mitigate and respond to the needs of crisis-affected communities. The Fund will build on its success while continuing to evolve, so that the power to decide and to act is held as locally as possible.

The global Start Fund will continue to provide a model for how contingency funding can be organised and driven by civil society, in partnership with forward-leaning donors. Our vision is for a more inclusive global Start Fund to be accompanied by local Start Funds, where national or regional networks believe this could be of value.



IN ALL MY EXPERIENCE, THE PLATFORM THAT THE START FUND HAS BEEN ABLE TO CREATE TO FACILITATE AN EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES AND BRING TOGETHER AN EXCEPTIONALLY DIVERSE RANGE OF ACTORS, INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS IS UNMATCHED... WE ARE ABLE TO LEARN AND ADOPT THE BEST PRACTICES FROM ONE ANOTHER, LEARN FROM FAILURES AND SUCCESSES IN FIELD WORK AND COLLECTIVELY FORMULATE AND DELIBERATE ON PROJECT DESIGNS AND SOLUTIONS TO COMMON ISSUES... [IT] IS TRULY INVALUABLE...

SINA CHOWDHURY

People Oriented Programme Implementation (POPI, Bangladesh)

CASE STUDY

CYCLONE



CRISIS ALERT 417 VANUATU

CRISIS ALERT 418 TONGA

As the world's attention was focused on the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic, Tropical Cyclone Harold struck the Pacific Islands, making landfall in Vanuatu on 6 April and Tonga on 9 April. In Vanuatu, 130,000 people were affected. While in Tonga, the cyclone caused widespread flooding, which affected over 75,000 people. In both countries, homes and infrastructure were destroyed, and crops and water sources damaged. This crisis could have easily gone under the radar in the height of a global pandemic, however the Start Fund was prompt in its response.

In both countries, Start Network members helped people with urgent needs including shelter, water, sanitation, and hygiene relief. Care International and Catholic Relief Services, and Caritas Tonga responded in Tonga, and Care International, Save the Children and World Vision responded in Vanuatu. Given the emerging threat of the pandemic, COVID-19 communication was also incorporated into activities on both islands.



[IN VANUATU] WE USED THE TARPAULINS TO MAKE THE WALLS FOR OUR SLEEPING HOUSE AND THE ROOF FOR OUR KITCHEN... WE'RE SO HAPPY TO RECEIVE THESE GOODS TO HELP US HAVE A SAFE PLACE TO SLEEP AND START TO RE-BUILD.

MICHEL

Wanur Community



[THE RESPONSE IN TONGA] DIRECTLY IMPACTED THE POPULATION, BY PROVIDING HOUSEHOLDS WITH EMERGENCY KITS, AND PROVIDING SCHOOLS WITH WATER TANK REHABILITATION... RESTORING ACCESS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER.

CARE INTERNATIONAL

Tonga





CASE STUDY

GENDER BASED
VIOLENCE



! CRISIS ALERT 422 EL SALVADOR

In April 2020, the Start Fund responded to the first ever gender-based violence (GBV) alert. More than 12,000 women and girls including women with disabilities, the elderly, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and adolescent girls living in highly impoverished areas were supported.

The COVID-19 pandemic increased women and girls' vulnerability to GBV as local and government support services were suspended, and many found themselves confined with perpetrators for extended periods of time. NGOs in El Salvador recognised the high risk of violence and abuse, which in some cases even resulted in death.

Asociación de Ayuda Humanitaria PROVIDA, Plan International El Salvador, Save the Children El Salvador, Oxfam, and International Rescue Committee worked together. They raised awareness of the issue and provided psychosocial support. They also distributed food packages, vouchers, and protection kits containing toiletries, a whistle, and information on the types of violence and emergency numbers to call. In addition, cash enabled families to alleviate some of their most urgent needs. GBV training provided as part of this project strengthened local networks and alert systems in the long term.



FOR SOME WOMEN, IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THEY COULD BUY GROCERIES WITH THEIR OWN MONEY.

SAVE THE CHILDREN

CASE STUDY

STORM


 **CRISIS ALERT 439 SYRIA**

On 19 June 2020, a severe thunderstorm hit Idlib Province in Syria, causing flash floods which led to the full or partial destruction of 38 camps for displaced people. More than 1,285 families were left completely without shelter, and the deaths of at least three children were reported. Urgent needs included shelter, food, hygiene kits and sensitisation on the existing prevalence of COVID-19 in Syria.

Just six days after the thunderstorm, Start Funding was made available to CAFOD and its local partners). They distributed ground sheets and mattresses to more than 4,000 displaced families, and construction work in 38 camps cleared water and limited any further flooding. More than 4,200 ready-to-eat meals and hygiene kits were distributed, and informative sessions on COVID-19 prevention were also held.



WITHOUT START NETWORK FUNDING, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT AFFECTED PEOPLE WOULD HAVE BEEN REACHED... THE RESPONSE PREVENTED THE EXACERBATION OF EXISTING VULNERABILITIES.

JOSIE O'REILLY

Catholic International Development Charity (CAFOD)



CAFOD, Alert 439 in Syria (Storm)



[COMMUNITY MEMBERS] WEREN'T EXPECTING TO RECEIVE ANY TYPE OF ASSISTANCE, BECAUSE ... SOME OF THESE PEOPLE WERE ACTUALLY DISPLACED MORE THAN ONE TIME. SO UNFORTUNATELY, THEY GOT USED TO IT ... BUT WITH THE START MECHANISM... IT WAS REALLY EFFICIENT.

GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIP MANAGER

Local Partner



CASE STUDY

ANTICIPATION OF
FLOODING



! CRISIS ALERT 449 SIERRA LEONE

Flooding in Freetown is a regular and frequent occurrence. Start Network members describe it as not a case of 'if' but 'when'. Following an alert that responded to the August flooding season in 2019, members wanted to use their experience of response to pre-emptively manage the forecasted impacts of future floods.

By using reliable forecasts that had been accurate in previous years, this proactive approach resulted in members strengthening and reinforcing drainage systems in typically flood-affected areas. The projects were designed to incorporate community members and local actors

for longevity. Alongside short-term disbursements of hygiene materials and non-food items, long-term activities such as water-source rehabilitation, bridge-building, and the set-up of a disaster management channel in the community also future-proofed infrastructure.

By using funds ahead of the crisis, a longer-term impact was facilitated. Community members in affected areas noted that it was the first time that flooding effects did not need to be recorded, as the issues which related to flooding had been addressed at the source.



THE BEST WAY TO ACTUALLY ADDRESS THE FLOODING CHALLENGES IN FREETOWN IS TO USE THIS ANTICIPATORY APPROACH.

JUSUFU CONTEH

Programme Manager, Concern Worldwide Sierra Leone,
Learning Exchange



START FUND COVID-19



7.4 MILLION

pounds in funding awarded for humanitarian crises



2.3 MILLION

people reached

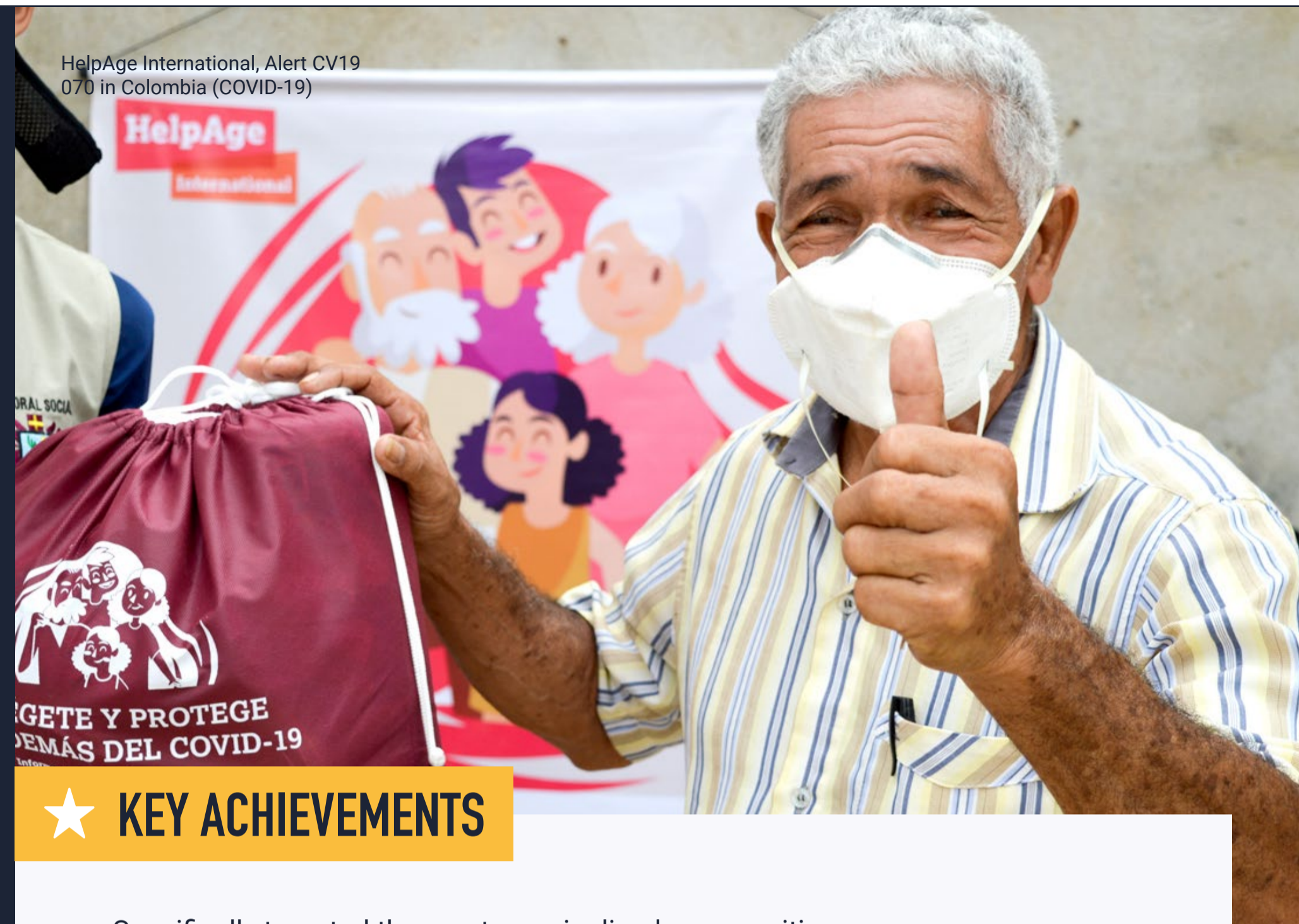


20%

disbursed to local and national organisations

Start Fund COVID-19 was launched in April 2020 following an intensive consultation with Start Network members and donors on the implications in low-income countries. The mechanism provided rapid funding for small to medium responses at the local level, and early and anticipatory humanitarian action needed before the virus spread to at-risk communities. The quick launch of Start Fund COVID-19 enabled the global Start Fund to continue responding to crises that would have otherwise been overlooked.

With seed funding from the IKEA Foundation and further support from UK Aid, Jersey Overseas Aid, German Federal Foreign Office, Avaaz, a private donor, Start Fund COVID-19 was met with unprecedented demand. Over the nine months that the fund was operational, 59 projects were funded across 31 countries. Mid-term and end-term assessments of these projects provided valuable learning and feedback.



★ KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Specifically targeted the most marginalised communities.
- Responses were aligned to the World Health Organisation (WHO) COVID-19 Response Plan.
- Covered gaps in national responses, particularly for Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) and Infection Prevention and Control (IPC).
- Allowed members to quickly respond with activities, while other donors were slow at making COVID-19-dedicated funding available or agreeing to changes in existing programming and budgets.
- Projects have seen high levels of coordination and collaboration, which enabled swift responses that reached vulnerable communities at a time when access became difficult.
- Launched a pilot to release limited funds to organisations as part of the Tiered Due Diligence Framework pilot. Read more on page 28.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE AND UNDERSTANDING OF OUR NEEDS. THANK YOU FOR NOT FORGETTING US IN THESE HARD TIMES. THANK YOU ON BEHALF OF OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY AND ALL FAMILIES WHO RECEIVED THE ASSISTANCE.

LETTER FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OF ONE OF THE ASSISTED COMMUNITIES

City of Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina



THE COVID-19 FUND PROCESS ... SHOWED THE VALUE OF THE START FUND MODEL. NOT MANY NETWORKS WOULD BE ABLE TO PROCESS AND ALLOCATE FUNDING TO A GLOBAL EMERGENCY SUCH AS COVID-19 SO FAST. BEING ABLE TO WORK THROUGH 85 ALERTS TO A FINAL LIST OF FIVE IN A PERIOD OF 24 HOURS DEMONSTRATES THAT TRANSPARENT, PEER-LED DECISION MAKING CAN HAPPEN AT SPEED AND AT SCALE.

DAN COLLISON

Formerly War Child



THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN GREAT AT BRINGING TOGETHER THIS CONSORTIUM. WE DO NOT CONSIDER THIS EXPERIENCE WITH THE START FUND A ONE-OFF, WE WANT TO BUILD ON THIS COLLABORATION!

RELIEF INTERNATIONAL, LEBANON



Catholic Relief Services,
Alert CV19 062 in Bosnia and
Herzegovina (COVID-19)

Information about all alerts can be accessed through the [alert dashboard](#).



START FUND BANGLADESH



3.7 MILLION

pounds in funding awarded for humanitarian crises



0.5 MILLION

people reached



86%

disbursed directly and indirectly to local and national organisations



3%

disbursed before a crisis hit

Start Fund Bangladesh (SFB) is a civil society owned and led rapid emergency fund that activates within 72 hours of a crisis. With GBP 10 million funding from UK Aid, it addresses under the radar, small to medium crises through a membership of 27 local and national NGOs (L/NNGO) and 20 international NGOs (INGO).



LOCALLY LED ACTION

- Increased participation of local and national NGOs in governance and decision making. L/NNGO participation in allocation decision stood at 71% and project selection 69%.
- Direct funding to L/NNGOs under SFB surpassed the Grand Bargain target of 25% and reached 80% in 2020. This has translated to reduction of intermediaries, ensuring more rapid and cost-effective responses.
- SFB's performance data since 2017 indicates that funding local partners directly has reduced response time by 40%, and average operational and management costs by 18%.

ADVOCACY AND COLLABORATION

- By advocating for the equitable sharing of Indirect Cost Recovery between INGO and local and national NGOs, SFB has created opportunities to build and retain its resources and invest in meeting due diligence requirements. ICR sharing stood at 70% to INGOs and 30% to local and national NGOs with GBP 7,951 going downstream to implementing local NGOs. This is in addition to £208,435 which went directly to L/NNGOs in 2020, due to their direct funding access.
- SFB developed a common accountability framework (Mechanism for Accountability to Affected Population) and rolled it out in 2020 through SFB funded responses (i.e. 35 projects under 14 alerts) to facilitate active participation of at-risk and affected populations. The framework was also used by the UN and their implementing agencies under the CERF funded cyclone Amphan response.
- Improved preparedness, response, and coordination capacities of L/NNGOs. SFB was tasked to co-lead the Localisation Technical Working Group to support greater collaboration and coordination between L/NNGOs and the greater humanitarian coordination system.

NEXT STEPS

- **Diversifying donor base to reduce single donor dependency.**
- **Investing in members' capacities on anticipatory early actions and disaster risk financing.**
- **Transitioning towards a Hub model without obstructing the current state of evolution.**
- **Increasing accountability to affected communities to inspire the participation revolution.**
- **Reinforcing safeguarding and increasing women's participation in humanitarian action to change the attitudes on the role of women in times of crisis.**



Uttaran, Alert B029 in Bangladesh (Cyclone)



OUR TRUSTED PARTNER, START FUND BANGLADESH DELIVERS ITS MANDATES WITH SPEED AND INNOVATION AND HELPS BUILD BRIDGES BETWEEN DHAKA AND THE COMMUNITIES THROUGH EMPOWERMENT OF LOCAL NGOS.

HENRY GLORIEUX

Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, Bangladesh

LOCALLY LED ACTION DURING A PANDEMIC

When COVID-19 hit Bangladesh, authorities realised that they would need to act quickly and independently to prevent a huge loss of life. The first allocation from SFB to respond to the COVID-19 crisis was on 27 March. This was just a day after the nationwide lockdown and nine days after the first death. A second allocation followed on 31 March.

All funding went to national and local member organisations to support public information campaigns, WASH programmes, PPE for community health workers and local food supply chains and markets.

START FUND BANGLADESH DISBURSED A TOTAL OF £550,000, HELPING 106,000 PEOPLE IN 23 DISTRICTS, AHEAD OF MOST NGOS AND IN AREAS NOT ACTIVELY SUPPORTED BY INTERNATIONAL NGOS.

Uttaran, Alert B029 in Bangladesh (Cyclone)





MIGRATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND



0.3 MILLION

pounds in funding awarded for humanitarian crises



0.1 MILLION

people reached

The Migration Emergency Response Fund (MERF) was set up to address the unpredictable nature of the mixed migration context across the Mediterranean, and rapidly respond to new or emerging needs. It also aimed to improve the effectiveness and understanding of migration responses and trends.

Funded by UK Aid, the MERF funded over 30 projects across nine countries in Europe and Africa, including nine Collaborative Information Collection and Analysis (CICA) grants since 2017. It did so in two phases. The first of which ran from 2017 in partnership with 15 Start Network members across 18 countries, primarily in Europe and North Africa. The second phase was launched in July 2018, and involved 23 partners across 11 countries in North, West, and Central Africa.



THE BIGGEST IMPACT OF MERF HAS BEEN TO ESTABLISH COMMUNICATION AND EXCHANGE BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS THAT WERE NOT REALLY CONNECTED BEFORE. IT ALLOWED US TO NETWORK HERE IN TUNISIA AND CREATE A REALLY OPEN RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANISATIONS AND A NICE DYNAMIC. WE WOULD LIKE TO REPLICATE IT IN ANOTHER FORM IN THE FUTURE.

ELISA CLAESSENS

Terre d'Asile Tunisia, Tunisia

★ KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Developed practical guidance on implementing feedback and complaints mechanisms in the context of mixed migration, which are available in English, French, and Spanish.
- Developed on-the-ground learning on implementing migration humanitarian responses in an urban context, based on projects funded in Casablanca.
- Funded nine Collaborative Information Collection and Analysis (CICA) grants, including one that looked at the growing popularity of the Atlantic route, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Provided anticipatory funding for one of the first projects in Cameroon, to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 to almost 140,000 refugees and nearby communities.



NEXT STEPS

- After more than three years, the Migration Emergency Response Fund has now closed. Information about all alerts can be accessed through the [MERF alert dashboard](#).

FOREWARN

Humanitarians need quality information to know when and how to act before a disaster strikes, so that lives can be saved, and losses can be prevented. The forecast-based warning, analysis and response network (FOREWARN) brings together humanitarians with multi-disciplinary experts to collectively analyse risk, and make sure that anticipatory decision making is guided by the right information and people.

The FOREWARN global community brings together hazard-specific experts to inform Start Fund's anticipation alerts, share learning and develop anticipatory approaches. In addition, three national FOREWARN pilots in the Philippines, Bangladesh and Madagascar ensure that appropriate, local information informs anticipatory action in those countries. Start Network's tools and analysis grants allow members and their partners to work together to understand risk, consult with the people who are affected, and make sure that quality information is received in time to act before a disaster hits.

→ **IN 2020, FOREWARN EXPERTS PROVIDED ESSENTIAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION TO 100% OF ANTICIPATION FUNDING DECISIONS.**

→ **THE GLOBAL FOREWARN COMMUNITY HAS MORE THAN 130 PARTICIPANTS, AND AROUND 50 HAZARD SPECIFIC EXPERTS.**

→ **THERE ARE 49 HAZARD SPECIFIC EXPERTS IN THE NATIONAL FOREWARN PILOTS, WHICH GROWS EACH TIME A NEW ANALYSIS PROJECT IS LAUNCHED**

NATIONAL FOREWARN PILOTS

- In national FOREWARN pilot countries, **seven collaborative analysis projects are underway** for hazards including landslides, dengue, cyclone, riverbank erosion and multi-hazard analysis.
- In Madagascar, FOREWARN is working with Start Fund members including the London School of Economics, the National Office of Risk and Disaster Management (BNGRC), and the General Directorate of Meteorology to **improve the speed of cyclone forecasting**, and raise a Start Fund anticipation alert which will allow members to **put activities in place before a cyclone hits**.

NEXT STEPS

- The final two FOREWARN pilots are now underway in Pakistan and DRC, which will support the existing disaster risk financing work nationally and eventually feed into the SFF.



The Social and Economic Enhancement Programme (SEEP), Alert B027 in Bangladesh (Anticipation of Dengue)

ANTICIPATING DENGUE OUTBREAK IN DHAKA

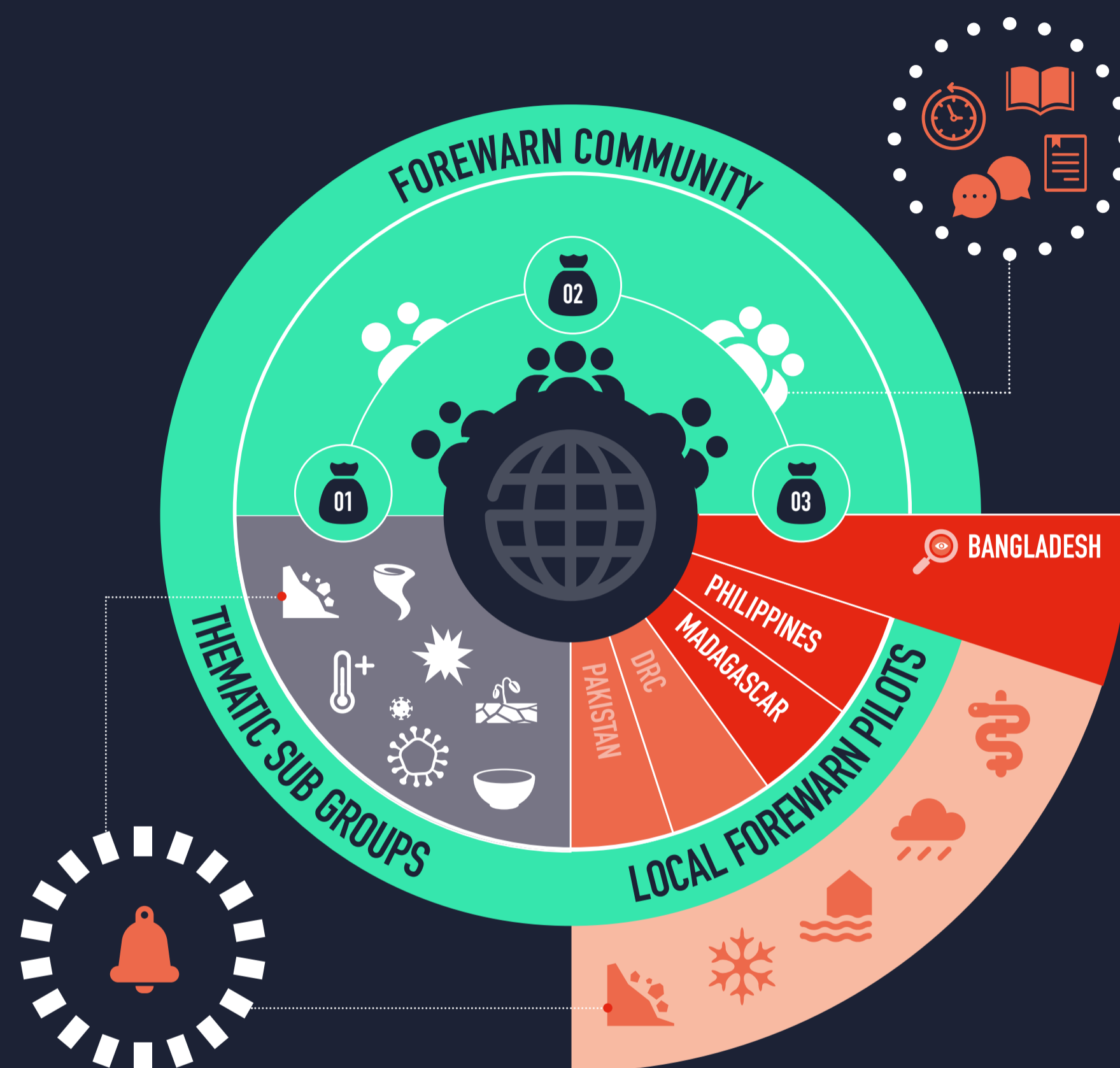
Based on FOREWARN Bangladesh's analysis from the 2019 dengue outbreak in Dhaka, the first ever Start Fund alert for the anticipation of Dengue was activated on 26 April 2020. Start Fund Bangladesh member, Social and Economic Enhancement Programme (SEEP), was awarded GBP50,000 for lifesaving activities, including the development of an epidemiological model surveillance system.



WORKING ON DENGUE WAS NOT AN EASY START IN BANGLADESH. FOREWARN CAME UP WITH THE DENGUE ANALYSIS. THEIR PROPOSED ACTIONS WERE TIMELY TO DESIGN THE WHOLE PROJECT. WE EXPECT AN EARLY ACTION ON DENGUE PREVENTION WILL EASE NOT ONLY MOSQUITO MENACE OF THE TARGETED AREA BUT ALSO LEAVE A GLOWING EXAMPLE FOR OTHER STAKEHOLDERS TO FOLLOW.

MD. YEAKUB HOSSAIN

Climate Action and Humanitarian Response focal point, SEEP, Bangladesh



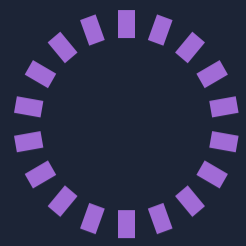
01 ACADEMIC CONSORTIA
02 TOOLS
03 ANALYSIS FOR ACTION GRANTS



GLOBAL FOREWARN COMMUNITY
START NETWORK MEMBERS AND PARTNERS /
MULTI-DISCIPLINARY EXPERTS /
PRIVATE SECTOR / DONORS / ACADEMICS /
HUMANITARIANS / FORECASTERS / ANALYSTS /
PARTNERSHIP BROKERS



GLOBAL FOREWARN COMMUNITY ROLES
START FUND ANTICIPATION ALERTS
EARLY ACTION - COORDINATION
POLICY
ADVOCACY AND DIALOGUE
SHARING AND LEARNING



ARC REPLICA



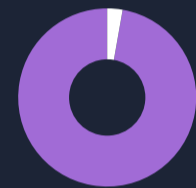
7.9 MILLION

pounds in funding
programmed for
drought mitigation



0.3 MILLION

people reached



2%

disbursed to local and national organisations



100%

disbursed before a crisis hit

ARC Replica allows NGOs to work side-by-side with governments to manage climate-related humanitarian risks through macro-insurance. The programme is run in a partnership between Start Network, the Government of Senegal, African Risk Capacity (ARC) and the World Food Programme.

2020 saw this project come to fruition, following a poor rainy season in the winter of 2019 and an insurance payout of 10.6 million USD in Dec 2019. In 2020 Start Network members programmed £7.9 million to deliver assistance to the most vulnerable communities in Senegal before the worst impacts of the drought were felt.

Six Start Network members collaborated across seven regions of Senegal. Catholic Relief Services, Save the Children, Oxfam, Action Contre la Faim, Plan International, and World Vision reached more than 335,000 people with unconditional cash transfers, nutritional support, and sensitisation ahead of the period when the worst impacts of the drought were expected to be felt. By acting before the worst effects of the drought,

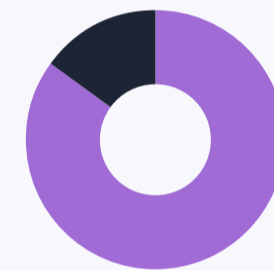
households entered the lean season with a higher level of resilience, and could potentially take fewer risks or negative actions to manage food or money insecurity.

Distribution had been intended to start in April 2020, but was delayed and then adjusted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Communities' movements were restricted and employment stalled, which meant that people were increasingly vulnerable. By reducing face-to-face transactions, implementing actors managed the health risk of travelling to distribution points, without limiting communities' access to support.

★ IMPACT

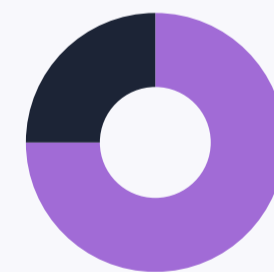
Over the six-month implementation period, [monthly surveys and discussions](#) with a group of 2,587 household representatives enabled the team to collect timely and comprehensive information on the needs of the communities and the impact of the assistance.

Household level impact included:



85%

of surveyed households reported an improved quality or quantity of food accessed during the project period.



75%

On average, at least 75% of funds received by households was spent on basic necessities such as food, health, and debt repayment.



17%

reduction in the number of targeted households going a whole day without eating.



ARC REPLICA IS A GROUND-BREAKING INITIATIVE, WHICH WE ARE HAPPY TO SUPPORT ON BEHALF OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT (BMZ). THIS STRONG PARTNERSHIP HAS BEEN A SUCCESS – THE FRUITS OF WHICH ARE EVIDENT IN THE 2020 IMPLEMENTATION PHASE. AND WE HOPE THIS COLLABORATIVE APPROACH WILL BE SUSTAINED IN YEARS TO COME.

VERONIKA BERTRAM

KfW





DRF PAKISTAN



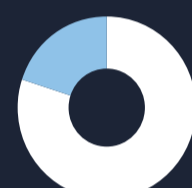
0.1 MILLION

pounds in funding awarded for humanitarian crises



1.1 MILLION

people reached



80%

disbursed to local and national organisations



100%

disbursed before a crisis hit

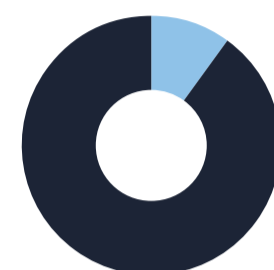
Building on Start Network's experience of cyclical heatwaves in Pakistan, the Pakistan Hub established the first multi-hazard disaster risk financing system (DRF) this year. This enables local humanitarians to access funds to protect communities ahead of predictable risks such as floods, heatwaves, and droughts. The development of an operational country based DRF system is a critical milestone in the wider hub efforts.

In May, the heatwave parametric model released GBP36,000 to respond to anticipated heatwaves in the city of Karachi. Led by Health And Nutrition Development Society (HANDS), one of four new local members in Pakistan, the response showcased how DRF can support local actors to access financing for cyclical and predictable hazards.

The heatwave season is immediately followed by the monsoon season (July-September), where extreme rainfall resulted in the worst monsoon rains recorded in the last 70 years. The early operationalisation of the flood model resulted in GBP80,000 of funding being awarded to Care International before the onset of further flooding in the city of Muzaffargarh.

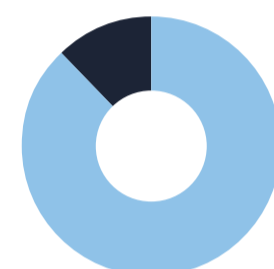
★ IMPACT

The timing of an intervention is a key component of DRF. By pre-positioning financing, activities can happen before the onset of the hazard. Research from the Knowledge Attitude Practices (KAP) survey conducted by Health And Nutrition Development Society (HANDS) found that:



<10%

Less than 10% of participants found the heatwave campaign was too late, with 47% reporting it was at the right time.



88%

Of participants reported being able to recall the recommended steps to avoid the impacts of the heatwave.



NEXT STEPS

We will build on the learnings from this pilot year to:

- **Enhance the risk management infrastructure, by developing a dashboard that will show the outputs from each of the models enabling members to monitor each hazard in real time.**
- **Develop a risk management system that will support members to triangulate the information from the parametric models.**
- **Work with members to identify where the models should expand to geographically.**



[ON HEATWAVES IN 2020] THE WHOLE PROCESS MOVED VERY FAST. THAT'S KEY. IT DOESN'T INVOLVE TOO MUCH BUREAUCRACY. IT INVOLVES GOOD WORK IN THE MEMBERS. IT'S A TEAM EFFORT.

REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Start Network member agency, based in Pakistan

ENABLERS



MEMBER ENGAGEMENT



95%

of member assembly representatives are satisfied with their membership.



55

member organisations, of which 33% are local or national NGOs.



76%

of member organisations participated in Start Fund decision making (allocations).

Start Network's diverse and passionate membership continues to be our key asset in bringing about the systems change we want to see. Throughout 2020, the membership focused on understanding the challenges and opportunities that need to be considered. This work will continue over the coming year as we shift towards becoming a more diverse, decentralised and locally led network of hubs.

IMPACT IN 2020

Five new national and international NGOs were approved by members to become part of the network. 13 local and national NGOs from DRC, India and Pakistan also completed their due diligence and were fully inducted into the network.

To better support all members, a dedicated membership team was established to improve engagement across all Start Network activities. Despite the challenges that COVID-19 brought, we held over 70, largely online events to bring our members together. We also translated many of our key resources into other languages to improve accessibility, with the aim to accelerate this work further.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

We will continue to:

- Work with hubs to engage and induct new national and local members.
- Support hubs and global members through Start Network's governance transition, as we shift from a centralised network of organisations to a decentralised network of hubs.
- Provide a schedule of events for members to understand and participate in some of Start Network's key initiatives.
- Develop the right infrastructure to better serve our diversifying membership base, including platforms for communications and training on the necessary systems and processes.



[LEARNING THROUGH START NETWORK HAS] REALLY SHARPENED OUR OWN THINKING AS WELL. IT HAS ADDED VALUE [TO] HOW WE ORGANISE OURSELVES AND PROVIDE HUMANITARIAN [ACTION]. THIS HAS BEEN A GREAT LEARNING FOR PEOPLE IN OUR ORGANISATION.

WIM DEN HARTOG

Dorcas



WE ARE GAINING CONFIDENCE BY BEING A MEMBER OF START NETWORK AND ARE NOW TAKING LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN SOME OF OUR WORK.

TIRTHA PRASAD

NEADS, India

VIRTUAL ASSEMBLY

Start Network's annual Assembly meeting took place over four days in October 2020. The Assembly brings the whole network together to learn about the progress that has been made across our initiatives, resolve challenges to help us advance our work, and make key decisions through the Annual General Meeting.

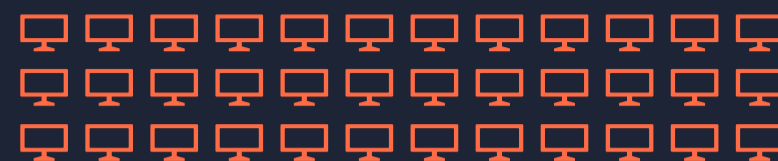
GOING VIRTUAL

In addition to marking Start Network's tenth anniversary, this was also our first virtual Assembly. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic was the driving force for this, affordability, accessibility to wider audiences, and ecological considerations were also factored in. This has given us the chance to put virtual events to the test and see how we might future-proof our Assembly meetings as the network grows and decentralises.

HIGHLIGHTS

In the session, localisation featured heavily as we discussed how power could be shifted in the network through a re-design of our governance structure. Tensions such as current debates around systemic racism, and the decolonisation of humanitarian action also surfaced. Start Network committed to launching a strategy refresh focusing on accelerating localisation and developing a decolonisation framework for our programmes in 2021.

Other themes that emerged were around our financing instruments and infrastructure. We discussed refining the niche of the Start Fund to evolve with the humanitarian landscape and explored how initiatives like the Start Fund Bangladesh and FOREWARN are enforcing the importance of local leadership and expertise. Members also contributed



36 SESSIONS OVER FOUR DAYS



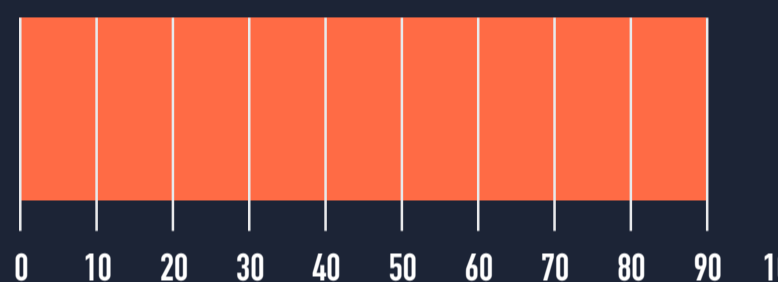
350 REGISTERED ACROSS



61 COUNTRIES



202 ATTENDED



90% OF START NETWORK MEMBER ORGANISATIONS IN ATTENDANCE

to the design of the Start Fund Facility (SFF) minimum viable product, which will be launched next year.

Some conversations highlighted the need to shift the sector's approach to risk and reimagine the idea of "organisational strength" as not just level of compliance, but things like strength of partnerships and accountability to communities. We committed to pursuing constant dialogue with donors to advocate for shifts in their own risk behaviours.

Finally, the members reviewed Start Network's first annual report as an independent organisation and voted to admit five new local and international members into the network.



WILL THERE COME A DAY WHEN THE SUCCESS OF AN INGO IS MEASURED BY A SHRINKING COUNTRY FOOTPRINT AND A REDIRECTION OF FUNDS? HOW CAN WE WORK AS A MEMBERSHIP TO HELP THAT ALONG?

BOB RUXTON

Concern Worldwide

ADVOCACY

2020 was an exciting year for Start Network's advocacy efforts. In the second quarter, our newly established advocacy team officially began to advocate for the change we want to see in the humanitarian sector.

We consulted with our local, national, and international members and hubs on our vision as an influencing role across the sector. This process involved key informant interviews with external partners, national FOREWARNs and the hubs. We also co-developed our advocacy strategy with stakeholders, which was agreed by the Board in December 2020.

OUR CAMPAIGNS

During 2020, the UK's challenging political climate has significant implications on humanitarian action. Start Network launched a targeted campaign to advocate for the respect of humanitarian principles in the new Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), and worked closely with members to send an open letter to the UK Prime Minister.

SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS

The first step in creating a community of advocates is to support our members and hubs to become active ambassadors on locally led humanitarian action, anticipatory action, and collective innovation. To do this, we developed advocacy packs with key messages, calls to action and information on Start Network's strategic areas.

ENGAGING EXTERNALLY

We believe in supporting existing efforts instead of duplicating or replacing them. That's why we have prioritised building trusted relationships with like-minded organisations and networks. These include:

BOND

ANTICIPATORY ACTION TASK FORCE

CHARTER FOR CHANGE (C4C)

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES (ICVA)

THE INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE (IASC)

NETWORK FOR EMPOWERED AID RESPONSE (NEAR)

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE (SCHR)

RISK INFORMED EARLY ACTION PARTNERSHIP (REAP)

ANTICIPATION HUB

Start Network has also taken on a Chairing role of the Anticipatory Action Task Force (AATF). Throughout the year, we participated in a series of high-level advocacy events, which included introducing the concept of anticipation, and presenting key policy asks to EU member states through the Council Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid (COHAFA).

LOOKING FORWARD

In 2021, we will:

- Deliver advocacy training at the national level for FOREWARN members, the hubs, and local partners, with support from The Advocacy Team.
- Launch campaigns and policy papers focused on supporting locally-driven efforts, such as indirect costs of local and national organisations, and how anticipatory action and locally-led humanitarian action agendas can mutually support each other.
- Expand the positioning of Start Network at key high level events, such as the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week (HNPW) and the Civil Society C7 as a way to influence COP26, and use those events to create a platform for local and national voices.
- Start Network will co-chair the Anticipation Hub Advisory Group

DONOR ENGAGEMENT

Start Network works in partnership with a range of donors from around the world. This includes governments and multilateral development agencies, the private sector, and charitable trusts and foundations. While some donors have been there since the beginning of our ten-year journey, others have joined more recently as our work has expanded. Start Network's innovative financing, particularly in early action and the expansion into local hubs, have offered new opportunities to more specialised donors.

DONOR COUNCIL

Start Network's Donor Council was originally established to enable members, staff, and donors to discuss the performance and evolution of the Start Fund. After moving online in 2020, it provides an opportunity for current and prospective donors to learn about new developments and programmes being implemented across Start Network.

START NETWORK AT DAVOS

A Start Network team attended the 2020 World Economic Forum (WEF) as part of the Sustainable Impact Hub, which brought together stakeholders from the international development and humanitarian sector to showcase the power of cross-sector collaboration. Our attendance positioned Start Network as an influencer in the global conversation and was also an opportunity for us to make new connections.



WE CERTAINLY BENEFIT FROM THE VISIBILITY OF THE START NETWORK... AND FROM BEING INVOLVED IN THE DONOR COUNCIL. WE SIT IN AND LISTEN ABOUT ONGOING DEVELOPMENTS AND CHALLENGES AS WELL AS BEING INVOLVED IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS. FOR AN AGENCY OUR SIZE IT'S HUGELY VALUABLE, NOT ONLY THROUGH ENHANCING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE HUMANITARIAN LANDSCAPE, BUT ALSO IN TERMS OF FORGING IMPORTANT PARTNERSHIPS.

EDWARD LEWIS

Jersey Aid

We welcomed two new donors in 2020, Avaaz and a private foundation, both of which supported the Start Fund COVID-19. And secured 11 new grants. These included:

- The German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO) renewed its **multi-year support** with a **three-year grant** for the Start Fund and our work in **early action and risk financing**, which will run to 2022.
- The GFFO also provided a **major grant** for COVID-19.
- The German Development Bank, KfW, **extended and increased its support** for the ARC Replica programme in 2020.
- UK Aid agreed **new support** over a **three-year period** for Start Network's **risk financing and innovation work**, in partnership with Elrha.
- The IKEA Foundation agreed a **second multi-year grant** for the Start Fund. This will run from 2021-23.
- Our existing donors, Irish Aid and Jersey Overseas Aid, provided **new annual grants** for the Start Fund. Jersey **generously gave us further support** for the Start Fund COVID-19.
- Start Network has **continued to benefit** from the **core funding provided** for three years by the Netherlands. All three donors supported the Start Fund's localisation pilot for organisations assessed at tier 2.

EVIDENCE AND LEARNING

Given the innovative and ground-breaking work areas and our systems change ambition, it is critical that we prioritise evidence, analysis, learning and peer exchange to understand our overall impact.

Our approach is to develop robust and relevant metrics to capture our progress, understand our relevance and effectiveness, build on good practice, and learn from our mistakes. This includes supporting the vision of local and national humanitarian actors, testing and sharing new tools and methodologies, supporting solutions to locally-relevant and systems level problems, and encouraging learning across our membership in an agile way.

We measure our impact by asking system stakeholders whether this is happening, assessing key metrics of system change, and gathering examples of these approaches and behaviours in practice. We evaluate our programmes and activities by developing relevant and robust methodologies and tools that enable us to assess effectiveness as well as unintended impacts.

In 2020, we conducted

- **an independent monitoring** of the localisation pilot in collaboration with consultants in DRC, Pakistan and India who collected feedback from more than 600 households in their local languages.
- **a global stakeholder survey** on the work of the Start Network and its programmes which received feedback from 220 people across 60 countries, and a local partner survey which captured experiences of these partnerships for 98 organisations from 33 countries.
- **a mixed-method and multi-stakeholder evaluation** of the ARC-Replica payout, which included monthly sentinel site check-ins with community leaders, in-depth interviews with government representatives and member agencies, and a remote household survey of more than 2500 project participants.



WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND THAT THE START NETWORK CONDUCT A WORKSHOP AND SHARE THEIR MONITORING PROCESSES AND EXPERIENCES WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF SENEGAL AND ARC, SO THAT FUTURE GOVERNMENTS AND ORGANISATIONS RECEIVING PAYOUTS CAN BENEFIT FROM THEIR SUCCESS.

KIMETRICA (2020)

African Risk Capacity Process Audit Final Report: 2019 Senegal Payout



NEXT STEPS

- **Going forward, our aim is to invest in the tools and technology for the collection and interpretation of valid, relevant and useful evidence across the network, which is supported by feedback from communities affected by crisis.**
- **We will aim to create an agile, iterative practice and mindset that is responsive to data and feedback, based on reflective action-based learning. We will also identify and address the barriers that currently make change difficult at organisational and broader sectoral levels.**

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

IN 2020 WE

Welcomed **11 new employees** into new roles.



Continued to **promote the learning and development** of staff. **Funding coaching** for senior leaders and language courses in French and Spanish.



Introduced **Kaya** – a free online learning platform, covering sector specific topics such as safeguarding and fraud, as well as **personalised induction training packages** for new starters.



Conducted **our first annual diversity survey**, which told us that **87% of staff feel proud to work for Start Network**.



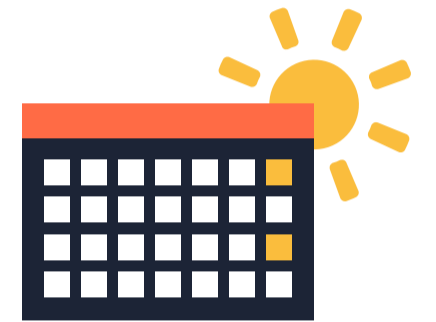
SUPPORTING STAFF THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

In 2020, we supported staff through the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by:

Providing staff with a £200 budget to create comfortable home working spaces.



Introducing Summer Fridays, a wellbeing initiative with an early finish every other week between June and August.



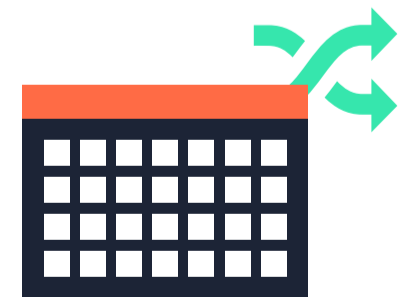
Put in place peer wellbeing supporters as well as professional counsellors.



Initiating a “No Meeting / Email” Friday policy to allow the team to focus on their own projects.



Further promoting flexible working to support those with caring responsibilities while working from home.



WELLBEING

As we shifted to remote working, staff wellbeing was supported with the introduction of our Wellbeing Peer Supporters. We also funded free counselling sessions to staff, started a monthly wellbeing newsletter, offered sessions around key topics such as psychological safety, and arranged regular social activities to keep colleagues connected and engaged.

DECOLONISATION AND ANTI-RACISM

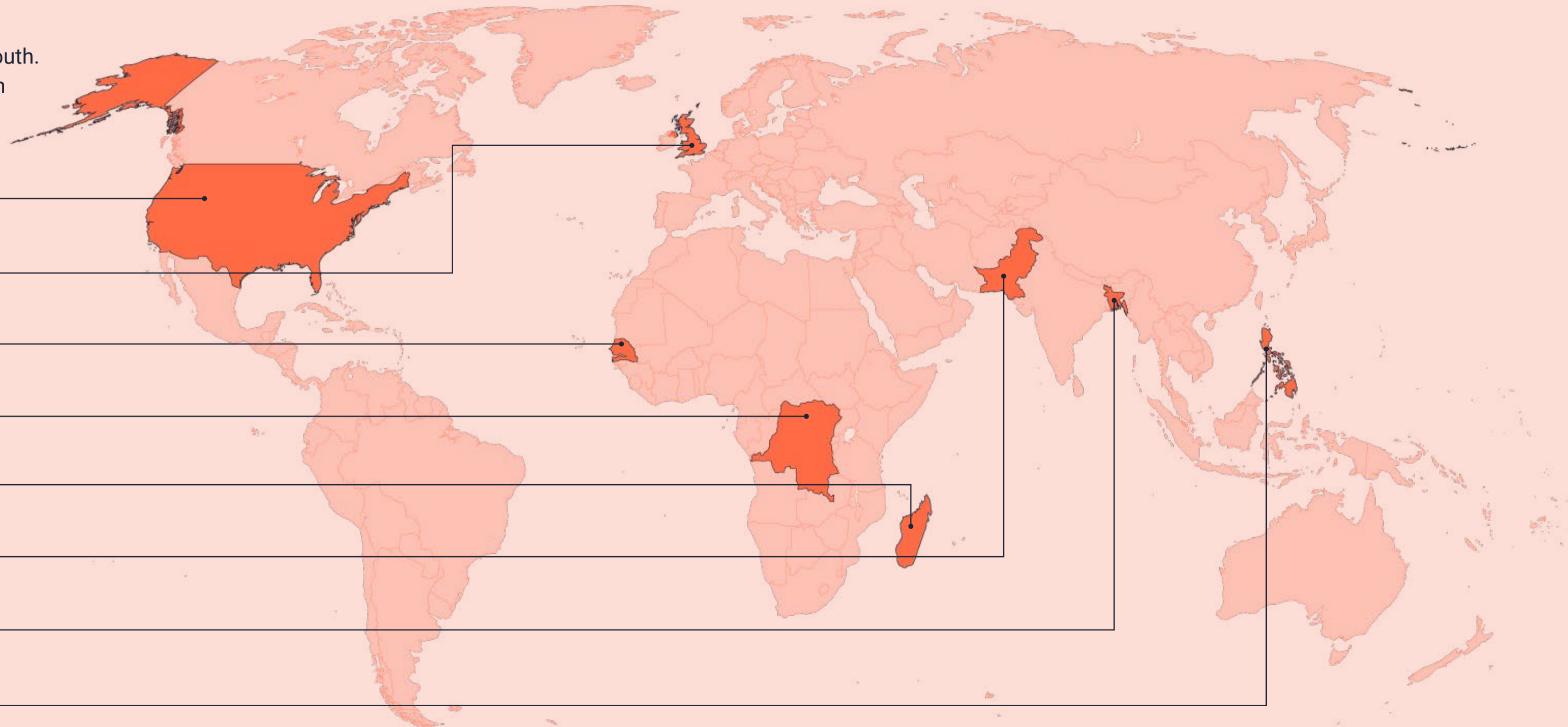
The Black Lives Matter protests and the increased focus on racism and colonialism in the sector highlighted the issue within Start Network itself. Expanding on our equality, diversity and inclusion work, we created spaces for colleagues to openly discuss their experiences of racism and colonialism reactions and learnings, as well as collating anti-racism resources. In addition, we commissioned a review of our programmes and the creation of a decolonisation and anti-racism framework, which will be rolled out in 2021.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

We created a cross-organisational Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Steering Group, who supported the development of our three-year EDI strategy. Staff created their own BIPOC and LGBTQ+ staff networks, and we held a series of design sessions to gather input from the entire team on our EDI priorities. One of the first actions from this was to introduce Applied, a blind recruitment software meant to encourage unconscious hiring practice.

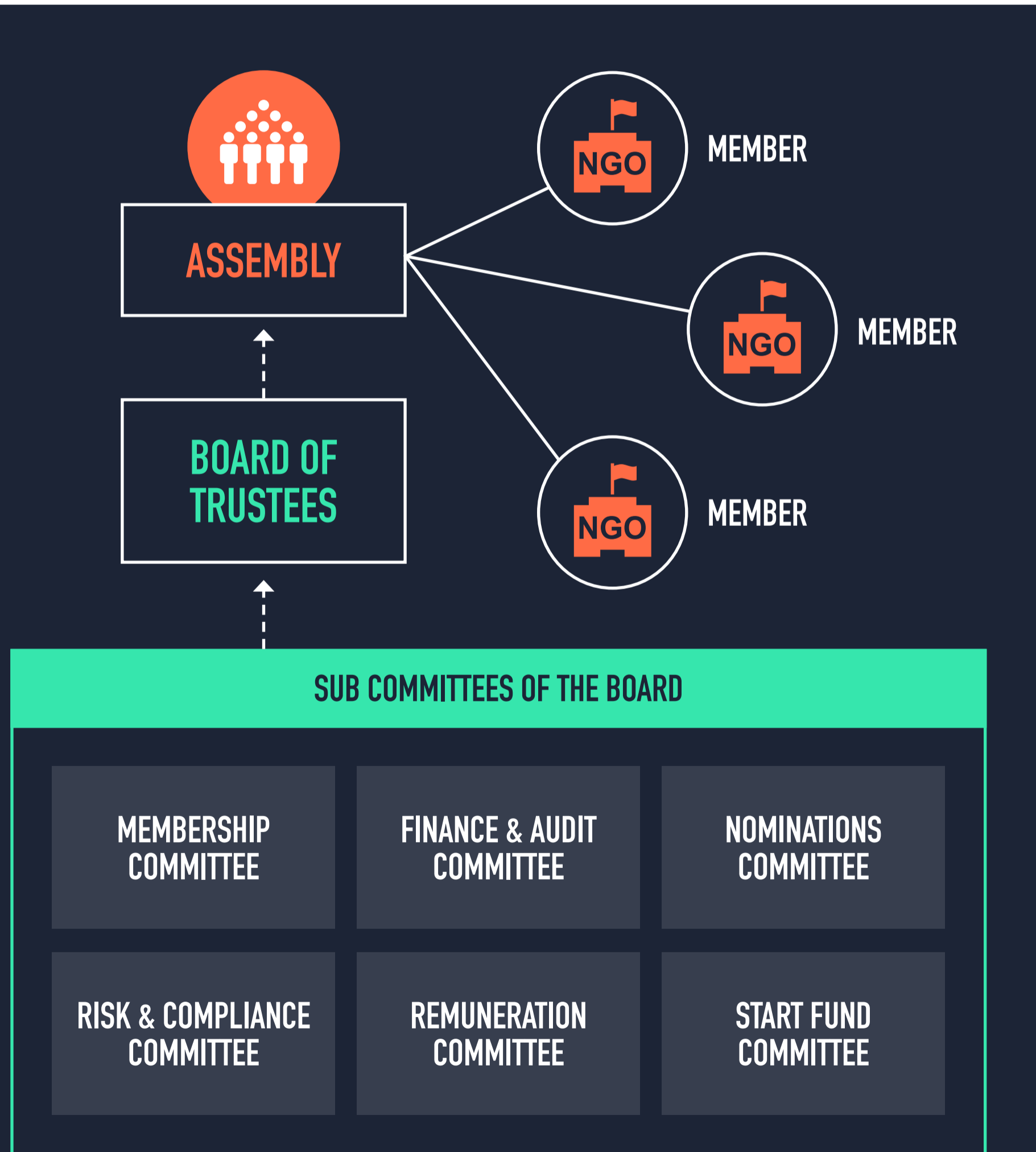
We are looking to support a decentralised team, with more staff in the Global South. Today our team is based in the following locations:

- 1 USA
- 60 UNITED KINGDOM
- 1 SENEGAL
- 1 DRC
- 1 MADAGASCAR
- 1 PAKISTAN
- 7 BANGLADESH
- 2 PHILIPPINES



GOVERNANCE

Start Network is a company limited by guarantee and is a registered charity. It is governed by a Board of Trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purposes of company law, and are accountable to the Start Network members. The Board is supported by several sub-committees, while the day-to-day running of the charity is the responsibility of the CEO and CFOO.



THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees sets the charity’s long-term strategy and approves the annual plan. It monitors progress against objectives and ensures that the principal risks to the charity are identified and controls are in place. It is responsible for trustee and senior leadership succession planning, setting the charity’s culture, and upholding the charity’s values. ‘Matters that are reserved to the Board’, that sets out key decisions that the Board retains responsibility for. These are regularly reviewed and updated. In line with governance best practice, the Board aspires to follow the principles of the voluntary Charity Governance Code.

The Board of Trustees comprises a mix of independent experts and representatives of the charity’s member agencies. The composition of the Board as of 31 December 2020 is as follows:

GENDER

Male	60%
Female	40%



BACKGROUND

Independent	50%
INGO member	40%
Local/National NGO member	10%



ETHNICITY

White	50%
Asian	30%
Middle East	10%
Latin American	10%



GOVERNANCE

TRUSTEE REGISTER

Name	Type of Trustee
Anwer Iqbal	Member trustee (Health and Nutrition Development Society)
Benjamin Laniado Kassin	Member trustee (CADENA)
Binny Prabhakar	Independent trustee
Robert William Ruxton	Member trustee (Concern Worldwide)
Christof Gabriel Maetze (Chair)	Independent trustee
Lola Gostelow (Safeguarding focal point)	Independent trustee
Noreen McGrath Gumbo (Vice-Chair)	Member trustee (Trócaire)
Paul Jaques Sylvain Astruc (Treasurer)	Independent trustee
Raja Waseem Ahmad	Member trustee (Islamic Relief)
Shaima Al Zarooni	Independent trustee
Degan Abdurahman Ali (exit date: Sept-20)	Member trustee (Adeso)
Alexandre Michel Alain Giraud (exit date: Sept-20)	Member trustee (Solidarites International)

THE ASSEMBLY

In setting Start Network's strategic direction, the Board is steered by the Start Network membership. Members are represented through the Assembly, which retains three key decisions – admitting new members into the network, appointing or removing trustees, and approving any changes to Start Network's Membership Policy.

Member representatives on the Assembly are nominated by each agency, and are usually CEOs or Humanitarian Directors. They are the individuals authorised to vote on Annual General Meeting (AGM) matters and take part in decision making on behalf of their organisations.

Supporting the work of the Board are a number of sub-committees. Read more about them in the Trustees Report 2020.

A GOVERNANCE DESIGN TO SHIFT POWER

In 2020, we started to think about some important ways in which the organisation needs to change for a new, decentralised network model to emerge. One key aspect is our governance structure. We asked ourselves what this would look like if Start Network evolved from a centralised entity to a dispersed network of hubs, and how decisions would be made.

Over a period of six months, a working group comprising representatives of the Start team, Board of Trustees, and the hubs came together to answer this question. A proposed governance design was shared with the Assembly towards the end of the year, envisioning a "federated" model of decision making, and outlining a possible transition process between now and 2024/2025.



NEXT STEPS

- **We will investigate the implications of the governance transition by further consulting with our members. With the aim of presenting to the 2021 Assembly a more detailed plan for transition, to commence in 2022. The network will then enter a new phase, with the admission of hub entities as full, voting members. There is more work to do, but one thing is certain – our governance and membership models will look very different in the years to come.**

FINANCIALS



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE START NETWORK CHARITY (FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020)

	Restricted funds 2020 £000	Unrestricted funds 2020 £000	Total funds 2020 £000
Income from:			
Donations and legacies	997	2,017	3,014
Charitable activities	62	467	529
Total income	1,059	2,484	3,543
Total income Expenditure on:			
Raising funds	-	155	155
Charitable activities	590	1,542	2,132
Total expenditure	590	1,697	2,287
Net income	469	787	1,256
Net movement in funds	469	787	1,256
Reconciliation of funds	-	2,933	2,933
Total funds brought forward	469	787	1,256
Total funds carried forward	469	3,720	4,189

ACRONYMS

AGM	Annual General Meeting	IHH	India Humanitarian Hub
AGUASACH	Asociación de Guardianes de la Salud	INGO	International Non-governmental Organisations
ARC	African Risk Capacity	IPC	Infection Prevention and Control
ASECSA	The Asociación de Servicios Comunitarios de Salud	KFW	German Development Bank
BIPOC	Black, Indigenous, and other People of Colour	LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and other sexual identities
C4C	Charter for Change	L/NGO	Local/National Non-governmental Organisations
CAFOD	The Catholic Agency for Overseas Development	MERF	Migration Emergency Response Fund
CEO	Chief Executive Officer	NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority
CERF	A non profit that provides seed funds to jump-start critical relief operations and fund life-saving programmes not covered by other donors.	NEAR	Network for Empowered Aid Response
CFOO	Chief Financial and Operating Officer	NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
CiC	Community Inclusion Currency	NOAH Center	Northwest Organization for Animal Help (NOAH)
CICA	Collaborative Information Collection and Analysis	NSC	National Steering Committee
CLIP	Community-led Innovation Partnership	PIANGO	Pacific Islands Association of Non-governmental Organizations
COHAFA	Council Working Party on Humanitarian Aid and Food Aid	POPI	People Oriented Programme Implementation
COP 26	2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference	RCCE	Risk communications and community engagement
DEPP	Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme	SCHR	Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo	SEEDS	Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society
DRF	Disaster Risk Financing	SFB	Start Fund Bangladesh
EDI	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	SFF	Start Financing Facility
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office	SHG	Self help groups
FORWARN	Forecast-based Warning, Analysis and Response Network	WDC	Working Differently Challenge
GBV	Gender-based Violence	WEF	World Economic Forum
GFFO	German Federal Foreign Office	WHO	World Health Organisation
HANDS	Health And Nutrition Development Society		
Humanitarian FALE	Humanitarian Facility Aiding Locally led Engagement		
IASC	The Inter-Agency Standing Committee		
ICR	Indirect Cost Recovery		
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies		

MEMBERS



DONORS



A NEW ERA OF HUMANITARIAN ACTION

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