



DISASTERS & EMERGENCIES
PREPAREDNESS PROGRAMME



Could you manage an innovation lab
to improve disaster preparedness?

Start Network and CDAC Network have launched a worldwide search for organisations to run new “innovation labs” aimed at finding fresh ways to help local communities prepare for disasters.

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PRESS RELEASE: GLOBAL AID NETWORK TO LAUNCH 'INNOVATION LABS' TO PREPARE FOR DISASTERS

A global network of aid agencies has launched a worldwide search for organisations to run new "innovation labs" aimed at finding fresh ways to help local communities prepare for disasters.

Up to four such labs will be set up in countries prone to disaster, with Bangladesh, Jordan, Kenya, Mozambique and the Philippines the likeliest candidates to host them.

The move by Start Network will be the first of its kind by humanitarian non-governmental organisations (NGOs), under a two-year programme funded by UK Aid. It will build on the work of 13 experimental projects already running under the network's Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme (DEPP), in countries where the risk of humanitarian crisis is highest.

Innovations produced by the labs could range from developing better building materials and that are more resistant to flooding or earthquakes or easier to transport when reconstruction is needed, to new communications systems for communities to use in a crisis. New technology might be used to improve planning and crisis response systems within an affected country.

Organisations interested in managing such a lab, where new ideas would be developed and tested, are being asked to contact Start Network by the end of this month (January). Their role in the £10 million programme would be to:

- Deliver a "pipeline" of identified projects to increase preparedness amongst communities at risk of disaster, using new approaches, technology and business or organisational models. The aim is to increase local decision-making, and to make aid more effective and efficient.
- Assess the support that projects need to test and implement their ideas.
- Provide the infrastructure needed for organisations to grow and refine their ideas, and take them to local, national or potentially international scale.
- Support locally-based entrepreneurs in building their own networks and learning to collaborate.
- Increase leadership skills among those involved in the projects so that they become more effective "change agents" within the aid sector.
- Take part in monitoring, evaluation and learning processes of the programme, in collaboration with Start Network.
- Join key research projects alongside Start Network, particularly to explore how best to identify and support emerging areas of innovation, to achieve a broader impact in the sector.

Start Network and the CDAC Network, which will jointly manage the overall labs project, are now seeking expressions of interest from a broad range of organisations. A lab operator could be an international organisation, or one that is active in just a single country. The network is strongly encouraging local organisations to apply.

Neil Townsend, DEPP Innovation Programme Manager, said:

"We don't necessarily expect organisations applying to have experience of running humanitarian preparedness innovation labs, because this is a new area of work. Some applicants may be very strong on humanitarian preparedness, while others may be very experienced at running innovation

labs. It is important to us that organisations selected to run the labs have close connections with communities affected by disasters, and are able to harness their creativity, ideas and solutions.

“This is a chance to support locally-driven change within the humanitarian system and to channel meaningful support and resources to the people most affected by disasters. The labs will provide the mechanism to support many new projects across several countries, some of which will have the potential to take to scale and lead to system-wide change.”

Saul Guerrero, Director of International Nutrition Initiatives at Action Against Hunger, who helped Start Network design the project, said:

“This exciting venture is an opportunity to bring together organisations that wouldn’t normally collaborate, to support locally-led initiatives that will help communities prepare better for emergencies and disasters. Our expectation is that it will produce new ideas and approaches that are different to anything the humanitarian sector has previously considered.”

The network is aiming for the labs to be set up and ready to begin work on July 1.

Start Network’s 42 members range from high-profile international aid agencies to national NGOs in countries such as Kenya, Mexico and Jordan. The network aims to lead for change in the humanitarian system, and manages innovative aid programmes that contribute to this objective.

(ends)

Expression of interest form:

https://start-network.app.box.com/files/0/f/13944089624/1/f_113648885350

Organisations should complete and return these to DEPPLabs@startnetwork.org and mark a copy to tenders@savethechildren.org.uk by Jan 31, 2017.

Further information on the application process: Bhavya Srinivasan , DEPP Innovation Operations Manager, DEPPLabs@startnetwork.org

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. The [Start Network](http://www.startnetwork.org) (www.startnetwork.org) was originally a group of 15 British humanitarian agencies, impatient at the slow pace and duplication of effort in aid delivery, which came together to develop an emergency response fund. It has since grown to 42 members spanning five continents.
2. The **Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme (DEPP)** is a three-year programme of 14 collaborative projects across 10 countries. Start Engage coordinates 13 of them and one further project is run by the CDAC Network (Communication with Disaster-Affected Communities). In all 45 partner agencies are involved. The £30 million programme is financed by UK Aid (DFID).
3. Other initiatives from Start Network include the [Start Fund](#), the first multi-donor pooled fund managed exclusively by NGOs, which has been activated 90 times since April 2014 and has disbursed more than £19 million, reaching 5 million people. It aims to begin disbursing funds in response to “below-the-radar” emergencies within 72 hours of a member raising an

alert. The fund is financed jointly by the UK Aid (DFID), Irish Aid (Government of Ireland), the Government of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the European Commission's Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations.

4. **Members of Start Network are:** Action Against Hunger (ACF); ACTED; Action Aid; Adeso; Alliance for International Medical Action (ALIMA); ARDD-Legal Aid; Cadena; Cafod; Care International; Caritas Bangladesh; Caritas Sri Lanka; Catholic Relief Services (CRS); Christian Aid; Community World Service Asia; Concern Worldwide; Cordaid; Doctors of the World; Dorcas; Goal; Handicap International; Help Age International; International Medical Corps; International Rescue Committee (IRC); Islamic Relief Worldwide; Mines Advisory Group; Mercy Corps; Muslim Aid; Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC); Oxfam; PARC; Plan International; PRO-VIDA; Qatar Charity; Relief International; Save the Children; Solidarites International; Tearfund; Trocaire; War Child; Welt Hunger Hilfe; World Jewish Relief; World Vision.

