



THE ALLIANCE
FOR CHILD PROTECTION
IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action Learning & Development Strategy 2021-23

Learning and Development within the Alliance

The mission of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPHA) is to support the efforts of humanitarian actors to achieve high quality and effective child protection interventions in humanitarian settings. Within its mission, the Alliance 2021-23 strategy centres around the goal of the centrality of children and their protection being recognised and prioritised across the humanitarian system. To achieve this goal, the Alliance has highlighted four strategic priorities to guide its work, including: localization, prevention, cross-sectoral integration/collaboration and accountability to children, including child participation.

For the 2021-2023 strategy, the Alliance will place greater emphasis on its capacity strengthening, learning, and development function. This elevated status is grounded in the acknowledgement of the importance of capacity strengthening efforts in the delivery of high-quality and robust programmes across the many contexts where child protection programmes are delivered.

Essential to achieve the Alliance mission, learning and development efforts facilitate the strengthening and sharing of knowledge, skills and attitudes of humanitarian child protection practitioners, working at various levels and in different settings, in line with competencies set through the [CPHA Competency Framework](#), to ensure the [Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action \(CPMS\)](#) are met. This commitment is part of the long-term approach of supporting the development of humanitarian practitioners, to contribute to the operationalisation of the Alliance's strategic priorities, and thereby improving the results for children and families in humanitarian situations.

In cooperation with the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR), UNHCR and the broader Alliance membership, the Learning and Development Working Group (LDWG) will coordinate and lead the Alliance's efforts to: maps capacity gaps and strengths; defines priorities and strategic direction for capacity development; encourages capacity sharing opportunities; provides learning initiatives and materials, both face-to-face and remote; establishes cooperation with tertiary level institutions to professionalise of the CPHA workforce; and provides advice and guidance on learning design and facilitation.



Our goal is that CPHA practitioners have access to and benefit from quality learning and development initiatives that promote the growth and sharing of competence.

To achieve this, the specific objectives of the LDWG during the period 2021-23 are:

- Learning and Development is approached in a strategic, competency-based and structured way to ensure quality and relevance for CPHA practitioners;
- CPHA actors benefit from increased access to learning and development opportunities at global, regional and national levels;
- CPHA practitioners have increased opportunities to share learning through convened events and communities;
- Increased cooperation with tertiary level institutions and improved access to tertiary level education for CPHA practitioners;
- Other Working Groups and Task Forces of the Alliance are supported in the development and roll-out of quality capacity strengthening activities.

The LDWG will work with all of the Alliance's working groups, task forces and initiatives to drive this strategy, as well as supporting capacity-building efforts across the sector.

It is worth acknowledging the close link that exists between the functions of knowledge management and learning and development, because of the shared core interest of improving knowledge flow to enhance performance. The KM and L&D teams in the Alliance will strive to work closely together, particularly where traditional KM approaches are drivers of informal learning, for example in communities of practice and content curation.

Our approach to learning and development

Learning and development refers to the process of identifying and meeting the learning needs of individuals, in order to enhance their performance in their role(s) - both current and future (career development).

Learning and development is often equated with the design and delivery, or attendance, of training courses, but this is just one way in which learning and development activities can manifest. The L&D Working Group promotes a holistic approach to learning and development, which is described in this paper.



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Furthermore, we will strive to incorporate the belief that learning and development is a joint process; the facilitator and the participant both learn and both teach, in the process of engaging with one another. Through this, and through harnessing the strengths of our practitioner community, we will work to deconstruct traditional power dynamics inherent in humanitarian capacity strengthening.

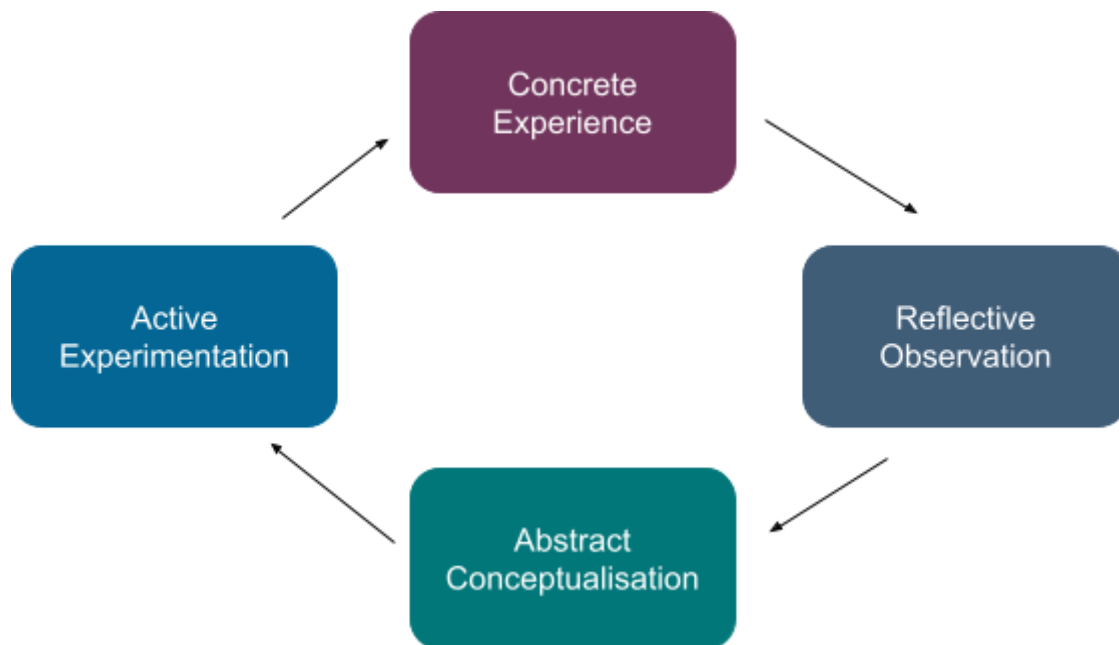
Learning beyond training

The L&D Working Group aims to lead and support a shift from a training mindset to a learning mindset for the Alliance working groups, task forces and initiatives. We will become increasingly learner-focused in the conceptualisation and design of our learning and development activities, putting learners' needs at the centre of our decision making.

This shift will be guided by two key theories: Kolb's experiential learning cycle¹, and the 70:20:10 approach².

Learning theory

Our learning and development work is guided by adult learning theory, specifically Kolb's experiential learning cycle.



While you can start at any point in the cycle, it is most common to start with the learner having a 'concrete experience' i.e. being actively involved in a task. This is followed by 'reflective

¹ Original source: David Kolb, (1984), *Experiential Learning: Experience As The Source Of Learning And Development*.

² Arets, J., Jennings, C., and Heijnen, V. (2016), [70:20:10 into Action](#).



observation', which means stepping back from the task and reviewing what has been done and experienced. The next stage, 'abstract conceptualisation', is the process of making sense of what has happened and involves identifying patterns, connections and relationships in different situations. In a training context, this is often where theory is input by the trainer. Generally, the final stage of the learning cycle is putting the learning into practice through 'active experimentation'. This active experimentation creates new learning experiences and so continues the learning cycle.

According to Kolb's model, the ideal learning process involves the application of all four stages in response to situational demands. This aligns with our experiential approach to learning.

Learning Approach

The L&D Working Group advocates for and strives to use the 70:20:10 approach to adult learning:

WHERE LEARNING HAPPENS:



Examples of learning and development activities which fall under each category are:

70% Experiential learning activities	20% Social learning activities	10% Formal learning activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stretch assignments• Secondments• Acting up / providing cover• Shadowing• Group problem-solving• Increasing responsibility• Increasing authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conversations• Mentoring / reverse mentoring• Giving and receiving feedback• Engaging with networks• Project de-briefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Courses• Modules• Workshops• E-learning• Webinars• Reading

Formal learning activities alone do not ensure a full and effective learning experience. It is therefore essential that we support our colleagues and members to combine the formal



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learning opportunities we provide with social and experiential learning opportunities that can take place within specific contexts and workplaces.

It is important to note that the component parts of this approach overlap; for example, social learning can be incorporated into formal learning activities, mentoring schemes can be formalised. The percentages act as a guide to build a holistic learning and development approach.

Our learning principles

The following principles and associated activities will guide how we implement our learning and development approach:

- Competency- and needs-based
- Learner-centred
- Quality
- Evidence-based

Competency- and needs-based: The learning and development activities we undertake shall be designed to help learners build specific sets of skills which help them perform effectively in their role, job or situation. The required sets of skills, or competencies, should be identified through learning needs assessment, and this should be used to design L&D activities, particularly the drafting of learning objectives. Specific reference should be made to the [CPHA Competency Framework](#).

By basing our learning interventions on the CPHA Competency Framework, and the specific competency and capacity gaps practitioners have identified through learning needs analysis processes, we can ensure the connection to practice, to outcomes and to results.

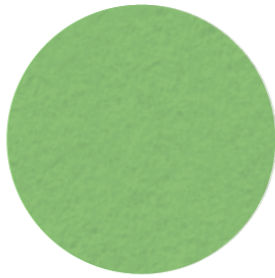
The Alliance's learning and development strategy focuses predominantly on technical competencies to ensure the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS) are met. Values are kept as the foundation of our activities, and the core humanitarian competencies are a complementary element.



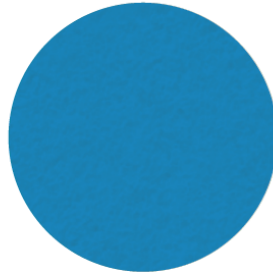
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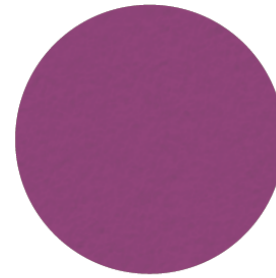
COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK STRUCTURE



**Technical
Competencies**



Core Values



**Core Humanitarian
Competency Domains**

Actions:

To promote the principle of competency- and needs-based learning, the L&D Working Group will:

- Translate and disseminate the CPHA Competency Framework;
- Provide training and guidance on the use of the CPHA Competency Framework;
- Promote the use of existing capacity analyses in WGs and TFs decision-making on L&D activities and provide recommendations on strengths and gaps;
- Support Alliance WG and TF to design, conduct and analyse capacity gaps and strengths assessments;
- Provide L&D technical advice (mentoring) to Alliance members who do not have L&D staff.

Learner-centred: Learning and development activities will focus primarily on what the learner needs to be able to do, and will be designed and delivered in ways which enable this, including through co-creation.

Activities will encourage and incorporate peer learning approaches to promote capacity sharing (any opportunity to build the capacity of others, by sharing your own knowledge and/or experiences). Where possible this will be in service of the localisation agenda and in contribution to the decolonisation of aid. It will capitalise on the strengths identified within our practitioner communities.



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A note on capacity sharing

In learning and development terms, capacity sharing refers to the transfer of knowledge, skills and competence between people and organisations, through formal and informal channels. It focuses on a peer-to-peer approach, and suggests avoidance of top-down approaches.

In organisational terms, capacity sharing is the alignment of excessive capacity with excessive demand, across organisations or departments, wherein one organisation or department may have high demand for certain expertise and will borrow this expertise from another organisation or department where capacity is high and demand is low.

In our L&D approach we refer to the former, but it is important to clarify meaning when using the term in other fora.

When should we do capacity sharing?

Where you have essential information to convey, such as details of a new policy, a key theory related to the topic, or instructions for an upcoming exercise, capacity sharing is unlikely to be a good fit.

It is also important to consider the readiness of the audience for a capacity sharing approach. Are participants willing and comfortable to share? Do they feel safe and familiar enough with the group to do so? Are other participants ready and willing to learn from another's experience?

What can we do to promote capacity sharing approaches?

- Include capacity (strengths) mapping into capacity gaps analyses, so as to identify potential sources for sharing of technical expertise, contextual knowledge, or practical skills.
- Invite new voices, who may have different knowledge and experience to share.
- Encourage sharing to continue, for example by asking your training or webinar participants how they will further share what they have learnt.

We will work to provide convened events and communities for capacity sharing between CPHA practitioners. This could include: communities of practice, sharing of lessons learnt reports or case studies, after action reviews/project debriefs, peer mentoring, discussion groups, provision/receipt of advice and/or feedback.



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Our learning environments will be places where CPHA practitioners will be challenged and encouraged to develop deeper levels of thinking, understanding and application, within a safe and supportive community.

Actions:

To promote the principle of learner-centredness, the L&D Working Group will:

- Engage practitioners in the ideation and design of new learning initiatives;
- Support the establishment and running of a CPHA Community of Practice;
- Convene inter-agency events to promote learning and experience sharing,
- Run regular L&D 'open house' sessions to provide opportunities for members to seek support on learning beyond training.

Quality: Learning and development activities will be high quality; they will be accurate, relevant and designed and delivered with consideration of how adults learn. Specifically, taking into account that:

- Learners need to know what, why, and how learning will take place
- Experience (including mistakes) provides the basis of activities
- Learning is most interesting and useful when it has immediate relevance to the learner
- Learning is problem-centred, not content-oriented

To cater to adult learners, the design of learning and development initiatives shall have a firm basis in experience, that is combined with opportunities to reflect, analyse and try new ideas. This is why the largest proportion of our learning approach - the 70% - is learning from experience.

Actions:

To promote the principle of quality, the L&D Working Group will:

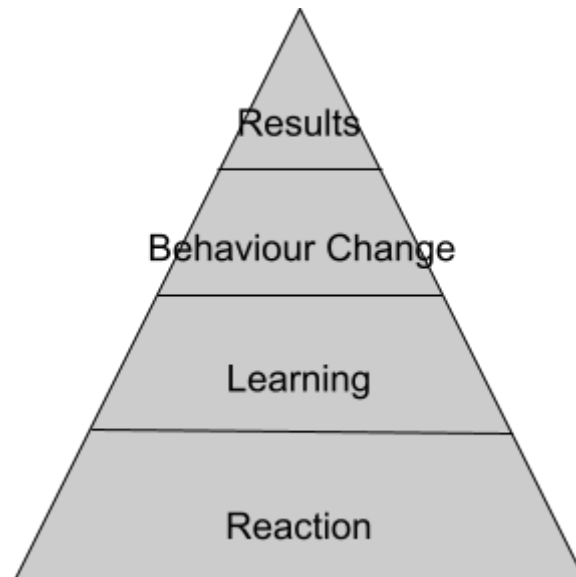
- Support the coordination, development and roll out of new learning content by Alliance working groups and task forces;
- Support the contextualisation of learning to different modalities, audiences and contexts, including refugee contexts;
- Provide a recommended process for the development of new training courses;
- Provide guidance and tools on the implementation of other learning initiatives.



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Evidence-based: A key activity in the current (2021-23) LDWG work plan is the development of a learning and development monitoring and evaluation framework in cooperation with the AME working group. How we measure success in the Alliance learning and development activities will strive to take into account the 4 levels of evaluation from the Kirkpatrick model³. In this model each level is important in its own right, and also impacts on the next level(s) up.



Level 1 - Reaction: Do participants react in a positive way to the learning experience?

Level 2 - Learning: Do participants learn new information and gain new knowledge?

Level 3 - Behaviour change: Do participants make changes to their behaviour as a result of what they learnt?

Level 4 - Results: Do new behaviours contribute to results (or impact) for the organisation, response, or target population?

Actions:

To promote the principle of evidence-based, the L&D Working Group will:

- Encourage the consideration of this evaluation model for all the Alliance capacity strengthening initiatives;
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for L&D, in cooperation with the AME Working Group.

³ Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1994), Evaluating Training Programs: the Four Levels. Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco.