How to Scale:
Tactics to Enable the Adoption of Humanitarian Innovations

Scaling Series

elrha

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Much research has focused on understanding why it is so difficult to scale innovations in the humanitarian sector. Our Scaling Series of learning papers focuses on helping innovators, the innovation ecosystem and the wider humanitarian sector to take practical steps to overcome these challenges and increase the frequency of innovations transitioning from proof-of-concept pilots to sustained adoption in humanitarian response.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a playbook of tactics for innovators who are aiming to scale through enabling other organisations to adopt their innovations. It may also be useful for innovators seeking to scale their innovation to other teams, offices and locations within their organisation that have not been involved in developing or testing the innovation.

The paper is based on research and evidence, drawing on the experiences of teams behind ten innovations and existing literature. The case study innovations had been implemented in at least two protracted crisis settings. The innovations are drawn from multiple sectors, types of originating organisation (private sector, humanitarian organisation, start-up) and geographic reach (national or international). National non-governmental organisations (NGOs) led two of the projects. The ten innovations include a range of complexity from the perspective of adoption (eg, level of adaptation required, how neatly the innovation fits within the existing system, scope of investment required) and different degrees of technological focus. In terms of innovation type, they covered all four elements of the '4Ps' model of innovation: product/service, process, position and paradigm.

The paper summarises six tactics used across the ten case studies:

Tactic 1: Determine your long-term role
This is about the role the innovation team will play in delivering the innovation over the long term. It is the foundation for future implementation and business models.

Tactic 2: Build and use your network
Networks are vital to ensuring teams have a full-system perspective. They ensure a deep understanding of key actors – roles, relationships, decision-makers, influencers – and a sense of 'the way things work', including factors that shape the actions of people within the network.

Tactic 3: Build on what already exists
Embedding the innovation in national systems, and leveraging humanitarian coordination structures, existing programmes and innovation collaborations can create sustainable foundations for adoption.

Tactic 4: Make it easy to integrate
It is vital to make it as easy as possible for teams to adopt and integrate the innovation into their existing practices and ways of working.

Tactic 5: Work with the entire adopter
Work with the 'whole adopter', not just one team, unit, function or department. The 'adopter' can mean a single organisation or several actors that must be involved in implementation at scale.

Tactic 6: Move beyond humanitarian innovation grants Transitioning to mainstream implementation can mean innovation funds become harder to secure. Establishing a diversified business model is essential.

The paper then shares a deeper examination of **how five of our case study innovations applied different combinations of these tactics** to drive uptake of their innovations: Wash'Em, Start Ready, RedRose, DMS-Himalaya, and Mum's Magic Hands.

A common thread through the case studies was the need to engage with individuals in different positions at multiple levels of the humanitarian system and to leverage existing relationships between them. Effectively positioning both the innovation and the team was also critical to taking advantage of opportunities and incentives.

Tools and resources are included as signposts for innovators on the next steps to take in experimenting with the tactics identified in the paper.

From a systems perspective, we need collective action to address systemic barriers. The paper therefore identifies questions for **donors, humanitarian organisations, national governments and innovation actors**. Our intention is to stimulate engagement around developing a shared roadmap to achieve the changes required to create a more enabling environment for humanitarian innovations to scale.

Questions to reflect on

How can funding for innovation better support the costs of adoption?

What kinds of demand-side mechanisms might incentivise and support improved adoption of innovations, covering costs of knowledge transfer, change management, etc?

Are there ways to incentivise and 'crowd in' new types of funders, such as foundations and non-traditional donors, to complement investments in innovation made by bilateral and multilateral donors, and increase availability of unrestricted funding?

How might we improve the capacity for humanitarian organisations to more frequently adopt new innovations?

What is the 'absorptive capacity' of different kinds of humanitarian actors, and what are the most relevant and important aspects of absorptive capacity? Based on this learning, how can absorptive capacity be improved?

What can we learn from examples, case studies and success stories of how innovations have been adopted and integrated into humanitarian programmes?

How might improvements in transparency and information availability improve the environment for adoption?

What kinds of information-sharing mechanisms, such as innovation fairs, pitch days, catalogues, demonstrations, etc, are commonly in use, and what are their relationships with uptake?

Might it be valuable to develop shared information and data standards to catalogue a greater range of innovations and allow better comparison? What can be learned from previous online cataloguing initiatives?

What is the role of national governments and other standards setters in incentivising the adoption of new innovations through policy and regulatory frameworks?

How might innovators work with national governments and other standards setters to better support adoption?

What can we learn from examples, case studies and success stories of innovators working with national governments and other standards setters to support adoption?

TACTICS FOR ADOPTION

Tactic 1

Determine your long-term role

- Partner
- Advisor
- Supplier (paid for service)
- Provider (public good)

Tactic 2

Build and use your network

- Networks to market the innovation
- Networks to identify influencers and decision makers
- Networks to build a systems view
- Networks to increase collective confidence
- Networks to tailor the innovation

Tactic 3

Build on what already exists

- Use response coordination structures
- Integrate the innovation into existing programmes
- Maintain innovation collaborations during the journey to scale

Tactic 4

Make it easy to integrate

- Make it open access and accessible online
- Provide implementation support
- Ensure compatibility
- Design to meet demand and needs
- Prepare for frictions
- Think beyond the financial cost

Tactic 5

Work with the entire adopter

- Engage with individuals and teams across the adopting organisation
- Ensure implementation support includes all affected teams
- Use peer networks to support implementation

Tactic 6

Move beyond innovation grants

- Look for funding opportunities within response funding
- Experiment with and implement different revenue and resource models
- Be aware of misaligned incentives
- Find ways to invest in the 'core' of the innovation

Figure 1: Tactics to drive adoption of humanitarian innovation

FOREWORD

By Syed Imran Ali, Founder and Lead, Safe Water Optimisation Tool, Dahdaleh Institute for Global Health Research, York University, Toronto, Canada.

We, as humanitarian responders, are notoriously good at spotting problems. Working in the complex settings we find ourselves in, where not many things are going well, noticing problems is a pretty natural and easy thing to do.

Coming up with solutions to these problems – well, that's a bit harder. It's a long road from understanding a problem to imagining different ways of solving it, building out prototypes, and then trying them out in the field and learning. With the support of funders like Elrha's Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF), we've done pretty well on this as a community over the past ten years or so, with lots of proven innovations out there, ready for action.

It's the last part, though – getting humanitarian organisations to adopt innovations at scale – that turns out to be the hardest. It's at this stage where a lot of innovations get stuck.

This report, the third in Elrha's invaluable series on scaling humanitarian innovations, takes direct aim at this stubborn problem. Drawing on the literature, interviews and case studies of humanitarian innovations that are successfully navigating their scaling journeys, the authors draw out six core tactics for enabling the adoption of innovations by humanitarian organisations. Presenting five case studies on humanitarian innovations that have achieved scale, the report lays out the specifics on how innovation teams have successfully deployed these six tactics.

The report balances the general with the specific, providing enough detail to see how innovation teams achieved what they did, while also drawing out generalisable lessons. With the breadth of innovations that the authors have studied – from different sectors (eg, water, sanitation and hygiene; cash; nutrition; information management), across to different innovation types (eg, products; services; processes), to different types of organisations (eg, local; national; international) – there's something here for everyone. The report's deep-dive case studies and six core tactics, all clearly laid out and actionable, set off all sorts of sparks in our team's thinking about how to scale our innovation.

For more than ten years, the HIF has been driving humanitarian innovation. Drawing on their experience, this learning paper sets out lessons learned to help other teams scale their innovations.

I am confident that the humanitarian community and innovation teams will gain a lot from this report, and I am excited to see how we'll all advance our innovations through this last, tough step of the journey to scale.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This learning paper was prepared by Abi Taylor and Ruth Salmon, Innovation Managers of Elrha's Humanitarian innovation Fund (HIF).

We would like to thank the innovators and adopters who contributed to the research and generously shared their stories, insights and candid reflections on their innovation journeys so far. Without their joint commitment to learning in the open and a willingness to share their experiences good and bad, this paper would not exist.

We would also like to thank those innovators and innovation experts who helped us to define the scope of our research and who peer-reviewed this paper. In particular, we are grateful to members of the HIF Advisory Group, Paula Gil Baizan, Aradhana Gurung, Ben Kumpf; HIF grantees Syed Imran Ali, James Brown and Sammy Mahdi; and our HIF colleague Ian McClelland. The questions, challenges, reflections and contributions of these reviewers greatly strengthened our final paper.

Finally, we are grateful for the collaboration and invaluable contribution of Shtefi Mladenovska, research associate at Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU Wien) during the primary research and analysis phases of this project.

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs

from the British people

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

Adoption
When an innovation is accepted and used by a relevant person or entity.

Complexity Theory
A scientific theory, applied to differnt fields such as organisations and management, that examines uncertainty and non-linearity, viewing groups as networks, collections of strategies, and structures (James, E. and Taylor, A. 2018: 245).

DMS
Disaster Management System

Diffuse/spread
To make known to or cause to be used by large numbers of people.

FCDO
UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

HBCC
Hygiene and Behaviour Change Coalition

HCT
Humanitarian country team

HIF
Humanitarian Innovation Fund

IASC
Inter-Agency Standing Committee

INGOs
International non-governmental organisations

IP
Intellectual Property

MMH
Mum’s Magic Hands

NASSA
National Secretariat for Social Action

NGOs
Non-governmental organisations

OCHA
United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Scaling
The process of increasing the impact of an innovation to better match the size of the social problem it seeks to address.

UN
United Nations

UNICEF
United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund

WASH
Water, sanitation, and hygiene

WU Wien
Vienna University of Economics and Business

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Emphasis on scaling humanitarian innovations has increased in recent years, but many innovations still struggle to progress beyond the pilot phase.

The factors that make it extremely challenging to scale humanitarian innovations have been identified and explored to varying degrees by different actors (Creating Hope in Conflict 2021; Elrha 2018; McClure et al 2018; Obrecht and Warner 2016). Some can be addressed directly by innovation teams; others are systemic in nature and require a collective response. The HIF seeks to catalyse change at all levels to ensure that what works is put into practice in the sector.

Building on our flagship report *Too Tough to Scale* (Elrha 2018), Elrha has undertaken further research to uncover deeper understanding and ways forward in specific challenge areas. The first paper, Humanitarian Procurement, explores challenges and opportunities for adoption within procurement systems in the humanitarian water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector (Gray et al 2021). The second report, *Impact Evidence and Beyond* (Dodgson & Crowley 2021), focuses on guiding innovators to use evidence to drive adoption of innovations.

The purpose of this third paper is to provide a playbook of tactics for innovators who are aiming to scale through enabling other organisations to adopt their innovation.

This is sometimes referred to as 'scaling out' (Gray & McClure 2019: 57). It may also be useful for innovators seeking to scale their innovation to other teams, offices and locations within their organisation that were not involved in developing or testing the innovation.

This paper considers how demand for individual innovations can be stimulated and harnessed; and how different stakeholders and institutions perceive an innovation, and what they can do with it. It is about the interactions between innovators, adopters, organisations and systems that are required for innovations to become adopted and become part of business as usual – transitioning to the point when they are no longer regarded as innovative.

Through this research, we set out to explore how innovation teams have succeeded in securing adoption of their innovations – across multiple levels of the system, using different pathways to scale and diverse scaling strategies. We examined a range of case studies to shed light on the actions and tactics innovators can use to drive the adoption of innovations.[1]

We have focused on the process of adoption – the part of a scaling journey when an innovation is picked up and integrated by new teams and organisations. It is a point where many innovation projects stall, struggling to convert interest into commitment or struggling to convert commitment into incorporation of the innovation into business-as-usual operations.

Based on more than a decade of investment in humanitarian innovation, **we know that shared recognition of a problem and the need for a solution is not enough to convert latent demand into adoption and changes in practice**. This is increasingly recognised, but not enough emphasis is placed by the innovation ecosystem as a whole on understanding and mobilising the 'demand side'

1 Terminology relating to the adoption of innovations is not consistent across the literature. The terms uptake and adoption are typically used interchangeably. Here, we intentionally use the term 'adoption' to describe a process whereby an organisation or team that is external to the original innovating team implements a specific innovation. We use the term adoption to focus attention on the perspective, needs and priorities of the adopting organisation.

of innovation in terms of users, customers, markets and ongoing investment.

It is difficult to connect demand for solutions with the supply of innovations in humanitarian settings, even when a problem has been clearly defined and an appropriate innovative solution identified (Scriven 2016). There are practical challenges with integrating a new solution into existing systems and processes, challenges that innovation teams are often insulated from during pilot projects.

Demand for solutions can be unpredictable, depending on when and where crises occur. Demand can also be opaque, with gaps between users of innovations, actors who pay for them and those who see the greatest benefits. During the scaling journey, these complexities must be addressed head on.

Using a case study approach, we identified tactics that can help teams take a proactive role in stimulating demand and driving adoption of their innovation. The tactics are not stand-alone and should be used together on an ongoing basis, informing innovation teams' priorities and ways of working. **Fundamentally, the key to driving adoption is engaging with many parts of the humanitarian system in different ways to create the right conditions for adoption to occur.**

Box 1: Pathways, frameworks and strategic approaches to scaling humanitarian innovation

Of the many pathways, frameworks and strategic approaches that exist, we most commonly use the following resources:

1. The *Pathways to Impact* framework (Elrha 2018: 13) outlines three core ways we support innovations to scale and achieve their full impact and potential, through:
- **policy and guidance or practice standards** – shaping sector norms and best practice
- **adoption by others** – where uptake is driven by an actor outside the original innovating organisation
- **direct implementation by the originating organisation** – including through partnerships where the original innovating organisation retains a degree of control.

2. The *Social Replication Toolkit* (Spring Impact 2016: 5) distinguishes between three broad types of approach to scaling, defined by the degree of control retained by the original innovating organisation. The spectrum covers loose forms of dissemination through to affiliation strategies and tightly controlled, wholly-owned replication strategies.

3. Our *Scaling Strategy* Template (Elrha n.d.: Section 6.3(D) Finalise your scale strategy) can help teams to develop a more robust plan to manage the scaling journey. This helps teams to work through the core building blocks required for the transition to scale, such as evidence for scaling, business and financial modelling, team and organisational development, partnerships and the value network.

From scaling strategy to action

An innovation can take many possible routes to scale. Multiple pathways, frameworks and strategic approaches have been documented to help explain how innovations scale within the humanitarian sector.

These can be extremely useful in helping innovators to articulate the long-term vision for scale, high-level approach and milestones that might be critical along the way (see Box 1 for examples). The pathways are not singular or linear: they change over time and multiple pathways may be pursued simultaneously, particularly as the innovation reaches greater scale.

As innovation teams embark on the process of realising their long-term vision, the practical applicability of frameworks is limited. Innovation teams must navigate along their selected pathway, responding to unique conditions relating to the problem they are seeking to address, the nature of their innovation, the type of stakeholder who must adopt the innovation and the setting in which the innovation will be used.

Rather than adding further to these theories and frameworks, we have taken a case study approach to highlight common actions and tactics that enable adoption. These case studies provide colour and depth to the factors that enable innovations to scale successfully, building a body of experience that innovators can draw on. Tools and resources are signposted throughout to help innovators test each tactic. These tools and resources are also collated towards the end of the paper (see Table 2).

By laying out the tactics identified through our research, we hope to help innovation teams and the organisations that support them to prioritise activities that will help to drive adoption and ultimately improve humanitarian outcomes.

After providing a summary of our research methodology, the paper offers a detailed insight into the six identified tactics, illustrated throughout using examples drawn from our case study interviews. Of the ten case studies examined, we then share deep dives into ways in which five innovation teams implemented some of these tactics.

This is followed by a compilation of tools and resources for readers to use as they begin to apply the tactics in their own work. Finally, the paper outlines calls to action for donors, potential innovation adopters and global innovation actors that could help make the system more conducive to routine adoption of innovations to improve humanitarian outcomes.

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Methodology

This was a qualitative research study with five main research phases: (1) an evidence review; (2) semi-structured scoping interviews; (3) in-depth semi-structured case study interviews; (4) analysis and write-up; and (5) peer review and validation of findings with interview participants.

1. The **evidence review** included 21 pieces of grey and academic literature covering diffusion and adoption of innovations within and beyond the humanitarian sector, coordination structures and decision-making in humanitarian response. Three researchers collected evidence through online search engines, using predefined key terms linked to the research questions. The review included sources published from 2009 onwards as this is regarded as the point at which a humanitarian innovation ecosystem began to emerge (Ramalingam et al 2009).

2. This literature review was supplemented by **six semi-structured scoping interviews** with advisors to the HIF who have extensive experience of humanitarian response and humanitarian innovation. These interviews helped to refine the research questions and identify case studies for inclusion.

3. The primary research consisted of **13 in-depth semi-structured case study interviews** to build ten innovation case studies that have scaled in protracted crisis settings. These are summarised in Table 1 and interviewees are listed in the Annex. **Recognising that there is no singular way to categorise different innovations, we instead sought to acknowledge the different characteristics of the innovations.** Characteristics included: type of originating organisation (private sector, humanitarian organisation, start-up); type of adopting organisation; geographic reach (national or international); humanitarian sub-sector; business and implementation models at scale; level of technological focus; type of innovation (product/service, process, position, paradigm); degree of adaptation required for implementation; and ensuring the sample included innovations led by local or national organisations.[2] All the innovations had been implemented in at least two contexts beyond the original implementation setting.[3] The case study interviews focused on the processes of innovation adoption (including decision-making) and the factors that enabled it.

4. **Analysis and write-up** captured the key trends and themes identified in case study interviews relating to approaches to enabling adoption and how innovators can best manage them.

5. After analysis and write-up, the draft findings were validated through an external **peer-review process**. Case study interviewees were reengaged and a draft of the paper was peer-reviewed by an independent group of experts in the field of humanitarian innovation. The validation stage focused on accuracy, relevance and resonance. More detail on the methodology can be found in the Annex.

Ethics

Ethical considerations ensured the reasonable protection of individuals participating in the research. No significant risks to the safety or dignity of participants were identified during the research design phase. Participants were advised that they could decline to answer any question, should they wish to. The nature of the information collected focused on interviewees' opinions and experiences rather than personal information. Interviewees provided informed consent in writing before participating in the research. This included information about the research team; the purpose of the interviews; how data would be used; a timeframe for withdrawing consent; and a complaints process.

2 'Local and national organisations' encompass a range of possible actors: local and national civil society organisations; local, regional and national governments; and people affected by crisis (as relevant to the innovation and the nature of the problem being addressed).
3 'Context' is defined broadly here. In some case studies, it meant different locations within the original country of implementation; for others it meant different countries and different types of humanitarian emergencies. The HIF does not preference one geographic definition of scale over another.

SUMMARY OF THE INNOVATION CASE STUDIES

SUMMARY OF THE INNOVATION CASE STUDIES

Team members were interviewed about their experiences of scaling the innovations in Table 1. For three of the innovations, individuals from adopting organisations were also interviewed. Insights from these interviews form the basis of the tactics outlined in this paper. Of these ten case studies, five are examined in depth in this paper, to provide a picture of how different combinations of tactics were used. A full list of interviewees can be found in the Annex.

Table 1:
Summary of innovation case studies

Innovation	Originating organisation name (and type)	Description	Scale and adopters	Long-term role[4]
iCheck	BioAnalyt (private company)	A portable device that can quantitatively measure the micronutrient content of fortified foods within a matter of minutes.	iCheck has been used by 300 customers – agencies, government and industry – in over 77 countries. More than 1,400 iCheck devices have been deployed	Supplier (paid-for service)
Disaster Management System Himalaya (DMS-Himalaya)	Pragya (national NGO)	An information and capacity-building toolkit that enables remote Himalayan communities to reduce their disaster risk. It comprises two core components: a network for disaster communication (infrastructure and people) and community-based disaster response (training for local responders, early warning mechanisms, vulnerability and capability assessments).	DMS-Himalaya is being implemented in 12 districts across five Indian Himalayan states and union territories through partnerships with government and communities.	Partner
RedRose	RedRose (social enterprise)	An integrated technology platform that comprises a range of offerings including data collection, data management and financial services.	The solution has been adopted by at least 26 customers – including INGOs, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, International Committee of the Red Cross and United Nations agencies – in 45 countries.	Advisor and Supplier (paid-for service)

4 See Tactic 1 for our explanation of different potential long-term roles for innovation teams. The potential roles are partner, advisor, supplier (paid for service) and provider (public good) and are not mutually exclusive.

Wash'Em	London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Action Against Hunger and the Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation (academic and NGO partnership)	A process for rapidly designing evidence-based and context-adapted handwashing promotion programmes during crises and disease outbreaks.	Wash'Em has been used in over 100 crises and by more than 70 organisations.	Advisor and Provider (public good)
SATO Tap	SATO/LIXIL (private company)	A novel handwashing station that ensures low contact and minimal water use.	400,000 units have been distributed by UNICEF and other partners.	Supplier (paid-for service)
Mum's Magic Hands	Oxfam (INGO)	A set of activities that encourage behaviour change in key areas, such as handwashing, using emotional 'nudges' around nurturing and affiliation.	It been used in 25 countries, helping organisations support improved hygiene for over 800,000 people during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.	Provider (public good)
Start Ready	Start Network (INGO)	A new financial service for the humanitarian sector. It is an aggregate of disaster risk financing country systems, providing pre-agreed funding at scale for predictable crises using innovative finance and insurance principles. It is based on locally led action and using innovative risk analysis, collective planning and pre-positioned financing.	The pilot pool has gone live in 6 countries for 8 total hazards, over 12 months (including heatwaves, droughts, floods and cyclones/typhoons).	Partner
Signpost	International Rescue Committee and Mercy Corps (NGO partnership)	A community-led information service that empowers its clients in times of crisis by delivering critical information through digital channels and social media.	It has reached 17 million people with information in 13 countries on 3 continents and in at least 6 languages.	Advisor
DIGITAL PH	NASSA/Caritas Philippines (national NGO)	A project to digitise and make available validated and up-to-date information on community demographics, vulnerabilities and capacities, and other vital information for future response.	It is being scaled across all 85 dioceses and social action centres in the NASSA/Caritas Philippines network.	Partner
Ushahidi	Ushahidi (social enterprise)	Open-source software designed to strengthen communities and improve lives, empowering users to rapidly and purposefully gather, analyse, respond to and act on data and information.	Ushahidi has been deployed 200,000 times and created 50 million posts on the platform and testimonies, reaching 25 million people in critical situations.	Provider (public good)

TACTICS FOR ADOPTION

Tactic 1

Determine your long-term role

The role your team plays in delivering an innovation and your long-term relationship with adopters is the foundation for the innovation's future implementation and business model. It shapes how your innovation will be delivered, and how value will be created and captured, and by whom.

Determining the best long-term role depends on factors such as: what elements of the innovation you want the adopter to 'own' and adapt; the degree of change the innovation will bring (incremental to radical); the skills, capabilities and strategic focus of the adopting organisation; and how much control you will retain over intellectual property (IP) associated with the innovation.

Roles and relationships are likely to change during the course of the scaling journey, as the adopting organisation moves from trialling your innovation to incorporating it into standard practice and as the scope of the innovating team's work evolves.

The end goal for implementation should be considered early to effectively manage the transition.

Our interviews with innovation teams highlighted the following possible relationship characteristics between adopting and originating organisations.

The innovation can be delivered in partnership between the innovator and adopter, or the innovator can maintain a more advisory role, supporting implementation. Within these two approaches, the innovation team can act as a supplier (offering paid-for services) or a provider (making available a public good). None of these characteristics are mutually exclusive.

Partner

Implementing the solution in partnership with those adopting your innovation, working closely together in the long term.

For example, Disaster Management System Himalaya (DMS-Himalaya) requires collaboration between Pragya, communities and government disaster management authorities. The relationships may change over time, but all groups will remain involved.

This approach can work well where:

- each organisation brings different value to the partnership, such as expertise, mandate and networks.
- each deployment requires a bespoke approach.
- components of the innovation are highly technical, such that delivery relies on the originating organisation.
- implementation requires adjustments to wider systems.

Business model considerations:
- An innovation may be funded by the adopting organisation, depending on the type of value created by the innovation and originating team.
- Revenue sources may shift over time from funding primarily being sourced by the originating organisation, to joint fundraising or allocating funds from the adopting organisation's budget.
- To be financially sustainable, innovations need to move beyond innovation grant funding to mainstream humanitarian programme funding or other sources.
- Both originating and adopting teams require capacity and commitment for ongoing, hands-on collaboration.

Over time, the originator may incrementally hand over management of operations, either maintaining control of IP or making it open access for the adopter to modify. Through this process the originating team may become an advisor or provider (see Figure 3).

Advisor

Positioning yourself as an advisor to the implementing organisation.

For example, Signpost maintains and provides the core platform for humanitarian organisations to implement the innovation in different contexts and enables them to take the lead in adapting services to the needs specific to the response setting. Wash'Em fields questions by email; arranges one-to-one calls with users; facilitates training; moderates online forums; and offers a staffed chat service and a network of 'champion users' to advise on how to adapt the tool to different contexts. Adopters can act autonomously or access implementation support from the innovation team.

This approach can work well where:
- implementation does not require developing radically new capabilities within the adopting organisation.
- the innovation does not require significant adaptation for new deployments.
- the innovation can be clearly codified.
- the change expected is more incremental and can be easily 'plugged into' existing systems.

Business model implications:
- The innovation can be delivered through a paid service or for free.
- It can be implemented with ad hoc support or as an ongoing subscription model.
- It may be offered to adopting organisations with an optional fee-for-service basis, accompanying either a paid-for or public good innovation.
- Guidance may be an essential component of ensuring the innovation is implemented appropriately, thereby not generating a separate revenue stream.

Codification (ie, documentation) of your innovation should include articulation of which elements are unchangeable (core) and which are adaptable (modular or hackable). Adaptable elements might include changing the language, adding branding, ensuring that elements are culturally relevant and sensitive, or completely new features based on context and needs. The codification should also include detail on how to implement the innovation, such as through documented standard operating procedures.

Box 2: Explanation of core, modular and hackable elements of innovations

'Core' elements are those which are intrinsic to the innovation and cannot be changed when it is redeployed in a new setting.

'Modular' elements are those which can be added or removed for each deployment, as needed by the adopting user.

'Hackable' elements are those which an adopting organisation changes, usually in ways that are unexpected to the original innovator.

Supplier (paid-for service)

Acting as a contracted supplier to the adopter.

For example, the RedRose team provides ongoing services to its clients and must maintain the platform on an ongoing basis. It also collaborates with each of its clients to develop bespoke features and adapt the platform to their needs.

This approach can work well where:
- specific technical expertise is held within the innovation team.
- the innovation involves an ongoing service.
- the innovation requires maintenance, whether of hardware or software.
- you want or need to retain control over IP.

Business model implications:
- The innovation can create a sustained revenue stream, through regular one-off sales or a subscription model.
- Supplier relationships typically include a financial transaction, which may indicate greater commitment from the adopter.
- It may require a shift in relationship from collaborator to procured service provider.
- Supplier relationships can involve a degree of collaboration and co-design, but the supplier retains ownership of the innovation.

Provider (public good)

Ensuring that the solution can be implemented without having to rely on the original innovating team or retaining control over IP.

For example, Ushahidi's scaling has been driven by user demand. It has facilitated this by making the software open source. For other innovations, transitioning to be a provider typically requires manuals and guidance to be in place for new organisations to operationalise without significant support. This has been the case with Mum's Magic Hands, where the innovation team has created stand-alone materials that allow the approach to be implemented with little or no input from the originating organisations.

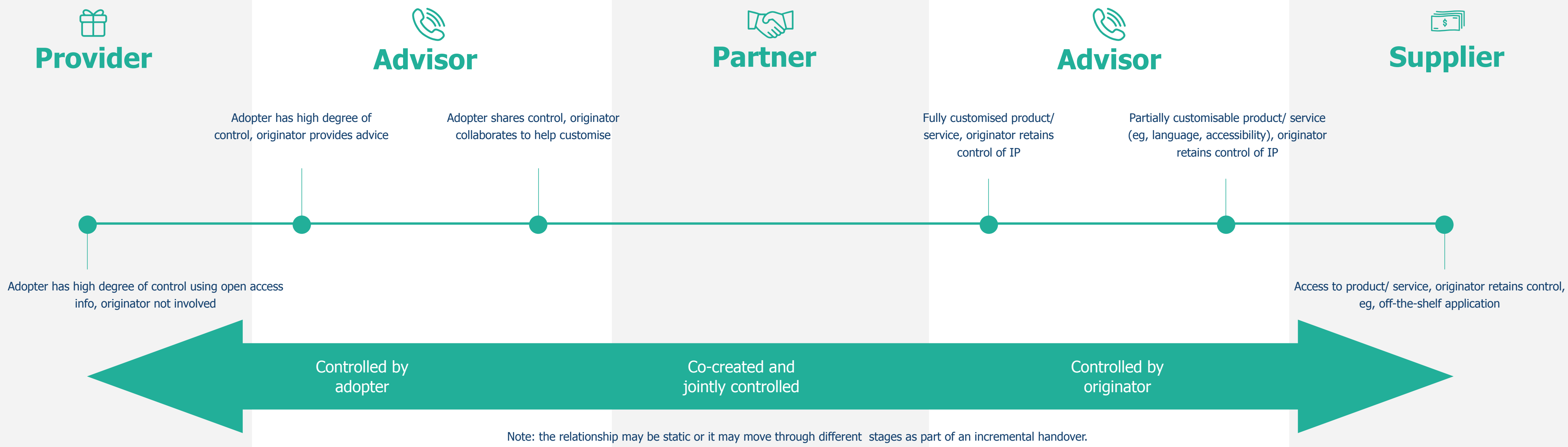
This approach can work well where:
- key components can be published or made open access.
- the innovation can be implemented with minimal training.
- proactive demand for the innovation is strong.

Business model implications:
- Maintenance of the innovation may require ongoing investment from the originating organisation.
- It may require subsidisation by other revenue streams (such as advisory services offered on a paid-for supplier basis).
- Without clear incentives to adopt (such as additional funding) or unusually strong proactive demand, providing a public good is rarely a successful stand-alone route to enabling adoption.

These relationship characteristics are usually seen in combination. For example, Wash'Em created materials and a platform for users to access as public goods online, but also offers a hands-on advisory role to support implementation for adopting teams.

Determining which elements of the innovation you want to retain full control over can be a complicated process. For some teams, this may involve deciding whether to make an innovative technology openly available (considering complex issues around quality control, ethics, safety, funding and the possibility of the innovator making its team obsolete). For others, it might be possible to make the innovation openly available while retaining ownership of a unique implementation model.

Figure 2: Spectrum visualising characteristics of long-term roles



Tools and resources

The following tools and resources may help you to determine your long-term role.

Tools to work through:

How you can most effectively create and deliver value:

- Value Proposition Canvas (#18)
- Business Model Canvas (#4)
- the Marketing Mix and the 4Ps of Marketing (#17)

How your delivery fits into the existing system:

- systems mapping (#16)
- stakeholder analysis (#15)
- external force analysis (#11)

Revenue models:

- Business Model Navigator (#5)
- business model testing cards (#6)

Resources to learn more about:

Intellectual property management:

- private sector innovation (#12)
- business cases for open-source software and approaches (#3)
- Creative Commons licence guidance (#9)

Quality management:

- managing and improving quality (#10)

Working in complex systems:

- introduction to systems thinking (#19)
- complexity theory and humanitarian relief (#8)

Alternative finance models:

- alternative finance communities (#1)
- overview of social impact investing (#13).

Note: full details on the highlighted tools and resources are found in Table 2; numbering (#) is to aid navigation.

Tactic 2

Build and use your network

The teams we interviewed all emphasised the role of team members' professional networks in stimulating adoption. Strong networks are underpinned by a deep understanding of key actors in terms of roles, relationships, decision-makers and influencers; as well as a sense of 'the way things work', including barriers, incentives, priorities, funding flows and planning cycles that shape the actions of people within the network. This provides innovation teams with a systems perspective.

Often these networks depend on relationships that have been built over decades in the sector and are considered both personal and professional. Despite this, the case studies demonstrated that with time, building effective networks from scratch is achievable – an 'insider' identity can be created. Yet this type of activity is difficult to secure funding for. It is time-consuming and rarely supported through grant project funding.

It was clear from our interviews that effective use of networks created the conditions for sustained adoption of innovations.

Effective building and use of networks is not a short-term set of actions – it is better understood as an engrained way of working.

If underpinned by continuing care, attention and cultivation, networks can be engaged to help achieve different outcomes at different times. These include raising awareness of a problem or solution, identifying decision-makers, increasing collective confidence and tailoring the innovation to the needs and experiences of users.

Networks to market your innovation

Raising awareness of a problem and your innovation as a solution are both vital.

Using its extensive experience in the WASH sector, the team behind Wash'Em has implemented a multifaceted adoption strategy to raise awareness of the tool, leveraging networks and structures to aid diffusion. The team demonstrates how the tool directly responds to the needs, priorities and challenges of those working in the WASH sector to help change practices. One way Ushahidi demonstrated the credibility of its platform was to fill a critical information gap. The team published a daily situation report (sitrep) during the 2010 Haiti earthquake response, providing vital information to responders. This helped to build a reputation, generating contacts and conversations. The team also published blogs and used social media effectively to spread the word about the innovation, its role, value and impact. Critically, this made it easy for journalists and others to pick up and tell Ushahidi's story to a larger audience. With this information, grassroots groups knew about the innovation, and were motivated to set up and deploy it in response to their needs, and individuals were mobilised to contribute.

Practical pointers:

- Tailor communication about the innovation to the perspective of your audience (ie, how the innovation can address their pressing problems).
- Attend and present at conferences, identifying in advance who you want to engage with and for what purpose.
- Speak the language of the sector to help to create an insider identity for the innovation, which can help to indicate credibility.
- Demonstrate your expertise and make it easy for others to tell your story.

Networks to identify influencers and decision-makers

Many teams stated the importance of identifying and targeting stakeholders with decision-making power – either in relation to policy decisions or operational decisions at response level, depending on the desired outcome.

It can be surprisingly difficult to identify decision-makers – it is usually necessary to target individuals at several levels and in several parts of an organisation to reach a decision to adopt. Innovators found decisions were made collectively, with sign-off or endorsement from several people and teams. In addition, some stakeholders have the power to veto.

In the Philippines, the National Secretariat for Social Action/Caritas team was clear on which roles have decision-making authority over adoption of its innovation. The organisation's national leadership team sets strategic priorities; and supports, trains and influences dioceses and social action centres across the country, which in turn design and lead programme implementation.

Bishops of each diocese have decision-making and veto powers ("if they say no, it's a big no"), and social action directors have decision-making power and lead implementation at field level. This understanding helped them to focus on key actors, the role they would play in enabling adoption, and the priorities and agendas of these individuals that would influence their level of interest.

Practical pointers:

- Recruit team members or allies with experience of key roles and how the system works, and an understanding of who the influencers, gatekeepers and decision-makers are.
- Develop detailed stakeholder analysis that records the roles of key individuals in relation to your innovation, including their perceived power and influence.

Networks to build a systems view

One defining change for innovations shifting from pilot projects to implementation at scale is the need to integrate a solution into the complex environment of real-world systems.

This might include policy and legislation, links to related institutions and services, manufacturing and distribution, and revenue models.

Networking can be an invaluable part of developing a systems perspective. It enables you to identify connections between the innovation and the wider system, and which stakeholders will need to be involved for long-term integration of your solution.

Practical pointers:

- Develop a systems map and start expanding your networks to reflect this.
- Take a strategic approach to networking that considers the full spectrum of change across the system that may be required to enable sustained integration.
- Learn more about managing programmes in complex environments (see Tools and resources section for references).

Networks to increase collective confidence

Taking a networked approach can reduce anxiety stakeholders may feel about trialling a new solution.

Innovators worked closely with individuals who indicated greater openness to trying new things and supported them to champion innovations with their colleagues and peers.

Both Pragya and Wash'Em encourage groups of stakeholders to adopt the innovation together as a way to reduce the anxiety associated with trying something new for the first time. This has worked well as the adopters do not feel they are 'out on a limb' if others in their network are also trialling the same thing. It can also reduce reliance on small numbers of individuals for sustained adoption, which is important due to the high rate of staff turnover across the humanitarian sector.

Practical pointers:

- Ensure multiple people from the adopting organisation participate to reduce reliance on key individuals.
- Create 'cohorts' of adopters through facilitating training and online forums, which can become a peer network.
- Coordinate through national or global cluster mechanisms, enhancing exposure and avoiding duplication.
- Identify existing connections between early and later adopters and encourage contacts to support each other.

Networks to tailor your innovation

Working with users in the response setting helps to ensure your innovation can be adapted to their needs and experiences, ensuring it addresses a real and recognised problem.

This can also strengthen the profile of your innovation team.

Use of RedRose scaled largely through word of mouth in its first five years (from 2015). The core team spent a lot of time in different response settings building relationships with humanitarian response managers to fully understand their needs, later working alongside project managers to implement and adapt the solution. In doing so, the team established a strong reputation, becoming an expert in the area and a trusted long-term partner.

Practical pointers:

- Spend time in the response setting observing and understanding formal and informal processes, and how things work.
- If your innovation has been developed outside the response setting, adapt it based on what you see, hear and experience.

Tools and resources

The following tools and resources may help you to determine your long-term role.

Tools to work through:

The role of different partners and stakeholders in delivery at scale:
- Business Model Canvas (#4)

The spectrum of stakeholders involved in or affected by your innovation at scale:
- systems mapping (#16)

The positions and perspectives of key actors:
- stakeholder analysis (#15)

The workflows your innovation will need to integrate with:
- business process mapping (#7)

Resources to learn more about:

The spectrum of stakeholders involved in or affected by your innovation at scale:
- introduction to systems thinking (#19)

The humanitarian system:
- international architecture overview (#14)
- overview of humanitarian decision-making (#2)

How to implement new revenue models:
- alternative finance communities (#1)
- overview of social impact investing (#13)

Tactic 3

Build on what already exists

Sustained presence in a response may require you to embed the innovation in national governance structures. Connected to the need for targeted networking, teams can generate exposure by engaging with the structures and mechanisms that make up the architecture of the humanitarian system. It is also possible to integrate your innovation into mainstream programmes (ie, beyond innovation pilot projects) through new or existing partnerships.

Embed within national social and innovation ecosystems

To operate sustainably, innovations that target people affected by crisis cannot act in isolation from national systems.

For many, this is a legal and ethical imperative as well as an enabler of sustainability. Innovations that intersect with government services, such as in education and health, must comply with policy and regulation, and integrate or align with existing structures and institutions. Organisations may need to register nationally or work through a nationally registered partner organisation to operate legally. Indications of a permanent presence in a setting can also affect perceptions of your innovation and team, making interest in sustained adoption more likely.

Practical pointers:

- Use networks and seek legal advice to learn more about the national regulatory system for organisations operating in the response setting; and ensure your innovation complies with relevant regulation and legislation.
- Join innovation networks and co-working spaces to find experts and intermediaries to assist with integration. Examples include Response Innovation Labs, Impact Hubs and the U-Inspire Alliance.

Use response coordination structures

Humanitarian actors coordinate through the cluster system at national and international response levels.

National clusters are activated if the national response and coordination are unable to meet needs in a way that conforms with humanitarian principles.

The cluster system is coordinated by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) through designated lead agencies for each sectoral cluster at global level and designated officials in specific crisis response settings (Stumpenhorst et al 2011). As part of this, the humanitarian country team (HCT) provides a forum for strategic and operational decision-making, oversight of the response and an interface with other coordination mechanisms. It comprises representatives of the United Nations (UN), international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and cluster lead agencies (OCHA 2020).

Clusters and HCTs are not mandated to tell humanitarian organisations how to respond or to ‘approve’ specific innovations. However, they are useful forums for highlighting problems and solutions, and provide opportunities to connect with influencers and decision-makers from a range of organisations. Most innovations do not fit neatly within the remit of a single cluster, so engaging with multiple clusters is often worthwhile.

Humanitarian organisations often establish consortia to coordinate across organisations around specific programme areas. It is also common for humanitarian organisations to deliver programmes through partnerships, including with local and national organisations. The remit, mandate, power, influence and decision-making role in each consortium and partnership varies.

Practical pointers:

- Learn more about the humanitarian architecture (see Tools and resources section for references).
- Identify which national and international clusters may align with your innovation.
- Map out and engage with different operational consortia and partnerships to understand which ones you might work with to help stimulate adoption.

Integrate your innovation into existing programmes

If you are already working in partnership with a potential adopter, it may be possible to suggest ways to integrate your innovation into existing programmes and workplans.

Building on 15 years of working in partnership with government disaster management authorities, Pragya could offer the DMS-Himalaya innovation as an additional asset to disaster planning, response and management efforts, addressing gaps that partners recognised.

Another avenue is through innovating within long-term agreements between actors with complementary sets of expertise and assets. This is possible when agencies have long-term supplier contracts, usually held by manufacturers or distributers (Gray et al 2021). SATO Tap is an innovation that was rapidly developed, piloted and manufactured at scale (400,000 units) because it was developed within an existing ‘shared value’ partnership between the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and SATO (a social enterprise inside Japanese manufacturer LIXIL). SATO provided the design expertise and UNICEF provided access to technical WASH advice on needs and programmes in which to pilot the design. SATO provided manufacturing capacity through its partners and UNICEF distributed the taps through its network. Without the pre-existing partnership this process may have taken years rather than months.

Practical pointers:

- Work out how your innovation fits with ongoing humanitarian programmes, including practical considerations.
- Offer pro bono or paid-for consultancy to aid implementation and integration.
- Identify key moments in planning cycles for when to introduce the innovation.
- Communicate regularly with partners about your strategic long-term vision for the innovation and ensure activities progress towards shared scaling goals.

Maintain innovation collaborations during the journey to scale

There are many examples of innovations resulting from collaborations to develop solutions to pressing problems.

Maintaining innovation collaborations as your solution progresses from development to scaling can support adoption, both within collaborating partners and their networks.

Mum's Magic Hands was developed as a collaboration between Oxfam and Unilever, which spread the innovation to other NGOs in their networks. Similarly, International Rescue Committee and Mercy Corps developed Signpost and spread it through their networks.

However, partnerships may need to transition from collaborative to transactional as the emphasis changes from developing a solution to deploying it at scale. Some collaborative innovation projects face challenges after an innovation has been piloted successfully, with the humanitarian organisation having to issue an open tender to procure the item at scale. This can leave start-ups at risk of losing out to dominant suppliers with less innovative or effective solutions due to the range of considerations in procurement decisions, such as price or other factors (Gray et al 2021).

Practical pointers:

- Discuss plans for adoption with collaborators – all partners must understand the practicalities of scaling up for each organisation.
- Work with collaborators on the scaling strategy to help ensure their buy-in and support as you work with other adopters.
- If procurement is appropriate, review our WASH procurement paper (Gray et al 2021).

Tools and resources

The following tools and resources may help you to determine your long-term role.

Tools to work through:

The experience, pressures and priorities of key actors:

- Value Proposition Canvas (#18)

The position and roles of key actors:

- systems mapping (#16)

How responses, programmes, consortia and systems work:

- business process mapping (#7)

Resources to learn more about:

Engaging with complex systems:

- introduction to systems thinking (#19)
- complexity theory and humanitarian relief (#8)

The humanitarian system:

- international architecture overview (#14)
- overview of humanitarian decision-making (#2)

Tactic 4

Make it easy to integrate

It is vital to make it as easy as possible for teams to adopt and integrate the innovation into their existing practices and ways of working.

Make your innovation open access and accessible online

This has worked for some innovations such as Ushahidi, but open access rarely drives adoption without a clear adoption strategy to accompany it – such as the one implemented by the Wash'Em team (see Case Study 1).

Simply putting a product design, codified programme model or code for an app online will not generate uptake.

Practical pointers:

- Use open access in combination with other tactics.
- Consider the most appropriate location to publish your innovation – this might be on a dedicated website or in an established repository.

Provide implementation support

Combining open access with implementation support has been effective in the case of Wash'Em.

Implementation support can be provided through training and training of trainers for members of an adopting organisation, or by having an online platform where adopters can submit queries and get in touch with someone to provide guidance and advice. Existing structures and coordination mechanisms such as training institutions and the cluster system can be used to deliver this training, allowing it to reach wider audiences.

Ensure compatibility – linguistically and technologically

Ensuring that information and guidance related to your innovation are available in languages that are accessible for target impact and user groups is also important.

Many responses are primarily managed in English, French or Arabic, but ensuring your innovation includes local and national NGOs and – where appropriate – people affected by crisis often requires more nuanced consideration of language.

Practical pointers:

- A combination of these strategies is needed as online resources are unlikely to be used without support and promotion.
- Consider a range of platforms and modalities to provide support, based on the behaviours of your adopters (eg, Do they use existing platforms, such as KnowledgePoint, to find professional support? Are they part of forums such as clusters?).
- Develop a certified training course, either through your own website or integrating with the adopter's internal learning systems.

Similarly, it is important to ensure that the technology and platforms you are using are accessible to users. Ushahidi in 2008 developed open-source software to enable citizens to report and track violence that followed the 2007 elections in Kenya. It subsequently deployed the software in more than 160 countries, including after earthquakes in Haiti (2010) and Nepal (2015).

The small Ushahidi team is often not directly involved in setting up new deployments. To facilitate greater uptake, the team created a simplified version of the platform that was less technical for users to customise after they realised some potential adopters did not have the skills to implement the original version.

Practical pointers:

- Explore the language needs of adopters and communities through your own research and resources such as Translators without Borders' language maps.
- Understand the technical capacities of adopters and ensure your innovation fits.
- Offer different levels of implementation support to increase accessibility.

Design to meet demand and the needs of your target impact group

Is there a demand for your solution? This may seem an obvious question, but it can be tempting to develop innovations based on assumed impact potential and only later explore problems and use cases in detail.

This can be avoided by ensuring that at each step of the innovation journey, development of a solution is based on feedback from users and the target impact group.

There are instances of agencies and donors actively seeking out innovations (usually high-tech solutions), although this is less common than innovators might think. For example, BioAnalyt addresses a specific technical niche. Its flagship product, iCheck, is a portable device that can measure the micronutrient content of fortified foods within minutes, without having to rely on traditional laboratory capacity. As the only technical solution available for this type of testing, it is used all over the world. Being a major company in a small industry, BioAnalyt is typically approached by NGOs, governments and food producers.

Yet even from this unique position, BioAnalyt estimates the sales cycle can take up to a year with a 50% success rate. This experience emphasises the long cycles (including sales, planning and project implementation), investment required in building relationships and opportunities, and return on this investment. These costs are not typically covered by grants that fund innovation teams.

Practical pointer:

- Market your innovation in terms of the problem it solves, from the perspective of your potential adopters.

Prepare for friction that comes with integrating new approaches

We know that adopting new approaches and ways of working can bring a range of challenges for humanitarian organisations.

Once the case for adoption has been successfully made with commitment and consensus, the time, capacity and constraints of emergency settings can represent significant barriers to adoption. From consultations for our WASH Adoption Challenge and supporting our Journey to Scale cohorts, we know that funding the costs specific to adopting an innovation can be crucial. Such adoption costs might be associated with: ensuring there is no gap in access during a transition between solutions or in the event your innovation does not work as expected; staff training; adapting your innovation to a particular setting; adapting internal systems and processes to fit with the innovation; and generating sufficient evidence to sustain use of your innovation.

Practical pointers:

- Having funds designated for implementing an innovation can be an essential enabler – but secure commitments to subsequent implementation from the adopting organisation at the outset.
- Be aware of long lead times due to planning cycles and consensus-based decision-making.

Think beyond financial cost

It is easy to assume that money – either the availability of funds or lack of them – is the deciding factor in relation to adopting an innovation. However, it is rarely that simple.

Start Ready, the Start Network's disaster risk financing facility, has a big incentive for potential adopters: the prospect of receiving funding ahead of a crisis. With this early funding the adopter can respond faster in providing support to communities most affected by a crisis. Even with this clear incentive, the need for initial investment (eg, a contribution to buying the insurance policy) and extensive advance input in terms of multi-stakeholder planning and coordination can create hesitancy.

The innovation team must still invest significant time in building support and consensus behind the innovation before a decision to adopt can be made – this decision is a collective one (involving communities, NGOs and government departments, at multiple levels within each). This requires time and capacity; the Start Network employs a coordinator to facilitate the process in each country of focus. Echoing analysis by Rogers (2003: 221) that 'observability' is key to innovation uptake, there is evidence that once the benefits come to fruition (eg partners have received disbursements and early action plans have been implemented), more stakeholders become keen to adopt.

Practical pointer:

- Examine the full range of internal and external factors that will affect implementation.

Tools and resources

The following tools and resources may help you to determine your long-term role.

Tools to work through:

Access and compatibility needs:

- Value Proposition Canvas (#18)
- stakeholder analysis (#15)
- business process mapping (#7)

Elements of the system you need to integrate with or consider:

- systems mapping (#16)
- external force analysis (#11)
- business process mapping (#7)

How to position your innovation:

- the Marketing Mix and the 4Ps of Marketing (#17)

Resources to learn more about:

Integrating with systems:

- introduction to systems thinking (#19)

Navigating decision-making processes:

- overview of humanitarian decision-making (#2)

Tactic 5

Work with the entire adopter

Work with the 'whole adopter', not just one team, unit, function or department.

For many innovators, the scaling goal is to see a sustained change in practice across an organisation. Their intention is to enable adoption of your innovation across teams and offices and ensure it is embedded for the long term. Depending on the nature of the innovation, this typically requires commitment from senior leadership combined with support and consensus built up across multiple levels of the organisation, from influencers to implementers, to budget holders and IT, and procurement and operations team members.

For other innovators, the adopter is not a single organisation. Several actors may be involved, such as government departments, NGOs and communities.

Engage with individuals and teams across adopting organisations

Organisations are not monolithic entities. Decisions in humanitarian organisations and government are rarely made by an individual in a single team. This is underscored by evidence that 81% of decisions in humanitarian response are taken in a group or after consultation (Campbell & Knox Clarke 2019).
It is therefore important to see the adopting organisation as a complex system, with multiple interdependent teams. Engagement should consider internal dynamics, culture, systems, processes, drivers and barriers.

To adopt an innovation as part of the organisation's 'business-as-usual' may require buy-in from the leadership, technical advisors, programme officers and 'back office' functions such as finance and procurement.

Pragya was able to identify the role of three levels of government in decision-making, as well as functioning teams within each, and how to engage with each in every phase of implementation. This ensured a consensus to adopt was reached.

Practical pointers:

- Be aware of individuals with formal or informal 'veto powers'.
- Do not rely on buy-in and backing from senior leadership alone.
- Map the process of implementing your innovation from the adopter's perspective, identifying which teams or functions will be affected.

Ensure implementation support includes all affected teams

Building consensus and ownership at implementation level and 'meeting people where they are' is essential for building momentum.

The team behind Digital PH worked towards this over three years. Integrating the innovation across the 85 dioceses and social action centres (local offices that design and lead responses) is an organisational strategic priority. But this does not mean that implementation is dictated to social action directors from headquarters. Instead, the Digital PH team aims to "experience [the innovation] from their shoes", relating benefits to the challenges social action directors face – ranging from the need for access to timely and accurate information immediately after an emergency, to the impracticality of previous reliance on huge, heavy, printed documents. If these key actors do not see a tangible value, then implementation will not happen or will be short-lived.

Practical pointers:

- Lead by example and keep your communications simple. Avoid jargon when you communicate what your innovation is and how it can be implemented.
- Relate your innovation to the day-to-day challenges of the adopter.

Use peer networks to support implementation

Internal networks of influence within organisations play an important role to help translate a formal decision to adopt an innovation into new ways of working.

Pragya and Wash'Em both highlighted the importance of identifying and supporting individuals within adopting organisations to champion innovations internally. As one case study interviewee put it, people "can relate to the project better if it's in [their] context, not from another planet".

This is reinforced by research for Elrha's learning paper on procurement (Gray et al 2021: 37): certain individuals, such as experienced technical advisors, can often influence the level of support for a given intervention (and conversely hold informal veto power). From Impact Evidence and Beyond (Dodgson & Crowley 2021: 53), we learned that people look to the experience and advice of their peers to inform decision-making; for example, response directors consulting with one another to inform their decision-making.

Practical pointer:

- Encourage early adopters to showcase how they have implemented your innovation and to communicate the benefits.

Tools and resources

The following tools and resources may help you to determine your long-term role.

Tools to work through:

Identifying who you need to involve:
- systems mapping (#16)
- business process mapping (#7)

Understanding the pressures and priorities, interest and influence of key individuals and teams:
- stakeholder analysis (#13)
- business process mapping (#7)

Resources to learn more about:

Integrating with systems:
- introduction to systems thinking (#19)

Involving different roles in decision-making:
- overview of humanitarian decision-making (#2)

Tactic 6

Move beyond humanitarian innovation grants

Moving beyond innovation funding is an essential part of establishing a business model that will be sustainable over time.

Look for opportunities within response funding

Your vision may be to enhance outcomes and ways of working as part of the existing humanitarian system. In this case, a sustainable revenue model can involve accessing mainstream humanitarian funding mechanisms, aligning with humanitarian response plans and establishing partnerships with humanitarian organisations actively responding to emergencies in response settings.

Some humanitarian funding includes a requirement to consider innovation in programme design. Within the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), 'innovation and technology' is one of 15 areas to be mainstreamed in the development of multi-year plans for each response. However, the breadth of areas to be covered and the timeframe of the planning process make it difficult for FCDO advisors to proactively seek out specific innovations and approaches. Instead, they look to implementing partners to take on this responsibility in programme design and planning.

The Australian Humanitarian Partnership, a partnership between the Australian government and Australian NGOs for disaster response and preparedness, required innovation to be considered and included in consortium proposals. Field Ready (a former Elhra grantee not interviewed for this paper) was invited to join a World Vision Australia consortium as its innovation partner. Field Ready used the opportunity to establish a presence in the South Pacific region to showcase the potential of its innovation, which in turn led to more partnerships, funding and greater adoption in the region.

Timing is critical, as is the ability to respond to opportunities as they emerge. Planning happens against narrow timelines – missing a planning window can close opportunities for integration into a response plan for several years. Things that get written into proposals and budgets are the things that happen. Good ideas that are discussed at later stages may find support but are unlikely to be put into practice.

Opportunities may arise through funding calls launched in response to emergencies, such as those launched by Humanitarian Grand Challenge and by the Hygiene and Behaviour Change Coalition (HBCC) in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of the HBCC network, Unilever used its role as a convenor and funder to encourage NGO partners to adopt Mum's Magic Hands (and other hygiene-related innovations). Even without introducing requirements or earmarked funding, funders' recommendations make a difference.

Practical pointers:

- Know the cycles of the sector, organisation and programme you are targeting.
- Learn about the priorities and interests of donors and agencies to identify enthusiasm to mainstream innovations.
- Build NGO connections over time so that potential partners think of your innovation when planning processes start.

Experiment with and implement different revenue and resource models

Especially for innovation teams that envisage operating outside existing response structures, more innovative approaches to generating revenue may be required. Potential approaches will depend on the innovation, innovator and value created.

Depending on the nature of your innovation, it may be possible to tap into crowdfunding, or major donor or public fundraising appeals. Sales revenue can be generated by directly selling the innovation (as a one-time purchase or subscription service) or offering consulting advisory services and implementation support to adopters. This links to strategic decisions about your team's long-term role (Tactic 1).

Some innovators find a secondary market, where it is possible to sell their innovation at a higher price point than in the humanitarian sector. Surplus revenue (profit) can then be used to subsidise costs to humanitarian customers and partners. Aravind Eye Care Services is known for using this model in a very powerful way to provide high-quality eye care that includes poor and remote communities.

Impact investment and outcome-based financing models may have potential for some innovations. There are few examples of impact investment supporting humanitarian innovation, but there are some in the development and wider social innovation sectors. The Global Innovation Fund, for example, provides investment in multiple forms including convertible loans, debt and equity (Global Innovation Fund n.d.).

Using open-source platforms can also enable innovators to leverage communities of technical volunteers to reduce overhead costs. This is especially appropriate for innovations with a significant digital tech component. Humanitarian OpenStreetMap is an example of a former Elrha grantee that succeeded in mobilising technical volunteers.

Practical pointers:

- Revisit and experiment with elements of your business model.
- Take inspiration from social innovators outside the sector.
- Remember: your business model is not only about revenue – it is about the value you create and the way you create it.

Access national innovation ecosystems

Many countries that are affected by humanitarian crises have strong or emerging innovation ecosystems – sometimes focused on humanitarian response and resilience, more often with a broad focus on supporting entrepreneurship.

Tapping into these ecosystems could help you shift the focus from response cycles, provide a more permanent support base – including on key issues for innovators such as national regulation, legislation, registration, and IP protection – and often the ability connect to funding and investment opportunities.

Practical pointers:

- Use networks and research to map the innovation ecosystem in your operational setting. Find information, such as Response Innovation Lab's innovation ecosystem maps (Response Innovation Lab n.d.)
- Join local networks, which are often connected with co-working spaces. These can build connections with expertise and services necessary to operate within the country.
- Identify national funding opportunities targeting innovators, such as the Innovation Partnership Fund of the Government of Nepal's Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration (Government of Nepal n.d.).

Be aware of misaligned incentives

The source and nature of funding can either help or hinder accountability to the target impact group.

Many innovations rely on grant funding, which can result in donor priorities influencing outcomes. Innovations that secure flexible funding can be more responsive to the needs of users and the target impact group, as Ushahidi has done effectively.

Availability of piecemeal funding can also provide the incentive for an organisation to try an innovation without committing to sustained implementation over time. This can prolong the cycle of 'perpetual pilots' (repeatedly conducting pilot projects), extracting time and resources from your innovation team in the short term, without long-term gains.

Practical pointer:

- Spend time discussing priorities and motivations with interested organisations.

Find ways to invest in the 'core' of your innovation

Ushahidi, Signpost and RedRose highlighted the role unrestricted funding played in enabling adoption.

Securing funding that was not tied to specific partners, deployments or activities enabled them to spend time developing the 'core' of the innovation. This is an important step that ensures each deployment of an innovation does not require development of a bespoke solution. Standardised guidance, training and operating procedures can be produced, facilitating easier implementation and instilling confidence for potential adopters that using your innovation will be manageable. It is a way to end the cycle of perpetual pilots and a step change towards achieving scale.

Sources of unrestricted grant funding are notoriously scarce. The teams interviewed secured unrestricted funding through sales, appeals and private philanthropy.

Practical pointers:

- Prioritise unrestricted revenue generation.
- Engage with implementing teams to learn how your innovation has created most value, and which features are most needed.
- Document core aspects of your innovation and how to implement it.
- Study and record how different teams have adapted your innovation – this will help you understand which aspects of the innovation are core and which are adaptable ('modular' or 'hackable').

Tools and resources

The following tools and resources may help you to determine your long-term role.

Tools to work through:

Different ways of creating value with sustainable revenue streams:
- Business Model Canvas (#4)
- business model testing cards (#6)

The many revenue models that can be used and combined:
- Business Model Navigator (#5)

The funding opportunities and funding flows in the wider system (humanitarian or national):
- systems mapping (#16)

Resources to learn more about:

Identifying connection and leverage points in complex systems:
- introduction to systems thinking (#19)

How to implement new revenue models:
- alternative finance communities (#1)
- overview of social impact investing (#13)

CASE STUDIES

The following case studies, selected on the basis of data availability, take a deeper look at how five of the teams we interviewed have implemented adoption tactics, sharing deeper insight into the practicalities of scaling humanitarian innovations.

CASE STUDY 1

Wash'Em

Lead organisation(s):
- London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
- Action Against Hunger
- Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation

Scale:
Used in over 100 crises

The innovation

Wash'Em is a process for rapidly designing evidence-based and context-adapted handwashing promotion programmes in crises and outbreaks, developed through a partnership between London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, Action Against Hunger and the Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation.

The process involves using five rapid assessment tools to understand behaviour. The findings from the tools are entered into the Wash'Em software, which selects from 80+ handwashing activities to provide a tailored set of recommendations for the user's context. Each activity comes with a step-by-step guide to help aid organisations in planning the logistics and delivery of their programmes. The process can be completed in as little as four days (White 2020).

Scale

It has been used in over 100 crises, by more than 70 organisations. The innovation team came to the project with some experience in the WASH sector and hygiene programming, and cultivated specialist experience and a clear systems view through researching, listening to and collaborating with the sector, and learning from people affected by crises. This systems view included how humanitarian organisations design hygiene programmes, key influencers who could promote adoption of the new approach, decision-making culture, and implementation and operational processes. Based on this understanding, the team developed a highly effective adoption strategy.

Tactic 1: Determine your long-term role

The small Wash'Em team operates primarily as a provider (public good) and advisor.
- The process, tools and software are openly available online for humanitarian organisations to access and implement.
- They are supplemented by a wide range of support made available by the innovation team to assist with training and implementation, at no cost to the adopter.

> The innovation team took what they described as a "top-down and bottom-up" approach to expanding its networks and using them strategically.

Tactic 2: Build and use your network

The innovation team took what they described as a "top-down and bottom-up" approach to expanding its networks and using them strategically:

- Relationships were built with response directors and WASH programme managers of large INGOs and UN agencies in countries affected by crises. In relation to Wash'Em, as a programme design innovation, these roles were found to have significant autonomy to make technical programme decisions for their operational setting, even where global support systems were in place (ie, technical advisors at headquarters level who were normally involved in identifying pilot countries and keen individuals working at the response level). Case studies could then be shared with staff at headquarters to demonstrate successes within their organisations and generate more strategic investment.
- In smaller INGOs and NGOs, relationships were built with leadership teams at the headquarters level. In this type of organisation, the team found that there were much stronger interpersonal connections across teams and offices. The innovation could be included in strategies at the international level, piloted in a few countries and showcased to other country offices for subsequent adoption.
- Ongoing engagement was maintained with key individuals within humanitarian organisations to build institutional support. For example, UNICEF headquarters staff from both the WASH and communications for development teams were invited to participate in activities throughout the innovation's journey from inception to scale, which helped to create significant buy-in and support for the innovation. In turn, this led UNICEF to include Wash'Em in internal online learning courses, introducing a sustained prompt for staff to use the innovation in programme design processes.
- As our interviewee reflected, there is rarely a moment where someone decides, "We'll adopt!" It is more about building consensus and maintaining interest. The cost of doing this, such as through the strategy outlined above, is very rarely included in programme budgets.

Tactic 3: Build on what already exists

- Wash'Em was designed with compatibility in mind, including integration with humanitarian operational processes and the technology literacy of target users. Practical steps included ensuring the training team travelled to deliver trainings in different countries to give the team first-hand experience of humanitarian responses; and help them understand the types of pressure staff are under, and how teams, programmes and logistics operate. Simulation workshops were organised for the software developers, who had not previously worked in the humanitarian

> Including multiple people from each organisation helped maintain momentum for implementation after the training and ensured that knowledge was embedded in teams, not just individuals.

sector. The developers were also part of initial testing with humanitarians, so they could see directly what was intuitive for users and what did not work, and receive feedback in real time.

- In some settings, training was provided to WASH managers and hygiene promoters through national WASH clusters, equipping people working on hygiene programmes with the skills and knowledge to use Wash’Em. Training convened through clusters brought individuals together from multiple organisations. This helped to develop connections between people working on different hygiene programmes in the same response setting who could subsequently support each other with implementation.
- Multiple people from each organisation were encouraged to participate in online training, where participants learned through a mix of self-directed online learning modules and online group sessions, which allowed participants to virtually practise the process of implementing the innovation and using it to design programmes.
- Including multiple people from each organisation helped maintain momentum for implementation after the training and ensured that knowledge was embedded in teams, not just individuals. For participants from larger NGOs, backing from senior managers was requested, to show longer-term commitment to including the approach in WASH programming and proposals.
- Sector-wide research highlighting shared challenges associated with hygiene programming was used to demonstrate the problem-solving potential of Wash’Em.
- The interviewee also indicated that the main funder, the United States Agency for International Development’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, had informally advocated for the adoption of Wash’Em within other programmatic grants it was funding, which helped to spread the word and incentivise uptake.

Tactic 4: Make it easy to integrate

- Individuals who had used Wash’Em in at least one response, and were enthusiastic about the innovation, were supported to champion its continued use in their organisation.
- The WASH’Em team delivered online training to a cohort of staff of national and international NGOs, by invitation. Key to this was finding the right people to implement and act as champions of the innovation (ie, implementing staff rather than directors), including multiple people in each organisation, and ensuring that participants had line managers’ support to secure organisational backing for subsequent adoption.
- Potential barriers to adoption were explored in detail for various user groups, including hygiene promoters, in-country WASH managers and WASH technical advisors at headquarters. Specific guidance was developed that responded to the different needs of each group, and over time developed into a nuanced understanding: “We

> The key thing with adoption is capturing people at the project proposal stage…you can float a million great ideas, but if it's not written into the proposal, in the budget, it doesn't really matter.

started with 'humanitarians' as the user group, but it's not that simple." Based on this nuanced information, training and implementation relating to Wash'Em has been broken down into distinct phases, with written and video guidance produced for each user group to help them overcome challenges and make implementation easier.

- The innovation team maintained open lines of communication with adopters and potential adopters as the team found that: "people aren't going to try something new unless there's a person they can reach out to, ask questions, and get support from." The team does this through Skype calls, a website chat function, social media, WhatsApp and a KnowledgePoint forum.
- Potential adopters were approached at strategic moments (eg, at the funding proposal stage for a programme): "The key thing with adoption is capturing people at the project proposal stage…you can float a million great ideas, but if it's not written into the proposal, in the budget, it doesn't really matter." Even though implementing Wash'Em does not require additional funding, the team recognised that proposal writing is when most decisions are made around design and delivery.

CASE STUDY 2

Start Ready

Lead organisation(s):
• Start Network

Scale:
Pilot pool going live in 6 countries

The innovation

Start Ready is a new financial service for the humanitarian sector, led by the Start Network. It provides pre-agreed funding at scale based on innovative finance and insurance principles, providing funding for locally led early or anticipatory action and using risk analysis, collective planning and pre-positioned financing. The scaling pathway requires partnership between national governments, (national and international) Start Network NGO members and communities at risk of humanitarian crises. A form of anticipation and risk financing, Start Ready provides funding for predictable crises or crises that can be forecast, and where action can be taken between forecast and onset to reduce loss and damage, save lives and livelihoods, and protect hard-won gains.

Scale

The Start Ready pilot pool is going live in six countries for eight total hazards – including heatwaves, droughts, floods and cyclones/typhoons – over 12 months.

Tactic 4: Make it easy to integrate

- Adapt the approach to each setting – In most instances Start Ready deployments are coordinated at national government level, but in some contexts have been led by INGOs, consortia of national NGOs or communities in collaboration with local government, or at regional level. Every time the innovation is adopted, the project is owned by the partners who must decide how a pay-out will be used and make contingency plans to ensure timely, effective response.
- Provide support to project partners – After trying various ways to manage project development and coordination, the Start Network team realised that permanent coordinator roles were necessary to bring partners together to set up disaster risk financing systems. Coordinators are hosted by Start Network member organisations in country.

Tactic 5: Work with the entire adopter

To be effective in achieving the outcome of early, effective humanitarian response, consortia of different types of organisations that are working together must adopt Start Ready.

Anticipation and risk financing involve a very different way of working to what most governments, humanitarian organisations, disaster management authorities and communities are used to.

- For insurance-based Start Ready mechanisms, the ministry of finance in each country usually has final decision-making power, as the government must contribute to purchasing the insurance policy.
- Government departments with responsibility for disaster management and response must be deeply involved in early planning and establishing the programme as these departments will operationalise the response (in collaboration with NGOs and communities) once a Start Ready disbursement is triggered.
- Significant buy-in is required from Start Network member NGOs, with decision-making authority held variously by heads of programmes or country directors.
- Planning is undertaken in close collaboration with communities at risk of humanitarian crisis in anticipation of early-action funding and subsequent response.

Tactic 6: Move beyond humanitarian innovation grants

Anticipation and risk financing involve a very different way of working to what most governments, humanitarian organisations, disaster management authorities and communities are used to. The Start Network team therefore emphasised the need to make a strong case by helping stakeholders understand what Start Ready is, how it works, and how it can improve disaster management and humanitarian response. Critically, the team focused on the factors that were most pressing for adopters:

- Return on investment – A primary consideration for all partners when deciding whether to adopt the innovation and commit to participating in a pre-positioned funding mechanism was how much time they would need to invest, and how much of a return on investment they would see in eventual funding.
- Demonstrated outcomes – Once a pay-out has been made, prospective new partners naturally become more interested in joining the fund. However, creating a risk financing system takes 12–18 months and entails significant planning to determine allocations and actions in the event of the funds being triggered. 'Early adopters' invest significant time and resources in establishing the mechanism, and can be resentful of partners who opt in later once this work has already been done.
- The case for 'acting early' – The innovation enables organisations to respond much earlier than they are used to, often through anticipatory action. The team worked closely with potential partners to convey the innovation's benefits and determine how responses could play out – aware that a disaster might not unfold exactly as anticipated – and reassured organisations that Start Ready was not diverting funds that would otherwise be allocated to traditional emergency response.

CASE STUDY 3

RedRose

Lead organisation(s):
- Red Rose

Scale:
Used in 45 countries

The innovation

RedRose is a company that provides services for humanitarian organisations and national governments. It uses a digital services platform that integrates with data collection tools to manage data (eg, beneficiary details, market price monitoring, post-distribution surveys) and with payment mechanisms (eg, mobile money, remittances, e-vouchers) to distribute cash assistance and enable automated reconciliation in a secure and auditable manner. The platform provides monitoring and reporting capabilities and can also be used for other assistance types such as in-kind and services (CashHub n.d.).

Scale

The solution has been adopted by at least 26 customers – including INGOs, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, International Committee of the Red Cross and United Nations agencies – in 45 countries (RedRose n.d.).

Tactic 1: Determine your long-term role

RedRose is a supplier and advisor (paid-for services) to humanitarian organisations.

- By demonstrating expertise across both humanitarian and software engineering sides, the team could operate as a technical service provider and advisory consultant during collaborative design and implementation processes. Humanitarians understand the challenges they experience very well, but are not usually equipped to know which technical solutions will best help address those challenges, or how to define technical specifications or requirements to develop the right technical solution.

Tactic 2: Build and use your network

- The team built relationships and a customer base through networking and word of mouth; in particular, by investing time working with humanitarian response managers in different settings, understanding their challenges, constraints and opportunities; and building a reputation as a well-informed, trusted partner that delivered effective solutions within the sector. The RedRose team worked alongside project and programme managers in response settings to collaboratively assess the situation and develop the right solution, and provided hands-on support during implementation. This was a different way of working for the developer team, which

The pathway to securing adoption varied based on the specific needs in each response, the structure of each organisation, the humanitarian response cycle, and individual decision-makers' priorities and preferences.

was used to working to traditional finite engineering project cycles with clients, rather than delivering sustained services.

- The team started by working with country offices, shifting to global headquarters over time. During its early years, RedRose worked to secure adoption and sales through working with staff in humanitarian organisations' country offices, building a proven track record and reputation. This proved complicated, but was possible in many instances. The pathway to securing adoption varied based on the specific needs in each response, the structure of each organisation, the humanitarian response cycle, and individual decision-makers' priorities and preferences.

Tactic 6: Move beyond humanitarian innovation grants

- The team has invested heavily in developing a platform code with a robust 'core', to which 'modular' tools and capabilities can be added in response to specific client needs. After six years and three major redevelopments of the platform, this has resulted in a solution that can be more easily tailored and adopted. This robust core makes it feasible to respond to the custom requirements of every response and client by adapting modular components without the need for a full re-code. It means the innovation can be tailored and delivered at high quality with relatively low development costs, and therefore sold at an affordable price within the sector.
- RedRose was able to secure contracts with humanitarian organisations. For some, decision-making power was held at global headquarters' level due to centralised procurement processes or a need for 'framework agreements' (which put suppliers on an approved provider list, in turn making it easier for country offices to procure their services). Seven years into the scaling journey, RedRose has global framework agreements with most clients. These are time-consuming and can be challenging to secure – with one organisation, it took two-and-a-half years to secure an agreement – but has proved the most effective way to sustain relationships with adopting organisations at international scale.

CASE STUDY 4

DMS-Himalaya

Lead organisation(s):
- Pragya

Scale:
Implemented in 12 districts across five Indian states and union territories

The innovation

Disaster Management System (DMS-Himalaya) is designed to reduce the disaster risk of remote mountain communities that are highly disaster prone, but extremely difficult for government disaster management authorities to reach through traditional approaches to warning and response. Led by Indian NGO Pragya, DMS-Himalaya is an information and capacity-building innovation comprising two core components: a network for disaster communication (infrastructure and people) and community-based disaster response (training for local responders, early warning mechanisms, vulnerability and capability assessments).

Scale

DMS-Himalaya is being implemented in 12 districts across five Indian states and union territories, in close partnership with communities and government disaster management authorities.

With a 25-year track record of working in partnership with communities and government, Pragya is an established part of the disaster management landscape. By building on these partnerships and experience, Pragya has been extremely successful in driving adoption of the innovation, collaborating with governments across the Indian Himalayan region and helping them to incorporate DMS-Himalaya into disaster planning, response and management. Building on this foundation of trust, the team has used the following approaches to dispel anxieties, build support, develop skills and create a sense of co-ownership of the innovation.

Tactic 1: Determine your long-term role

Pragya operates as a partner to adopters (ie, government disaster management authorities and communities) and supplier of the platforms, infrastructure and training materials that underpin the system. Although the governments do not currently pay for access to DMS-Himalaya, the complexity of the approach means it is not well suited to being made openly available online.

> The team recognised having the "right relationship" as vital to enabling adoption and co-ownership.

Tactic 3: Build on what already exists

- DMS-Himalaya is designed to work alongside and enhance existing disaster management systems. It does not offer an alternative system, but rather ways to address gaps in current capability.
- The organisation is positioned as a collaborator, working with disaster management authorities towards a shared goal, rather than as a critic pushing authorities to change.

Tactic 4: Make it easy to integrate

- The team took incremental steps, adapting the approach to each geographic context based on research into the local hazard profile and consultation with officials.
- Evidence was showcased in different districts at meetings with government officials and community members to build confidence in: (a) the effectiveness of the approach; (b) the feasibility of adopting the innovation (demonstrating that it had been adopted by other districts); and (c) its potential to help governments fulfil their mandates.
- Government partners have gradually begun to take leadership over aspects of the DMS-Himalaya approach, managing them directly.
- Once adopted, community members have driven the use of DMS-Himalaya, including repurposing the system to accommodate additional needs – such as sharing information between communities during unpredictable events as they unfold.

Tactic 5: Work with the entire adopter

- Because of its deep experience in disaster management, Pragya has a clear understanding of the roles of different levels of government in relation to decision-making about adopting DMS-Himalaya:
  - The national government can endorse the innovation and has veto power.
  - State and union territory governments have both decision-making and veto powers.
  - District governments have decision-making power.

The team therefore engages with government in a gradual process the team describes as "patient investing", building awareness and buy-in from officials at all three levels of government and conscious of the ability of many

> Pragya has a longstanding presence in many of the target communities, creating a basis of trust from which to introduce the approach and build networks of youth-first responders that are a critical component of the solution.

different stakeholders to veto adoption. The team recognised having the "right relationship" as vital to enabling adoption and co-ownership.

- As well as working at all levels of government, the team worked with multiple departments and functions to involve all individuals and teams that would be affected by aspects of implementation – from decision-making and funding to coordination and data management, and policy and disaster risk reduction planning – which they described as a "tiered multi-step process."
- Pragya has a longstanding presence in many of the target communities, creating a basis of trust from which to introduce the approach and build networks of youth first responders that are a critical component of the solution.
- Knowing that key personnel will change, as young people move between regions and as government staff move between roles, Pragya invests in regular training for different stakeholder groups, including delivering repeat training over time.
- To build a sense of collective confidence, Pragya has worked with multiple district governments in clusters to adopt the innovation together.
- Less risk-averse officials were identified as champions within government departments to help continue building support among colleagues for adoption and implementation. Having such voices on the inside of the adopting organisation, as well as in the innovation team, helps to build credibility and confidence in the approach.

CASE STUDY 5

Mum's Magic Hands

Lead organisation(s):
- Oxfam
- Unilever's Lifebuoy soap

Scale:
Used in 25 countries

The innovation

Mum's Magic Hands (MMH) is an approach jointly developed by Oxfam and Unilever's Lifebuoy soap. It encourages behaviour change in key areas such as handwashing with soap and COVID-19 prevention measures. MMH is unique because it uses emotional 'nudges' based on nurture and affiliation and can be used to enhance existing or new WASH programmes.[5] MMH materials include an engaging story that forms the core narrative of the programme, games and interactive activities such as scratch cards and certificates, and several nudges including stickers and visual reminders. The innovation is not a stand-alone intervention, but rather a set of activities that can be integrated into public health and hygiene promotion programmes (Oxfam n.d.).

Scale

MMH has been used in 25 countries and has helped organisations support improved hygiene for over 800,000 people during the COVID-19 pandemic (Oxfam, n.d.).

Tactic 1: Determine your long-term role

- Oxfam and Unilever worked as the initial developers of the innovation. After initial development, MMH materials – including a summary of the programme, the resources needed to implement it and supporting evidence – were all made freely available online for humanitarian organisations to access and adapt according to context. This means that new organisations can implement the programme with little involvement from either Oxfam or Unilever.

Tactic 2: Build and use your network

- Unilever and the FCDO established the Hygiene and Behaviour Change Coalition (HBCC) as part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, on the basis that handwashing and hygiene would be critical components of the fight against COVID-19. Unilever and Oxfam used this network of humanitarian organisations to raise awareness of the innovation at a time when there was a critical demand. This led multiple organisations to implement MMH as part of their own COVID-19 response programmes. The organisations we interviewed felt this network had created collective confidence, as they knew other organisations were also implementing the programme at the same time.
- Adopters also felt confidence in MMH as an approach because it had been developed by and endorsed by both a

5 For a definition of nudges, see Imperial College London (n. d.).

At the core of the MMH programme are emotional nudges based on mother-child relationships that transcend cultural and contextual differences, facilitating the programme’s adoption in a variety of contexts.

well-known humanitarian actor (Oxfam) and a globally recognised hygiene promoter (Unilever). This confidence was a key factor in their decision to incorporate MMH into their programmes.

- In April and May 2019, Amref Health Africa was actively engaging with its networks to seek out interventions that would support behaviour change as part of its COVID-19 response. The team had also been encouraged by Unilever to consider including innovative approaches in its funding proposal to the HBCC. That Mum’s Magic Hands had previously been used in other Amref Health Africa programmes and by other organisations in the HBCC helped instil confidence and contributed to Amref’s decision to adopt the approach.

Tactic 4: Make it easy to integrate

- MMH is designed to be integrated into existing programming and activities, meaning that rather than requiring potential adopters to implement entirely new ways of working, they can simply adapt and improve on existing ones to achieve better humanitarian outcomes.
- At the core of the MMH programme are emotional nudges based on mother-child relationships that transcend cultural and contextual differences, facilitating the programme’s adoption in a variety of contexts. However, the approach is designed in such a way that the materials can be adapted to specific contexts while maintaining cultural sensitivity. For example, a team implementing the approach in Kenya changed the name of the child in the story to a Kenyan name. In another country, the team implementing the approach decided to remove the reference to magic as this was not appropriate for the country context.
- Deciding factors that enabled adoption by Amref Health Africa were that: the organisation was actively looking for an intervention that addressed the behaviour change element of hygiene programming; MMH had a track record of being used internally and by other humanitarian organisations; and the team could see evidence that the approach worked and, crucially, that it built on existing health systems. Interviewees also recognised that MMH instinctively seemed like an approach that could be effective – aligning with cultural and social norms that mothers play a significant role in influencing the behaviour of their families – which made them initially receptive, then ready to adopt the innovation once they had seen the evidence to support it.
- It was important for Amref Health Africa to be able to adapt the approach, ensuring it was culturally relevant and fit with organisational processes and requirements. Adaptations included changing the name to S’Hero or Mama Bomba; and adding demonstrations and amending stories to incorporate local language, relatable visuals and recognisable place names. The intervention also had to be updated to be delivered in a shorter format, to fit with COVID-19 restrictions on the length of time health workers could spend in households.

The COVID-19 pandemic provided an opportunity for MMH to be adopted beyond the originating organisations, with unusually strong demand among NGOs specifically looking for hygiene behaviour change interventions.

Tactic 6: Move beyond humanitarian innovation grants

- The COVID-19 pandemic provided an opportunity for MMH to be adopted beyond the originating organisations, with unusually strong demand among NGOs specifically looking for hygiene behaviour change interventions. This catalysed its adoption and integration into mainstream humanitarian programmes.
- One element of the HBCC was the provision of grant funding for humanitarian COVID-19 response. Unilever encouraged partners to integrate innovations – including MMH – into programme designs from proposal stage, and offered MMH assets and support at no cost to facilitate this. Without including this as a requirement, it had meaningful impact on programme designs.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

TOOLS AND RESOURCES

Table 2 lists recommended tools and resources that may help you to experiment with tactics identified in the paper. The tools and resources are signposted in the tactics sections above – many are listed under several tactics because they have cross-cutting applications. This cross-referencing should underscore the utility of the tools and resources for innovators on the scaling journey.

Several of the tools listed here form part of Elrha's Humanitarian Innovation Guide. The Humanitarian Innovation Guide is a growing online resource, with a broad range of tools for all stages of innovation process. It is a resource to help individuals and organisations find their starting point and navigate the challenge of humanitarian innovation.

	Tool or resource	How to use it	Tactics	Where to find it
#1	Alternative finance communities	Join a community such as Zebras Unite to gain perspectives on alternative financial models that are better for the world than traditional commercial approaches.	1, 2, 6	https://www.zebrasunite.org/
#2	Overview of humanitarian decision-making	Gain deeper insight into the nature of decision-making in humanitarian response.	2, 3, 4, 5	https://www.alnap.org/help-library/alnap-study-beyond-assumptions-how-humanitarians-make-operational-decisions
#3	Business cases for open-source software and approaches	Read about the case for open-source software from 18F, a US government technology and design consultancy; and a business case for open-source approaches more broadly from the Open Source Initiative.	1	https://18f.gsa.gov/2018/07/12/the-case-for-open-source-software/ https://opensource.org/advocacy/case_for_business.php
#4	Business Model Canvas	Use it to help articulate how you intend to solve problems and create value in a way that is financially sustainable. It includes considering your value proposition, activities, resources and partners that underpin the cost model and customers, relationships and engagement channels that shape potential revenue streams.	1, 2, 6	https://www.strategyzer.com/canvas/business-model-canvas
#5	Business Model Navigator	Browse this interactive tool to shed light on the many revenue models that can be used and combined to underpin a resilient business model.	1, 6	https://businessmodelnavigator.com/explore
#6	Business model testing cards	Review and test aspects of your business model.	1, 6	https://higuide.elrha.org/toolkits/pilot/project-management/test-your-business-model/

#7	Business process mapping	Visualise the workflow of an organisation, identifying the different activities and teams that are involved in a process.	2, 3, 4, 5	https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/microsoft-365/business-insights-ideas/resources/succeed-with-process-mapping
#8	Complexity theory and humanitarian relief	Recognise how to act as you transition your innovation from pilot projects to integration in complex systems by learning about complexity theory in humanitarian relief.	1, 3	MacCann, J. (2018). Complexity Theory and Humanitarian Relief. In E. James & A. Taylor (eds), Managing Humanitarian Innovation: The Cutting Edge of Aid. Rugby: Practical Action Publishing
#9	Creative Commons licence guidance	Follow guidance on applying Creative Commons open licences.	1	https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/
#10	Managing and improving quality	Learn about different approaches to building, sustaining and improving quality.	1	Brown, S., Bessant, J. and Jiu, F. (2018) Doing it Better: Managing and Improving Quality. In Strategic Operations Management. London: Routledge
#11	External force analysis	Consider using tools such as PESTLE or force field analysis to understand different factors that will affect implementation, considering both internal and external forces.	1, 4	https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/strategy/organisational-development/pestle-analysis-factsheet https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTED_06.htm
#12	Private sector innovation	Learn from private sector innovation experts about intellectual property management through the innovation Academy.	1	https://academy.patsnap.com/
#13	Overview of social impact investing	Read more about the fundamentals of social impact investing from the University of Oxford, UK.	1, 2, 6	https://golab.bsg.ox.ac.uk/the-basics/social-impact-investing/
#14	International architecture overview	Learn more about the humanitarian architecture from the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination Field Handbook and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level.	2, 3	https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/1823826E_web_pages.pdf https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/coordination/clusters/document/iasc-reference-module-cluster-coordination-country-level-0
#15	Stakeholder analysis	Use stakeholder analysis, personas and spheres of influence to develop a nuanced understanding of key individuals. This will help you determine who to prioritise, and how to engage with them most effectively.	1, 2, 4, 5	https://higuide.elrha.org/toolkits/adaptation/organisational-adaptation/review-roles-and-power-dynamics/ https://higuide.elrha.org/toolkits/recognition/initial-impressions/understand-end-users-and-primary-beneficiaries/

#16	Systems mapping	Create a visual representation of all actors, institutions, processes and interactions that are involved in the system your innovation is (or will be) part of.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	https://servicedesigntools.org/tools/system-map
#17	The Marketing Mix and the 4Ps of Marketing	Use tools from the private sector to help you figure out how to position your innovation in the right place at the right cost, at the right time.	1, 4	https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newSTR_94.htm
#18	Value Proposition Canvas	Use this marketing tool to help identify the core value created by an innovation from a partner perspective. This may help inform decision-making around the most appropriate long-term role for your team and innovation.	1, 3, 4	https://www.strategyzer.com/canvas/value-proposition-canvas
#19	Introduction to systems thinking	Learn more about systems thinking from these two introductory videos from the Interaction Design Foundation (2:15 mins) and a classic TED Talk by Tom Wujec (9:05 mins) on taking a systems approach to making toast.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	https://www.interaction-design.org/literature/topics/systems-thinking https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_vS_b7cJn2A

A WAY FORWARD FOR THE SECTOR

In this report, we have focused on practical approaches innovators can use to drive adoption of their innovations – despite the challenges and barriers they face. However, to enable more routine sustained adoption of innovations across the humanitarian sector, we need to address systemic barriers as an ecosystem of actors.

Much research has been conducted to understand barriers to scale and identify potential solutions. It is now time for key actors from across the system to come together and develop a roadmap to achieving the required changes. Key actors include donors, humanitarian organisations, national governments of countries at risk of, or experiencing, humanitarian crisis, and innovation actors.

In this final section of the paper, we pose a series of questions to these actors. Our hope is to use these questions to spark engagement, convening the humanitarian sector to develop collective strategies for enabling widespread adoption of innovations:

? How can funding for innovation better support the costs of adoption?

- What kinds of demand-side mechanisms might incentivise and support improved adoption of innovations, covering costs of knowledge transfer, change management, etc?
- Are there ways to incentivise and 'crowd in' new types of funders, such as foundations and non-traditional donors, to complement investments in innovation by bilateral and multilateral donors, and increase availability of unrestricted funding?

? How might we improve the capacity of humanitarian organisations to more frequently adopt new innovations?

- What is the 'absorptive capacity' of different kinds of humanitarian actors, and what are the most relevant and important aspects of absorptive capacity? Based on this learning, how can absorptive capacity be improved?
- What can we learn from examples, case studies and success stories of how innovations have been adopted and integrated into humanitarian programmes?

? How might improvements in transparency and information availability improve the environment for adoption?

- What kinds of information-sharing mechanisms, such as innovation fairs, pitch days, catalogues, demonstrations, etc, are commonly in use, and what are their relationships with uptake?
- Might it be valuable to develop shared information and data standards to catalogue a greater range of innovations and allow better comparison? What can be learned from previous online cataloguing?

? What is the role of national governments and other standards setters in incentivising the adoption of new innovations through policy and regulatory frameworks?

- How might innovators work with national governments and other standards setters to better support adoption?
- What can we learn from examples, case studies and success stories of innovators working with national governments and other standards setters to support adoption?

ANNEX

FULL METHODOLOGY

Problem statement

Although investment in and efforts to scale humanitarian innovation have increased in recent years, innovations still struggle to scale beyond the pilot phase and become incorporated into routine humanitarian programming. Innovation teams often attempt to scale from headquarters or global-level structures, which can lead to other tactics and actions being overlooked. This means that how the adoption of innovation operates at different levels of the humanitarian sector, especially the routines, relationships and rules that govern these processes, is not well understood.

The aim of this learning paper was to explore tactics and actions that innovation teams have used to enable and drive innovation adoption. Our intention is that the paper will help innovation teams – and actors that support them – to better engage with decision-makers and responders, and to position their innovations in a way that helps these actors more effectively address the needs of people affected by crisis.

Research questions

The primary research question was: What strategies can innovators use to enable and promote the adoption and uptake of innovation? Associated questions included:

1. What actions have innovators taken to stimulate and capture demand for their innovation?
2. Are there commonalities among the case studies in terms of what works or is each one case-specific?
3. What issues do the selected examples highlight that inform broader recommendations for the sector?

Methodology

This was a qualitative study, with three main research phases: an evidence review, followed by semi-structured scoping interviews, then later by more in-depth semi-structured case study interviews. After the analysis and write-up, findings were tested through a peer-review process and validated with interview participants.

The research focused on protracted crisis settings, as opposed to acute responses. The adoption and use of innovations during acute responses is an important area for further research, but was excluded from the scope of this study as it would have required a different approach.

The project scope was not narrowed to specific responses (such as the Rohingya response in Bangladesh or the Northern Uganda refugee response) or sub-sectors of the humanitarian sector (such as WASH or inclusion). Due to the limited number of innovations that have scaled in the humanitarian sector, and the limitations of Elrha's networks, we decided to rely on 'snowball' methods for the evidence review and to identify valuable case studies for inclusion.

The study did not focus on a specific 'type' of innovation. Innovation literature often uses the '4Ps' as a framework to understand different types of innovation: product/service, process, position and paradigm (Frances & Bessant 2005). While this is a useful framing for many purposes, few humanitarian innovations fit neatly into one of these four categories. Instead, we sought to consider multiple types of characteristics of the innovations we explored. This might include, for example: sector; type of innovation; level of complexity; level of technological focus; degree of adaptation required for each implementation; type of originating organisation (including local, national or international); type of adopting organisation or actor; and scale of investment required for adoption.

While not a focus of the study, the research considered the role and extent of 'local' decision-making in the adoption of innovations. Local decision-making can include decisions to adopt by governments, civil society organisations or NGOs, and people affected by crisis. This can involve consideration of legislation, policy, regulations and guidance. To this end, we included two case studies of innovations that are led by local or national organisations.

Most of the case studies used innovations that are marketed on a not-for-profit basis, developed and led by NGOs, social enterprises and sector collaborations. One innovation was sold as part of the core business of a private, for-profit company; another was delivered by a private company as part of a 'shared value' partnership. The 'adopter' for all innovations is a humanitarian responder in some capacity, including local, national and international NGOs, and local, state and national governments.

Research phases

1. Evidence review
2. Scoping interviews
3. Case study interviews
4. Analysis and write-up
5. Validation.

Evidence review

Three researchers collected evidence through online searches using Google, Google Scholar, Academic.edu and ResearchGate. The search terms for each area are listed below. The evidence review included sources published from 2009 onwards as this is regarded as the point at which a humanitarian innovation ecosystem began to emerge (Ramalingam et al 2009). Evidence included both academic research and grey literature; 14 pieces of grey literature were reviewed and seven academic papers or books.

The aim of the evidence review was to identify existing research on adoption of innovation or literature related to the areas listed below.

- Main stakeholder groups involved in the adoption of innovation at crisis response level. Key search terms: humanitarian response, cluster system, roles.
- Decision-making channels, both formal and informal. Key search terms: decision-making in the humanitarian response/cluster system, informal networks.
- Literature on innovation adoption and pathways for adoption, factors involved. Key search terms: adoption of innovation, diffusion of innovation, scaling, implementation science.
- Literature on managing the factors that influence adoption and strategies for communication and selling innovation. Key search terms: strategies for scaling innovation, managing the diffusion of innovation.

Secondary research into diffusion and adoption of innovations looked beyond the humanitarian sector. Much research has been undertaken to understand how innovations diffuse. This research, along with other learning papers in the HIF's Scaling Series, in part will aim to understand how these wider theories and experiences apply to the humanitarian sector and how humanitarian innovators can learn from them.

Scoping interviews

Following the evidence review, six scoping interviews were conducted with key external contacts.

Interviewees for the scoping interviews were selected based on their extensive experience of humanitarian response in UN, INGO and Red Cross organisations (ideally, across multiple settings and sectors), as well as for their experience of humanitarian innovation.

The aim of these interviews was to explore in greater detail the processes and factors governing adoption of innovation in humanitarian responses through an exploration of innovation examples. These interviews also generated initial feedback on the research questions, helping to refine and validate the scope of the study. Finally, they suggested potential case studies for inclusion in the research and identified associated interviewees from within their networks.

Questions included:
- Do you have any thoughts on the scope of the research and the approach we are taking?
- What type of innovations would be most useful to examine? (Looking for specific examples, covering a range of characteristics including local leadership.)
- Which stakeholders would be most important to identify and speak to in each response setting?

Case study interviews

Based on the initial research stages, 23 innovations were identified as potential case studies. From this longlist, the research team selected ten for inclusion in the study. This took into account multiple characteristics of each innovation, including type of originating organisation (private sector, humanitarian organisation, start-up); geographic reach (national or international); and ensuring the sample included innovations led by local or national organisations.[8] All of the innovations had been implemented in at least two contexts beyond the original implementation setting.

Humanitarian organisations were the primary adopter (or buyer) of each case study innovation. Case study innovations included a range of complexity (from the adoption perspective; eg, level of adaptation required, how neatly the innovation fits within the existing system, scope of investment required) and different degrees of technological focus.

Interviews were conducted with stakeholders of the ten case studies. Interviewees included members of the originating innovation team, members of the adopting organisation and field implementation staff. They were identified through Elrha's networks and through the scoping interviews, and included staff of INGO country offices, UN offices or Red Cross organisations, or local or national organisations. Our intention was to capture perspectives from different levels of each organisation, from CEO to field level, by interviewing people working at all levels of the system, from the crisis response level in-country to national, regional and international offices.

Thirteen semi-structured interviews were conducted, focusing on the processes of adopting the innovation (including decision-making) and the factors that enabled it. Through the interviews, we identified key trends and themes in the process of enabling adoption and how innovators can best manage them. Across ten case studies, and stratified according to the criteria above, this provided diverse and varied data to draw out patterns and conclusions about adoption processes. Throughout the interview process we endeavoured to include a diverse and representative sample of interviewees.

The interviews followed the process below:
1. Desk review of published information on the scaling journey of the innovation and the factors that enabled it to be discussed and tested during interviews.
2. Interviews focused on the factors and processes that led to adoption of the innovation, including adoption routes; actions that adopters and innovation teams took to enable adoption; key decision-making processes; and evidence requirements. Questions focused on what worked well and lessons learned by the teams.
3. Analysis and write-up, which included coding and content analysis of the interview data to look for repeated themes.

Analysis and write-up

From this analysis we examined the adoption process for each innovation then looked for similarities and differences between all case studies to draw more generalisable conclusions and provide advice for innovators.

Validation of draft findings

All case study interviewees were re-engaged and a draft of the paper was peer-reviewed by an independent group of experts in the field of humanitarian innovation. The validation stage focused on accuracy, relevance and resonance.

8 For this research, we used the NEAR Network's definition of a local and/or national organisation, which might include a community-based organisation, an NGO or civil society organisation, as well as a global Southern regional/cross-border organisation.

Limitations

A limited number of interviews was undertaken for this research. We sought to interview multiple people associated with each innovation from both the originating and the adopting organisations. However, we were only successful in securing interviews from adopting organisations for one innovation. As such, it is important to recognise that many of the case study-specific insights captured are based on individual perspectives. Furthermore, we did not seek to produce detailed mappings of each adoption pathway as this would have required wider perspectives, particularly from adopting stakeholders.

At the outset we intended to incorporate a significant focus on actors, actions and decision-making at the crisis response level. However, it proved difficult to identify and connect with stakeholders operating at this level of the system, so our interviewees skew towards individuals based within headquarters or international roles. This is an important area for further research but would require a different approach.

Research team

The research was undertaken collaboratively by Ruth Salmon and Abi Taylor of Elrha's HIF and Shtefi Mladenovska, research associate at Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU Wien). As well as informing this learning paper, the primary research conducted will contribute to Shtefi Mladenovska's doctoral dissertation.

CASE STUDY INTERVIEWEES

Name	Innovation	Position	Organisation	Role
Hakan Buyukbayrak	RedRose	Director	RedRose	Innovator
Erik Hersman	Ushahidi	Co-founder	Ushahidi	Innovator
Abie Bangura	Mum's Magic Hands	Handwashing Projects Coordinator	Oxfam	Innovator
Helena Dollimore	Mum's Magic Hands	Senior Manager, Global Sustainability	Unilever	Innovator/Funder
Gargi Banerji	DMS-Himalaya	Founder and Director	Pragya	Innovator
Sian White	Wash'Em	Research Fellow	London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine	Innovator
Anna Zhenchuk	iCheck	Managing Director	BioAnalyt	Innovator
André Heller	Signpost	Director, Signpost Project	International Rescue Committee	Innovator
Leonie Le Borgne	Start Ready	Start Ready Programme Manager	Start Network	Innovator
Jason Cardosi	SATO Tap	Leader, Global Partnerships	LIXIL	Innovator
Daigo Ishiyama	SATO Tap	Leader, Innovation	LIXIL	Innovator
Michael Emerson Gnilo	SATO Tap	Sanitation and Hygiene Specialist	UNICEF	Innovator and adopter
Jing Rey Henderson	Digital PH	Head of Research and Advocacy	NASSA Caritas	Innovator
Tom Heath	Wash'Em	WASH Technical Advisor	Action Against Hunger	Adopter
Aluma John	Mum's Magic Hands	Health Management Information System Manager	Save the Children	Adopter
Dennis Munai	Mum's Magic Hands	Project Manager	Amref Health Africa	Adopter
Rogers Moraro	Mum's Magic Hands	Project Officer	Amref Health Africa	Adopter

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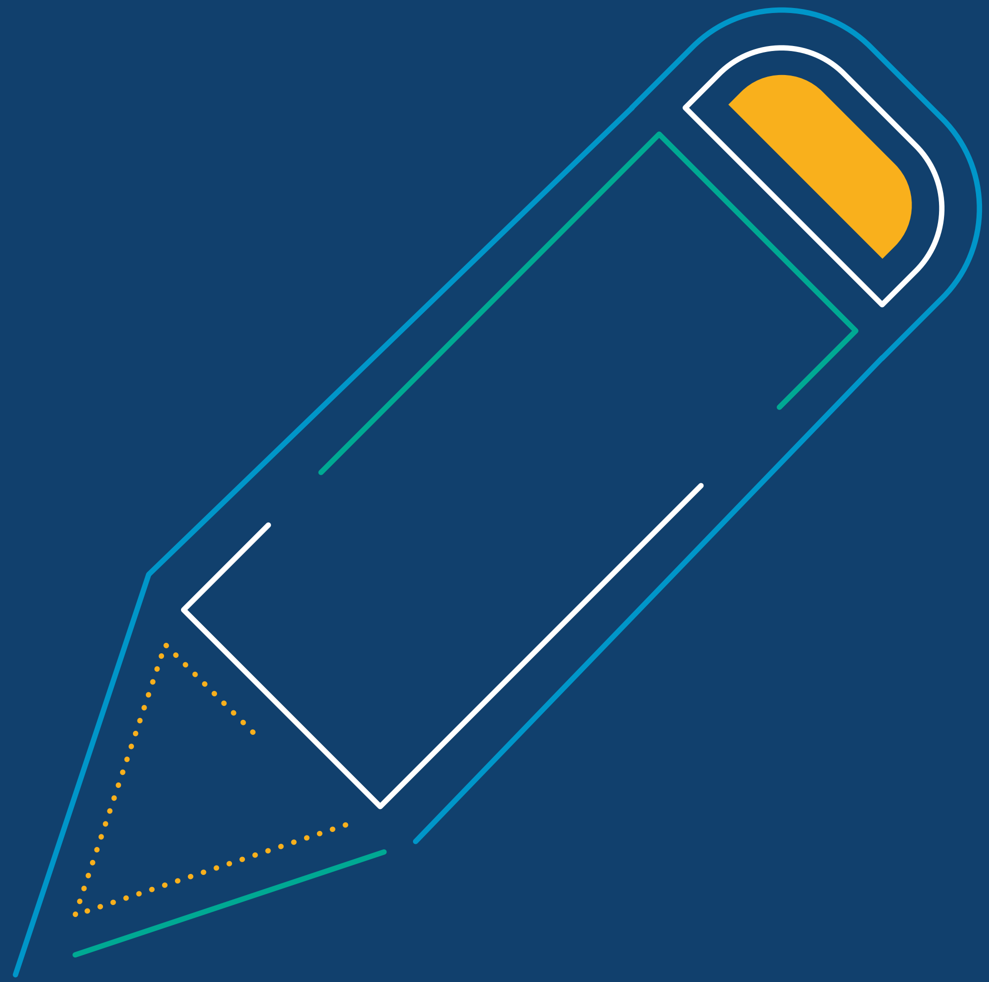

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ABOUT US

We are Elrha. A global charity that finds solutions to complex humanitarian problems through research and innovation. We are an established actor in the humanitarian community, working in partnership with humanitarian organisations, researchers, innovators, and the private sector to tackle some of the most difficult challenges facing people all over the world.

We equip humanitarian responders with knowledge of what works, so that people affected by crises get the right help when they need it most. We have supported more than 200 world-class research studies and innovation projects, championing new ideas and different approaches to evidence what works in humanitarian response.

Elrha has two successful humanitarian programmes: Research for Health in Humanitarian Crises (R2HC) and the Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF). The HIF programme improves outcomes for people affected by humanitarian crises by identifying, nurturing and sharing more effective, scalable solutions.

The HIF is a globally recognised programme leading on the development and testing of innovation in the humanitarian system. Established in 2011, it was the first of its kind: an independent, grant-making programme open to the entire humanitarian community. It now leads the way in funding, supporting, and managing innovation at every stage of the process.

"We equip humanitarian responders with knowledge of what works, so that people affected by crises get the right help when they need it most."

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