

ACHE Lifeline Learning Brief One

ADVANCING COMMUNICATION IN HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCIES

Delivering Lifeline communication and participatory approaches sustainably in Somalia, Nigeria and Ukraine

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This learning brief summarises key findings and recommendations from BBC Media Action's endline evaluation of the Advancing Communication in Humanitarian Emergencies (ACHE) project in Nigeria, Somalia and Ukraine. Specifically, this brief focuses on the enablers and barriers in delivering "Lifeline" communication[1].

The project was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) and ran from September 2021 to May 2024. Comprising training, mentoring and network/relationship building for media and humanitarian actors delivered by BBC Media Action, the project aimed to strengthen the capacity of humanitarian and media actors to communicate with people affected by crisis.

This capacity strengthening was designed to ensure they have access to practical information they can use to survive and cope, and are able to participate in dialogues at the core of humanitarian decision-making. Ultimately, the project aimed to improve the relevance, accessibility and inclusivity of humanitarian response. There are multiple challenges in delivering communication in humanitarian emergencies. In protracted crises like Somalia and Nigeria, humanitarian responders regularly have to pause their work because of security issues. In Ukraine, humanitarian responses are regularly interrupted by power cuts and air raids. These impacts are often greater for smaller organisations with fewer resources.

This project made an impressive start in advancing communication in humanitarian emergencies among the participating actors, and it strengthened media outlets' capacity to deliver effective, participatory communication for crisis-affected people during its lifespan. After the project ceased, some media outlets continued to embed humanitarian communication and participatory approaches in their broader programmes.

For media and humanitarian actors alike, the project's greatest strength was their increased ability and skills to communicate with crisis-affected people – and each other – in all three contexts. The project was particularly successful in strengthening the capacity of media actors, but it also highlighted further opportunities for more tailored approaches and specific strategies for humanitarians.

There remains both an opportunity and a need for more organisation-wide approaches to strengthening the capacity of humanitarian actors and media outlets. This could help to overcome key barriers to the sustainable delivery of Lifeline programming, and the participation of, and accountability to, crisis-affected people. These barriers include these organisations' operations, two-way communication systems and funding models.

[1] The other two learning briefs produced under this programme can be found at the following link – https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediaaction/publications-and-resources/research/briefings/somalia/nigeria/ukraine/ache/

Much more work is needed, particularly in establishing mechanisms that identify and prioritise the communication needs and priorities of crisis-affected populations.

Longer-term projects would also facilitate a longer-lasting effect and increase the chances of sustainable 'Lifeline' communication and participatory approaches. Short, sharp interventions are often the norm for humanitarian agencies that are under pressure to spend money within short timeframes and respond quickly to emergencies. However, humanitarian challenges are often deep-rooted and require longer-term, systemic approaches.

BBC Media Action played a unique role in helping to advance humanitarian communication among the targeted actors, because it is trusted by both media and humanitarians, and has expertise in working with the media. Nevertheless, future interventions are needed to further build the capacity of media and humanitarian actors to sustainably deliver 'Lifeline' communication. These interventions should also strengthen co-ordination and existing relationships to advocate for systemic change in the humanitarian co-ordination system, to prioritise communication in humanitarian emergencies.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAP	Accountability to affected people
ACHE	Advancing Communication in Humanitarian Emergencies
BHA	Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance
IDP	Internally displaced person
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation

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1. INTRODUCTION

In September 2021 BBC Media Action was funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) to deliver significant improvements in community engagement, accountability and participation within three humanitarian contexts – in Somalia, Nigeria and Ukraine. The project ran until May 2024 and the focus was on improving the "ability, motivation and connectedness of local and national actors to communicate effectively with people affected by crisis, contributing to strengthened humanitarian systems in participation and accountability to affected persons".[2]

BBC Media Action designed two interconnected interventions to support these aims:

BBC Media Action definition of Lifeline communication:

Special media programming for people affected by humanitarian crisis. It aims to give them a voice and provide timely, relevant and practical information to help alleviate their suffering and assist with their recovery. It can play an important role in strengthening community engagement and accountability of relief providers.

See this website for further information – *Lifeline Programming*

1) Building the capacity of local and national actors to integrate communication, participation and accountability approaches in their work with crisis-affected populations, which includes both IDPs and host communities.
2) Building more effective working relationships and bridges between existing humanitarian actors, co-ordination mechanisms, and national and local organisations that are key to humanitarian response

Formative research conducted for this project identified a need for media outlets to produce more informed programming that is relevant and effective for crisis-affected communities, and to work more collaboratively with the humanitarian organisations providing support on the ground. As such, the project engaged local actors, including local media partners, humanitarian responders, relevant local non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations (CSOs) and government agencies, in capacity strengthening workshops and sessions to improve communication, participation and accountability strategies and services for crisis-affected communities in each of the three countries.

The primary tools for delivery were training workshops with media and humanitarian actors, mentoring sessions for media outlets, identified and selected through a needs assessment process, and roundtable discussions with key response actors. Overall, the project supported

[2] BBC Media Action ACHE project proposal, 2021.

337 media, humanitarian and government actors across the three implementation countries. The project also provided key equipment and software for media outlets to keep, alongside technical training to use these resources effectively. Resources and funds were also provided during the project to help media outlets reach crisis-affected communities. Throughout the project, media partners in the three countries co-produced Lifeline content, tailoring platforms and formats for each context, to provide local crisis-affected communities with critical humanitarian information.

Three learning briefs were commissioned to help inform existing and future work and build knowledge of best practice. These briefs should be read in conjunction with each other. This brief, the first in this series, focuses on the first project aim, looking at the enablers and barriers in the delivery of "Lifeline" communication (see text box) and participatory approaches with crisis-affected populations.

The second learning brief (***ACHE Lifeline Learning Brief Two***) focuses on the relationships between different actors, and BBC Media Action's role in facilitating partnerships and collaborations to support communication with crisis-affected people. The third brief (***ACHE Lifeline Learning Brief Three***) focuses on audiences, and how the Lifeline communication and participatory approaches supported crisis-affected people.

Contexts

The Advancing Communication in Humanitarian Emergencies (ACHE) project was implemented in three contexts:

- The South-West state of Somalia, which has been exposed to three decades of protracted conflict and humanitarian crisis
- The states of Borno and Adamawa in North-East Nigeria, which has experienced more than 10 years of internal conflict with widespread insecurity, with North-East Nigeria hosting an estimated 2.2 million people who have been displaced as a result of the conflict[3]
- The frontline region of Zaporizhzhia and the eastern Oblast of Dnipro in Ukraine, where the humanitarian situation is deteriorating as armed conflict continues to escalate[4]

[3] UN Migration/Global Data Institute Displacement Tracking Matrix (2023) 'Nigeria — North-east — Mobility Tracking Round 46 IDP and Returnee Atlas'. Available at: https://dtm.iom.int/reports/nigeria-north-east-mobility-tracking-round-46-idp-and-returnee-atlas-december-2023

[4] Reliefweb (2024) Ukraine. Available at: https://reliefweb.int/country/ukr

2. LEARNING QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH METHODS

This learning brief aims to help identify the successes, challenges and opportunities for media and humanitarian actors to deliver Lifeline communication and participatory approaches sustainably in humanitarian contexts. This brief will help to inform and strengthen knowledge and future interventions in the media and humanitarian sectors.

BBC Media Action designed a set of learning questions to inform this brief. The research methodology drew on interviews with ten key stakeholders involved in the project in Somalia, Nigeria, Ukraine and members of the global team (see Appendix 1). It also used findings from BBC Media Action's evaluative research reports and products. Indicative findings were tested with BBC Media Action's ACHE project and research leads.

Once the project closed, specific roles stopped so key informants' post-project knowledge of collaborations is limited to the immediate aftermath of the project, and to media stations that BBC Media Action works with on other projects.

Learning questions

- How far are the media and humanitarian partners using BBC Media Action's training/mentoring?

- What were/are the barriers and enablers for the media and humanitarian actors to integrate and deliver Lifeline communication and approaches during the project, and afterwards?

- What motivates actors to integrate and deliver Lifeline communication and participatory approaches with affected populations?

3. FINDINGS

3.1. HOW FAR ARE THE MEDIA AND HUMANITARIAN ACTORS USING THE TRAINING/MENTORING?

Findings from the interviews with key informants, and a review of key research information, suggest that media and humanitarian partners used and applied the skills and participatory approaches during the project lifespan, and to some extent afterwards.

For media practitioners, this included embedding humanitarian topics and accountability to affected people (AAP) approaches in their work, and strengthened two-way dialogue and communication with crisis-affected populations. Both humanitarian and media practitioners strengthened their overall skills in communicating with affected people, and each other.

The following sections detail how far these learning and skills are being applied, key enablers and barriers, and recommendations for future initiatives.

3.1.1. Applying Lifeline communication and participation skills: Media

Overall: The project was successful in increasing individuals' knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver Lifeline communication

Media practitioners reported using the training, skills and participatory approaches in their overall programmes, not just Lifeline programmes. This included strengthening and adapting their production style and presentation to align more with BBC Media Action standards, including humanitarian topics in their content, and focusing on amplifying the voice of crisis-affected people. In Ukraine specifically, following media practitioners participation in the project, they introduced fact-checking of information, such as contact information for humanitarian services, ahead of Lifeline content being disseminated.

Overall, after taking part in the ACHE project, media practitioners reported feeling better able to communicate with people during crises and address humanitarian issues, and being more confident about interviewing crisis-affected people. They also reported sharing project learning with colleagues, facilitating a multiplier effect.

Enabler: Training and mentoring was particularly effective with the media as it was tailored to their identified needs

As part of the project, capacity and needs assessments, and media content analysis, were conducted to identify the needs of specific media outlets and tailor interventions accordingly. Post-training mentoring was a key enabler in embedding project participants' knowledge and skills, and helping them to apply these directly.

Barrier: Knowledge and skills training was limited to a small number of media practitioners

While some project participants shared learning with their colleagues, key informants stated that the training would have a more sustainable effect if more individuals were reached by holding additional training sessions.

3.1.2. Applying Lifeline communication and participation skills: humanitarians

Overall: The project was successful in helping to strengthen humanitarian practitioners' ability to communicate with crisis-affected people, but more limited than it was with media

Like the media practitioners, humanitarian actors reported being better able to communicate with crisis-affected people as a result of the project. For example, humanitarian actors in Nigeria said they were more able to communicate with internally displaced people (IDPs) following the training, better understanding both their needs and how to communicate with them effectively. They also highlighted feeling more equipped and informed to communicate with the media. In Ukraine and Nigeria, some humanitarians felt they already had expertise in many of the training topics but working with the media was as a new area for them.

Enabler: The strongest enabler of humanitarians' learning was being connected with the media

Lifeline training enabled connections to be built between humanitarian actors and media practitioners, with some humanitarian actors mentioning that they are now more confident to communicate with crisis-affected people, citing how they have collaborated with media to produce lifeline programmes, by granting interviews and linking respondents to available services.

Barrier: The project had less emphasis on capacity strengthening with humanitarian actors

Humanitarians received less follow-up mentoring, and less support for specific organisations through this project, than media actors, and the local strategy for humanitarian actors was not as specific as that for the media. This meant that the project had a more limited impact on building the capacity of humanitarian actors. BBC Media Action has exceptional expertise in working with the media. While it also has experience of working with humanitarian organisations, this is not evenly spread across the organisation.

In Nigeria, BBC Media Action made attempts to partner with a humanitarian organisation for delivery, but longer than expected donor approval processes and local registration challenges prevented this.

3.1.3. Embedding of humanitarian topics and AAP approaches

Overall: The project equipped media outlets to embed humanitarian topics and approaches into their existing programmes

The project closure also meant the end of many specific Lifeline programmes, for example in Ukraine, however, some production of Lifeline content continued after the project end in Nigeria and Somalia – even without external funding.

Enabler: Embedding Lifeline content into existing media programmes appears to be more sustainable and less resource-intensive

In Nigeria, the approach during and after the project was to integrate Lifeline content or segments into pre-existing programmes, working with humanitarian actors. This structured input from humanitarians stopped after the project end, but programme modification continued – such as incorporating humanitarian topics like food security into media content, and two-way formats like discussion programmes.

Enabler: Staff motivation and a sense of moral duty was a clear contributor to ongoing work

For example, the Lifeline programmes in Somalia that continued after the project end without additional funding were cited as doing so because the staff believed in the product and were motivated to help crisis-affected people.

Barrier: Funding was the key barrier to continuing full programming

Lack of funds and resources is a common challenge for local agencies. Additionally, donor funding was reported to sometimes inadvertently challenge the sustainability of Lifeline programmes. For example, some media outlets that continued to create Lifeline programming after the project funds stopped ceased these broadcasts when they were offered donor funding for new programmes.

3.1.4. Accountability and participation

Overall: More work is needed to integrate local voices and groups into humanitarian agency dialogue

Particularly in Somalia, the roundtable discussions highlighted that humanitarian agency feedback mechanisms often miss out the voices of women, as women are restricted by their domestic responsibilities. This means that women's unique needs are not explicitly included in humanitarian responses. Local community leaders were also cited as needing to be included in the design of communication with crisis-affected people.

Enabler: The project integrated accountability for crisis-affected people by amplifying their voice on media platforms

A key component of Lifeline programming is including crisis-affected people through two-way dialogue, "amplifying their voice" and the participation of multiple actors. This includes crisis-affected people being supported to express their concerns to humanitarian and government actors.

Participation and accountability: positive programme impact

Female respondents from rural areas of Borno who listened to the *Me Ke Faruwa* (What is happening?) radio debate programme in Nigeria said the programme helped them to resolve a lack of water due to dirt in the drains. The programme educated people to stop throwing dirt into drains that caused blocked drains, flooding and even cholera. Residents called the programme to urge the government to help. The government subsequently cleared the drains and advised residents to stop blocking them.

Source: BBC Media Action research finding

BBC Media Action research found that the affected population across both states in Nigeria believed that the Lifeline radio programmes resulting from this project effectively captured their concerns because they addressed issues that affect them, such as sanitation, hygiene, food supply and rape. Awareness-raising programmes on sanitation and hygiene helped to facilitate discussions and helped people to demand accountability, apparently influencing government action (see text box).

This project also facilitated relationships between media and humanitarian actors by increasing awareness of their roles and building trust (*See* ***ACHE Lifeline Learning Brief Two***). This enabled more humanitarians to participate in media programming, providing their expertise and opportunities for dialogue and discussion. It appears that this continued on an ad-hoc basis after the project, building on relationships established through the project, but humanitarians' structured input into media programming stopped once the project ended.

Enabler: Giving local people a public platform to express their concerns helps to facilitate action

This can be for multiple and varied reasons. For example, this public exposure can sometimes raise awareness of an issue that was previously unknown to government and the aid community, or it can encourage action on a known issue. Bringing humanitarians into media programmes allows for increased dialogue between humanitarian actors and crisis-affected communities, providing a platform for them to express their concerns.

Barrier: Accountability and participation relies on effective, two-way mechanisms that can sometimes be a challenge

This point is explored further in the next section, 3.1.5.

3.1.5. Participation and two-way communication with crisis-affected people: Media

Overall: The project successfully helped to integrate crisis-affected people's voices into communication responses, but systems remain challenging

The project conducted research with crisis-affected communities, and media and humanitarian actors, which helped to inform the design and content of its interventions. Media outlets' programmes used research from BBC Media Action to understand and address the needs of crisis-affected people, and integrate their voices. The project also helped journalists to reach and speak with vulnerable groups, such as by providing vehicles to reach IDP camps.

Two-way systems used to communicate with and gather information from crisis-affected communities are a critical part of crisis-affected people's voices being heard. In Nigeria, key informants reported media outlets integrating phone-ins into their programmes, allowing audience members to dial in and have their say. In Ukraine, journalists also used social media dialogue and comment tracking to understand crisis-affected people's concerns.

While the project resulted in some improvements in two-way systems, there remain clear opportunities and needs for further strengthening. This includes technical support and systems to fully mainstream two-way communication into all media Lifeline programming.

Two-way communication systems were particularly challenging for some media outlets. For example, in Somalia each radio station has a single phone number for all programmes for their audiences to contact. This means that journalists must listen to recordings of listeners' messages for all programmes in their radio station to find those that are relevant to them.

3.1.6. Participation and two-way communication with crisis-affected people: Humanitarian actors

Overall: Across the intervention countries, there were few unified mechanisms for humanitarian agencies to identify priority information needs and responses, leaving communication gaps for crisis-affected people

For example, in Nigeria, project research showed gaps in humanitarians' understanding and knowledge of the needs of crisis-affected communities, with communication generally described as "one-way". In Ukraine, research highlighted challenges around understanding the language used by aid actors, and humanitarians' lack of participation in the most trusted information spaces such as refugee-to-refugee online spaces. In Somalia, key informants highlighted the challenges of a limited humanitarian co-ordination system and lack of effective 'communication with communities'.

Barrier: Siloed ways of working, and humanitarian systems' lack of transparency and openness

Humanitarian agencies face multiple barriers to establishing effective, unified mechanisms for two-way communication and accountability. A key barrier is siloed ways of working, which is explored further in ***ACHE Lifeline Learning Brief Two***. For example in Somalia, humanitarians highlighted the limitations of complaint and feedback mechanisms run by different agencies to collect community inputs and address any issues raised. They noted that these mechanisms lack transparency and openness as they are not collaborative.

Crisis-affected people find multiple processes and systems used by different agencies to be confusing and burdensome, so they are often simply not used. Additionally, aid agencies' complaint and consultation mechanisms often miss out the women's voices, as noted above.

Enabler: The project enabled a successful open discussion between agencies on two-way communication with crisis-affected communities

This is an important first step in supporting the participation of, and accountability to, crisis-affected people in Lifeline programming, but sustained dialogue and collaboration is needed to embed and enhance two-way communication practices.

3.2. BARRIERS AND ENABLERS TO INTEGRATE AND DELIVER LIFELINE COMMUNICATION AND APPROACHES

Contextual issues are one of the largest barriers to delivering Lifeline communication

For humanitarian and media actors alike, physical barriers affect all kinds of responses and interventions. This varies by context but includes power cuts, resources and the socio-political environment. In protracted crises like those in Somalia and Nigeria, humanitarian responders

are used to their work having to stop for weeks on end as security issues arise. In Ukraine, responders are regularly interrupted by power cuts and air raids, and often have to work from bunkers. While physical barriers are of course cross-cutting, the impact is greater on smaller organisations with less resource for back up – such as when power cuts take place.

Local humanitarian responders are part of crisis-affected communities

Local responders (eg NGOs and local media personnel) are often part of the crisis-affected population. This enables them to empathise with key issues faced by the affected community and serves as a strong motivation to act. However, this also means that they need support. This was particularly apparent in Ukraine, where local journalists were working long hours, separated from their families and sorely needed psychosocial support.

Crisis-affected communities are not always willing or able to communicate with aid communities

This was particularly clear in Ukraine, where aid agencies spoke of the challenge in speaking with members of vulnerable groups who are clearly traumatised. This is sometimes exacerbated by the lack of co-ordination between agencies, resulting in multiple agencies approaching the same crisis-affected groups for similar information.

Information overload

'Information noise' was highlighted by humanitarians in Ukraine as particularly challenging. Humanitarian responders can face difficulties in cutting through the large amounts of information they are confronted with, in order to identify priorities and streamline information for crisis-affected communities.

Limited organisational capacity strengthening

Overall findings point to a strong consensus that the project provided a very good start in advancing communication in emergencies, but more time is needed for this to fully materialise. It is clear that this project helped to increase the capacity of individuals across the humanitarian and media sectors in their communication with crisis-affected people.

While some of the upskilling is cross-cutting within institutions, it largely applies to individuals rather than the organisational systems, structures and mechanisms that need support. Additionally, there was limited scope for capacity strengthening to dive deeply into contextual issues, for example working with traumatised people.

Funding

Lack of resources for media outlets and humanitarian organisations is a pressing issue, particularly for smaller organisations. Although some resources (eg equipment for media outlets) remained after the project, other challenges remained (eg funding for Lifeline programming). Some key informants reported that donor funding sometimes inadvertently challenged the sustainability of Lifeline programmes, with programmes ceasing when funding was provided to media outlets for other programmes

Capacity to create and deliver Lifeline communication

This project provided equipment and software to media outlets as well as resources and funds to help them reach crisis-affected communities. The equipment and software remains with the media outlets and is being used after the project end, increasing their overall efficiency and quality of programming.

The end of project funds and vehicles to reach communities means that limited resources are a challenge again. However, some media practitioners, for example in Somalia, continued to travel to crisis-affected areas after the project funds ceased, suggesting that these outlets maintained their motivation to produce Lifeline content, and managed to identify alternative resources.

3.3. WHAT MOTIVATES ACTORS TO INTEGRATE AND DELIVER LIFELINE COMMUNICATION AND APPROACHES?

Moral and social responsibility: Media practitioners

As they are often part of the crisis-affected community, a key driver for local responders is a sense of moral and social responsibility, along with their empathy and understanding of key issues. Although there is the challenge that local responders may also need support themselves, being part of a response can also help give them a sense of agency when surrounded by chaos. This arose from discussions with frontline journalists in Ukraine, and other emergencies. Some also felt inspired by the power of communication for development, while others were driven by the humanitarian aspect of Lifeline programming.

Desire to respond well and reach BBC standards: Media practitioners

Findings related to the media practitioners involved in this project highlighted their desire to respond well to emergencies, which links up with a sense of moral and social responsibility, and organisational reputation.

The BBC has a very good reputation among project partners and affiliates (see ***ACHE Lifeline Learning Brief Two***), and participants were motivated to incorporate approaches endorsed by such a respected and trusted organisation. Participants were motivated by a conviction that training from BBC Media Action would enhance the quality and standard of their programmes, given the BBC's reputation in broadcasting.

Opportunity to engage with communication: Humanitarians

Humanitarian project participants reported perceiving communication with crisis-affected communities as important, but that funding challenges mean that communication is often deprioritised. This project not only foregrounded communication but also motivated humanitarians as it enabled them to be involved with something they believe to be important without having to fund it themselves.

Funds/resources

Local responders often lack the funds and resources to respond appropriately, so it is in their interest to collaborate with projects that unlock resources and funds to support their work. Funding was specifically cited as a challenge in Somalia, where there is animosity between local and international actors – with international actors receiving more definite funds for response work, and local actors receiving much less funding, if any.

Audience response and engagement

A key motivator for embedding and delivering Lifeline communication is that it prompts responses from members of crisis-affected communities, and often increases media and humanitarian organisations' audience reach and engagement. This is inspiring and encouraging for media actors – and important to humanitarians who often need large reach figures for their reporting and donor requirements.

A desire to improve their reputation

For varying reasons explored in ***ACHE Lifeline Learning Brief Two***, media and humanitarian organisations struggle with negative perceptions from both crisis-affected communities and each other. They are aware of this, and so it is in their personal and organisational interests to be perceived well by crisis-affected communities and other sectors. This is one motivator for communicating well with crisis-affected communities.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Consider strategies to allow training to go beyond individuals

Individual practitioners reported increased knowledge and skills following capacity strengthening activities, however future training could be expanded to include local training of trainer sessions. This would enable practitioners to have more ownership of the work and reducing the need for as much external support, progressing towards a more sustainable approach.

B. Consider a more tailored strategy to support humanitarian practitioners' and organisations' needs

There is opportunity and need for more tailored work to fully understand and address specific barriers that humanitarians face in applying and integrating communication and participation with crisis-affected people in their delivery. For example, for future work in this area, it may be effective to partner with an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) for post-training mentoring and capacity strengthening with humanitarians, which would have the added advantage of strengthening relationships and facilitating collaboration.

C. Conduct further dialogue across communities to identify appropriate, culturally sensitive mechanisms that allow all voices to be heard

Future programmes should help to model best practice by integrating wider voices into programmes, and amplifying the voices of crisis-affected communities.

D. Conduct further capacity strengthening with media organisations to systematise their existing two-way communication systems

Stronger media outlets' audience communication systems could result in humanitarian agencies using audience-driven information and learning to improve their response. Humanitarian organisations often focus on feedback mechanisms for their AAP and learning about their aid responses. It can be more challenging for agencies to establish or use platforms for the participation and dialogue with crisis-affected communities that inclusive decision-making and effective responses require. There is the opportunity to strengthen media networks, and facilitate shared learning and information between media and humanitarian organisations, to support more cohesive Lifeline programming.

E. Improve the transparency and effectiveness of humanitarian agencies' feedback mechanisms, and improve humanitarian and media actors' access to information, to address the communication needs of crisis-affected people

Further dialogue and co-ordination is needed between agencies to progress in this area. Moreover, the establishment of humanitarian communication working groups. could help to

identify, streamline, and share the priority communication needs of crisis-affected people with media practitioners and humanitarian responders. It might also be helpful to bring in actors from similar regions who have effective mechanisms, to share learning about their systems. Additionally, local leaders should be part of dialogue to help agencies better understand crisis-affected communities.

F. Lifeline training and mentoring would benefit from partnerships with thematic specialists who can provide psychological support to responders, eg frontline journalists.

Local responders are often part of crisis-affected communities. Given this, future capacity strengthening initiatives should integrate relevant support for these responders, such as psychosocial support from frontline journalists in Ukraine.

G. Consider longer-term projects that seek to strengthen organisations and allow for deep-dives on contextual issues.

Though not impossible, it is challenging to strengthen systems if organisations lack their own internal systems and structures to accommodate them. Future projects should be expanded to allow organisational capacity strengthening. They could then help to assess and strengthen media outlets' two-way communication systems, operations, technology needs, strategy and funding models, which all emerged as potential barriers to long-term sustainable delivery. A similar, longer-term approach could be applied to humanitarian organisations, potentially via a humanitarian partner.

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED WITH KEY INFORMANTS

Country	Role	Name
Nigeria	Senior Project Manager	Nicholas Rao
Nigeria	Research Officer	Janet Conqueror
Nigeria	Head of Production and Training	Deji Arosho
Nigeria	Project Manager	Innocent Maduekwe
Ukraine	Research Officer	Olena Vypirailenko
Ukraine	Project Manager	Cian Ibbotson
Ukraine	On-the-ground Co-ordinator	Dima Khilchenko
Somalia	Research Manager	Hodan Ibrahim
Somalia	Project Director	Mohamed Yonis
Somalia	Humanitarian Communication Co-ordinator	Mohamed Abdimalik

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