

INSPIRING THE HUMANITARIAN LEADERS OF TOMORROW

A Guiding Star Narrative for the
Humanitarian Leadership Academy (HLA).



The HLA's Leadership Guiding Star

In a world grappling with unprecedented challenges, the need for visionary leadership within the humanitarian sector has never been greater. The mission of the Humanitarian Leadership Academy extends beyond crisis response; it is to ignite a global movement of compassionate, visionary leaders who embrace systemic thinking, aspire to reshape the system, and champion locally-led action.



A Commitment to Transformative Leadership

Our Guiding Star represents our unwavering commitment to transformative leadership, drawing inspiration from Simon Western's insights on fostering connectedness in leadership behaviours that reflect a shared global responsibility and accountability. Edgar Schein's Process Consultancy, which delves into the core of organisational and community systems, seamlessly complements our decade-long commitment to fostering a coaching agenda in collaboration with Coach Mentoring Ltd.

Through this agenda, we connect experienced international leaders to emerging local leaders in solidarity. We aim to cultivate leaders who will shape the future of humanitarianism and drive positive change worldwide. These three approaches are distinct yet complementary and are all underpinned by four principles that enable us to reach our Guiding Star: supporting and enabling locally-driven empowerment, establishing a systemic, global, collaborative Network, cultivating profound connections, and eliminating obstacles to cultural development.



Approach 1

Eco-Leadership: Nurturing Systemic Thinkers

Our approach is firmly grounded in the principles of Eco-Leadership, nurturing humanitarian leaders who champion holistic perspectives, seeking to understand and address both the immediate crisis symptoms and their underlying root causes, while fostering resilience and sustainable solutions. Eco-Leadership transcends traditional top-down approaches, reshaping power relationships and values, recognising that everyone can play an active role within an ecosystem. This inclusive perspective opens our minds to new possibilities and empowers voices from marginalised communities. Our adoption of Eco-Mutualist thinking encourages engaged collaborations, maximising systemic opportunities. Eco-Mutualism is a dynamic, context-specific process, making it responsive to local dynamics.

Approach 2

Process Consultancy Approach: Cultivating Change Agents

We acknowledge that change within organisations and systems requires more than directives; it necessitates a humble inquiry into human dynamics, cultures, and motivations. Our cadre of experienced humanitarian coaches will facilitate change by asking open questions about organisational culture, learning from others, and exploring our vulnerabilities with humility and a willingness to learn. In doing so, we aim to assist individuals and organisations in attaining self-awareness and taking ownership of their journey towards transformation. Through this approach, our coaches will initiate a ripple effect of enduring and positive change within the humanitarian sector, always with a humble attitude towards the complexities of this journey.

Approach 3

Coaching Excellence: Leveraging Experience for Growth

Over the span of a decade, we have continued to refine our coaching agenda through a collaborative partnership with Coach Mentoring Ltd, wholeheartedly embracing the transformative potential of coaching and peer support. Our emerging leaders are poised to benefit greatly from the mentorship and deep expertise offered by experienced humanitarian leaders, who serve as professional coaches. We remain dedicated to expanding this pool of professional humanitarian coaches, bolstering our ability to offer substantial support to leaders and their teams during moments of crisis and change. This expansion will allow us to tap into the collective wisdom and extensive experience of our humanitarian mentors, further enhancing our commitment to leadership development in the humanitarian sector.

Guiding Principles

Navigating the Path to Humanitarian Leadership

We firmly believe that propelling these approaches forward is vital to enable the visionary leadership required to drive positive change in the Humanitarian system.

How these approaches are achieved is as important as the principles that underpin them, which will be critical to their collective and individual successions, and eliminating obstacles to cultural development.



Principle 1

Locally-Driven Empowerment:

We wholeheartedly champion the principle of locally-driven empowerment. Our focus is on nurturing leaders who empower communities to take charge of their development and disaster response initiatives. This principle underscores the significance of collaborative partnerships with local organisations, the appreciation of diverse perspectives, and the respectful acknowledgment of cultural nuances.

Eco-Mutualism, central to our philosophy, guides us to engage in collaborative efforts that harness systemic opportunities while remaining responsive to the intricacies of local contexts. This holistic approach ensures not only the sustainability but also the effectiveness of our humanitarian interventions.

Principle 2

Global Systemic Collaborative Network:

Another core principle is the establishment of a systemic, global collaborative network comprising like-minded organisations, individuals, and communities who share our vision for humanitarian leadership.

Together, and guided by systemic thinking, we magnify our impact and act collaboratively, enhancing our capacity to tackle intricate humanitarian challenges and promote collective action for systemic change and transformation.

Principle 3

Cultivating Profound Connections:

We deeply recognise the significance of creating time and space for profound connections within our organisation and with our partners. Inquiry and authentic dialogue flourish in an environment where individuals can connect on a deep level.

We actively promote reflective practices and open forums that facilitate the exchange of diverse perspectives and experiences, nurturing a culture of continuous learning and growth.

Principle 4

Eliminating Obstacles to Cultural Development:

We are unwaveringly dedicated to identifying and dismantling processes that impede the development of the culture we aspire to create. This entails an ongoing examination of our own practices and a willingness to adapt and evolve. We acknowledge that change starts from within, and we actively strive to eliminate barriers that hinder us from fostering a culture of collaboration and innovation.

Summary

We are not merely leaders of today; **we are the architects of tomorrow's world**, where fostering positive global impact becomes the standard, and transformation is our enduring legacy.

Our Guiding Star directs us towards a future where humanitarianism transcends crisis response and aims to spark profound and lasting change. We stand resolute in our commitment to shaping this future, one defined by visionary leadership, systemic thinking, and an unwavering dedication to fostering positive global impact, all while embracing the valuable lessons we gather on our journey.

