Response Innovation Labs

Why
Where
What
How
We envision a world where innovation plays a key role in advancing humanitarian responses, reducing suffering and saving lives in emergencies.

We complement emergency response operations developing, testing and rolling out proven concepts, overcoming context-specific problems to support people affected by crisis.

We work to create a supportive and safe environment to invent, test and adapt new ways of dealing with problems when and where they occur ... on the ground floor of an emergency.

Response Innovation Lab’s core purpose is to solve real, on-the-ground humanitarian problems.
Unmet Innovation Needs and Opportunities in a Crisis

**Access**
“If my team is going to test and refine innovations we need access to work in the crisis area. M&E and iterative design requires on the ground tests.”
Academic Innovators

**Connection/ Collaboration**
“I keep hearing about how there is a desire to build more non-traditional collaborations, but there’s no obvious place to reach out to with potential fits”
Commercial Manager

**Scanning / Scale Out**
“There are ideas and new tools available in the global community that could help. I just don’t have time or connections to find the right ones”
Response Manager

**Filtering**
“There are too many people rushing into the area with ideas and innovations. I don’t have time to sort through which are appropriate and tested”
Response Manager

**Mentoring**
“I’ve lived here for my whole life. I have ideas that could help but I don’t have the connections or the mentoring to develop and deploy them”
Local Innovator

**Focus**
“We try to encourage innovation, but inevitably people get pulled away to deal with something that seems more urgent at the moment.”
Innovating Aid Worker

**Adoption**
“Most of the time innovations get done on the side. The people who really need to deploy and adopt them are left out of the creative journey, so in the end no one is on board to adopt.”
Response Manager

**Incubation / Scale Up**
“When we have ideas that has been successfully developed in context, too often they fall through the cracks and just languish.”
NGO Worker and Local Innovator
Innovation Labs are emerging to deal with a range of Humanitarian Relief needs.

(RIL’s support the development and use of innovation in Chaotic relief environments)

Where Do Response Innovation Labs Work?

- **GAHI**
  Cross Sector Convening

- **START LABS**
  Thematic Innovation (Blockchain, Finance, etc.)

- **UNIVERSITY LABS**
  Academic Institution Based

- **AGENCY LABS**
  UN Mission Focused Thematic

- **GHL**
  New Global Humanitarian Labs - Being Defined

- **USAID RAN**
  Resilient Africa Network 4 In-Country Labs

- **DEPP**
  Disaster Preparedness in High Risk Countries

- **GRASSROOTS LABS**
  Lots of Local Incubators and Lab Spaces

- **UNIVERSITY LABS**
  Academic Institution Based

Protracted Crisis

Preparedness
Early Warning
Slow Onset
Recovery
Rehabilitation

Spike
What Makes a RIL Unique?

1. Lab’s Agile Core
   - Chaotic Context
   - Broad Engagement
   - Space to Think Differently
   - Passionate Team Experienced in Both Innovation and Relief
   - “like a skunkworks in action”

2. Intentional Focus on Emergency Response
   - real time response
   - focusing on innovations that matter
   - engaging real people in affected communities
   - innovate despite on the ground distractions

3. Unique Network that Engages both Global and In Context Innovators
   - Network of Resources and Tools
   - Innovators and Entrepreneurs Outside the Crisis
   - Commercial Innovators
   - Academic Researchers

   deep connections to in-context relief actors
   problem owners and local innovators are part of creative journey
Overview of a Deployed Response Innovation Lab (DRIL)

Mixing Pot Where Diverse Innovators Easily Engage ...in the Field ...During a Response

- International NGO's/Agencies
- Academics & Universities
- Commercial Innovators
- NGO Field Teams
- Community Members
- Local Innovators
- Institutional Actors
- Innovation Experts

Solve Immediate Problems
- Field Problem
- Share Answers
- International, National, Local Solutions

Solution!!

Incubate Innovations
- Thematic Problem Focus
  - (e.g. Wash)

Scale Up Innovations
- (In-context applications)

Discover and Test Ideas
- Great Ideas!
  - (Develop and Test)

Residencies
  - (Relevant to Context)

Promote Innovation Quality / Build Local Innovation Capacity

- Promote Humanitarian Innov. Standards
- Support Evidence Gathering
- Provide Resources / Tools
  - (e.g. Maker Space)
- Events and Training
- Local Support
  - (e.g. Mentoring, Funding Access)
Applying Agile Innovation to RIL

Opportunity to extract insights from NLab Pilot in Nepal

In collaboration with World Vision, the Nepal Innovation Lab (NLab) was established to foster inclusive and innovative solutions for effective post-earthquake humanitarian action. The NLab provides a space for innovators to develop and test their ideas to effectively overcome local problems with the guidance and support of experts from both Nepal and abroad.
Collaborative cross-sector teams are working on this now. The challenge: be ready to deploy the next pilot lab(s) by the start of 2017.
Core Partners to build, collaborate and deploy the RIL

- Help us build the RIL by giving staff time for a range of support (ex. M&E, Innovation Services, Surge Roster and training)
- Attend monthly meetings
- Support a deployed RIL once a year

Funding and Investment

Invest in the RIL and help us find donors so we can deploy 2 labs to where innovation can make the biggest difference – for the most vulnerable people in the world hit by disasters.

What we need Now

To connect email jennifer@responseinnovationlab.com