



TRIPLELINE

Creating Hope in Conflict (2018-2022) Independent Evaluation

Final Report

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List of abbreviations

CAD	Canadian Dollars
CHIC	Creating Hope in Conflict
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EPP	Energy Peace Partners
EQ	Evaluation questions
FCDO	UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
GBP	British Pound Sterling
GC	Grand Challenge
GCC	Grand Challenges Canada
HIF	Humanitarian Innovation Fund
KII	Key informant interview
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NW	Northwest
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
P-REC	Peace Renewable Energy Certificate
TA	Technical assistance
TTS	Transition to scale
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
VFM	Value for money
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme

Executive Summary

This independent evaluation provides an external assessment of Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC), the Humanitarian Grand Challenge programme from its launch in 2018 through to 2022. The evaluation has a dual purpose of accountability and learning and focuses on CHIC's contribution to the humanitarian system. It addresses an overarching question: 'To what extent and how did the CHIC programme, using the Grand Challenge approach and humanitarian innovation, contribute to systemic improvements in the provision of healthcare, information, energy and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), in conflict-driven humanitarian crises?'

CHIC's stated aim is to 'identify, fund and accelerate innovative solutions that enable life-saving or life-improving assistance to reach the people worst affected by conflict-generated humanitarian crises, including those who are particularly vulnerable or who are located in inaccessible areas.'¹ It was established in 2018 as a partnership between donors and is managed by Grand Challenges Canada. CHIC focuses on addressing acute needs of people in conflict settings through a Grand Challenge model in four thematic areas: WASH, energy, life-saving information and health supplies and services. During the period evaluated, CHIC awarded 73 seed and transition to scale grants to 64 innovators, including NGOs, for-profit organizations, and academic institutions² and had a total budget of CAD 38m.

Context: CHIC described the global humanitarian context in terms of spiraling numbers of people in need of assistance and highlighted conflict as a primary 'driver' of global humanitarian needs. It defined the problem of humanitarian action struggling to 'reach' people in conflicts and identified humanitarian innovation as an opportunity to improve 'humanitarian access'. CHIC identified investment in humanitarian innovation as a further challenge. The context soon after CHIC's launch was also impacted by the global Covid-19 pandemic.

Methodology: The objective was to conduct an independent evaluation of CHIC's programme, portfolio and systemic contributions using key evaluation questions adapted from the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, outcomes, and impact. The evaluators found CHIC to be evaluable, with some limitations. They undertook the evaluation independently and impartially and managed risks to independence arising from the close partnership with GCC and management reporting lines for the evaluation. A bespoke evaluation framework centered on a logic model developed in inception. The evaluators conducted a detailed review of 50 documents, interviewed 27 key stakeholders, conducted an innovator survey, three mini-case studies and a value for money analysis and took a structured approach to generating evidence and facilitating learning. Some limitations arose due to gaps in CHIC monitoring, evaluation and learning products and the diverging perspectives of CHIC managers and humanitarian system actors.

Relevance and Coherence: 'Doing the right thing'

Humanitarian System Relevance: The CHIC programme's objectives and activities responded moderately well to needs and recognized problems in the humanitarian system, to humanitarian policy priorities and the policy interests of its four donors. It was considered relevant to the humanitarian system in several diverse ways, including through its support for humanitarian innovation. CHIC-funded projects addressed thematic 'barriers' whilst its overall clarity of problem definition and analysis were less strong.

Relevance to innovators: CHIC responded very well to the funding needs of innovators working in conflict settings, providing income stability and flexible, adaptable support – also vital during the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. Technical assistance design was well suited to responding to the set-up needs of seed grantees, but somewhat less well suited to the scaling and networking needs of transition to scale grantees and preparation for life beyond the grant.

¹ CHIC (2020) Theory of Change, September 2020.

² See CHIC evaluation portfolio analysis (Annex 1)

Relevance to people in need of assistance: CHIC responded moderately well to the needs of people affected by conflict, including hard-to-reach populations and vulnerable groups. Many innovators had started to report early success in saving or improving lives. CHIC supported relevance principally through engagement of local actors and funding innovators from within local communities, and relevance was well supported by its fund management processes. For some innovations, needs of vulnerable groups were addressed later on in implementation rather than from the outset.

Relevance to other actors: Many aspects of CHIC's approach helped to ensure that the programme responded to the needs and priorities of community partners: CHIC had a strong commitment to local community engagement and was relevant to them. Engagement with the private sector was valued and facilitated to some extent, but had become less of a priority.

Added value: CHIC was moderately compatible with other interventions in the humanitarian system and thematic areas. It added some value to the humanitarian innovation ecosystem by focusing on conflict-affected and local innovators and strove to coordinate with other humanitarian innovation actors in an ecosystem lacking coherence. The Grand Challenge approach was considered CHIC's primary humanitarian added value although CHIC may not have realized its full potential.

Effectiveness: 'Doing it well'

Programme effectiveness: CHIC funding and technical assistance met expectations for effectiveness in delivering quality services that achieved immediate outputs, particularly the funding of a broad range of early-stage innovations. This was a notable achievement given the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. CHIC was somewhat effective at facilitating learning – more of a challenge given the pandemic – and for a variety of reasons was less effective, in the time period, for achieving longer term outcomes of system change and sustainability.

Programme efficiency: CHIC systems and processes ensured economy in terms of achieving an optimal combination of quality, service, time and cost. Processes were thorough, fair, well designed and generally efficient, with some opportunities for streamlining fund processes and technical assistance provision.

Value for money: Overall, the innovation case studies showed good value for money. All four demonstrated the potential to bring about product, process or system-level change in the humanitarian system and spread beyond their project locations and, if widely adopted, to increase either the efficiency or the cost-effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. Three innovations studied brought a range of significant and equitably experienced benefits to conflict-affected populations, surpassing expectations, and two were on a pathway to wider adoption.

Outcomes and Impact: 'So what actually happened?'

Seed innovations: CHIC's portfolio of seed innovations offered value propositions, successfully demonstrating proof of concept and improved solutions for innovation in conflict settings, despite the implementation challenges. Some had already achieved wider impacts and progress towards scaling and others seemed likely to, whilst others faced sustainability challenges. Seed innovators generated valuable evidence although more could be done to consolidate and share learning.

Scaling innovations: CHIC-funded transition to scale innovations offered diverse and promising improved solutions in health, energy and lifesaving information and demonstrated transition to scale. Some had successfully secured further funding although few were yet being more widely adopted, largely due to operational and systemic barriers, and these required more enabling support.

Responder utilization: Some 2-3 million conflict-affected people and local actors accessed and used CHIC-funded solutions. There was minimal uptake and use by large international humanitarian responders (e.g., UN agencies), who perhaps lacked willingness or incentives to do so.

Systemic improvements: In its first four years, the CHIC portfolio seems to have made only limited contributions to specifically defined problems in WASH, energy, information and healthcare. CHIC's portfolio of transition to scale innovations offered some promising localized contributions to improving humanitarian action and to improving humanitarian outcomes through local actors, but, looking wider, these were little adopted by humanitarian actors and therefore did not lead to 'systemic' improvements to problems identified. There were missed opportunities due to insufficient

engagement with humanitarian communities of practice and in relation to sharing of evidence and learning.

Resources mobilized: CHIC-supported innovations successfully engaged private sector and local community partners and consequently leveraged financial and technical resources to support their innovations to further develop and scale. Some grantees struggled to leverage funding and wanted more support from CHIC to do so.

Conclusions present lessons learned based on the evaluation findings and the logic model developed at inception stage. They reflect on how the CHIC programme, using the Grand Challenge approach and humanitarian innovation, contributed to systemic improvements in conflict-driven humanitarian crises. They highlight what worked in the first phase of CHIC (2018-2022) and where improvements could be made to increase the programme's impact in its second phase (2023-2027).

The CHIC programme's funding enabled a unique range of mostly small innovations to be piloted and developed in fragile and conflict-affected states. Focused solely on conflict-induced humanitarian crisis, CHIC was valued for its boldness by its four government donors and provided a unique and flexible funding source which de-risked innovations. The programme delivered outputs efficiently and effectively through GCC's strong operational management. It did a good job of managing selection and funding (through robust and somewhat resource intensive procedures), technical assistance and learning facilitation, generally meeting expectations for delivering quality services and achieving immediate outputs. The CHIC programme built a portfolio of diverse technical innovations, some of which were highly promising, in the context of considerable Covid-19 challenges faced by both GCC and CHIC innovators, and managed to engage some additional capacities (including technical and financial resources) to address the broad humanitarian problems identified, through engaging partners from the private sector and local communities.

The programme struggled to optimize the Grand Challenge approach and fully realize its added value to address humanitarian problems, and could have benefited from stronger strategic focus, implementation models and MEL systems to maximize impact, thus addressing humanitarian problems and meeting its bolder ambitions. The strong portfolio of seed and TTS innovations, which offered technical solutions to a range of problems in conflict settings, had not yet resulted in sustainable local uptake, humanitarian adoption or larger scaling. The programme missed some opportunities to go beyond promising localized contributions to improved humanitarian action to transforming it and having a discernible impact on reducing humanitarian problems.

Recommendations

R1. Reinforce operations: CHIC should sustain, reinforce, and capitalize upon the operational management capacities and processes it established during the first phase (2018-2022). Such consolidation is necessary to maintain CHIC's relevance to innovators, the effectiveness of its support programme and the efficiency of its systems and processes. Specifically, CHIC should sustain funding, continue effective and efficient fund management, develop its portfolio of technical innovations with a focus on the most promising, and add capacity from the private sector and affected communities.

R2. Develop strategy: CHIC should design, implement and monitor a new multi-year strategy to purposefully guide the programme towards addressing humanitarian problems during the second phase (2023-2027). An explicit strategy is needed to specify CHIC's relevance to the humanitarian system and its added value in the humanitarian innovation ecosystem, enhance user uptake and potential contributions made by innovations, and make more discernible improvements to problems in thematic areas. Specifically, CHIC should define problems better, define objectives to maximize portfolio impact, promote sustainable uptake, take opportunities to have a more discernible impact on reducing humanitarian problems, and ensure learning.

R3. Clarify approaches: CHIC should more clearly explain how its implementation approaches will improve the humanitarian system during the second phase. This is necessary to offer greater clarity about CHIC's intended contributions to the humanitarian system, people in need of assistance, and local communities. Specifically, CHIC should define commitments to fundamental humanitarian principles and policy frameworks, specify how it will apply and develop good practice in humanitarian innovation, develop good practice in Grand Challenge approaches, specify how it will add value to the

humanitarian ecosystem, clarify how much it intends to adopt a localized approach to improve humanitarian outcomes and adopt a systemic approach to improve humanitarian action in global thematic areas.

R4. Manage risks: CHIC should define, manage and mitigate risks that could derail progress in the second phase. This is important because CHIC's strategic objectives lack clarity for the longer term, progress reporting is limited in several ways, and key stakeholders diverge noticeably in their underlying assumptions, understandings and expectations of CHIC. Specifically, CHIC should mitigate risks arising from its focus on lives saved and lives improved, its positioning and commitments on non-technical challenges, its position on localization, expectations for 'innovation advocacy', its degree of participation in humanitarian communities of practice, potential duplication of effort within the humanitarian innovation ecosystem, potential capacity overstretch, the balance of proof of concept innovations, and missed opportunities for sharing evidence and learning.

Summary of GCC's Management Response to the CHIC Independent Evaluation

The global humanitarian context is staggering, with spiraling numbers of people in need of assistance. Today, more than 339 million people around the world are in need of humanitarian assistance³. Millions of these people are unreachable by traditional humanitarian aid delivery due to armed conflict.

The *Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge (CHIC)* is the first innovation challenge to focus on humanitarian crises caused by conflict. Completing its fifth year of implementation at the end of 2022, CHIC has continued to support and expand its portfolio of over 70 innovations. As a result, over 3 million people have gained access to humanitarian innovations, resulting in the improvement of 296 thousand lives across 24 conflict-affected countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia.⁴ Additional benefits accruing from CHIC for conflict-affected communities include diversified and improved livelihoods, renewable energy expansion, and better coordinated humanitarian response efforts, among many other positive ripple effects.

Grand Challenges Canada's (GCC) believes more needs to be done to double down on these impactful results to deliver life-changing innovations to those who most need them, and build on critical lessons learned from CHIC's first phase. As part of this learning process, we commend the independent evaluator, Triple Line, for their comprehensive, in-depth independent evaluation of the first phase of the CHIC innovation platform.

GCC believes the independent evaluation findings are largely fair and balanced, reinforcing our emerging lessons learned in the first five years of the program. Importantly, the independent evaluators cataloged and reaffirmed important successes of the program including:

- CHIC was effective in developing a pipeline of early-stage seed innovations and building a portfolio of promising innovations at the Transition to Scale stage, some of which are already demonstrating impact in conflict-affected communities, demonstrating that innovation in conflict settings is possible.
- CHIC's systems and processes ensured economy in terms of achieving an optimal combination of quality, service, time, and cost.
- CHIC's objectives and activities were aligned with a range of policy interests of its four donors, and the needs of innovators and conflict-affected populations, including hard-to-reach communities, and vulnerable groups.
- The program was considered relevant to the humanitarian system in diverse ways, including through its support for humanitarian innovation and its specific focus on conflict-affected communities.

While the report is a commendable learning assessment of the program, GCC believes the independent evaluation could have done more to explore three interrelated major elements:

- 1. COVID:** The independent evaluation does not pay sufficient attention to the crucial context of the COVID pandemic that began two years after CHIC's inception and lasted throughout the first phase. Consequently, the report does not factor in the implications of this once in a lifetime crisis on the program's ability to implement, and on the innovators' ability to carry out activities and

³ United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), [Global Humanitarian Overview \(GHO\) 2023](#), released 1 December 2022.

⁴ Based on the latest CHIC results, April 2023. Data collection for the independent evaluation was completed in mid-2022, and the evaluation report does not reflect updated results that were reported after the data collection period.

achieve impact as planned. In a discussion with the independent evaluation team, it was acknowledged that there were no COVID-related questions in the evaluation methodology and the findings cannot be retrofitted to account for the pandemic.

As a result, the independent evaluation does not contextualize some key constricting dynamics that the program operated in. For instance, due to COVID travel restrictions in 2020 and 2021, the CHIC management team was not able to visit innovations, engage with humanitarian actors in-person, support innovators in-person, or fully explore adoption and scale avenues with them. In the same way, innovations were affected by various levels of pandemic restrictions which limited mobility of personnel, caused significant delays in implementation, and required resources to be diverted towards adaptations and pivots. Crucially, many were personally affected by the morbidity and mortality of COVID-19. Finally, due to COVID, one of CHIC's donors had to stop advancing funds, and ultimately reduced the amount of funding committed to CHIC, which required the team to redirect their time and energy to pivot and reallocate investment commitments to other sources. As such, we see the lack of consideration of COVID as a crucial limitation of the independent evaluation. Further, GCC anticipates that COVID will play a much less significant role in the development and implementation of CHIC's second phase.

2. **Systems Change:** GCC believes that the independent evaluation missed important nuances around CHIC's ability to have discernable impact on systems change. To be sure, systems change is a challenge the entire humanitarian sector is grappling with. It is unrealistic to expect that CHIC could bring measurable systemic change in a five-year time span. Indeed, the independent evaluation itself points out that systems change takes at least five to 15 years.

Moreover, systems change requires more resources, including time and financial resources, than what was available in the first phase of CHIC. As well, it is important to note that discernable improvements to global systems are incremental and require action from multiple players. Again, the context of COVID created a number of limitations to CHIC's ability to incrementally impact systems change within its first five years and mobilize external partners and capital to support scaling. For instance, the CHIC team focused their efforts on helping innovations adapt to the COVID reality and were limited in their ability to engage with humanitarian actors, and forge new partnerships for coordinated action. CHIC intends to increase its efforts to mobilize these actors and partners in the second phase of CHIC. However, the extent to which this will be possible is somewhat dependent on the amount of funding committed to the second phase of CHIC, and whether the program is funded from current or new donors.

3. **Grand Challenge Approach:** GCC disagrees with the conclusion that the programme struggled to optimize the Grand Challenge approach. GCC believes the independent evaluation may have relied too heavily on other organizations' definition of grand challenges, rather than assessing CHIC's performance against GCC's definition. For instance, the GCC approach, which is laid out in [The Grand Challenges Approach White Paper](#), supports broad, complex challenges that are not restricted to highly specialized, technical focus areas. Further, a [Meta-Evaluation of Grand Challenges for Development](#) programs commissioned by USAID and carried out by Triple Line commended CHIC for its "Grand Challenge design characterized by clear objective setting and informed by a strong understanding of context", and found that this was a factor that contributed to the program's overall success and achievement of results.

As a perennially learning organization, GCC acknowledges there is always room for improvement in its grand challenge models, tools and approaches for different contexts and topics. For instance, GCC believes there is an opportunity to mobilize additional actors, investors, and problem solvers around the Grand Challenge through advocacy and engagement activities which was not possible during COVID. GCC intends to explore this opportunity more fully in CHIC's second phase.

Reflecting on the independent evaluation as well as its own internal learnings, GCC will do the following in the second phase of CHIC:

- **Strategic Focus:** In the coming year, CHIC will refresh its strategic focus, approaches and tactics to optimize the program and increase the impact in its second phase. This will be done in a

consultative manner with key stakeholders with the aim of mobilizing additional resources and coordinating action in the humanitarian sector to help CHIC achieve its full potential.

- **Systems Change:** As part of its strategic refocus, CHIC will reassess how it frames and prioritizes systems change in a way that manages expectations and aligns definitions of innovators, funders, and other stakeholders. This may involve assessing whether CHIC should focus on informing and influencing the humanitarian system, rather than trying to materially change and improve it, given CHIC's limited size and funding.
- **Innovation Adoption, Scale and Sustainability:** CHIC has already begun work on an Innovation Adoption and Demand Creation Strategy to guide efforts to increase and accelerate adoption of innovations by the major humanitarian actors. This will be a critical component of CHIC systems impact approach.
- **Enhance Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning:** CHIC will expand and enhance its monitoring, evaluation and learning approaches to align with the new strategy for phase two and ensure that it better captures results stemming from efforts to increase innovation adoption and scale, and systems work.

For a full management response, please see Annex 13.

Introduction

This independent evaluation is about Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC), the humanitarian Grand Challenge programme. It provides an external assessment of CHIC, with conclusions and recommendations to inform future direction. The evaluation's dual purpose is to promote accountability to CHIC's diverse stakeholders and to facilitate learning about CHIC. The primary intended users are CHIC's Steering Committee, which is responsible for setting CHIC's overall strategic direction,⁵ and Grand Challenges Canada (GCC), which is responsible for the programme's implementation.

The evaluation focuses on CHIC's contribution to the humanitarian system. It addresses an overarching question: 'To what extent and how did the CHIC programme, using the Grand Challenge approach and humanitarian innovation, contribute to systemic improvements in the provision of healthcare, information, energy and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in conflict-driven humanitarian crises?' It conceives of CHIC as a 'programme,' which supports a 'portfolio' of humanitarian innovations and intends to contribute to 'systemic changes' that could improve humanitarian action. Findings are presented against evaluation questions which address issues of relevance and coherence; effectiveness, efficiency and value for money (VFM); and outcomes and impact.

The evaluation covers CHIC's 'first phase', a near five-year period from CHIC's launch in 2018 until the end of 2022. Its geographic scope is global with a focus on conflict-driven humanitarian crises, and the 22 conflict-affected countries for which CHIC grants were awarded.

The Creating Hope in Conflict Programme

CHIC's stated aim is to 'identify, fund and accelerate innovative solutions that enable life-saving or life-improving assistance to reach the people worst affected by conflict-generated humanitarian crises, including those who are particularly vulnerable or who are located in inaccessible areas.'⁶ CHIC-funded innovations were intended to 'engage the private sector and involve input from affected communities',⁷ enable local solutions, serve local needs and delivery gaps, overcome common delivery barriers in conflict settings, and/or improve on the timeliness and cost efficiency of current humanitarian delivery methods.

In 2018, CHIC was established as a 'partnership' between GCC, the implementing agency, and institutional donors.⁸ Donors included the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Bureau of Humanitarian Affairs, the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), Global Affairs Canada, and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In this partnership, GCC was responsible for grant-making and fund management, including launch, selection, set-up, management, monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL). GCC also contracted innovator technical assistance (TA) provision from the World Food Programme's (WFP) Innovation Accelerator and Brink, who provided innovator community support.

As set out in its Theory of Change, CHIC's focus was on addressing acute needs of people in conflict settings in four key areas: (i) WASH – water, sanitation and hygiene; (ii) energy; (iii) life-saving information; and (iv) health supplies and services.⁹ These areas emerged through a process which began in 2016, when a 'Delphi panel' method was used to involve a range of stakeholders, including

⁵ The CHIC Steering Committee comprises GCC senior management and CHIC donor partners.

⁶ CHIC (2020) Theory of Change, September 2020.

⁷ CHIC (2020), Theory of Change, September 4, 2020.

⁸ *ibid*

⁹ CHIC (2020), Theory of Change, September 4, 2020

people from conflict-affected communities. The areas were subsequently refined through a ‘barriers’ analysis.¹⁰

During 2018-2022, CHIC launched three annual funding rounds and an additional round focused on responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, which emerged two years into CHIC and before any of the first round grants had concluded. CHIC awarded 73 grants to 64 innovators, including NGOs, for-profit organizations, and academic institutions.¹¹ Three-quarters of these (56/73) were seed grants or ‘proof of concept’ grants worth between CAD¹² 243,552 and CAD 339,516 (median value: CAD 249,986). One quarter (17/73) were for transition to scale (TTS) grants, worth between CAD 200,000 and CAD 2 million each (median value: CAD 743,001).

CHIC’s total budget for 2018-2022 was CAD 38 million.¹³ CHIC initially received equal contributions of around £5.4 million from USAID and FCDO (then known as DFID) and later received a similar amount from the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs following a commitment made in 2018, along with further commitments from USAID and FCDO. In November 2020, Global Affairs Canada joined the partnership and committed an additional CAD 8 million to the programme as part of a broader package of support for GCC. FCDO planned to contribute £9.2 million over 5 years from 2018 to March 2023.

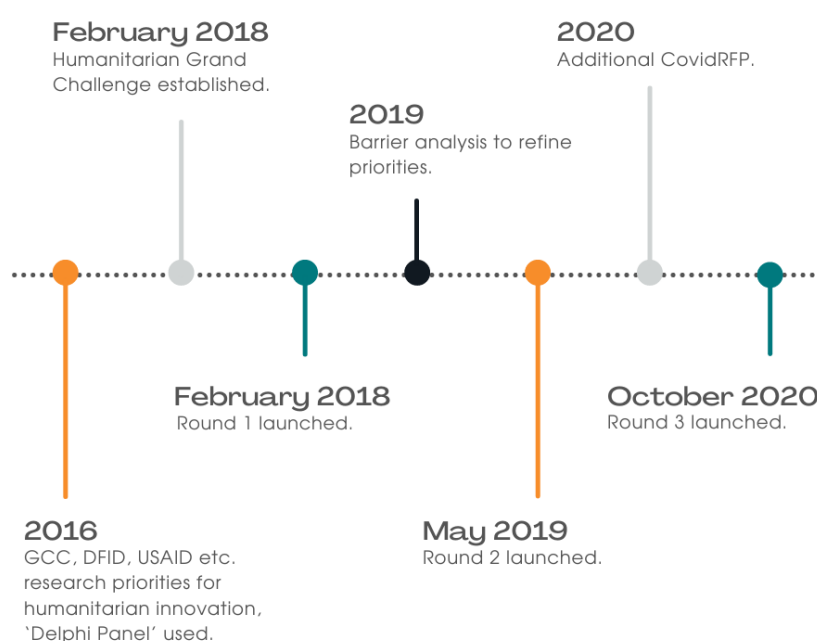


Figure 1: CHIC timeline

Context

During 2018-2022, CHIC described the global humanitarian context in terms of spiraling numbers of people in need of assistance. From CHIC’s most detailed conceptualization in the FCDO Business Case,¹⁴ through its calls for proposals in each funding round, and in its analysis of barriers affecting

¹⁰ CHIC (2020), Analysis of Barriers Affecting Innovations in Humanitarian Contexts. Grand Challenges Canada.

¹¹ See CHIC evaluation portfolio analysis (Annex 1)

¹² Canadian dollars

¹³ CHIC (2022), Annual Report April 2022. Equivalent at today’s rates to around USD 27.5m (exchange rate calculated by xe.com, 11 March 2023)

¹⁴ DFID (2017), Humanitarian Grand Challenge: Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC). Business Case

innovations in humanitarian contexts,¹⁵ the overall humanitarian context was framed as large numbers of people in need of humanitarian assistance, and with reference to the Global Humanitarian Overview produced each year by OCHA¹⁶ or the State of the Humanitarian System produced by ALNAP.¹⁷ In 2017, the FCDO Business Case for CHIC referred to over 135 million people in need of assistance across 26 countries, and in 2020, CHIC's Request for Proposals referred to 168 million people in need humanitarian assistance. In 2021, this number rose more steeply to 235m people with the effects of Covid-19.

CHIC highlighted conflict as a primary 'driver' of global humanitarian needs. The FCDO Business Case also noted that conflicts were increasing in length, frequency, and scope in countries such as Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, Iraq, Yemen, Bangladesh (Rohingya refugees) and the Philippines. It noted that these conflicts were causing massive displacement and were understood to be the main driver of humanitarian needs worldwide.¹⁸

CHIC defined the problem of humanitarian action struggling to 'reach' people in conflicts. According to the FCDO Business Case, millions of people in need were unreachable by traditional humanitarian aid delivery and international aid agencies often found it difficult to deliver assistance in conflicts. Lack of access was due to damaged infrastructure, aid diversion, corruption, and threats of violence, as well as political constraints on access. Whereas local actors may be better placed to reach people in need, they often lacked skills, capacity, resources, and funding.¹⁹ Within populations that need assistance, further barriers complicated assistance to vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities.²⁰

CHIC identified humanitarian innovation as an opportunity to improve 'humanitarian access'. The FCDO Business Case pointed to the need for new solutions to reach vulnerable, inaccessible communities; new ways of working and thinking; new actors, especially innovation actors; and engagement of the private sector's untapped potential, skills, and innovation. It also noted a lack of business models and insufficient involvement of local communities and community-based organizations (CBOs).

CHIC identified investment in humanitarian innovation as a further challenge. While noting that less than 1% of humanitarian spending was on innovation,²¹ the FCDO Business Case highlighted FCDO efforts to support humanitarian innovation through the Humanitarian Innovation and Evidence Programme (HIEP), the Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF), and the Global Alliance for Humanitarian Innovation (GAHI). A review of FCDO's humanitarian innovation portfolio highlighted a need for consolidation of the global humanitarian innovation system, with stronger partnerships between donors and other actors and greater coherence with other donors, both to ensure coherence of global innovation efforts and to facilitate decisions about which innovations to take to scale. It highlighted the advantages of pooling resources and attention around a focused functional challenge area to build a critical mass of activity and knowledge on what works, instead of funding fully open calls for proposals.

¹⁵ CHIC (2020), Analysis of Barriers Affecting Innovations in Humanitarian Contexts. Grand Challenges Canada.

¹⁶ OCHA (2020), Global Humanitarian Overview 2021

¹⁷ ALNAP (2018) The State of the Humanitarian System

¹⁸ DFID (2017), Humanitarian Grand Challenge: Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC). Business Case

¹⁹ It was noted that, in 2018, only 0.2% of humanitarian funding went directly to national and local agencies

²⁰ DFID (2017), Humanitarian Grand Challenge: Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC). Business Case

²¹ DFID (2018) citing Deloitte 2015. See: https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/global/Documents/About-Deloitte/dttl_cr_humanitarian_r&d_imperative.pdf

Methodology

The evaluators conducted this independent evaluation during August and December 2022. It was part of a developmental evaluation agreement between Triple Line and GCC which lasted from mid-2021 until March 2023, and involved an initial process review, four case studies and the independent evaluation.

Our objective was to conduct an independent evaluation of CHIC's programme, portfolio and systemic contributions using key evaluation questions adapted from the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, outcomes and impact. The process involved preparing a concept note to define the evaluation's scope and design the approach, collecting data using mixed methods, and developing findings based on synthesized evidence.

Evaluability and Independence

The evaluators found CHIC to be evaluable, with some limitations. Evaluability is a responsibility of CHIC and means 'the extent to which an activity or a program can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion, and usually involves having adequately defined objectives and verifiable results.' Evaluability involved ensuring that CHIC's strategic objectives were clarified; that there was relevant progress monitoring; and that sufficient time and human resources were available to conduct the evaluation to standard. We found CHIC's intentions to be articulated in the FCDO Business Case, a CHIC Theory of Change and a log frame, but no strategy with clearly defined objectives. GCC collected results data from grantees and bi-annual grantee reports to track progress towards impact (i.e., lives improved and saved) and compiled annual and bi-annual reports on CHIC's progress towards building a portfolio of humanitarian innovations and overall progress on improving and saving lives among populations affected by conflict. For the evaluation, Triple Line collected additional information about CHIC, beginning with the rapid process review and four detailed case studies to assess outcomes and value for money. CHIC had little evidence available about portfolio-level progress on outcomes and impact on value for money and systems change. CHIC dedicated sufficient resources for the evaluation, and additional data could be collected at reasonable cost from documentation, grantees and stakeholders.

The evaluators collaborated with CHIC managers and navigated risks to independence. The evaluators undertook the evaluation independently and impartially, in line with recognized principles and practices, as outlined by OECD/DAC, ALNAP, FCDO and others (see section 2.2). While the developmental evaluation provided important information for the final evaluation and deeper knowledge of CHIC's work, it posed some risks to independence due to the close partnership developed and the team's management reporting line to GCC implementers. The evaluators proposed to mitigate these risks by establishing an evaluation reference group (ERG) composed of key stakeholders (i.e., intended users of the evaluation, including GCC) and by the Team having an independent technical lead responsible for ensuring independent evidence-based judgments. These measures were not fully implemented, but GCC did afford us the space to maintain professional independence and impartiality.

Approach and Methods

The evaluators developed a bespoke framework to guide the evaluation. The evaluation team did this by making explicit the CHIC programme's intervention logic; using a logic model proposed at inception stage of the developmental evaluation (see Annex 2) underpinned by key concepts for the evaluation (see Annex 3); developing 13 evaluation questions (EQs) in collaboration with GCC, informed by

relevant evaluation criteria as defined by OECD/DAC,^{22 23} ALNAP,^{24 25} and Outcome Mapping²⁶ (Annex 4); and designing 28 judgment criteria, intended to describe ‘what good looks like’ for each EQ and guide the analysis in a transparent manner. (Judgement criteria are reformulated in the evaluation Findings below as ‘expectations’.) Based on these, the team prepared an evaluation matrix which set out evaluation criteria, questions and judgement criteria and defined how each data collection and analysis method would be used to address the questions and reach findings based on systematic triangulation (Annex 5).

The evaluators designed the approach to meet CHIC requirements. The team was guided by humanitarian principles, including good humanitarian donorship²⁷ and the Red Cross and NGO Code of Conduct;²⁸ and recognized standards and good practices in carrying out evaluations, as outlined by OECD/DAC,²⁹ UNEG,³⁰ and ALNAP.^{31, 32} The evaluators adopted a realist perspective,³³ comparing strategic and programmatic intentions with verifiable realities to learn what works where and how, instead of merely ‘does it work?’ The team used mixed methods for data collection and analysis, allowing for triangulation of evidence and more robust findings. The evaluation was conducted in a proportionate manner, responding to the defined needs and priorities of intended users with ‘good enough’³⁴ approaches that rely on sampling and light touch data collection techniques. (See Annex 6).

The evaluators conducted a detailed review of 50 documents. In an analysis of monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) sources, the team selected and reviewed 27 documents relating to the CHIC programme including its design, implementation, learning and results (see Annex 7). Most notably, these included documents about CHIC’s design, such as the FCDO Business Case, CHIC’s Theory of Change, and requests for proposals to innovators; documents that reported on implementation and results, such as periodic reporting by GCC, WFP and Brink, Annual Reviews by FCDO, and a Rapid Process Review; and learning documents, such as those analyzing barriers in thematic areas, the CHIC portfolio, and specific innovations. Next, in a document review activity, the team identified and reviewed 23 external documents about the context for the CHIC programme (see Annex 8). These included documents about the humanitarian system and the humanitarian innovation ecosystem, and documents about CHIC.

The evaluators conducted structured consultations with 79 key stakeholders. The team identified and interviewed a balanced sample of 27 key stakeholders in two categories: a category of humanitarian leadership and system level actors, comprised of CHIC managers and CHIC donors, and a category of humanitarian innovators, comprising CHIC grantees and humanitarian innovation experts.

²² OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation (2019), Better Criteria for Better Evaluation, Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use

²³ OECD DAC, Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management

²⁴ ALNAP (2006), Evaluating humanitarian action using the OECD-DAC criteria: An ALNAP guide for Humanitarian agencies, (Overseas Development Institute, London, March 2006)

²⁵ Obrecht, A. with Warner, A. and Dillon, N. (2017) ‘Working paper: Evaluating humanitarian innovation’ HIF/ALNAP Working Paper. London: ODI/ALNAP.

²⁶ Earl, S. Carden, C. and Smutlyo, T. (2001), Outcome Mapping, Building Learning and Reflection into Development Programs. International Development Research Centre

²⁷ Good Humanitarian Donorship (2003), 24 Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship

²⁸ ICRC (1994), The Code of Conduct Principles of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes

²⁹ OECD/DAC (1991), DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance

³⁰ UNEG (2016), Norms and Standards for Evaluation

³¹ ALNAP (2016), Evaluation of Humanitarian Action (EHA) Guide

³² Obrecht, A. with Warner, A. and Dillon, N. (2017) ‘Working paper: Evaluating humanitarian innovation’ HIF/ALNAP Working Paper. London: ODI/ALNAP.

³³ Pawson, S. & Tilley, N. (2004): *Realist Evaluation*.

³⁴ The Good Enough Guide (2007), Impact Measurement and Accountability in Emergencies

(Stakeholder categories and the sampling methodology can be found in Annex 9; interviewees are listed in Annex 10). The evaluators also conducted a survey among all 69 CHIC innovators who had received CHIC grants to date, asking for opinions on a range of statements about CHIC and humanitarian innovation. Some 52 innovators responded, of whom 42 provided complete responses, giving a full response rate of 59% and a partial response rate of 75%.

The evaluators conducted three mini-case studies on the themes of life-saving information, energy and health, in the absence of information about CHIC outcomes and impact in its defined thematic areas. These used further primary and secondary data sources - 12 key informant interviews and review of further 47 documents (see Annex 11). While not comprehensive, and focused on the impact of CHIC's most impactful innovations, these light touch exercises shed light on CHIC progress towards outcomes and impact, and helped us to address EQs 3.1-3.5. The case studies' conclusions are in Annex 12.

The evaluators conducted a value-for-money (VFM) analysis. To address EQ2.3 on VFM, the evaluators relied on case studies conducted at an earlier stage in the developmental evaluation support, focused on innovations by Energy Peace Partners (EPP); Field Ready; Nuru, and Hala Systems. In the evaluation, the team made judgments according to CHIC's VFM assessment methodology, based on a detailed analysis of the benefits flowing from a sample of four innovations, drawing out larger implications as appropriate.

The evaluators promoted evidence and learning. The team took a structured approach to generating evidence and facilitating learning, aiming to offer a sound evidence base to CHIC and make robust evaluative judgments to inform its second phase. For each method used, the team mapped and selected data sources compared to the evaluation framework, extracted relevant data, conducted focused analyses and generated separate evidence reports. The team collated these evidence streams in a single evidence matrix, conducted an initial synthesis analysis, reviewed and discussed early findings as a team, and then presented these to GCC managers in a facilitated discussion. The evaluators then prepared the report with different team members preparing different sections.

Limitations

As noted in the evaluability assessment above, the evaluators found notable gaps in CHIC MEL products. The team made CHIC's intentions and logic model explicit, but these were not clearly defined and coherently explained in the form of strategic objectives or an aligned results framework. CHIC collected data and produced regular information about progress, but this did not amount to a coherent and proportionate MEL system that could generate evidence about progress towards intended outcomes and impact. Even with support from the developmental evaluation, CHIC lacked suitable approaches to address important larger questions about the portfolio's outcomes and impact (EQs 3.1 - 3.5).

The evaluators found that CHIC managers and humanitarian system actors had notably diverging perspectives. In general, CHIC managers and CHIC innovators were mainly focused on grants and specific innovations and lacked information about portfolio-level progress towards reducing stated problems. Similarly, CHIC's VFM assessment focuses on four high-value innovations, but not the whole portfolio of 73 innovations. On the other hand, CHIC donors, policy actors, and humanitarian innovation experts were mostly focused on CHIC's contributions to the humanitarian system and ultimately on meeting humanitarian needs. While these actors were relatively few, and had limited information about CHIC, they shared a larger interest in understanding the portfolio's overall outcomes, impacts, and value. The team addressed several rounds of detailed feedback from GCC managers before presenting findings to the Steering Committee of donors.

The evaluation team necessarily could only speak to a small proportion of grantees. Potential bias was mitigated through carefully sampling a cross-section of grantees (by theme and grant size) whose grants had ended within the last year. Additionally, the grantee survey gave all grantees an opportunity to give their views.

Relevance and Coherence

This section assesses whether CHIC ‘did the right thing’ according to the criteria of relevance and coherence. It considers CHIC’s relevance at design stage and during implementation to innovators, to people in need of assistance, to private sector actors and local communities, and to the wider humanitarian system. It looks at external coherence in terms of added value within the humanitarian system.

1.1 Humanitarian system relevance

It was expected that CHIC’s objectives and activities should respond to humanitarian policy priorities, systemic needs and recognized problems.³⁵

Finding: The CHIC programme’s objectives and activities responded moderately well to needs and recognized problems in the humanitarian system, to humanitarian policy priorities and the policy interests of its four donors. It was considered relevant to the humanitarian system in several diverse ways including through its support for humanitarian innovation. Its projects addressed thematic barriers although its overall problem definition and analysis was less strong.

Policy priorities

CHIC responded to the policy interests of its four donors: FCDO, the USAID Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance, Global Affairs Canada, and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The external document review indicates that CHIC was well aligned with FCDO’s various humanitarian priorities in 2017³⁶ and considered by FCDO at that date to be well aligned with those of other humanitarian donors. In 2021, FCDO’s annual review recommended its continued funding because it was ‘the only innovation programme specifically addressing the needs of the most vulnerable people in humanitarian crises caused by conflict’.³⁷ In 2022, the US, the UK, and Canada were three of the world’s top ten humanitarian donors, accounting for more than half of global humanitarian funding, with the US alone accounting for 46%.³⁸ The CHIC document review also indicates that CHIC’s activities were coherent and well aligned with policy priorities.

CHIC was perceived to be aligned with a diversity of humanitarian policy priorities. In describing CHIC’s relevance, policy actors referred to a wide variety of priorities: humanitarian innovation in conflict; improving last mile delivery; system change (to address long-standing humanitarian problems); improving humanitarian effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness to beneficiaries; and bringing in fresh perspectives (private sector and academia).

CHIC also responded to innovation priorities that were not necessarily ‘humanitarian.’ For one policy actor, CHIC is interesting as an innovation actor, due to its ‘system work’ and interest in applying ‘Innovation 3.0’ approaches.³⁹ For another, CHIC has the ability to pilot approaches that donors and multilateral organizations would not otherwise fund, such as supporting local actors in conflict-affected countries. For one donor, CHIC is supported as part of larger institutional support for GCC and not exclusively tied to humanitarian priorities.

³⁵ EQ1.1: To what extent and how does the CHIC programme objectives/activities respond to system needs and recognised problems?

³⁶ FCDO (2017), Humanitarian Grand Challenge: Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC). Business Case.

³⁷ FCDO (2021), Creating Hope in Conflict Humanitarian Grand Challenge (CHIC). Annual Review.

³⁸ OCHA Financial Tracking Service, accessed 7 December 2022.

³⁹ This was a quote from the interview and is taken to mean more contextualised solutions, akin to systems thinking about how solutions work (or don’t) in specific contexts. This is in contrast to ‘innovation 1.0’ – solutions, often ICT-based, looking for problems and ‘innovation 2.0’ – problem-driven solutions. See <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2019/03/20/humanitarian-innovation-faces-rethink-innovators-take-stock>

System needs

CHIC was considered relevant to the humanitarian system in several diverse ways. While nearly half (18/40) of CHIC-funded innovators strongly agreed that CHIC responds to the needs of the humanitarian system, CHIC managers describe its relevance in terms of efficiency and productivity, contributing to ‘system change,’ localization of humanitarian action, and diversifying humanitarian sector by involving local innovators and problem-solving technical experts. CHIC managers saw the increased involvement of local actors as a key way in which the programme became more relevant to the humanitarian system during 2018-2022, citing the declining percentage of humanitarian funding across the sector going to local responders despite commitments made in the Grand Bargain.⁴⁰ In 2020, the CHIC programme was found to respond to four of the ten initial workstreams of the Grand Bargain.⁴¹

CHIC may be considered relevant to the humanitarian system because it supports humanitarian innovation. The document review indicates humanitarian innovation was seen as a way to increase efficiency and effectiveness in the humanitarian system,⁴² even if its ability to bring about transformational change was increasingly questioned.⁴³ Humanitarian innovation grew during 2018-2022, and was found to make progress of a more gradual nature through four different types of innovation, two of which were supported by CHIC: sectoral programme and enabling innovations that contributed to effectiveness of humanitarian action, and innovations by local and non-traditional actors.^{44, 45}

At the same time, humanitarian innovation competed with other relevant approaches to improving the humanitarian system. Policy actors note that donors could adopt other non-innovation approaches that effectively support people in conflict or improve the system. For example, increasing investment in peacebuilding and diplomacy, investing in the Grand Bargain to improve humanitarian action, or investing in MEL, since this remains weak and knowing how well humanitarian action is performing could be a precondition for guiding innovative improvements.

Defined problems

CHIC-funded projects were found to address thematic ‘barriers’. In 2020, GCC commissioned a study to assess how well CHIC-funded innovations addressed barriers and gaps identified across the four thematic areas and provided recommendations on how the process can be strengthened.⁴⁶ (This aligned with a key element of GCC’s Grand Challenges approach – that it must identify a critical barrier holding back progress in addressing critical problems.⁴⁷) Each of the 52 funded projects were mapped in relation to 78 thematic barriers identified in GCC’s 2019 Barrier Analysis.⁴⁸ The projects were also mapped against the 12 most significant gaps in emergency WASH, as identified in a 2013 HIF paper, and in relation to the key challenges emerging from ALNAP’s 2018 ‘The State of the Humanitarian System’ study. Most projects addressed one primary barrier, and a smaller number of projects (ten) addressed multiple barriers within one or two sectors. The paper recommended among other things to define priority barriers and provide guidance on prioritization.

⁴⁰ The Grand Bargain (2016), A Shared Commitment to Better Serve People in Need.

⁴¹ The Research People (2020), Grant Award Review. CHIC.

⁴² ALNAP (2022) The State of the Humanitarian System. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.

⁴³ Nelis, T.; Allouche, J. and Sida, L. (2020) The Humanitarian Innovation and Evidence Programme (HIEP): Bringing New Evidence and Methods to Humanitarian Action, Evidence Synthesis, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

⁴⁴ ALNAP (2018) The State of the Humanitarian System. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.

⁴⁵ ALNAP (2022) The State of the Humanitarian System. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.

⁴⁶ The Research People (2020), Grant Award Review. CHIC.

⁴⁷ GCC (2011) The Grand Challenges Approach (White Paper)

⁴⁸ CHIC (2020), Analysis of Barriers Affecting Innovations in Humanitarian Contexts. Grand Challenges Canada.

But CHIC was perceived to lack strong problem definition and analysis. While CHIC managers recall its four themes were underpinned by extensive consultation involving a range of stakeholders at design phase, policy actors were generally unclear on exactly what problems CHIC addresses and noted that CHIC's 'broad categories' did not represent well-defined problems. Innovators largely reported responding to 'gaps' in service provision more than 'barriers', raising questions about how these terms are understood. Humanitarian innovation experts agreed that it is important for innovation funds to invest in a good overall problem analysis while leaving more thorough and context-specific analysis of problems to innovators.

CHIC's definition of problems did not always coincide with problems defined by humanitarians. In the case of energy, for example, CHIC did not identify energy as a 'grand challenge' when GCC initially convened a 'Delphi panel' to identify and articulate the most pressing humanitarian challenges.⁴⁹ In 2020, CHIC identified 'barriers' to energy provision that could be addressed by innovation, including 15 'barriers' that could be addressed by bold humanitarian innovations funded through the Grand Challenge approach, in contrast to contextual barriers that could not be addressed in this way and would have to be circumvented.⁵⁰ However, the CHIC-defined barriers to energy services lacked coherence, were based on very limited evidence, and did not focus on more widely recognized systemic problems involving donors, funding, and incentives.⁵¹

1.2 Relevance to innovators

It was expected that CHIC's objectives and activities should respond to the needs and priorities of humanitarian innovators, including seed innovations and transition-to-scale innovations, and those with the potential to change the systemic problems defined.⁵²

Finding: CHIC responded very well to the funding needs of innovators working in conflict settings providing income stability and flexible, adaptable support – vital too during the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. Technical assistance design was well suited to responding to the set-up needs of Seed grantees, but somewhat less well to the scaling and networking needs of TTS grantees, and preparation for life beyond the CHIC grant.

Innovator needs

CHIC was perceived to respond very well to the immediate needs of humanitarian innovators. Survey results were positive: 88% (35/40) survey respondents agreed that CHIC responded to innovator needs including those of 'private sector actors and local innovators'. When reporting on CHIC's relevance, grantee survey respondents strongly agreed that CHIC responded to their needs and agreed that CHIC provided funding for projects that no one else is funding. This was especially pronounced for innovators working in the energy and health sectors.

CHIC responded to the funding needs of innovators working in conflict settings by providing them with income stability and adaptable support. Flexibility is needed both for innovation (where iteration and learning is key) and also for humanitarian contexts, where instability, violence, and a myriad of other challenges affect innovation and implementation. CHIC recognizes the challenges of working in both these contexts and responded with flexible budgeting to support successful implementation – particularly vital during the additional challenges of implementing during the Covid-19 pandemic. CHIC's flexible funding was viewed as CHIC's greatest contribution to grantees and their

⁴⁹ Nature, 12 July 2018.

⁵⁰ CHIC (2020), Analysis of Barriers Affecting Innovations in Humanitarian Contexts. Grand Challenges Canada.

⁵¹ See Nelis, T.; Allouche, J. and Sida, L. (2020) The Humanitarian Innovation and Evidence Programme (HIEP): Bringing New Evidence and Methods to Humanitarian Action, Evidence Synthesis, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.

⁵² EQ1.2: To what extent does the CHIC programme objectives / activities respond to humanitarian innovators' needs and priorities?

innovations.⁵³ It enabled innovators to maintain stable incomes whilst working on their innovation, generating evidence, and seeking further investment. The funding also allowed TTS projects to perform well, which was crucial for securing further funding. CHIC's flexible approach to funding was particularly relevant for innovators working in difficult humanitarian settings. This is well illustrated by the experience of Hala Systems, where CHIC funding helped them to continue operations despite challenging changes in context, including an influx of a million IDPs and the need to take their entire outreach programme online due to Covid-19.⁵⁴ Additionally, CHIC funding is considered to “de-risk” grantees innovations for other investors, increasing the probability of grantees securing additional or longer-term funding,⁵⁵ because it increases the legitimacy of grantees in the eyes of other actors, improving their chances of being adopted by relevant actors or receiving new investment. For example, one grantee reported that a key humanitarian actor approached them to understand the innovation after learning that CHIC had awarded them innovation funding. (It is not known whether this new interest led to the grantee receiving a new investment.)

CHIC TA was relevant for Seed grantees because of its focus on organizational support and the running of an innovation, although it was less relevant for TTS grantees, whose needs related more to evidence generation, pitching their project to external stakeholders and networking to help them scale and become more sustainable. The TA provided by CHIC was perceived as being more relevant to smaller organizations or those early on in their innovation than for TTS grantees. Consequently, uptake of the TA services offered by WFP and Brink was mixed. While the majority (18/33) of Seed innovators responding to the survey perceived the informal learning provided by Brink as very relevant, TTS innovators reported more mixed views of the TA provided overall. Group sessions offered little new learning for TTS innovators and, despite CHIC's adaptations to the one-to-one TA (provided by WFP) in response to grantee feedback, three of the four TTS grantees interviewed reported the TA as having limited relevance to their needs. This could be partly due to grantee and CHIC's lack of clarity as to what ‘sustainability’ means for humanitarian innovation. In one case, an innovator felt that the commercial approach to sustainability supported by TA was inappropriate and indeed potentially contradictory to CHIC's goal of reaching vulnerable groups. Another innovator wanted more advice on alternative (including non-commercial) funding sources and another wanted more support on how to approach potential investors (beyond that which is already provided). One grantee interviewed thought that the CHIC training sessions could have been better tailored to the needs of each innovator by acknowledging the differences in levels of grantee knowledge, experience and competences.

A key priority for TTS innovators was support in forming connections with funders and receiving TA on how to engage with potential partners. A number of ‘life saving information’ grantees in particular felt that CHIC could play a greater role in brokering connections, disseminating evidence and playing more of a ‘bridging role’⁵⁶ by capitalizing on their credibility and network in the sector – for example by engaging with (or encouraging innovators on the ground) to engage with the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC) or UNHCR's Digital Inclusion programme, led by UNHCR's Innovation Service.⁵⁷

CHIC staff recognized that innovators wanted CHIC to play more of a learning and networking role than what had been provided. CHIC managers reported that the need to provide capacity building for innovators to generate evidence that could be used to pitch for further funding only became apparent once implementation had started. Some ad-hoc support was provided but generally this was an area where they recognized the fund could provide more support. CHIC managers interviewed could also see that innovators wanted more connections with funders and investors than had been provided.

⁵³ Life-saving information Case Study.

⁵⁴ Hala Systems Outcomes and Value for Money Case Study.

⁵⁵ Energy Peace Partners Outcomes and Value for Money Case Study.

⁵⁶ Information Case Study

⁵⁷ The ETC, set up by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) is a global network of organisations that works to provide shared communication services in humanitarian crises. The Digital Inclusion programme uses innovative approaches and tools to ensure that refugees and their host communities have their voices heard in humanitarian responses.

Inevitably, the Covid-19 pandemic severely impacted CHIC's ability to provide in-person gatherings and connect innovator to sector actors, but events re-commenced as soon as feasible in 2022, and more were planned.

System change

CHIC offered limited technical assistance to help innovators contribute to systems change. The majority of innovations funded through CHIC are Seed innovations, which are at an early stage in the innovation cycle and not yet at the point where they are ready to tackle wider systems change. Grants are typically two years long, and the funding and support are focused on addressing near-term, early-stage gaps and needs rather than supporting future or longer-term needs. Addressing systems change would require longer-term funding and support for innovators, and may be something for CHIC to consider focusing on as more innovations graduate to later-stage transition to scale funding.

Almost all grantees interviewed felt they would have benefitted from more support to help them prepare for life beyond the CHIC grant. Seed grantees expressed a need for earlier support in thinking about how to transition to TTS, and TTS grantees expressed a need for more support in linking with external stakeholders. A few grantees who reported having received guidance and support of this nature reported that it was provided too late on in the grant period and was not always appropriately tailored, as noted above. Finally, CHIC's lack of linkages to the humanitarian system to build relationships through which to promote innovation take-up was noted, an issue covered in more depth in EQ3.4.

1.3 Relevance to people in need of assistance

It was expected that CHIC's objectives and activities should respond, equitably, to the needs of people in need of humanitarian assistance.⁵⁸

Finding: CHIC responded moderately well to the needs of people affected by conflict, including hard-to-reach populations, and vulnerable groups. Many innovators had started to report early success in saving or improving lives. CHIC supported relevance principally through engagement of local actors and funding innovators from within local communities, and relevance was well supported by its fund management processes. For some innovations, needs of vulnerable groups were addressed later on in implementation rather than from the outset.

CHIC-funded innovations were expected to 'save and/or improve' lives and many had started to report early success in doing so. As of April 2022, CHIC-funded innovations were being used by 2.6M people, and some 260,000 lives were improved. CHIC also reported that 107 lives had been saved through its innovations.⁵⁹ One of the reasons for the low number of lives saved is the difficulty in carrying out studies in conflict-affected settings to determine mortality reductions that can be attributed to CHIC-funded innovations. To date, only one innovation has been able to carry out a rigorous study to determine mortality reductions attributable to the innovation. Seed innovations, which focus on testing their idea, are unlikely to have large impact in the context of saving lives, whereas TTS innovations are working towards scaling impact, with the expectation that they will improve or save lives during the TTS funding period, with overall impact increasing in the later TTS stages (i.e., among those that are funded at TTS3 or TTS4). At the time of writing, the first cohort of TTS innovations were just reaching the end of their funding period, and final results had not all come in, or were pending internal results validation by the CHIC team.

CHIC sought to ensure innovation relevance to needs principally through engagement of local actors and funding innovators from within local communities. Evidence indicates that CHIC tried to address the needs of people in humanitarian crises during the design phase, application phase, and throughout the lifetime of the fund, primarily through encouraging locally led innovators to apply and, in later rounds, seeking out and giving explicit preference to them. This was based on GCC's

⁵⁸ EQ1.3: To what extent does the CHIC programme respond to the needs of people affected by conflict, including hard-to-reach populations and vulnerable groups?

⁵⁹ CHIC (2022) Annual Report

understanding that people directly affected by conflict are best placed to address their own acute humanitarian challenges.

In Round 1, CHIC applicants were asked to demonstrate a meaningful connection to local partners and communities. By Round 3, CHIC gave explicit preference to locally led and owned innovations, seeking them out through regionally based ambassadors and hosting applicant webinars with targeted groups. Further, CHIC responded to the needs of local people by selecting grantees that focused on locally led solutions. Applicants were asked to explain their connection to conflict-affected populations. At the time of writing, 64% of grantees had partnerships with local communities or were led by individuals from affected communities and 30% were led by individuals who self-identified as members of conflict-affected communities.⁶⁰ By round three, 19% of applicants were locally led and 30% were locally owned.⁶¹

CHIC's fund management processes supported innovation relevance. Evidence from the Rapid Process Review further indicated that CHIC had made a conscious effort to emphasize the need for innovations to be (and remain) relevant to the needs of all people affected by conflict through their launch, guidance and selection process and ongoing management:

- Applicants were asked to take into account the voices of particularly marginalized groups in design and implementation, to address their needs appropriately. They were also asked to describe how the innovation had been informed by the needs of the target population, and specifically how it addressed the needs of more vulnerable groups.
- Female applicants were strongly encouraged to apply, for example by CHIC ambassadors whose role was to use their knowledge of context to network and promote calls for proposals to targeted audiences.
- A comprehensive gender equality scoring exercise was carried out for TTS due diligence, prior to being selected for funding. In late 2021, CHIC began providing dedicated Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) support to TTS innovations and those found to have minimal GESI integration were provided with support through external GESI experts.
- Continued efforts were made to widen language capabilities, including provision of outreach materials in Swahili and Arabic amongst others, and through the appointment of Regional Ambassadors to help with applicant outreach.

Evidence from KIs further suggests that relevance to conflict-affected people was considered throughout the fund management cycle and that CHIC managers included the opinions of people affected by conflict into both the design process and TA provision of the programme.

CHIC's approach to ensuring relevance was demonstrated and validated through evidence collected from interviews. Recognizing that innovators face many challenges working in conflict zones whilst also being expected to meet the needs of the most marginalized groups, several evaluation informants saw localization, investment in local innovators and challenging existing power dynamics as a fundamental way of ensuring relevance to all people in need of assistance.

Innovators reported that CHIC addressed the needs of vulnerable groups and the most acute needs in conflicts. For some innovations, needs were addressed once shortcomings in reaching them had been identified during implementation, rather than integrated into design, or support for design, from the outset. In the evaluation's grantee survey, 88% of innovators surveyed strongly agreed that CHIC responded to the 'needs and priorities of people most affected by specific conflicts', and 75% felt that CHIC responded to the most acute needs in conflicts. Although programme guidance on inclusion was prominent at the application and due diligence stages, several innovators who were interviewed felt that this was subsequently given little attention post-award, other than requirements

⁶⁰ Source: Portfolio analysis.

⁶¹ Source: Rapid process review. Data and categorisation of terms taken from CHIC database and CHIC application forms: Affected community owned (i.e. Locally owned) = organisation is based in/owned by persons from a community affected by humanitarian crisis. Affected community led (i.e. Locally led) = at least one person in senior management position is from a community affected by humanitarian crisis.

to include disaggregated data in progress reports. Further, it seems that grantees did not always appreciate the need for gender analysis to underpin innovation development and implementation plans, hence the additional support provided by CHIC from 2021. In the case of Suny Korea for example, who developed mobility aids for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, it seemed that the difficulties of reaching women living with a disability was only being tackled near the end of the grant. Similarly, it was not until the gender imbalance in the successful outreach strategy of Hala Systems' Sentry early warning system was noted and CHIC funded a survey that they were able to redesign their outreach to reach more women.

Some CHIC innovators struggled to report on end-users – people in conflict who were benefitting from their innovation. Some grantees commented on the high and sometimes unrealistic expectations of disaggregated beneficiary reporting. One drew attention to the fact that they were supporting organizations providing direct services to beneficiaries rather than directly engaging beneficiaries themselves. Another grantee mentioned that although they could complete the beneficiary reporting due to their experience of academic research, they thought that it would be very challenging for other grantees with no background in research.

Policy actors interviewed had mixed views on whether (and how) the CHIC programme successfully responded to the needs of those in need of humanitarian assistance. One actor noted that 'humanitarian innovators should not aim to save lives, but rather to improve humanitarian action'. Indeed, this view aligns with our external document review which found that humanitarian innovation is not usually defined in terms of lives saved, but rather in terms of evidence, learning and improved humanitarian action. Our external document review further found that the relationship between humanitarian innovation and humanitarian needs is unclear, complicated by diverging opinions around the ability of innovation to achieve the desired change, and insufficient evidence about impact.

1.4 Relevance to other actors

It was expected that CHIC's objectives and activities should respond to the needs and priorities of partners from the private sector and local communities.⁶²

Finding: Many aspects of CHIC's approach helped to ensure that the programme responded to the needs and priorities of community partners: CHIC had a strong commitment to local community engagement and was relevant to them. Engagement with the private sector was valued and facilitated to some extent but had become less of a priority.

Private sector partners

The Grand Challenge⁶³ model specifically envisages involvement of actors not previously engaged in development or humanitarian challenges, including private companies. Their involvement (either as grantees or as innovator partners) is intended to leverage new solutions and technologies through collaborative approaches, and to leverage funds and resources, and thus lead to more effective and scaled solutions.⁶⁴ The private sector could, for example, play a role in bringing innovative goods and supplies to the market in hard to reach areas or apply their core competencies to help get assistance to the hardest to reach.⁶⁵

⁶² EQ1.4: To what extent does the CHIC programme respond to the needs and priorities of relevant private sector partners and community partners?

⁶³ CHIC is often referred to as 'the HGC of 'the Humanitarian Grand Challenge'. It was one of nine Grand Challenges included in the USAID Grand Challenges meta-evaluation.

⁶⁴ USAID Grand Challenge for Development Meta-Evaluation (2021) pp2-3
https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USAID_GRAND_CHALLENGES_Meta-Evaluation_Report_FINAL.pdf.

⁶⁵ FCDO Business Case 2017.

Both CHIC managers and innovators recognized the value which the private sector could bring to humanitarian innovation supported by CHIC. A third of CHIC grants (27 out of 73) were made to ‘for profit’ organizations.⁶⁶ Documents indicate that, during the design phase, CHIC emphasized the importance of partnership and encouraged innovators to engage with other actors during the lifetime of the grant. The requests for proposals highlight the need for grantees to engage with private sector actors; and TA provided by WFP was designed to include exposing innovators to potential investors to help them to secure longer-term funding for their innovation.

Some CHIC innovators interviewed found it difficult to engage or work with private sector suppliers. Reasons given for this were the need to comply with the terms, conditions and requirements of donor funding (such as very detailed budgets, exclusion of any provision for indirect costs and complex compliance) in their use of grant funding and lack of support to enable them to engage effectively (such as providing the type of documentation required by investors). CHIC had in fact de-prioritized facilitating partnerships between grantees and private sector actors in 2022 because of the significant effort involved and the minimal outcomes achieved (which was possibly due to Seed innovators in particular being too early on in their project cycle to be able to fully take advantage of the connections made).⁶⁷

CHIC saw the role of the private sector as important but limited or nuanced. CHIC saw the capital, business mindset and entrepreneurship of the private sector as an asset which is needed in the humanitarian sector but recognized that the private sector offers one potential route to sustainability and scale for some innovations, rather than the primary one. They recognized that a market-based model is not readily applied to innovations driven by ‘social returns’ – such as reach to vulnerable, poor populations on the fringes of a local economy. The document review too found that the absence of any mechanism for generating financial returns means that humanitarian innovation may lack adequate incentives for engaging the private sector.

For these reasons, CHIC did not ‘prioritize the needs’ of the private sector or help innovators to do so. Rather, the emphasis (for example in the Requests for Proposals) was on how engagement with the private sector could help (‘prioritize the needs of’) innovators.

Local communities

CHIC had a strong commitment to engagement of local communities and capacities, in keeping with Grand Challenge commitments. Affected communities have historically been insufficiently involved in planning for and responding to crises and the humanitarian sector has typically not drawn on the skills and commitment of local communities in addressing the problems they are themselves experiencing.⁶⁸ CHIC managers expressed a strong commitment to ‘localization’ (as noted in EQ 3.3), which innovators recognized.

CHIC sought to ensure relevance to community partnerships through its selection and other processes. Connection to partners and communities was a selection criterion and GCC looked for evidence that innovators were involving local communities, for example through engagement with local government, humanitarian actors and so on. This and the priority given to selecting local innovators are means by which CHIC worked to ensure relevance to local partners’ needs. The innovator community network managed by Brink also sought to facilitate peer-to-peer connections between innovators for local partnership.

CHIC’s relevance to community partners was also evidenced by examples of successful partnerships between local actors and innovators (many of whom are themselves locally based). Both Hala Systems and Field Ready developed a model for better local humanitarian response by, for example, civil defense organizations, hospitals, schools and local businesses. They developed these partnerships through their local relationships and on the ground knowledge and supported their local partners with training and technical equipment to enable the innovation to roll out. Surveyed

⁶⁶ CHIC Grantee Portfolio Analysis.

⁶⁷ CHIC Rapid Process Review (2022)

⁶⁸ FCDO Business Case (2017)

innovators (26 out of 40) agreed that partnerships with local communities are important. One innovator interviewed felt that CHIC did not provide assistance to enable them to engage with local communities.

1.5 Added value

It was expected that CHIC's objectives and activities should add value to existing humanitarian innovation activities carried out by other humanitarian innovation initiatives.⁶⁹

Finding: CHIC was moderately compatible with other interventions in the humanitarian system and thematic areas. It added some value to the humanitarian innovation ecosystem by focusing on conflict and local innovators and strove to coordinate with other humanitarian innovation actors. The Grand Challenge approach was considered CHIC's primary potential added value.

Perceived value

CHIC's focus on conflict and local innovators was considered an added value. CHIC managers noted that CHIC is the only funder of humanitarian innovation focused on conflict and singled out as distinctive its emphasis on local innovators. They felt that CHIC was less risk-averse than other funds, enabling it to operate in conflict zones and also to fund local organizations. Some policy actors highlighted similar benefits, perceiving that CHIC was in touch with local innovators, involving them more compared to large humanitarian actors, building local capacity, contributing to localization, reaching local people with innovations, and focusing on improving access to services in difficult conflict situations – more than other humanitarian innovation actors do.

CHIC's operational management was also considered an added value. CHIC managers highlighted the added value of the GCC approach, pointing to several features that added value on top of the funding itself: the TA; knowledge sharing and connections within the CHIC innovator community and beyond; and supportive relationships with innovators. They emphasized that 'trying to meet innovators where they are at' was an essential added value, seeing more scope for this, particularly if support provided could be more joined up or coherent. Some policy actors saw added value in CHIC's approach to managing innovations. They saw CHIC as comparatively strong on being operational, self-reflective, open to new approaches, responsive to demands, and bold risk-taking.

CHIC's funding and selection approach were highly valued by grantees. CHIC grantees variously appreciated CHIC's willingness to support organizations that others won't fund, flexibility in terms of budget revisions, gender requirements, accessibility to local organizations, and understanding of conflict contexts. 'Whereas other donors determine the priorities for countries without consulting,' said one grantee, 'GCC gives you the freedom to determine priority with people from the beneficiary country.' Seed grantees in particular noted how much CHIC genuinely cared about their work and wanted to support them.

Grand Challenge approach

CHIC's primary humanitarian added value was considered to be the Grand Challenge approach. According to the FCDO Business case in 2017,⁷⁰ the Humanitarian Grand Challenge, established as a partnership with GCC and donors, would offer comparative benefits in terms of partnership and collaboration through 'a ready-made platform to enable cross-sector and multi-national collaboration to address different aspects of a single, focused global challenge'. It would also offer a focus on results and shared learning by several means: GCC would document and share lessons learned on humanitarian innovation, scalability, and sustainability; GCC would take promising innovations funded at seed level to TTS funding after the completion of the project; and by building upon evidence and experience from other Grand Challenges through GCC's strong track record in managing Grand Challenges.

⁶⁹ EQ1.5: To what extent is CHIC compatible with other interventions in the humanitarian system and thematic areas?

⁷⁰ FCDO (2017), Humanitarian Grand Challenge: Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC). Business Case

The Grand Challenge approach was understood to work by focusing significant new attention on an ‘area of study’ and can make major contributions in that area. CHIC managers saw the Grand Challenge as a focusing mechanism that involved and financed new problem solvers, that worked with them as a community of innovators, and that invested in ideas (compared to other approaches that invest in leaders). The historic Grand Challenge approach was revitalized by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in 2003 when it identified 14 Grand Challenges in Global Health and showed how the approach can focus significant new attention on an area of study, energize communities to rise to meet challenges, and bring new talent into a field. The Global Health Grand Challenges was found to be a ‘watershed moment’ that ‘changed the course of global health’. By 2017, Grand Challenges had supported more than 450 solutions in 70 countries.⁷¹

CHIC’s application of the Grand Challenge approach raised questions and fell short of some expectations. Policy actors highlighted the Grand Challenge model as CHIC’s potential added value because it could address specific and well-defined technical problems, catalyze action, unlock new insights into a problem, and fund product innovations. They did however also perceive the model to be less suited for addressing complex non-technical problems, addressing systemic problems, and funding larger system-level investments. They questioned whether the model could be adapted to these ends.

CHIC may not have realized the full potential of the Grand Challenge approach. Some policy actors and innovators questioned whether CHIC was using the full potential of its position to maximize the Grand Challenge approach’s contribution, value and impact. They believed that CHIC should capitalize on the benefits of the Grand Challenge model in terms of being more ‘intentional’ and accessing the network that the GC brings together, such as the global community of diverse scientists. It was also suggested the Grand Challenge approach was undermined by CHIC not offering a very clear definition of the problem(s) to be addressed.

Humanitarian ecosystem

CHIC managers saw the programme’s complementary role as being established by the process undertaken at design phase. In 2016, GCC began identifying priorities for humanitarian innovation work. Building on a broad call for input from experts and affected peoples, GCC convened a structured process (a ‘Delphi panel’) to identify and articulate the most pressing challenges.⁷² The top ten resulting priorities were then shared with a wide range of stakeholders, to be refined into one single topic which was to be launched as a Humanitarian Grand Challenge. In 2018, 10 humanitarian ‘grand challenges’ were identified, and the list was published in the journal *Nature*.⁷³ In 2017-2018, ‘access to affected populations in highly insecure environments’ was defined as the greatest challenge to be addressed by innovations. In 2018, CHIC reported making efforts at design stage to complement existing humanitarian innovation initiatives by conducting a study of existing humanitarian innovation initiatives. The study identified limited capacity to invest in developing effective and efficient solutions both to long-term humanitarian crises and tomorrow’s humanitarian challenges. CHIC sought to address this by mobilizing the private sector, governments, foundations, universities, and other aid actors to scale existing solutions to humanitarian challenges and by making strategic investments to identify, innovate and develop solutions for emerging humanitarian grand challenges.⁷⁴

CHIC was expected to remain coherent with other innovation actors through donor steering and the work of a coordination body for humanitarian innovation. According to the FCDO business case in 2017,⁷⁵ CHIC would enable a strong FCDO – USAID partnership and involvement from other donors. Further coherence would be promoted through the Global Alliance for Humanitarian Innovation (GAHI), a coordination body launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, of which FCDO was

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Nature*, 12 July 2018.

⁷⁴ CHIC (2018), Modification of Assistance Award, USAID.

⁷⁵ FCDO (2017), Humanitarian Grand Challenge: Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC) Business Case.

a founder and contributor member. GAHI's overall aim was to address innovation needs in the sector that could not be effectively tackled by individual actors and organizations working on their own.

CHIC made proactive efforts to coordinate with other humanitarian innovation actors and has been recognized as a valuable member of the humanitarian innovation ecosystem. Stakeholders reported that CHIC had chaired a quarterly 'Humanitarian Innovation Social Club' with actors such as GSMA, Elrha, ICRC to share information, discuss common themes and challenges, and create opportunities for collaboration. Policy actors recognized that CHIC engaged in coordination through donors, partners and contacts with Elrha. However, they doubted that CHIC was highly reflective about its positioning, worried that it may not have been in touch with agency-based innovation funds, and saw the risk of some duplication occurring among humanitarian innovation actors. For example, they questioned why CHIC and the HIF both focused on humanitarian health innovations.

CHIC was understood to offer specific types of innovation support. Unlike innovation funders that sit within humanitarian or development organizations, CHIC was defined as a 'multi-agency innovation funder.' It was also understood to be a funder that supported bottom-up local innovations, for example, to the START Network's Disasters and Emergencies Preparedness Programme (DEPP) Innovation Labs (DEPP-labs). In 2022, the State of the Humanitarian System found humanitarian innovation was making some overall progress through four different approaches: (i) agency-specific operational innovations; (ii) sectoral programme and enabling innovations; (iii) 'humanitarian to humanitarian' (H2H) innovations; and (iv) innovations by non-traditional humanitarian actors and local actors.⁷⁶ According to this typology, CHIC appears to involve elements of sectoral innovations (ii) and innovations by non-traditional actors (iv).

But CHIC's position in the humanitarian ecosystem remained unclearly defined. Policy actors were unclear about CHIC's comparative advantages compared to other actors, and humanitarian innovators acknowledged the need for a more strategic approach to coordination. Stakeholders hoped that CHIC would engage strongly with the Global Prioritization Exercise, reflect on its position, and work in a more complementary way going forward. The Global Prioritization Exercise, conducted by Elrha, is looking into priorities at global and local level for research and innovation, and it was hoped this would provide some strategic direction and help coordination for CHIC and others.

CHIC operated in an ecosystem that clearly lacked coherence and coordination. As the document review indicates, humanitarian innovation activities lack a holistic view or systemic approach among donors and practitioners.⁷⁷ External coherence was complicated by a lack of coordination among humanitarian innovation activities following the failure of GAHI in 2019, despite an offer by GCC to host the alliance.⁷⁸ Despite the closure of GAHI, underlying challenges in the humanitarian innovation ecosystem were still present and the ecosystem is still in need of a collaborative platform for enhancing the impact of humanitarian innovation – with more than 800 initiatives related to humanitarian innovation aiming at transforming the humanitarian system having been launched.

⁷⁶ ALNAP (2022) The State of the Humanitarian System. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.

⁷⁷ United Nations University - Maastricht Economic and social Research institute on Innovation and Technology (2022), Literature Study. Innovation in Humanitarian Assistance

⁷⁸ KPMG (2019), Global Alliance of Humanitarian Innovation (GAHI). Lessons Learned

Effectiveness

This section assesses whether CHIC ‘did well’ according to the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, and value for money. It considers the effectiveness and efficiency of the CHIC programme, and looks at value for money by focusing on four innovations selected for case study. These criteria emphasize accountability and are understood to be largely within CHIC’s sphere of influence.

2.1 Programme effectiveness

It was expected that the CHIC programme would achieve its intended output results, recognizing their relative importance based on inputs and their contribution to intended outcomes and impact.⁷⁹

Finding: CHIC funding and technical assistance met expectations for effectiveness in delivering quality services that achieved immediate outputs, particularly the funding of a broad range of early stage innovations. This was a notable achievement given the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. CHIC was somewhat effective at facilitating learning - more challenging given the pandemic - and for a variety of reasons was less effective, in the time period, for longer term outcomes of system change and sustainability.

Funding innovations

CHIC was considered to have effectively achieved its most important output: ‘Innovative and relevant products and services selected for CHIC funding.’ Cumulatively, CHIC funded 56 Seed and 17 TTS innovations in 22 different conflict-affected countries over the course of three funding rounds. 64% of CHIC grantees were conducted either in partnership with affected communities or were led by individuals from affected communities⁸⁰ and 30% of grantee organizations being led by women.⁸¹ However, the multi-donor funding arrangements with different terms and conditions sometimes led to delays in the release of funds, which had adverse effects on project progress.⁸²

CHIC’s flexible approach to funding was perceived as critical to CHIC’s effectiveness. Many grantees had been given ‘no cost’ (and some costed) extensions to enable them to complete their projects following challenges and delays caused by the severe impact on grant implementation of the Covid-19 pandemic. Interviewed grantees perceived that the CHIC program team understood the complexities of implementing in conflict settings (and during the pandemic) well and offered innovators appropriate support and flexibility.

CHIC’s effectiveness in achieving longer-term outcomes was potentially limited by the length of its grants. CHIC had a phased approach to TTS investments which provided a framework for increasing the length of funding and helped tailor the support provided for TTS. However, the maximum grant length allowed by CHIC’s stakeholders was two years. KIs with grantees and external stakeholders indicated that two-year grants for TTS innovators were too short to be effective in supporting them achieve scale. While a Humanitarian Innovation Expert noted that five to eight years would be more realistic for innovation success, they recognized that this might not be acceptable to donors.

CHIC’s selection of innovations and management was considered good but lacking in strategy for impact. All policy actors expressed appreciation for how well CHIC navigated the challenges of funding innovations in conflict contexts and managing multiple donors’ different requirements. They commented on CHIC’s strong fund management being driven by GCC’s previous experience. However, their perception was that relying on past models within a new sector has led to CHIC primarily working with traditional problem solvers such as international NGOs instead of new actors who have relevant solutions but are unfamiliar with the humanitarian sector as intended in the Grand Challenge

⁷⁹ EQ2.1: To what extent and how well did the CHIC programme provide funding, TA, and learning facilitation as intended, using the Grand Challenge (GC) approach?

⁸⁰ Creating Hope in Conflict, July 2020, *Descriptive Portfolio Analysis*. Does not include Round 3 grantees.

⁸¹ Portfolio Analysis, Rapid Process Review.

⁸² Energy Case Study.

approach.⁸³ They also raised questions around the speed of grant delivery and the extent to which the investment strategy could lead to long-term impact on specific problems identified by humanitarian actors due to the diversity of the innovations funded and the early innovation stages of the grantees.

Technical assistance

CHIC innovators had mixed views on the effectiveness of the TA provided, although generally seed innovators were more positive. From the grantee survey, innovators overall were positive about the technical support provided by CHIC and its effectiveness in supporting Seed innovators to achieve proof of concept. However, its effectiveness in supporting innovators to scale and become sustainable was perceived as limited. Brink's community support was reported as more effective by Seed innovators than TTS innovators (18/33 Seed compared to 4/10 TTS) and WFP's technical support was reported more useful by TTS innovators compared to Seed innovators (6/10 TTS compared to 16/34 Seed).⁸⁴ Evidence from innovator KIIs also presented mixed experiences across both TTS and Seed grantees. Some felt they had received the support they needed to progress their innovations while others, particularly among the TTS innovators, reported receiving little, if any, technical support, or reported that allocated advisors did not teach them anything new. Some TTS innovators mentioned that the linkages established at WFP's accelerator week were useful but there was insufficient follow-up support to facilitate strategic links to other stakeholders who may have supported the further development along pathways to scale. One TTS innovator who was already well-established felt that they had been pressured to participate in group training sessions which provided no new learnings for them, while others stated that they would have appreciated more proactive support in preparing for and engaging with potential partners for longer term sustainability or scaling.

CHIC undertook feedback exercises to establish the effectiveness of TA for innovators but did not follow-up to assess whether TA-supported innovators achieved their intended goals or any contribution the TA might have made if so. The original proposal for TA included plans to base provision on an assessment of each individual innovations' potential for transformative change which would be used to develop a tailored program of TA to support progress along a pathway to optimum impact. CHIC was unable to implement this highly tailored and specialized approach to TA because it required too many resources. Instead, CHIC introduced quarterly innovator surveys administered by Brink and WFP to gather regular feedback on the TA being provided. A question regarding TA was also included in the innovators' final report template and end of grant surveys. Feedback from these information sources were immediately fed back into the design of the next TA engagement with grantees. However, these feedback exercises stopped short of measuring whether the TA provided resulted in new partnerships or strengthened programming.

The effectiveness of TA was significantly hindered by the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. Innovators noted that face-to-face meetings were much more useful than those conducted remotely, and online gatherings convened by CHIC as a substitute in the light of the pandemic inevitably entailed shortcomings, such as the difficulty of accommodating multiple time zones.

Learning facilitation

CHIC was considered somewhat effective at facilitating learning. CHIC developed six learning papers,⁸⁵ increased its media and social media presence and provided informal platforms for innovator learning through its TA provider Brink. CHIC staff were also featured on panels and webinars focused on innovation, humanitarian innovation, and other relevant topics. Innovators largely felt that they had generated evidence about their own innovations (32/42) and that CHIC generated learnings to help humanitarian innovation.⁸⁶ However, they were doubtful about how widely formal learnings and recommendations were disseminated among relevant actors, and policy actors saw a need for

⁸³ KIIs with external stakeholders.

⁸⁴ Innovator Survey.

⁸⁵ Four papers are on scaling and barriers to innovation and two are innovator case studies (the most recent was published in Sept 2022).

⁸⁶ Innovator Survey.

CHIC to enhance their advocacy, learning and visibility work with donors and humanitarian actors.⁸⁷ For example, it was suggested that increasing engagement with humanitarian actors who were in a position to use and deploy innovations which had demonstrated proof of concept could be a pathway through which CHIC could achieve long term outcomes. CHIC had the potential to act as a thought leader, provide structured advocacy, and involve relevant stakeholders early on in the innovation process.

CHIC MEL practices were considered to be weaker in tracking outcomes and facilitating learning by both innovators and policy actors.⁸⁸ Policy actors described a lack of monitoring of portfolio progress from outcomes to impact over time using its existing indicator of 'Lives saved and Lives improved', and innovators reported a heavy focus on numbers of end users and amount spent. While CHIC has strengthened the MEL support for innovators, policy actors suggested that closer engagement with innovations over time would have enabled CHIC to better track outcomes. These actors advised that accountability could be increased by demonstrating improvements through rapid consultations with relevant intended users: communities, humanitarian response organizations or global practitioners. Immediate community learning could be increased by asking innovators to provide learning reports in more innovative ways (e.g., presentations or stories), and sharing these more widely with the community, including with CHIC's TA partners.

Overall effectiveness

CHIC was perceived to have been very effective at getting funding to small innovations during its first years despite many challenges. Despite facing many challenges in distributing funding from multiple donors with differing priorities and general funding cuts, CHIC was very effective in the management of the programme. They took broad and early-innovation approach to grantee selection in order to meet the needs of the different donors and fund new innovation areas, with the idea that the portfolio of innovations would narrow later on. (Notably, this was in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on CHIC's operations.) There is now a need to enter a 'next phase'. Policy actors identified challenges ahead for CHIC such as continuing to strengthen their work, as well as needing to adapt their approach and instruments much more to the requirements of the humanitarian system and to its recognized challenges based on its learnings so far and learnings from other humanitarian actors.

CHIC was perceived to be limited in its effectiveness at reaching its longer-term system change outcome due to its strategy of funding a diverse range of innovations. While CHIC's model has the merit of going beyond 'solutions without a problem', CHIC's scaling model was seen as very ambitious if it aimed at uptake by multiple organizations in different contexts – especially without the capacity to also invest in addressing adoption challenges. Humanitarian innovation experts believed that CHIC needed to develop a more focused strategy. They suggested that programs supporting humanitarian innovation with limited resources need to make strategic choices on program focus (e.g., thematic, locally led or system change). The CHIC program's broad strategy made it difficult to provide the nature and intensity of support required for locally led innovations to progress to scale and thereby attract system-level interest, or to engage different players in addressing more narrowly defined challenge. A clear strategy could help define a clear direction (thematic focus) and the process for getting there (the why and the how) while maintaining enough flexibility in the funding to support multiple innovations. In particular, a strategy would need to define how much CHIC will work by supporting local innovations at community level and how much it will work through improving the parts of the humanitarian system delivered by international humanitarian actors such as the UN bodies.

⁸⁷ KIIs with external stakeholders.

⁸⁸ KIIs.

2.2 Programme efficiency

It was expected that CHIC should ensure economy through procurement and recruitment systems; process efficiency (i.e., ensuring that all processes are both sufficient and necessary); allocative efficiency (selecting the projects with the greatest potential for transformative change); and TA to provide innovations with the support they need in order to achieve transformative change.⁸⁹

Finding: CHIC systems and processes ensured economy in terms of achieving an optimal combination of quality, service, time, and cost. Processes were thorough, fair, well designed and generally efficient, with some opportunities for streamlining fund processes and technical assistance provision.

Economy

CHIC had rigorous procurement and recruitment systems in place to ensure best value. The Rapid Process Review identified that GCC's published policies covering procurement and travel included provisions to ensure best value in terms of the optimal combination of quality, service, time, and cost considerations. The monitoring of compliance with these policies is overseen by the GCC Director of Finance and Administration with quarterly and annual compliance reporting to the GCC Audit, Finance & Risk Committee. Some donor partners required innovations to comply with additional donor-specific policies and procedures. Compliance checking processes were applied to both the GCC operations and grantees.

While such robust procedures may have provided donors with the confidence to fund high risk projects, they took a long time and could be extremely resource intensive for both GCC personnel and innovators. In consultation interviews, both GCC personnel and innovators commented on the complexity of the terms and conditions of grants and onerous due diligence and financial reporting processes which varied by donor. While some innovators commended GCC's efforts to clarify and simplify where possible, some terms and conditions, particularly those imposed by USAID, were found to be so complex that one grantee mentioned that they remained concerned about compliance with terms and conditions and the associated risks (reputational and financial) of inadvertent non-compliance. Some GCC personnel referred to the donors' and the CHIC investment committee's high expectations for risk management, and the challenges of ensuring efficiency whilst also maintaining rigor.

Selection processes

While CHIC's appraisal guidelines and processes were generally thorough, fair and well designed to identify innovations with the greatest potential for transformative change, the CHIC Rapid Process Review identified a risk of excluding innovations with potential for transformative change as a result of a scoring protocol based on average scores across five criteria. The initial screening process required all eligible applications to be assessed by three expert panelists who assigned scores against appraisal criteria covering impact, integrated innovation, project execution plan, leadership capability to champion change, and value for effort, which taken together are comprehensive. However, according to the guidance, only projects achieving a threshold average score across all criteria were considered 'fundable'. As the scores are not weighted, there was a possibility that proposals with significant potential for transformational change might not reach the average score threshold due to weaknesses in project management-related aspects of their application which could potentially be addressed through grant management and TA support.

While the CHIC Rapid Process Review judged selection processes to be thorough and fair, it also found that the overall process (from application to fund disbursement) took a long time and was very resource intensive. Although the GCC team has reduced the time taken from application to award, they reported that it could still take a year. The selection processes followed a number of different stages and involved expert panels bringing a range of varied perspectives and included

⁸⁹ EQ2.2: To what extent and how did CHIC deliver results (outputs) in an economic, efficient way (where efficiency includes timeliness)?

assessors nominated by donor partners. While this helped to ensure a balanced appraisal and provided donors with assurances that their perspectives were included in the appraisal, GCC personnel felt that this also presented a challenge to ensuring consistency of scoring and judgments across such a large pool of expert assessors. The convening of discussions to resolve differences of opinions took time to arrange and required a significant investment of GCC team time. Lengthy funder approval processes also added to the timeframe.

While CHIC grantees recognized that the programme was willing to fund high-risk humanitarian innovation projects, they found the due diligence and grant confirmation processes arduous and time consuming, particularly for TTS grants. Some found the support provided to refine proposals and budgets useful. On the other hand, some grantees found that the long delays in the initial disbursement of funds caused disruption to project implementation. One interviewed grantee believed that the CHIC funding terms and conditions may prohibit the engagement of local partners due to the level of detail required for budgets.

Technical assistance

Sub-contracting of TA provision to Brink and WFP introduced some inefficiencies and limited learning exchange opportunities. The Rapid Process Review identified that the Brink-led community of (mostly Seed) innovators had great potential as a network or forum for innovators to exchange learning, identify common challenges and share positive experiences. As well as developing the online community, Brink was also helping to improve coordination and opportunities for synergies between GCC, Brink and WFP, which each had a role in engaging directly with innovators. Unfortunately, these initiatives lost some momentum during 2022, due in part to uncertainties about future funding. Some innovators were confused about the role of each organization vis-à-vis CHIC and one innovator felt that the presence of Brink impeded their direct access to the GCC team. While outsourcing TA can be beneficial in terms of fostering connections and bringing in necessary experience, KIs revealed that GCC was inconsistent in its sharing of project and programme progress and learning reports with Brink and WFP, thereby limiting potential learning exchange opportunities. However, all three supporting organizations were engaged in the CHIC innovator meeting in late 2022 Brussels, the first large scale in-person CHIC event after the pandemic, and Brink has recently started to develop an innovator community forum for TTS grantees.

There have been missed opportunities for more formalized mechanisms and strategies for sharing of learning both internally and externally. The grantee survey identified that innovators (32/42) felt that they generated evidence about their own innovations and that CHIC generated learnings to help humanitarian innovation. However, the survey found that a smaller proportion (22/41) of grantees agreed that CHIC effectively shared evidence to innovators, and only 22/40 agreed that CHIC did well in disseminating evidence to others. The Rapid Process Review found that CHIC's processes for sharing of learning lacked a clear strategy and structure. It also found that Brink had planned to 'translate' CHIC learning papers to make them accessible to innovators (where relevant). Neither of these have been addressed and this appears to be due to overall CHIC resource limitations.

2.3 Value for Money

It was expected that case study innovations would bring significant benefits to conflict-affected people (taking into consideration any costs they incurred), and/or environmental benefits, in particular carbon emission reductions; they would have the potential to bring about product, process or system-level change in the humanitarian system, and would spread and be on a pathway to wider adoption; and they would have the potential, if widely adopted, to increase the efficiency and/or the cost-effectiveness of humanitarian actions.⁹⁰

Finding: Overall, the four innovation case studies showed good VFM. All four case study innovations demonstrated the potential to bring about product, process or system-level change in

⁹⁰ EQ2.3: To what extent and how did the innovations supported by CHIC benefit conflict-affected people, contribute to or foster wider change in the humanitarian system, and have the potential to increase the efficiency and/or cost-effectiveness of humanitarian assistance?

the humanitarian system and spread beyond their project locations and, if widely adopted, to increase either the efficiency or the cost-effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. Three innovations studied brought a range of equitably experience and significant benefits to conflict-affect people, surpassing expectations, and two were on a pathway to wider adoption.

Benefits

Three of the four case study innovations (EPP, Field Ready and Hala Systems) have brought a range of significant benefits, surpassing CHIC's expectations.

- **Energy Peace Partners** created and facilitated the sale of a financial product (a Peace Renewable Energy Certificate or P-REC) attractive to large corporates whose proceeds may be used to provide renewable energy to conflict-affected locations, such as streetlights (Goma) and provision of a regular power supply to a hospital in a conflict-affected area (Malakal, South Sudan).
- **Field Ready** proved that local technicians in conflict zones (in this case, NW Syria) can repair and fabricate a significant proportion of health facilities' equipment to international quality standards, quicker and more cheaply than could be done through international procurement, thus enabling more medical procedures to happen more promptly, with consequent health benefits, alleviating anxiety among health facility staff and patients, and reducing costly cross-border travel for treatment.
- **Hala Systems** developed a sufficiently accurate and reliable early warning system (EWS) for conflict affected people subject to air strikes in NW Syria. The EWS has reduced casualties and to some extent alleviated mental distress for approximately 2 million people and in the process has compiled a hashed (incorruptible) database of evidence for potential future use by actors seeking to hold perpetrators to account (media, courts, human rights advocates).

In all cases CHIC's funding made a significant contribution, and achievements exceeded expectations.

The benefits of three of the four case study innovations (EPP, Field Ready and Hala Systems) were experienced equitably where this was within the innovators' power. The benefits of EPP-funded electricity supply have been felt equitably in Goma. Field Ready and Hala Systems made systematic efforts to ensure that the benefits of their work were experienced equitably to the extent possible, given social and cultural factors, through their design, monitoring and staffing practices.

Nuru brought benefits to some conflict-affected people but these fell short of expectations and were not experienced equitably. NurU provided a reliable electricity supply from a renewable source to households and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Goma, but the benefits fell short of NurU's and CHIC's expectations. The high-cost limited uptake: a large part of the population either couldn't afford the electricity or could only afford it four hours a day for low demand use (lighting and low power devices).

Three of the case study innovations (EPP, NurU and Field Ready) delivered carbon reductions, compared with alternatives, while the fourth (Hala Systems) has no significant carbon downside. EPP and NurU deliver renewable energy infrastructure which to some extent displaces fossil fuel usage; Field Ready's local repair and fabrication displace purchases made through international supply chains which rely on fossil fuel; Hala Systems' activities do not appear to entail significant carbon emissions.

Key to Field Ready and Hala Systems' success was their local approach to project design and implementation. Field Ready and Hala Systems' success depended on gaining the trust of local responders (health facilities; civil defense organizations, such as White Helmets); 'selling' their model (Field Ready's model of local repair and fabrication; Hala Systems' automated EWS); training and networking the relevant local actors (for Field Ready, health facility staff and their prospective suppliers, and local engineers; for Hala Systems, vulnerable facilities and civilians, and civil defense workers) and supplying the technology (Field Ready provided 3D printers; Hala Systems installed acoustic sensors, prediction algorithms, relays and alarms).

Wider adoption

All four innovations had the potential to bring about improvements in either the products or the processes of humanitarian assistance.

- EPP offered a new fund-raising product to finance the construction of new energy infrastructure that can benefit conflict-affected people.
- Nuru offered a new business model, attracting commercial investment for off-grid, megawatt scale renewable energy infrastructure that benefits conflict-affected people.
- Field Ready proposed a process change to the way that procurement (not just for health but potentially other sectors such as shelter and WASH) is conceptualized, funded and managed: this means recognizing the potential for local repair and fabrication alongside international supply chains, based on an appropriate triage process.
- Hala Systems offered a new product: a model EWS with potentially wide application in conflict zones and possibly for natural disasters as well.

Nuru had an expanding pipeline of new projects and EPP appears to be on a pathway to scale and sustainability from sales revenue (of P-REC certificates, and of power respectively). EPP and Nuru are scaling, with likely further solar electrification of conflict-affected locations. A large potential market is UN humanitarian hubs, currently reliant on diesel powered generators, but this calls for a change in UN decarbonization policy and practice.

For Field Ready and Hala Systems, despite their clear benefits (or potential benefits), wider adoption was happening slowly, if at all; it was hampered by a range of factors. Both need donor funding if they are to scale as a commercial model was not viable in the settings where they operate. In both cases this was not forthcoming despite the innovations' benefits. Field Ready had not yet made significant changes in international logistics mindsets. Its operations in NW Syria could not be maintained beyond the end of CHIC funding. Hala Systems needed sustained donor funding to reconfigure its successful NW Syria EWS in other locations, as this entails both a lengthy and delicate process of local trust-building, dialogue, recruitment and training, and a technical process changing the parameters of the detectors and the algorithms.

Efficiency or cost-effectiveness

All four innovations had the potential, if widely adopted, of increasing either the efficiency or the cost-effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. Efficiency is about doing things better (quicker, cheaper, at no loss of quality). Cost-effectiveness is about getting more impact relative to the cost.

- EPP offered a potential cost-effectiveness gain: greater impact through new infrastructure funded from a new source of investment with little pressure on humanitarian budgets.
- Nuru offered a potential cost-effectiveness gain for the same reason, bringing in commercial capital to fund renewable infrastructure in conflict-affected areas.
- Field Ready offered an efficiency gain: where local fabrication is appropriate, it delivers humanitarian outputs (health-related equipment) more quickly and cheaply than the default alternative (international procurement) without sacrificing quality.
- Hala Systems offered a new product which potentially provides a measure of security to a large population at a cost that is small in the context of humanitarian country budgets such as Syria's, and which reduces downstream humanitarian costs in proportion to the healthcare and other conflict-related displacement costs averted. This can be seen as a cost-effectiveness gain.

CHIC's overall VFM would be higher to the extent that it could help secure wider adoption for Field Ready and Hala Systems and hence wider efficiency and cost-effectiveness gains in their respective areas.

Outcomes and Impact

This section explores ‘so what happened as a result of the CHIC programme?’, with regard to intended immediate outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and longer term ‘impact’. It considers immediate outcomes at the level of CHIC-supported innovations, intermediate outcomes at the level of innovation users, and longer-term impact at the level of potential improvements in the humanitarian system, particularly in the thematic areas identified by CHIC. These criteria are concerned primarily with learning about ‘what works and how’ recognizing that outcomes and impact depend on other actors and circumstances that often lie outside of CHIC’s sphere of influence.

3.1 Seed innovations

It was expected that CHIC’s portfolio of seed innovations might each offer a value proposition, proof of concept, and an improved solution; and thus, generate consolidated learning and evidence.⁹¹

Finding: CHIC’s portfolio of seed innovations offered value propositions, successfully demonstrating proof of concepts and improved solutions for innovation in conflict settings despite the implementation challenges. Some had already achieved wider impact and progress towards scaling and others seemed likely to, whilst others faced sustainability challenges. Seed innovators generated valuable evidence although more could be done to consolidate and share learning.

Proof of concept

CHIC-funded seed innovations offered value propositions and many successfully demonstrated proof of concept, (‘a test... to understand whether the innovation might be physically or conceptually possible to achieve’ - ALNAP). Interviews with CHIC managers and stakeholders cited many examples, supported also by the mini case studies. Additionally, 77% (27/35) of seed innovators responding to the grantee survey agreed⁹² that CHIC had helped them to achieve proof of concept. The existence of a set of successful humanitarian innovations is significant given that, although funding for humanitarian innovation has increased in recent years,⁹³ it remains low – 0.2% of the overall humanitarian assistance budget between 2017 and 2021 according to one analysis⁹⁴ - and ‘the humanitarian system remains in the bottom list of sectors and industries investing in research and innovation’.⁹⁵ Notably, these achievements are in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Crucially, seed innovations demonstrated that innovation in conflict settings is possible. Almost all seed innovations in health, life-saving information and energy appeared to address the overarching problems for humanitarian assistance in conflict which were identified by CHIC during initial analysis.

Proof of concept is seen as a realistic and successful outcome for Seed innovations, and some have had wider impact than might be expected at this early stage on the innovation pathway. One example is Energy Peace Partners, which may be having early influence on the humanitarian system by leveraging the renewable energy credit market to support clean energy provision in conflict-affected locations. This innovation is also on the pathway to scale and seems to be sustainable, due to its promising model, which is demonstrating commercial viability. Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)’s innovation, a platform to assist NRC legal aid teams in the field to improve tailored legal counselling offered to users, is being rolled out across these teams now that proof of concept has been established.

⁹¹ EQ3.1: To what extent and how did the portfolio of seed innovations accelerate innovative solutions?

⁹² On a scale of 1 to 6, where 6 = ‘strongly agree’, agreement is taken to be those selecting 5 or 6 on the scale.

⁹³ ALNAP, State of the Humanitarian System 2018 and 2022

⁹⁴ Issa, Z., Camburn, J., Schenck, C., Almalla, M., and Jabbour, S. (2022). Who funds what? Humanitarian research and innovation funding flows analysis. London: Elrha. (page 35).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

Sustainability – the ability to maintain the innovation beyond the end of CHIC funding – was a challenge for CHIC seed grantees, although there are some examples of seed funded innovations that are already making progress towards scaling, as they complete the seed funding. Difficulties in securing further funding was a recurring theme in grantee interviews. Only 28% of Seed survey respondents (10/35) said that their innovation was sustainable without further donor funding, suggesting that they doubt a commercial model is an option (at least in the immediate term) and that they are reliant on continued grant funding of some form, if they are to continue to maintain, develop and scale their innovation. Four of the 56 grantees from Rounds 1 and 2 progressed to a TTS grant on the strength of their success at proof of concept stage. A quarter (8/32) of Seed survey respondents agreed that CHIC had helped their innovation to scale.

Improved solutions

CHIC Seed innovations developed new and improved products and processes in the thematic areas.

Three quarters of Seed innovator survey respondents (26/34) said that they had developed a new or improved product, and 65% (22/34) a new or improved process, and both CHIC data and external sources provided further evidence of improved solutions in the portfolio. Innovators developed and tested new products (for example Surgibox, a clear, sterile drape that inflates with sterile air into an enclosure over an incision or wound, thus rethinking safe surgery in conflict zones) or tested and adapted existing innovations to humanitarian settings (for example Deutsche Welthungerhilfe's use of hydroponic agriculture in ZamZam IDP camp in Darfur Sudan, which complemented WFP cash voucher distributions).

Most Seed innovations reported that they offered improved solutions: a better way of doing things ('measurable, comparative improvement in effectiveness, quality or efficiency compared to current approaches to the problem addressed by the innovation' ALNAP). 77% (27/35) of Seed innovator survey respondents said that their innovation provided a more efficient solution; and over 90% (31/44) said that it provided a better-quality solution. Whilst the evaluation did not comprehensively triangulate these claims, it did find supporting evidence for many of them. Good examples are provided by Change WaterLabs (a portable toilet that converts liquid sewage into clean water vapor that then evaporates, used for drop-in and distributed sanitation for displaced and urban communities in Uganda) and Needs List (chatbot service that aggregates and shares messages containing urgent information, supply, and human resource needs sent in by frontline responders with various stakeholders so that needs can be better met in real-time).

Consolidated evidence

CHIC Seed innovators generated valuable evidence about viable models to address identified problems of health services and supplies, energy and information. 76% (32/42) of all survey respondents (both Seed and TTS innovators) agreed that they had generated evidence about their innovation.

The mini case study found that a key value of the health portfolio, for example, was that it had generated strong evidence for the broader localization agenda through a) the potential for the humanitarian system to adopt more local procurement efforts and b) demonstrating the value and role of local humanitarian responders, as both implementers and users of innovations.

Some evidence was consolidated, but it was not clear whether or how it was being actively shared with relevant system actors or in a way that could progress innovative solutions. In interviews, grantees felt that CHIC could have done more to support evidence generation and consolidation. CHIC managers themselves recognized that there was more scope for capturing and sharing learning about the Seed innovations – successes and failures – both within and beyond the innovator community, but had often been constrained by resource limitations. The mini case studies corroborated this view: it found that evidence did not seem to have been made accessible to or disseminated to relevant actors and networks in the humanitarian system to encourage wider innovation uptake.

3.2 Scaling innovations (transition to scale grants)

It was expected that CHIC's TTS innovations would offer diffusion or scaling, improved solutions for humanitarian action, and wider adoption of these improved solutions.⁹⁶

Finding: CHIC-funded TTS innovations offered diverse and promising improved solutions in health, energy and lifesaving information and demonstrated transition to scale. Some had successfully secured further funding although few were yet being more widely adopted, largely due to operational and systemic barriers, and these required more enabling support.

Diffusion and scaling

17 CHIC TTS grants were awarded. The 13 innovations that were funded in the first two years of the TTS program largely all successfully completed their grants. Few TTS innovations are 'locally owned' and it was harder to find locally owned TTS applicants. Of the TTS grants made, 13 were to organizations based in the USA, UK or Canada. The four which were locally owned were based in Turkey (White Helmets, operating in NW Syria), Nigeria (ColdHubs), DRC (Nuru and Altech) and Pakistan (Sehat Kehani).⁹⁷

Improved solutions

CHIC TTS innovations offered diverse and promising improved solutions across the thematic areas. Notably, in health, Field Ready scaled in Northwest (NW) Syria, enabling locally manufactured repairs to damaged medical equipment thus demonstrating the potential of this model. The life-saving information TTS portfolio offered three solutions to different aspects of the problem with some demonstrable potential for system level uptake and adoption. Hala Systems, also in NW Syria, offered a unique and improved solution for humanitarian action, rolling out their Sentry EWS through local organizations to approximately 2.2 million inhabitants at risk of air strikes and thus providing a local solution to the information problems of information access, content and two-way communications, and demonstrating significant impact in terms of lives saved and improved. In energy, Nuru installed a solar powered mini-grid and street lights in Ndoshio, DRC. Nine out of ten TTS respondents to the grantee survey said that their innovation offered a more efficient solution, and the same numbers that their innovation offered a new or improved product or technology. (Six out of ten said that their innovation offered a new or improved humanitarian process.)

CHIC TTS innovations offered solutions to different technical problems in a largely localized context. They worked effectively with local organizations to roll out their innovation and engaged with local communities to promote uptake. (Field Ready provides a good example.) This engagement was achieved despite the difficulties ensuing from the Covid-19 pandemic which brought face to face communication to a halt for most of 2020 and diverted innovators along with other humanitarian responders into taking mitigating measures such as providing personal protective equipment for their staff.

Wider adoption

TTS innovations with potential to improve humanitarian action more widely have successfully scaled where implemented, although are not yet being adopted more widely, beyond this locality by humanitarian actors. Although evidence⁹⁸ indicates that some TTS innovations have been accessed by the wider public and other humanitarian actors, and have managed to leverage additional funding, on the whole funding remains a challenge. Field Ready, a successful TTS innovation, had to close its operations in NW Syria soon after the grant ended although their localized procurement model has been replicated in a variety of humanitarian contexts. Energy Peace Partners had a promising potential pipeline of investors at the end of their (Seed) grant, having proved their concept and

⁹⁶ EQ3.2: To what extent and how did the portfolio of TTS innovations accelerate innovative solutions?

⁹⁷ CHIC grant portfolio analysis (updated – see Annex 1)

⁹⁸ CHIC FCDO Annual Review

developed a commercially viable model. This is not the case for many, however. Innovations which are fundamentally reliant on donor funding to continue reaching target users often face barriers in donor funding systems and priorities which make accessing such funding very challenging. Innovators expressed uncertainty about the extent to which leadership in humanitarian organizations were committed to trialing new approaches, willing to adopt innovations, or systematically take up new ways of working.

This is a commonly recognized problem: our document review found that research and the growing experience of innovators in the sector⁹⁹ indicates that scaling remains a core challenge for humanitarian innovation. According to Elhra,¹⁰⁰ innovators looking to scale their projects in the humanitarian sector face a complex set of barriers and constraints at both operational and systemic levels. These barriers increase the time, effort and financial investment required to scale and are preventing the type of transformative change hoped for.

Some TTS innovations were having some success in securing funding or support for the next phase – the step beyond ‘transition to scale’. One innovator had established a for-profit business and sought support and financial investment from an externally facilitated network of impact investors. Another innovator had established linkages and channels for future funding due to their own reputation and their dissemination of information about the innovation. In some cases, the provision of the TTS grant helped with the further testing and generation of evidence about innovations which the innovators used to seek backing for wider adoption, to varying degrees of success. Holding a CHIC TTS grant in itself assisted some innovators in securing funding from other sources.

Both innovators and policy actors suggested that CHIC could do more to support the scaling process. For most innovators, the requirement is for significant and sustained investment. Widespread adoption by humanitarian organizations - ‘the gold measure of success’ according to one interviewee - is recognized to take many years and require more funding than TTS grants alone ever provide. Some grantees thought that CHIC provided insufficient support in facilitating linkages between innovators and other potential and significant stakeholders and wanted more. Policy actors perceived that more could have been achieved in scaling CHIC TTS innovations with an approach that accompanied innovations on their scaling journey (end-to-end, not mid-point hand-off), that TTS support is opaque, that resourcing of the support is limited, and that CHIC engages too little with the humanitarian system. It is perceived that CHIC lacks sufficiently solid knowledge of the humanitarian system and capacity to engage with it. Donors expect CHIC to do more in establishing necessary connections with other stakeholders, including private sector actors to increase sustainability, and to learn about how to do this. However, some policy actors also recognize barriers to scaling, which include the challenge of incentives and ownership of innovations (if outside agencies), the need to invest sufficient resources in system-level innovations, and the need for context-specific innovation support mechanisms.

A CHIC study highlighted learning about scaling humanitarian innovations and the associated challenges.¹⁰¹ The study drew lessons from five case studies within the humanitarian sector which were helping to transform established ways of working, whether within one organization or across the wider sector. A further CHIC study¹⁰² identified the social and political factors that complicate scaling journeys in conflict-affected contexts, but which have received less attention than recognized challenges and barriers to scale in humanitarian innovation.

⁹⁹ See Ramalingam et al., 2015; Deloitte, 2015; Gray and McClure, 2015; Elhra, 2017

¹⁰⁰ Elhra. (2018) ‘Too Tough to Scale? Challenges to Scaling Innovation in the Humanitarian Sector.’ Elhra: London.

¹⁰¹ The Research People (2021), How do Great Ideas Scale? Learning From Scaling Successes in Humanitarian Innovation. Grand Challenges Canada.

¹⁰² CHIC (2022), Political and social barriers to scaling humanitarian innovation

3.3 Responder utilization

It was expected that relevant humanitarian responders – including international, national and local actors – might access and use improved solutions to address problems specifically defined by CHIC.¹⁰³

Finding: Some two to three million conflict-affected people and local actors accessed and used CHIC-funded solutions. There was minimal uptake and use by large international humanitarian responders (e.g., UN agencies), who perhaps lacked willingness or incentives to do so.

Access and use

Some two to three million conflict-affected people had access to CHIC-funded innovations. As ultimate ‘end users’ of CHIC-funded innovations, between two to three million people¹⁰⁴ – communities, civilians, refugees and displaced persons – were reported to have accessed or benefited from these innovations over the lifetime of the fund. According to the evaluation’s grantee survey, 75% of grantees surveyed agreed their innovation was both accessible to and used by intended users. CHIC report that 260,215 lives have been improved and 107 saved through use of CHIC-funded innovations.¹⁰⁵

There was strong uptake and use of CHIC-funded innovations amongst local (and national) actors.

Evidence from the evaluation’s document review, grantee survey and mini case studies suggests that CHIC-funded innovations were accessed and used by local actors, i.e., affected communities, refugees, local NGOs, local and national level authorities and service providers (health providers, education authorities etc.) For example, Field Ready’s repaired products were used and operated by local health care staff as intended; Hala System’s EWS was successfully taken up and used by several local NGOs operating education and health centers in NW Syria. Innovations were also accessed and used by local and national front-line humanitarian responders; for example, the Syrian Civil Defense (White Helmets), a national civil protection agency working as a front-line responder in Syria, accessed and used Hala System’s early warning system as well as using PPE manufactured as a result of the White Helmet’s own TTS grant in Syria.

CHIC-funded innovations were as yet little taken up and used by international humanitarian responders (UN agencies, donors etc.) as intended, although there were some noteworthy exceptions. Across the portfolio of TTS and seed grants, there was, on the whole, minimal uptake and use of innovations by international humanitarian responders. There were some exceptions to this, with some smaller-scale examples of uptake by UN organizations within the portfolio. For example, although Seed grant EPP came across political barriers in attempts to influence UN bodies to use EPP-funded solar-powered energy, they successfully demonstrated its value to UN organizations by creating a legal mechanism to work with the IOM. Specifically, this enabled IOM’s involvement in a P-REC transaction in South Sudan that was used to fund electricity provision to a teaching hospital serving c. 100 people per day. Similarly, the Global Strategy Network’s innovation, ‘Sealr’ – which verifies content emerging from conflict areas immediately and unimpeachably – has been taken up by UNDP’s climate team in West Africa. Although the health TTS grants funded in NW Syria (White Helmets and Field Ready) were members of the WHO-led NW Syria Health Cluster, there was no further uptake (or wider sharing) by the cluster mechanism within the humanitarian system. Barriers to uptake by international humanitarian responders appear to relate largely to issues around organizational inertia, lack of incentives and reluctance to change or trial new approaches. One way to mitigate this and encourage wider adoption may be via early engagement with key stakeholders as illustrated by ColdHubs: although their technology is yet to be proven within the context of IDP camps

¹⁰³ EQ3.3: To what extent and how did relevant humanitarian responders – including international, national, and local actors – access and use these improved solutions to address specifically defined problems (responder utilisation/improved solutions)?

¹⁰⁴ FCDO (2021), Creating Hope in Conflict Humanitarian Grand Challenge (CHIC). Annual Review. Note that 2.2m of these are accounted for by a single innovation, Hala Systems’ Sentry early warning system.

¹⁰⁵ CHIC (2022) Annual Report

in Nigeria, the innovator behind the ColdHubs solar-powered cold storage innovation is already engaged in consultations with UNHCR and WFP regarding potential for wider scale adoption, if the application of the technology in the IDP camp setting proves to be successful.

CHIC demonstrated that local organizations and actors could play a critical role in protracted humanitarian crises as active agents of change in humanitarian response. Evidence from both the evaluation mini case studies and wider KIIIs demonstrates that as well as having potential to influence the humanitarian system at a global level (e.g. through the UN system), CHIC, through its innovators, can positively influence the local humanitarian ecosystem through innovation take up by local communities and local humanitarian responders, albeit there may be limits to wider adoption at scale.

3.4 Systemic improvements

It was expected that CHIC's portfolio of innovations might result in discernible 'system-level' improvements to problems defined in WASH, energy, information, and healthcare through TTS innovations being used. It was also expected that CHIC's portfolio of innovations might result in accessible system-level evidence and learning about solutions to problems defined in these areas through proof of concept innovations being made available to humanitarian system actors.¹⁰⁶

Finding: In its first four years, the CHIC portfolio seems to have made only limited contributions to specifically defined problems in WASH, energy, information and healthcare. CHIC's portfolio of TTS innovations offered some promising localized contributions to improving humanitarian action and to improving humanitarian outcomes through local actors, but these were little adopted by humanitarian actors and therefore did not lead to 'systemic' improvements to problems identified. There were missed opportunities due to insufficient engagement with humanitarian communities of practice and in relation to sharing of evidence and learning.

CHIC and system change

The CHIC portfolio addressed diverse issues identified across the four 'focus areas.' In 2020, CHIC's innovations were mapped against the 78 thematic barriers identified in GCC's 2019 Barrier Analysis.¹⁰⁷ Most of the 52 innovations were found to address one primary barrier, and a smaller number of projects (10) addressed multiple barriers within one or two sectors.

CHIC managers sought to contribute to system change through 'innovation advocacy.' They perceived that some CHIC-funded innovations were influencing changes in the humanitarian system, for example, by enabling local manufacture of PPE equipment (White Helmets), providing off-grid energy solutions (Nuru), and enabling local crop production instead of relying on imports (Rainmaker). They recognized that system change was a longer-term goal to be achieved incrementally, through wider adoption of CHIC-funded innovations as well as innovation principles (e.g., local manufacturing) and new models (e.g., P-RECs and the Rainmaker concept). This required advocating for innovations in ways that created demand for CHIC innovations, encouraged uptake, and ultimately achieved 'change' in the humanitarian system. However, CHIC managers observed it was difficult to generate interest among large humanitarian organizations and donors, who seemed generally slow to embrace change or to take up innovations. The unprecedented context of the Covid-19 pandemic also limited opportunities in many ways.

Policy actors questioned CHIC's understanding of system change. While policy actors remained somewhat unclear about the intended impact of CHIC's innovation portfolio and which specific problems it intended to solve, they suggested it could realistically aim to improve technical services in specific sectors, improve humanitarian processes (e.g., around localization), amplify different assistance mechanisms, and/or influence donors in how they fund innovations. While they did not

¹⁰⁶ EQ3.4: To what extent and how did CHIC make systemic improvements to specifically defined humanitarian problems in WASH, energy, information, and healthcare (system change)?

¹⁰⁷ The Research People (2020), Grant Award Review. CHIC

expect CHIC to bring about transformational systemic change, they expected the programme to do more than support product innovations. They also questioned the realism of CHIC's intentions to enable localization and decolonization of aid in the absence of coherent pathways for doing so. 'CHIC will not localize the system by funding local product innovations', one observed.

CHIC-funded innovators doubted the programme's ability to foster system change. Survey respondents overall were uncertain about CHIC's effectiveness in influencing humanitarian delivery models, shifting power dynamics, and changing policy and practice at a system level.¹⁰⁸ They also questioned whether CHIC's advocacy efforts were making contributions at the system level. CHIC funded innovators generally reported achieving immediate outcomes such as demonstrating 'proof of concept', but rarely reported wider changes or noticeable improvements to humanitarian assistance at local, sectoral, or global levels. They further questioned if leadership in humanitarian organizations were sufficiently committed to trialing new approaches, willing to adopt proven innovations, or enabled to take up new ways of working.

CHIC may be helping to improve humanitarian action through both sectoral and local approaches. In 2022, the State of the Humanitarian System found humanitarian innovation was making some progress (diversely) through: (i) Agency-specific operational innovations; (ii) sectoral programme and enabling innovations; (iii) 'humanitarian to humanitarian' (H2H) innovations; and (iv) innovations by non-traditional humanitarian actors and local actors.¹⁰⁹ By this typology, CHIC-funded innovations are understood to include both sectoral programme innovations (ii) and innovations by non-traditional humanitarian actors and local actors (iv). It seems fair to assume CHIC is contributing to this wider progress.

Yet CHIC may be missing opportunities to contribute to progress that does occur due to limited engagement in sectors. In the growing humanitarian energy sector, for example, the CHIC portfolio seemed to make little contribution to systemic energy improvements that occurred in recent years, due a lack of intention, focus, alignment, and engagement. A rapid study conducted for this evaluation found that innovation actors contributed to improving humanitarian energy provision during 2015-2022, with innovation actors – not humanitarian actors – delivering most humanitarian energy services.¹¹⁰ Such progress by the sector remained insufficient as it was outpaced by increased displacement, the sheer scale of energy challenges, and innovation actors not delivering energy at the necessary scale, or in a coordinated and integrated manner. In this context, CHIC likely made little contribution because it did not fully address the energy problem as a grand challenge, did not focus on systemic problems and solutions, and remained disengaged from system-level efforts to address energy problems, most notably the Global Plan of Action.¹¹¹

At the same time, innovators faced unrealistic expectations about their ability to transform humanitarian action. In 2019, questions were being asked in the wider humanitarian sector about unreasonable expectations of humanitarian innovation to generate transformational change, and humanitarian innovation's lack of sustainability as currently designed.¹¹² In 2022, humanitarian innovation continued to struggle to implement system-wide solutions, with insufficient investments and support mechanisms. While agencies partially fulfilled the promise of innovations, using new technologies and approaches to rise to the challenge of longer and more frequent crises, other system-wide solutions failed or stalled, because of insufficient investments and insufficient support mechanisms.¹¹³ Under-investment, lack of realistic expectations for how long scaling takes, and poor

¹⁰⁸ Out of 40 respondents, 13 strongly agreed that 'CHIC is contributing to changes in the standard delivery models for humanitarian assistance' whilst 16 somewhat agreed, 9 were in the middle of the range and 2 disagreed.

¹⁰⁹ ALNAP (2022) The State of the Humanitarian System. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.

¹¹⁰ See GPA (2022) The State of the Humanitarian Energy Sector. Global Platform for Action on Sustainable Energy in Displacement Settings: Challenges, Progress and Issues in 2022. UNITAR Publishing. Geneva, Switzerland

¹¹¹ GPA (2018), The Global Plan of Action for Sustainable Energy Solutions in Situations of Displacement Framework for Action

¹¹² Currian, P. (2019), The Black Hole of Humanitarian Innovation.

¹¹³ ALNAP (2022) The State of the Humanitarian System. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.

prioritization in the mechanisms needed to support system-wide innovation were recognized to present significant barriers.

Systemic improvements

CHIC-funded TTS innovations offered some promising contributions to improving humanitarian action mainly in specific sectors and locations; they also contributed to improving humanitarian outcomes through specific national or local actors – such as the White Helmets in NW Syria. In energy, the portfolio offered three solutions to different aspects of humanitarian energy problems, two of which seemed capable of addressing these in a highly localized manner through improved humanitarian action (Cold Hubs) and through improved (though limited and inequitable) humanitarian outcomes (Nuru). A CHIC-funded proof of concept innovation (which is under consideration for TTS funding) showed potential to unlock additional financing for clean energy provision in several crisis-affected countries (EPP). In life-saving information, the portfolio also offered three solutions to different aspects of information problems, addressing these issues in a localized manner through improved humanitarian action (Sealr, Humanitarian OpenStreetMap) and through improved outcomes (Hala Systems). In health, it offered two solutions to the same aspects of the broader ‘health supplies and services’ problem in NW Syria, addressing these problems in a localized manner through national actors (Field Ready, White Helmets).

CHIC-funded TTS innovations were little adopted by humanitarian actors and did not lead to ‘systemic’ improvements to any problems identified. In energy, TTS energy innovations remained little used by humanitarian response actors even where that was intended. One TTS energy innovation may yet be able to achieve this with CHIC support (Cold Hubs) but another was unable to, possibly because it lacked such CHIC support (Sun Buckets). In life-saving information, TTS information innovations were largely accessed and used by local actors, so there was minimal system level improvement to the overall problems defined. In health, the TTS health innovations were little used by large international humanitarian response actors (e.g. UN agencies, international donors etc.), and so there was limited wider application or adoption of these innovations at scale and minimal system level improvement to the problems defined. Instead, CHIC-funded innovation actors largely reported their innovations were being used by communities and vulnerable groups more than humanitarian actors and governments.

Systemic evidence

CHIC-funded proof of concept innovations made limited contributions to evidence and learning within sectors or in the wider humanitarian system. In energy, most proof of concept innovations demonstrated solutions that could work technically but seemed unlikely to be sustained locally and did not offer accessible evidence for other relevant actors. In health, proof of concept innovations generated evidence and learning around viable models that address problems in health supplies and services, but evidence and learning about what worked did not seem to be made available and accessible at system level to relevant actors. In life-saving information, insufficient evidence and learning was also made accessible to the humanitarian ecosystem, with some grantees feeling that CHIC could play a greater role in this regard – by brokering connections, disseminating evidence and learning about the innovations, and playing an increased ‘bridging role’ with the humanitarian sector.

The CHIC portfolio generated some evidence about individual innovations. Around three quarters of CHIC-funded innovators reported they had generated evidence about their own innovation, and CHIC was perceived to facilitate learning to support humanitarian innovations. CHIC funded studies to demonstrate the value of some individual innovators, such as the Field Ready study in cost effectiveness.¹¹⁴ But more broadly, humanitarian innovations continued to struggle with assessing their impacts, complicated by difficulties in generating evidence about the ‘tail’ of innovation impacts which tend to be much longer than the timeframes used to evaluate humanitarian grant funding.¹¹⁵ Impact evidence was only available for 16% of funded projects, according to an unpublished study of

¹¹⁴ CHIC (2021), Field Ready Cost Effectiveness Case Study. Grand Challenges Canada.

¹¹⁵ ALNAP (2022), The State of the Humanitarian System. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.

eight humanitarian innovation funders, and most of them were unable to collect data on innovation outcomes after grant funding had ended. While many examples exist of individual innovations having an impact (e.g., digital data collection, cash-based assistance, community-based management of acute malnutrition, and blockchain at the largest scale), a significant data gap remains on what impact innovations are collectively having on humanitarian effectiveness and efficiency.

The CHIC portfolio did little to facilitate learning among relevant humanitarian actors. At the portfolio level, CHIC managers reported the programme helped to demonstrate it was possible to innovate in conflict settings amid humanitarian needs and implementation challenges, noting that other innovation actors were being influenced by CHIC's approach in ways that could impact the humanitarian system. In addition, CHIC's annual and semi-annual reports which highlight achievements made by innovators within the four focus areas (WASH, energy, information, health). CHIC also produced several learning papers which highlighted achievements by innovators and how innovators could overcome challenges in the humanitarian sector. Key lessons centered around innovation funding being limited and inaccessible for women, difficulties faced by local actors in accessing and/or engaging with innovation funds in conflict-affected countries, and humanitarian decision-making spaces being dominated by whites and challenges posed by racial inequities. However, CHIC did not report on how this portfolio-level learning was disseminated, or what specific lessons were being learned about solutions to the problems identified in the four thematic areas. CHIC-funded innovators were doubtful that CHIC shared evidence effectively with innovators or other relevant actors.

3.5 Resources mobilized

It was expected that CHIC's portfolio of innovations might engage relevant private sector partners and local communities, and thus mobilize additional resources for humanitarian action.¹¹⁶

Finding: CHIC-supported innovations successfully engaged private sector and local community partners and consequently leveraged financial and technical resources to support their innovations to further develop and scale. Some grantees struggled to leverage funding and wanted more support from CHIC to do so.

Partner engagement

Some CHIC-supported innovations successfully engaged private sector and local community partners, and some of these engagements were facilitated by CHIC. Humanity Data Systems, for example, formed partnerships, including with tech companies, humanitarian agencies and local implementers. They were introduced by CHIC to Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation in order to expand into another community in Yemen. This was an exception: most innovators interviewed could not identify partnerships brought about through CHIC and had worked to develop their own. They felt that CHIC could do more to facilitate relationships, including with humanitarian actors.

CHIC grantees engaged more with local community partners than with private sector partners. Three quarters of CHIC innovators reported engaging with local community-level partners (32 out of 42 survey respondents) and just over half with private sector partners (22 out of 42).

Resources leveraged

CHIC grantees successfully leveraged financial and technical resources to support their innovations to further develop and scale. By mid-2021, CHIC grantees had mobilized some USD 24m in additional funding,¹¹⁷ the majority from grant funding rather than private sector investment. For many, the CHIC grant effectively de-risked additional investment, crowded in other investors and lending credibility to

¹¹⁶ EQ3.5: To what extent and how did CHIC engage relevant partners from the private sector and local communities in thematic areas as intended, so that additional technical and financial resources were mobilised for humanitarian action?

¹¹⁷ FCD0 (2021), Creating Hope in Conflict Humanitarian Grand Challenge (CHIC). Annual Review.

the innovator. CHIC funding additionally provided innovators with much-needed time and funding required to further develop and test innovations, generate evidence of efficacy and seek appropriate sources of funding. Significantly, both humanitarian innovation experts and grantees recognized that CHIC had supported innovations that would have been too risky for other humanitarian innovation funds. One innovator which successfully mobilized funding is EPP which, soon after the grant ended, had facilitated the sale of Peace Renewable Energy Credits worth USD 500k in four transactions to investors such as Google and Microsoft.¹¹⁸ This investment, and further transactions which were in EPP's pipeline, mobilizes investment for social impact projects including for renewable energy generation. Nuru has received equity investment from a number of investors and funds.

CHIC managers saw both private sector funding and other funding models as an important means of enabling innovation. Potential models could include innovators using cross-subsidization: using profits from selling services to some users to subsidize its availability to those who could not afford it. Sehat Kahani is one such example: a digital health model whereby Afghan refugees and Pakistani IDPs could benefit from a fee waiver mechanism subsidized by fees from sale of Sehat Kahani's services to wealthier users.

Grantees also mobilized resources through humanitarian partnerships, as well as grant funding. Rainmaker, for example, sold produce from the season's harvest to WFP. Mandulis Energy secured a partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organisation to help them expand their reach into other areas in Uganda; MENTOR Initiative is working with the NGO Blumont and the Kurdish Red Crescent, and Sealr has plans to work with the US Department of State to deploy their innovation to three local partners. Hala Systems alone accounted for 60% of the total funds of all types raised by innovators. All of the USD 14.9m, fifteen times the value of their CHIC grant, was from multi-year grants, and not private funding.¹¹⁹

Amongst the successes, some grantees struggled to leverage funding and wanted more support to do so. CHIC grantee survey respondents largely felt that their innovations were not sustainable without further funding. Well over a third (15/41) of survey respondents reported that CHIC had not helped them to obtain further funding and nearly 40% (16/41) were doubtful that they had helped.¹²⁰ One interviewed innovator wanted more help to prepare to engage with investors, and another felt that CHIC could have done more to support a professional relationship with UN agencies.

Case study evidence and CHIC documents suggest that some CHIC grantees successfully mobilized technical resources to support their innovations. Examples include Needslist who collaborated with SAP to overcome logistical issues that arose when transporting supplies; and *Fundación Acción contra el Hambre* (Action against Hunger Foundation) who signed an agreement with Tyrus Software, who will develop the application to diagnose and monitor malnutrition in Senegal.

¹¹⁸ EPP Outcome and VFM Case Study.

¹¹⁹ CHIC April-Sept 2020 Semi-Annual Report p.6.

¹²⁰ These respondents selected, respectively, 1 or 2; or 3 or 4 on the response scale, which went from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).

Conclusions

Exploring the question ‘so what happened as a result of the CHIC programme?’, these conclusions present lessons learned based on the evaluation findings and the logic model developed at inception stage. They reflect on how the CHIC programme, using the Grand Challenge approach and humanitarian innovation, contributed to systemic improvements in conflict-driven humanitarian crises. They highlight what worked in the first phase of CHIC (2018-2022) and where improvements could be made to increase the programme’s impact in its second phase (2023-2027).

C1. The CHIC programme’s funding enabled a unique range of mostly small innovations to be piloted and developed in fragile and conflict-affected states. During 2018-2022, CHIC solicited, selected and funded more than 70 innovative projects across 22 fragile and conflict-affected countries, notably Syria, Yemen, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda. CHIC was the only innovation fund that focused solely on conflict-induced humanitarian crises, was bolder and less risk-averse than other innovation funders and was valued for this by its four government donors. The median grant size¹²¹ was CAD 250,000 for seed innovations and CAD 750,000 for transition to scale innovations. CHIC provided a unique funding source for finance-starved innovators in such settings, thus meeting the primary need of innovators. It delivered funding in a predictable, flexible and appropriate manner, responding well to the unprecedented challenges of fund delivery during the Covid-19 pandemic (e.g., offering funding flexibility such as no cost extensions) and ‘understanding’ the needs of innovators in FCAS. This had the effect of ‘de-risking’ innovations, to increase their access to other investors. Providing funding to innovators and communities in fragile and conflict-affected states did not necessarily mean these innovations were strictly ‘humanitarian’ as conventionally defined or clearly aligned with addressing humanitarian needs and prioritizing the most vulnerable.

C2. The CHIC programme delivered outputs efficiently and effectively through GCC’s strong operational management. Designed as a partnership among humanitarian donor government institutions and Grand Challenges Canada, GCC took responsibility for managing the CHIC fund based on its existing platform, strong track record of managing Grand Challenges and its (financial) risk management and mitigation processes. GCC did a good job of managing selection and funding, technical assistance, and learning facilitation, generally meeting expectations for delivering quality services and achieving immediate outputs. GCC’s systems and processes ensured economy with an optimal combination of quality, service, time, and cost; and processes that were generally efficient. Compliance with differing donor requirements was ensured through a set of monitoring and reporting processes. Its robust procedures were resource intensive for both GCC personnel and innovators.

C3. The CHIC programme built a portfolio of diverse technical innovations, some of which were highly promising. During 2018-2022 CHIC launched several funding rounds, resulting in 56 proof of concept grants and 17 transition to scale grants. Most of the innovations demonstrated proof of concept, showing how new and improved products and processes could offer improved solutions in the areas of energy, life-saving information, health, and WASH. Notable among these were Solar-powered Water pumps for Regenerative Agriculture (Rainmaker), Self-service digital legal aid for displaced populations (NRC), an ‘operating room in a backpack’ (SurgiBox), and the Peace Renewable Energy Credit which would leverage renewable energy credits to support clean energy provision in FCAS (Energy Peace Partners). The TTS innovations went beyond the concept stage, offering a diverse range of solutions across thematic areas that could either improve humanitarian action or humanitarian outcomes, mostly in a highly localized manner. In NW Syria, for example, one innovation project enabled locally manufactured repairs to damaged medical equipment (Field Ready), and another provided an improved air strike early warning system through local organizations that could help protect more than 2 million people (Hala Systems). In DRC, an innovation offered a cooling service that could extend the shelf-life of perishable food in five of Nigeria’s displacement camps (Cold Hubs). Notably, CHIC’s achievements were in the context of the global pandemic and the very considerable associated challenges faced by both GCC and CHIC innovators. Many of the innovations,

¹²¹ Rounded figures quoted.

which offered highly technical solutions, were not (yet) taken up at scale by other actors and were likely only sustainable with further humanitarian grants.

C4. The CHIC programme managed to engage some additional capacities to address the broad humanitarian problems identified. In principle, CHIC expected to engage the most relevant partners from the private sector and local communities, and thus mobilize additional technical and financial resources for humanitarian innovation and humanitarian action. This was true for only some CHIC-supported innovations. By mid-2021, CHIC grantees had mobilized some USD 24m in additional funds of which the majority was grant funding. One innovator (EPP) found a way to mobilize additional funding to FCAS through the sale of Peace Renewable Energy Credits (P-RECs) and mobilized new investments worth USD 500k from environmental, social and governance investors such as Google, Microsoft and Block. At the same time, CHIC took steps to engage local innovators as grantees and a number of CHIC-funded innovators engaged successfully with local partners of different types. Overall, however, CHIC struggled to engage private sector actors and local capacities for humanitarian innovation (and ultimately gave this objective lower priority).

C5. The CHIC programme struggled to optimize the Grand Challenge approach to address humanitarian problems. CHIC's primary humanitarian added value was considered to be the Grand Challenge approach, which was expected to mobilize governments, companies and foundations around specific humanitarian challenges. In so doing, it would bring in new voices, source new solutions, test new ideas, scale what works by awarding grants accordingly, and provide targeted technical assistance support to a wide variety of actors from many countries. Despite CHIC's evolving efforts to define humanitarian problems, from the Delphi panel in 2017-2018 to its barriers analysis in 2020, CHIC was still felt to lack sufficiently defined and analyzed problems: stakeholders were unclear about exactly what problems CHIC was addressing beyond the broad thematic categories, and problems defined did not always coincide with problems recognized by humanitarian actors. There was also scope for CHIC to further leverage GC's potential by being more 'intentional' and by accessing and involving a GC global network of scientists, philanthropists and problem solvers. CHIC's experience raises interesting questions about how and how well the GC model can address complex humanitarian problems of a non-technical or 'systemic' nature and fund or mobilize larger system-level investments.

C6. The CHIC programme could have benefited from stronger strategic focus, implementation models and MEL systems to maximize impact. During 2018-2022, CHIC intentionally eschewed a multi-year strategy and clearly defined objectives, in order to allow maximum flexibility to learn and evolve experientially. Its Theory of Change and log frame tools evolved over this period although ultimately offered too little clarity about how activities were expected to lead to intended impacts through credible outcome pathways. CHIC's MEL system effectively collected information on projects and programme level results, but did not capture progress along outcome pathways related to systems change in ways which could enable learning about what works and to inform portfolio-level decision-making in relation to this higher ambition. During its first four to five years, CHIC's highly operational approach enabled it to meet expectations in terms of providing intended funding and technical assistance. Its ability to generate larger outcomes was limited by the absence of a prioritized and managed strategy to do so, an implementation model to guide its approach accordingly, and a comprehensive MEL process to generate corresponding evidence and guide decision-making. This hindered its ability to offer a distinct humanitarian value proposition compared to other innovation actors, to focus its limited resources on clearly defined and analyzed problems, and to present a structured approach to change that could be evaluated over time. These gaps also limited CHIC's ability to think beyond individual innovations to the fund's intended middle and longer-term outcomes and how it could address humanitarian problems, or meet some of CHIC's bolder ambitions about system change. In particular, it left confusion about how much it intended to work through two separate models of humanitarian innovation: the 'programme enabling approach', and the 'community owned approach'. Finally, CHIC's limited generation of portfolio-level evidence missed the opportunity to contribute to wider learning in the sector that could be taken up by other humanitarian actors.

C7. The strong portfolio of seed and TTS innovations had not yet resulted in sustainable local uptake, humanitarian adoption or larger scaling. CHIC's portfolio of seed innovations offered technical solutions to a range of problems in conflict settings. Most would be sustainable only with

further humanitarian innovation funding. Associated evidence and learning was not systematically captured and made available to would-be humanitarian actors and innovators wishing to use it. CHIC's portfolio of transition to scale innovations offered more developed solutions to technical problems in specific local contexts. Few were able to leverage additional funding, and none were, at this stage, being more widely and sustainably adopted by humanitarian actors. This weak uptake by humanitarian actors was attributed to their unwillingness to trial new approaches and adopt innovations or a lack of incentives for doing so, and was also linked to the more widely recognized challenge of scaling humanitarian innovations in the humanitarian system. At the same time, many CHIC-funded innovations worked in partnership with local communities, local and national actors most often using the innovations developed in specific locations (including civil protection actors such as White Helmets, health authorities, but also local NGOs and community organizations), and around three million people affected may now be using CHIC-funded innovations (Hala Systems accounting for the vast majority in NW Syria). In this context, it was suggested that CHIC could do more to help innovators access significant and sustained investment, facilitate linkages between them and important stakeholders – including private sector actors, offer context-specific innovation support mechanisms, do more to accompany promising TTS innovations along their journey to scale (e.g., end-to-end support), and offer longer-term grants for five years or more to promising TTS innovations.

C8. The CHIC programme missed some opportunities to have a discernible impact on reducing humanitarian problems. CHIC's overarching purpose was (and is) ambitious: to significantly improve and save lives through the humanitarian GC approach, better address unmet needs and influence wider system-level changes within the humanitarian sector by investing in innovation. The humanitarian system is defined as a network of interconnected institutional and operational entities through which humanitarian action is undertaken when local and national resources are, on their own, insufficient to meet the needs of a population in crisis. Within this system, CHIC defined four system-wide technical areas with numerous barriers to address, and clearly recognized that related political and contextual challenges could not be addressed by the Grand Challenge approach alone. By implied logic, CHIC expected humanitarian actors – local, national, or international – to adopt the innovations and in turn reduce the problems defined within a specific sector, perhaps only in one location at first, and ultimately reinforce the system's capacity to save lives. CHIC's portfolio of TTS innovations offered some promising localized contributions to improving humanitarian action and to improving humanitarian outcomes through local actors, but many expectations surrounding the ability of innovation funds to transform humanitarian action (the 'change pathway') were unrealistic and CHIC's understanding of 'system change' and its ability to foster it needed to be better developed for the programme to move towards impact. Since the CHIC portfolio of TTS innovations was little adopted by humanitarian actors, it did not lead to 'systemic' improvements to problems identified, and CHIC sometimes missed opportunities to contribute to progress that did occur due to insufficient engagement with humanitarian communities of practice. While the portfolio generated some evidence about individual innovations, CHIC-funded seed innovations made little contribution to evidence and learning within humanitarian sectors or in the wider system and CHIC-facilitated learning among relevant humanitarian actors was limited.

Recommendations

In line with the evaluation's objectives to inform CHIC's next phase, these recommendations are based on the evaluation's main findings and conclusions and discussions with GCC.

Recommendations 1 to 3 are presented as strategic recommendations, each followed by several practical suggestions for CHIC's consideration. Recommendation 4 recommends addressing the strategic risks which are outlined.

R1. Capitalize on Operational Strength: CHIC should sustain, reinforce, and capitalize upon the operational management capacities and processes it established during the first phase (2018-2022). Such consolidation is necessary to maintain CHIC's relevance to innovators, the effectiveness of its support programme, and the efficiency of its systems and processes. Specifically, CHIC should:

1. **Sustain funding:** Continue to provide funding support to bold innovations in fragile and conflict-affected states, recognizing the importance of this funding to innovators in these contexts and its useful role in de-risking innovations to attract other funders.
2. **Operational management:** Continue to deliver fund management outputs efficiently and effectively through GCC's strong operational management processes, including calls for proposals, selection of innovations, disbursement of funding, technical assistance and enhanced support for monitoring, evaluation and learning.
3. **Promising innovations:** Develop its portfolio of technical innovations with a focus on the most promising ones, including seed innovations and TTS innovations in specific sectors and locations, such as Northwest Syria, eastern DRC and South Sudan. CHIC management could also consider adjusting the focus of the portfolio, from relatively short-term investments in diverse early stage innovations, to investing more deeply and sustainably, and with more focus in a few of the most promising innovations.
4. **Adding capacities:** More consistently support innovations to engage partners from the private sector and communities affected, so as to catalyze new capacities within the humanitarian system that can address the broad humanitarian problems identified.

R2. Develop strategy: CHIC should build on the achievements of its first four years to design, implement and monitor a new multi-year strategy to purposefully guide the programme towards addressing humanitarian problems during the second phase (2023-2027). An explicit strategy is needed to specify CHIC's relevance to the humanitarian system and its added value in the humanitarian innovation ecosystem, enhance wider user uptake and potential contributions made by innovations, and how it can make more discernible improvements to tackling problems in thematic areas. Specifically, CHIC should:

1. **Define problems:** Use the Grand Challenge approach to better define and analyze the humanitarian problem/s it seeks to address, ensuring the problem/s is/are sufficiently technical in nature, informed by evidence, recognized by the humanitarian sector and that CHIC positions itself to engage the wider Grand Challenge community.
2. **Define objectives:** Use a strategic management approach aimed at maximizing portfolio impact, including by specifying a humanitarian value proposition compared to other actors, defining how activities are expected to lead to intended impacts (through credible outcome pathways), and by establishing proportionate MEL processes that enable learning about what works and inform portfolio-level decision-making.
3. **Promote uptake:** Invest in efforts to enhance the ability of programme innovations to result in sustainable local uptake, humanitarian adoption, and/or larger scaling, without relying solely on humanitarian innovation funding, where possible. It could do this by facilitating linkages between them and important stakeholders – including private sector actors – offering context-specific innovation support mechanisms, doing more to accompany promising TTS innovations along their journey to scale (e.g., end-to-end support), and offering longer-term grants for five years or more to promising TTS innovations.

4. Reduce problems: Take opportunities to have a more discernible impact on reducing humanitarian problems, by working with humanitarian actors – local, national, and/or international – to learn from and adopt the innovations so that they can start to reduce the problems defined within a specific sector, perhaps only in one fragile and conflict affected location at first.
5. Ensure learning: Ensure seed innovations contribute evidence and learning within humanitarian sectors and/or in the wider system and facilitate learning among relevant humanitarian actors. Relevant actors, in this case, may not be other humanitarian innovators.

R3. Clarify approaches: CHIC should more clearly explain how its implementation approaches will contribute to longer term outcomes and improve the humanitarian system during the second phase.

This is necessary to offer greater clarity about CHIC's intended contributions to the humanitarian system, people in need of assistance, and local communities. Specifically, CHIC should:

1. Humanitarian commitments: Define how its work demonstrates commitments to fundamental humanitarian principles and relevant policy frameworks, such as those outlined in the Red Cross/NGO Code of Conduct, the Agenda for Humanity, Good Humanitarian Donorship, and/or the Grand Bargain.
2. Humanitarian innovation: Specify how it will apply (and develop) good practices in humanitarian innovation, as defined by Elrha, ALNAP, GAHI and others. Decide whether to expand its scope beyond innovation in the humanitarian sector, to include innovation in development and peacebuilding activities in fragile and conflict-affected states.
3. Grand Challenges: Specify how CHIC will deepen the Grand Challenge approach, including how it may need to be adapted to realize CHIC's ambition to contribute to the humanitarian system, and/or to mobilize governments, companies, and foundations around a specific humanitarian challenge/s.
4. Ecosystem value: Specify how CHIC will add value within the humanitarian innovation ecosystem, and how it will continue to do so – for example, by engaging in humanitarian innovation coordination efforts with Elrha and others, and by periodically consulting its Steering Committee. CHIC could consider whether or how it intends to promote coordination among humanitarian innovation actors, and whether it is the right actor to do this (or to what end).
5. Localized approach: Clarify how far it intends to adopt a localized and 'bottom up' approach that would improve 'humanitarian outcomes' in specific locations, by investing in local innovators that develop life-saving solutions outside the formal humanitarian response, and to what extent it might seek to shape this, for example by defining which fragile and conflict-affected states to prioritize, building upon existing work and avoiding fragmentation across too many countries
6. Thematic approach: Clarify how much it intends to adopt a systemic approach that would improve 'humanitarian action' in global thematic areas, by investing in technical innovations that develop life-saving solutions within specific humanitarian sectors and established global humanitarian communities of practice.

R4. Manage risks: CHIC should define, manage, and mitigate risks that could derail progress on long-term outcomes in the second phase, particularly risks related to long-term sustainability of TTS innovations and wider systems change. This is important because the evaluation has found that CHIC's strategic objectives lack clarity about the longer term, progress reporting is limited in several ways, and key stakeholders diverge noticeably in their underlying assumptions, understandings and expectations of CHIC. Specifically, CHIC should consider and mitigate accordingly the following risks:

1. Lives saved: Counting 'lives saved' as a key performance indicator may conflate humanitarian innovation with humanitarian action, misdirecting the programme towards providing piecemeal immediate assistance instead of helping humanitarian actors to improve their

work. CHIC could instead use definitions of good practice and criteria defined by ALNAP and Elrha (i.e., as used in this evaluation), which view saving lives as an ultimate goal of humanitarian innovation not a more immediate performance metric.

2. **Lives improved:** Counting ‘lives improved’ as a key performance indicator may wrongly direct the programme beyond humanitarian innovation priorities. Humanitarian actors are required to prevent and alleviate suffering wherever it is found (humanity), without discrimination, giving priority to the most urgent cases (impartiality), and usually informed by needs assessments.
3. **Role of rhetoric:** Adopting highly principled positions, using bold language and making ambitious yet undefined commitments on non-technical challenges such as ‘system change’, ‘localization’, ‘anti-racism’, and ‘decolonizing aid’ may misdirect limited programme resources, raise unrealistic expectations and undermine credibility.
4. **Localization:** Committing to the localization of humanitarian action as per Grand Bargain commitment may be unfeasible, or seen as unfeasible, and misdirect resources, without further clarification (see also Recommendation 3.5). The Grand Bargain commitment applies to the largest humanitarian donors and agencies not humanitarian innovation actors. CHIC aims to work outside mainstream humanitarian structures by empowering local innovators, even if many grantee organizations are not ‘locally’ owned by communities most affected.
5. **Innovation advocacy:** Expecting to contribute to humanitarian system change through ‘innovation advocacy’ may be unfeasible, or seen as unfeasible, and misdirect resources, without further clarification. It seems highly unlikely that CHIC has the necessary capacity, credibility or position to advocate systematically and successfully for the adoption of CHIC innovations in ways that ‘create demand’ for these innovations, encourage their uptake and ultimately result in system change – especially when humanitarian actors have shown a disinterest and are considered slow to embrace changes. Humanitarian innovation evidence suggests other approaches would be more effective.
6. **Communities of practice:** Defining humanitarian problems in thematic areas in terms of ‘barriers’ without reference to problems defined by humanitarian communities of practice and without participating in these communities of practice, may result in unfocused and duplicative approaches or missed opportunities to contribute to measurable/tangible systemic improvements. Problem definition and engagement with communities of practice is therefore recommended.
7. **Theme duplication:** Supporting innovations in thematic areas without specifying how CHIC will add value to existing humanitarian innovation efforts may be duplicative or less likely to contribute to systemic improvements, especially in the absence of coordination mechanisms (e.g., GAHI) and without active guidance by the Steering Committee. For example, CHIC’s work on health as a thematic area may be duplicative of Elrha’s work on humanitarian health.
8. **Capacity overstretch:** Addressing four thematic areas and dozens of ‘barriers’ and across 22 different countries, may be overstretching CHIC’s limited resources and capacities for making contributions to improving humanitarian action. Expanding these four thematic areas to include three new areas (early childhood development, SGBV, and countering misinformation) as proposed by CHIC in 2022 would further dilute existing resources, capacities and likelihood of humanitarian improvements.
9. **Pilots less relevant:** Maintaining a portfolio comprised largely (75%) of ‘proof of concept’ innovations may no longer be appropriate to improving humanitarian action, given the proliferation of small pilot projects that are not taken up by humanitarian actors or other relevant actors. These remain dependent on humanitarian innovation grants and are no longer considered a priority by humanitarian innovation experts.
10. **Learning losses:** Supporting ‘proof of concept’ innovations without systematically capturing evidence and learning, and making it easily accessible to relevant humanitarian actors elsewhere and at future times, may miss the opportunity to contribute to systemic improvements by sharing evidence about what works (and what does not) and may squander valuable learning.

Annexes

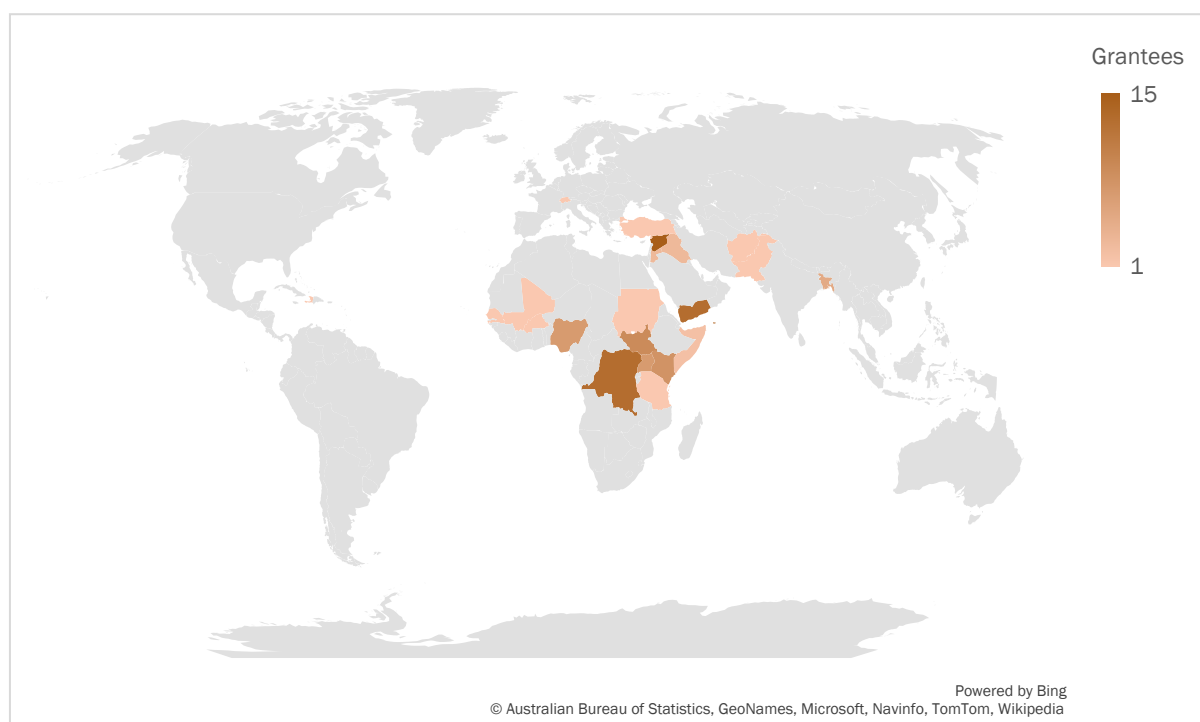
Annex 1. Portfolio Analysis

The CHIC portfolio comprises a total of 73 grants made over three funding rounds plus an additional Covid-19-specific funding round. The portfolio has been analysed by geography, grant type and size, lead implementer, sector, round and grantee organisation type.

1 Geographical Distribution

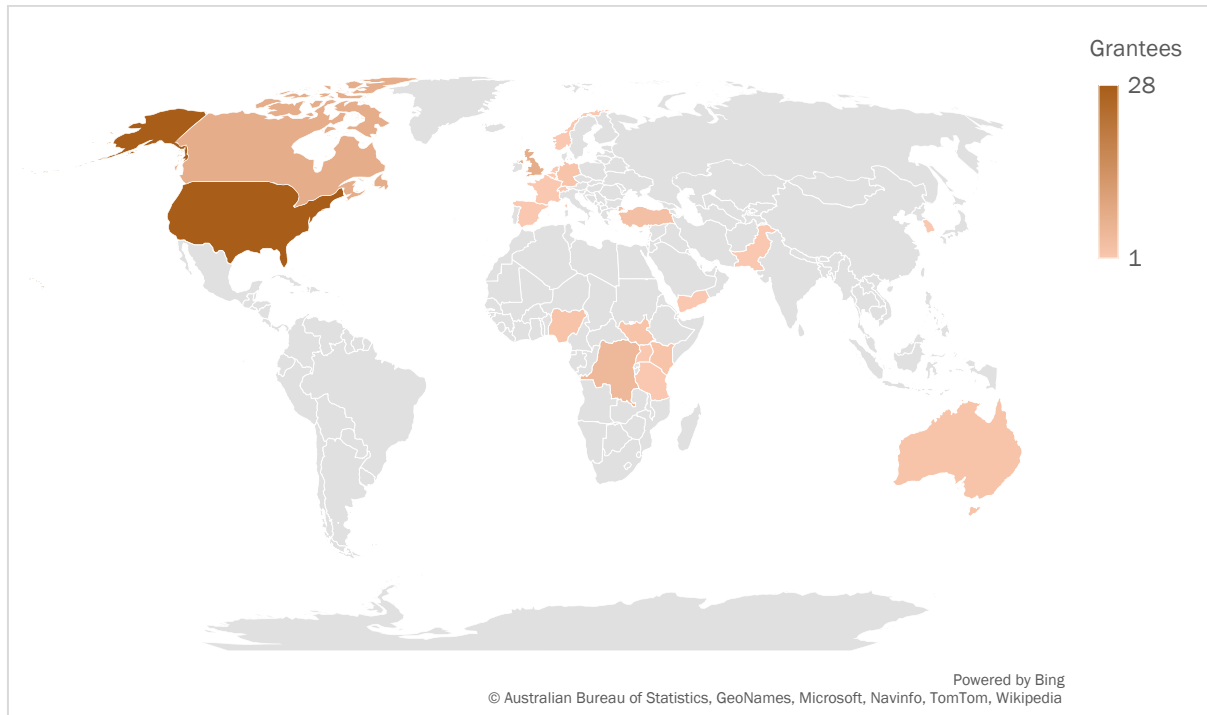
CHIC funds projects in 22 different conflict-affected countries around the world with Syria (15), Yemen (12), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (13) the three countries with the most interventions, as shown in Figure 2. 18 projects are implemented in two or more countries. 74.3% of grantee institutions are headquartered in high-income countries (HICs) with the remainder based in either conflict-affected states (Syria, Yemen, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, etc.) or countries with significant refugee populations (Kenya, Turkey, Uganda, etc.) as shown in Figure 3. 17 out of 18 organisations based in conflict-affected countries or countries with significant refugee populations implement their projects in the same country.¹²²

Figure 2: Distribution of Implementation Countries



¹²² The only organisation based in a conflict-affected country or country with significant a refugee population which implements the project in a *different* conflict-affected country or country with a significant refugee population is based in Turkey with implementation taking place in Syria.

Figure 3: Distribution of Grantee Headquarters



2 Grant Type and Size¹²³

CHIC provides differentiated support to grantees depending on their position on the innovation pathway. There are two categories of grantee and related support modalities: proof of concept (or seed grants) and transition to scale (TTS). CHIC provides funding and support to 56 seed innovations and to 17 TTS innovations. Central among the differences between them are funding amounts and durations as outlined in Table 2.1: generally, seed grantees receive smaller grants over longer periods than TTS grantees.

Table 2.1: Grant Types, Number, Amounts, and Durations

Grant Type	No. of Innovations	Funding Amount (CAD)				Funding Duration (Months)		
		Min	Median	Max	Total	Min	Median	Max
Seed	56	CAD243,552	CAD249,986	CAD339,516	CAD14,123,768	12	24	41
TTS	17	CAD200,000	CAD646,501	CAD2,000,000	CAD14,576,167	7	16	25
Total	74	CAD200,000	CAD249,997	CAD2,000,000	CAD28,699,935	7	21	41

Considering the portfolio as a whole, funding amounts disbursed to grantees range from CAD200,000 to CAD2,000,000, but with a particular concentration around the CAD250,000 mark (50% of grants disbursed range between CAD249,917 and CAD274,997 and the median funding amount is CAD249,997). This reflects the preponderance of seed grants in the CHIC portfolio. A total of

¹²³ All currency figures are in CAD unless otherwise stated.

CAD2,88,99,935 has been awarded to grantees as of February 2023, more or less evenly split between seed and TTS grants despite the greater number of seed grants.

A broadly similar number of seed and TTS grants were awarded over both Rounds 1 and 2 with about half as many grants awarded in Round 3 overall as shown in Table 2.2. The Covid-19 Round ('Round COVID') did not award any seed grants, but did award three TTS grants.

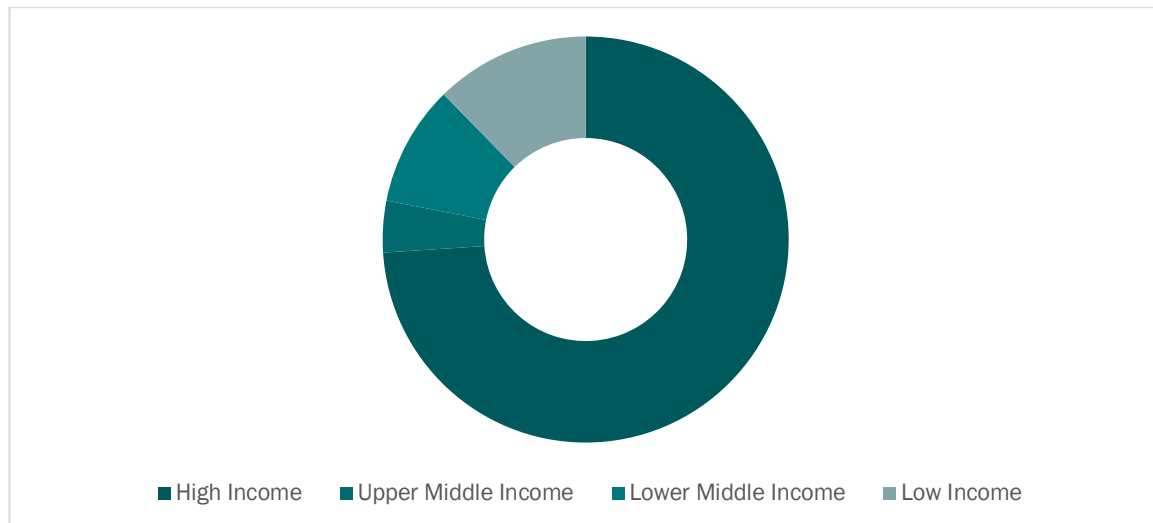
Table 2.2: Number of Grants by Round

Grant Type	No. of Round 1 Awards	No. of Round 2 Awards	No. of Round Covid Awards	No. of Round 3 Awards	Total
Seed	22	24	0	10	56
TTS	3	4	3	7	17
Total	25	28	3	18	73

3 Grant Implementers and Leadership

CHIC is committed to providing more than 25% of humanitarian funding to local and national responders.¹²⁴ As shown in Figure 4 and Figure 5, with 25.7% of grantees coming from and 26.2% of funding going to organisations based in low-, lower-middle-, and upper-middle-income, CHIC has achieved its 25% commitment. With 12.2% of funding, the second biggest set of countries (after high-income countries) receiving funding from CHIC are a group of 9 projects implemented in low-income countries. The remaining 13.5% of funding is split between organisations from lower-middle- and upper-middle-income countries.

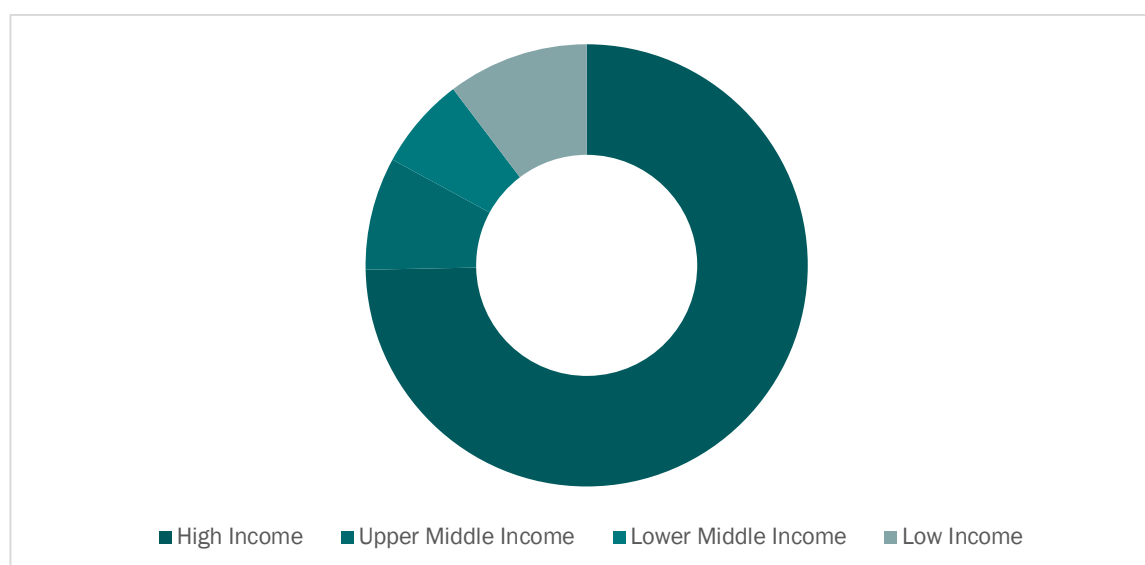
Figure 4: Countries in Which Grantees Are Headquartered by World Bank Classification



Grant Type	High Income	Upper Middle Income	Lower Middle Income	Low Income	Total
Seed	42	2	5	7	56
TTS	12	1	2	2	17
Total	54	3	7	9	73

¹²⁴ Creating Hope in Conflict, July 2020, *Descriptive Portfolio Analysis*

Figure 5: Funding Awarded by World Bank Classification



Grant Type	High Income	Upper Middle Income	Lower Middle Income	Low Income	Total
Seed	CAD10,625,499	CAD499,063	CAD1,249,609	CAD1,749,597	CAD14,123,768
TTS	CAD9,079,441	CAD16,98,998.00	CAD13,00,000.00	CAD999,829	CAD13,078,268
Total	CAD1,99,04,940.00	CAD2,198,061	CAD25,49,609.00	CAD2,749,426	CAD27,202,036

64% of CHIC grantees are conducted either in partnership with affected communities or are led by individuals from affected communities.¹²⁵

The gender of innovations' project leads is visible across the portfolio with 68.5% of grantee project leads being men and 31.5% being women.¹²⁶ Analysis of the gender of project leads and an innovation's gender score at award indicates that there is a positive correlation between an innovation being female-led and having a higher gender score and a negative correlation between an innovation being male-led and having a higher gender score.¹²⁷ 82.6% of women-led innovations in comparison to 23.8% of male-led innovations received a gender score of 1, 2, or 3 in comparison to 17.0% and 58.82% being awarded a gender score of 0 respectively. 78.2% of all projects with a gender score of 2 or 3 were women-led even though only 31.1% of grantee project leads were women. The only innovation to be awarded a gender score of 3 was women-led.¹²⁸ Figure 6 shows the relationship between the gender of project leads and the project's gender score at award adjusted for the higher number of male project leads.

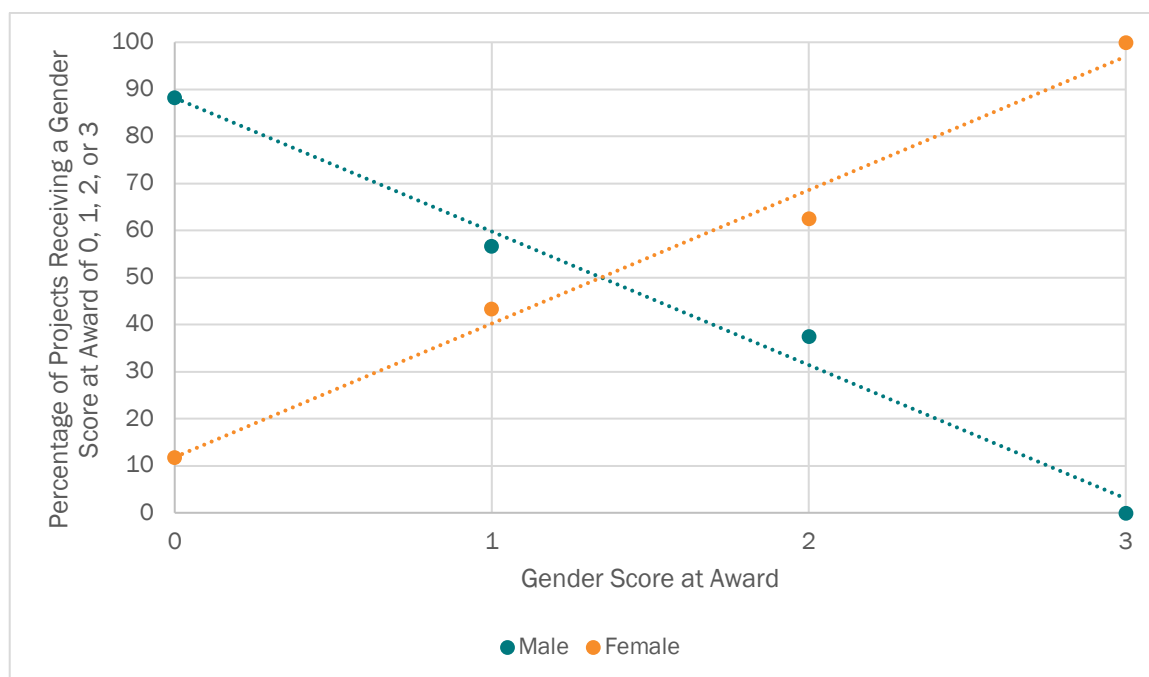
¹²⁵ Creating Hope in Conflict, July 2020, *Descriptive Portfolio Analysis*. Does not include Round 3 grantees.

¹²⁶ Based on analysis of 73 grantees for which data is available.

¹²⁷ Gender score at award is assessed on the basis of how a project aims to promote gender equality during all phases of the project. For example, what is the gender dynamic of the team, are local women included in the planning and development of the project, how will they provide access and reduce barriers for women in the community, etc..

¹²⁸ The evaluation will look at how gender considerations have been integrated into innovation design and implementation.

Figure 6: Relationship between Gender of Project Lead and Gender Score at Award (Adjusted)



4 Sectors

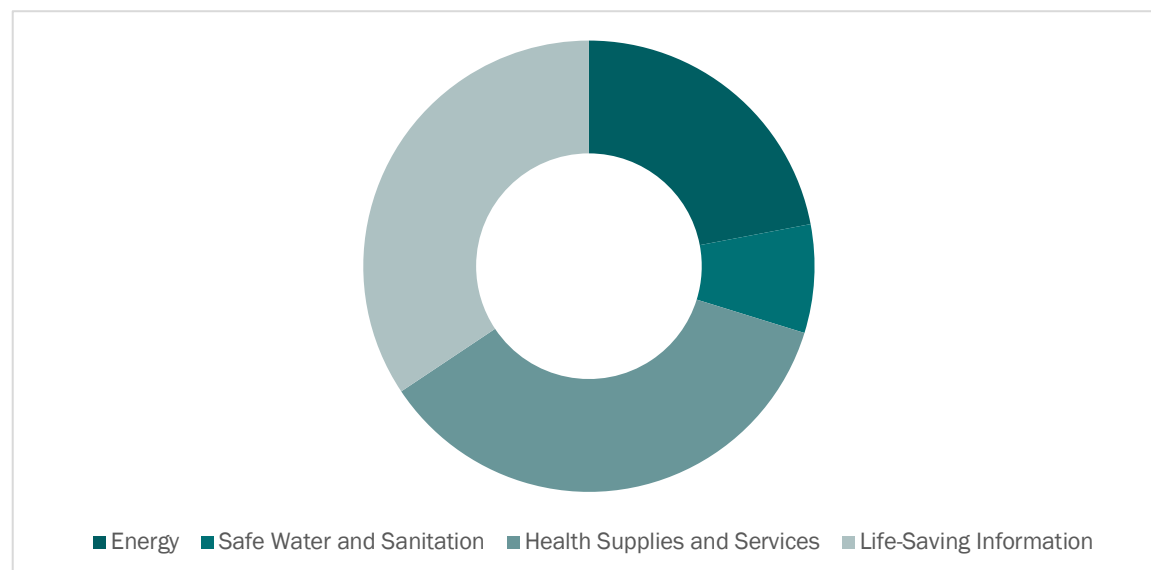
CHIC's funding is targeted at innovations which address challenges in four sectors (energy, safe water and sanitation, health supplies and services, and life-saving information) identified during CHIC's design as being the most critical for conflict-affected populations. There is a relatively balanced distribution of sectors across the CHIC portfolio as a whole, with the least represented (safe water and sanitation) making up 12.3% of the portfolio and the most represented (health supplies and services) making up 41.1%. That picture changes, however, when broken down by seed/TTS grants as shown in Table 4.1, revealing a higher concentration of grantees in specific sectors for each grant type. 44.6% of seed grantees operate in the health supplies and services sector and 47.1% of TTS grantees provide life-saving information while the remaining grants are distributed more or less evenly, and therefore in comparatively low numbers, across the other sectors. No TTS grantees operate in the safe water and sanitation sector.

Table 4.1: Number of Grants by Sector

Sector	Seed		TTS		Overall	
	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Energy	21.4%	12	23.5%	6	21.6%	16
Safe Water and Sanitation	16.1%	9	0.0%	0	12.3%	9
Health Supplies and Services	44.6%	25	29.4%	5	41.1%	30
Life-Saving Information	17.9%	10	47.1%	8	24.7%	19
Total	100%	56	100%	17	100%	73

As shown in Figure 7, this distribution differs from the distribution of funding only slightly. That the sectoral distribution of grants awarded and of funding are broadly similar indicates that the distribution of funding across the portfolio is broadly proportional across sectors.

Figure 7: Percentage of Funding by Sector



Sector	Percentage of Total Seed Funding	Percentage of Total TTS Funding	Percentage of Total Funding
Energy	21.2%	23%	22.1%
Safe Water and Sanitation	15.9%	0.0%	7.8%
Health Supplies and Services	44.6%	27.8%	36%
Life-Saving Information	18.3%	49.3%	34%

5 Rounds

CHIC has received a total of 1,954 applications and made a total of 73 awards over Rounds 1-3 and Round Covid as shown in Table 5.1. Application success rate by round is shown in Table 5.2. A total of CAD9.3M, CAD8.6M, CAD4.2M, and CAD3.9M was awarded for Rounds 1, 2, Covid, and 3 respectively as shown in Figure 8.

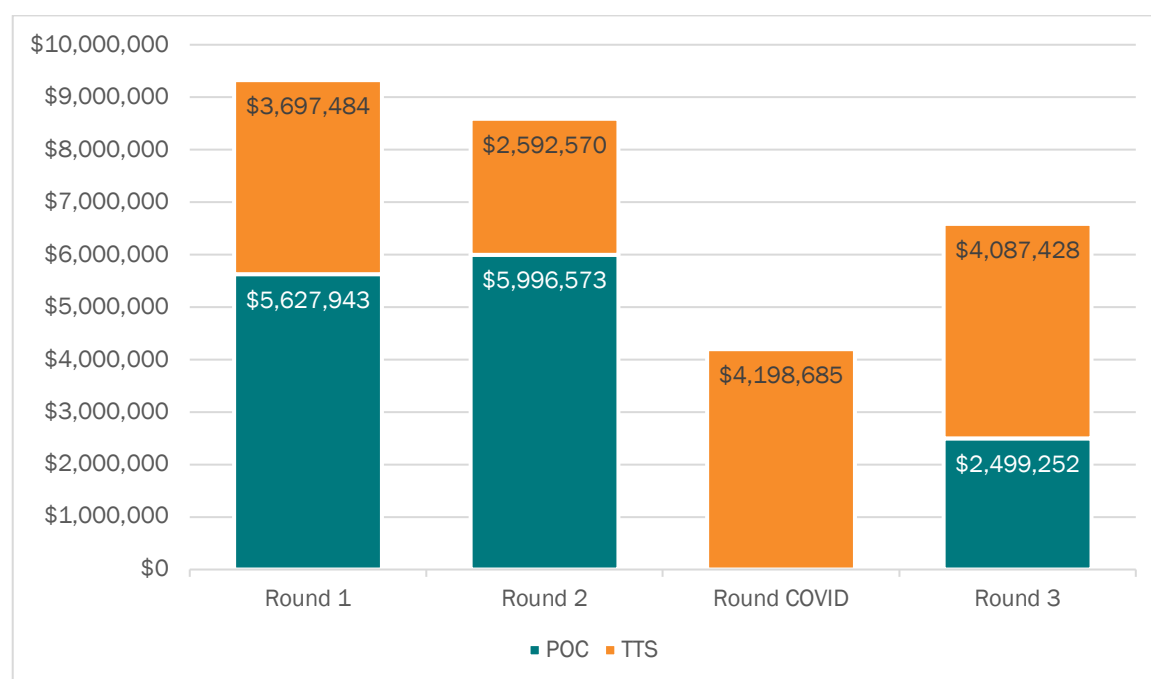
Table 5.1: Applications and Awards by Round

Grant Type	Applications				Awards			
	Round 1	Round 2	Round Covid	Round 3	Round 1	Round 2	Round Covid	Round 3
Seed	504	576	-	380	22	24	0	10
TTS	111	71	-	202	3	4	3	7
Total	615	647	110	582	25	28	3	17

Table 5.2: Application Success Rate by Round

Grant Type	Round 1	Round 2	Round Covid	Round 3
Seed	4.4%	4.2%	-	2.6%
TTS	2.7%	5.6%	-	3.96%
Overall	4.1%	4.3%	2.7%	3.09%

Figure 8: Funding Awarded by Round



6 Grantee Organisation Types

As shown in Figure 9, of the 73 grants awarded, 37 have been made to not-for-profit organisations, 26 to for profit organisations, 9 to academic/research institutions, and 1 classified as “other”. Of the 17 TTS grants, seven have been made to not-for-profit and ten to for profit organisations. Of the 56 seed grants, 53.6% have been made to not-for-profit organisations, 16.1% to academic/research institutions, 28.6% to for profit organisations, and 1.8% to an awardee classified as “other”. The larger funding amounts associated with TTS grants are apparent in Figure 10 with more than half of not-for-profit funding going to just seven TTS grants and more than 50% of for-profit funding going to ten TTS grants.

Figure 9: Number of Awards by Type of Organisation

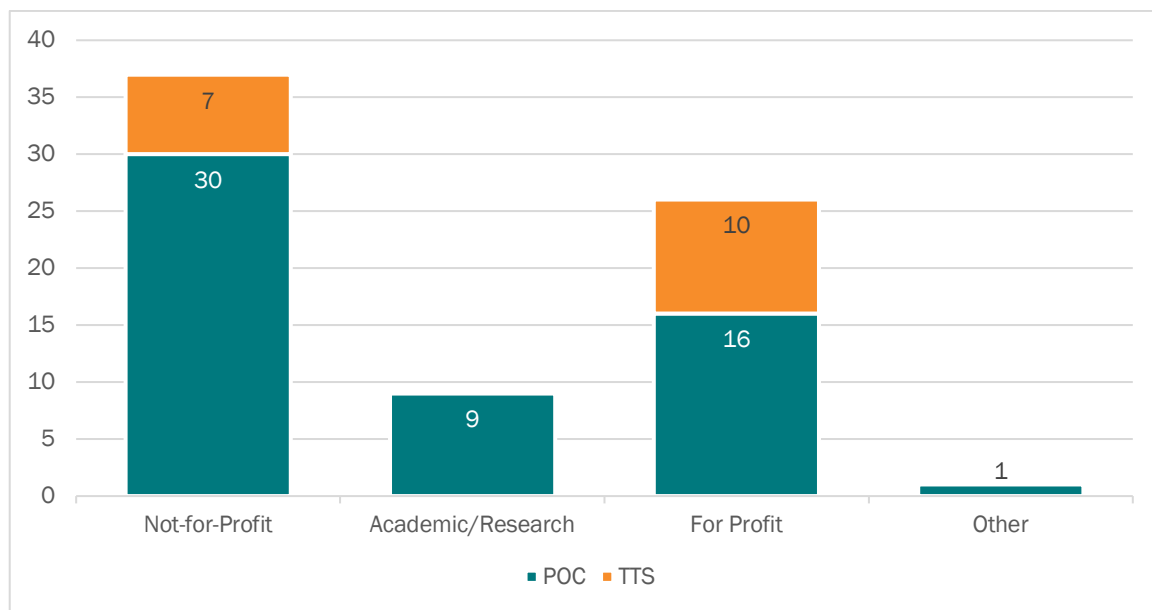
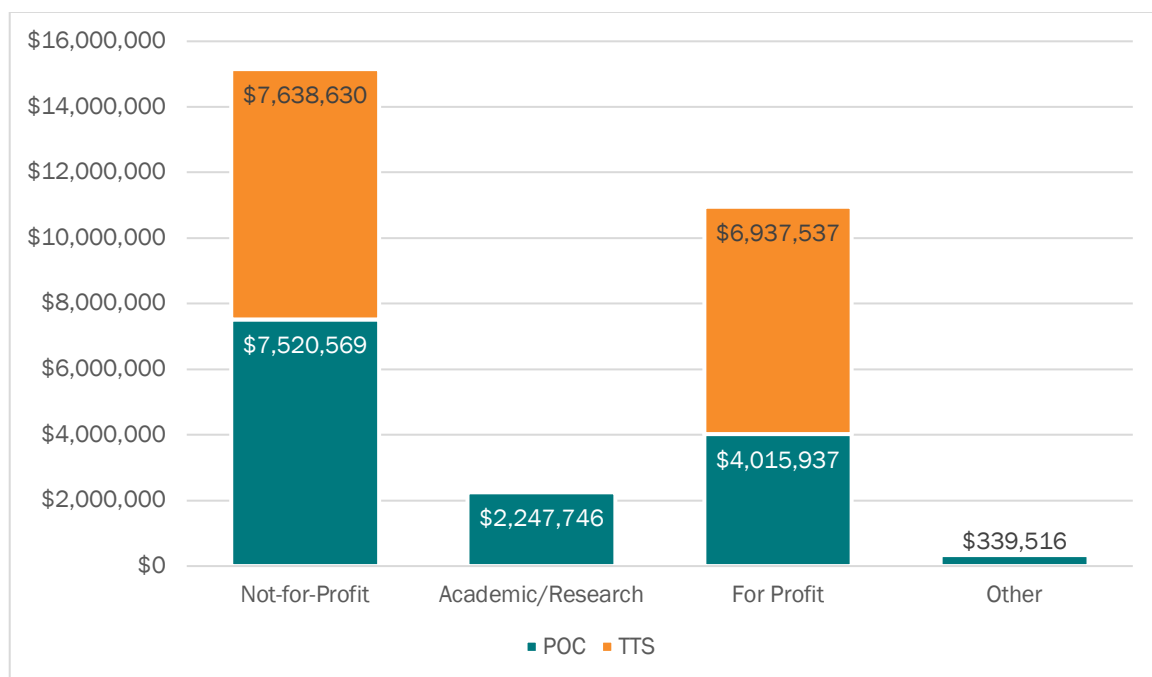


Figure 10: Funding Awarded by Type of Organisation



Annex 2. CHIC's Logic Model and Change Pathways: a hypothesis for the evaluation

The logic model and its pathways, developed in the evaluation inception phase, offer an understanding of how CHIC was expected to generate outcomes and contribute to system change, to support the evaluation's learning purpose.

Based on documents reviewed, two main pathways emerged for generating system change: an innovative solutions pathway and a private sector engagement pathway. These pathways are described below. They provided a hypothesis explored by the evaluation.

Pathway 1 (innovative solutions) involves CHIC using the Grand Challenge approach to contribute to systemic improvements in the humanitarian system and is understood to absorb the bulk of CHIC resources and level of effort, as presented in the diagram below (CHIC's logic model (simplified)). The innovative solutions pathway may be further split into the four thematic areas of the programme, each accounting for a portion of CHIC funding allocations: Health supplies and services (39%); life-saving information (27%); Energy (21%); and Safe WASH (13%).¹²⁹

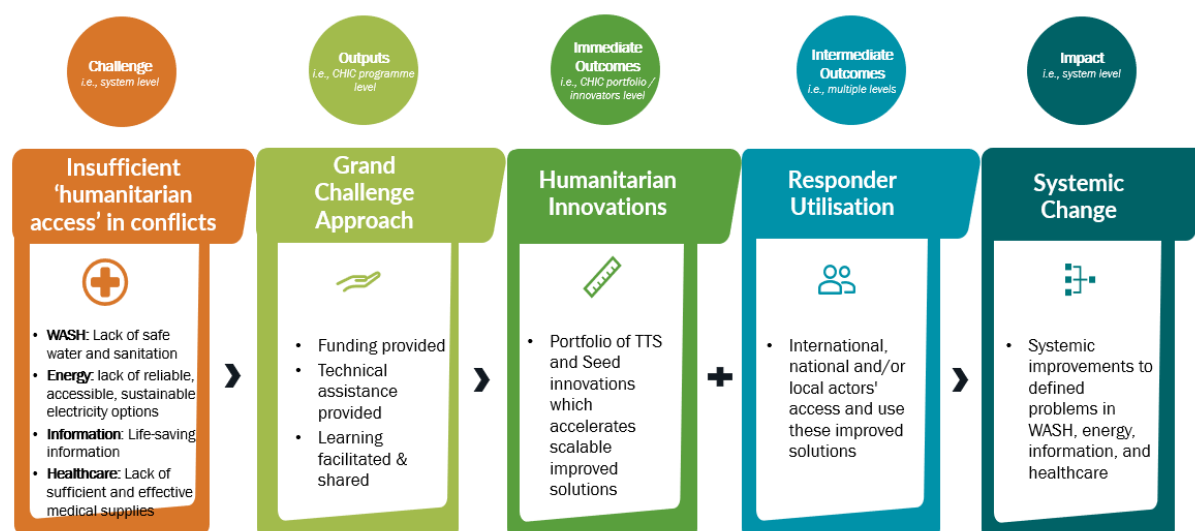


Figure: CHIC's logic model (simplified)

Hypothesis 1: 'Innovative solutions' pathway

IF ... the CHIC programme provides funding, TA, and learning facilitation⁴⁹ as intended, using the Grand Challenge approach (GC approach)

AND ... the CHIC portfolio of humanitarian innovations, including seed and TTS innovations, accelerates scalable, improved solutions to specifically defined humanitarian problems (humanitarian innovations)

AND ... relevant humanitarian responders – including international, national, and local actors – access and use these improved solutions to address specifically defined problems (responder utilization/improved solutions)

THEN ... systemic improvements will be made to specially defined humanitarian problems in WASH, energy, information, and healthcare (system change), increasing the system's capacity to save lives of the most vulnerable people in conflicts/complex emergencies

¹²⁹ See Portfolio analysis, Process review (Annex 5)

Pathway 2 (partner engagement), which seems, from our review, to absorb less effort than the grant-making and TA in Pathway 1, involves CHIC mobilizing additional resources from the private sector for humanitarian innovation/action. First, we slightly adjusted this pathway based on learning from process review and case studies. Second, following comments from GCC we expanded this hypothesis to include engagement with both private sector and communities, as described in the FCDO's CHIC design (2018) and the CHIC Theory of Change (2020).

Hypothesis 2: 'partner engagement' pathway

IF ... the CHIC programme provides technical support to grantees aimed at engaging private sector and local communities (including local NGOs and authorities) where appropriate (CHIC TA)

AND ... grantees use an integrated (non-siloed) approach to engage the most relevant partners, from the private sector and local communities (incl, local NGOs and authorities) (grantee engagement)

AND ... private sector actors and local communities engage with innovations in thematic areas as intended (partner engagement)

THEN ... additional (technical and financial) resources will be mobilized for humanitarian action (resources leveraged)

Annex 3. Logic Model Key Concepts

The evaluation was underpinned by the following key concepts which are the building blocks of the logic model developed at inception.

Grand Challenge: The Grand Challenge approach was described in the CHIC Business Case:¹³⁰ ‘By mobilizing governments, companies, and foundations, and through a combination of grants, capacity-building services, and research this Grand Challenge seeks to: (i) Build the case for private sector engagement in conflict settings; (ii) Identify, test, and scale solutions to the world’s most intractable problems in conflict settings; and (iii) Advance the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.’ More broadly, Grand Challenges are programmes that “mobilize governments, companies and foundations around specific developmental and humanitarian challenges. Through them, [donors] and public and private partners bring in new voices to solve developmental problems ... they source new solutions, test new ideas and scale what works by awarding grants and ... providing targeted TA support to a wide variety of actors from many countries”.¹³¹

Humanitarian innovation: CHIC maintained a portfolio of humanitarian innovations, funded by both ‘Seed’ (proof of concept) grants and TTS grants, aiming to move innovations along the innovation pathway reproduced below. Humanitarian innovation is defined as ‘an iterative process that identifies, adjusts and diffuses ideas for improving humanitarian action’. The key difference between standard programming and innovation lies in ‘doing something differently with the aim of improvement at a system or sector level, where adaptation and invention require a uniquely iterative process’.¹³²

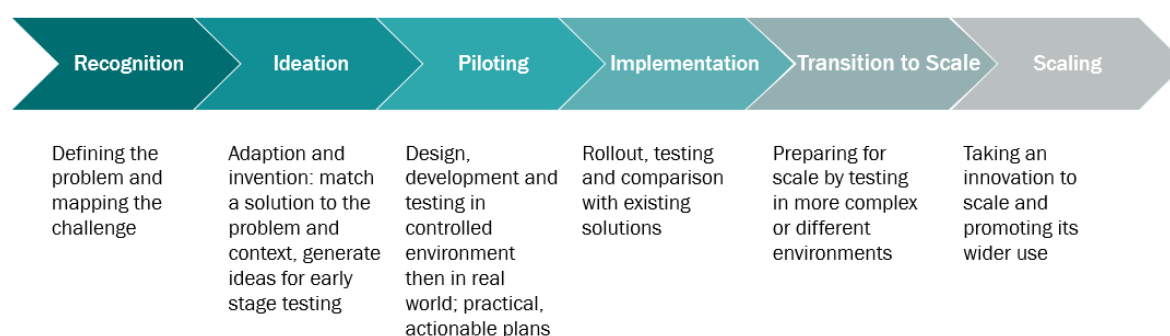


Figure 3: A model of the pathway for humanitarian innovation (based on ALNAP 2017)

System change: CHIC’s overarching purpose is an ambitious humanitarian one: to significantly improve and save lives through the humanitarian ‘grand challenge’ approach, better address unmet needs and generate wider system-level changes within the humanitarian sector by investing in innovation. The international humanitarian system is defined as ‘the network of interconnected institutional and operational entities through which humanitarian action is undertaken when local and national resources are, on their own, insufficient to meet the needs of a population in crisis.’¹³³ Within

¹³⁰ FCDO (2018), CHIC business case

¹³¹ Definition taken from USAID Grand Challenges for Development Meta-Evaluation, Oct 2021. USAID is a core donor of CHIC which was one of nine Grand Challenges included in the meta-evaluation. The DE inception report provides further background, sourced from the 2018 DFID (FCDO) CHIC Business Case.

¹³² Obrecht, A. with Warner, A. and Dillon, N. (2017) ‘Working paper: Evaluating humanitarian innovation’ HIF/ALNAP Working Paper. London: ODI/ALNAP.

¹³³ ALNAP (2021), The State of the Humanitarian System – Fifth Edition. Inception Report

this system, CHIC has defined four system-wide technical problems to address, recognizing that related political and contextual challenges lie outside what the Grand Challenge approach can influence:¹³⁴ barriers to the provision of lifesaving information (information); provision of healthcare services (health); provision of water and sanitation (WASH); and energy provision.

¹³⁴ CHIC (2019), Analysis of Barriers Affecting Innovations in Humanitarian Contexts

Annex 4. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation assessed CHIC according to applicable evaluation criteria, as defined by OECD/DAC,^{135, 136} ALNAP,^{137, 138} and Outcome Mapping.¹³⁹ These criteria allow for objective assessment that supports the evaluation's accountability purpose.

Relevance: 'the extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries', global, country, and partner/institution needs, policies and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change (OECD/DAC 2019).

Appropriateness is 'the tailoring of humanitarian activities to local needs, increasing ownership, accountability and cost-effectiveness accordingly' (ALNAP 2006).

Coherence: 'the compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution' (OECD/DAC 2019). This is an important factor to assess the 'additionality' of the activities.

Effectiveness: 'The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and results, including any differential results across groups' (OECD/DAC 2019) and 'the extent to which an activity achieves its purpose, or whether this can be expected to happen on the basis of outputs' (ALNAP 2006).

Efficiency: 'The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way' (OECD/DAC 2019).

Outcomes: 'the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention's outputs' (OECD-DAC 2002). Here short-term outcomes refer to products and services accessed and used by humanitarian innovators, and medium-term outcomes refer to innovations used by humanitarian responders and comparative improvements made. Short-term outcomes may include any 'changes in the behavior, relationships, activities or actions of the people, groups and organizations with whom a programme works directly. These outcomes can be logically linked to a program's activities, although they are not necessarily directly caused by them (Earl et al 2001).

Impact: Impact is defined as the wider effects of the project – social, economic, technical, environmental – on individuals, gender-and age-groups, communities and institutions. Impacts can be intended and unintended, positive and negative, macro (sector) and micro (household) (consistent with OECD/DAC, 2019). For the summative evaluation, increased effectiveness (longer term outcomes) includes CHIC's contributions at the level of the humanitarian system, including in specific thematic areas (impact indicator 3 in the theory of change/results framework).

¹³⁵ OECD/DAC Network on Development Evaluation (2019), Better Criteria for Better Evaluation, Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use

¹³⁶ OECD DAC, 2002. Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management

¹³⁷ ALNAP (2006), Evaluating humanitarian action using the OECD-DAC criteria: An ALNAP guide for Humanitarian agencies, (Overseas Development Institute, London, March 2006)

¹³⁸ Obrecht, A. with Warner, A. and Dillon, N. (2017) 'Working paper: Evaluating humanitarian innovation' HIF/ALNAP Working Paper. London: ODI/ALNAP.

¹³⁹ Earl, S. Carden, C. and Smutlyo, T. (2001), Outcome Mapping, Building Learning and Reflection into Development Programs. International Development Research Centre

Annex 5. Evaluation Matrix

This annex presents the evaluation matrix, intended to be used as a single tool to guide the evaluation process, and as a reference point for CHIC and GCC.

1. Doing the right thing (relevance and coherence)	
EQ 1.1 Humanitarian system relevance: To what extent and how does the CHIC programme objectives/activities respond to system needs and recognized problems?	
JC	<p>1.1.1 CHIC's objectives and activities responded to policy priorities (and continued to do so if circumstances changed) (OECD/DAC, ALNAP/Relevance).</p> <p>1.1.2 CHIC responded to systemic needs and recognized problems (Logic Model).</p>
Rationale	<p>It is expected that CHIC's objectives and activities should align with donor policy priorities, which are assumed to reflect systemic problems/needs defined by donors. This is a low bar, and more concerned with accountability, since donor policy cannot be expected to have analyzed the problem to the same extent as CHIC.</p> <p>It is expected that CHIC's objectives and activities should respond to an initial analysis done by CHIC, as this is the first step in developing a value proposition for a humanitarian global service or innovation. This is a higher bar, and more concerned with quality management/leadership.</p> <p>As indicated by the JC, the question will provide both accountability and learning: useful insights about CHIC objectives (5y ago), continued relevance and any need for change.</p>
How	<p>Data analysis: evidence that CHIC conducted initial analysis of problem (transparent)</p> <p>Document review: evidence of clear alignment between CHIC and donor policies, as well as system literature (e.g., State of Humanitarian System, Humanitarian Innovation documents, Grand Bargain etc.)</p> <p>Consultations/KIIs: evidence that systemic problem remains recognized and/or important and/or any changes in these problems (including due to the contribution made by humanitarian innovation)</p>
EQ 1.2 Innovator relevance: To what extent does the CHIC programme objectives / activities respond to humanitarian innovators' needs and priorities?	
JC	<p>1.2.1 CHIC's objectives and activities responded to the needs and priorities of humanitarian innovators, including TSS and Seed innovations (and continued to do so if circumstances changed) (OECD/DAC, ALNAP/appropriateness).</p> <p>1.2.2 CHIC responded to the needs and priorities of humanitarian innovations with the potential to change the systemic problems defined (Logic Model).</p>
Rationale	<p>It is expected that CHIC's objectives and activities should respond to the needs and priorities of humanitarian innovators. This is an accountability requirement.</p> <p>It is expected that CHIC's objectives and activities should respond to the needs and priorities of humanitarian innovators, with regard to addressing the systemic problems defined. This is an indication of quality/leadership – outcome orientation.</p>
How	<p>Data analysis: evidence that objectives of selected innovations are clearly aligned with CHIC objectives – without major gaps or obvious incompatibilities</p> <p>Consultations/KIIs: evidence that CHIC's funding, TA, and learning enables progress towards impact</p>

Consultations/survey: evidence that CHIC's funding, TA, and learning is aligned with innovation objectives	
EQ 1.3 Relevance to people in need of assistance: To what extent does the CHIC programme respond to the needs of people affected by conflict, including hard-to-reach populations and vulnerable groups?	
JC	1.3.1 CHIC's objectives and activities respond to the needs of people in need of humanitarian assistance (OECD, ALNAP).
Rationale	<p>It is expected that CHIC's objectives and activities should respond to humanitarian needs (albeit indirectly), through the modality of humanitarian innovation.</p> <p>It is expected that CHIC's objectives and activities should uphold good practices in humanitarian innovation, always with the intention of saving lives, reducing suffering, and upholding human dignity.</p>
How	<p>Data analysis: evidence that CHIC's objectives and activities apply good practices (ALNAP, ELRHA guidance, tools etc.) in humanitarian innovation, aligned with humanitarian principles</p> <p>Document review: evidence that humanitarian innovation (as a modality, distinct from humanitarian action) is relevant to addressing humanitarian needs</p> <p>Consultations/KIIs: evidence that CHIC has mechanisms in place that effectively uphold humanitarian principles (humanity and do no harm)</p>
EQ 1.4 Partner relevance: To what extent does the CHIC programme respond to the needs and priorities of relevant private sector partners and community partners?	
JC	1.4.1 CHIC's objectives and activities respond to the needs and priorities of relevant partners, from the private sector and local communities with regard to humanitarian innovation (OECD/DAC relevance, Logic model).
Rationale	It is expected that CHIC's programme provides technical support to grantees aimed at engaging private sector (including prospective partners) and local communities (including NGOs and authorities) where appropriate (CHIC TA), so that grantees develop effective partner engagement plans and implement them (grantee engagement), and then partners engage with innovations in thematic areas as intended (partner engagement).
How	<p>Data analysis: evidence that CHIC has mechanisms that effectively engage relevant partners from the private sector and local communities</p> <p>Document review: evidence that humanitarian innovation responds to the needs and priorities of private sector and local communities</p> <p>Consultations/KIIs: evidence that mechanisms for engaging private sector and communities work as intended</p>
EQ 1.5 Added value: To what extent is CHIC compatible with other interventions in the humanitarian system and thematic areas?	
JC	1.5.1 CHIC's objectives and activities add value to existing humanitarian innovation activities by other humanitarian innovation initiatives (whether multistakeholder initiatives or initiatives by humanitarian agencies) (OECD/DAC).
Rationale	It is expected that CHIC objectives and activities should fit with existing humanitarian innovation activities, filling gaps and/or leveraging additional value in line with objectives (with compatibility as a minimum criterion).

How	<p>Data analysis: evidence that CHIC design identified and sought to fill gaps in existing humanitarian innovation initiatives aimed at addressing the stated problem</p> <p>Document review: evidence that CHIC objectives and activities remain compatible with other humanitarian innovation initiatives</p> <p>Consultations/KIIs: evidence that CHIC objectives and activities remain compatible with other humanitarian innovation initiatives and sought to fill gaps</p>
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2. Doing it well (effectiveness, efficiency, VfM)

EQ 2.1 Programme effectiveness: To what extent and how well did the CHIC programme provide funding, TA, and learning facilitation as intended, using the Grand Challenge approach (GC approach)

JC	<p>2.1.1 The CHIC programme achieved its intended output results, taking into account their relative importance based on inputs (esp. financial) (OECD/DAC effectiveness, Logic model).</p> <p>2.1.2 The CHIC programme achieved its intended output results, taking into account their relative importance in contributing to intended outcomes and impact (OECD/DAC effectiveness, Logic model).</p>
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Rationale	<p>It is expected that CHIC should conduct activities and deliver intended output results, namely provide funding, TA, and learning facilitation as intended (when financing invested).</p> <p>It is expected that CHIC should conduct activities and deliver intended output results, namely provide funding, TA, and learning facilitation as appropriate for driving intended outcomes/impact (i.e., enabling a portfolio of TTS and Seed innovations, and accelerating scalable improvements/solutions). TA is understood to include helping humanitarian innovations engage with the private sector and local communities, as well as efforts to 'decolonize its practices and approaches to make them more equitable, accessible, and innovator- and community-centric.'</p>
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How	<p>Data analysis: evidence that CHIC delivered outputs as intended with regard to funding, TA, and learning facilitation (i.e., from annual reporting, management information)</p> <p>Consultations/KIIs: evidence that CHIC delivered outputs (i.e., funding, TA, and learning facilitation) in a way most likely to generate intended outcomes and impact</p> <p>Consultations/survey: evidence that grantees perceived these outputs to adequately enable outcomes and impact (humanitarian innovation, responder utilization, and systemic change)</p>
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EQ 2.2 Programme efficiency: To what extent and how did CHIC deliver results (outputs) in an economic, efficient way (where efficiency includes timeliness)?

JC	<p>2.2.1 Economy: The CHIC programme (GCC) ensured economy through the systematic use of procurement and recruitment systems of international standard. (OECD/DAC efficiency)</p> <p>2.2.2 Process Efficiency: The CHIC programme (GCC)'s processes are based on a clear rationale, they are thorough, all the elements in them are necessary, and they are streamlined to ensure timeliness. (OECD/DAC efficiency)</p>
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	<p>2.2.3 Allocative Efficiency: Project Selection – the project selection process is well designed to identify innovations with the greatest potential for transformative change.</p> <p>2.2.4 Allocative Efficiency: TA – the TA is well designed to identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ where an innovation has the greatest potential for making transformational change, and ○ how to support it in that direction.
Rationale	<p>Efficiency is an element needed to assess VFM. The JC have been broken down accordingly to match the assessment criteria used for Programme Efficiency in the rapid process review:</p> <p>Economy: To what extent does the programme ensure economy?</p> <p>Process Efficiency: To what extent do the programme’s processes ensure efficiency?</p> <p>Allocative Efficiency: Project Selection: To what extent do project selection processes ensure efficiency?</p> <p>Allocative Efficiency: TA: To what extent do TA processes ensure efficiency?</p>
How	<p>Data analysis: evidence about progress made by GCC against Rapid Process Review recommendations, comparisons drawn from other funds where possible</p> <p>Document review: Programme Efficiency TL Rapid Process Review (March 2022), evidence for comparison from comparable humanitarian innovation initiatives wherever the information is publicly accessible or otherwise known to TL (e.g. HIF, GSMA, Innovation Norway, UNICEF or WFP innovation)</p>
<p>EQ 2.3 Programme VFM: To what extent and how did the innovations supported by CHIC benefit conflict-affected people, contribute to or foster wider change in the humanitarian system, and have the potential to increase the efficiency and/or cost-effectiveness of humanitarian assistance?</p>	
JC	<p>2.3.1 Innovation costs and benefits: Case study innovations have brought significant benefits to conflict-affected people (taking into consideration any costs incurred by those people) and/or environmental benefits, in particular carbon emission reductions. Benefits have been experienced equitably.</p> <p>2.3.2 Innovation adoption in the humanitarian system: Case study innovations have the potential to bring about product, process or system-level change in the humanitarian system, they are spreading beyond their project locations, and they are on a pathway to wider adoption.</p> <p>2.3.3 Increasing the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of humanitarian assistance: The case study innovations have the potential, if widely adopted, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase the efficiency of humanitarian activities through, for example, reducing costs of common humanitarian outputs, and/or ○ Increase the cost-effectiveness of humanitarian actions through, for example, improving outcomes of common humanitarian interventions at no extra cost.
Rationale	<p>JC have been narrowed down according to the following understanding of VFM:</p> <p>2.3.1 Innovation costs and benefits: To what extent and how have innovations brought net benefits to conflict-affected people (meaning benefits that outweigh any costs experienced by either ‘beneficiaries’ or users).</p>

	<p>2.3.2 Innovation adoption in the humanitarian system: To what extent and how have innovations contributed to or fostered wider change within the humanitarian ecosystem?</p> <p>2.3.3 Increasing the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of humanitarian assistance: How and to what extent, if widely adopted, would the innovations increase the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of humanitarian assistance?</p>
How	<p>Data analysis: evidence about benefits to conflict-affected people and impacts on humanitarian actors based on VFM case study findings</p> <p>Document review: Programme VFM: The four case studies: Nuru, EPP, FR and HS, supported by a small number of KIIs with sectoral experts</p>
3. So what actually happened? (outcomes, impact)	
EQ 3.1 Humanitarian innovations (Seed)/Portfolio immediate outcomes: To what extent and how did the portfolio of seed innovations accelerate innovative solutions?	
JC	<p>3.1.1 CHIC's portfolio of seed innovations (each) offer (value proposition and) proof of concept, 'an early test applied to a single idea or key assumption of the overall innovation, to understand whether the innovation as a whole might be physically or conceptually possible to achieve.' (ALNAP, Logic model)</p> <p>3.1.2 CHIC's portfolio of seed innovations offer consolidating learning and evidence, 'New knowledge generated, or the evidence base enhanced around the area the innovation is intended to address, or around the performance of the innovation itself.' (ALNAP, Logic model)</p> <p>3.1.3 CHIC's portfolio of seed innovations each offer an improved solution for humanitarian action, 'The innovation offers a measurable, comparative improvement in effectiveness, quality or efficiency over current approaches to the problem addressed by the innovation' (ALNAP, Logic model)</p>
Rationale	<p>JC 1 reflects expectations for proof of concept, as defined by Obrecht et al. (2017), while JCs 2 and 3 reflect 'What does successful innovation look like and how is it achieved?' according to Obrecht, A. and T. Warner, A. (2016). These are focused on 'stages' 1-3 of the innovation process, recognizing that successful innovation processes tend to feature five different types of activities, but which often overlap:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recognition activities: What is the problem or opportunity for improving humanitarian action? ○ Ideation activities: What is the potential improvement for humanitarian action? ○ Development activities: How can it work?
How	<p>Data analysis: Evidence that proof of concept is achieved, and evidence/learning generated (quantified)</p> <p>Document review: Evidence (if available) that seed/proof of concept innovations add value/can contribute to system change/addressing the defined problems</p> <p>Consultations/KIIs: Evidence that CHIC's seed/proof concept innovations are contributing/can contribute to solving problems defined/system change</p> <p>Consultations/survey: Evidence that proof of concept is achieved, and evidence/learning generated (for a majority of innovations); and that this contributes/can contribute to addressing problems defined (perceptions quantified)</p> <p>MCS: Evidence (if available) of how seed/proof of concept innovations contributed to solving problems defined/system change</p>
3.2 Humanitarian innovations (TTS)/Portfolio immediate outcomes: To what extent and how did the portfolio of TTS innovations accelerate innovative solutions?	

JC	<p>3.2.1 CHIC's portfolio of TTS innovations offer diffusion/scaling, generating wider adoption of an innovation ... building on demonstrated successes to ensure solutions reach their maximum potential, have the greatest possible impact and lead to widespread change. (ALNAP, Logic model)</p> <p>3.2.2 CHIC's portfolio of TTS innovations each offer an improved solution for humanitarian action, 'The innovation offers a measurable, comparative improvement in effectiveness, quality or efficiency over current approaches to the problem addressed by the innovation' (ALNAP, Logic model)</p> <p>3.2.3 CHIC's portfolio of TTS innovations each offer wide adoption of improved solutions, 'The innovation is taken to scale and used by others to improve humanitarian performance.' (ALNAP, Logic model)</p>
Rationale	<p>JC 1 reflects expectations for diffusion/scaling, as defined by Obrecht et al. (2017), while JCs 2 and 3 reflect 'What does successful innovation look like and how is it achieved?' according to Obrecht, A. and T. Warner, A. (2016). These are focused on 'stages' 4-5 of the innovation process, recognizing that successful innovation processes tend to feature five different types of activities, but which often overlap:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implementation activities: Does it work? ○ Diffusion activities: How can wider ownership for this improvement be achieved? ○ (GCC note the challenges to scaling in the humanitarian sector.)
How	<p>Data analysis: Evidence that CHIC TTS innovations were diffused/taken to scale, offer an improved solution and used by others (quantified)</p> <p>Document review: Evidence (if available) that TTS innovations approaches add value/contribute to improving the humanitarian system, including in response to (thematic) problems defined</p> <p>Consultations/KIIs: Evidence that CHIC TTS innovations contributed to/can contribute to addressing problems defined/system change</p> <p>Consultations/survey: Evidence that CHIC TTS innovations were diffused/taken to scale, offer an improved solution and used by others (perceptions/quantified)</p> <p>MCS: Evidence (if available) of how TTS innovations contributed to solving problems defined/system change</p>
EQ 3.3 Responder utilization/Portfolio intermediate outcomes: To what extent and how did relevant humanitarian response actors– including international, national, and local actors – access and use these improved solutions to address specifically defined problems (responder utilization/improved solutions)?	
JC	<p>3.3.1 CHIC's portfolio of innovations were (being) accessed by (intended) humanitarian response actors, incl. international, national and local (ALNAP, Logic model)</p> <p>3.3.2 CHIC's portfolio of innovations were (being) used by (intended) humanitarian response actors, incl. international, national and local (ALNAP, Logic model)</p>
Rationale	<p>Both the ALNAP good practices and the proposed CHIC model expect humanitarian actors to access and use the innovations. For TTS innovations, this is made explicit that solutions should be adopted. For seed/proof of concept innovations, it is implicit that evidence and learning should be captured and made available to the sector.</p>
How	<p>Data analysis: evidence that innovations were (being) accessed and/or used by specific responders, incl. international, national and local (identification of users, quantification, categorization)</p>

Consultations/KIIs: evidence that innovations were (being) accessed and/or used by specific responders, incl. international, national and local (most significant users identified)

Consultations/survey: evidence that innovations were (being) accessed and/or used by specific responders, incl. international, national and local (perceptions of how innovations being used)

MCS: evidence about how (selected) innovations were (being) accessed and/or used by specific responders

EQ 3.4 Systemic improvements/portfolio impact: To what extent and how did CHIC make systemic improvements to specially defined humanitarian problems in WASH, energy, information, and healthcare (system change), thereby increasing the system's capacity to save lives of the most vulnerable people in conflicts/complex emergencies?

JC 3.4.1 CHIC's portfolio of innovations resulted in discernible (system-level) improvements to problems defined in WASH, energy, information, and healthcare (i.e., through TTS innovations being used) (ALNAP, Logic model)

3.4.2 CHIC's portfolio of innovations resulted in accessible (system-level) evidence and learning about solutions to problems defined in WASH, energy, information, and healthcare (i.e., through seed/proof of concept innovations being made available to humanitarian system actors) (ALNAP, Logic model).

Rationale The proposed model expects that CHIC TTS innovations should result in solutions to the problems defined in 4x thematic areas, or progress in addressing them according to the innovation process described by ALNAP.

Humanitarian innovation good practices (ALNAP studies) expect that seed/proof of concept innovations should result in evidence and learning that can be accessed/used by other humanitarian actors.

GCC (Aug 2022) note the many hindrances to systemic change and the challenges to impact measurement which face humanitarian innovation. The analysis for this EQ will include any evidence collected about them.

Systemic improvements are not expected in WASH due to the small number of grants. This limitation will be noted in our analysis.

How **Data analysis:** evidence (if available) of CHIC TTS innovations solving problems defined (narratives)

Document review: evidence (if available) of humanitarian innovations resulting in system change

Consultations/KIIs: evidence of CHIC TTS innovations solving problems defined (perceptions/qual)

Consultations/survey: evidence of CHIC TTS innovations solving problems defined (perceptions/quant)

MCS: evidence of how CHIC TTS innovations contributed to solving problems defined, including potential impact. This may include comparing intentions of TTS per thematic areas and capturing progress towards them and/or most significant change/s

EQ 3.5 Resources mobilized/portfolio outcome: To what extent and how did CHIC engage relevant partners from the private sector and local communities in thematic areas as intended, so that additional (technical and financial) resources were mobilized for humanitarian action (resources leveraged)?

JC	<p>JC 3.5.1 CHIC's portfolio of innovations engaged relevant partners from the private sector and/or local communities in thematic areas as intended (partner engagement).</p> <p>JC 3.5.2 CHIC's portfolio of innovations mobilized additional (technical and financial) resources for humanitarian action (resources leveraged).</p>
Rationale	It is expected that some grantees, where relevant, should develop effective engagement plans for the private sector and/or local communities and implement them, leading to their engagement in the innovation and mobilization of additional (technical and financial) resources for humanitarian action (Logic model).
How	<p>Data analysis: evidence (if available) of CHIC innovations engaging private sector and/or local community actors</p> <p>Document review: evidence (if available) of humanitarian innovations engaging private sector and/or local community actors</p> <p>Consultations/KIIs: evidence of CHIC portfolio engaging private sector and/or local community actors, resulting in additional technical and financial resources for humanitarian action (perceptions/qual)</p> <p>Consultations/survey: evidence of CHIC portfolio engaging private sector and/or local community actors, resulting in additional technical and financial resources for humanitarian action (perceptions/quant)</p>

Conclusions

Overall question: To what extent and how did the CHIC programme, using the Grand Challenge approach and humanitarian innovation, contribute to systemic improvements in the provision of healthcare, information, energy, and WASH in conflict-driven humanitarian crises? What are the main lessons learned? What would be the situation/consequences if CHIC did not exist/stopped functioning?

What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons learned about the overall model and how it works • Lessons learned about problems defined/relevance • Lessons learned about the Grand Challenge approach • Lessons learned about humanitarian innovation • Lessons learned about respondent utilization • Lessons learned about system change • Lessons learned about private sector engagement • Lessons learned about the overall value of CHIC (including counterfactual)
Rationale	<p>Conclusions identify lessons learned compared to the model and what works (i.e., strengths, challenges, risks).</p> <p>Conclusions give an overall assessment of the value of the intervention (incl. counterfactual).</p> <p>Lessons learned are defined as 'generalizations based on evaluation experiences with projects, programs, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact. (OECD/DAC)</p>

	Conclusions point out the factors of success and failure of the evaluated intervention, with special attention paid to the intended and unintended results and impacts, and more generally to any other strength or weakness. (OECD/DAC)
How	<p>Synthesis findings: findings based on all data</p> <p>Synthesis analysis: conclusions based on all findings</p> <p>Learning session with ERG: conclusions proposed as PPT and learning</p> <p>Reporting: drafting of report to capture findings and conclusions</p>
Recommendations	
What prioritized actionable implications for CHIC arise from the conclusions?	
What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3-5 strategic recommendations to CHIC based on lessons learned, aimed at optimizing activities and generating value (addressing problems defined) • Specific suggestions below each strategic recommendation
Rationale	Recommendations are expected to be ‘proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, quality, or efficiency of a development intervention; at redesigning the objectives; and/or at the reallocation of resources. Recommendations should be linked to conclusions’ (OECD/DAC).
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implications for CHIC based on conclusions • Implications for CHIC based on (1-2) documents defining future strategy (if available) • Recommendations for CHIC based on workshop with CHIC/ERG i.e. evaluation users

Annex 6. Evaluation Approach – applied principles

The summative evaluation was guided by these applied principles:

- **Humanitarian principles:** The evaluation approach was guided by humanitarian principles. In line with the principles of good humanitarian donorship,¹⁴⁰ our overarching concern was to support humanitarian action which aims ‘to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of man-made crises and natural disasters, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for the occurrence of such situations’. We were further guided by the Red Cross and NGO Code of Conduct which translates humanitarian principles into practice for diverse humanitarian actors.¹⁴¹
- **Evaluation standards:** The evaluation upheld recognized standards and good practices in carrying out evaluations. These include practical principles and norms outlined by OECD/DAC¹⁴² and UNEG,¹⁴³ such as impartiality and independence, credibility, utility, and integrity. They also include applicable good practices described by ALNAP for humanitarian evaluation¹⁴⁴ and for the evaluation of humanitarian innovation.¹⁴⁵
- **Realist perspective:** The evaluation adopted a realist perspective.¹⁴⁶ This approach seeks to compare strategic and programmatic intentions with verifiable realities to learn what works, where and how. Pawson and Tilley, who developed the first realist evaluation approach, argued that in order to be useful for decision makers, evaluations need to identify ‘what works in which circumstances and for whom?’, rather than merely ‘does it work?’ The approach is distinguished by its configuration of a context-mechanism-outcome hypothesis to guide investigation into how outcomes are generated. Our hypotheses were developed according to this approach and will be used to guide learning and recommendations.
- **Mixed methods:** The evaluation used mixed methods for data collection and analysis to allow for evidence triangulation and therefore more robust findings. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected, including ‘hard’ evidence (e.g. from documentary sources) and perceptions (e.g. from interviews or workshops).
- **Proportionate:** The evaluation was conducted in a proportionate manner, responding to the defined needs and priorities of intended users. Given the complexity of the humanitarian system and the pathways needed to effect change, it was important to be highly focused and avoid overcomplicated analyses or comprehensive approaches. Instead, it meant using ‘good enough’¹⁴⁷ approaches, including sampling strategies and light touch data collection techniques.

¹⁴⁰ Good Humanitarian Donorship (2003), 24 Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship.

¹⁴¹ ICRC (1994), The Code of Conduct Principles of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Response Programmes.

¹⁴² OECD/DAC (1991), DAC Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance

¹⁴³ UNEG (2016), Norms and Standards for Evaluation

¹⁴⁴ ALNAP (2016), Evaluation of Humanitarian Action (EHA) Guide

¹⁴⁵ Obrecht, A. with Warner, A. and Dillon, N. (2017) ‘Working paper: Evaluating humanitarian innovation’ HIF/ALNAP Working Paper. London: ODI/ALNAP.

¹⁴⁶ Pawson, S. & Tilley, N. (2004): *Realist Evaluation*.

¹⁴⁷ The Good Enough Guide (2007), Impact Measurement and Accountability in Emergencies

Annex 7. Data Analysis Sources

CHIC design documents

- CHIC (2020), Analysis of Barriers Affecting Innovations in Humanitarian Contexts. Grand Challenges Canada.
- FCDO (2017), Humanitarian Grand Challenge: Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC). Business Case
- CHIC (2018), Modification of Assistance Award, USAID
- CHIC (2020), Theory of Change
- CHIC (2018), Request for proposals round 1
- CHIC (2019), Request for proposals round 2
- CHIC (2020), Request for proposals round 3

CHIC MEL and reporting documents

- CHIC (2022), Innovator Feedback Survey (March 2022)
- CHIC (2022), Innovator Feedback Survey (March 2022)
- WFP (2021), Semi-annual report: May – Oct 2021
- Brink (2021) Semi-annual report: Oct – April 2021
- CHIC (2022), June 2022 Steering Committee E-meeting slides
- CHIC (2020), Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge, Semi-Annual Report April-September 2020. Grand Challenges Canada
- CHIC (2021), Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge, Semi-Annual Report October 2020-March 2021. Grand Challenges Canada
- CHIC (2022), Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge, Semi-Annual Report October 2021-April 2022. Grand Challenges Canada
- CHIC (2022), Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge, Annual Report April 2022. Grand Challenges Canada
- FCDO (2020), Creating Hope in Conflict Humanitarian Grand Challenge (CHIC). Annual Review
- CHIC (2022), Logical Framework

CHIC learning documents

- Triple Line (2022), Creating Hope in Conflict Developmental Evaluation: Rapid Process Review
- Triple Line (2022), Creating Hope in Conflict: Outcome and VFM Case Study – EPP
- Triple Line (2022), Creating Hope in Conflict: Outcome and VFM Case Study – Field Ready
- Triple Line (2022), Creating Hope in Conflict: Outcome and VFM Case Study – Hala Systems
- Triple Line (2022), Creating Hope in Conflict: Portfolio Analysis
- The Research People (2020), Grant Reward Review, Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge
- The Research People (2021), How do Great Ideas Scale? Learning from Scaling Successes in Humanitarian Innovation
- CHIC (2022), Political and social barriers to scaling humanitarian innovation
- CHIC and Brink (n.d. 2020?), The Story of Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge

Annex 8. Document Review Sources

Documents about Humanitarian Innovation

A majority of the documents selected (15/23) focused on humanitarian action and humanitarian innovation in general. They covered the role of humanitarian innovation in the humanitarian system (ALNAP 2018, ALNAP 2021, Nelis et al 2020), humanitarian innovation and its ecosystem (Ramalingham et al. 2015, Obrecht and Warner 2016, Obrecht et al. 2017, KPMG 2019, Currión 2019, United Nations University 2022), and the factors that hinder or help humanitarian innovations and scaling them (Elrha 2018, CHIC 2020, CHIC n.d., the Research People 2021).

- ALNAP (2018) The State of the Humanitarian System. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.
- ALNAP (2022) The State of the Humanitarian System. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.
- B. Ramalingham et al. (2015), Strengthening the Humanitarian Innovation Ecosystem
- CHIC (2020), Analysis of Barriers Affecting Innovations in Humanitarian Contexts. Grand Challenges Canada.
- CHIC (n.d. - 2022?), Political and social barriers to scaling humanitarian innovation
- Currión, P. (2019), The Black Hole of Humanitarian Innovation
- Deloitte (2015), The Humanitarian R&D Imperative: How other sectors overcame impediments to innovation
- Elrha. (2018) 'Too Tough to Scale? Challenges to Scaling Innovation in the Humanitarian Sector.' Elrha: London.
- KPMG (2019), Global Alliance of Humanitarian Innovation (GAHI). Lessons Learned
- McClure, D; Bourns, L and Obrecht, A. (2018), 'Humanitarian Innovation: Untangling the many paths to scale. Global Alliance for Humanitarian Innovation (GAHI).
- Nelis, T.; Allouche, J. and Sida, L. (2020) The Humanitarian Innovation and Evidence Programme (HIEP): Bringing New Evidence and Methods to Humanitarian Action, Evidence Synthesis, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies
- Obrecht, A. and T. Warner, A. (2016) 'More than just luck: Innovation in humanitarian action'. HIF/ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.
- Obrecht, A. with Warner, A. and Dillon, N. (2017) 'Working paper: Evaluating humanitarian innovation' HIF/ALNAP Working Paper. London: ODI/ALNAP.
- The Research People (2021), How do Great Ideas Scale? Learning From Scaling Successes in Humanitarian Innovation. Grand Challenges Canada.
- United Nations University - Maastricht Economic and social Research institute on Innovation and Technology (2022), Literature Study. Innovation in Humanitarian Assistance

Documents about CHIC

A minority of the documents (8/23) focused on CHIC. Several of these offer a donor or 'partner' perspective of CHIC (FCDO 2017, FCDO 2021, a CHIC blog by the USAID administrator 2019, and a CHIC news release about Canada joining CHIC in 2021). Others offer perspectives by CHIC, including a story of its evolution (CHIC n.d.), a request for proposals (CHIC 2022), and a review of grants awarded (The Research People 2020).

- CHIC (2020), Request for proposals
- CHIC (n.d.), The Story of Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge
- FCDO (2017), Humanitarian Grand Challenge: Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC). Business Case
- FCDO (2021), Creating Hope in Conflict Humanitarian Grand Challenge (CHIC). Annual Review
- Green, M. (2019), Creating Hope in Conflict, Discover ground-breaking ideas to tackle the humanitarian community's toughest problems. humanitariangrandchallenge.org. (accessed 28 Sept 2022)
- FCDO (2021), Creating Hope in Conflict Humanitarian Grand Challenge (CHIC). Annual Review
- November 9, 2021, Canada joins U.S., U.K. and Netherlands to support humanitarian solutions in the world's most challenging conflict zones. humanitariangrandchallenge.org. (accessed 28 Sept 2022)
- The Research People (2020), Grant Award Review. CHIC

Annex 9. Consultations: Stakeholder categories and sampling

Stakeholder categories

Group 1: Humanitarian leadership and system actors	Group 2: Humanitarian Innovators
Stakeholders who make funding recommendations or decisions on humanitarian innovation, develop policy and shape recommendations for (or maybe make) decisions, implement and manage CHIC.	Innovators working within or commissioned by research organizations, foundations and/or implementing organizations, who are engaged in humanitarian innovation.
<p>a) Global Policy Actors and funders of Humanitarian Innovation</p> <p>Current and prospective donors of CHIC and donors of other humanitarian innovation programmes. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 current CHIC donors / Steering Committee members (FCDO, USAID, Dutch MFA, GAC) • 1 donor of other HI programming (Norway MFA, who have some convening role with humanitarian innovation donors) 	<p>a) CHIC Grantees</p> <p>The interviews enabled grantees to give perspective and opinions, to supplement more quantitative grantee survey data. 8 were interviewed. (Sampling is explained below).</p>
<p>b) CHIC management</p> <p>These are individuals involved directly in managing CHIC. For the consultation, the team identified a universe of nine people, each with different roles, and selected 8 individuals with different roles and responsibilities within the programme to interview.</p>	<p>b) Humanitarian Innovation Experts</p> <p>A population of 15 such experts from 11 organizations were identified through Triple Line contacts and associated web search. A pool of seven was purposively selected to give a spread of HI implementing organizations, researchers and thought leaders, from which three were selected as first choice informants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSMA M4H Senior Insights Manager • CEO of Elhra, which hosts the HIF • Head of Research and Impact at ALNAP and co-author of SOHS 2022

Sampling of grantees for consultation

Grantees were sampled from the universe of all CHIC grantees (as at January 2022), including those whose grants had ended. A sample of 38 was derived from which 8 were selected for interview, following the process set out below:

4. COVID Round grants were excluded: these grants were not typical to CHIC but were made in response to the pandemic (n=3)
5. Grants who were the subject of the outcome and VFM case studies (n=4) were excluded as rich interview data was already available for them.
6. Grants ending more than 12 months preceding the interview were excluded, and any which were still in implementation. This was to ensure that experience was sufficiently recent, and grantees

had the whole length of the grant to reflect upon. This entailed excluding all grants ending in 2020 up to August 2021 (n=19) or due to end from October 2022 (n=10).

7. This left 38 grants which were sorted by:

- Theme (Energy, Health, Life-saving Information and Safe Water and Sanitation)
- Grant type (Seed or TTS)

with the aim of selecting one grant of each type from each theme, in order to give a good cross-section from across the portfolio.

- 8.** TTS grants: there were two categories with no TTS grants: Health, where the two TTS grants were a) a COVID Round grant and b) the subject of an outcome/VfM case study; and Safe Water and Sanitation, where no TTS grants were made. Two TTS grants were therefore selected for each of the other themes. For Energy, there was only one TTS grant within the timeframe, so another ending in October 2022 was added. For Health, the two largest of the three TTS grants were selected.
- 9.** Seed grants: First and second choice grants were selected within each of the themes, in such a way as to ensure a geographical spread and a variety of topics.

Annex 10. Consultations: interviewees

Summative Evaluation Consultation Interviews		
Name	Date	Organization
Humanitarian leadership and system actors		
Global Policy Actors & humanitarian innovation funders		
Tarah Friend	08/11/22	FCDO
Nicholas Leader	08/11/22	FCDO
Lillie Rosen	04/11/22	USAID
Margaret Schmitz	04/11/22	USAID
Fiona Burger	02/11/22	Dutch MFA
Dragica Stanivak	27/10/22	GAC
Alice Obrecht	15/11/22	ALNAP
CHIC management		
Zainah Alsamman	09/11/22	GCC/CHIC
Kristin Neudorf	09/11/22	GCC/CHIC
Fawad Akbari	27/10/22	GCC/CHIC
Chris Houston	13/10/22	Ex-GCC/CHIC
Joe Torres	14/10/22	GCC/CHIC
Patrick Coburn	13/10/22	GCC/CHIC
Bryony Nicholson	07/11/22	Brink
Karlee Silver	11/11/22	GCC/CHIC
Humanitarian Innovators		
CHIC grantees		
Katie Fettes and James Thuch Madhier	01/11/22	Rainmaker Organization for Sustainable Development
Suzana Brown	01/11/22	SUNY Korea
Aisha Jumaan	31/10/22	Yemen Relief and Reconstruction Foundation
Amir Shiva	18/10/22	Norwegian Refugee Council
Paul Uithol	10/11/22	Humanitarian OpenStreetMap
Christopher Tuckwood	25/10/22	The Sentinel Project
Ahava Zarembeski	01/11/22	Sun Buckets Inc.

Summative Evaluation Consultation Interviews		
Name	Date	Organization
Nnaemeka Ikegwuonu	24/10/22	ColdHubs
Humanitarian Innovation Experts		
Matthew Downer	14/11/22	GSMA M4H
Jess Camburn	22/11/22	Elrha
Nan Buzard	28/10/22	ICRC

Annex 11. Mini Case Studies: Method and Data sources

Method

Each mini case study used a combination of primary and secondary data sources which are listed below: documentary evidence (including CHIC data and external literature from the thematic sector); between five and seven KII with grantees, innovation users, sector experts and/or system actors (for example cluster leads or others with an informed technical perspective on the problem and solutions offered); and additional KII data from the evaluation's broader stakeholder consultations. The data was analyzed to generate evidence in relation to the JCs and EQs.

The three mini case studies were necessarily light touch. As such, we focused our efforts on a smaller number of TTS grants to generate greater depth of findings, as well as in recognition of the greater likelihood of TTS grants contributing towards systemic level changes. Our selection was naturally purposive, selecting innovations based on recommendations from the GCC team. Our review of the proof of concept grants was high level: we did not review proof of concept grantee reports, rather relied on publicly available information (e.g., from CHIC and innovators' websites) and existing portfolio analysis data.¹⁴⁸ As such, whilst the mini case studies aimed to provide a snapshot of CHIC's health, energy and information portfolios, it was not a comprehensive review of all proof of concept or TTS innovations within the portfolio. This limits the strength of the evidence and the extent to which broader generalizations about the portfolio can be made.

Data Sources

Energy

Main documents:

- FCDO (2017), Humanitarian Grand Challenge: Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC). Business Case
- Creating Hope in Conflict: a Humanitarian Grand Challenge (2020), Analysis of Barriers Affecting Innovations in Humanitarian Contexts. Grand Challenges Canada
- Triple Line (2022), CHIC Outcome and Value for Money (Impact) Case Study. Nuru. Revised and combined draft. 24 September 2022
- High level proof of concept grants review (CHIC website, grantee websites, portfolio data)
- Lahn, G. and Grafham, O. (2015), Heat, Light and Power for Refugees Saving Lives, Reducing Costs. Chatham House Report for the Moving Energy Initiative
- GPA (2018), The Global Plan of Action for Sustainable Energy Solutions in Situations of Displacement Framework for Action
- GPA (2022) The State of the Humanitarian Energy Sector. Global Platform for Action on Sustainable Energy in Displacement Settings: Challenges, Progress and Issues in 2022. UNITAR Publishing. Geneva, Switzerland.

Other information sources:

- CHIC website Sun Buckets TTS grant - CHIC website/DFID AR 2021 (NB. No TTS report available).
- KII: Ahava Zarembski, SunBuckets
- KII Nnaemeka Ikegwuonu, Project Lead / CEO, ColdHubs, 24/10/22
- FCDO Annual Review 2021
- Kyle H - interview notes (from Nuru case study)
- Eva M - IOM - interview notes (From EPP/Nuru case study)
- Kube Mads UH - interview notes (From EPP/Nuru case study)
- Erin H interview notes (from EPP case study). 3degrees:
- Cold Hubs Progress Report, July 2022
- GPA website, accessed 17 Nov 2022, www.humanitarianenergy.org/

¹⁴⁸ Portfolio analysis, Process review

- Nelis, T.; Allouche, J. and Sida, L. (2020) The Humanitarian Innovation and Evidence Programme (HIEP): Bringing New Evidence and Methods to Humanitarian Action, Evidence Synthesis, Brighton: Institute of Development Studies
- Patel et al. (2019), Infrastructure Management Contracts: Improving Energy Asset Management in Displacement Settings

Key informant interviews:

Interviews as part of research for energy MCS		
Name	Date	Organization
Aimee Jenks	28/10/22	UNITAR
Owen Grafham	25/11/22	Chatham House
Dave Mozersky	04/11/22	EPP
Dher Hayo	27/10/22	UNHCR Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster (CCCCMC).

Health

Main documents:

- ALNAP (2018) The State of the Humanitarian System. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.
- ALNAP (2022) The State of the Humanitarian System. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.
- Blanchet, K., & Roberts, B. et al. (2015) An evidence review of research on health interventions in humanitarian crises. Elrha: London
- Casey, S.E., Chynoweth, S.K., Cornier, N. et al. (2015). Progress and gaps in reproductive health services in three humanitarian settings: mixed-methods case studies. *Confl Health* 9 (Suppl 1), S3.
- CHIC (2018), Request for proposals, Round 1
- CHIC (2019), Request for proposals, Round 2
- CHIC (2020), Request for proposals, Round 3
- CHIC (2020), Analysis of Barriers Affecting Innovations in Humanitarian Contexts. Grand Challenges Canada.
- Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge. (2020). Grant Award Review. Grand Challenges Canada
- Doocy, S., Lyles, E., Tappis, H. (2022). An evidence review of research on health interventions in humanitarian crises: 2021 Update. Elrha: London
- FCDO (2017), Humanitarian Grand Challenge: Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC). Business Case.
- Nature, Vol 559, (2018).
- The Research People (2020), Grant Award Review. CHIC
- Thompson R, Kapila M. (2018). Healthcare in Conflict Settings: Leaving No One Behind. Doha, Qatar: World Innovation Summit for Health
- Tønnessen-Krokan M, Bringedal Houge A. Complex emergencies: overcoming barriers to health care. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*. 2022;50(3):312-317.
- Triple Line (2022), Creating Hope in Conflict: Outcome and VfM Case Study – Field Ready
- Triple Line (2022), Creating Hope in Conflict Developmental Evaluation: Rapid Process Review
- UNOCHA (2018). Global Humanitarian Overview 2018.
- UNOCH (2022). Global Humanitarian Overview 2022. Available from: <https://gho.unocha.org/>

Key informant interviews:

Interviews as part of research for health mini case study		
Name	Date	Organization
Linda Doull	21/11/22	Global Health Cluster
Nasr Mohamed	17/11/22	Kings College London
Mukesh Kapila	25/10/22	Independent
Muzna Dureid	16/11/22	White Helmets

Life-saving information

Main documents:

- CHIC (2018), Request for proposals, Round 1
- CHIC (2020), Analysis of Barriers Affecting Innovations in Humanitarian Contexts. Grand Challenges Canada.
- Creating Hope in Conflict: A Humanitarian Grand Challenge. (2020). Grant Award Review. Grand Challenges Canada.
- FCDO (2017), Humanitarian Grand Challenge: Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC). Business Case
- GSMA (2018). Landscaping the humanitarian digital ecosystem.
- Nature, Vol 559, (2018)
- The Research People (2020), Grant Award Review. CHIC
- Triple Line (2022), Creating Hope in Conflict Developmental Evaluation: Rapid Process Review
- UNHCR (2018). Displaced and disconnected: connectivity for refugees. Available at [Displaced-Disconnected-WEB.pdf \(unhcr.org\)](#)

Key informant interviews:

Interviews as part of research for life-saving information MCS		
Name	Date	Organization
Ivan Gayton	02/11/22	Independent
John Bryant	09/11/22	ODI
Giles Barrett	16/11/22	Global Strategy Network (Sealr project)
John Jaegar	10/11/22	Hala Systems

Annex 12. Mini Case Studies: Method and Conclusions

Introduction

Creating Hope in Conflict (CHIC), a Humanitarian Grand Challenge (HGC), is a multi-donor fund which supports innovators to develop and scale solutions that enable life-saving and life-improving assistance to reach people worst affected by conflict-generated humanitarian crisis. CHIC's model, or theory of change, expects that CHIC Transition to Scale (TTS) innovations should result in systemic level improvements to the problems defined, or progress towards addressing them, and also expects that seed/proof of concept innovations should result in accessible evidence and learning around solutions.

The purpose of the mini case studies (MCS) was to capture the extent to which, and how, CHIC-funded innovations contributed towards solving the health, energy and life-saving information problems as defined by CHIC. They aimed to generate evidence about outcomes and impacts achieved by CHIC funded innovators, and specifically EQs 3.1 to 3.4, by exploring progress towards systemic change along the innovative solutions' pathways. The mini case studies served as a key data source for the summative evaluation.

Full text of our mini case studies has not been included as there were so few key informants that they could easily be identified, and the limitations of the exercise more widely are noted in Annex 11. The conclusions are included here, however, as summary evidence which was analyzed alongside other sources to generate evaluation findings.

Life Saving Information Mini Case Study: Conclusions

The CHIC portfolio of TTS information innovations reviewed offered three solutions to different aspects of the life-saving information problem. These solutions largely addressed these problems in a localized manner, but with some demonstrable potential for system level uptake and adoption.

CHIC's third largest TTS information grantee, Hala Systems, offered a unique and improved solution for humanitarian action in NW Syria, providing a local solution to the information problems of information access, content and two-way communications in this particular context, and demonstrating significant impact in terms of lives saved and improved. It offers significant potential for wider system level adoption and uptake in other contexts, both humanitarian and non-humanitarian, but requires significant and sustained investment to do so. CHIC's second largest TTS information grantee, Humanitarian OpenStreetMap (HOT), offers an improved solution to the problem of information access through locally appropriate and open-source geographic data. The grant achieved proof of concept but did not achieve wider scaling nor the level of operational impact that was intended in the project countries (Uganda and DRC). Its impact was demonstrated at the local level, to inform health and infrastructure provision, ultimately improving lives. Although not linked to (or a result of) the CHIC grant, OpenStreetMap has been successfully used and taken up by a range of humanitarian actors in other contexts and projects (e.g., UNHCR, MSF, Red Cross), hence there are plausible signs of potential for continued wider uptake and adoption. Lastly, through Sealr, the Global Strategy Network Ltd (TGSN) offered a promising solution to address some of the information problems defined, with potential for wider uptake in humanitarian and non-humanitarian contexts. However, more evidence is required to demonstrate its wider applicability and wider adoption remains a challenge in terms of securing further funding and partnerships.

The CHIC portfolio of proof of concept information innovations offered value proposition and, in some cases, proof of concept. The portfolio focused on improving access to lack of (accurate) information, with innovations mostly being accessed and used by affected communities and local service providers. It was unclear from the information reviewed whether the innovations had realistic sustainability prospects but on the whole required further support over time and collaboration with wider stakeholders to take to the next stage. The value of the information proof of concept portfolio lies in their potential to generate evidence about viable models that might address information sector problems, but our (albeit limited) evidence suggests that consolidated evidence and learning from proof of concept grants has not been made available to relevant system level actors.

The TTS and proof of concept information innovations reviewed were largely accessed and used by local actors (civilians, CBOs) including local and national humanitarian actors (NGOs, civil protection organizations, private sector organizations working in reconstruction efforts) as well as local and national level service providers (health, education etc.). They remained little used by international humanitarian response actors, i.e., UN agencies, donors etc., albeit there are some exceptions to this with some small-scale examples of uptake by UN organizations within the portfolio (e.g., UNDP in West Africa for Sealr).

Overall, and from the information reviewed, CHIC's information-seeking portfolio of innovations seems fairly well balanced in terms of addressing the information problems defined - and it tackles specific barriers (some more than others – specifically issues around access, content and two-way communications) with multiple projects. The TTS grants reviewed – Sealr, Missing Maps and Hala - focused mostly on addressing problems of access to reliable sources of information and accurate content for local populations (and to some extent, humanitarian organizations), and two-way communications. There was some evidence to suggest these barriers are dynamic and shift over time – not least because the underlying causes of the barriers change over time (take for example, Covid-19 or climate change). Although humanitarian innovation can work to mitigate against the problems in the information sector, it is unlikely they can be permanently solved through innovation, unless the systemic conditions that cause them are profoundly addressed.

Although there was some wider application and use/adoption of innovations at scale, there was minimal system-level improvement to the overall problems defined, although the problems were undoubtedly addressed in specific contexts and over specific time periods. A general barrier to adoption at scale will always be lack of funding; humanitarian innovation in the information sector will likely only be successful with long term and sustained investments, including from the private sector. What these innovations did achieve however was to de-risk this type of work and generate learning around certain types of approaches that do work in the information innovation sector. Notably these included the role of citizen science (to source scientifically useful data points) and the value of local citizen participation (and crucially of putting agency into civilians' hands), in conjunction with the use of technology – specifically the importance of open-source software and creating freely available tools that can be used locally. This can be seen as a systemic-level improvement, following the pathway of generating accessible system-level evidence about solutions to the problems defined. One key value of the CHIC information portfolio thus lies in demonstrating the importance of countering the top-down dominant incentives that define and determine much digital innovation work (e.g., biometrics), and delivering more locally driven, inclusive-aware and participatory approaches to solutions.

However, more work is needed to make this evidence and learning more widely accessible in the humanitarian ecosystem. CHIC TTS information innovations require further advocacy and championing of innovations to be taken up at sector level along with strong evidence to demonstrate their success and potential for impact or wider applicability. The information portfolio demonstrates that system change can be fostered through more than one avenue – as stated in the CHIC 2022 annual report – by mobilizing humanitarian actors to adopt innovations (some, but limited, evidence of success here), by advocating for localization (largely achieved here) and by demonstrating innovations' VFM (in progress via this summative evaluation).

Across the information reviewed, flexible funding was overwhelmingly viewed as CHIC's greatest contribution to grantees and their innovations, de-risking their work and enabling organizations to maintain stable incomes whilst working on their innovation or to gain further investment. In many cases the funding allowed TTS projects to perform well, which was crucial for securing further funding (e.g., Hala).

A number of information grantees felt that CHIC could play a greater role in brokering connections, disseminating evidence and learning about the innovations and playing more of a 'bridging role' – thus capitalizing on their credibility and network in the sector. For example, from our own analysis, it is suggested that CHIC could engage with (or encourage innovators on the ground to engage with) the Emergency Telecommunications Cluster (ETC), set up by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) (a global network of organizations that works to provide shared communication services in humanitarian crises) to encourage greater uptake of innovations at a sectoral level. Similarly, UNHCR's Digital Inclusion programme, led by UNHCR's Innovation Service and which uses innovative approaches and tools to ensure that refugees and their host communities have their voices heard in

humanitarian responses (i.e., digital inclusion) is another stakeholder with whom CHIC could connect at a higher level to disseminate evidence about solutions and encourage wider uptake. Innovative and user-friendly dissemination methods and products are required to best meet the needs of the over-stretched workforce within the humanitarian sector.

Energy Mini Case Study: Conclusions

The CHIC portfolio of TTS energy innovations offered three solutions to different aspects of the humanitarian energy problem, two of which seemed able to address these in a highly localized manner. CHIC-funded TTS energy innovations offered a variety of energy solutions (mini grid, cooling service, and cooking mechanism), with two of them offering highly localized solutions to wider problems. CHIC's largest TTS energy innovation grantee, Nuru, aimed to scale up energy provision within a neighborhood of Goma, DRC. It seemed likely to have a highly localized impact, not necessarily solely among people in need of assistance or the most vulnerable. CHIC's second-largest TTS energy innovation grantee, Cold Hubs, offered a cooling service to extend the shelf-life of perishable food in Nigeria's displacement camps. It could potentially be expanded to other IDP camps in Nigeria, if successfully piloted and if a scaling plan can be developed with UNHCR. CHIC's third largest TTS energy innovation grantee, Sun Buckets, offered a unique solar cooking solution for people in refugee camps worldwide. It seemed unlikely to progress without necessary investors and humanitarian partnerships.

The TTS energy innovations remained little used by humanitarian response actors. Two of the three CHIC-funded TTS energy innovations required utilization by humanitarian actors, with one of them potentially able to achieve it (with CHIC support) and the other unable to do that (without CHIC support).

The CHIC portfolio of proof of concept energy innovations offered a promising financing solution that seemed potentially applicable in multiple crises, but most other proof of concept innovations seemed unlikely to be sustained locally and did not offer accessible evidence to other relevant actors. CHIC-funded proof of concept innovations tended to focus on increasing access to locally-owned renewable energy for displaced populations (more than strengthening delivery or engaging with humanitarian actors) and demonstrate technical solutions, but they remain unlikely to be sustained locally or instructive to humanitarian energy actors at a system level (without a mechanism for sharing evidence with relevant actors). But one CHIC funded proof of concept, EPP, could unlock additional financing for clean energy provision in multiple humanitarian settings (at a more systemic level), by leveraging the renewable energy credit market to support clean energy provision in conflict-affected states.

The CHIC portfolio appeared to make little contribution to systemic energy improvements that did occur, due a lack of intention, focus, alignment and engagement. During 2015-2022, innovation actors made a contribution to improving humanitarian energy, but it was insufficient. The humanitarian sector made progress in addressing energy problems, and innovation actors - not humanitarian actors - delivered most humanitarian energy services. However, the humanitarian sector's progress in energy was outpaced by increased displacement and the sheer scale of energy challenges, and innovation actors did not deliver energy at the necessary scale, or in a coordinated and integrated manner. CHIC likely made little contribution to this progress for the following reasons. First, CHIC did not fully address the energy problem as a 'grand challenge', instead identifying 'barriers' to energy provision that could be addressed by innovation, but not focusing on systemic problems with donors, funding and incentives. Second, CHIC did not focus on systemic problems, instead defining multiple and diverse expectations from innovations focused on energy, investing mostly in improving access to energy through climate smart technologies, and perceiving most of its contributions to be in cost efficiencies (mini-grids) and increased local ownership (Nuru and others) - with the exception of EPP, which it considered had the potential to bring wider change. Third, CHIC was not aligned or engaged with system-level efforts to address energy problems, most notably the Global Plan of Action.

Health Mini Case Study: Conclusions

The CHIC portfolio of TTS health innovations reviewed offered two solutions to the same aspects of the broader ‘health supplies and services’ problem in NW Syria. These solutions largely addressed these problems in a localized manner, but with some potential for wider system-level adoption.

Field Ready (the only (non-Covid-19 related) TTS grantee in the health portfolio when the mini case study was conducted) offered a very promising and much improved solution to the problems of limited or damaged physical health care infrastructure, and the problems associated with international supply chains and humanitarian access in NW Syria. The TTS grant did not lead to wide-scale system change in terms of wider adoption of its local manufacturing approach in other humanitarian settings.

However, it demonstrated potential in changing how logistics is thought about and organized by humanitarian actors, and through its work with the Local Procurement Development Partnership and wider advocacy activities, shows potential to lead to wider system-level change in future. It has potential for wider application both in terms of geographic and sectoral scope (i.e., outside of health) in contexts where supply chains are under pressure. If more widely adopted, the innovative approach has potential to reduce the use of international procurement agreements (but not replace them).

White Helmets, CHIC’s largest health TTS innovation grantee, offered an improved solution to the problems of supply chain management, poor health care infrastructure and equipment and issues around ‘humanitarian access’ in NW Syria. Through the CHIC grant, White Helmets demonstrated it was feasible and economical to use local capacity and resources to produce medical protection equipment in humanitarian settings. It did not achieve further scaling or wider adoption but did contribute to the broader evidence base around localization and the role of local actors in crises.

The CHIC portfolio of health proof of concept innovations offered value proposition and some offered proof of concept. There were some notable examples of improved solutions to problems defined

(e.g., Intelhealth – a knowledge-enabled telemedicine platform that empowers community health workers to provide a suite of primary and specialist level health services in hard-to-reach areas). The portfolio focused on addressing all four barriers to health supplies and services as set out by CHIC – health worker capacity, physical infrastructure, health risks and medicine supply chain management. Some health proof of concept innovations demonstrated potential for wider adoption, and this has been achieved in some instances (e.g., Sehat Kahani’s telemedicine solution). A number of innovations appeared to have potential wider application both within and outside of humanitarian contexts, particularly those using a telemedicine approach, but many still require further support, funding and collaboration to take to the next stage. The value of the health proof of concept innovation portfolio lies in generating evidence around viable models that might address problems of health services and supplies in humanitarian settings, although it was unclear from the information reviewed the extent to which this learning has been made accessible to wider system level actors.

The TTS and proof of concept health innovations reviewed were little used by large international humanitarian response actors (e.g. UN agencies, international donors etc.)

The health innovations were largely accessed and used by local actors (communities, civilians) including local and national humanitarian actors (e.g., civil protection actors, NGOs), and – unsurprisingly – local and national level health service providers, including health care authorities and health care workers. Both TTS grants demonstrate the critical role that local organizations and actors can play in protracted humanitarian crises as active agents of change in humanitarian response.

Overall from the information reviewed, CHIC’s health portfolio of proof of concept and TTS innovations seems fairly well balanced in terms of addressing the broad, systemic-level health problems defined by CHIC, tackling specific barriers with multiple projects.

The TTS grants reviewed focused specifically on addressing issues of physical health care infrastructure and supply chain management, as well as the cross-cutting issue of ‘humanitarian access’, specifically in the context of NW Syria; the proof of concept grants addressed elements of all four barriers defined. These health specific barriers are still relevant today – and indeed represent systemic issues faced by many significantly weakened health systems, amplified in conflict and humanitarian crisis settings, and further exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. By working to address these barriers, CHIC was aligned with and supporting wider efforts to strengthen health systems in humanitarian contexts. Although CHIC specifically aimed to transform humanitarian system capacity to save lives (in health and other sectors), the health portfolio reminds us that in health (as in other sectors), humanitarian and early recovery aid efforts should consider and align with longer term and broader health system

strengthening efforts. In health system strengthening more generally, innovation can play a key role in filling the gaps and enabling complementary approaches with existing efforts.

There was limited wider application and adoption of the health funded innovations at scale and minimal system-level improvement to the problems defined, although – in the case of the two TTS grants - the problems were successfully addressed in specific context of Syria and during the life of the grants and in the case of one (Field Ready), demonstrated strong potential for wider applicability. Field Ready demonstrated that the provision of health care services in a conflict area such as NW Syria is unlikely to ever become fully reliant on a commercial model – in this instance, there were limits to how far commercialization could support wider scaling. In the Syrian context, given the highly fragmented operating context and significant influence of wider international conflicts, it seems unlikely that there is much scope for commercialization in the next few years. In order for innovations producing locally manufactured and repaired equipment to be sustained in the longer term, a shift in mindset at the international humanitarian sector level is likely to be required – for example, via an OCHA indicator that specifically incorporates tracking of local equipment – along with a shift in donor budget allocations or priorities. Recognizing the need for more awareness here, Field Ready have founded the Local Procurement Learning Partnership that presses for an understanding that local repairs and renewals should be considered a default modality alongside international procurement, subject to an analysis that this is more cheap/effective in a particular context.

A key value of the health portfolio thus lies in providing strong evidence for the broader localization agenda, as well as demonstrating the potential for local production/logistics as a solution to the problems of poor physical infrastructure, international supply chain issues and the wider cross-cutting challenges around humanitarian access. As such, both health TTS grants reviewed advance the larger strategy towards localization in two ways: a) the potential for switching to more local procurement efforts at humanitarian system level, and b) around the value and role of local humanitarian responders on the ground – as both implementers and users of innovations. The Field Ready example (and to a lesser extent, White Helmets) demonstrates that the pathways to innovation system change lie in both the localization model (i.e., enabling local innovations and finding locally owned solutions to problems), as well as influencing sectoral level solutions - finding an improved solution for international humanitarian actors. It demonstrates that the two potential pathways to change are not incompatible and can be complementary.

Across the information reviewed, flexible funding was overwhelmingly viewed as CHIC's greatest contribution to grantees and their innovations, providing stable organizational-level income and enabling grantees to continue their work on the ground. In general, CHIC-facilitated learning or capacity building was not significantly highlighted. As an international system level stakeholder, CHIC is in a unique position to advocate to system-level agencies and donors, both to make learning more widely accessible, but also to showcase innovations and potentially broker connections. For example, our evidence suggests there is a potential role for WHO Country Level Health Clusters to share evidence of best practices in innovations and showcase these up to the Global Health Cluster. The WHO's Global Health Cluster 2022-23 strategy includes a strategic objective around improving the quality of health cluster action, and which tries to capture areas of good practice across the sector. Country cluster coordinators and broader international research can feed into this agenda which may be taken up at global level by a quality task team, with the ultimate aim of increasing use and uptake and driving mainstream practices. As demonstrated by this case study, membership within the cluster mechanism (in NW Syria) did not appear sufficient in terms of generating wider uptake. Innovations require strong evidence of impact, presented to humanitarian system actors in a practical and user-friendly way, as well as wider championing by the innovator, the donors, or the innovation fund itself. There is significant work taking place within WHO and the sector more broadly around what the global health architecture for emerging responses will look like in the future; CHIC and its donors may be able to play a role in feeding into this.

Annex 13. GCC Management Response to CHIC Independent Evaluation

1. The impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the CHIC Program

GCC Management Response:

The independent evaluation does not pay sufficient attention to the crucial context of COVID-19 that occurred right in the middle of CHIC's first phase and the implications of this once in a lifetime crisis on the program's ability to implement and on the innovations ability to carry out activities and achieve impact as planned. In a discussion with the evaluation team, it was acknowledged that there were no COVID-related questions in the evaluation, and while there are a number of references to challenges stemming from COVID-19, the findings cannot be retrofitted to account for the pandemic. As such, the evaluation does not provide an in-depth analysis of the interplay between the multiple simultaneous COVID challenges that affected CHIC and CHIC-funded innovations. GCC sees the lack of consideration of COVID as a crucial limitation of the independent evaluation.

2. System change/improvement

Summary of Findings:

The evaluation concluded that CHIC missed some opportunities to have a discernible impact on reducing humanitarian problems, which may be due in part to CHIC's overly ambitious goal to significantly improve and save lives through the humanitarian 'grand challenge' approach, better address unmet needs and influence wider system-level changes within the humanitarian sector by investing in innovation. CHIC was perceived to be limited in its effectiveness at reaching its longer-term system change outcome due to its strategy of funding a diverse range of innovations. Furthermore, the evaluation found that CHIC-funded TTS innovations were little adopted by humanitarian actors and also did not lead to 'systemic' improvements to any problems identified. In interviews, policy actors questioned CHIC's understanding of system change, and they also questioned the realism of CHIC's intentions to enable localisation and decolonization of aid in the absence of coherent pathways for doing so.

GCC Management Response:

GCC believes that the independent evaluation missed some important nuance around CHIC's ability to have discernable impact on systems change. As discussed in the evaluation, systems change is a long-term impact that takes at least 5 – 15 years to achieve. Given the timeframe and resources needed to achieve systems change, the funding and timeline of CHIC's first phase were too limited to achieve outcomes and impact in this area. Further, a clear commitment of systems change was not one of promised areas of focus at the start of the program, and rather, it evolved as an impact area throughout the first few years of the program without any additional resource commitments to drive the systems work forward.

Recognizing that there was a risk of spreading itself too thin with the available resources, in phase one CHIC focused on establishing a portfolio of innovative solutions that were able to improve and/or save lives in conflict affected communities. Again, the context of COVID created a number of limitations to CHIC's ability to incrementally impact systems change within its first five years and mobilize external partners and capital to support scaling. For instance, the CHIC team focused their efforts on helping innovations adapt to the COVID reality (which included

mobilizing supplementary COVID funding) and were limited in their ability to engage with humanitarian actors and forge new partnerships for coordinated action.

Systems change is a challenge that the entire humanitarian sector is grappling with, and CHIC intends to increase its focus on mobilizing humanitarian actors and partners around systems change in the second phase. However, the extent to which this will be possible is somewhat dependent on the amount of funding committed to the second phase of CHIC, and whether the program is funded from current or new donors.

As part of its strategic refocus, CHIC will reassess how it frames and prioritizes systems change in a way that manages expectations and aligns with definitions of systems change from innovators, funders, and other stakeholders. This may involve exploring if informing/influencing the humanitarian system or, more realistically, improving humanitarian action may be a more achievable impact area, in addition to lives saved and lives improved.

The evaluation also highlighted the tension between focusing on localization vs systems change. In phase one, CHIC prioritized localization rather than systems change with the aim of demonstrating that local innovators are best positioned to develop solutions for the challenges their communities face, and to disprove the assumption that small, locally-based organizations are inherently riskier investments than large, international or HIC-based organizations. CHIC plans to formalize and disseminate learnings about localization in phase two.

Action Points:

- a. Assess and articulate where/how CHIC is best positioned to influence, inform and/or change the system, and which other players need to mobilize alongside CHIC to achieve impact in this area.
- b. Develop a strategy, monitoring and evaluation framework, and risk mitigation approaches for systems work.
- c. Formalize and disseminate learnings on localization.

3. Application of the GC approach

Summary of Findings:

The independent evaluation concluded that CHIC struggled to optimize the Grand Challenge approach to address humanitarian problems, and fell short of some expectations. It found that CHIC may not have realised the full potential of the Grand Challenge approach, as it did not sufficiently mobilise governments, companies and foundations around specific humanitarian challenges. CHIC was perceived to be primarily working with traditional problem solvers such as international NGOs instead of new actors who have relevant solutions but are unfamiliar with the humanitarian sector as intended in the Grand Challenge approach.

GCC Management Response:

GCC disagrees with the conclusion that the program struggled to optimize the Grand Challenge approach and fully realize its added value to address humanitarian problems. GCC believes the independent evaluation missed important nuances in how CHIC has applied the Grand Challenge approach and may have relied too heavily on other organizations' definition of Grand Challenges, rather than assessing CHIC's performance against GCC's definition and description of a Grand Challenge. Furthermore, as mentioned above, the evaluation failed to contextualize the challenges COVID presented to fully optimizing a Grand Challenge approach.

As documented in GCC's 2011 [White Paper "The Grand Challenges Approach,"](#) there are three essential elements of the grand challenge approach:

- i. It must identify a critical barrier holding back progress in addressing critical problems.
 - CHIC focuses on four specific sectors and has identified critical barriers within each sector that innovations can help address.
- ii. It should develop a targeted program that funds teams to develop solutions to the barriers.
 - CHIC has done this by funding more than 70 innovators/teams to test and scale solutions in conflict-affected communities.
- iii. It should implement strategies to bring these solutions to scale.
 - CHIC is currently working on an Innovation Adoption and Demand Creation Strategy to accelerate adoption and scale of innovations (work on this strategy got underway after data collection for the independent evaluation was complete).

Further, a [Meta-Evaluation of Grand Challenges for Development](#) programs commissioned by USAID and carried out by Triple Line found that CHIC's application of the Grand Challenge approach contributed to the program's overall success and achievement of results. The Meta-Evaluation commended CHIC for its "Grand Challenge design characterized by clear objective setting and informed by a strong understanding of context".

As an organization that is deeply committed to continual learning and improvement, GCC acknowledges that there are always opportunities for further improvement, and there is room to further adapt the Grand Challenge approach for humanitarian contexts.

- CHIC's first phase focused on setting up the program and establishing a portfolio of innovations, which has been achieved. In the second phase, CHIC plans to build on this foundational work and bring in additional actors, investors, and problem solvers through advocacy and engagement activities.
- CHIC has revisited and updated the barrier analysis that was conducted in 2020 to further refine its focus areas for the second phase.
- Recognizing that addressing challenges and barriers in conflict-affected humanitarian settings is complex, CHIC is assessing which systemic improvements its Grand Challenge approach is best positioned to influence and contribute to.

Action Items:

- a. Develop and implement the Innovation Adoption and Demand Creation Strategy.
- b. Assess and articulate how CHIC will intentionally and strategically widen its network of innovators, funders, investors, and humanitarian actors through advocacy and engagement activities.

4. Scale and sustainability of innovations

Summary of Findings:

Both innovators and policy actors suggested that CHIC could do more to support the scaling process. Some grantees thought that CHIC provided insufficient support in facilitating linkages between innovators and other potential and significant stakeholders, and wanted more. Sustainability was a challenge for CHIC seed grantees, although there were some examples of seed funded innovations making progress towards scaling, as they completed the seed funding. Policy actors perceived that more could have been achieved in scaling CHIC-funded TTS innovations with an approach that accompanied innovations on their scaling journey (end-to-end, not mid-point hand-off). They further reported that TTS support is opaque, that resourcing of the support is limited and that CHIC engages too little with the humanitarian system. Policy actors perceived that CHIC lacks sufficiently solid knowledge of the humanitarian system and the capacity to engage with it. Donors expect CHIC to do more in establishing necessary

connections with other stakeholders, including private sector actors, to increase sustainability. However, some policy actors also recognized the barriers to scaling, which include the challenge of incentives and ownership of innovations (if outside agencies), the need to invest sufficient resources in system-level innovations, and the need for context-specific innovation support mechanisms.

GCC Management Response:

GCC agrees that there have been fewer achievements towards scale and sustainability, relative to other impact areas, but the evaluation also missed some important nuance around CHIC's expectations for innovation scale and adoption. The purpose of the seed funding is to enable innovators to test their idea and work towards proving their concept. The finding that 8/32 seed survey respondents agreed that CHIC has helped their innovation scale exceeds CHIC's expectations for seed innovations, and this is a very positive result. CHIC does not expect innovations to be financially sustainable at the end of seed funding, and it is not surprising that the majority are still reliant on grant funding after their CHIC seed funding has ended. As innovations progress through TTS funding, they are expected to make progress towards financial sustainability, but that is not an expectation for seed innovations. Even at the TTS stage, it is not expected that 100% of innovations to be financially sustainable without further grant funding – CHIC expects them to make progress towards a sustainable financial model (including progress towards uptake and adoption by other humanitarian actors), but not all will be able to achieve this within the funding period, especially given the added complexity of becoming financially sustainable while operating in conflict settings.

GCC recognizes that CHIC-funded TTS innovators need more support with scaling, including making connections and linkages to other funders and humanitarian actors. While CHIC plans to do more to support innovators' journey towards scale in phase two, it is important to note that CHIC was not designed to provide end-to-end support through the scaling journey, as suggested in the evaluation findings. As noted in the findings (and quoted above), it takes many years and resources to scale an innovation. GCC's experience also shows that it is unrealistic to expect innovations to reach scale and become sustainable in one round of TTS funding. It is also important to note that humanitarian grants may remain a critical sustainability pathway for many innovations, and in fact, many major humanitarian operations also remain dependent upon donations and grants. CHIC's TTS funding model is designed to support innovations as they embark on their scale and sustainability journey, and help innovators make progress towards achieving financial sustainability, to enable greater impact.

To better support TTS innovations, CHIC is developing an Innovation Adoption and Demand Creation Strategy, which focuses on working with key actors in the humanitarian sector to stimulate and accelerate demand for innovation, by helping aid agencies make the necessary procurement, process, and political changes. CHIC is also exploring catalytic ecosystem grants as a mechanism to promote wider uptake and scale. As part of this strategy, the CHIC team has already started intentional engagement with several potential partners in the humanitarian sector, including Plan Canada, Canadian Red Cross, WHO, UNICEF, and the US Department of State to promote and advocate for innovation uptake. This is also supported by GCC's Public and Private Sector Scale and Sustainability Strategies that are being developed and tested.

With COVID lockdowns and travel restrictions now behind us, CHIC also intends to better utilize in-person and regional events to strengthen collaboration with system actors and convene critical conversations towards increasing innovation uptake and demand. With site visits now back on track, it will also enable more *in situ* learning, to better understand scaling challenges and tailor support accordingly.

Action Points:

- a. Develop and implement the Innovation Adoption and Demand Creation Strategy in tandem with GCC's Public and Private Sector Scale and Sustainability Strategies.
- b. Refine and enhance the content and format of the technical assistance, based on the findings of the independent evaluation and the feedback CHIC has received directly from innovators.

5. Technical assistance for TTS innovations

Summary of Findings:

While technical assistance was found to be well-suited for seed innovations, it was less relevant for TTS grantees, whose needs related more to evidence generation, pitching their project to external stakeholders and networking to help them scale and become more sustainable. A key priority for TTS innovators was support in forming connections with funders and receiving technical assistance on how to engage with potential partners. Almost all grantees interviewed felt they would have benefitted from more support to help them prepare for life beyond the CHIC grant. The technical assistance provided by CHIC was perceived as being more relevant to smaller organisations or those at an earlier stage, than for TTS grantees. Consequently, uptake of the technical assistance services offered by WFP and Brink was mixed. Furthermore, CHIC offered limited technical assistance to help innovators contribute to systems change.

The effectiveness of technical assistance was significantly hindered by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Innovators noted that face-to-face meetings were much more useful than those conducted remotely, and online gatherings convened by CHIC as a substitute in the light of the pandemic inevitably entailed shortcomings, such as the difficulty of accommodating multiple time zones.

GCC Management Response:

GCC recognizes that adaptations and enhancements are needed to make the technical assistance more effective. Developing a more specialized and tailored TTS technical assistance and learning platform was beyond the resources and scope of CHIC phase one. The feedback CHIC received directly from innovators aligns with the findings in the independent evaluation, and with additional resources in phase two, CHIC will be able to build out a more specialized technical assistance and learning platform that includes:

- Support earlier in the funding cycle for seed innovators to prepare for TTS;
- More tailored support for both seed and TTS innovators to help address specific, individual needs;
- More linkages to humanitarian actors and potential partners;
- An improved approach for gathering and integrating feedback on technical assistance;
- Enhanced monitoring of the outcomes of the technical assistance.

The global COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown measures and travel restrictions had considerable knock-on effects to many aspects of CHIC programming, especially in-person engagements, pitch events and networking opportunities which are so critical to building relationships with external stakeholders and potential investors. With travel restrictions and lockdown measures behind us, CHIC is now able to leverage regional, in-person events to foster connections for innovators and engage with external stakeholders.

Action Points:

- a. Refine and enhance the content and format of the technical assistance, based on the findings of the independent evaluation and the feedback CHIC has received directly from innovators.

- b. Implement an improved approach to gathering feedback from innovators and stakeholders.
- c. Implement a more robust approach to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the technical assistance.

6. Sharing learnings more widely in the ecosystem

Summary of Findings:

There have been missed opportunities for more formalised mechanisms and strategies for sharing of learning both internally and externally. Innovators largely felt that they had generated evidence about their own innovations (32/42) and that CHIC generated learnings to help humanitarian innovation.⁸⁴ However, they were doubtful about how widely formal learnings and recommendations were disseminated among relevant actors, and policy actors saw a need for CHIC to enhance their advocacy, learning and visibility work with donors and humanitarian actors.⁸⁵ The evaluation found that CHIC's processes for sharing of learning lacked a clear strategy and structure. Some evidence was consolidated, but it was not clear whether or how it was being actively shared with relevant system actors or in a way that could progress innovative solutions.

GCC Management Response:

GCC recognizes that more could have been done to share evidence and learning from its portfolio of innovations more widely, and enhanced knowledge sharing and dissemination will take place in phase two, if additional resources become available to support this work. In phase one, there were limited resources for knowledge sharing and dissemination, and the CHIC team focused on meeting donor reporting requirements and implementing an ambitious learning agenda to the best of their ability. Within the resources available in phase one, CHIC disseminated the following learning outputs among relevant actors:

- a. Reports on the following topics (which are available on the [CHIC website](#)):
 - CHIC's Annual Report
 - Political and Social Barriers to Scale
 - How do Great Ideas Scale
- b. Peer-reviewed journal articles: CHIC has supported 174 innovators to publish their findings in peer-reviewed journals.
- c. Blog series: a blog series is underway to share results and lessons from the Seed portfolio more widely. This is expected to be completed in mid-2023.
- d. Panel discussions/events:
 - At the Grand Challenges Annual Meeting in 2023, CHIC moderated a panel discussion: "Shifting the humanitarian system: gaps, lessons learned, local solutions, and future pathways", which was attended by an estimated 120 participants – both virtually and in-person.
 - At the Grand Challenges Annual Meeting in 2021, CHIC hosted a panel discussion: Preventing Misinformation and Disinformation in the COVID-19 Era. Over 85 participants attended, including representation from the innovator cohort, as well as private and humanitarian sector actors.
 - At Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week in 2023, CHIC moderated a panel discussion: "Generating demand, securing adoption and scaling humanitarian innovations: lessons learned" which was attended by an estimated 60 participants.

Action Points:

- a. Update and expand the Learning Agenda to include more knowledge sharing and dissemination in phase two.

- b. Join forces with other actors in the humanitarian sector (in Canada and globally) for joint events and public engagement activities.

Recommendations

The independent evaluation included four main recommendations, which align with the action points described in the GCC management response above. The table below summarizes the priority action points for each of the four recommendations. However, the extent to which it will be possible to action each of these recommendations is somewhat dependent on the amount of funding committed to the second phase of CHIC.

Recommendations	CHIC Action Points
R1. Capitalise on Operational Strength: CHIC should sustain, reinforce, and capitalise upon the operational management capacities and processes it established during the first phase (2018-2022). Such consolidation is necessary to maintain CHIC's relevance to innovators, the effectiveness of its support programme, and the efficiency of its systems and processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to implement the operational model and fine tune where necessary to further promote powershifting to local innovators. ○ Refine and enhance the content and format of the technical assistance, based on the findings of the independent evaluation and the feedback we have received directly from innovators. ○ Implement an improved approach to gathering feedback from innovators and stakeholders. ○ Implement a more robust approach to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the technical assistance.
R2. Develop strategy: CHIC should build on the achievements of its first four years to design, implement and monitor a new multi-year strategy to purposefully guide the programme towards addressing humanitarian problems during the second phase (2023-2027). An explicit strategy is needed to specify CHIC's relevance to the humanitarian system and its added value in the humanitarian innovation ecosystem, enhance wider user uptake and potential contributions made by innovations, and how it can make more discernible improvements to tackling problems in thematic areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop and implement the Innovation Adoption and Demand Creation Strategy. ○ Assess and articulate how CHIC will intentionally and strategically widen its network of innovators, funders, investors, and humanitarian actors through advocacy and engagement activities. ○ Develop a strategy, monitoring and evaluation framework, and risk mitigation approaches for systems work.
R3. Clarify approaches: CHIC should more clearly explain how its implementation approaches will contribute to longer term outcomes and improve the humanitarian system during the second phase. This is necessary to offer greater clarity about CHIC's intended contributions to the humanitarian system, people in need of assistance, and local communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assess and articulate where/how CHIC is best positioned to influence, inform and/or change the system, and which other players need to mobilize alongside CHIC to achieve impact in this area. ○ Develop a strategy, monitoring and evaluation framework, and risk mitigation approaches for systems work. ○ Develop and implement the Innovation Adoption and Demand Creation Strategy. ○ Formalize and disseminate learnings on localization.
R4. Manage risks: CHIC should define, manage and mitigate risks that could derail progress on long-term outcomes in the second phase, particularly risks related to long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assess and articulate where/how CHIC is best positioned to influence, inform and/or change the system, and which other players

<p>sustainability of TTS innovations and wider systems change. This is important because the evaluation has found that CHIC's strategic objectives lack clarity about the longer term, progress reporting is limited in several ways, and key stakeholders diverge noticeably in their underlying assumptions, understandings and expectations of CHIC.</p>	<p>need to mobilize alongside CHIC to achieve this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop a strategy, monitoring and evaluation framework, and risk mitigation approaches for systems work. ○ Formalize and disseminate learnings on localization. ○ Update and expand the Learning Agenda to include more knowledge sharing and dissemination in phase two.
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