

## TRUK Theory of Change

Team Rubicon UK provides agile teams who are able to respond to natural disasters at home and around the world with a unique volunteer base originating broadly from the veteran community and skilled civilians. Their backgrounds and experience mean they have the mental and physical resilience and resourcefulness which, alongside our training programme, ensures that our volunteers can get to where the need is greatest. They deliver aid to the worst affected communities in the hardest to reach areas. Quite simply, our people are our USP - exceptional people with an exceptional purpose.

Our training courses bring the veteran community together and provides them with the 3 things they consistently report losing the most post service;

- purpose
- pride
- community

With veteran mental health concerns rising, no one charity or support system can eliminate risks associated with leaving the forces. Team Rubicon UK is in a unique position to support a group of former service men and women and empower their transition into Civilian Street and act as a pre-emptive strike against declining mental health, self-esteem and security.

*Our* ultimate goal is to provide disaster response, recovery and resilience support to the most remote and vulnerable communities affected by natural disasters by utilising the unique skill set of UK Military Veterans. In turn this will raise the profile and offering of the UK's veteran community who are an un-tapped and under-valued resource. We are committed to boosting a lifeline of support to the veteran community through personal development, repurposing of skills and renewed sense of pride.

To reach this goal, TRUK works with funders individually and collectively, who want to work closely with a humanitarian partner that is value for money, diligent in practice, fast and effective, sensitive to a variety of approaches to humanitarian constraints and is open to collaborative working and the philanthropic field more broadly.

We need to build on our partner base to secure funding for all capability delivery. In the shorter-term, we want to see:

- **Stronger, more collaborative relationships**—not just among humanitarian aid NGOs, but also between funders, aid agencies, Government experts and new areas of venture philanthropy.
- **Funders operating from a more informed knowledge base** about grant-making practice, trends in humanitarian aid delivery, and where they fit in the funding landscape. They are looking more to changes in government practices and alternative funding, aid and climate change activists and evidence to inform their decision-making and agree that this—along with some adaptability and risk-taking—is what it takes to be more effective in their grant-making.

- **Advocating** - taking their learning to other philanthropic sectors, bringing more people on board to tackle new aid challenges and filling the funding gaps.

## **How we will demonstrate our impact to funders.**

In the first instance TRUK will continue to create detailed impact metrics of all achievements to evidence and demonstrate our inputs, outputs and outcomes for the beneficiaries positively affected by our activity post disaster. Some examples include veterans trained, tonnes of aid delivered, numbers of beneficiaries reached, collaboration and accolades of achievements.

We aim to continue to connect, collaborate, build trust, exchange information, and learn together. TRUK's exceptional people play a key part in helping grant-makers understand the immediate impact of humanitarian aid agencies during the response and recovery phase that meets the priority needs of affected populations, minimising duplication.

We also aim to move funders from discussion to making change—going beyond networking to shift the field of philanthropy through individual and collective actions. This could be about supporting organisations to move away from their traditional thinking about the DEC or DfID, and facilitating opportunities for members to understand the difference TRUK offers in this space.

It is essential that our funders share a vision for effective humanitarian grant-making and the impact they can offer. While the NGO aid community has a plethora of diverse approaches, we believe that a shared commitment to the delivery of appropriate aid for those most in need is critical. TRUK's unique offering should not to be undersold or misunderstood.

Additionally, we recognise just how much TRUK and our Veteran Volunteers act as ambassadors and mentors to others agencies and veterans looking for support. We have an important role to play in influencing peers within and beyond the humanitarian community.

We don't have all the answers but we equally don't think any one person or organisation does. We aim to realise our ambitions as collectively and collaboratively as possible and we are committed to listening and to learning.

## **Our assumptions**

We hold five assumptions about the nature of our training and humanitarian delivery which comes from our experience in the past 5 years.

1. Natural disasters are complex and chaotic. Their landscape, and the ability to deliver aid within it, can constantly shift alongside political influences and management. They consist of tangible things like people, need and organisations, connected by intangible things like history, political agendas, worldviews, context and culture.
2. Everyone who is part of the response of a natural disaster will hold a different perspective on its nature, purpose and boundaries. No one person holds the whole truth (including us).

3. Emotions during complex crises in challenging, stressful and often heart breaking situations are heightened.
4. Successful delivery emerges from a willingness to collaborate for the greater good. No one NGO can supply all aid to all people. We therefore need to help build our language to be one of shared learning, practice and inclusivity to generate positive change.
5. Natural disasters are unpredictable which means we can't fully plan how to best serve our beneficiaries until we are on the ground. However, years of experience in disaster response, the skills and adaptability of our volunteer base and TRUK's intelligent training programme, means we are best placed to adapt to rapidly evolving situations.

Our assumptions inform how we work. For example, we:

- Involve the volunteer base who have responded to share learning and deliver updated training programmes.
- Flat hierarchy, collaborative approach.
- Acknowledge the importance of the human element
- Explore questions collectively using open inquiry

### **Core Culture Behaviours.**

We have identified core culture behaviours as part of our training programme to embed our organisational beliefs into our volunteer base.

Our core culture behaviours have been demonstrated on response operations and we have seen that (i) it is the presence of these behaviours, more than any specific methodology, that seems to account for positive change and (ii) these behaviours need to be present and continually promoted in every part of our organisation.

1. The humanitarian imperative comes first.
2. Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone.
3. Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint.
4. We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy.
5. We shall respect culture and custom.
6. We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities.
7. Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid.
8. Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs.
9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources.
10. In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognize disaster victims as dignified human beings, not hopeless objects.

**We aim to make members of TRUK, staff or volunteers, feel:**

### **1. Part of an interconnected whole pulling together for the greater good**

Everyone working towards our aim to deliver humanitarian aid to those in greatest need understands that their actions form part of a web of activity made up of the contribution of many others. Everyone wants the system as a whole to work and knows that they alone cannot control it.

## **2. Viewed as resourceful and bringing strengths**

Everyone is viewed as bringing both strengths and weaknesses as part of a resourceful network of people who are continually growing and learning from each other.

## **3. Share a vision**

People appreciate each other's perspectives and seek common purpose and understanding.

## **4. Equality of voice is actively promoted**

All people are able to play their fullest role in building an effective system. Unequal distribution of power is continually addressed.

## **5. Part of the decision making process**

We understand that those people closest to a complex situation understand the uniqueness and context and to use their initiative to respond to it and report on it.

## **6. Accountable and given accountability**

TRUK improvements are driven by accountability to those delivering our ambition and the beneficiaries being served.

## **7. Open, trusting relationships enable effective dialogue**

People feel safe to ask the difficult questions, voice disagreement and deal with the conflict and uncomfortable emotions that surface.

## **8. Leadership is collaborative and promoted at every level**

Leadership is identified and valued across the full spectrum of the organisation from the frontline worker to the CEO. We practice active followership as much as adaptive leadership.

## **9. Feedback and collective learning drive adaptation**

People can see a learning loop between the actions they take and their understanding of the problem they are trying to solve, so that each is being continually adapted and refined.

## **HOW WE WORK**

All our actions are designed to test, understand and promote the ambition of the charity and its behaviours. Rather than seeking to impose them, we have learned that the most effective way to work with complex systems is to develop open and powerful questions as the basis for collective inquiry. This involves collaborating with people across systems to act, reflect and iterate.

We continue to review the following.

- 1. How can we promote a more critical approach to understanding the complex nature of the delivery of humanitarian aid?**
- 2. How do we improve our effectiveness and efficiency in supporting both the veteran community and the affected populations of disaster.**
- 3. How can we continue to improve the narrative of the UK veteran community whilst continuing to provide meaningful opportunities to serve those most in need around the world.**
- 4. How do we continue to adapt and deliver our bespoke training to a wider audience.**
- 5. How do we continuously evolve our governance structures to ensure we continue to provide cutting edge assistance in complex crises.**
- 6. How do we drive research based innovation to advance our capability suite, ultimately heightening our impact.**

This way of working requires us to address our own processes and capabilities, both at an Executive and Non-Executive level, recognising that we are part of the system that is shifting, politically and climatically and financially.

#### **How will we know we are achieving our ambition?**

Our ultimate indicator will be an evidence trail of reduced human suffering in the aftermath of disaster as a result of TRUK's activity.

This will be achieved by

- 1. An aligned organisation, communications and fundraising effort that realises our potential**
- 2. An increased cohort of trained veteran volunteers who share our ambition to deliver aid.**
- 3. A world renowned and respected reputation, granting us access and information across any operating environment.**

#### **What happens next?**

Our main purpose in publishing this update on our approach is to be as open as possible about the ideas, learning and assumptions that underpin our work, and to demonstrate how they continue to evolve.

We hope that you will contribute to and challenge our learning and ideas, so that this document comes to represent the collective wisdom of our organisation, volunteers and partners.

**We would love to hear your feedback, questions and challenges so please contact [info@teamrubiconuk.org](mailto:info@teamrubiconuk.org) to start the conversation.**