Humanitarian Aid International
Strategy Document

Humanitarian Aid International (HAI) is a not-for-profit Indian organisation that was founded by a team of Indian humanitarian and development professionals with a collective national and global experience of over 300 years. HAI's mission is to seek durable solutions in the humanitarian context by appropriately providing aid and support to those in need with a focus on poverty alleviation.

HAI is registered under the Indian Trusts Act and the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA). HAI is also registered under 12A and 80G of the Income Tax Act, 1961 and thereby gets tax exemption. Although its activities are currently confined to India, the organisation aspires to expand its work outside India, particularly under the South-South framework. HAI believes that complementing the Indian government's bilateral support to developing and least developed countries on poverty alleviation and humanitarian programmes is crucial to achieving a more sustainable future.

What sets HAI apart from other organisations is its commitment to developing and promoting localised humanitarian and development models. While the Western world has broadly defined the development and humanitarian architecture models for the developing world, HAI strives to evolve these paradigms to be more informed by the local context, leading to efficient South-South cooperation. In recent years, there has been a shift towards promoting local solutions and strengthening local capacities to address development and humanitarian challenges. HAI is at the forefront of this movement, working closely with local communities to develop and implement programmes that address their specific needs.

HAI, while remaining engaged in almost all key global humanitarian processes, is also rooted on the ground, and that makes HAI a powerful and authentic advocate on humanitarian issues. HAI's work is multifaceted and includes initiatives such as providing education and vocational training to refugee youth, ensuring access to rights, entitlements and basic amenities following a rights-based approach, and responding to disasters and emergencies with a focus on seeking durable solutions. HAI also advocates for the rights of marginalised communities, particularly refugees, and works to combat discrimination and inequality.

Organisations like HAI become even more critical as the world continues to face complex challenges such as climate change, economic disparities, and conflict. HAI's commitment to promoting localised solutions and strengthening local capacities serves as a model for others in the field. Its efforts to evolve development and humanitarian paradigms provide hope for a more sustainable and equitable future.

HAI's Objectives:

HAI was founded for the following three overall objectives:
- Influencing the development/humanitarian architecture in India (localisation and decolonization of aid).
- Working on South-South and Trilateral Cooperation as an Indian organisation.
- Advocacy for early and durable solutions of protracted crises.

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HAI's Thematic Focus Areas:

HAI has been founded with the overall mission of working in India and outside, as and when the government permits, in four thematic areas, which are:

1. **Humanitarian Response** to strengthen emergency response capacity and support affected communities. Since its inception, HAI has expanded its humanitarian operation in 15 states of India, through its network of local organisations. HAI was also one of the early responders to the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic since March 2020.

2. **Disaster Risk Reduction** to build resilience and reduce the impact of disasters in India through the Tech4Aid platform to reduce disaster risk through anticipatory risk mitigation programmes and technology-enabled solutions, which HAI has been piloting in the disaster hotspots in Assam and Sundarbans in India.

3. **Climate Change and Adaptation** to foster climate resilience and adaptive capacity in vulnerable communities. HAI plays a vital role in influencing the global discourse on humanitarian architecture and climate change through its constant engagement at various international platforms, and by being a signatory to the Climate Charter. HAI has also undertaken climate change projects to address several food, nutrition, and income insecurity issues. HAI has also initiated a multi-year climate resilience programme in Sundarbans, West Bengal.

4. **Humanitarian Advocacy** with a focus on Localization to amplify local voices and enhance the role of local actors in humanitarian action through locally-led responses.
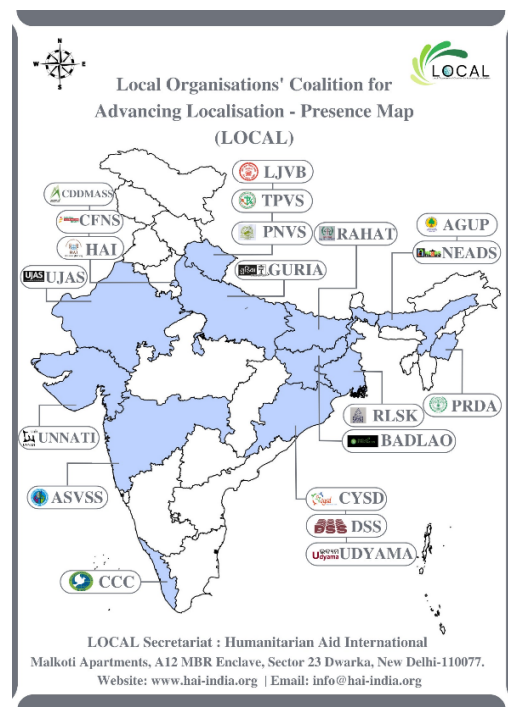
HAI's Strategic Initiatives:

At the country level, HAI conceived three pillars to give a push to the localisation process and to work on HAI's thematic areas:
1) A national platform of frontline organisations (the LOCAL platform).
2) A national pooled fund to make disaster responses timely, and
3) A national roster to provide surge support to smaller humanitarian organisations.

HAI started working through frontline NGOs since 2016 and thereby started giving shape to a national platform. Since 2016, In 2017, HAI's Thousand Plus Campaign was launched to establish an emergency response fund, which was first used for flood response in Assam. The national roster was activated for the first time in 2018 during the Kerala flood response.

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LOCAL Platform

To promote locally-led response, HAI and 19 local and national organisations from 11 states of India agreed to launch a **Local Organisations' Coalition for Advancing Localisation (LOCAL)** platform for a collaborative approach to transform the Indian humanitarian architecture, led by the local organisations and frontline actors. LOCAL is HAI's endeavour to bring Indian home-grown and grassroots NGOs, humanitarian CSOs, corporate sectors, and other stakeholders under one platform to support coordinated humanitarian response. LOCAL is an opportunity to strategically approach localisation in India by representing local voices and organising grass root local organisations under a collaborative platform. We aim to address the flaws the humanitarian sector has been struggling with and continue to utilise our humanitarian partnerships and grassroots action to demonstrate how local capacities can be strengthened and sustained for effective disaster response. Primarily functioning as a non-financial platform, LOCAL aims to set a new benchmark for sector-wide change and promote cooperative and locally-led humanitarian architecture following the LOCAL Accountability Charter.

Local Organisations' Coalition for Advancing Localisation - Presence Map (LOCAL)

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Aid Transparency

The NGO sector faces a trust deficit not only in India but the world over. Financial transparency in the public domain is one of the key reasons, which is also a barrier to tracking the funding reaching local and national actors as committed under Grand Bargain and Charter4Change. While IATI and FTS are available globally for financial data reporting, there is none at the country level to publish data in the public domain. To address that, HAI is working on a national dashboard mechanism in India, namely DATA (Dashboard on Aid Transparency and Accountability). This dashboard will not only ensure financial transparency in the humanitarian sector but would also help track the funding reaching local & national actors and the affected population.

Tech4Aid platform

HAI is also making constant efforts to integrate technology into disaster management. As disasters are increasing in frequency, scale and intensity and becoming more complex, HAI firmly believes that technology can help understand the underlying causes of risk & vulnerabilities and thereby plan interventions for durable solutions. Furthermore, simplifying technology is equally important for its better application and analysis at the community level. HAI's strategy is to reduce disaster risk through anticipatory risk mitigation programmes and technology-enabled solutions. HAI's Tech4Aid is an endeavour in this regard.

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There are four key features of the Tech4Aid i.e.,

1) Post-disaster damage & loss assessment,
2) Supporting disaster response forces in search & rescue,
3) Airdropping of lifesaving assistance, and
4) Developing a digital atlas of disaster hotspots to inform the development and humanitarian response programmes to integrate mitigation and resilience features.

Refugee Programme

Since 2018, HAI has been working with refugees in two camps in Delhi. HAI's refugee programme in Delhi is its flagship programme. The refugee programme is managed across the domains of education, health, livelihoods, access to basic amenities and legal assistance. The programme is being implemented in closer coordination with the National Human Rights Commission, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights and local government units.

International Engagements

HAI has also been engaged in several global processes: HAI is one of the founders and one of the two international coordinators of the Alliance for Empowering Partnerships (A4EP), which is a global network working on South-South cooperation and strengthening of local NGOs across the global South but in collaboration with actors from the global North. Through Alliance for Empowering Partnerships (A4EP), HAI joined the group of signatories to Grand Bargain. HAI hosted the international secretariat of Charter4Change in India until December 2021, being the first Global South organisation to do so. HAI joined the steering group of the World Humanitarian Action Forum and also remained engaged with Agenda4Humanity. Currently, HAI is also part of the Advisory Group of BOND. Since March 2019, HAI took the lead to establish a hub in India with support from Start Network. That work is continuing though with slow progress. HAI is now also actively engaged, and one of the supporters of Pledge4Change.

Resource Mobilization and Key Donors

To support our mission, our strategies include diversifying funding sources and engaging with donors and partners who share HAI's vision. Additionally, we identify key stakeholders and potential partners who can contribute to HAI's efforts to foster cooperation, knowledge sharing, and joint initiatives. In addition to having dedicated approximately 3,000 individual donors, HAI also has a few regular corporate and institutional donors including Vitol Foundation, Sony Pictures Networks India Pvt. Ltd, HCL Foundation, Care Today and Himalaya Drug Company.

For further information please contact:

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