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Published online: 19 Apr 2023.

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Non-profit crisis leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic in India and the United States

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ABSTRACT

During extreme crises, governments' capacity is compromised, and they need support from non-profits, especially to reach the vulnerable and marginalised. Our qualitative study examines leadership response to the COVID-19 pandemic at four US and Indian non-profits; they paused their mission-related activities to focus on crisis leadership tasks. Our key findings reveal the importance of obtaining reliable information, balancing service delivery and stakeholder safety, communication with stakeholders, accepting the new normal and adopting creative solutions. These findings can inform training non-profit leaders on a number of key issues.

Introduction

During crises like the COVID-19 pandemic, the capacity of governments and public institutions is severely strained and requires support from the private sector and non-profit organisations (Mazzucato and Kattel 2020). Non-profits usually complement governments by serving the most vulnerable and marginalised groups, who are at risk during a pandemic on both health and economic grounds (United Nations 2020).

The coronavirus crisis has seen many non-profits shift their mission focus. While rare and deeply regrettable, pandemics offer the opportunity to study phenomena across different nations and cultures, highlight similarities and differences and craft theoretical and practical frameworks (Azevedo, Bell, and Medina 2021). Research on non-profit leaders has not been conducted in cross-cultural, social and political settings in which they work (Hailey and James 2004) and tends to focus on leadership traits rather than processes and interactions (Brower, Magno, and Afaq 2012). Leadership associated with crisis management also merits scholarly attention (Nohrstedt et al. 2018'T Hart and Tummers 2019). There is considerable scope for comparative qualitative studies to enhance our understanding of the topic (Cooke, Veen, and Wood 2017).

In India, the lockdown-driven economic downturn was especially difficult for day labourers and internal migrant workers in the informal sector; they comprise nearly 93%

of India's workforce (Gopalan and Misra 2020). In the United States, minorities, home-less and incarcerated people and undocumented workers were most vulnerable to COVID-19 (Centers for Disease Control 2020). The present study poses two research questions: What is similar and different between long-lasting crisis responses by non-profit leaders in different countries? How do context and culture affect non-profit leaders' processes and interactions during crises, which will impact human resource development (HRD) theory, research and practice?

This study examines the nature of leaders' tasks at non-profits in India and the United States in the extreme context (Hannah et al. 2009) of the pandemic. It uses a crisis leadership framework (Boin et al. 2005; Stern 2013) of six leadership challenges – sensemaking, decision-making, meaning-making, ending, learning and preparing – that must be addressed in extreme crises. Our findings show that, despite some common practices, local innovations were created to suit specific contexts.

Crisis leadership in Indian and US non-profits

Crises can affect entire societies and require multiple actors to manage. Collaboration among core actors is key to crisis management and is facilitated by trust, goal consensus and each actor's specialised skills (Nolte and Martin 2021; Raju and Becker 2013; Vasavada 2013). The power of networks and social capital (Joshi and Misa 2013; Kilby 2008) in crisis management was demonstrated after the December 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean and in several US natural disasters (Ismail et al. 2014; Kapucu 2008), but crisis management often leads to stress and emotional burnout (Eisner 2010; Kahn 2018; Shah, Garland, and Katz 2007). Research on non-profit leadership highlights the impor-tance of participative management (Muñoz et al. 2021) and transformational and trans-actional leadership (Rowold and Rohmann 2008) in managing crises (Gilstrap et al. 2015; Jordan, Upright, and Tice-Owens 2016).

Because of non-profits' key role in responding to crises and natural disasters (Mazzucato and Kattel 2020; Rodriguez et al. 2006; Willems 2016), more formalised and systemic research into leadership and crisis management is urgently needed ('T Hart and Tummers 2019; Nohrstedt et al. 2018), particularly among non-profits (Coule, Dodge, and Eikenberry 2020). Further, there is a lack of cross-cultural research (Hailey and James 2004) focused on leaders' processes and interactions during crisis manage-ment (Brower, Magno, and Afaq 2012). Comparative qualitative studies can offer a more nuanced understanding of the topic (Cooke, Veen, and Wood 2017). The present study, using a crisis leadership framework (Boin et al. 2005; Stern 2013), examines non-profit leadership in cross-cultural, long-term crisis management settings by focusing on leaders' processes and interactions.

Leadership through crisis

Leadership is an integral element of effective crisis management (Bhaduri 2019). Wooten and James (2008) identified the competencies leaders need during different crisis phases. In the containment phase, decision-making under pressure, commu-nicating effectively and taking risks are crucial. Kapucu and Ustun's (2018) model of collaborative crisis management identified key crisis leadership attributes as traits,

skills (decisiveness, flexibility and communication) and behaviours. Their leadership model characterises leaders as engaging in task-related, people-oriented and organisation-oriented behaviours. Stoker, Garretsen, and Soudis (2019) studied leadership following the 2008 financial crisis, finding increased use of directive leadership but no significant change in participative leadership. This could support the relevance of task-oriented behaviours in crises but does not assess their effectiveness. According to Caligiuri and Tarique (2016), global leaders who succeed in novel situations, including crises, typically leverage three responses related to cultural agility: adapting to contextual demands, integrating diverse perspectives and understanding when to provide direction. Caligiuri et al. (2020) found that a leader's ability to read a situation and respond using the appropriate one of these options was especially relevant during the pandemic. Chen and Sriphon (2021) showed that COVID-19 impacted organisational leadership, finding a connection between communal relationships and trust during the pandemic. They found that leaders in crises must have good communication skills to accurately share information with empathy and be able to manage ethically uncertain, dynamic situations.

Much crisis leadership research uses archival data and case studies of actual crises, expert opinions, self-reflections from leaders or a combination (Nyenswah, Engineer, and Peters 2016; Wooten and James 2008). While prior research focuses on noteworthy factors in crisis situations, leadership styles adopted to address challenges and whether those responses were effective, this article uses the crisis leadership model to examine leaders' tasks and actions during the pandemic.

Crisis leadership framework

Crises are complex, dynamic and ambiguous situations that usually have low probability and significant consequences, making them extremely difficult to interpret (Weick 1988). Boin et al. (2005) studied hundreds of crises from around the world to develop a framework around five key leadership challenges: sensemaking, decision-making, meaning-making, ending and learning. Stern (2013) extended this framework by adding preparing.

Sensemaking means trying to understand what is happening and what may happen, the implications on various organisational stakeholders and possible responses. Crises require timely responses from leaders under difficult conditions, in the form of *decision-making*, which consultation and coordination with stakeholders and experts can enhance (T Hart and Sundelius 2013). Therefore, leaders need to undertake *meaning-making* for those constituencies to manage their emotions, expectations and behaviours and bolster their trust in leaders and organizations. The task of *ending* a crisis involves moving from emergency mode back to routines and accounting for what happened so that organizations reputation, autonomy and resources are not jeopardised. *Learning* from a crisis is key to planning and training for future crises and requires purposeful effort by both leader and organisation to critically examine how the crisis was handled. Leaders need to ensure that their stakeholders and constituencies are empowered and *prepared* to adequately face future crises (Stern 2013).

Methodology

A multiple case study approach was used (O'Neill 2001). Qualitative case studies provide insider perspectives on real-life events and processes (Creswell 1998). By using the multi-case and strong interest in the quintain (categorically bounded cases), the main significance of this study was instrumental, as the focus goes beyond each individual case's uniqueness and complexity (Stake 2006). The geographical spread was purposefully selected to enable comparisons between cases. As the research was conducted during the pandemic, several non-profits had to decline our request to participate. Therefore, within each geographical area, cases were selected through convenience sampling, with the authors utilising their network in the non-profit sector. Two representatives of non-profit cases in both India and the United States, with one in each country operating nationally and the other at the state level were selected. The national-level organisations served a broad constituency, while the state-level organisations concentrated on smaller regions. This facilitated the analysis of findings across organisations operating at the same level and enabled cross-border comparisons.

Interviews are an established method of qualitative research (Jones and Donmoyer 2020); semi-structured interview questions were developed using the crisis leadership framework (Boin et al. 2005; Stern 2013). The interview protocol was designed by the research team and the questions were used to guide the discussions rather than restrict what interviewees divulged. The interview protocol appears in Appendix A.

To establish credibility through triangulation, we conducted 60- to 70-minute interviews with one senior and one mid-level leader of each organisation. In India, two authors were present for all four interviews, while the US interviews were conducted by the author who was most familiar with the country's culture and organisational background. The pandemic meant that interviews were conducted virtually using a digital platform, recorded with interviewee consent and converted to text using Otter software. Each author who participated in an interview validated the transcripts with the recordings. For the Indian state-level non-profit, the interview was conducted in a local vernacular language (Gujarati) and translated to English. Two authors are proficient in English and Gujarati, so they translated the interview protocol to Gujarati and validated the transcript translations from Gujarati to English.

We examined the data using content analysis (Weber 1990) and constant comparative methods (Glaser and Strauss 1967). Using the directed approach to content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005), we used the theoretical framework to guide initial code categorisation. Under each major category – sensemaking, decision-making, meaning-making, ending, learning and preparing – we arrived at an emergent thematic coding scheme based on interviewee responses. Each initial list of codes was created by the author(s) who conducted the interview and then compared and consolidated across all interview transcripts, based on similarity of meanings; unique codes were retained. The thematic categories under each task emerged from these codes. This involved the use of the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss 1967), with each text assigned to a category and systematically compared with those already assigned to that category; the categories were integrated based on interpreting the meaning assigned to them. Many

subthemes appeared in all four organisations, but anything specific to one organisation is indicated below. The codes and thematic categories that emerged under each task appear in Appendix B.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that trustworthiness requires establishing a study's credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. To mitigate and limit bias we used numerous and highly knowledgeable informants to analyse and view the data. Our varied researchers engaged in convergent retrospective sensemaking and/or impression management of the data (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). Triangulation of data from two participants in each case was used for credibility, with the case contexts described to enable readers to assess transferability. Both dependability and confirmability were established through detailed auditing of the research process. The study proposal was approved by George Mason University's institutional review board to ensure ethical research practices in conducting human subject research.

Case context

National-level Indian organisation

Established in 2002, this organisation aims to connect unreached and underserved communities to bring them out of the digital darkness and equip them with access to information. It identifies sustainable digital interventions to overcome information poverty in rural and remote locations and empower communities with digital literacy, digital tools and last mile connectivity. It has undertaken initiatives in 500 locations across 100 districts of 23 states, impacting more than five million lives through digital interventions. It has 173 employees, six board members and an annual budget of roughly US$1.8 million.

State-level Indian organisation

This organisation works in six districts of Gujarat's desolate Bhal region, helping marginalised communities self-organise around critical livelihood issues and develop local leadership. It initiates sustainable gender-sensitive and grassroots processes of empowerment amongst the most vulnerable communities through inclusion, raising awareness and organising around major issues. It has 29 key staff, eight board members and an annual budget of approximately US$100,000.

National-level US organisation

This youth organisation prepares members for leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. With more than 760,113 members in 8,739 chapters, this non-profit is the largest student-led organisation in the nation. Founded by young farmers in 1928 to prepare future generations for the challenges of feeding a growing population, its name was changed in 1988 to reflect agriculture's growing diversity and wider opportunities. Its annual budget is around US$3 million.

US state-level organisation

Established in 2005 to serve refugees from one African country, it was renamed in 2010 to reflect a growing clientele that includes people from more than 72 nations living in Tennessee. It seeks to eliminate the root causes of poverty in metropolitan Nashville's refugee and immigrant community, to create opportunities for upward socioeconomic mobility and to socially integrate the people it serves. Clients are challenged to think beyond their current circumstances and discuss long-term goals, which the organisation supports by placing clients in educational and employment environments conducive to success. It has 50 staff, eight board members and an annual budget of around US $2 million.

Findings

Studying the US and Indian cases revealed several key insights into how non-profit leaders handled the COVID-19 crisis and other challenges in 2020. The findings have been organised around the six tasks in the crisis leadership framework with subthemes that emerged from the data. The findings are summarised in Table 1.

Sensemaking

Sensemaking involves leaders determining what is happening and may happen, how that could impact their stakeholders and what can be done in response. Three related themes emerged from the data: sources and monitoring of information, workplace impact and psychological impact. The first shows that leaders viewed reliable information from multiple sources as crucial to their sensemaking processes, while the latter two reveal how leaders perceived the pandemic's impact on their stakeholders.

Sources and monitoring of information

Throughout the pandemic, all four non-profits relied on health departments at all levels of government, the media and the community they served as primary sources of information for sensemaking. One US non-profit grasped the seriousness of COVID-19 after attending a conference in Washington, DC, an Indian organisation reported that extensive travel and talking to people outside their constituency provided it with relevant information: Our staff started travelling beyond Delhi and Haryana to serve people. We actually have a record of travelling about 20,000 kilometres at the time of the pandemic . . . this gave us insight into the people in general who were affected across the country.

As non-profits both consumed and disseminated information, they had to ensure the authenticity of sources and accuracy of information. One Indian non-profit said that it initially struggled with the government reports on areas where people needed relief, which was inaccurate, so it started collecting information from the community. A US non-profit manager noted, 'it is my role to communicate to the public about how the pandemic is affecting our community, where the hotspots are, and how our organisation is responding to it', so it was essential to have reliable information. Another leader reported having to fight the pandemic at the levels of information, infrastructure, dissemination, finances and resource mobilisation.

Table 1. Summary of the Findings.

Sensemaking	Decision Making	Meaning Making	Ending	Learning	Preparing
• Reliance on and monitoring of reliable sources of information • Workplace impact as mode switched to WFH • Psychological impact in terms of stress and anxiety due to dear of health/job loss. Increased instances of PTSD, abuse, domestic violence in community.	• Stages related to rise/fall of infection and caution exercised by community leading to tightening/loosening restrictions. • Emergence of new/modified team structures and protocols for quick decision making in a dynamic environment. • Agile processes balancing service delivery with safety, increased autonomy • Shift in focus from regular programmes to relief work • Prudence in budgeting for current and future operations, diversification in sources of funds. • Tackling challenges and changes on WFH policies	• Intentional and frequent communication with stakeholders to compensate for lack of face-to-face interaction • Motivating and raising morale of internal stakeholders. • Allaying fears about pandemic amongst community served • Collaborating with other organisations and government to share information about new welfare programmes • Building trust of funders and public to allow for flexibility of existing and new funding sources.	• Acceptance of new normal in the event of long-term crisis and need to reduce digital divide • Address disruption and anxiety caused by multiple crises • Consider substance of new programmes and address fear of uncertainty for the future	• Prior experiences helped tackle the present situation, but nature, scale and duration of crisis was unprecedented. • Mission did not change amidst crisis but emerged stronger due to sense of purpose.	Future challenges in terms of tackling misinformation, finances, uncertainty. Future preparation encompassing change, diversification, learning from the pandemic and applying best practices.

Workplace impact

One critical insight into sensemaking regarding the pandemic's impact on stakeholders was having to change how work was conducted. Office protocols were revamped, with one US non-profit highlighting that it quickly changed policy to ensure that employees could work from home (WFH), with only essential staff still in the office. Leaders also had to determine how to deal with COVID-19-positive staff or clients, how to share that information and how to ensure everyone was following policy. Leaders from both countries sensed a new normal for work, with one leader commenting: 'the biggest challenge we are facing at the moment is a serious cultural shift to everything digital. I see a huge challenge of fighting over information and unreliable sources at all levels'.

Psychological impact

Sensemaking about the pandemic also led leaders to recognise psychological impacts on stakeholders. While all four non-profits acknowledged that both employees and communities had to confront that impact, the specifics differed at each non-profit.

One Indian non-profit reported that internal stakeholders feared for not only their health but also for their jobs. The lack of resources and the stress of travelling safely during the pandemic affected mental health, according to the other Indian non-profit. One US non-profit acknowledged that team members suffered from stress, compounded by the politicising of the pandemic during the presidential election. One leader stated that 'real health issues were less; it was the lockdown that had the main effect. Many of my employees had a fear of health rather than actual health'.

As to impact on external stakeholders, an Indian non-profit sensed that surviving under uncertainty for an indefinite time was a greater threat to the community rather than physical health, while a US non-profit reported an increase among its client community in posttraumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, domestic violence, sleeplessness and feeling isolated.

Decision-making

This task requires leaders to offer timely and effective responses to the various problems they encounter during a crisis. Our findings uncovered several themes on this issue: different decision stages, a structure to aid decision-making, the decision-making process, the types of decisions to be made and the challenges faced when making certain decisions.

Stages

For most non-profits, decision stages correlated with the number of COVID cases and the caution exercised by their communities. At first, case numbers were low, but people's caution levels were high. Over time, people became more comfortable leaving their homes. Later, as cases spiralled upward, people did not react with the same caution as they initially had; fears had receded, and people suffered from pandemic fatigue. Consequently, leaders had to decide about tightening or easing restrictions on working in the office and meeting in person, depending on both actual infection risk and the level of community caution.

However, one Indian non-profit identified the stages in terms of the problems faced by the community it served. The first was material: food and money shortages and the need to migrate due to the lockdown. The second was psychological: mental health suffering due to job loss and the sudden absence of social interactions as the lockdown continued. The third was related to health: the stark fear of dying from COVID-19. The fourth involved the logistics challenges involved in accessing the community. Consequently, leaders had to make decisions to ensure that the right resources reached the right people at the right time.

Structure

The need to respond quickly to constant changes during the pandemic involved setting up special decision-making structures. All four non-profits adopted new structures or modified existing ones, with US organisation reporting, 'we needed an internal leadership team to make quick decisions – therefore the COVID task force emerged'. Existing protocols were not sufficient for decision-making at all four non-profits.

Process

Several leaders cited the need to change decision-making processes. One US non-profit adopted a strategic response to the pandemic, viewing itself as providing essential services but also wanting to avoid putting its people at risk. Its decisions were based on safety and relied on government guidance. For the other US non-profit, the pivotal point was deciding to transform how people worked: 'Life as we know it will never be the same – our work environment has completely changed, and I do not see it going back to the way it was'. The non-profits needed to be agile during the crisis. One Indian non-profit organised a meeting of senior management and trustees on strategies to reach out to those who were struggling. They collected ground-level information from their local representatives to identify key issues. While monitoring work and providing guidance from headquarters, the CEO gave increased decision-making autonomy to programme heads and coordinators.

Programmatic decisions

Many leaders reported having to change their programming. One Indian non-profit made that decision quickly. After closing for 15 days, it obtained board approval for a business continuity plan focused on relief work: preparing and distributing COVID-19 prevention kits and food and encouraging rural entrepreneurs to start manufacturing masks. Another effort involved learning about migrant labourers' challenges when returning to their villages due to the lockdown. For one US non-profit, one major challenge was a ban on overseas travel. This meant that refugees, its primary clients, could no longer enter the country. Even after those restrictions were lifted, people from many countries were not permitted to enter the country for fear of spreading the virus, so there were few new refugees. Since the organisation also served those already in the country, it decided to focus on those programmes.

One Indian non-profit adopted a creative strategy to make the local community as self-reliant as possible. Its workers were asked to buy grains from local farms to distribute in the village, thus supporting the local community and saving transportation costs. Further, as markets closed and people's food stocks dwindled, the non-profit focused on kitchen gardens that let people grow their own vegetables. It supplied training and kits to develop gardens. Creativity and ingenuity to continue their work was evident in several non-profits.

Financial decisions

As non-profits' financial obligations were front of mind, it was prudent for them to make sound budgeting decisions regarding current and future operations. One Indian non-profit's employees contributed 30% of their salary towards funding its initial relief work before other funds began flowing; the other Indian organisation's employees contributed their annual bonuses to the organisation's relief work. For one US non-profit, fundraising was already a major challenge due to government funding cuts to their key programme. The non-profit responded strategically by looking for other sources of funding and developing programmes to generate income.

Challenges

The WFH decision was difficult for many staff and clients; those with young children were dealing with school from home, which was a burden on those who had to go to their workplaces. While they needed to make a living, they also did not want to put themselves and their families at risk. Numerous clients also needed help with transportation and protective gear because they were employed in essential services.

Meaning-making

This task refers to communicating with stakeholders to manage their emotions, expectations and behaviours and to bolster their trust in their leaders. A leader's grasp of the situation, is transmitted to stakeholders by meaning-making. There are four types of stakeholders: staff and other leaders (internal) and communities served, collaborators and funders (external).

Staff and leaders

Non-profit leaders realised early in the pandemic that how they operated and communicated needed to change. At one US non-profit, local organisations had to be proactive in communicating to all levels of staff and stakeholders since face-to-face meetings were no longer possible. New weekly protocols and prioritising certain communication media were used to ensure reporting and accountability. The leadership team of another US non-profit met online daily, and the full team met weekly to determine how to WFH. In under two weeks, they determined how to do 85% of their work virtually.

Communication was crucial to building and maintaining morale inside organisations during the pandemic, which meant leaders had to coordinate with one another. One Indian non-profit provided its team with job security assurances and had them buy into the solution by donating part of their salaries to COVID-19 relief. This contribution would be used if other resources dried up. There was a dispute about personal privacy

versus public health amongst a US non-profit's staff members that resulted in some staff not informing others when they had COVID-19 and were going to the office. The leader decided to address the need for people to report being infected so that proper safety protocols could be followed.

Communities served

Traditional programmes were re-engineered in this new normal so that safety protocols were followed and stakeholders felt that their needs were being met. The organisations' physical presence had to be replaced with virtual interactions that may not be as highly valued in the long term. This was very challenging for one US non-profit because its clients were recent refugees. The stigma attached to and fear of being ostracised for having COVID in the immigrant community kept people from communicating openly about it. A lack of language skills and technological knowledge exacerbated the difficulties in connecting with their clients, but once it hired a programme coordinator who spoke many of those languages, communication improved. Schooling from home was also very difficult for clients' families. Initially, the non-profit tried to ensure that they had Wi-Fi hotspots, but it later developed a mentorship programme to connect children with people who could help with online education. This non-profit received substantial funds for people who had lost income to COVID and needed to communicate that information to potential applicants. Its staff went around town, putting up posters in places where their clients shopped, ate or worked and called clients with telephones to disseminate the information. Before the pandemic, this non-profit's leader visited the different programmes to observe and take photographs and talk with clients, which was helpful in communicating what it was doing to the public. This approach was impossible under COVID, so the leader had to devise alternative means of communication. At one Indian non-profit, the leader recorded a video to allay COVID fears and circulated it in the community using mobile phones. Extensive travel also helped, as leaders could meet with beneficiaries and migrant labourers, learn about their problems they were facing and offer necessary support.

Collaborators

Collaboration with other non-profits, volunteers and governments facilitated communication that enable clients to access the resources they needed. One US non-profit contacted other non-profits in the city to learn how to structure applications for a relief fund and connect the community to resources. It also reached out to non-profits educating people about COVID to ensure that they were supported in translating the material into the refugee communities' languages. It contacted their volunteers to connect the most vulnerable people with basic necessities and collaborated with local service providers, government agencies and schools to share data, services and information and identify gaps in service delivery.

Funders

Because non-profit – funder relationships were built on trust, new funders could be attracted, and flexibility in using funds was authorised. One Indian non-profit stated, 'we got so many people who were new funders, and they trusted us and gave us significant resources'. Similarly, a US non-profit reported that its pandemic-driven online

fundraising events were even more successful because of a greater sense of community and people wanting to give back in light of the extensive media coverage of people who were suffering.

Ending

Three themes were identified for ending: the new normal, multiple crises and sustenance.

The new normal

Even now, the COVID-19 crisis is not behind us, and sensemaking and decision-making processes have become repetitive. However, everyone has accepted the new normal; WFM and online communication tools are now completely unremarkable. One Indian non-profit's existing digital capacity was a significant support. Its mission of reducing the digital divide became even more relevant: 'Yesterday, only few people were dependent, now everybody is dependent [on the internet]. Earlier, we were working on inclusion; now if you don't have internet then you are totally excluded'. Another non-profit expressed similar concerns; while technology did assist with outreach, the digital divide might worsen in areas without internet access. One leader said, 'I don't even know what normalcy means right now for our organisation. . . . I have no idea what it looks like, nor do I know what our future holds. . . . I see things becoming more hybrid'; another said simply, 'we're just going to have to do things differently'. Total organisational reliance on technology and digital communications was completely new for several case organisations and needed support like adequate devices and training.

Multiple crises

Other crises were encountered during the pandemic, including racial unrest and leadership turnover, which caused one US non-profit a great deal of disruption. The other US non-profit reported that pandemic-induced anxiety was compounded by how COVID-19 was politicised during the national elections. It faced disruptions to both work and funding because of a dramatic government policy change that affected the community it served.

Sustenance

One US non-profit leader said that there was a point at which local organisations had to be realistic about what they could accomplish and avoid creating new programmes that could not be sustained, especially with the importance of financial concerns. There was concern about membership losses if young people no longer saw value in their services: 'I fear the future. . . . Who knows what 2022 will look like for our organization? . . . The ripple effect could be tremendous'. The other US non-profit's main mission was helping refugees develop their full potential, but they soon began operating in survival mode, trying to meet their clients' basic needs.

Learning

For learning, three themes emerged: prior experience, mission and creative solutions.

Prior experience

All the non-profits had faced previous crises and thus had some experience managing them, but none had faced one of the pandemic's magnitude. One non-profit's leader said that it had dealt with floods and that their beneficiaries often faced crises in their lives, so it was not overwhelmed by COVID-19. One Indian non-profit works in a coastal area and dealt with tsunamis, hurricanes and earthquakes, so it had experience in handling people's emotions during crises. Another non-profit recalled a financial crisis it faced in 2008, when the sector lost its primary funding but survived. More recently, there was a sudden change in government policy on a key programme for the communities it serves. It worked closely with other area non-profits to advocate for the government to continue the programme and asked major donors to increase their support.

Mission

The mission of one Indian non-profit to reduce the digital divide was made more urgent by the pandemic. For one US non-profit, the pandemic did not appear to affect its mission; in fact, some local chapters became stronger due to a renewed sense of connection and purpose.

Creative solutions and local innovation

Several new initiatives, many using digital technology and the internet, were started by one Indian non-profit. For a US non-profit, many unique and creative solutions emerged, as the pandemic challenged the organisation to think beyond its normal parameters and expand into areas it never thought possible. It also encouraged local chapter leadership to meet the challenge and seek to come out ahead.

The other Indian non-profit reported that its team was strengthened by connecting through virtual communication for reporting, orientation, meetings, coordination and feedback. A US non-profit reported highly successful online fundraising and gaining many new supporters. It also moved its adult learning programmes online. Staff with children at home learned to balance work and their children's online schooling.

Preparing

Two themes emerged regarding preparing: future challenges and preparation.

Future challenges

Misinformation. An Indian non-profit highlighted the negative impact of the shift to the digital medium: 'I think the biggest challenge we are facing at the moment is a serious cultural shift to everything digital. I see a huge challenge of fighting over information and unreliable information at all levels'.

Finance. Local organisations continue to face many difficult choices because the COVID-19 threat is not over, and financial issues are the most pressing. The case organisations demonstrated caution about the future; one US non-profit stated, 'we have to be careful how we monetise this online experience'.

Uncertainty. A US non-profit leader assessed an unknowable future as follows:

Through this situation we had to rely on our own ingenuity and some past experiences that we may have had and admit that we may not know everything. . . . We needed to ask a lot of questions so we were prepared for the unknown. . . . . There was no notebook for this scenario.

Future preparation

Change. Emphasizing the need for change, one US non-profit stated that the pandemic 'is causing us to rethink how we do events and whether or not we need to have alterations in that process'. The other US non-profit plans to maintain its present course; it has accepted uncertainty and is not trying to plan too far into the future.

Diversify. The pandemic has created an urgency to diversify both funding sources and services offered, as one US non-profit leader noted:

I think we have prepared our staff for a long time that the milk train of sponsors isn't the only bucket that we have. . . . We need to pivot quickly . . . . [and] be extremely budget conscious because every dollar spent is going to be scrutinized.

The other US non-profit has been preparing for threats to their key programmes by diversifying their funding sources and focusing on those supporting refugees already in the state, as they expect immigration numbers to remain depressed.

Workplace. At one US non-profit, most work is still done remotely; in-person interaction must be essential and is approved on a case-by-case basis. The organisation does not plan to fully re-open its office anytime soon.

Best practices. One US non-profit offered a positive outlook about the future with the hope that 2021 would be different by applying the lessons learned in 2020. Another non-profit referred to tracking global responses to COVID-19, with a focus on learning.

Additional sample quotes from the participants appear in Table 2.

Discussion

The pandemic caused dramatic changes for organisations worldwide. Non-profits were no exception but persevered to overcome the obstacles. On the national and state level, leadership played an important role in ensuring that non-profits were prepared to pivot and help the communities they served. All four organisations relied heavily on leaders' abilities to assess the situation and respond appropriately (Caligiuri et al. 2020). Organizational agility was key in making decisions about closing offices or transforming working practices. Hamdan et al. (2020) describe strategic organisational agility as essential for non-profits keeping pace with environmental changes and crises. Many human resource policies and procedures had to pivot to accommodate the changing needs of the crisis. Three of the four organisations had to focus on finances and develop business continuity plans, supporting Stoker, Garretsen, and Soudis's (2019) finding that during crises, leaders choose a more directive approach to ensure organisational survival. For the US non-profits, some such decisions were challenging amid racial tensions and national elections. In the Indian non-profits, the decision to shift from existing programmes to relief work was made rapidly through technology-based consensus building.

Table 2. Participants quotes based on thematic category.

Thematic Category	Sample Participant Quotes
Sources and monitoring of information	• ... even though we got the news on the news, we also got the news from a local, we also get the news from our communities. And we also got news from overseas. • It becomes very difficult to decide which information would be authentic, which source to believe, which direction to follow, which strategy would help to reach the needy with constraints of mobilisations. There comes a time when the leader's role has to be proactive to take a step towards getting the solution. • We had to fight the pandemic at an information level ... dissemination level • I see a huge challenge of fighting over information and unreliable information at all levels.
Workplace impact	• Yesterday only few people were dependent now everybody is dependent (on the internet) • I think the biggest challenge we are facing at the moment is a serious cultural shift to everything digital • ... we were ... few of the first group in the city that decided to move on, to move from home ... we decided we needed to meet virtually to come up with the strategies, the policies, the planning, on how to work from home. And I'm telling you with less than a week, less than two weeks, we came up with, what was pretty much 85% of what we used to do traditionally, to be carried on virtually.
Psychological impact	• Real health issues was less; lockdown was the main effect. Fear of health rather than actual health was the main issue. • We implemented a check-in system so that every leader had set staff to check in with to make sure they were doing okay • The COVID update is critical part of our staff communication, but it is also part of building morale and keeping people connected and encouraging them through these very difficult circumstances. There are so many moving parts we have to stay on top of it all. • ... the motivation was, in terms of words was in the meetings which they used to conduct weekly meetings, fortnightly meetings, just to know how we are and how we are coping, how our families are, how the work is going helping us reach out to us who were working 12 to 14 hours. The leaders were also working with us. So that was the biggest motivation, I got and other employees thought ...
Stages	• ... in the beginning, the cases ... are actually a lot lower than they are now. But people's kind of level of caution was a lot higher ... and then in the summer or a month or two ago cases were going down. So, people kind of became more relaxed and started doing more. And I think now we're kind of moving into a stage where we need to tighten up our restrictions more because the cases here are getting out of control. But people aren't quite reacting the same as they did in the beginning. • ... at the first stage, feeding the people who are the biggest issue, you know relief work ... Second level was also more psychological ... mental level of fight that was there at the third level, I think the fourth level was more the logistics.
Structure	• Our leader determined quickly that we needed an internal leadership team to make quick decisions – therefore the COVID taskforce emerged, and we still use it now • Personally, I decided to reach out to my leadership team. I would call the leaders together to figure out what we can do together in our capacity and be able to continue to deliver services that were needed.
Process	• ... the response was us figuring out a way to provide the services, but not in the traditional way. In a traditional way, we will continue meeting with the client, continue driving clients' services and will continue interacting with clients face to face. That's how our setting is ... but when we realised that this think would put out people at risk, at higher risk, then we decided that we will be using social distancing services or use the online platform. • We're just going to have to do things differently
Programmatic decisions	• It is causing us to rethink how we do events and whether we need to have alterations in that process for our team. • ... we brainstormed and we completely shifted to online version that was one thing where we face difficulty that how to take these projects, which .... require more of you to know about the interactions and physical thing that we can do online.

(*Continued*)

Table 2. (Continued).

Thematic Category	Sample Participant Quotes
Financial decisions	• . . . we need to pivot quickly that we need to be extremely budget conscious because every dollar spent is going to be scrutinised • . . . we have to be careful how we monetise this online experience
Challenges	• And then there was also a time when the city shut down most services, what they considered nonessential services were shut down. But the essential services were still going on. And most of our clients work in essential services . . . Now how are they going to be able to get there, transportation wise. . .Any by the way some of them also do not have a PPE, they will be giving you gloves and masks at work, but they will not have enough to bring them home.
Staff & Leaders (Internal)	• Now, the leadership team decided to meet every day. And then the overall team decided to meet every week virtually. Okay we decided we needed to meet virtually to come up with the strategies, the policies, the planning, on how to work from home • . . . the motivation was . . . the meetings which they used to conduct weekly meetings, fortnightly meetings just to know how we are how we are coping and how our families are, how's the work going and helping us reach out and always be available so that it was not only the employees who were working 12 to 14 hours, but the leaders were also working with us. So, the biggest motivation I got and other employees thought.
Community Served (External)	• So, we this huge pool of funding that people can apply for if they've lost income because of COVID. So that's been a big challenge trying to communicate that to the people, potential applicants. It's been hard like we've gone as far as going around town and putting up posters in places where our clients shop or restaurant or other organisation. Yeah, we've been calling clients just like trying to push the information out. • . . . in a lot of the immigrant communities . . . they're at least in the beginning and probably still now was like a big stigma about having COVID . . . people didn't want others to know if they had it, because they were afraid, they would be ostracised.
Collaborations (External)	• We have different groups who work together according to the need. We have local service provider, we also have government agencies that also (help?) us, we have states growth we also have an openness, role, government, that we have good basis aspects most work together with the school system, little public school and more merchants are also providing the same services that we have. We would share data, we share services, information and sometimes the data that we share enable us to deliver where the gaps are that we might not be able to do. • We have a big volunteer community and one of the apartment complexes that a lot of our clients live in. So, I think we've been connecting a lot with our lead volunteers there to king of learn what some of the most vulnerable people are struggling with and try to connect them with things and with housing or food or whatever that they need.
Funders (External)	• We got so many people who were new funders, and they trusted us and gave us a significant resource to work. • And then being a funder, not seeing the ground, not seeing your, you know, office and still coming forward and funding you purely on the basis of that paperwork on the compliance paperwork. I would say is a great sense of you know, comradery and the trust and everything.
New Normal	• I don't even know what normalcy means right now for our organisation . . . I have no idea what it looks like nor do I know what our future holds . . . I see things becoming more hybrid • We are going to have to rethink the way we do business. Earlier we were working on inclusion, now if you don't have internet then you are totally excluded
Multiple Crises	• Now, the confounding political environment we are in now adds more on to this. I don't know whether anything will change positively in the next few weeks after the elections or they will get worse. We don't know. You're not in America. America now is just crazy with this election. Other crisis moments were encountered during the pandemic including racial unrest and leadership expulsion which caused this organisation a great deal of disruption

(*Continued*)

Table 2. (Continued).

Thematic Category	Sample Participant Quotes
Sustenance	• There is a point where the organisations must be realistic about what they can accomplish as an organisation – not creating too many new things that they cannot sustain • So, we prepared ourselves for the next two years, in a position that if there was no new funding coming, we could have sustained for two years of course, with that with less salary and all that, but the point is that we were ready to be in that position and in that situation, that our organisation will not be closed our people will not be fired
Prior Experience	• . . . these experiences helped prepare me to be steady and confident and to reflect to the organisation that we are going to be okay • We do have a policy of crisis management. What we needed to do when we have an issue, we have that, but we never had a plan for something of this magnitude
Mission	• . . . actually, it has increased our scope of work in a bigger way . . . like you must have started reading that digital divide is a new topic once again, you know the dependency on digital is a new phenomenon now, because yesterday only few people were dependent now everybody is dependent . . . our mission is to ensure that immigrants and refugees achieve their full potential. But I think with the pandemic . . . we're kind of resorting more to just ensuring that people have what they need to survive. Like, it's more about like meeting those basic needs . . .
Creative Solutions/Local Innovation	• We came up with an innovative idea of sourcing survival commodities like grains and other food items hyper locally in the villages by setting up a system wherein these commodities will be supplied by the local farmers of the village. This helped farmers earn their livelihood as well as keep the supply of necessary commodities continued in the times of a nationwide lockdown • But our team are very innovative. They're very talented, the way that my creative team, they came up with a way to do that, and we are even better than some of the other things that we used to do) • As the markets were shut, the food supply was almost depleted . . . we came up with the solution of kitchen garden so as one can grow his/her own vegetables . . . we started giving training tips and kits for the kitchen garden to each of our beneficiaries
Future challenges	• I fear the future . . . who knows what 2022 will look like for our organisation . . . the ripple effect could be tremendous. • I don't even know what normalcy means right now for our organisation . . . I have no idea what it looks like nor do I know what our future holds . . . I see things becoming more hybrid • Life as we know it will never be the same – our work environment has completely changed, and I do not see it going back to the way it was • This was all new unchartered territory. We didn't really have anything in place to handle this
Future Preparation	• I think we have prepared our staff for a long time that the milk train of sponsors isn't the only bucket that we have . . . • Now, how can 2021 be different from 2020, you take the lesson you learn in 2020 and try to, you know, advocate what you think is the best and best approach that you have applied earlier and try to see how you can fit it and align it for the goals of 2021

All the non-profits had to exercise prudence regarding current and future operations, human resources, and financial planning. Coordination with stakeholders enhanced their execution of plans ('T Hart and Sundelius 2013) and resource distribution (Garilao 1987). All interviewees emphasised quality information and monitoring sources so that they could consume and distribute accurate information. It became evident that many of these leaders were not formally trained on how to handle a crisis but used their experience and knowledge to do the best for the communities served. In the future HRD need to develop leadership programmes on crisis management and how to quickly pivot

when crisis emerges. There is a need for stronger theoretical basis on how HRD meets the need of non-profits through contingency theory in times of crisis.

To maintain trust, it was vital for leaders to engage in intentional communication and meaning-making with both internal and external stakeholders (Chen and Sriphon 2021). With face-to-face meetings impossible, maintaining employee morale during the decision-making and ending phases of the crisis was important, as was building trust with external stakeholders. Human resources for all four organisations became a pivotal component that needed to be addressed and implemented to build engagement. More research needs to be done on the impact that virtual office environments have on employee morale and decision making.

The outcome at all four non-profits was that work continued in a different format, with technology playing a key role in facilitating the new normal. Some innovative solutions, including preparing COVID-19 kits for communities, converting business models to serve new populations, transforming programming to digital delivery and rethinking the ways resources were provided, emerged during the pandemic and are likely to remain in place. Necessity-based and intensively local innovation (Abrol and Gupta 2014; Hoffecker 2018) appeared to play an important role and is thus integral to crisis management. The hybrid form of engagement is likely to continue well into the future, and it is critical for non-profit leaders to develop crisis resistance for the unexpected (Willems 2016). All four leadership groups realised that they needed to diversify their offerings and clients to prepare for the future.

The major differences between state and national levels were that state non-profits looked closer to home for solutions, whereas national entities cast a wider net to overcome challenges. Creativity and ingenuity existed at both levels, but the execution of strategies different noticeably. State non-profits used community resources to address a lack of connectivity amongst certain populations, while national non-profits reached out to regions they knew had a digital divide to overcome. Based partly on past experience of handling crises, leaders in all four cases found that they were able to face the COVID-19 pandemic (Mumford et al. 2007). All leaders agreed that the pandemic had taken an emotional toll on employees and communities. The lessons learnt in dealing with the pandemic's impacts are relevant beyond the case organisations and their countries.

Limitations

The study has certain limitations. The use of convenience sampling did not allow us to examine similar cases in terms of size, financial and mission. Specific organisational contexts may influence non-profit governance and management practices (Wiepking et al. 2021). However, this approach was used because it was otherwise difficult to find willing participants. A few other organisations were approached but declined due to extreme workloads. In addition, triangulation involved interviewing only two people in each organisation; again, this was due to a lack of availability during the crisis.

Implications for theory, research and practice

Though a pandemic is inherently transnational and involves different dynamics than local or national crises (Boin 2018; Giliberto et al. 2020), prior research indicates convergence from a comparative perspective (Bouckaert et al. 2020). Our findings across two countries indicate adherence to the key crisis leadership tasks in the non-profit context articulated by Boin et al. (2005) and Stern (2013). The findings highlight the importance of leadership (Bhaduri 2019), task orientation (Kapucu and Ustun 2018), coordination across various phases (Nolte and Martin 2021; Raju and Becker 2013) and engagement with multiple stakeholders in making decisions (Muñoz et al. 2021; Vasavada 2013). Our study has several implications for HRD theory and practice. First, for longer-lasting crises, we propose *local innovation* as another activity to enhance the framework. This concept resonates with prior findings that heuristics and workarounds are relevant in pandemics (Hupe 2013; Weible et al. 2020). Adapting to situations is central to being resilient (Duchek 2019), so HRD professionals must tap their networks to understand how other organisations are responding to the crisis (Dirani et al. 2020). The knowledge obtained needs to be presented so that it makes sense to the organisation and creates a safe environment for employees and stakeholders.

Second, the study contributes to the comparative literature (Cooke, Veen, and Wood 2017) and brings 'geographical thinking into crisis research' (Brinks and Ibert 2020, 275) by comparing the responses of non-profit leaders in two countries. Further, examining responses to the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates the complexity of an extreme, global, long-term crisis. The crisis leadership model requires further development (Boin et al. 2005), especially regarding contextual and cultural implications for leaders. More research should be conducted on for-profit and non-profit organisational leaders during extreme crises (Miller-Millesen 2003), and whether local innovation remains an integral part of the framework in other studies of the non-profit sector or other sectors can be taken up in future research. Further examination is also needed to understand the preparing phase (Stern 2013). A model of anticipatory crisis intervention might be proposed after reviewing multiple case studies and testing theory with empirical studies (Eisenhardt 1989).

Third, non-profit leaders need to have distinctive capabilities (Bish and Becker 2015) that enable them to demonstrate better governance during crises (McMullin and Raggo 2020). Our findings identified several key areas for leadership development: the need for distributed leadership, foresight regarding financial planning and fundraising, innovative digital technology practices, the protection of work – life balance and the need for dynamic motivation at multiple levels. Training interventions are clearly essential to ensure a crisis-prepared organisational culture (Hutchins and Wang 2008). Emotional intelligence, which facilitates such a culture, can be improved using case study analyses, joint scenario development, roleplaying simulations, and full-scale exercises (Chen and Sriphon 2021'T Hart and Sundelius 2013). This is an excellent opportunity for HRD professionals to provide leaders with the assistance they need to support their employees and build trust (Dirani et al. 2020).

Finally, individuals, teams, organisations and communities can better anticipate and respond to extreme crises. HRD can facilitate learning by developing leaders' critical thinking skills for sensemaking and decision-making during crises (Antonacopoulou and

Sheaffer 2014) and by designing a knowledge management system to capture best practices across organisations for future crisis prevention and management. The present study supports Dirani et al. (2020) findings that employees look to leaders for guidance in their daily activities, especially in times of challenge and crisis. Employees expect leaders to provide sensemaking at such times and demand pivotal leadership from HRD professionals. Leaders should be able to respond rapidly to dynamic situations and put reflection-in-action methods into practice to create organisation-wide learning environments (Eraut 2006).

Our study highlights the need for accurate, timely communication that ensures well-developed meaning-making for both internal and external stakeholders and facilitates change by ensuring sound decisions, building trust and allaying anxiety. HRD can provide opportunities to improve leaders' communication skills and design an information management system to ensure the systematic access, sorting, prioritising and communication of information (Boin et al. 2005). The unknowable but inevitable crises of the future will involve complexity that requires increased development of human capital (Malcolm et al. 2015; Miller 2019). Due to the limited resources of the non-profit sector, it will be vital for the sustainability of their mission to anticipate and develop protocols for their leaders to succeed no matter what crisis may evolve.

Acknowledgements

Disclosure statement

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Appendices

Appendix A. Interview Protocol

Tell me about yourself. What is your current position in this organization? Could you tell me about your prior experience that has shaped you as the leader you are today?

(I) Sensemaking
  (1) How did you gather information about the pandemic when it started and based on that information what understanding did you gain about the situation?
  (2) How did you determine reliable sources for the information?
(II) Decision making
  (1) According to you, what were/are the various stages of the pandemic?
  (2) What were the main challenges faced during each stage?
  (3) What were the kind of decisions required during each stage?
  (4) How were these decisions made? (process)
(III) Meaning-making
  (1) Who are your stakeholders?
  (2) Who did you interact with the most during each stage of the pandemic? (Within your Organization, Community, Funding Agencies, Government, etc.)
(IV) Ending
  (1) What initiatives were taken at each stage of the pandemic?
  (2) How has this pandemic impacted members of your organization?
  (3) How has this pandemic impacted the mission/objective of your organization?
(V) Learning
  (1) What are some of the initiatives (taken during the current crisis) that have worked and why?
  (2) What are some of the initiatives that did not work and why?
(VI) Planning
  (1) Were there any systems/procedures/committees in place to handle a crisis situation before the pandemic? If yes, what were they?
  (2) What challenges do you foresee in the future?
  (3) How are you preparing/planning to face them?

We would like to thank you for your time today. Is there anything else that you would like to share with us?

Appendix B. Codes and Thematic Categories

Sr. No.	Major Category	Thematic Category	Alternate codes	Description
1	Generic	Leader tenure		Number of years the leader has been with the NGO
2	Generic	Leader role		Role of the participant in the NGO
3	Sensemaking	Sources and monitoring of information	Information networks; Unreliable sources	Primary sources of information about the Pandemic and the need to monitor their reliability
4	Sensemaking	Workplace impact	Going digital/online; Changing to WFH; Treatment of covid positive staff & clients	Changes in the way work was conducted & related policies to ensure staff and client safety
5	Sensemaking	Psychological Impact	Morale and spirit; Emotional impact	Fear/Stress/Anxiety about health, safety, job loss, survival, lack of financial resources among internal & external stakeholders
6	Decision Making	Stages	Spread of cases; Precautions taken; Problems faced by community	Decisions taken based on number of cases, caution exercised & nature of problems
7	Decision Making	Structure	Organizational agility; Change of mode	Change in decision making structures to respond with agility to ever-changing situation due to the pandemic
8	Decision Making	Process	Safety of stakeholders; Essential service	Change in mindset & strategy to prioritise safety & needs of stakeholders
9	Decision Making	Programmatic decisions	Business Continuity Plan (BCP); Shift to relief work; Creative solutions	Need to come up with new programmes, re-engineer old programmes
10	Decision Making	Financial decisions	Budgeting for the present & future; Staff contributions towards relief; Fundraising challenges	Overcoming fundraising challenges through internal contributions for initial relief work, exploring new sources, generating income through programmes, and budgeting for current and future programmes
11	Decision Making	Challenges	WFH challenges for those with young children; Safety & transportation challenges for clients in essential services	Providing support to those who could WFH and those who could not WFH
12	Meaning-making	Staff & Leaders (Internal)	Intentional communication; Regular meetings; Motivation & morale	Intentional communication through regular meetings; Communication to enhance motivation & morale by ensuring job security & safety
13	Meaning-making	Community Served (External)	Lack of online technology, knowledge & infrastructure; Stigma	Overcoming communication challenges due to lack of technology, knowledge, and infrastructure through use of alternate media, and providing infrastructure & support

(*Continued*)

(Continued).

Sr. No.	Major Category	Thematic Category	Alternate codes	Description
14	Meaning-making	Collaborators (External)	Local collaboration; Sharing information; Gaps in service delivery	Collaboration with local NGOs, volunteers, public services & government to share data, services, information & identify gaps in service delivery
15	Meaning-making	Funders (External)	Resource mobilization/flexibility; Trust; Media coverage	Relationship of trust allowed flexibility in use of resources and new funders attracted due to media coverage & a sense of community
16	Ending	New Normal	Ongoing crisis; Digital Divide	Acceptance & support of new normal of digitisation in the event of long-term crisis
17	Ending	Multiple Crises	Racial unrest; Leader expulsion; Politicising of Pandemic	Leaders in the US had to handle multiple crises
18	Ending	Sustenance	Sustaining new programmes; Survival mode	Concerns about survival & sustaining new initiatives, due to continued uncertainty & financial constraints
19	Learning	Prior Experience	Natural disasters; Magnitude & span of crisis; Reflection on priorities; Handling emotions; Survival strategies	Learning from previous crises about prioritisation, handling emotions and survival strategies, but none of them were of the scale & duration of the current crisis
20	Learning	Mission	Need for mission emphasised; Mission got stronger	Missions were accentuated and commitment towards them got stronger due to the pandemic
21	Learning	Creative Solutions/ Local Innovation	New initiatives using digital technology; Non digital innovations; Creative solutions due to expanded thinking; Elevated leadership; Strengthened team	New & creative initiatives emerged, and leadership & teams were strengthened using technology & other means
22	Preparing	Future Challenges	Misinformation; Finance; Uncertainty	Future challenges will relate to obtaining reliable information, budgeting & financial planning, and dealing with uncertainty
23	Preparing	Future Preparation	Change; Diversify; Workplace; Best Practices	Future preparation will involve a need for change, diversity in funding & service, hybrid working arrangements and keeping track of & applying learning