

The event aimed at sharing our learning and considering how the CHS acts as a driver of change and improvement.

- The CHS verification processes and the lessons that we can learn from them;
- Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA);
- Complaints handling and feedback mechanisms;
- Participation of crisis-affected people;
- Working with and through partners;
- Future activities of the CHS Alliance to support its members and the wider sector to effectively apply the CHS.



It was based on group learning, enabling participants to share examples of good practice, experiences and insights with one another. This short report aims at providing a snapshot of the enlightening discussions that were held throughout the day.





1. VISIONING EXERCISE – HOW CAN THE CHS DRIVE CHANGE FOR PEOPLE AFFECTED BY CRISIS?

Using visioning, this exercise explored the value of the Standard in helping to deliver better quality and accountability for people affected by crisis.

Participants worked in two groups:

- Group 1 worked from the perspectives of the organisations responding to a crisis, while
- Group 2 worked from the perspective of people affected by a crisis.

The results of this exercise showed that the main priorities to achieve success would be:

- To respect, preserve and restore the dignity of people affected by crisis, namely by listening, being transparent and inclusive;
- To build trust between aid workers and the people affected by crisis; ensure that aid workers deliver on their promises; consistency in responsiveness and delivery; finding local solutions; closing the feedback loop; using two-way communications channels; enabling communities affected by crisis to participate in decision-making processes; protecting people affected by crisis from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA);
- To address people's long-term concerns, ensuring that aid workers are working with flexible fund/multi-year-funded responses; building on the existing local structures, systems, capacities and capabilities; fostering the local economy and employment; building resilience; delivering a strong disaster risk reduction intervention, identifying and mitigating unintended impacts; considering environmental issues.



2. PANEL DISCUSSION: HOW DO STANDARDS DRIVE CHANGE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS? - ORGANISATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

This question was discussed through an interactive panel discussion moderated by Monica Blagescu, Director of Humanitarian Programmes and Accountability, DEC. The panel was composed of four representatives from headquarters, regional offices, donors and a CHS verification body.

- **Affan Cheema**, Head of Programme Quality at Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW)
- **Daddy Obware**, Humanitarian Response Adviser for East Africa Crisis Response, Tearfund
- **Peter Taylor**, Head of Safeguarding Unit, DfID
- **Pierre Hauselmann**, Executive Director, HQAI

The panel provoked us to think about the key challenges and opportunities for the application of the Standard from head offices to project sites; including challenging questions around what is the added value of verification, the challenges of applying the CHS when working through partners, the difference that the CHS is making for aid workers and communities, DFID's engagement with the CHS and the CHS Verification Scheme.



3. HOW HAS THE CHS DELVED CHANGE IN ORGANISATIONS? - SHARING GOOD PRACTICE

Participants had the opportunity to discuss ten examples of good practice:

ZOA	Charity Van Bommel	<u>Building staff capacity on CoC</u>
ACTED	Gaetane WICQUART	<u>Complaints mechanisms</u>
Concern Worldwide	Carol Morgan	CoC and its dissemination
Tearfund	Binod Ghimire	Integrated and Inclusive Practices in Nepal Earthquake Response Project
LWF	Allan Calma	<u>Conducting SA at country level</u>
Oxfam Bangladesh	Iffat Tahmid Fatema - Rodilyn A Bolo	<u>Complaints & feedback mechanisms</u>
Islamic Relief	Mayumi Fuchi	<u>“One Stop Shop of Accountability and Integrating CHS into Internal Quality Management System”</u>
Save the Children - oPt	Jonathan Eccles	Emergency Preparedness Planning (EPP) Improvement
ActionAid Bangladesh	S A Hasan Al Farooque	Listening exercise
Oxfam	Emily Tomkys Valteri	<u>Complaints mechanisms</u> (and <u>here</u>)



4. TACKLING THE CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING THE CHS

Through four parallel working sessions, participants turned to some of the harder and more pressing issues that challenge the application of the CHS. They also explored some collective solutions.

Complaints and feedback mechanisms

Participants discussed the existing mechanisms, challenges and ideas for the implementation of feedback mechanisms. They highlighted the need for more joint mechanisms, as well as the promotion of existing joint mechanisms such as AAP/PSEA mechanism.

More specifically:

- Encourage more centralised mechanisms per location;
- Link AAP/complaints/abuse of power/PSEA into one system;
- Advocate to donors for collective action under the [Grand Bargain](#)'s 'Participation Revolution' workstream.

PSEA/Safeguarding

The group discussed how the global commitments made at the [Safeguarding Conference](#), which took place in October, links to the CHS. They identified the following priorities to move forward:

- Cultural change requires full engagement of senior management;
- Ensure legitimacy in global south and local context;
- Sharing good practice but also reflect on failures and improvements;
- Cross-fertilisation and cross-facilitation across the sector of CHS PSEA Index e.g. private sector, United Nations etc.;
- Bridge between ideals and practice;
- Broaden up globally discussions on commitments with civil society platforms - entry points could be CIVICUS or [ICVA](#), for instance.

Participation of people affected by crisis in humanitarian decision-making processes

Participants discussed how to collectively improve the perception of people affected by crisis and make them feel that they truly influence humanitarian decisions that concern them, coordinate respective organisations' approaches to optimise the involvement of people affected by crisis (avoiding duplication of efforts, competition, confusion etc.), and increase the enabling factors for the participation of people affected by crisis in humanitarian decision-making processes.

Participants highlighted the following main elements:

- Apply the [Core Humanitarian Competency Framework \(CHCF\)](#) and build aid workers' analytical, communications and negotiations skills;
- Generate evidence of and disseminate best practices illustrating the benefits of participation and adaptable programming/ disseminate best practices;
- Advocate for flexible and multi-year funding so that organisations can modify their programmes in response to participation.



Working with and through partners

This discussion showed the varying experience organisations have in applying the CHS through partners. There is no common approach and various differing challenges and conceptions linked with this.

Suggestions for improving how you implement the CHS with and through partners included:

- More guidance from the CHS Alliance on how to implement the CHS with and through partners, including case studies and good practice;
- Create communities of practice amongst member organisations that are implementing the CHS in this way;
- Consider means to better engage partners themselves with the CHS, either through membership of the CHS Alliance or a recognition of their engagement toward the CHS, e.g. by developing an alignment statement for partners and/or incorporating clear partnership agreements with elaborate CHS verification.

5. CHANGE AT THE SECTOR LEVEL: CHS ALLIANCE IN THE FUTURE

Participants proposed ways in which the CHS Alliance could better support its member organisations and the wider sector, building on discussions that took place throughout the day.

The results of this exercise can be summarised as such:

Knowledge and understanding of the CHS:

- Ensure that the CHS is integrated fully into ways of working at various levels (e.g. member organisations, donors etc.);
- Foster more information-sharing with regard to member organisation's experiences with the CHS (case studies, webinars, data visualisation etc.);
- Advocate to have one standard approach for all donors;
- Make the Standard applicable to both humanitarian and development organisations;
- Encourage joint messages at the sector level to communities, and focus on people's rights rather than our standards when we communicate with them;
- Accompany the elaboration of simplified and contextualised tools to deliver the message to people and communities affected by crisis:

Verification:

- Support the translation of the verification tools into more languages and make the information useful for colleagues in the field;
- More support on localising and contextualising the audit process (provision of auditors at regional level) to make the audits cheaper;
- More support for the development and implementation of an improvement plan after the completion of a verification process;
- Support ways to better communicate and work with partners on verification-related aspects;



- More focus on best practices, as opposed to compliance issues, and promote other verification options than certification (which is not necessarily *the* answer).

Support to find collective solutions to common challenges:

- Refine and harmonise the CHS PSEA Index with other standards and concretely support their roll-out with tools;
- Support the development of guidance on how to better translate commitments regarding PSEA into practice;
- Support the identification, documentation and sharing of good practices, especially on the most challenging issues;
- Encourage culturally sensitive mechanisms;
- Support coordinated approaches and joint mechanisms;
- Support research and evidence gathering;
- Provide training and/or support capacity-building mechanisms.

Membership and communications:

- Regular learning webinars on challenging topics and CHS Commitments;
- Learning and action-oriented events targeting specific areas defined in cooperation with member organisations;
- Initiate CHS communities of practice and work with other existing networks where/when relevant;
- Monthly newsletters informing member organisations about training sessions and events.





PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

The participants loved ...

- The opportunity to have a safe place to exchange experiences (practical solutions), learning and challenges;
- The visioning exercise as it positioned individuals to look forward where the CHS should drive change;
- Open discussions with engaged people from headquarters and the field;
- Hearing from the CHS Alliance about its plans for the future and to have the opportunity to feed into these plans;
- Learning about practical examples from organisations;
- Group works and networking;
- The facilitation method and the flow of the day;
- The very idea of the learning event and the topics covered - participants were asking for more similar events;
- The panel discussion as the shared different perspectives captured an overall picture of what is happening around the CHS.

... and suggested the following improvement for future learning events:

- More "Southern voices" or regional events;
- Focus on specific CHS Commitments;
- More space for experience-sharing and breakout sessions;
- Longer event (more than just a day);
- More promotion of the event;
- Enable more networking (e.g. by sharing participants list in advance);
- Engage more donors and UN agencies;
- More room for experience-sharing;
- Gender-balanced panel.