

Virtual Global CHS Exchange

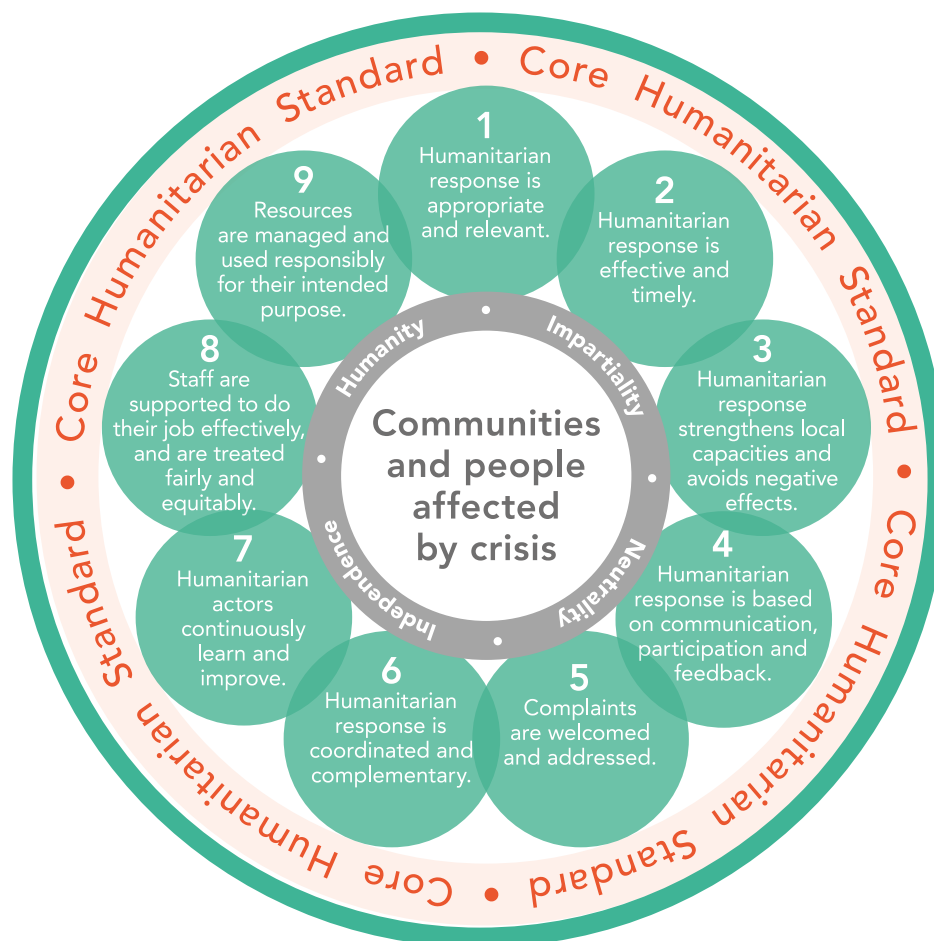
6-8 October 2020



CONFERENCE REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

The first ever virtual CHS Exchange provided an incredible opportunity to gather a global community of people committed to making aid work better and applying the CHS.

The Global CHS Exchange took place in **28 sessions** across **three days**, we heard from **more than 100 speakers**, and engaged with **over 600 attendees**, all entirely remotely.



BACKGROUND

The [Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability](#) (CHS) was launched in late 2014. It was a collaborative effort made by the sector for the sector to address the issue of quality and accountability in aid work by providing a clear and measurable standard to make aid work better for people.

More than five years later, [CHS Alliance](#) members and partners came together virtually to discuss the progress that applying the CHS has made and what more needs to be done to drive change for the people we serve.

This year's Exchange was built on discussions that took place in London in November 2018, Amman in July 2019 and Bangkok November 2019. The virtual event was based on interactive online discussion, group learning, and enabling participants to share their experiences and insights with one another.

THE EVENT

Over the course of 6-8 October, we exchanged knowledge and ideas to identify how we can strive to meet the commitments made to affected people set out in the CHS.

The Global CHS Exchange explored:

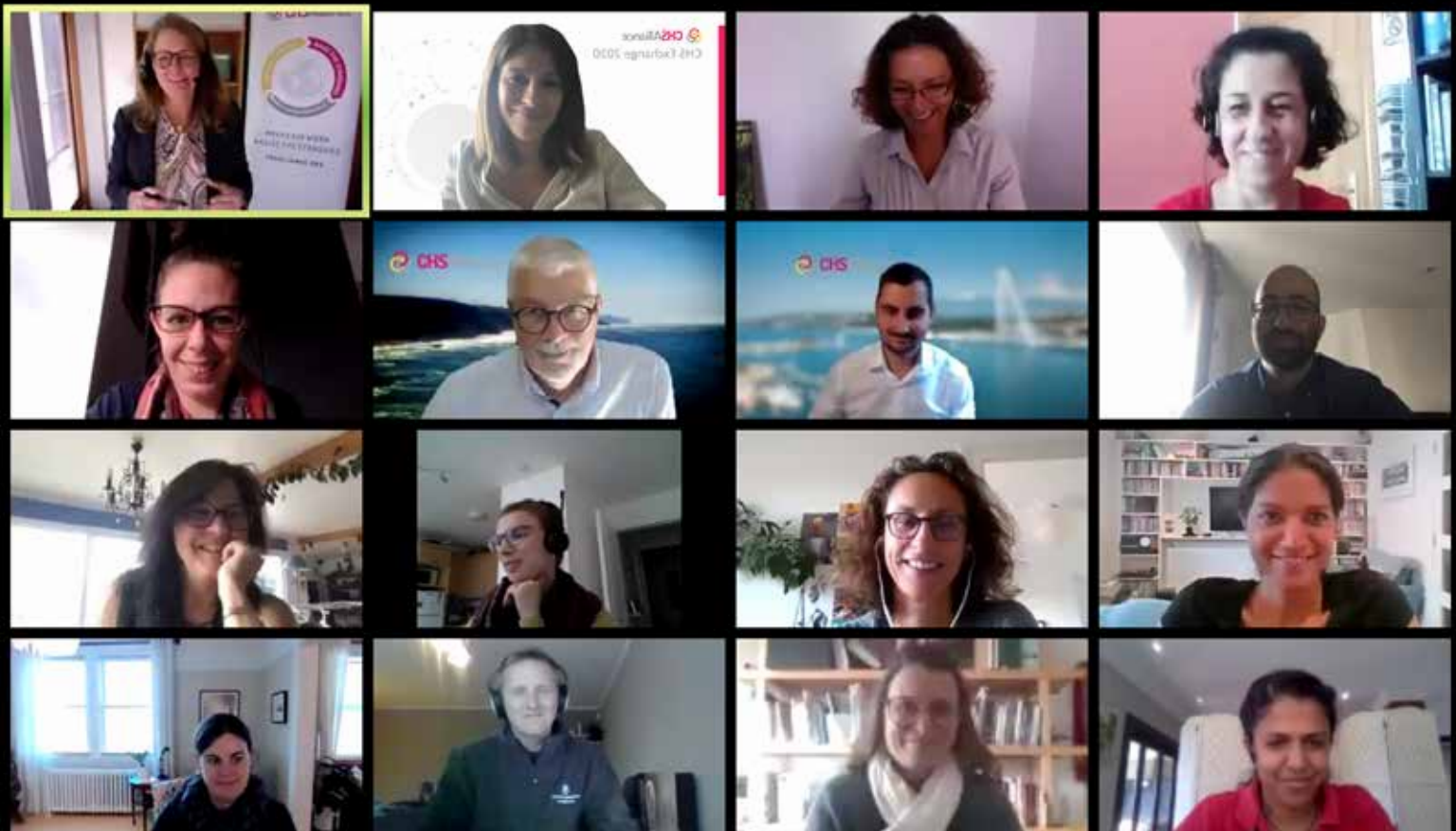
- Findings from the Humanitarian Accountability Report 2020;
 - What we have learned through applying the CHS, as organisations and as a sector;
 - How we build on this learning to improve our service to people affected by crisis;
 - The way forward for the CHS and verification.
-

PARTICIPATION

619 Global CHS Exchange delegates joined the event platform from 229 organisations. Participating organisations included 67 CHS Alliance members.* Among them, 14 organisations are certified against the CHS, four are independently verified against the CHS, and one is an independently verified organisation through group verification. A further 31 have completed CHS self-assessment.

*Global network affiliates members are counted as one per network.

We also welcomed representatives from the governments of Australia, Denmark, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America as well as from the European Commission, IOM, UNICEF, UNOCHA and UNHCR.



DAY ONE

opening & HAR 2020 launch

OPENING OF THE GLOBAL CHS EXCHANGE

CHS Alliance Interim Chair Robert Sweatman welcomed attendees with some personal reflections from the CHS Alliance Chair and Vice-Chair Shama Mall on the CHS more than five years after it launched.

SPEAKERS

- **Robert Sweatman**, Director of Performance and Accountability, British Red Cross & Interim Chair, CHS Alliance
- **Shama Mall**, Deputy Regional Director, Community World Service Asia & Vice-Chair, CHS Alliance
- **Bonaventure Gbétoho Sokpoh**, Head of Policy, Advocacy & Learning, CHS Alliance

“If I’m honest, my expectations at the Copenhagen launch of the CHS in December 2014 was that we would have made significantly more progress by now with a greater number of verified organisations, with a greater number of donors who had really embraced the CHS... The pace of change in the sector is very slow. So, 108 organisations that have been through verification is a milestone on a longer journey [towards accountability].”

Robert Sweatman, Interim Chair, CHS Alliance.



From top left clockwise:
Paul Jackson -
Conference Facilitator,
Robert, Bona, Shama.

LAUNCH OF THE HUMANITARIAN ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT 2020

Providing an evidence-based overview of accountability in the sector, the Humanitarian Accountability Report (HAR) 2020 reveals the current state of adherence to the CHS and what progress has been made meeting its Nine Commitments.

Using information, data and experience gathered from more than 90 verified aid organisations, the report uncovers which Commitments are being best met and where more efforts are most needed.

At the launch event a first discussion panel reflected on how far the sector has come since the launch of the CHS, and another brought new ideas on what future of accountable aid should look like. Key findings and recommendations from the report were also shared by one of its authors and the CHS Alliance's Executive Director.

PANELLISTS

- **Kate Halff**, International Committee of the Red Cross, Head of Division, Cooperation & Coordination
- **Manu Gupta**, SEEDs India, Founder
- **Millie Dollner Fjeldsted**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Head of Section, Humanitarian Action & Civil Society
- **Gwi-Yeop Son**, UN OCHA, Regional Director, Development Coordination Office Istanbul
- **Paul Knox-Clarke**, HAR 2020 contributing author & CHC Initiative
- **Tanya Wood**, CHS Alliance, Executive Director
- **Salama Bakhlah**, Loop, Board Member
- **Arbie Baguious**, Aid Re-imagined, Founder
- **Nan Buzard**, International Committee of the Red Cross, Head of Innovation



From top left clockwise: Kate, Manu, Gwi, Millie.

“The overall hope was that by agreeing upon the CHS that we would also be able to raise the bar of the overall humanitarian sector, increasing accountability and quality assurance.”

Millie Dollner Fjeldsted, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark, Head of Section, Humanitarian Action & Civil Society

TAKEAWAYS

The HAR 2020 – *Are we making aid work better for people affected by crisis?* shows that dedicated aid organisations can tackle the toughest barriers to meeting the commitments they made to people and communities. However, progress has been slower than anticipated and none of the Nine Commitments have yet been met, at an aggregated level.

As a collective, CHS certified organisations have made gains on three vital accountability issues that the aid sector has been trying to tackle for decades:

- 1. Strengthening local capacities and avoiding the negative effects of aid (Commitment 3);**
- 2. Basing humanitarian response on communication, participation and feedback with people affected by crisis (Commitment 4);**
- 3. Welcoming and addressing complaints from people affected by crisis (Commitment 5).**

Yet the HAR 2020 reveals that the aid sector has not reached its goals:

CHS Commitment 6 on coordination and complementarity is the closest to being fully met by verified organisations, while Commitment 5 on welcoming and addressing complaints is the lowest scoring.

Aggregated CHS verification data also illustrates that performance is generally better in indicators related to establishing policies rather than those related to what staff do in practice.

The HAR 2020 indicates that we are not yet seeing system-wide acceleration towards a transformative approach that gives communities and people affected by crisis strategic influence over aid.

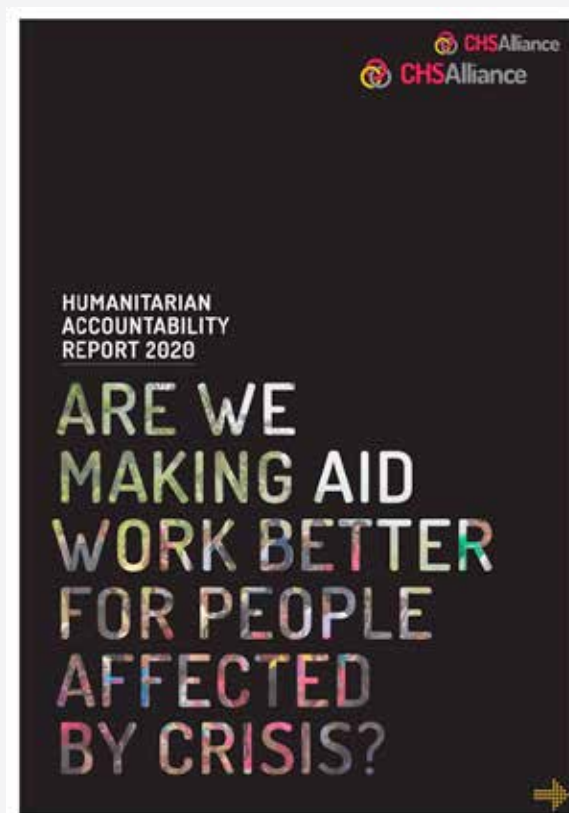
“All of the lights on the humanitarian dashboard are blinking red... there is a slow rate of change and improvements but [HAR] results show that we should be able to change more rapidly.”

Paul Knox Clarke, Co-author, HAR 2020.

To accelerate the pace of change, the HAR 2020 finds that committed aid organisations need to harness the power of the multiplier effect; they must intensify their efforts on three cross-cutting actions that raise the standard of aid across the board. Find out what they are in the report, available [online](#).

ACTIONS

- Read the [HAR 2020](#), or it's Executive Summary in [English](#) or [French](#).
- Catch up on the virtual launch of the HAR 2020 with the event [recording](#).
- Share news of the HAR 2020 through the [Raise the Standard campaign toolkit](#).



DAY TWO

thematic workshops

As the HAR 2020 demonstrates CHS Alliance member organisations have made some significant improvements in their practices as a result of applying the CHS. Day two of the Global CHS Exchange provided an excellent opportunity for Alliance members to showcase their accountability and quality successes, as well as share challenges and learnings with participants. Summaries of the member-led workshops are organised by theme on the following pages.

All virtual Global CHS Exchange delegates have access to recordings of every session on the [conference platform](#) until September 2021.

Selected recordings of the thematic workshops are also available for CHS Alliance members who did not register for the event, please contact [CHS Alliance](#) for more information if you are interested in any of the session videos.



ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED PEOPLE WORKSHOPS

YOUTH REPORTERS: HOLDING HUMANITARIAN ACTORS ACCOUNTABLE (PLAN INTERNATIONAL)

Disasters exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and inequalities of children, with girls and young women particularly hard hit in emergencies. In 2014, Plan International launched a Youth Reporter Project to support young people to share their own stories and priorities with humanitarian agencies and decision-makers, shaping response through voicing their suggestions and concerns.

SPEAKERS

- **Enan Melencio**, Plan International, Regional Emergency Preparedness & Response, Asia Pacific Region
- **Vanda Lenggkong**, Plan International, Head of Disaster Risk Management, Asia Pacific Region
- **Shreeram KC**, Plan International Nepal, Communications Manager
- **Gian Libot**, Internews, Project Lead
- **Alissa Ferry**, Plan International, Community Engagement Specialist

TAKEAWAYS

- Children and youth affected by crisis can be active drivers of change to help humanitarian responses become more appropriate, relevant, effective.
- By working with children and youth, we help build responsible and transparent aid leaders of tomorrow.
- Children and youth affected by crisis are effective, trusted communicators who help marginalised communities access lifesaving culturally appropriate information and convey feedback and complaints.

ACTIONS

- Harness the energy of youth for accountability.
- Train youth in reporting techniques to hold those in power to account.
- Explore new technologies for communicating in novel ways.

RESOURCES

- <https://plan-international.org/asia>
- https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=plan+international+nepal+youth+reporter
- https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=plan+international+philippines+youth+reporters

FEMINIST APPROACHES FOR ACCOUNTABLE HUMANITARIAN ACTION (ACTIONAID)

ActionAid and the Feminist Humanitarian Network (FHN) shared learning and case studies on the nexus between safeguarding and accountability in the humanitarian context using a feminist lens. Participants explored the critical transformations that must occur within the humanitarian system for aid to become accountable to women and marginalised groups affected by crises in the future.

SPEAKERS

- **Sumera Shrestha**, Women for Human Rights - Nepal
- **Mimidoo Achapka**, Women in Humanitarian Response in Nigeria Initiative Network
- **Mmonbeyo Nadine Joah**, Organisation for Women & Children, Liberia
- **Maryam Hussein Abdirahman**, Womankind Kenya
- **Niki Ignatiou**, ActionAid UK
- **Patricia Waliula**, ActionAid
- **Neesha Fakir**, ActionAid
- **Clare Bleasdale**, ActionAid

TAKEAWAYS


Humanitarian Responses Must:

- Involve women's networks in localisation efforts.
- Relinquish power.
- Facilitate women's leadership.

ACTIONS

- Build awareness of an organisation's power.
- Have conversations with local partners and create a safe space for dialogue and feedback.
- Promote a learning process to apply the takeaways.

Speakers:



Mimidoo Achapka
Women in Humanitarian Response in Nigeria Initiative Network

Maryam Hussein Abdirahman
Womankind Kenya


Mmonbeyo Nadine Joah
Organisation for Women and Children - Liberia

Neesha Fakir
ActionAid


Niki Ignatiou
ActionAid UK

Patricia Waliula
ActionAid

Facilitation:



Sumera Shrestha
Women for Human Rights - Nepal



MAINSTREAMING CHS COMMITMENTS INTO ORGANIZATIONAL DNA (TEARFUND UK)

Tearfund shared their annual country and partner self-assessment tool used to help determine the annual capacity building plan for each partner and country offices. Through the development of a Quality Standards tool they have been able to identify synergies for principled, quality programming, due diligence and safeguarding to help implementation for both staff and the partners they work with.

SPEAKERS

- **Lindsey Reece-Smith**, Tearfund, Head of Operations & Assurance,
- **Marina Kobzeva**, Tearfund, Quality, Accountability & Learning Lead

TAKEAWAYS & ACTIONS

- Embed CHS Commitments into internal systems and processes, make them everyone's responsibility.
- Keep checking progress regularly.
- Adapt language to suit partners' reality.



ENHANCING INCLUSION AT EVERY LEVEL OF THE ORGANISATION THROUGH A DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT (IFRC & ATENA HENSCH)

In 2016, IFRC developed the Gender and Diversity Organisational Assessment Toolkit to provide an opportunity for the National Societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to be able to analyse their gender and diversity policies, practices and approaches and to take action. Due to new measures within IFRC the toolkit needed to be revised, so the presentation was about this journey.



SPEAKERS

- Lisa Akero, IFRC, Gender and Diversity Coordinator
- Atena Hensch, Hensch Consultant, Consultant

TAKEAWAYS

- Protection, gender and inclusion are everyone's business.
- Without diversity and inclusion, we are not able to change.
- Having policies and procedures without any action is useless.

ACTIONS

- Update toolkits regularly as the world is constantly changing around us.
- Promote peer support within same region for policy/procedures/toolkit implementation.
- Approach protection, gender and inclusion in a holistic way.

RESOURCES

- The toolkit is not yet public but interested parties can ask for advanced versions at lisa.akero@ifrc.org.

FACING THE FACTS OF WHERE WE ARE AT: DRC'S GLOBAL LEARNING REVIEW TO ADDRESS COMMITMENT 5 OF THE CHS (DRC)

Danish Refugee Council (DRC) conducted a global learning review on how to address Commitment 5 of the CHS, focusing on Feedback and Complaint Response Mechanisms (FCRM). This review presented key obstacles to establishing these mechanisms, along with solutions to address those.

SPEAKERS

- **Joanna Nevill**, Danish Refugee Council Headquarters, Global Accountability and Participation Advisor
- **Charlotte Brown**, Danish Refugee Council Sudan, Complaints Response Mechanism (CRM) Officer

TAKEAWAYS

- A lack of engagement with displacement-affected people resulted in non-conformity to Commitment 5.
- DRC uncovered 10 key obstacles and opportunities to address Commitment 5 weaknesses.

ACTIONS

- Establishing FCRM systems requires detailed and clear structures, systems and staffing.
- They need extensive engagement with communities.
- Use FCRM systems as a marker for all other commitments of the CHS.

RESOURCES

- <https://www.chsalliance.org/get-support/article/drc-commitment-5-learning-brief/>
- <https://drc.ngo/media/nilpgapf/fcrm-global-review-learning-brief-short-form-final.pdf>

DISABILITY INCLUSIVE CLIENT RESPONSIVENESS (IRC)

Building on its 2018 CHS self-assessment verification, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) began to improve how it meaningfully consults and acts upon the feedback of marginalised groups. With the support of Sida, IRC began a review of how to be more disability inclusive. This presentation highlighted their experience, as well as the that of the IRC Tanzania country programme in adapting to the findings.

SPEAKERS

- **Alice Hawkes**, International Rescue Committee, Senior Technical Advisor
- **Valentina Shafina**, International Rescue Committee, Technical Specialist, Client Responsiveness
- **Pauline Thivillier**, Consultant

TAKEAWAYS

- IRC and partners will develop tools and guidance to strengthen institutional and global standards to ensure participation of persons with disabilities in accountability mechanisms.
- Inclusive Budgeting remains a critical gap in humanitarian policy and practice.
- Institutional donors need to ensure they support mainstream humanitarian actors to take a rights-based approach to disability inclusion.

ACTIONS

- Combined, universal design and reasonable accommodation guarantees equal access to feedback mechanisms to persons with disabilities.
- Offer multiple forms of communication to address access barriers and risks.
- Implement projects in collaboration with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities.

RESOURCES

- The summary of the Scoping Study on Disability Inclusive CR in the Humanitarian Exchange: <https://odihpn.org/magazine/walking-the-talk-a-participatory-review-of-the-ircs-feedback-mechanisms/>

ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH DIGITAL COMPLAINT CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (ISLAMIC RELIEF WORLDWIDE & LWF WORLD SERVICE)

The session introduced emerging debates and practices of digitalised case management systems for complaint handling and offered interactive platforms to facilitate exchange of ideas between participants via breakout sessions.

SPEAKERS

- **Mayumi Fuchi**, Global Programme Accountability and Learning Lead, Islamic Relief Worldwide
- **Petra Feil**, LWF World Service, Quality Assurance and Accountability
- **Cat Skehan**, Christian Aid, Humanitarian Accountability Specialist
- **Allan Calma**, Lutheran World Federation, Global Humanitarian Coordinator

TAKEAWAYS

- To start a digital case management system, it is important to develop a long-term project plan, resource properly and develop a clear flowchart to identify requirements.
- Digitalisation of complaint case management system can enhance accountability to people affected by crisis by introducing real-time reporting and quick access to information.
- It can quickly show trends and analysis, for continuous improvement within the organisation and the sector.

ACTIONS

- Join CHS Alliance's [AAP Community of Practice \(CoP\)](#) to progress this work.
- Establish a Task Force on Digital Complaint Case Management System to continue the discussion, possibly as part of the Alliance's AAP CoP.

WHATSAPP FOR TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION IN CASH TRANSFER PROGRAMMING (IFRC)

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) presented their experience using WhatsApp for Business as a new technology for communicating with migrants for cash transfer programming, sharing learning from country delegations in Latin America.

SPEAKERS

- **Diana Medina**, IFRC, Regional Community Engagement and Accountability Manager
- **Melissa Monzon**, IFRC, CEA Sr. Officer
- **Carla Guananga**, IFRC, CEA Officer

TAKEAWAYS

- The use of technology helps to connect people more than ever because of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Although WhatsApp is a great tool, don't forget about the people that can be left out due to a lack of internet access.

ACTIONS

- Explore how WhatsApp intersects with other communication methods.
- Investigate how to ensure inclusion.
- Understand how to budget for such initiatives (platforms are free, but the planning and preparation has a cost).

RESOURCES

- IFRC's WhatsApp Line Case Study Peru (EN & ES): <https://communityengagementhub.org/resource/covid-19-migration-whatsapp-business-line/>.

How WA help us being transparent?



- Implementing a two-way communication tool helped to strength the program transparency.
- People knew they had a channel they could go to in case they had doubts or questions about the program.
- Having a WA line meant having a direct link to the Red Cross, which helped to increase trust.
- The Line can also be a channel to receive reports or complaints about the program.

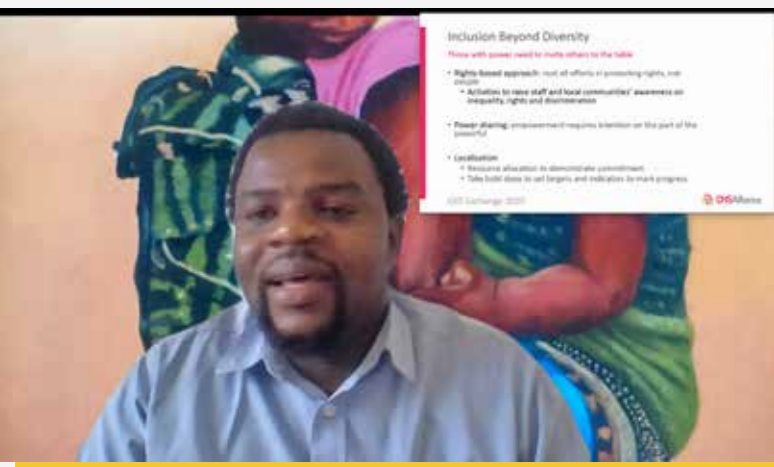


SAFEGUARDING AGAINST RACISM WITHIN PROGRAMS (ADRA & OXFAM AMERICA)

As we aim to strengthen our accountability of the abuse of power in the aid sector, safeguarding leads, and all staff, need to consider harm caused by racism towards staff, partners, and local communities. This session brought together panellists from ADRA International, Fathers Against Abuse, and Oxfam America to discuss ways to disrupt the programme cycle to identify and prevent imperialistic and racist practices towards local communities that aid organisations create with their presence and activities.

SPEAKERS

- **Brooke Feldman**, ADRA, Global Safeguarding Advisor
- **Jennifer Emond**, Oxfam America, Senior Advisor, Safeguarding
- **Nixon Nembaware**, Mercy Corps Zimbabwe, Founder of Fathers Against Abuse and Gender Specialist
- **Yemisi Songo-Williams**, ADRA, Senior Advisor for Knowledge Management, Safeguarding



TAKEAWAYS

- Given the harmful effects of racism and imperialism in our programmes, we have a responsibility to safeguard against this abuse of power.
- We can begin to understand and accomplish this by centralising the voices and shifting the decision-making power to local staff and communities.
- We need to commit resources to demonstrate commitment to diversity.

ACTIONS

- Initiate similar conversations with local staff and communities to learn how they experience racism within programmes and their proposed solutions.
- Disrupt partnerships and programmes in meaningful ways to share the balance of power in decision making.
- Begin putting numbers to this commitment – budgets and MEAL indicators – to track progress over time.

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON AAP (HERE)

HERE facilitated a panel discussion on how Covid-19 has impacted AAP for organisations. Concern Worldwide and MSF provided the perspective of their respective emergency departments, while the Institute of Social Studies presented some specifics from research into how Covid-19 has affected complaint mechanisms.

SPEAKERS

- **Ed Schenkenberg**, HERE, Executive Director
- **Mari Carmen Vinales**, Médecins sans Frontières, Head of Emergency Unit
- **Dominic Crowley**, Concern Worldwide, Emergency Response Director
- **Samantha Melis**, Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University, Humanitarian Researcher



TAKEAWAYS

- The pandemic has challenged the model of community engagement based on geographical proximity.
- Alternative models have worked where trust had already been established.
- Attention so far has not been put into anticipating future developments, although a likely reduction in funding in 2021 may have dramatic consequences.

ACTIONS

- HERE will conduct research to identify the impact the pandemic has on organisational decision-making and prioritisation.
- CHS Alliance will release research conducted with the Institute of Social Studies into how Covid-19 has impacted complaint mechanisms.

EFFICIENT AND INCLUSIVE COMPLAINT MECHANISMS CATERING FOR PSEAH (COMMUNITY WORLD SERVICE ASIA & ACT CHURCH OF SWEDEN)

The session presented four examples of complaints mechanisms (CRM), highlighting challenges and learnings. Overall, the examples showed the need for extensive consultations with all stakeholders, constant awareness raising with communities and staff, and how in-person presence of staff in camp is helpful. Language and cultural gaps associated with complaining can lead to taboos around the topic. Rolling out a CRM can also be an opportunity for prevention in itself.

SPEAKERS

- **Ester Dross**, PSEA Specialist
- **Miriam Warui**, Somalia PSEA taskforce coordinator
- **Anna Muinonen**, Finn Church Aird, Senior Quality and Accountability Advisor
- **James Whitehead**, Forest Peoples Programmes, Director
- **David Mueller**, Lutheran World Service

TAKEAWAYS

- In-depth consultation with all stakeholders, including communities, is key for the success of an inter-agency community-based complaint mechanism.
- Rolling out a CRM is a great occasion to build staff awareness on PSEA commitments and importance of welcoming complaints.
- Ability to process complaints in a timely and confidential manner is the key to trust.

ACTIONS

- Develop context specific awareness raising tools for communities.
- Identify clear referral pathways and legal frameworks before complaints come in.
- Multiply the complaints channels and note that informal and in-person channels are as important as formal channels.

CHS AND ITS ROLE IN PREVENTING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, ABUSE AND HARASSMENT: LAUNCH OF UPDATED CHS ALLIANCE PSEAH INDEX AND HANDBOOK

To strengthen the CHS for PSEAH, the CHS Alliance with support from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office released updated versions of the PSEAH Index and the PSEAH Implementation Quick Reference Handbook.

SPEAKERS

- **Jules Frost**, CHS Alliance, Head of Programmes & Partnerships
- **Mary Thompson**, UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), Senior Social Development Adviser
- **Belinda Lucas**, Consultant
- **Jo Thomson**, Consultant
- **Lucy Heaven Taylor**, Consultant

TAKEAWAYS

- The updated Index clearly states the safeguarding requirements for each relevant indicator of the CHS Verification Framework.
- Each chapter of the new Quick Implementation handbook references the relevant indicators and requirements of the PSEAH Index and includes a new chapter on Sexual Misconduct in the Workplace.

ACTIONS

- Download the updated [PSEAH Implementation Quick Reference Handbook](#).
- Access the latest [CHS PSEAH Index](#).

RESOURCES

- View the session: <https://youtu.be/6Lan4WJUtlM>

DEVELOPING A PSEA TOOLKIT FOR LOCAL PARTNERS (CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES)

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) led an exchange of knowledge, learning and feedback on the their PSEA pilot Toolkit. Participants were able to review a selection of tools, recommend improvements and identify missing items, or resources to be strengthened. The session was used to collate feedback and recommendations from the participants for improving the selected tools.

SPEAKERS

- **Amy Anderson**, CRS Technical Advisor PSEA & Protection Mainstreaming
- **John Rezel Day**, CRS Emergencies Program Officer
- **Tanja Menicanin**, CRS Technical Advisor for PSEA
- **Cassandra Bissianthe**, CRS Haiti, Partnership & Capacity Building Technical Advisor
- **Aude Archambault**, Consultant

TAKEAWAYS

- The code of conduct tool in this PSEA toolkit is a comprehensive way to support partner agencies to create their own code of conduct.
- CRS has adapted tools to be used online. i.e., InterAction video No Excuse for Abuse.
- Key is to operationalise sustainable systems that meet international PSEA standards.

ACTIONS

- Accompaniment, on-the job support and mentoring are important to enable partner success.
- Participants were encouraged to use the toolkit for their work.
- CRS would welcome feedback from organisations using the toolkit.

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS: A SYSTEM'S APPROACH TO SAFEGUARDING (WORLD VISION & ACTIONAID INTERNATIONAL)

World Vision and ActionAid use a systems approach to safeguarding. This approach is holistic, considering each corner of the organisation and each aspect of safeguarding, to better communicate exactly what safeguarding is, how it happens, who is involved, and why we must iterate on a constant cycle of learning. The session shared practical ways to embed safeguarding and shift organisational culture.

SPEAKERS

- **Elysia Nisan**, World Vision International, Senior Director of Safeguarding
- **Ruby Moshenska**, ActionAid International, Global SEAH & Safeguarding Lead

TAKEAWAYS

- Safeguarding must be the thread that runs through all structures and processes.
- Strong internal and external accountability is needed.
- Everyone must own safeguarding and share the 'burden', senior buy-in is vital.

ACTIONS

- Ensure safeguarding strategies are context specific.
- Create champions in organisations.
- Challenge stereotypes and make sure safeguarding roles are properly staffed (more than 1%!) and paid.

actionaid



ActionAid International:

- Takes an Intersectional Feminist approach to Safeguarding
- Believes that to address abuses of power – individual and structural change is needed
- Recognises that harm needs long term, sustainable, and structural solutions which everyone is committed to



HOW HAS COVID-19 ACCELERATED THE ADOPTION OF DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR REMOTE PEOPLE MANAGEMENT? (DIRECT AID SOCIETY)

Direct Aid Society's activities in fighting Covid-19 started in Africa this January by preparing procedures and systems for the association's offices in the field, to direct employees to the best ways to prevent and protect all the association's partners in all countries. This was achieved thanks to a rapid transition to homeworking for all team members through training staff on the enablers that increase efficiency and performance during remote work.

SPEAKER

Hala Al-Humaidhi, Direct Aid Society

TAKEAWAYS

The success of digital acceleration in Direct Aid Society was possible with:

- Support and continuous leadership communication.
- Rapid transition to flexible homeworking working.
- Training courses delivered on remote working and the use of digital solutions.

ACTIONS

- Monitor the needs of staff members, especially those most disadvantaged.
- Reach out to all staff worldwide to provide psychological and moral support.
- Continue the exchange of experiences among field teams.

RESOURCES

- <https://www.chsalliance.org/get-support/article/direct-aid-response-to-covid-19/>

NAVIGATING A CODE OF CONDUCT DURING PUBLIC HEALTH CRISES (COAST)

During the Covid-19 pandemic an organisational code of conduct and set of ethics could serve as a “go to” resource for finding high-level guidance and contact information for aid workers. Covering a range of ethical conduct and concerns these policies can remind and emphasise a common culture of integrity and responsibility.

SPEAKERS

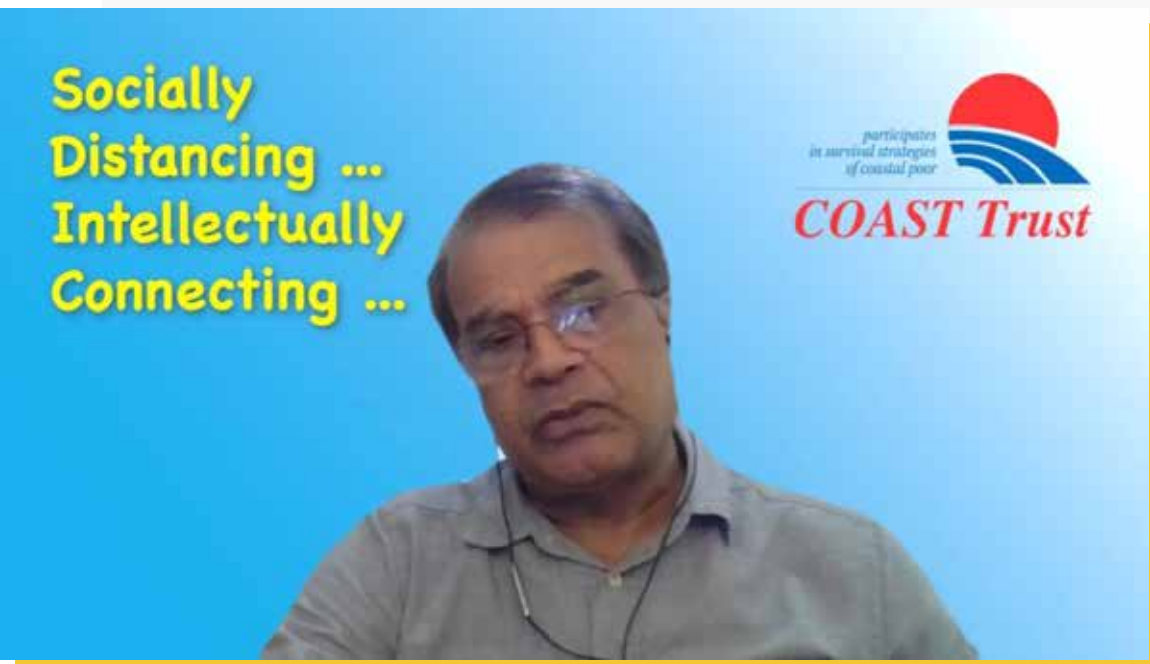
- **Rezaul Karim Chowdhury**, Coastal Association for Social Transformation (COAST Trust), Executive Director
- **Gozel Baltaeva**, CHS Alliance, People Management Adviser

TAKEAWAYS

- There are multiple benefits in developing an organisational code of conduct.
- A code of conduct offers an invaluable opportunity for a responsible organisation to create a supportive environment and an increased level of public confidence.
- Codes need to evolve with reality.

ACTIONS

- Engage with the [CHS Alliance](#) on the code of conduct toolkit production.



BREAKING SILOS TO KEEP STAFF SAFE (GISF, DUTY OF CARE INTERNATIONAL & CHS ALLIANCE)

If we want staff to stay healthy and operate effectively, they need to be – and feel - safe and secure. NGOs have a tendency to work in silos which means that things can fall through the gaps. The session looked at developing an integrated Human Resources and Security Management system to work together to create a safe environment for staff.

SPEAKERS

- **Heather Hughes**, GISF, Deputy Director
- **Christine Williamson**, Duty of Care International, Director
- **Gozel Baltaeva**, CHS Alliance, People Management Adviser
- **Rebekka Meissner**

TAKEAWAYS

- Working collaboratively, HR and Security Risk Management can provide more effective support to management.
- Wellbeing, safety and security of staff is more effectively managed by an integrated approach.
- 50% of session attendees found that the collaboration between their SRM and HR could be improved.

ACTIONS

- Increase awareness on the importance of HR and Security Management integration.
- Conversation will continue at HHR2020 and webinars.
- Promote resources on the issue.

RESOURCES

- www.gisf.ngo/resources
- www.dutyofcareinternational.co.uk/resources
- www.chsalliance.org/get-support/resources

DRIVING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION WITH VIRTUAL ON-BOARDING AND INDUCTION (MEDAIR)

Getting new international staff to the field is a challenge in Covid-19 times. Many start remotely and wait for months to be deployed in their respective programs. What needs to happen to enable a successful start in a new position? In this participatory session Medair's Learning & Development advisor shared how the organisation transformed their global induction from in-person to digital.

SPEAKER

- **Jonas Schaefer**, Medair, Learning & Development Advisor

TAKEAWAYS & ACTIONS

- Keep the induction social.
- Engage meaningfully, even more so in crisis.
- Explore to keep learning and growing.

RESPONDING TO VUCA WORLD – AGILITY FROM STAFF EXPERIENCE (WORLD VISION INTERNATIONAL)

The outbreak of Covid-19 is a great example for the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world we live in. While navigating through the storm and upholding business continuity, organisations face new challenges and many need to adopt a new mindset to be able to adapt quickly and indeed to survive by transforming structures, processes, management of people, ways of working, leadership and strategies.

SPEAKERS

- **Annekatriin Madlung**, Global Recourse Ltd, Managing Director
- **Johara Boukaa**, World Vision International, Senior Advisor Staff Care

TAKEAWAYS

- The core of Agile: Collaborate to deliver results in small steps and then Reflect to Improve.
- Core enablers of agility: Technology, Professional Support, Growth Mindset.
- Flexibility is not the same as agility.

WORKING WELL: STAFF CARE AND WELLBEING IN TRYING TIMES

Several barriers exist to fulfilling the Duty of Care in the CHS guidance “to promote mental and physical well-being and avoid long-term exhaustion, burnout, injury or illness”. Leads from the CHS Alliance initiative to cultivate compassionate and caring aid organisations explore the barriers and opportunities to be well, serve well.

SPEAKERS

- **Melissa Pitotti**, CHS Alliance Initiative to Cultivate Caring, Compassionate Aid Organisations
- **Nurhaida Rahim**, CHS Alliance Initiative to Cultivate Caring, Compassionate Aid Organisations

TAKEAWAYS

- The idea of compassion underpins humanitarian work.
- Culture, costs, lack of understanding and prioritisation are all barriers to staff mental good health.
- Outside assistance, internal conversations, virtual peer support and changed incentive structures help organisations fulfil their Duty of Care.

ACTIONS

- People are encouraged to keep up to date with the [initiative](#) online.
- To get involved in the Initiative more broadly, contact compassionateorg@chsalliance.org.



DAY THREE

verification & the CHS

The third day of the Global CHS Exchange focused on the themes of verify and trust. Participants debated CHS verification as a game changer for Grand Bargain commitments towards localisation and harmonisation and shared thoughts on the CHS revision process which will start in 2021.

SESSION 1: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CHS VERIFICATION

In the first session of the day participants heard from CHS Alliance, HQAI and verified organisations about CHS verification options and the experience of undertaking the process.

SPEAKERS

- **Adrien Muratet**, CHS Alliance, Verification Manager
- **Pierre Hauselmann**, HQAI, Director
- **Hana Abul Husn**, War Child Holland, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist
- **Prem Livingstone Navaneethar**, EFICOR
- **Maurice Sadlier**, World Vision Ireland, Programmes & Policy Director

After a brief presentation of the new CHS Alliance [Verification Scheme](#) and its three verification options – the new [CHS self-assessment](#), [independent verification](#) and [certification](#), member organisations shared verifications experiences, highlighting:

- The new self-assessment tool made the process quicker, easier and more accessible for small organisations. It arrived at the right time as it avoids travel in times of Covid-19.
- The verification process triggered important self-reflection conversations across organisations' departments and locations.
- The process in itself is also a trust building exercise with partners and helps create processes for documentation and evidence collection.

SESSION 2: SHIFTING THE DYNAMIC – CHS VERIFICATION AS A POWER BROKER IN THE DRIVE FOR LOCALISATION

The second session looked at the view from national NGOs on the potential of CHS verification. Discussions centred on verification as a way to build trust in the sector. Verified national NGOs shared stories of verification being a leveller between international and national actors – helping to break down power barriers.

SPEAKERS

- **Phillipe Besson**, Multilateral Division, SDC, Swiss Humanitarian Aid, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Co-chair GB Localisation work stream / Head
- **Dr Win Tun Kyi**, Karuna Mission Social Solidarity, National Director
- **Hiba Hamzi**, Program Coordinator, Development Action without Borders / Naba'a
- **Pascaline Kangethe**, ActionAid Kenya, Former Head of Programme Quality and Compliance & ActionAid International, Accountability Planning and Reporting Lead
- **John Ede**, Ohaha Family Foundation, CEO & of the Charter4Change Advocacy Working Group Co-Chair

Global South based national organisations shared concrete examples of CHS verification improving and fast-tracking their donor due diligence assessments. Speakers also stressed:

- Escalating discussions around the idea of CHS for fast tracking due diligence and explore the idea of CHS passporting.
- Taking the conversation on the CHS and verification to country level dialogues, platforms and networks where localisation issues are discussed.
- INGOs are encouraged to promote the Standard and support its application among their partners.
- Reinforcing local to local and peer to peer capacity strengthening to support national and local organisations' access to CHS verification.

“CHS verification is adding value, strong learning and continuous ‘improvement.’”

Hiba Hazmi, Naba'a

SESSION 3: WHAT IS NEEDED TO CREATE IMPACT? – THE ROLE OF DONORS IN RECOGNISING THE CHS

The views of national NGOs were shared with government donors and funding mechanisms to discuss the potential donors have to take CHS verification to scale and drive the change they want to see in the sector.

SPEAKERS

- **Regina “Nanette” Salvador-Antequis**, Global Alliance for Empowering Partnership, Chair & Ecosystems Work for Essential Benefits, Inc, Executive Director
- **Peter Taylor**, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, Head of Safeguarding Unit
- **Mille Døllner Fjeldsted**, Ministry Of Foreign Affairs Of Denmark, Humanitarian Action, Migration & Civil Society, Head of Section
- **Saleh Saeed Obe**, Disasters Emergency Committee, Chief Executive
- **Ruben Mulder**, Dutch Relief Alliance
- **Benjamin Hanna**, Federal Foreign Office, Germany, Deputy Head Of Division (Humanitarian Affairs - Operations)

Government donors and national funding bodies shared how they currently utilise CHS verification to drive improvements in the work of the organisation’s they support.

Speakers also stressed the potential of increased use of CHS verification in donor processes, and greater uptake by more funders:

“Verification of organisational culture and taking a survivor-centred approach is central to shift the sector.”

Saleh Saeed Obe, Disasters Emergency Committee, on why CHS verification is essential for those they fund.

“We see CHS independent verification as the gold standard. Why? It’s widely recognised & measurable.”

Peter Taylor, FCDO

“National NGOs should not be expected to go through CHS verification by MAGIC! Partnership is key and donor recognition is critical.”

Nanette Salvador-Antequis, Global Alliance for Empowering Partnership

“I encourage all donors to make it a requirement to verify against the CHS. As we can see from the Humanitarian Accountability Report 2020 – there is room for improvement... It’s hard work, but it pays off!”

Mille Døllner Fjeldsted, Ministry Of Foreign Affairs Of Denmark

“By having CHS verification as a member requirement, we can better achieve our own strategic priorities, as well as making sure we’re supporting accountable aid.”

Ruben Mulder, Dutch Relief Alliance

REVISING THE CHS

How to make the CHS fit for the future? The final session of the Global CHS Exchange invited participants to contribute ideas on the future of the Standard. An interactive mapping session collated diverse ideas to share with the CHS Steering Committee ahead of the revision process which will start in 2021.

SPEAKERS

- **Tanya Wood**, CHS Alliance, Executive Director
- **Aninia Nadig**, Sphere, Policy and Practice Manager

Participants shared many views and desired approaches on the revision, broadly along the following themes:

- The purpose of the CHS as a standard is to put people at the centre of aid, provide shared values, principles and a framework for everyone working with vulnerable people affected by crisis. The value of the CHS is its power to transform the sector by fostering learning and improvement, as well as allowing organisations to demonstrate performance and compliance. The Standard is a way to build trust and transparency among stakeholders.
- Any revision should keep the content of the Standard simple, covering minimum requirements and essential elements. It will also be important to look at areas that need strengthening in the new version, which could include inclusion, complaints, the environment and financing.
- The importance of ensuring the revision process is inclusive and pays particular attention to the involvement of people affected by crisis and first responders across the globe.

Next year, the CHS Steering Committee - which includes CHS Alliance, Sphere and Groupe URD - will start the CHS revision process in consultation with the aid sector across the globe, including aid workers and people affected by crisis. To keep up to date with the consultation sign up for the CHS Alliance's [monthly newsletter](#).

PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK

Results from the event evaluation survey showed that participants particularly valued:

- Analysis and findings from the Humanitarian Accountability Report 2020.
- A focus on localisation and voices of NNGOs.
- PSEAH Index and Implementation Handbook updates and safeguarding workshops.
- Sharing collective challenges and solutions together, especially on complaints mechanisms.
- Gaining a deeper understanding of the CHS verification options.
- Hearing donor insights into aligning due diligence processes with CHS verification.
- Online networking opportunities and an accessible virtual platform.

Evaluation survey respondents also suggested the following improvements for future learning events, that we will try to address:

- Simplify and consolidate participant interaction channels.
- Provide more time for deeper discussions, greater participant engagement and networking.
- Increase accessibility and inclusion through greater use of captioning, sign language, language interpretation and session timings.
- Promote more voices from across the world - people affected by crisis, local and national NGOs.

Thank you to all the participants for their great engagement in the discussions and for making this Exchange a success!

