

## MINUTES OF THE CHS ALLIANCE BOARD

21 & 23 June 2022

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

### PRESENT:

Hana Abul Husn (HAH), Mohamed Almasri (MA), John Beverley (JB, treasurer), Allan Calma (AC), Lola Gostelow (LG, Chair), Yegana Guliyeva (YG), Coleen Heemskerk (CH), Rehema Kajungu (RK), Jacqueline Koster (JK), Shama Mall (SM, Vice-Chair), Susan Otieno (SO), Sarah Pelicaric (SP), Meg Sattler (MS), Marina Skuric Prodanovic (MSP), Michael Wickham Moriarty (MWM)

### IN ATTENDANCE:

Tanya Wood (TW, Executive Director/ED), Matthew Carter (MC, Board Representative on the CHS Steering Committee), H  l  ne Maillet (HM, minutes only)

### APOLOGIES:

Day 1:

Michael Barnett (MB) not attending, HAH and MSP leaving earlier

Day 2:

MS not attending, AC, MSP, HAH and SM leaving earlier

### INVITEES:

Rosa Argent (RA, Director of Communications, Membership and Outreach), Patrick Hartmann (PH, Director of Support Services/CFO), Adrien Muratet (AM, Verification Lead), Aninia Nadig (AN, CHS Revision Manager), Melissa Pitotti (MP, Organisational Culture Manager), Audrey Rudny (AR, Finance Manager), Bonaventure Sokpoh (BS, CHS and Outreach Senior Adviser), Philip Tamminga (PT, CHS Revision Manager)

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS (paper 01)

### 1.1. Welcome, apologies, declarations of interest and agenda

LG welcomed everyone and read the vision and mission of the CHS Alliance. She then asked all Board members to share a story about what they have done for the Alliance since the last Board meeting. These included: personal reflections on LinkedIn / Twitter on Board member role (which could be used to promote the Governing well project), contributing to Board sub-committees, supporting the Secretariat, looking at operational issues, supported funding efforts (e.g. dialogue with donors), and promoting the CHS at meetings (e.g. in South Sudan where there was an opportunity to talk about the Standard, in Canada about compliance and the role of CHS, in Bangladesh sharing experience on safeguarding and how the CHS is used in this regard, meeting on harmonization of humanitarian standards, workshop in Uganda and UNHCR reps, Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week in May – sharing experience on verification journey, launching the CHS revision, speaking at the Governing Well session and HQAI event). Other Board members were engaged in growing the membership: encouraging and supporting organisations applying and getting for instance the Ministry of Gender in Uganda to advocate for the CHS. Lastly, Board members whose organisation is involved in the Ukraine response shared how they are promoting and supporting the use of the CHS and highlighted the need for training newly hired staff about CHS and PSEA.

On this last point, the Chair reminded the Board of the need to reflect on the Ukraine crisis and what CHS Alliance can do to support responses to future crises.

The meeting was **quorate** and had been convened according to the Statutes. Apologies were noted. There was no declaration of interest.

The **agenda was approved by consensus**

## 1.2. Minutes of March 2022 Board meeting

**The minutes of 29 & 31 March 2022 Board meeting were adopted as a true and correct record of the meeting.**

### 1.3. Action arising not appearing elsewhere on the agenda

HM clarified that completed actions are stored in a separate “completed actions” document. The actions arising document **was noted**.

### 1.4. Governance Calendar

Calendar was noted.

Dates for the September Board meeting: 15-16 September, in Geneva.

## **2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT (paper 02)**

ED report was shared ahead of time in the Board papers.

Summary of Q&A session on the ED report:

- UN interest in verification (see detailed response below under Verification section): further to Board question, it was clarified that bringing UN in the membership would not change the fee structure (two categories of membership with clear fee structure for each). Questions about verification to be addressed in the verification section below.
- CHS revision: Board members insisted on topics such as accessibility (through language), perception of diversity throughout the project, ownership, fundraising for the project (see more details in FRAC section below)
- Investigator Qualification Training Scheme (IQTS): Board members wanted to know more about required resources and support to manage this. The ED responded that the scheme is creating a lot of interest, but that it will require a heavy investment in the CHS Alliance systems to manage this training. So, should we outsource this, e.g. to Humentum, or develop CHS Alliance systems is one of the questions the team is considering.

**MSP left the meeting – meeting still quorate**

- Safeguarding: SM made the point that though there are many initiatives concerning PSEAH, these tend not to be joined up, particularly in country. Board members made several suggestions on this topic from collaborating more with national orgs to support them in the process to setting up a community of practice on safeguarding. They also raised concern about how to engage local actors who are doing similar initiatives but do not have funding. All agreed that there is collaboration at global level but there is still work to do to connect with local actors and work through existing PSEAH coordination bodies.
- Netherland-funded project: ED explained that a solid two-year proposal had been submitted to the Dutch government triggered by change in nature of the project.
- Internal Human Resources: the number of direct reporting lines to ED was still a concern and the ED shared that plans are to restructure the team with arrival of the new Director of Policy, Impact and Advocacy. Also need to review the way we work internally, specifically with regard to pressure

that the Support Services team is under, and JB is supporting the Secretariat to look at options for improvement.

Lastly the ED flagged the need to get a better understanding of the role of CHS Alliance in crises (linked to Ukraine crisis – see also section 1 above) – building on dialogue with the DEC and their roles on steering committee for the real time evaluation. She then asked Board members to share suggestions on how to shape the next Humanitarian Accountability Report (HAR) and increase its impact as evidence builds.

### **The ED report was noted.**

### **3. FRAC – audit report (paper 03)**

PH attended the meeting.

*Note: As per page 2 of March Board minutes, MWM was appointed Treasurer in March.*

MWM presented the report including the funding pipeline for 2022-2024, highlighting that some (less certain) proposals were not included here. He confirmed that the FRAC approved the revised 2022 budget.

Money is still to be raised for the CHS revision: a projection was shared with Board members should this need to come from our reserves. There is an agreement with other copyright holders that money for the revision should be fundraised for, and not taken from core funding. An update about funding for the CHS revision project will be shared with the Board at its September meeting.

The Treasurer updated the Board on the payment of membership – coming in at an acceptable rate although a bit behind last year at the same period.

Risk management approach: At its June meeting the FRAC discussed the new risk management proposal and will hold a workshop to go more into the content of the risks at the September Board meeting. For this meeting, Board will look at risks 1.4 (on Verification scheme) and 1.5 (on membership growth) in the relevant agenda items.

AC, SO, HAH, JK left the meeting – meeting still quorate

### **4. MNC REPORT (paper 04)**

RA attended the session. SM is reporting to the Board on behalf of MNC chair.

The Chair expressed huge thanks to Robert Sweatman who will continue chairing the MNC, until a new Chair is designated after the Board elections in September. Existing Board members were also encouraged to consider taking on this role.

#### 4.1. Board elections

The three Board members running for re-election were excused for this part of the meeting (CH, RK, YG).

**The Board approved the list of nominees for Board election, subject to payment of the membership fees.**

Note: Two nominating organisations have not yet paid their fees, but the Secretariat is in touch with them.

SM mentioned that members will have the opportunity to meet with the candidates on 27 Sep at the CHS Exchange. The voting will open on 20 Sep and close at midday on 28 Sep, results will be announced during the General Assembly on 29 Sep.

Noted that there are now five seats available for members as HAH will leave War Child Holland and therefore her seat will become vacant. The total number of vacant seats on the board will be eight.

#### 4.2. CHS Alliance Membership applications

SM presented the eight applications recommended by the MNC for membership of the Alliance:

- **Yemeni Response Council**
- **APROMOS**
- **Garib Unnayan Sangstha (GUS)**
- **Community Development Foundation (CDF)**
- **Safety N Us Trust**
- **Farmers Development Organisation**
- **Lodhran Pilot Project**
- **Shafak Organisation**

There was a discussion on one of the organisations in relation to fees, where the Board requested further work from the Secretariat to confirm further process about fee requests. At the September Board meeting, an approach to membership fee reduction will be discussed in more depth.

MSP re-joined the meeting.

#### The Board approved the eight applications.

##### **Action:**

- ◆ *Comms team to follow up with newly accepted members*

JK re-joined the meeting.

#### 4.3. Principles on loss of membership (page 45 of paper 04)

The secretariat is developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for implementing our Statutes Article 13 on loss of membership, with input and guidance from the MNC. This is still work in progress and is linked to further discussions on fee reductions that will take place at the September Board meeting.

#### 4.4. Membership dialogue and membership survey

In order to implement the new strategy, and catalyse the value of the membership, the Secretariat will be in touch with each member organisation, to get feedback on how they are engaging with the CHS to structure a dialogue at the General Assembly.

A discussion was held on the risk 1.5 "Membership of the Alliance. The results will be fed into the Risk matrix for discussion at the September Board meeting.

## 5. WHAT'S COMING (paper 05)

The ED presented forthcoming events:

- An IASC session on “System Change for Greater Accountability” on Friday 24 June at 15.00 GVA. It will promote our work on the Collective accountability Results Tracker and we will be using messaging from the HAR in this session. The “system wide” consideration to accountability is important for the CHS positioning.
- CHS Exchange on Tuesday 27 and Wednesday 28 September: the annual forum for our members and the broader sector. There will be four key sessions. More details and draft agenda in paper 05, pages 1-3.
- The CHS Alliance General Assembly on 29 September: we aim to conduct consultation with members about two key issues (membership and verification).

A facilitator is being identified to lead us through these three days of CHS Exchange and GA.

### **Governing Well Report:**

MP gave a short presentation on the status of the Governing Well project. The report is in the final review phase. She thanked: Lola for chairing the Advisory Circle, with participation of TW and SO; CH for recruiting the moderator of the Act Alliance Board, Erik Lysén, who was interviewed; JK for connecting us to the Chair of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank Kenneth Kim; SM for her Board Vice Chair Naila Hussain’s effort to engage staff before her interview; and others who participated in the 17 May Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week event to validate the findings of the report.

### **Board members agreed to:**

- 1) all sign on to the foreword of the report (included in the Board pack – paper 05, pages 5-6);**
- 2) reflect on one or more of the report's "5 questions Governing Boards should be asking" in the next Board meeting; and**
- 3) participate in a session in the CHS Exchange with Board representatives of our members as part of the roll-out of the report.**

SP left the meeting – meeting still quorate.

### **Action:**

- ◆ *draft Governing Well Report to be shared with Board members in days following the Board meeting.*

## **DAY TWO.**

### ***in camera session***

## 6. VERIFICATION UPDATE (paper 06)

AM and BS attended the session.

Update of verification process figures: five organisations completed the self-assessment in 2022 and 59 organisations have started the process. Discussions are underway with UNHCR and WHO regarding CHS verification.

Verification platform: the development phase has started and the aim is to have it finalized by the end of the year. There will be a self-assessment page, peer learning space and a public dashboard (with verification scores, disaggregated data and specific analytics, enabling to show evolution over years). The visual look of the platform will be shared with the Board at next meeting, if possible.

Verification scheme review: the revised Terms of Reference (paper 06, page 2) for the review have had inputs from the Verification Advisory Panel (VAP). They have requested clarity on expectations and process, and there was a debate among the VAP about the composition of the team (is technical auditing expertise needed?). They also wanted to ensure they understand Board's expectations.

Next steps:

- Consolidate the VAP and Board feedback
- Advertise the ToR at end of June
- Inform members about the process
- Consult with members on the scheme review at the GA.

The ED explained that the role of Director of Policy, Impact and Advocacy is being recruited to engage on this piece of work.

Then Board members were asked to share their views about risk 1.4 "Improving accessibility of the verification scheme". Results will be fed into the risk matrix and discussed at the next Board meeting.

MA left the meeting – meeting still quorate

Board members highlighted the importance of focusing the review to have a verification scheme fit for purpose and making it more accessible for NNGOs. It will be separate from the revision of the CHS though the two will obviously connect. Also flagging the danger of drawing generalizations from extreme moments (review during COVID crisis). It is important we get the views from national and international organisations about their verification experience. The Board also would like to ensure that not only we are clear about what organisations are committed to when joining or undertaking verification for the first time but also about what the responsibilities are, once they have committed. Some Board members raised a concern about measurement dictating programming and this impacting internal motivation and continuity.

The Secretariat clarified that the review will provide the analysis, upon which will require decision making with the Board and the Team.

## **7. SALARY REVIEW (paper 07)**

SM chaired the session.

PH attended the session.

Meeting still quorate

The Board was requested to approve the new Reward Policy of CHS Alliance, with its new salary grids, and the creation of a new People and Culture Committee (PCC) as a formal sub-committee of the Board, which will require an amendment to the Statutes.

Board members requested clarity on some parts and terminology used in the Reward Policy. Regarding the cost-of-living adjustment the Board suggested to include that the Executive Director pay award for cost of living is granted based on a proposal put forward to the People and Culture Committee.

The ED clarified that the remote working policy at CHS Alliance includes an expectation that staff come to the office two days per week. The Board discussed options to increase diversity in the workforce, including by recruiting outside of UK and Switzerland. More work will be done on how best to respond to this.

Regarding the scope of the People and Culture Committee, the Chair suggested that the PCC also be responsible for the recruitment of ED, internal staff complaints about safeguarding, annual development plans of Directors and for dealing with the non-member Board nominations (i.e. moving this to PCC from MNC). The Board agreed to take Chair's points in consideration in the future, but to proceed with the proposed plan for now. (PCC ToR in paper 07, p.19)

The change in the Reward Policy as well as other changes (highlighted in paper 07, p.21) will trigger changes in the Staff Rules and Regulations. The Board agreed to adopt those changes by email.

**The Board unanimously approved the Reward Policy and its salary grids, subject to the change re process for the ED cost-of-living adjustment.**

**Actions:**

- ◆ *HM to amend the Reward policy and make it available to staff*
- ◆ *SMT and HM to finalise the operational guidance to be annexed to the Reward Policy*
- ◆ *HM to prepare revised Staff rules and regulations for Board approval*

**8. CHS REVISION (no paper)**

AN and PT attended the session

AN re-explained to all Board members where the CHS comes from (the Joint Standards Initiative and the combination of three different standards and a quality & accountability methodology), its aim (making aid more effective and accountable) and the challenges encountered (COVID-19, climate emergency, mistrust and miscommunication, participation and inclusion, rethinking power dynamics). She reminded that the process is global but has to be rooted locally, and emphasized five points to identify what success would look like:

1. A more accessible and inclusive standard
2. Relevant for today and future challenges
3. Better known and used by many more stakeholders
4. Driving continuous, measurable improvements
5. Increasing accountability at all levels

She reaffirmed that the aim of the revision is not to replace the existing standard but improving and building on it. AN then shared the revision process timeline with mention that we are now in the 1<sup>st</sup> round of consultation and that 2<sup>nd</sup> consultation round will include regional workshops.

To support the process, it is planned to revise the CHS website, which will be used to collect feedback (through consultation guidelines, reporting templates, link to platform to comment online on texts, access surveys, polls, discussions).

At the meeting, the Board discussed two questions in groups (see below) and reminded that the process is an opportunity to reinforce the links with the two other copyright holders (Sphere and Groupe URD) and that it is important to make sure that we give sufficient weight to members and those using the standards (recognition that investment done by organisations will not be lost).

AN and PT said that a message had been sent to members in week of 20 June about the consultations starting.

Questions discussed by the Board in groups:

1. What would be the implications on the Alliance regarding the Humanitarian focus of the current CHS?
2. How can the revision be an opportunity to build greater ownership of the CHS by national actors?

Discussions were captured by session leads. In group 1 there was a mix of opinions regarding keeping the “H” in CHS; in group 2, discussions focused on quality of data collected that is affected by language barriers, on the Ukraine crisis, and the accessibility as well as the role of civil society and localisation in the process of building greater ownership of the CHS by local organisations.

To conclude, everyone was looking for in-depth discussions on these topics at a later stage and the involvement of the Board.

## 9. CLOSE

The Board meeting review results were shared with Board members. Nothing to flag.

### **Action:**

- ◆ *Secretariat to send invitations for September Board meeting – face-to-face.*

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions to this meeting.

*End of the meeting*



Lola Gostelow, Chair of the Board



Allan A. Calma (May 10, 2023 13:17 GMT+2)

Allan Calma, member of the Board

PP



H  l  ne Maillet, minutes' taker














# Board Minutes\_Jun2022\_approved


Final Audit Report


2023-05-10


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