

Revising the Core Humanitarian Standard

An Overview of the Changes

The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) has been a pivotal framework for the humanitarian community since its introduction in 2014. It sets a core standard of accountability in the sector, providing clear guidance on how to design principled and high-quality assistance with the people and communities receiving that assistance. This Standard has been used by hundreds of organisations and in a wide range of country-level operations since its inception. In 2024 an updated version will be brought into practice, building on an extensive global consultation process and informed by learning gathered from CHS users and humanitarian and development stakeholders from around the world.

Overseen by the [CHS Steering Committee](#), the revision kicked off with public consultations on the nine commitments of the Standard in May 2022, guided by six key aims:

1. Reinforce the Standard as a **people-centred framework for quality and accountability**.
2. Identify and address **priority issues** affecting quality and accountability in practice.
3. **Clarify** concepts, **simplify** language, and make the Standard **accessible** to more stakeholders.
4. Reinforce the **measurability** of the Standard.
5. Strengthen **coherence** with existing quality standards and good accountability practices.
6. Create a framework which even **more stakeholders**, especially national and local actors, can use.

How is the Standard Different in 2024?

Every aspect of the CHS has been scrutinised to test if it lives up to its purpose as a people-centred Standard, which is measurable and can be used by all in the aid community. Three major areas have been strengthened.

1. People are even more clearly at the centre of quality and accountability efforts.

So much so that people, their rights and the need for their participation is at the heart of the very first Commitment, from which all else follows: *“People and communities in situations of crisis and vulnerability can exercise their rights and participate in actions and decisions that affect them”*

The revision process clearly demonstrated that users wanted to see this brought to the forefront of the Standard, ensuring that crisis-affected people maintain agency, dignity and have a voice in all stages of the design and delivery of assistance. In addition, the language used focuses on creating space for dialogue with people and communities, reducing any perception of communities passively receiving assistance.

“The Standard acknowledges the diversity of actors intervening in humanitarian contexts. Thank you for the effort to reinforce the wider applicability of the Standard to different types and sizes of organisations, especially local actors”.

Participant at the
Amman CHS Revision Regional Workshop

2. The structure of the Standard is simpler to understand and easier to use.

In 2024, the Standard itself has been redesigned to have a more streamlined structure with nine commitments and supporting requirements:

- Requirements have been consolidated, replacing the 2014 “key actions” and “organisational responsibilities”.
- The number of Requirements has also been reduced, to 50 (down from 62 in 2014).

Language has been simplified, to allow for ease of understanding and translation. Any repetition or duplication has been addressed, and a brief glossary is included to define core terms.

3. The Standard is more accessible to more organisations and people.

The original scope of the Standard, principled humanitarian action, remains. But many parts of the updated CHS have been expanded with more inclusive language to consider the full range of organisations involved in supporting people in crisis. This includes a focus on locally-led response, as well as disaster risk reduction, preparedness and those working in development or peacebuilding.

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Commitment 3 (2014) has been divided into two distinct Commitments to reflect priority issues, new actors, and evolving needs in the changing global environment.

- Commitment 3 (2024) emphasises local leadership and sustainability.
- Commitment 4 (2024) focuses on consequences and risks of assistance for people and the environment.

Who Contributed to the Revision Process?

In 2014, the original Core Humanitarian Standard consultation reached more than 2,000 practitioners, drawing together their knowledge and experience. The 2024 revision has involved more than 4,000 individual contributors, 500 community representatives, and input from more than 90 countries, across two rounds of consultations.

“I have learned today that access to support and assistance is a right – not charity – and should be available without discrimination because of where you come from”

A series of workshops, online consultations and focus group discussions were supported by a multi-stakeholder Steering Group and the Management Group (CHS Alliance, Groupe URD and Sphere). We are grateful to all who shared their knowledge, and see the wealth of contributions as testimony to the value of the CHS. For more details on contributions, please refer to the first and second round consultation reports [here](#).

Rolling out the CHS in 2024

The updated CHS will be launched publicly on 21 March 2024 along with a sign-on campaign for all organisations to signal sector-wide support for the Standard, broaden its application, create opportunities for learning across organisations and build ever deeper commitments to people-centred accountability.

For all new information, please check the [Core Humanitarian Standard website](#) for regular updates!