

# CHS LOCALED - Frequently Asked Questions

A guide to support members' understanding of CHS LOCALED. If you still can't find the answer you are looking for, please contact us on [localed@chsalliance.org](mailto:localed@chsalliance.org)

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## 1. OVERVIEW OF CHS LOCALED

### What is CHS LOCALED?

CHS LOCALED is a **new initiative** by CHS Alliance designed to improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian aid by focusing on **local communities** and **collective action**.

It builds on the [Core Humanitarian Standard \(CHS\)](#), a widely used framework that helps organisations provide better, more accountable aid. CHS LOCALED will utilise this framework during specific humanitarian responses to conduct:



**Listen to communities** through surveys and feedback to understand if aid is meeting their needs and expectations



**Collective assessments** on how organisations are meeting the CHS commitments during the response

The goal is to **bridge the gap** between what communities expect and how aid is delivered, so responses are more inclusive, impactful, and driven by local knowledge.

### What does 'LOCALED' stand for?

LOCALED stands for *Leveraging Organisations' Collective Accountability: Locally-led and Evidence Driven*. This reflects the initiative's focus on local community involvement and evidence-based solutions.

### What are the goals of the CHS LOCALED initiative?

The CHS LOCALED is designed “*To foster a more accountable and localised approach to humanitarian action, which meets the expectations of people affected by crisis.*” Using the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) as a guide, the initiative helps frontline organisations tackle accountability challenges in practical and context-specific ways. It has three main goals:



**Increased evidence:** CHS LOCALED will build a comprehensive picture to increase understanding of how well aid is working by comparing the experiences of communities receiving aid with the perspectives of organisations providing it.



**Collective Solutions:** CHS LOCALED will support organisations to work together to identify areas for collective improvement and foster collective ways to find solutions that strengthen accountability to people affected by crises.



**Influence changes in policies and practices:** CHS LOCALED will use the evidence, learning and collective solutions to influence country practice and global policy around accountability to people affected by crises.

### Where will this initiative take place?

The initiative will work in four countries

- Bangladesh,
- South Sudan,
- Ukraine,
- Nigeria

These countries were selected using the following criteria:

- **Diversity of crisis situations and geography** covering a variety of humanitarian contexts – conflict, complex situation, natural disaster, displacement/refugee, etc.
- **Potential for learning** that combines accessibility, presence of CHS Alliance members, existence of accountability initiatives, and dynamic national civil society groups.

### Who is involved?

**Funding partner:** CHS LOCALED is funded by USAID'S Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.

**Initiative partners:** CHS Alliance is the lead partner and Ground Truth Solutions the supporting partner.

**Response partners:** In each of the four contexts where CHS LOCALED will take place, communities affected by crisis and multiple agencies (including local, national, international, UN, funding partners, NGO networks, coordination mechanisms, private sector) will be engaged in assessing the situation and finding collective solutions.

### How will the initiative ensure diverse community representation?

The initiative is guided by the CHS which has a strong focus on diversity, equity and inclusion. Activities under this initiative will ensure representation of diverse communities in each context, with attention to most marginalised. For example, the selection of the respondents to the community perception survey will be based on criteria that includes diversity.

### Will the private sector or diaspora organisations be involved in the initiative, and if so, how?

All types of actors contributing to support people and communities affected by crisis will be invited to join the initiative (see how to be involved in the section 2. Participation). We also invite all interested organisations and individuals to contact the project team at [loaled@chsalliance.org](mailto:loaled@chsalliance.org) to explore specific contributions and collaborations.

## 2. PARTICIPATION

### If my organisation is a CHS Alliance member working in one of four countries, how can we participate? Is it mandatory?

CHS Alliance members have committed to the CHS, and therefore involvement is expected. All our members are invited to contribute to collective assessments and collective solution finding to close the accountability gap.

Members can contribute through the following actions (list non exhaustive):

- Participate in meeting and workshops organised under the initiative
- Share information during the CHS Collective Peer Assessment to help build evidence on how organisations are meeting the CHS Commitments
- Nominate Peer Assessors from their organisations by 19 December 2024 (See the [ToR for Peer Assessors](#))
- Conduct a CHS verification if this is not already completed.
- Conduct CHS self-assessment for country offices (at least in the project countries). This is applicable for international member organisations.
- Encourage national partners to engage with the CHS

### If my organisation is not a CHS Alliance member, can we still participate?

This initiative is also open to non-members. All organisations supporting people affected by crisis willing to work toward closing the accountability gap are welcome to

the CHS LOCALED initiative. They can participate through the following actions (list non exhaustive)

- Participate in meeting and workshops organised under the initiative
- Share information during the CHS Collective Peer Assessment to help build evidence on how organisations are meeting the CHS Commitments
- Become a member of the Alliance and conduct CHS verification (self-assessment, independent verification or certification).

The following criteria will apply for non-member organisations.

- Having experience in humanitarian and development action
- Being registered in their home country as non-profit organisation.
- Not listed as terrorist organisation
- Have a code of conduct that prohibits sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment
- Have a public facing complaint mechanism or commit to develop one
- Willingness to engage in the process and maintain the commitment to learning through the lifetime of the project and beyond

**Are there any specific expectations regarding the involvement of local or national organisations in the initiative?**

Yes, local and national organisations, along with frontline staff, are expected to play a central role in CHS LOCALED. Their involvement will be essential, as they are closest to the communities affected by crises and are best placed to ensure accountability and meaningful engagement with those they serve.

CHS LOCALED actively prioritises and supports the leadership of local and national organisations in the initiative, providing opportunities for peer learning and support.

**How will participation benefit my organisation?**

All organisations participating in the CHS LOCALED will get a better understanding of how they are meeting people and communities' expectations and what to do individually to improve and how to contribute in collective efforts to close the persisting gaps. At different levels, organisations will be supported to share their good practice and get recognised and learn from peers to adapt to their context.

### **3. RELATIONSHIP WITH CHS VERIFICATION**

**How do these assessments link to current CHS verification processes?**

CHS LOCALED and CHS verification processes both aim to improve accountability but in different ways:



**CHS verification** (self-assessment, independent verification, or certification) is an individual process for organisations. It evaluates how well an organisation meets the CHS commitments and identifies specific areas for improvement.



**CHS LOCALED** focuses on collective accountability. It assesses how organisations involved in specific humanitarian response work together to meet the CHS commitments. The results reflect the overall response at the country level, and are not attributable to individual organisations.

While the CHS LOCALED peer assessment uses similar principles to CHS verification—such as gathering insights from communities and partners—it focuses on collective learning and action to improve aid effectiveness. It does not replace CHS verification or provide organisational certification.

**Should organisations participating in CHS LOCALED also complete CHS verification?**

Yes, organisations involved in CHS LOCALED are encouraged to undertake CHS verification (self-assessment, independent verification or certification) if they have not done so. CHS verification provides tailored insights and recommendations to help organisations strengthen their accountability practices. To learn more or start the process, contact [verification@chsalliance.org](mailto:verification@chsalliance.org).

## 4. TIMEFRAMES AND IMPLEMENTATION

**When will this initiative happen?**

The initiative started on 1 October 2024 will last for 3 years (October 2024 – September 2027). Between October and December 2024 will be a start-up phase, with the substantive work in country starting in 2025.

Regular updates will be provided on the [CHS LOCALED webpage](#) on the schedule of project activities.

**Is this initiative meant to be applied only to the start of a response, or can it be used at other stages?**

Humanitarian crises are complex and rarely follow a linear path. The collective approach of learning about how communities experience assistance and coming

together to find collective solutions to the accountability gap can happen at any stage of a response. However, one ambition for the initiative is that learning from CHS LOCALED can result in a more structured approach to listening to and working with communities affected by crisis, which could be applied at the start and throughout future crises.

#### What approach will CHS LOCALED adopt?

CHS LOCALED will connect three levels of a humanitarian response: affected communities, humanitarian organisation, and the wider aid system and will be guided by the following three approaches:

1. **Community centered approach:** Communities affected by crisis will be consulted to provide feedback on how well aid organisations are fulfilling the CHS commitments, ensuring their voices help to shape the response.
2. **Collective approach:** Organisations responding to the crisis will contribute to a collective assessment, using the CHS as a common framework. These assessments will generate valuable evidence of what is working, where improvements can be made, and whether challenges stem from local contexts or broader systemic challenges.
3. **Locally led approach:** Peer assessors will lead these collective assessments, shifting from traditional top-down approaches and to more participatory and accountable processes. Support will be provided to help local organisations unfamiliar with the CHS to meet their commitments, fostering knowledge exchange and capacity building.