

ACCOUNTABILITY IN ACTION  
ANNUAL REPORT 2024



## CONTENTS

### 03

#### HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- 03 Impact on communities
- 03 Impact on organisations
- 04 Impact for a more accountable aid system

### 05

#### FOREWORD

- 05 Message from Executive Director, Tanya Wood and Chair of the Board, Lola Gostelow

### 06

#### STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PEOPLE IN CRISIS

- 07 CHS LOCALED
- 08 Impact in Action

### 09

#### DRIVING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

- 09 CHS verification
- 10 Impact in Action

### 11

#### STRENGTHENING PROTECTION & PREVENTION OF SEAH

- 11 Harmonised Reporting Scheme
- 11 Misconduct Disclosure Scheme
- 12 SEAH investigations
- 12 Survivor-centred approaches
- 13 Impact in Action

### 14

#### SHAPING A MORE ACCOUNTABLE AID SYSTEM

- 14 Highlights
- 15 Donors and Governments recognise CHS
- 15 Advocacy and influence
- 16 Impact in Action

### 17

#### BUILDING A STRONGER CHS ALLIANCE MOVEMENT

- 17 A powerful movement for change

### 18

#### FINANCIAL SUMMARY

- 18 Summary of 2024 income and expenditure

### 19

#### LOOKING AHEAD

- 20 Thank you to our Donors



MEMBERSHIP GROWTH:

48%



Members are local / national organisations

400+



Organisations signed the CHS Commitment Statement

CHS VERIFICATION GROWTH:

171



Organisations verified

HARMONISED REPORTING SCHEME (HRS)

3x



Growth tripled to 75 organisations

© CHS Alliance

## HIGHLIGHTS AND KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Despite a tumultuous year worldwide, with escalating conflicts, climate-driven disasters, and economic instability, the CHS Alliance community has continued to strengthen accountability and safeguarding by applying the CHS across their work in 2024. The growing membership is contributing to a more diverse and localised movement for change.

### Impact on communities

CHS Alliance is a growing network of over 240 members, and by the end of year, local and national NGOs—who are closest to affected communities—represented 48% of the membership.

The Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) was revised based on an extensive global consultation with over 4000 contributors from aid organisations and communities affected by crises working in 90 countries. The updated Standard places even greater emphasis on people-driven and people-centred approaches, reinforcing the role of communities and local actors in shaping humanitarian responses and challenging power imbalances within the aid system.

2024 saw the launch of a game-changing initiative designed to shift power to communities and ensure that humanitarian aid truly met community needs, known as CHS LOCALED.

Rather than organisations assessing their own performance in isolation, the concept of LOCALED is to bring together community voices, aid organisations, and peer assessors to evaluate how well aid efforts uphold the CHS commitments. Through this initiative, communities have a direct say in shaping the support they receive, with their input leading to real improvements.

LOCALED was funded by USAID and efforts are now focused on securing new funding to take this work forward.

### Impact on organisations

More organisations are using CHS verification to strengthen safeguarding, feedback mechanisms, and overall quality and accountability. Since the Verification Scheme was launched, 171 organisations have completed one of the three CHS verification options: 39 achieved certification, 33 were independently verified (both external options offered by HQAI), and 99 completed self-assessment.

As more members progress their own learning, the network's value is becoming increasingly evident through peer support and shared learning. One example is the verification Community of Practice, which engages over 100 members in updating verification tools, as well as providing a knowledge bank and discussion forum. Members share how verification has helped them identify strengths, gaps, and areas for learning, and the ways that it has driven more people-centred and effective aid.

Applying and measuring performance against the CHS is being recognised by an increasing number of funders. At the end of 2024, the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office informed CHS Alliance members that it would be passporting CHS certification as part of its due diligence process. This welcome decision was based on their extensive research following HQAI audits over the previous years. It joins Denmark, DG ECHO, Ireland, Luxembourg and Germany in showing how the CHS can be used by government donors to drive accountability to crisis-affected people.





CHS Community Consultation in Niger © CHS Alliance

## Impact for a more accountable aid system

The updated CHS was launched in 2024 with members organising more than 30 events in 22 countries. Hundreds of organisations signed the CHS commitment statement. Seeing members drive the updated Standard forward, and bring together diverse stakeholders from across the donor, national and international NGO and inter-agency advocacy space, has set a clear tone for the future of accountability, and moved the dial forward for collective action.

2024 saw the highest-ever number of organisations join in the Misconduct Disclosure Scheme, increasing by 75, and record numbers taking part in the all-important Investigator Qualification Training Scheme (IQTS). Together, with the Alliance's other protection from sexual exploitation, abuse

and harassment (PSEAH) initiatives, these efforts work together to strengthen the aid system and prioritise the views of victims and survivors, making it safer and more accountable to people and communities.

Members of CHS Alliance continued to demonstrate and demand people-centred aid. The movement has grown, verification has expanded, and the updated CHS is driving real change. While US funding cuts have paused key initiatives like LOCALED and IQTS, the commitment to quality and accountability remains firm. With an engaged network and a clear vision, the Alliance is set to keep advancing standards that truly put people at the centre.

**“Being a member of CHS Alliance has been instrumental in this journey towards better meeting the CHS in our work. The Alliance has provided invaluable guidance and resources, enabling us to both measure and now improve the quality of our efforts.**

**We encourage our peer organisations to verify against the CHS and join CHS Alliance. The CHS is the universal framework for making aid work the way crisis-affected people want. The guidance, resources and support offered by the CHS Alliance network are indispensable to improving ways of working and ensuring that crisis-affected individuals receive support with dignity and respect.”**

**Hajar Abdulla Al-Hajri,**  
Qatar Charity

LAUNCH OF THE UPDATED CHS  
with one global event plus launches in  
**22 countries** across the year.

MISCONDUCT DISCLOSURE SCHEME (MDS):  
**323 implementing organisations,**  
**193,000 background checks.**

INCREASED DONOR RECOGNITION OF CHS  
**FCDO, ECHO, Denmark, Luxembourg,**  
**and Germany.**

SURVIVOR-CENTRED SEAH INVESTIGATIONS:  
**1300 people trained in**  
**110 countries.**



**“If I would summarise CHS in one word, or two: The aim of CHS for us is to make sure that at the core of these standards and when we implement them, people are treated with dignity and their dignity is preserved.”**

Sara Savva, GOPA-DERD

## FOREWORD

**By Tanya Wood, Executive Director, CHS Alliance & Lola Gostelow, Chair of CHS Alliance Board**

As we turned the page on 2024, momentum was building for much-needed accountability shifts. The Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) had been strengthened to be more focussed on the needs of people in crisis and more accessible to a wider range of organisations. Following the global launch in March, Alliance members amplified the news across the world, gathering partners to promote the revised Standard in more than 20 countries.

The Alliance continued to grow rapidly, welcoming members from countries not previously represented, including Haiti, Burkina Faso, and Cuba. By the end of the year, 242 organisations made up a vibrant and diverse CHS Alliance community, united in their demand for greater accountability to people in crisis. Nearly half of our members are national organisations, playing a powerful role in fostering a more accountable, equitable and localised response.

Since the start of 2025, however, the sector has been in turmoil. The abrupt withdrawal of funding from the US Government, on top of already reduced international aid budgets, has left organisations grappling with near impossible decisions — where to scale back, whom to support and what essential services to preserve?

It is more than just a financial crisis; structural shockwaves are shaking the entire system. Our principles and values are essential to keep us focused on what matters most. Organisations must continue to be guided by the CHS commitments to uphold the dignity, rights, and agency of the people affected by crisis. Principled, people-centred aid is effective and efficient aid.

**Accountability is not optional. It is the foundation of trust between aid providers and communities.**

In 2024, even more organisations demonstrated their commitment to accountability by verifying how they meet the CHS commitments and embracing the process as a tool for learning, improving and delivering meaningful change. CHS verification is how the sector holds itself accountable, putting people at the centre of its response.

But to make these efforts truly transformative, these organisations need to be recognised. At the end of 2024, momentum was building with donors recognising CHS verification as an important part of their due diligence process—reducing duplication and waste and building much-needed efficiencies around the CHS collective accountability framework. Ultimately, this pays off for donors, organisations and crucially for communities.

**As we look ahead, we must be bolder.** We cannot let this progress slide backwards. We must ensure that commitments to accountability and safeguarding are not the first casualties of budget cuts. We must stand together, as an Alliance, as a movement, that both demonstrates and demands a humanitarian system that is truly people-centred.

Approaching the 10-year anniversary of the CHS Alliance in 2025, we acknowledge the significant gains over the past decade to support hundreds of organisations to be more accountable to communities, including preventing sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. We proudly share this report with you, highlighting the stories of organisations that are stronger and can better serve people affected by crisis. The decisions we make now will define the future of accountability. This is a critical moment to reaffirm that people, not bureaucracy, must remain at the heart of humanitarian response.



**Tanya Wood**  
Executive Director,  
CHS Alliance



**Lola Gostelow**  
Chair,  
CHS Alliance Board

# STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PEOPLE IN CRISIS

The updated Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) was launched in 2024 following a two-year consultation with 4,000 contributors across 90 countries, led by CHS Alliance and partners Sphere and Groupe URD. This revision was driven by the need to ensure that commitments made to people affected by crises remained relevant, accessible and truly reflective of their needs. The updated CHS places even greater emphasis on people-driven and people-centred approaches, reinforcing the role of communities and local actors in shaping humanitarian responses and challenging existing power imbalances within the aid system.

Since March 2024, CHS events have been held in 22 countries, organised by 35 members, plus partners, engaging over 1,000 participants. These member-led events have been instrumental in driving deeper understanding and uptake of the CHS, fostering discussions on how organisations can embed CHS commitments more effectively into their work.

The commitment to CHS was evident in the worldwide momentum it generated. Events were held in Afghanistan, Australia, Benin, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Jordan, Niger, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Somalia/Somaliland, South Sudan, Spain, Sweden, Syria, Turkey and Yemen. Each gathering brought together local and international actors, strengthening networks and reinforcing the importance of accountability.

In Niamey, Niger, Concern Worldwide gathered over 50 national and international NGOs, with organisations such as Développement Harmonieux du Niger (EDHN) using CHS self-assessment to centre affected communities in their work. In Pakistan, a collaborative launch by Community World Service Asia, UN OCHA, Tearfund, IFRC, REEDS and Acted highlighted CHS's role in driving institutional strengthening. Meanwhile, in Spain, IECAH (Institute of Studies on Conflicts and Humanitarian Action) underscored how the updated CHS is increasingly being applied beyond humanitarian contexts, in development programming and advocacy.

To support organisations in applying CHS, the Alliance developed new tools, training, and resources. The CHS Verification Guide was upgraded to reflect the renewed Standard, providing practical insights into assessing CHS commitments. From March to December, the updated CHS 2024 website had 44,000 visits, with nearly 9,000 booklet downloads and 5,000 accesses to the interactive digital version.

**“The updated CHS will drive institutional strengthening for local organisations beyond capacity building, enhancing policies and operations. It was felt that more organisations must endorse and implement the CHS, so we can extend its benefits to local communities faster than ever.”**

**Tooba Siddiqi**, Community World Service Asia

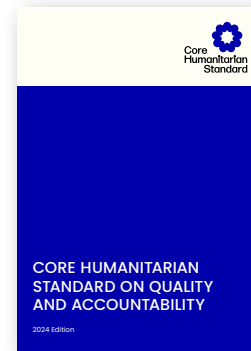
New e-learning modules were also developed in collaboration with the Humanitarian Learning Academy, Groupe URD, and Sphere. These are now accessible in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic, ensuring a wider reach. The updated Core Humanitarian Standard is available in Farsi, Hindi, Icelandic, Indonesian, Japanese, Romanian, Turkish and Ukrainian, with the CHS website accessible in Arabic, French and Spanish. Expanding translations has been critical in ensuring that the Standard is truly accessible to organisations and communities worldwide.

In October 2024, the CHS Alliance launched CHS LOCALED (Leveraging Organisations' Collective Accountability: Locally-led and Evidence Driven), an initiative designed to strengthen accountability in humanitarian aid by placing crisis-affected communities at the centre of assessments. The initiative aimed to close the accountability gap by ensuring that aid organisations are evaluated collectively, rather than in isolation, and that affected communities have a direct say in shaping humanitarian responses.

Pilots were planned for South Sudan, Ukraine, Bangladesh, and Nigeria in partnership with organisations such as Ground Truth Solutions. These pilots aimed to involve a diverse range of humanitarian responders, including CHS Alliance members and partners, with some acting as peer assessors.

However, in early 2025, the sudden withdrawal of US funding forced a pause in CHS LOCALED's roll out while the CHS Alliance works to secure alternative funding. Despite this setback, there is a strong commitment to resume and expand the initiative, ensuring that humanitarian accountability continues to be driven by those most affected by crises.

The renewed CHS has already begun transforming how actors engage with crisis-affected communities. As more organisations adopt its commitments and integrate them into their operations, accountability is becoming more embedded at every level. Moving forward, the CHS Alliance remains committed to find new and innovative ways to support members, strengthening accountability mechanisms and advocating for greater CHS uptake across the sector.



FROM MARCH - DECEMBER 2024

**44,000**   
visits to the updated website

**9,000**   
downloads of the Core Humanitarian Standards booklet (available in ten languages)

**5,000**   
interactions with the digital version of CHS

## CHS LOCALED is built around three core approaches:

1

### Community-Centred

Crisis-affected people providing direct feedback on how well aid organisations are fulfilling CHS commitments, ensuring their voices were integral to shaping responses.

2

### Collective


Aid organisations engaging in shared assessments, using the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) to identify what is working, where improvements are needed, and whether challenges stem from local contexts or systemic issues.

3

### Locally Led

Peer assessors, including local actors and organisations, lead the evaluation process, moving away from traditional top-down assessments and fostering knowledge exchange and capacity building.





**“Community World Service Asia has been instrumental in guiding us through our first CHS self-assessment. This support has heightened our awareness of necessary improvements and reinforced our commitment to serving vulnerable communities with greater quality and accountability.”**

**Daniel Ela**, Davao Episcopal Area of the United Methodist Church, the Philippines

Malka participated in CWSA's Climate Smart Agriculture training and has become a Lead Farmer in District Khairpur Mirs, Pakistan. © CWSA

## IMPACT IN ACTION

# DRIVING ACCOUNTABILITY ACROSS ASIA-PACIFIC: CWSA PEER SUPPORT

Community World Service Asia (CWSA) is a leader in promoting the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) across the Asia Pacific Region, supporting peer organisations and driving collaborative learning.

CWSA initially worked on their own organisation, undertaking a CHS self-assessment in 2018 to embed accountability across its work, improving transparency, trust, and programme effectiveness. Strengthening complaints and feedback mechanisms deepened community trust and engagement. Safeguarding policies now ensure communities understand what to expect from CWSA representatives.

Building on its own accountability journey, CWSA soon became a leader, supporting other organisations across the region. In the past three years, CWSA has supported 95 local organisations to integrate CHS Commitments through training

and technical assistance. It is currently leading a pioneering peer support approach, working with organisations in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, the Philippines, and Uganda as they undertake their CHS self-assessment process. This collaboration fosters collective learning and promotes continuous improvement among these organisations.

Through its active role in CHS Alliance, CWSA continues to drive accountability efforts, setting a benchmark for quality and transparency in humanitarian work. It continues to show how locally led organisations can use the CHS to enhance credibility, effectiveness and impact.



# DRIVING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE

## IMPACT ON ORGANISATIONS

2024 saw a sustained and steady increase in NGOs participating in verification processes. As of December 2024, 171 organisations had undergone one of the three CHS verification options of self-assessment, independent verification and certification. This includes the highest-ever number of national NGOs, with organisations in countries including Yemen and Malaysia, amongst others.

With the publication of the updated CHS in March, the Alliance began the creation and release of several new tools to support verification of the updated Standard. The new suite of tools has been designed in active consultation with a wide network of stakeholders and members, including a Members' Advisory Group, consultation with thematic groups and the participation of the CHS Verification Advisory Panel (VAP). The primary goal in designing the tools was to ensure they were accessible, usable and supported the Alliance's mission to put people affected by crises at the centre of aid during verification processes.

A new Verification Framework, the backbone to the Standard, was released in June, and work began in the latter part of 2024 on a Verification Guide and updated Self Assessment Manual and tools. The Guide and

Manual are due for release in early 2025, alongside the new PSEAH index and updated procedures for HQAI certification against the 2024 CHS.


The Alliance has been encouraged to see the ongoing commitment to verification that organisations have demonstrated. By the end of 2024, 112 CHS Alliance members had completed at least one verification option and actively tracked progress through the CHS Commitment Tracker.

Peer learning continues to build, with the CHS Verification Community of Practice (CoP), relaunched in July 2024. This CoP now has over 100 active members, providing a collaborative space for organisations to share learning, address challenges, and collectively enhance verification processes. In addition to quarterly sessions and webinars on issues such as verifying against CHS whilst working in partnerships, the CoP also features a knowledge library to support capacity building and peer learning across the membership.

Donors continue to recognise CHS's verification process as a means of ensuring the commitment to accountability, while offering another benefit of reducing the burden of the plethora of due diligence processes.

Organisations that have completed a CHS verification:

**99**   
Self-assessed

**33**   
Independently verified

**39**   
Certified organisations

**171**   
CHS verified organisations

**“The process to achieve certification against the CHS has been very helpful. We now have a clearer understanding of where systems, policies and practices are strong and effective and where further improvement is needed. The detailed, incisive audit report has helped us to improve. The entire process was an excellent opportunity to put the CHS at the forefront of the entire organisation and realign our activities and procedures accordingly. The CHS motivates us to walk the extra mile when it comes to meeting the highest quality standards.”**

**Geert de Jong**, Help a Child

A community youth group with new climate start stoves, supported by Help A Child partners © Serrah Galus/Help Age, 2025

## IMPACT IN ACTION

### NORWEGIAN REFUGEE COUNCIL ACHIEVES CHS CERTIFICATION

In 2024, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) obtained certification against the Core Humanitarian Standard, to demonstrate to donors, partners and communities they serve that their humanitarian efforts have been independently evaluated by HQAI to be principled, accountable and of high quality.

The organisation has credited CHS certification with enabling them to participate in continuous learning and enhancement, putting the communities and people affected by displacement at the heart of everything they do.

**“An important initiative to drive greater accountability is the Core Humanitarian Standard. I hope all organisations will join CHS Alliance, as the CHS is the gold standard that ensures the people we exist to serve can participate in decisions that affect their lives.”**

**Jan Egeland**, Secretary General, Norwegian Refugee Council

### GOING THE EXTRA MILE: HELP A CHILD'S COMMITMENT TO ACCOUNTABILITY

Help a Child achieved CHS certification in 2024, deepening its commitment to listening, improving and delivering programmes that truly meet community needs.

One of the biggest changes has been the introduction of community-led feedback mechanisms, giving people real influence over projects. In South Sudan, children are now leading their own feedback system, helping shape services that directly affect them. Help a Child has also launched a Community of Practice, creating space for staff and partners to share learnings and improve approaches to child protection and disaster response.

The organisation has strengthened how it works in emergencies, ensuring disaster response and long-term development go hand in hand. Partner relationships have also become more open and equal, thanks to clearer, more transparent agreements.



# STRENGTHENING PROTECTION & PREVENTION OF SEAH

Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) are among the most egregious failures of accountability in the aid sector, causing harm to individuals, eroding the trust of communities, and undermining the integrity of the sector.

Protection from sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (PSEAH) remains central to the CHS and during 2024 the Alliance has continued to build a series of pioneering initiatives, implemented at scale.

## Advancing SEAH understanding and transparency

The SEAH **Harmonised Reporting Scheme (HRS)**, funded by the UK Foreign Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO) helps make incidents more transparent. It allows trends to be analysed to improve understanding of SEAH, reduces under-reporting and supports efforts to address these issues.

The number of organisations participating in the scheme more than tripled during 2024, with a total of 75 organisations contributing data, highlighting the scheme's growing importance and sector-wide relevance. Since the start of data collection in September 2022, a total of 500+ SEAH incidents were reported to the HRS. Key findings from the latest six-month report (September 2024) include:

**36%**   
of victims/survivors  
are girls under 18

**32%**   
of alleged perpetrators  
are affiliated personnel<sup>1</sup>

**30%**   
of victims/survivors, no  
assistance was available

**“At the moment, we simply don’t have the adequate quality of data to know what we’re facing; let alone what forms it takes. This is like fighting blindfolded. The more quality data we have the better we can see. See enough to chart a way to stop this unacceptable abuse happening to the people most deserving of support and care.”**


Wonder Mufunda, Centre for Humanitarian Analytics

## Championing the shift from impunity to accountability


The Misconduct Disclosure Scheme (MDS), run in collaboration with the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response and supported by FCDO, facilitates the sharing of misconduct data between employers to stop known perpetrators of SEAH move undetected between organisations. Launched in 2019, MDS has grown to 323 members, conducting 193,000 background checks. This has resulted in 580 recruitment rejections due to SEAH concerns and helped organisations strengthen internal safeguarding policies beyond recruitment.


During 2024, MDS:

WELCOMED

**75**   
new members, from 45 countries,  
including 2 UN agencies,

SUPPORTED

**46,704**   
recruitments, with 52,455  
background checks

**195**   
candidates rejected  
as a result

**“The Closing the Accountability project has shown what is possible when you trust that victims/survivors – and those who work closest to them – know what’s best. We’ve seen a true shift in how accountability to survivors of SEAH is thought about and acted on, building an important knowledge base for achieving our accountability goals across the system. Importantly, this project has contributed to operationalising a key Inter-Agency Standing Committee objective on taking a victim/survivor centred approach to PSEAH.”**

**Laura Brinks**, Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

## Strengthening capacity for SEAH investigations

The sector lacks qualified investigators, most notably in high risk SEAH countries, which undermines accountability, deters survivors from reporting, and has allowed perpetrators to act with impunity.

The **Investigator Qualification Training Scheme (IQTS)**, run in partnership with Humentum and funded by USAID is designed to address this challenge. Grounded in CHS Alliance’s survivor-centred investigation guidance the IQTS trains a diverse pool of qualified SEAH investigators.

**During 2024 the IQTS has:**

TRAINED OVER

**1,300**



**people (66% of them women) across 110 countries**

CERTIFIED

**180**



**SEAH investigators (70% women) based in 61 countries**

TRANSLATED INVESTIGATION GUIDANCE INTO

**Arabic, Bengali, Polish and Ukrainian**

**“The IQTS has been a crucial stepping stone for ABAAD, addressing the investigative capacity gap that most local organizations face.”**

**Lara Habib**, ABAAD - Resource Centre for Gender Equality, Lebanon

## Survivor-centred approaches: Elevating Voices, Strengthening Responses.

The Alliance secretariat and members remain committed to elevating the voices of communities most affected by crises.

### Closing the Accountability Gap

supported by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, sought to understand, design, and evaluate victim/survivor led approaches to addressing SEAH. The project was led by communities based in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Working with victims/survivors through their trusted intermediaries, the project piloted PSEAH to effectively respond to SEAH in a victim/survivor-centred way. From violation to redress, the mechanisms to be utilized, the barriers and the actors involved were all mapped.

By the end of 2024 Closing the Accountability Gap had:

- **Increased awareness of, and engagement in, PSEAH** by reaching 28,379 community members in Bangladesh, Ethiopia and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.
- **Strengthened community-based complaint mechanisms**, including hotlines, community action groups, and dedicated PSEAH Focal Points.
- **Enhanced referral pathways for mental health and psychosocial support** and legal aid, benefiting 400 survivors, with 50 receiving direct legal assistance.
- **Trained 632 humanitarian workers, civil society actors, and government officials** on survivor-centred safeguarding and ethical reporting.



**“After so many years of improvements guided by the CHS commitments, the groups we work for are now more informed about their rights and can provide feedback in their local languages, which has significantly improved our service quality.”**

**Martha Woyessa**, Women Empowerment-Action

Closing the Accountability Gap WE-Action project team in Ethiopia © CHS Alliance/Debre Birhan

## IMPACT IN ACTION

# EMPOWERING WOMEN AND STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY IN ETHIOPIA


Women Empowerment-Action (WE-Action), a pioneering women-led organisation in Ethiopia, has transformed its safeguarding and accountability to communities by applying and measuring against the CHS. As a result, WE-Action is now tackling sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH) in a more meaningful and culturally appropriate way.

WE-Action also played a leadership role in the Closing the Accountability Gap in Ethiopia in 2024. The project designed and implemented a localised, victim centred approach to PSEAH in Ethiopia, Bangladesh, and Palestine. By working with victims/survivors through their trusted intermediaries, WE-Action co-designed solutions to protect women and girls in Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps in the Amhara region.


The project emphasised the importance of identifying contextualised responses to SEAH that are respectful of cultural norms and informed by local knowledge and solutions.

As the first local NGO in Ethiopia to verify against CHS (undertaking self-assessment then independent verification), WE-Action has also strengthened its organisational capacity. Embedding CHS values into staff performance has fostered a committed team to deliver impact for those it serves.

## Closing the Accountability Gap – Survivor-Centred PSEAH Impact

**28,379**   
community members reached  
(Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Occupied Palestinian Territories)

**400**   
survivors received enhanced referral pathways, with 50 receiving legal aid

**632**   
humanitarian workers trained in survivor-centred safeguarding

# SHAPING A MORE ACCOUNTABLE AID SYSTEM

The need for greater accountability to people affected by crises has been recognised for many years, but achieving systemic change requires bold leadership, putting aside organisational mandates and coming together in agreement on clear expectations that will hold aid actors to account. During 2024, CHS Alliance bolstered its efforts to influence people in positions to effect system change. This included working with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee members and influencing donors to make greater headway for shifting accountability.

## Highlights included:

- **CHS Alliance continued its role as the co-chair of the IASC AAP Task Force**, in partnership with the WFP and the IFRC, until it concluded in June – advocating on behalf of our members for enhanced collective accountability, developing pragmatic tools to help country teams deliver on their accountability commitments.
- **The role of donors in advancing accountability to people affected by crises** remained a core aspect of the IASC work, convening donors from eight countries for a one-day workshop which triggered bolder thinking in how donors can enable greater AAP.
- **The Alliance continued to work with its government donors.** Activities included the creation of a CHS Alliance members' Donor Recognition Working Group. In the group, national and international organisations explored advocacy strategies to encourage more donors to recognise the CHS as the globally-recognised standard for commitments to quality and accountability. These efforts were underpinned by a new web resource that maps donor recognition, providing a transparent overview of those recognising or requiring the CHS.
- **The Grand Bargain 3.0 workplan included the CHS** in their new levers for change. CHS Alliance members appreciated hearing from Ambassador Manuel Bessler at the General Assembly. He acknowledged the important role of the CHS and our network in moving the Grand Bargain forward - with a strong call to build on policies and guidance to action at community level.

We recognise CHS certification as the gold standard. Why? It's widely recognised, measurable and independently assessed."

**Peter Taylor**, UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office



## Donors and Governments recognise CHS

The UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) shared exciting news with our members at the General Assembly in December: from early 2025, it will endorse a streamlined due diligence process for CHS-certified organisations to significantly reduce administrative burdens. This momentous step will allow grantees to use existing CHS certification audits to fulfil large portions of FCDO's assessment requirements, a gamechanger for applicants.

In 2024 the Swedish Government committed to funding up to 80% of CHS certification costs for Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) partners. This welcome decision has already helped reduce financial barriers for organisations seeking CHS certification, further democratising applications for funding. Sweden will be hosting a launch of the updated CHS in 2025.

Elsewhere, a number of governments and donors continue to formally integrate the CHS into their humanitarian framework, including:

- **Denmark:** The Ministry of Foreign Affairs requires external verification against the CHS for funding eligibility.
- **Luxembourg:** Requires CHS certification to apply for financial support.
- **Germany:** The Federal Foreign Office recognises all three CHS verification options to shorten partner assessments.
- **The European Commission:** DG ECHO accepts CHS external verification as a source of evidence for ECHO ex-ante Framework Partnership Assessments (FPA)
- **UK Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) and Dutch Relief Alliance** require all members to undergo external CHS verification, strengthening sector-wide accountability.

Through ongoing dialogue and policy engagement, the Alliance continues to work closely with humanitarian funders and international networks to ensure that quality and accountability remains a central pillar to driving change across the aid sector.

**“By having CHS verification as a [DRA] 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 (DRA)

## Advocacy and influence

Beyond our role as co-chair of the IASC APP Task Force, the Alliance continued to advocate for greater accountability at multilateral fora, and to help guide this, joined with ICVA to undertake a [survey and convened a workshop in Bangkok](#) with national members to listen to their ideas for enhancing accountability and representation.

This resulted in a letter to Tom Fletcher, the incoming UN Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), from the 336 members of the CHS Alliance and ICVA, outlining practical and necessary measures to drive forward the accountability agenda.

CHS Alliance's AAP Community of Practice will continue to champion these recommendations with a wide range of stakeholders including the ERC and the IASC Principals. Through global collaboration the Alliance is both modelling and demanding the system shift needed to create a more accountable and equitable system for people in crisis.



Hanane Adamou Issaka, Welt Hungerhilfe Niger MEAL expert, speaks at the CHS launch in Niamey, Niger, May 2024. © CHS Alliance

## IMPACT IN ACTION

# A MORE ACCOUNTABLE AID SYSTEM

CHS Alliance and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) are working together to build a more accountable and equitable system for people in crisis. Through consultations with members and partners, they have explored how to enhance local-to-global accountability in humanitarian action.

A key step in this process was the Repositioning the Revolution survey, which gathered perspectives on strengthening collaboration and accountability. The survey highlighted key findings:

- 53% of respondents frequently discuss accountability in humanitarian work.
  - 47% cited limited time as a barrier to deeper engagement.
  - 45% found discussions too theoretical.
  - 47% saw value in linking into global conversations.
  - 44% wanted more regional connections.
- Participants saw value in linking into global conversations (47%) and building regional connections (44%).

To further explore these issues, ICVA and CHS Alliance convened a workshop in Bangkok with local, national, and international humanitarian

actors. Participants reflected on progress, identified key barriers, and proposed steps to shift power to crisis-affected people, ensuring their voices shape humanitarian decisions.

The workshop reinforced the need for stronger leadership on Accountability to Affected People (AAP) and informed a letter to the incoming UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, Tom Fletcher, that set out clear and practical steps to enhance system-wide accountability.

These included the ERC ensuring the voices of people affected by crises in decision making forums and promoting equal representation of local and national actors in Humanitarian Country Teams. Changes to monitoring humanitarian impact from the perspective of people affected and implementing a high-level dialogue with representatives of community members were also proposed.

Together, enacting these recommendations would signal a shift in mindset and practices that would lead to a more accountable and equitable humanitarian system.



## CHS ALLIANCE MEMBERS WORLDWIDE

**242** members

- 210 full members
- 8 global networks, (with 521 global network affiliates)
- 24 associate members

## GLOBAL PRESENCE

# BUILDING A STRONGER CHS ALLIANCE MOVEMENT

## A powerful movement for change

CHS Alliance members form a diverse and committed community of aid actors.

From small grass-roots organisations to large international NGOs, governments and networks, all are united by a common goal: improving quality, accountability and PSEAH to people affected by crises through applying the Core Humanitarian Standard.

In 2024, we welcomed 44 new organisations into our rapidly growing membership. We surpassed 240 members operating in more than 190 countries, supporting millions of people facing crises.

The majority of new members were national organisations – now accounting for almost half of the movement. The network is increasingly being shaped by organisations closest to the communities they serve.

Our strength lies in the collective knowledge and experience of our members, who apply the CHS in their daily work, and continuously learn and improve how they support communities. By supporting one another and working together, we are greater than the sum of our parts. Together, we embody accountability in action and form a powerful movement for change.

## AMERICAS

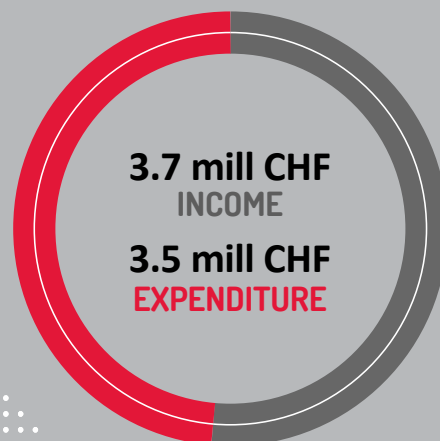
- 14 Full Members
- 1 Associate Member
- 3 Global networks

Thank you to  
our members

Click here for [full list](#) of members.

# 2024 FINANCIAL INCOME / EXPENDITURE

For the full, audited CHS Alliance 2024 financial report, see our 2024 [financial statements](#) online.



## EUROPE

- 78 Full Members
- 13 Associate Member
- 4 Global networks

## ASIA

- 68 Full Members
- 4 Associate Member

## AFRICA

- 48 Full Members
- 3 Associate Member
- 1 Global networks

## OCEANIA

- 2 Full Members
- 3 Associate Member

### BREAKDOWN OF NEW MEMBERS IN 2024:

**44**

new organisations  
joined in 2024

**80%**

of new members  
were national  
organisations

**190+**

countries where  
members operate

### UPDATED CHS LAUNCH REACH:

**22**

countries

**30+**

member hosts

**30**

events

**1,000+**

attendees





# LOOKING AHEAD: ACCOUNTABILITY IN ACTION

While this report reflects on 2024, it is being written in early 2025, a time when the humanitarian sector is reeling from brutal funding cuts. Organisations are grappling with agonising decisions that can make the difference between life and death.

As the situation looks set to worsen, the sector is talking about the need to reimagine the system, recognising that we cannot try and to do the same with even less resources.

This will require a hard look at where we have not met the anticipated reform agenda goals. We must use this crisis as an opportunity to remove the barriers to success.

While it has long been acknowledged that accountability to affected people leads to higher quality aid, better value for money, and improved performance, the shift towards people-centred aid has been too slow. This is because the supply-driven nature of the sector continues to be dictated by the mandates of individual agencies keen to demonstrate their value, rather than the needs and priorities of communities.

The future of aid should be grounded in evidence of what works. We must anchor ourselves in the commitments already made to people and communities and make greater accountability non-negotiable. The Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) is well positioned to support this shift.

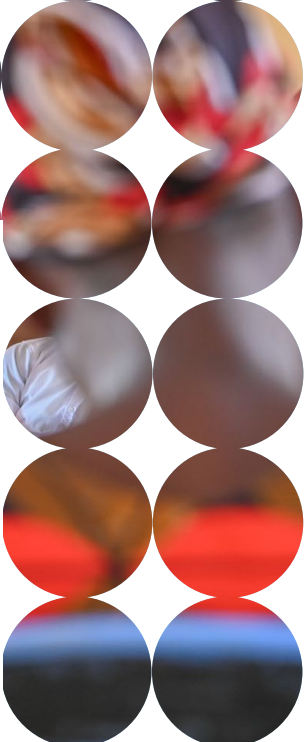
We have the tools we need. The CHS has been updated, written with direct input from crisis-affected communities. It is now more accessible for organisations to track progress against a worldwide standard, and take action to improve accountability in critical areas such as sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. The Alliance itself has grown into one of the largest global humanitarian networks, driven by the rapid uptake from national organisations who are demonstrating leadership in championing the strengthened Standard.

CHS Alliance members are a powerful movement for change. By acting together, we can put individual organisational considerations aside and truly coalesce around a stronger collective commitment to accountability to the people we serve.

As we enter our tenth anniversary year, the Alliance will mobilise its members to be bolder, including:

- **Calling on leadership** to ensure organisations meet CHS commitments and actively verify their performance.
- **Championing collective efforts.** A commitment to crisis-affected people only works if individual mandates are put aside and a truly collective effort is made to coalesce around a common framework. This means adoption by organisations other than NGOs – critically, the UN and private sector partners.
- **Advocating to donors** to recognise and reward CHS verified organisations for their demonstrable commitment to accountability, thereby ensuring organisations are being held to account by the people at the heart of crises.

As we write this, people affected by crises are facing unprecedented challenges. There is no time to waste. The uncertainty of the coming months demands a collective approach. If we are truly to reform the aid system, and put people at the heart of our decisions, we can only do this together. Now is the time to move beyond promises – we must see meaningful, and tangible action.



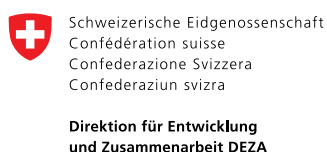
CHS Community consultation in Voi, Kenya © ActionAid Kenya/ Ezra Kiriago



CHS Community consultation in Ethiopia © CHS Alliance

## THANK YOU

CHS Alliance wishes to thank all its donors for making the transformational work of the Alliance in 2024 in collaboration with its members and other stakeholders – possible. Together, we continue to work tirelessly for better quality and accountability in aid.



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