

Collective solutions for accountable aid

CHS Alliance Draft strategy 2025-2027

For member feedback

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Foreword:

This strategy comes at a time when aid organisations are facing an uncertain future. Funding is shrinking. Political priorities are shifting. Organisations are being forced to make painful choices about who they assist – and who they don't.

The aid system must change. Competition must be replaced by collaboration, and tokenism replaced with bold, practical action. Aid must protect people from further harm, ensure their dignity is respected and their rights upheld. Above all, assistance must be driven by and for affected communities. While the challenge is significant, many solutions are within reach.

CHS Alliance is a powerful movement operating in 190 countries. We are a diverse global network with more than 250 members – local, national, and international. CHS Alliance members are united by a common vision: people affected by crisis, or in situations of vulnerability, can access and shape quality assistance and hold organisations accountable.

Our members' commitment to the globally recognised Core Humanitarian Standard and their ability to find solutions to complex challenges provides a platform for real change. Since our inception, a decade ago, hundreds of organisations have been guided by the CHS to address persistent challenges, such as protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment.

Now is the time to uphold our commitments to quality, accountability and safeguarding for people and communities who are firmly at the centre of our work. Together we will forge stronger partnerships and pursue collective solutions for more effective and locally-led assistance.

Overview

Vision	People and communities vulnerable to risk of, and affected by, disaster, conflict, poverty or injustice, access and shape quality assistance and hold organisations accountable.	
Mission	To promote respect for the rights and dignity of people and communities vulnerable to risk and affected by disaster, conflict, or poverty. We aim to enhance the effectiveness and impact of assistance by building a culture of quality and accountability.	
Goal	A global movement working together to make aid more accountable, effective, and safe.	
How we work	Our approach is evidence-based, people-centred and guided by the globally recognized Core Humanitarian Standard for Quality and Accountability: a set of nine commitments made to people in situations of crisis and vulnerability.	
Objectives	Accountable, effective, and safe organisations	Accountable, safe, and locally led aid system
	1. Enhance organisational capacity across the Alliance to improve the quality, accountability and safety of assistance.	2. Harness the influence of our global movement to create a more accountable, safer, and locally-led aid system.
Focus Areas	Improve Members can access guidance and tools to measure how they are meeting the CHS commitments and support to help them improve.	Harmonise CHS Alliance promotes collective solutions for a more accountable, effective, and safer aid system. Organisations join initiatives that harmonise ways of working, reduce duplication and overcome barriers to locally-led assistance.
	Collaborate Through a growing network, members support each other through peer learning opportunities, sharing resources and expertise. This strengthens accountability, safeguarding, and partnerships across the network.	Influence CHS Alliance will harness the perspectives of people in crises, evidence from data and the influence of the diverse global movement to advocate for changes to make aid more accountable and safer.

Accountable, effective, and safe organisations

Objective 1: Enhance organisational capacity across the Alliance to deliver quality, accountable and safe assistance.

With significantly reduced funding, access to basic services is becoming more limited and trust is being eroded. People are becoming more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse and aid workers are at heightened risk of harm. In this context it is crucial that we focus on the safety of communities, staff, and partners. Aid cuts have also significantly reduced the capacity of local, national, and international organisations to support crisis-affected communities that are under increasing pressure to deliver more effective aid with less resources. We must support each other to meet gaps and address weaknesses by enhancing the capacity across the network to deliver on the CHS commitments we have made to communities.

Focus areas

Improve

Over the past ten years, almost 200 organisations have shown their commitment by verifying how they are meeting the globally recognized Core Humanitarian Standard. A suite of tools has been developed to support them on this journey, aligned with the updated, more accessible, and people-centred Standard.

Looking ahead: In the challenging context of reduced funding and increasing needs we need to rally around the CHS commitments for a people-centred approach to aid and maintain a strong focus on protection against sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (PSEAH) and other forms of harm. Members will be supported to make continuous improvements through the following:

- **CHS verification and improvement.** Members will be encouraged and supported to verify against the CHS and advance their improvement plans through a combination of guidance materials, participation in community of practice and tailored support to members.
- **Training services.** Members will be able to access a range trainings to help deliver on the CHS, for example on strengthening safeguarding systems.
- **Shared services.** Members will be able to access expertise through a roster of consultants and practical resources from across the Alliance. The CHS Alliance will also explore shared services models to better enable capacity exchange between members.

Collaborate

Over the past ten years, there has been a rapid growth in the number of organisations joining the CHS Alliance. The largest growth has been the increase in national and local organisations, which now represent over half of the 250+ members.

Looking ahead: The large number and diverse range of organisations committed to a common framework provides a wealth of knowledge. The CHS Alliance will focus on enabling peer learning amongst members to share expertise and to collectively tackle some of the most persistent challenges to effective and accountable aid. Members will be encouraged to connect, collaborate, and learn through:

- **Country-level exchanges.** Responding to member demand, CHS Alliance will support connections at country level for learning and partnerships between members.
- **Communities of Practice and events.** CHS Alliance will convene CoPs on verification, due diligence, and safeguarding, as well as technical working groups and webinars on topical issues related to accountability. We will connect members to expertise and resources across the Alliance.
- **Grow and diversify the CHS Alliance.** An increased number of organisations, particularly those with more diverse backgrounds and perspectives, are encouraged to join to be part of a supportive network, driving organisational improvements.

Accountable, safe, and locally-led aid system

Objective 2. Harness the influence of our global movement to create a more accountable, safer, and locally led aid system.

Accountability to people affected by crises is not just about organisational policies and processes. Unequal power dynamics must be addressed at the systems level. At a time when the aid sector is undergoing transformation, it is critical that CHS Alliance members have a strong and collective voice on the importance of accountability to people affected by crisis, on locally-led assistance and on safeguarding.

As an alliance operational in over 190 countries, when members act together, transformative change is possible. Member organisations have shown their individual commitment to becoming more accountable to affected communities. During this strategy period, attention will focus on collective actions that will help the sector to become more accountable and effective, while also reducing duplication.

Focus areas

Harmonise

Over the last ten years the CHS Alliance has rallied donors and implementing organisations around the Core Humanitarian Standard as the people-centred, globally recognised, measurable standard for quality and accountability. CHS Alliance has identified collective

CHS Alliance: Making aid more accountable, effective, and safe

solutions to tackle some of the most persistent accountability challenges, including safeguarding, participation and localization.

Looking Ahead: Complex challenges are bigger than any one organisation. Harmonising around collective solutions has the potential to promote accountability and safety, reduce duplication and remove barriers to a truly locally led aid system. CHS Alliance will promote collective solutions and harmonise ways of working through:

- **CHS passporting.** The CHS Alliance will build on the innovative efforts of several member organisations to pilot due diligence passporting between members to help reduce duplication, expedite partnerships and locally led action.
- **Harmonised Reporting Scheme (HRS).** Members will be encouraged to become one of the 100+ organisations participating in the HRS to better understand and act on sexual, exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH).
- **Misconduct Disclosure Scheme (MDS).** Members will be encouraged to join the 350+ organisations participating in the MDS to prevent SEAH by stopping repeat perpetrators from being hired.

Influence

Over the last ten years, CHS Alliance has produced a wealth of evidence and learning from organisations applying the CHS and the associated safeguarding schemes. This data transparently shows where persistent challenges exist and helps the sector to identify solutions to address them.

Looking Ahead: There needs to be greater transparency in tracking progress on accountability and learning from communities affected by crisis, to understand the realities of where we are failing, and to continue to invest in making improvements. The CHS Alliance will influence sector change towards more accountable and safer aid in the following ways:

- **Evidenced and experience-based advocacy.** The CHS Alliance will harness CHS data, rich experience of members and perceptions of people living in crisis to advocate for bold sector reforms.
- **CHS donor recognition.** The CHS Alliance will build on recent successes, encouraging donors to endorse the CHS as the standard of quality and accountability and a means for verified organisations to access funding and/or basis for due diligence.
- **Collective country Assessments.** The CHS Alliance will support members to coordinate collective assessments with people experiencing crises to determine how aid organisations are working and how collective action could support improvements.