



CHS Country Cooperatives: Connecting members for accountability and impact

1. Background

The goal of the CHS Alliance's strategy is to build a global network that delivers accountable, effective and safe assistance. CHS Country Cooperatives¹ play an important role in enabling this by connecting members in country, promoting peer-to-peer learning, service sharing, fostering stronger partnerships.

CHS Alliance's strength is its global network of over 280 member organisations committed to making aid more accountable, more effective and safer for people in situations of crisis and vulnerability. Our members work in more than 190 countries and possess a wealth of knowledge and experience about how to deliver high-quality, people-centred aid. In these challenging times, it is more important than ever that we support each other and draw in each other's know-how, which is why the Alliance wants to go further to connect its members at country level and strengthen organisational capacities. This country level engagement values member to member connection and collaboration, context specific learning bringing the CHS closest to people and communities.

2. Purpose of the CHS Country Cooperatives

The CHS Country Cooperatives aim to harness organisational capacity across the network to deliver quality, accountable and safe support to people and communities.

These cooperatives aim to create inclusive spaces and practical mechanisms for members to:

- 1) learn together,
- 2) drive continuous improvement, and
- 3) forge stronger, purposeful partnerships

in order to deliver accountable, effective and safe assistance with and for people living in crisis.

3. CHS Country Cooperative Actions

CHS Country Cooperatives will operate with autonomy, to tailor their activities to the specific quality and accountability needs of their context. Below is an illustrative list of possible actions that Country Cooperatives might pursue.

Learn together

CHS Country Cooperatives may choose to:

- Compare results from verification processes to identify the strengths and weaknesses across the group.
- Share promising practices of member organisations for peer learning
- Partner with the Secretariat to conduct collective assessments with people experiencing crises to determine how aid organisations are working and how collective action could support improvements.

¹ A cooperative is "an autonomous association of persons/organisations united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically-controlled group". Cooperatives are democratically controlled by their members, with each member having one vote on decisions. Adapted from Wikipedia.

Drive continuous improvement

CHS Country Cooperatives may choose to:

- Conduct peer field visits to better understand the accountability mechanisms adopted by fellow member organisations.
- Identify a shared commit to advancing a particular aspect of the CHS
- Identify specific training that would be of value across the group

Forge stronger, purposeful partnerships

CHS Country Cooperatives may choose to:

- Establish partnerships around shared services
- Establish project related partnerships
- Partner with the Secretariat to initiate national-level efforts and advocacy to advance quality and accountability

4. Composition and Functions of the CHS Country Cooperatives

CHS Country Cooperatives will be comprised of representatives of member organisations operating in a given country. While member representatives are encouraged to connect with peers in these country level exchanges, engagement is on a voluntary basis. Member representatives wishing to lead/co-lead a CHS Country Cooperative can express interest to the Secretariat for support.

The Cooperative lead/co-leads will be responsible for key activities such as:

- Convening, hosting and chairing cooperative meetings on a frequency determined by the cooperative,
- Identifying with the group priority learning, improvement and partnership actions,
- Capturing and sharing actions that members have volunteered to undertake and
- Liaising with the CHS Alliance Secretariat for support as necessary.

Criteria for lead/co-lead member organisations include:

- o Capacity to appoint a focal point with facilitation skills who can dedicate up to 10 days per year for the coordination of the CHS Country Cooperative and connection with relevant stakeholders.
- o Capacity to host face-to-face meetings in relevant locations in the country

Regular (e.g. quarterly) online meetings gathering the leads/co-leads will be organised by the CHS Alliance secretariat to share experiences and learning from xcountries. Members of the Cooperatives will be invited to share experiences from their countries at regional and global events and the CHS Alliance Secretariat will provide updates on the actions of Cooperatives on the CHS Alliance website.

The CHS Country Cooperatives are encouraged to work in collaboration with existing coordination mechanisms in a way that maximizes impact on meeting people and communities' expectations.

CHS Alliance Secretariat team will provide CHS Country Cooperatives with the necessary coordination and technical support as requested by the Cooperative lead.