

MINUTES OF THE CHS ALLIANCE BOARD
17th June 2025: 10am – 13pm – 19th June 2025: 13pm – 16pm
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

PRESENT:

Lola Gostelow (LG, Chair), Michael Wickham Moriarty (MW), Carly Sheehan (CS), Coleen Heemskerk (CH), Rehema Kajungu (RK), Brian Beckett (BB), Catherine Skehan (CSk), Anna Karoliina Muinonen (AKM), Palwashay Arbab (PA), Gloria Soma (GS) (10:25-11:25)

APOLOGIES:

Michael Barnett (MB):

Yegana Guliyeva (YG):

Ghida Anani (GA): due to security reasons.

Coleen Heemskerk (CH) – 2nd day

ABSENT:

Gloria Soma (GS) joined for an hour on first day due to internet problems.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Tanya Wood (TW, Executive Director), Jonathan Beloe (JB, Deputy Director)

INVITEES:

Rosa Argent (RA, Director of Communications and Network Engagement), Bona Sokpoh (BS, Snr Advisor Policy & Outreach) Jordi Capdevila (JC, Head of Quality Assurance), Rabia Malik (RM, Snr Finance Officer), Fred Genoud (FG, Head of Finance)

1. INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURAL MATTERS (Paper 01)

1.1. Welcome, apologies, declarations of interest and agenda

The meeting was **quorate** and had been convened according to the Statutes. Apologies were noted.

LG welcomed the participants, expressed appreciation for their presence and asked members to share their hopes for the Alliance. Perspectives included that principles and accountability are more critical than ever as we've seen the challenges when the basics aren't followed, the role of the CHS in shifting humanitarian landscape, we are part of the solutions to help organizations do better, the opportunity of the membership being made up of 50% national members, the real solutions to the people centered approach, the fragmented landscape and the potential afforded by the shared language of CHS.

1.2. Approval of agenda – for approval

The agenda was approved by consensus.

1.3. Minutes of the March 2025 Board meeting – for approval

The March 2025 Board meeting minutes were adopted as a true and correct record of the meeting.

1.4. Actions arising not appearing – for information

LG noted that the issues arising were covered by the agenda topics.

1.5. Governance Calendar

LG encouraged members to put and protect board meetings and the GA in their calendars.

2. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT (Paper 02)

GS joined.

LG expressed awe and thanks for the work of the Secretariat given the reduced team.

TW reflected on the great momentum of CHS Alliance particularly on PSEAH and verification work. She stated that there was an opportunity for a harmonized approach on due diligence. She reflected on the staffing situation which although in constant transition is being managed. She reflected on opportunities and challenges of collaboration with other organisations and networks and referenced the exploration of opportunities at the humanitarian hub.

Questions were raised on morale in the team, collaboration with Sphere, differences between non-members and members completing Self-assessment, plans for the Alliance's 10th Anniversary, progress on due diligence passporting, plans for reinvigorating the LOCALED assessments, potential of the HAR and the increase in traffic to the CHS Alliance members' complaint mechanism.

It was noted that a more in-depth discussion is needed on country engagement, as the means to really galvanize peer support and creating a sustainable system for support as the membership grows.

The ED report was noted.

GS left the call.

3. MNC / GOVERNANCE (Paper 04)

RA and BS joined session

3.1. Updated Statutes – proposed changes and motions

LG expressed appreciation for RA, who is departing the Alliance at the end of June. Welcomed BS who will take over the membership function.

RA presented overview of main changes and motions to the Statutes. LG went through each motion requesting Board feedback:

Motion 1: Objectives – redrafted to be broader, more relevant to future strategies and more closely in line with the wording of the CHS (Art 5)

◇ No changes are required.

Motion 2: Membership categories – adjusted to be just one membership category (Arts 6, 7 and 8)

- ◇ LG asked if associate members have been consulted. RA confirmed CHSA will reach out individually to some associate members.
- ◇ No objections about moving towards a single membership model.

Motion 3: General Assembly – adjusted to afford more flexibility about where/how GAs are held and how members can vote (Art 15)

- ◇ No objections. CS identified an inconsistency with the wording on frequency, which will be amended.

Motion 4: Process to appoint the Chair

- ◇ CH identified a discrepancy with the text of 16a in that the General Assembly votes for the Chair.
- ◇ CH asked if the Chair can be an existing Board Member. LG confirmed this is correct.

Motion 5: Creation of the People, Culture and Complaints Committee.

- ◇ No objections.
- ◇ Discussed feedback on PCCC TOR – see below.

Motion 6: Fee Reduction – Clarification of the current fee reduction process which is managed by the Secretariat instead of the Board (Art 30).

- ◇ No changes required

Actions:

- ◇ **Secretariat to make text edits to motions 3 & 4**
- ◇ **Secretariat to follow up with Associate Members**

With these changes, the Board agrees these documents can be put forward as recommended motions to the General Assembly.

3.2. New PCCC ToR

Discussed under motion 5. CH agreed that it is a good idea to combine committees, but we may need to clarify a) the role of the ED should there be a complaint against them and b) how to manage oversight of complaints and appeals under new structure.

TW agreed that any complaint about the secretariat would need to be referred to a sub-group of the PCCC.

Noted that the Chair needs adding to the composition

Actions:

- ◇ **Secretariat to update the ToR to clarify the wording around the complaint sub-groups and add the Chair to the composition**
- ◇ **Include the appointment of a safeguarding focal point, who would be a committee member**

Approved by the board with the above edits.

3.3. Board Composition

LG explained that there is scope for the Board to co-opt two members.

TW shared proposition for two roles to focus on: 1) Person with lived experience and 2) Person with wider systems perspective. Board members shared some initial ideas for potentially strong candidates and asked to propose additional names.

Actions:

- ◇ **Board members to email TW & LG with their suggestions. The aim is to solicit candidates in the next couple of months for approval at the September Board meeting.**

MWM rejoined.

3.4. New Membership Applications

RK presented 13 prospective CHS Alliance members recommended by the MNC, following a thorough due diligence process. Three new countries are represented: Nicaragua, Ukraine and Honduras.

- Agribusiness Support Fund
- Centro Inter Eclesial de Estudios Teolicos y Sociales
- Comision de Accion Social Menonita
- Community Aid Development
- Community Development and Research Organisation
- Ensemble pour un developpement harmonieux du Niger
- Global Women Empowerment Development
- Lviv Children Care Center
- Manzil Organisation Balochistan
- NGO Poruch
- Positive Action for Development
- Wadajir Rural Development Organisation

The Board unanimously approved the membership of all.

Actions:

- ◇ **BS to follow up with the new members.**
- ◇ **Secretariat to add discussion on Country level peer learning to September Board agenda.**

4. Strategy

JB presented an overview of the Strategy and Focus Areas. Board members complemented the revised strategy and identified that it had been simplified and lifted-up to a more strategic level. Board members appreciated the structure, especially the four focus areas.

Specific feedback on the strategy included: bringing stronger focus to quality, effectiveness and the people-centred approach of the Alliance; consideration of an the enabling environment needed to

operationalise the strategy; more clarity on how what we've learnt is informing our strategic decisions; more of a future focus and consideration of whether the strategy fits with shifting power dynamics – e.g. localization. There were mixed responses to the prominence of safeguarding in the strategy and a call for wider aspects of AAP to be included. A recommendation was made to consider the ordering of themes and to highlight strengths over problems to solve. Another recommendation was make the interlinkages between the 4 focus areas more explicit. The Board suggested that the objective to 'be safer' wasn't inspiring and that the strategy could be bolder in terms of how aid is delivered and by whom. The Board also questioned the appropriateness of having trust as the title for the strategy.

JB thanked all board members for their reflections and confirmed that the conversation would continue on 19 June.

Actions:

- ◇ **Secretariat to make revisions to the strategy and share with Board for feedback prior to a draft being circulated to members.**
-

19 June 2025 Board Meeting

In camera Session

5. Verification Scheme – Paper 05

JC joined.

JC provided an overview on the verification scheme changes being explored through consultations. Two main proposals were outlined: the introduction of a new option of Independently Validated Self-Assessment; and consideration of the future of the current Independent Verification option.

JC shared a summary of findings from the consultations. There is strong appreciation for both the Verification Scheme's learning and improvement process as well as the recognition that verification affords. Consultations revolved around the balance between cost, recognition and learning. There was overwhelming support for the new option, albeit with work still needed to work out its exact modality.

Two modalities for delivering the new option were presented: 1) validation performed by a conformity assessment body (CAB) or 2) create a pool of independent auditors. The pros and cons of each were summarized.

More consideration is needed on any transition from the current independent verification option.

There was a rich discussion on the overall goal of the scheme with Board members sharing their respective views. It was recommended that another session with the Board would be needed to help inform the future direction.

Action:

- ◇ **Secretariat to convene a smaller group of Board members to support this process between now and the next Board meeting.**

6. FRAC – Paper 06

MWM provided an overview of the pipeline funding, noting an improvement in the income pipeline since February. MWM spoke to the updated budget, including the cost reduction and that the deficit for the end of the year can be absorbed within unrestricted reserves, which increased last year.

MWM confirmed cashflow in 2025 is fine and into 2026 it will depend on budgeted position and income which will change over the coming months.

MWM provided an overview of the discussions in FRAC related to risks, including funding volatility, partnerships, membership engagement, staffing and internal capacity.

MWM raised the possibility of reducing the scope and cost of the audit. He shared openness to changing the scope but stressed the importance of transparency. If Board and FRAC endorse a new approach this would be a GA decision.

7. Updated workplan and new strategic focus areas – (continuation of Paper 4)

TW and JB outlined the four focus areas and asked board members to reflect on which components were considered to be the most impactful for members.

There was a discussion on the focus on trust and exploring the role CHSA plays in promoting trust between peer organisations and with communities.

A question was raised regarding whether CHSA should be more explicit in the strategy around strategic partnerships given the need for the sector to consolidate and collaborate.

Consideration was given to how best to prioritise with a range of options considered including where more testing and development was needed, where the opportunity and urgency is greatest.

A recommendation was shared to give more focus to risk management and effective programming.

The Collaborate focus area was identified as something that would be valuable to members, in particular the country exchanges. The Influence area was considered important, specifically building evidence around our work. The Harmonise area, with passporting, was seen as important to advance locally led response.



Lola Gostelow, Chair of the Board



Michael Moriarty, Treasurer


[Tanya Wood \(4 nov. 2025 16:23:59 GMT+1\)](#)

Tanya Wood and Jon Beloe, Minutes' taker



[Jon Beloe \(4 nov. 2025 15:41:43 GMT\)](#)