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Sphere Handbook, CHS, Draft1, April 2017

The Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS)

The Core Humanitarian Standard describes processes and organizational responsibilities which are essential to achieving quality and accountability and fulfilling the Minimum Standards for assistance. It is fundamental to the rights of people affected by crisis to assistance and protection which supports life with dignity. The CHS builds on and replaces the Core Standards from the 2011 Handbook and is a direct result of a process to harmonise existing standards through the Joint Standards Initiative in 2013.

The methodology used to design, implement, monitor and evaluate humanitarian response should be as harmonised as much as possible, to ensure coordinated, complementary and effective humanitarian response. This includes practice for needs assessment, transparency, participation, decision making and coordination.

Establishing a core standard and reference framework for all sectors of humanitarian response is essential to effective humanitarian action, and the CHS provides this joint understanding of what reinforces the quality and accountability of humanitarian response, making it a foundation for the Sphere Handbook. This introduction explains the components and some of the drivers of quality and accountable humanitarian response, the “CHS System” of complementary initiatives, as well as linkages between the CHS and other chapters in the Handbook.

For more information on the CHS, please visit www.corehumanitarianstandard.org.

What is the CHS?

The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) is a direct result of a process to harmonise existing standards through the Joint Standards Initiative in 2013.¹ Broad consultations identified three key expectations in relation to this new standard placing communities and people affected by crisis at the centre, relying on humanitarian principles as a foundation, and being verifiable. Joined by Groupe URD, HAP and People in Aid (later merging as the CHS Alliance) and Sphere led a participative, multi-stakeholder, 12-month long process at global and local level, in line with internationally accepted good practice for standard development. These three organizations provide oversight of the CHS through a joint Steering Committee on behalf of the humanitarian sector.

After field piloting and validation by a representative technical advisory group, the Core Humanitarian Standard was launched in December 2014. Since then, the CHS has been adopted by an increasing number of NGOs, Red Cross and Red Crescent family members, United Nations agencies and donors. The CHS commitments were written with a rights-based approach, describing what communities and people affected by crisis should expect humanitarian response to look like. This focus is reinforced through many of the performance indicators. As explained in the Sphere Introduction, a people-centred approach requires awareness of the context in which one operates, understanding diversity, needs and capacities, identifying appropriate communication channels and possible negative consequences of any given intervention. A strong focus on inclusion and appropriate disaggregated data is essential to inform programmes.

The CHS frequently refers to the critical need to consider gender, age, diversity, disability, child protection, protection mainstreaming, or the environment in humanitarian response. However, for detailed guidance on these themes, readers are advised to refer to specific guidance, which is referred to in the Sphere Introduction and the relevant “further links” sections below.

As developed in the Humanitarian Charter and the Code of Conduct, humanitarian principles are at the core of all humanitarian work. The four core humanitarian principles are well integrated into the CHS. For additional guidance on humanitarian principles and how they relate to the Sphere Handbook, please refer to the Sphere Humanitarian Charter, which also summarises the core legal principles that have the most bearing on the rights and well-being of those affected by disaster or conflict.

¹ The Core Humanitarian Standard has now replaced the HAP standard, the Sphere Core Standards, the People In Aid Code of good practice, and the reference framework for Quality Compas.

While the Minimum Standards chapters in this Handbook describe *what* needs to be done for a quality and accountable sectoral intervention, the CHS focuses on *how* and is therefore applicable to all sectoral interventions. Key actions, guiding questions and performance indicators support effective design, implementation and monitoring of projects or programmes, as well as provide a framework by which to assess different types of interventions and make more evidence-based choices. While primarily intended for the humanitarian sector, the CHS can be used by any organisation to bring better quality and greater accountability to all aspects of its work with communities and people affected by crisis.

CHS structure

The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability



As a harmonized and collective core standard, the CHS structure differs from that of the Minimum Standards which follow in the Handbook. The CHS sets out nine Commitments, each supported by key actions and organisational requirements and complemented by guiding questions, performance indicators, guidance notes and references.

CHS Commitments and quality criteria

The Nine Commitments

encompass elements of humanitarian response that can have an impact on the quality and accountability of the response, regardless of the sector of intervention, with the first three commitments being results driven and the remaining commitments more focused on processes that support quality. While each Commitment concentrates on a specific enabler of humanitarian action, there is necessarily some degree of overlap that binds the Commitments together into a coherent whole. For example, both the importance of communication with affected people and the importance of supportive management of staff run through all nine Commitments. Each Commitment is supported by a Quality Criteria describing the

expected result of implementing the corresponding key actions and organisational responsibilities.

Key Actions and Organisational Responsibilities

To recognise the respective roles of individual staff members and organisations, each commitment includes two categories of requirements. Key actions describe what staff engaged in humanitarian action should do to be accountable to those they seek to assist and to consistently deliver high-quality programmes.

Organisational responsibilities define the policies, processes and systems organisations need to have in place to support the systematic implementation of Key Actions throughout the organisation. The systematic implementation of Key Actions helps to ensure that quality is embedded within an organisation's approach, rather than dependent on the skills of specific people.

Performance indicators and guiding questions

Performance indicators and guiding questions are intended to promote measurement of progress in meeting the standard and to drive continuous learning and improvement at all stages of humanitarian responses². CHS performance indicators are relevant to all sectors and contexts, and are best used as a set, though one could choose to focus more on results or processes. When used for a specific programme or intervention, indicators should be adapted to reflect the type of intervention being assessed. In order to allow the measurement of progress, satisfaction with ongoing programmes and/or comparison across time, programmes and context, performance indicators need to be measured in a way that is consistent across time and location³. To account for the diversity of people that form communities, it should triangulate information from different sources, including different groups within the affected population and allow at a minimum the disaggregation of data based on age and gender.

What else do I need to know: guidance notes and additional references

The guidance notes provide clarification on the Key Actions and Organisational Responsibilities laid out in the CHS and examine some of the practical challenges that may arise when applying the CHS. They provide guidance on how to meet a Commitment, and provide some examples for different audiences and contexts. For

² The performance indicators and guiding questions may be applied to guide project and programme design; monitoring at project, programme, sectoral and response-wide levels; agency-led organisational assessments; capacity-building strategies; internal evaluations; peer and joint reviews and evaluations; and real-time monitoring by affected people.

³ When applying the performance indicators, users are advised to consider the following: A simple way to score the performance indicators is to use a 5 degree Likert scale (1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Neither agree nor disagree; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly agree).

more in-depth guidance on how to respond to humanitarian crises, users are advised to refer to the links at the end of each section as well as the glossary and additional guidance.

Overview of the Commitments

Commitment 1 captures the primary purpose of responding to humanitarian crises: to alleviate distress and suffering, uphold people's rights to assistance and ensure their dignity as human beings. A response that automatically treats everybody and every situation in the same way may fail to meet its objectives and is unlikely to maximise its potential benefit to those in need. It stresses the importance of understanding the context and the needs of the different people affected and how these needs might change over time as well as the necessity to recognise the capacity of different groups of people. It also highlights the role of policies and processes to drive the *ongoing assessment* of needs, impartial assistance, and the acknowledging of gender and diversity in the response.

Commitment 2 highlights the need for effective systems that support timely, evidence-based decision-making, together with both adequate and timely geographical coverage of both assistance and protection needs. It recognises the challenges of access, security, funding, logistics, capacity and conflicting priorities. It requires that the humanitarian community, acting together, find ways to overcome these to provide a comprehensive response to people's needs. Anticipating and preparing for crises in advance increases the speed, appropriateness and efficiency of the response and ensures that decisions are based on the most reliable information. Responses must not just be timely. They must also adhere to minimum technical standards if they are to help protect people's lives and livelihoods.

Commitment 3 recognises the need to acknowledge and build on local and national capacity when responding to disasters and to forge stronger links with local organisations. Ensuring that individuals, communities and countries have greater control over decision-making and become more resilient leads to a quicker recovery and a greater capacity to withstand future shocks. Humanitarian action may have unintended, harmful consequences - organisations must recognise this and collaborate with others to prevent or mitigate such effects.

Commitment 4 emphasises the need for the inclusive participation of affected people. This requires a willingness to allow and encourage people receiving aid to speak out and influence decisions. Information and communication are critical forms of aid, without which affected people cannot access services, make the best decisions for themselves and their communities, or hold humanitarian organisations to account. Sharing information, listening carefully to affected people and involving them in decision-making contributes to more effective programmes and improves the quality of services delivered. When people have the opportunity

to voice their opinions, it enhances their sense of well-being, helps them adapt to the challenges they face and better enables them to take an active role in their own recovery.

Commitment 5 articulates the right of people affected by crisis to complain to an agency and to receive an appropriate and timely response. Formal mechanisms for complaints and redress are an essential component of an agency's accountability and give affected people some element of control over their lives. A complaint contains a specific grievance and can alert an organisation to serious misconduct or failures in the response, allowing them to take timely action to improve programme quality. All organisations are susceptible to fraud or abuse of power and a complaints system can help an organisation to recognise and respond to malpractice, manipulation and exploitation.

Commitment 6 emphasizes that adequate programme coverage and timely, effective humanitarian responses require collective action. Coordination mechanisms, such as those led by government or through the IASC cluster system, are required to establish a clear division of labour and responsibility and to identify gaps in coverage and quality. It is important to prevent the duplication of efforts and the waste of resources. The sharing of information and knowledge between stakeholders, joint planning and integrated activities can also ensure that organisations manage risk better and improve the outcomes of a response.

Commitment 7 points to importance of learning from success and failure and applying these insights to modify and adapt current and future work as a cornerstone of accountability and quality management. A culture of learning and continual improvement should lie at the heart of a professional and committed organisation and is fundamental to ensuring effectiveness and efficiency. Constant interaction with service users is necessary so that changes and adaptations can be made as soon as possible. Collaboration with other agencies can also enhance learning.

Commitment 8 focuses on the actions of staff as the foundation of each of the Nine Commitments and the basis for an effective response. An organisation's capacity to recruit, train and manage staff and volunteers is at the heart of the CHS. Staff-related costs are often the largest proportion of an organisation's costs and of most programme budgets, and investments in staff should be carefully nurtured if they are to yield the best outcomes for communities affected by crisis. Responsibilities related to staff, and the organisation's approach to its workforce as a whole, are also included in the other eight Commitments.

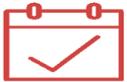
Commitment 9 focuses on resource management, as these are finite and need to be used with care. Being accountable is intrinsically linked with being responsible for the effective and efficient use of resources donated to and managed by the organisation. Communities affected by crisis bear the true costs of

mismanagement, negligence or corruption. It is vital that organisations use resources wisely and honestly in order to ensure maximum impact.

Links between the Core Humanitarian Standard and the Minimum Standards

The CHS complements the Humanitarian Charter and Protection Principles to provide a framework within which response is designed and implemented. Throughout the Handbook, cross-references between chapters are made.

The nine CHS Commitments don't follow a project cycle approach, because they are a mix of key actions and organisational requirements. Some actions are more specific to a certain phase of a project. Others are clearly meant to take place throughout a project.

	 Key actions	 Organisational Responsibilities	 Guiding questions	 Performance Indicators
Individual	✓		✓	
Project	✓		✓	✓
Organisation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cluster	✓		✓	✓

CHS Commitment 1

Communities and people affected by crisis receive assistance appropriate to their needs.

Quality Criterion: Humanitarian response is appropriate and relevant.

Performance Indicators

1. Communities and people affected by crisis consider that the response takes account of their specific needs and culture.
2. The assistance and protection provided correspond with assessed risks, vulnerabilities and needs.
3. The response takes the capacities (for example, the skills and knowledge) of people requiring assistance and/or protection into account.

Key Actions

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| KA 1.1: | Conduct a systematic, objective and ongoing analysis of the context and stakeholders. |
| KA 1.2 | Design and implement appropriate programmes based on an impartial assessment of needs and risks, and an understanding of the vulnerabilities and capacities of different groups. |
| KA 1.3: | Adapt programmes to changing needs, capacities and contexts. |

Organisational Responsibilities

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| OR 1.4: | Policies commit to providing impartial assistance based on the needs and capacities of communities and people affected by crisis. |
| OR 1.5: | Policies set out commitments which take into account the diversity of communities, including disadvantaged or marginalised people, and to collect disaggregated data. |
| OR 1.6: | Processes are in place to ensure an appropriate ongoing analysis of the context. |

Guiding questions for monitoring Key Actions

1. Has a comprehensive needs assessment been conducted and used to inform response planning?

2. Are multiple sources of information, including affected people and communities, local institutions and other stakeholders consulted when assessing needs, risks, capacities, vulnerabilities and context?
3. Are assessment and monitoring data disaggregated by sex, age and ability?
4. How have vulnerable groups been identified?
5. Does the response include different types of assistance and/or protection for different demographic groups?
6. What actions are taken to adapt the response strategy based on changing needs, capacities, risks and the context?

Guiding questions for monitoring Organisational Responsibilities

1. Does the organisation have a clear policy commitment to needs-based, impartial and independent humanitarian action, and are staff members aware of it?
2. Do relevant stakeholders perceive the organisation as impartial, independent and non-discriminatory?
3. Do working processes include mechanisms for consistently collecting data disaggregated by sex, age and ability?
4. Are these data regularly used to guide programme design and implementation?
5. Does the organisation have the funding, staffing policies and programmatic flexibility to allow it to adapt the response to changing needs?
- 6.

What else do I need to know?

Assessment and analysis

- Assessment and analysis is a process, not a single event. As time allows, an in-depth analysis should be performed.
- The needs of affected people are likely to change over time and should not be assumed. They should be identified through assessments or monitoring that engages them in an ongoing discussion.
- In the initial phases, it may be worth using secondary information wherever possible, rather than spending the time to collect new information.
- It is vital to cross-check and verify (i.e. triangulate) information. Acknowledge that initial assessment data will be imperfect.
- Assessments should take into account existing local capacities to meet identified needs.

- An assessment of the safety and security of both the disaster-affected and the host population is important to identify threats of violence and any forms of coercion, denial of subsistence or denial of basic human rights. An analysis of gender-related needs also helps to define a more effective and sustainable response.
- Planning is required to coordinate with others and avoid burdening communities with multiple assessments. Wherever possible, joint assessments (such as the multi-cluster/sector initial rapid assessment (MIRA)) should be executed and information (including selection criteria) shared with interested agencies, governments and affected populations.

Appropriate programmes

- Humanitarian response must be acceptable to the different groups affected within the community and should seek to uphold the rights of all community members by: meeting their basic needs (such as for clean water and healthcare); responding to their protection concerns (preventing sexual exploitation and violence, for example); and enabling people to maintain their sense of dignity and self-respect. Programme design should be context-specific.
- Some culturally acceptable practices violate people's human rights or are founded on misconceptions (for example, biased targeting of girls, boys or specific castes, denial of education to girls, refusal of immunisation, etc.) and should not be supported.

Impartial assessment

- Special efforts are needed to assess the needs of people in hard-to-reach locations, and people with specific vulnerabilities. Acting impartially does not mean that all people should be treated the same. It means recognising that different groups will have different needs, vulnerabilities and capacities.

Vulnerability

- People may be vulnerable because of individual factors such as age (particularly the very young and the very old), disability or illness (for example, people with mobility problems or people living with HIV) or because they are caring for others who are vulnerable.
- Social and contextual factors also contribute to people's vulnerability. These include discrimination and marginalisation (for example, in some contexts, the low status and power of women and girls), social isolation (including the lack of access to information), environmental degradation (for example, soil erosion or deforestation), climate variability, poverty, lack of land tenure, poor governance, ethnicity, class, caste, and religious or political affiliations.

Existing capacity

- The state has the primary role and responsibility to provide timely assistance and protection to affected people within its borders. Intervention by other humanitarian actors should take place only if the affected population and/or the state does not have sufficient capacity or willingness to respond (particularly

during the early stages of the response). Intervention may also be justified if the state or authorities actively discriminate against certain groups and/or people living in a particular affected area.

- Women and men affected by crisis (including older people and those with disabilities) already possess and can further acquire skills, knowledge and capacities to cope with, respond to and recover from disasters. They will usually be the first to respond. Actively engaging affected people in humanitarian response is an essential part of upholding their right to life with dignity.

Adapting programmes

- Adapting programmes should be based on ongoing needs assessment and monitoring.
- Epidemiological and other data must be monitored regularly and used to inform ongoing decision-making and identify life-saving priorities.
- Responders will have to remain flexible enough to redesign any intervention in response to changing needs. Discussions may be needed to ensure that donors agree with programme changes.

Organisational policies relating to impartial assistance and diversity

- To meet the CHS an organisation must maintain policies, processes and systems that articulate and support a commitment to humanitarian principles (and any exceptions to this) and that effectuate respect for gender, age, ability and diversity.
- All staff and volunteers should understand their responsibilities in relation to these policies, and how they may be held to account. Other key stakeholders should also be made aware of these policies.

Data disaggregation

- Organisational policies should make clear the required levels of data disaggregation for assessment and reporting. This can contribute to providing evidence of impartial assistance and can indicate if aid is reaching the groups it is intended for.

Processes for ongoing analysis

- Humanitarian organisations should provide appropriate management and supervisory support to enable humanitarian workers to acquire the knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes necessary to manage and carry out assessments.
- Human resources systems should be flexible enough to recruit and deploy assessment teams rapidly. Maintaining adequate numbers of qualified staff ensures that ongoing assessment and analysis is feasible.
- Programme budgets and resources should be allocated according to need. Funding should support ongoing analysis of assistance and protection needs, and the adaptation and correction of programmes.

CHS Commitment 2

Communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time.

Quality Criterion: Humanitarian response is effective and timely.

Performance Indicators

1. Communities and people affected by crisis, including the most vulnerable groups, consider that the timing of the assistance and protection they receive is adequate.
2. Communities and people affected by crisis consider that their needs are met by the response.
3. Monitoring and evaluation reports show that the humanitarian response meets its objectives in terms of timing, quality and quantity.

Key Actions

KA 2.1:	Design programmes that address constraints so that the proposed action is realistic and safe for communities.
KA 2.2:	Deliver humanitarian response in a timely manner, making decisions and acting without unnecessary delay.
KA 2.3:	Refer any unmet needs to those organisations with the relevant technical expertise and mandate, or advocate for those needs to be addressed.
KA 2.4:	Use relevant technical standards and good practice employed across the humanitarian sector to plan and assess programmes.
KA 2.5:	Monitor the activities, outputs and outcomes of humanitarian responses in order to adapt programmes and address poor performance.

Organisational Responsibilities

OR 2.6:	Programme commitments are in line with organisational capacities.
OR 2.7:	Policy commitments ensure: a. systematic, objective and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of activities and their effects; b. evidence from monitoring and evaluations is used to adapt and improve programmes; and c. timely decision-making with resources allocated accordingly.

Guiding questions for monitoring Key Actions

1. Are constraints and risks regularly identified and analysed, and plans adapted accordingly?
2. Does planning consider optimal times for activities, accounting for factors such as weather, season or conflict?
3. Are delays in implementing plans and activities monitored and addressed?
4. Are early warning systems and contingency plans used?
5. Are globally recognised technical standards used and achieved?
6. Are unmet needs identified and addressed?
7. Are the results of monitoring used to adapt programmes?

Guiding questions for monitoring Organisational Responsibilities

1. Are there clear processes to assess if the organisation has the sufficient ability, financing and appropriate deployable staff available before making programming commitments?
2. Are there clear policies, processes and resources in place to support monitoring and evaluation and to use the results for management and decision-making? Are they known to staff?
3. Are there clear processes to define responsibilities and timelines for decision-making on resource allocations?

What else do I need to know?

Addressing constraints and realistic programming

- While it may be difficult to access certain areas or populations, every effort should be made to consider where needs might exist, and to assess and meet these needs. If it is not possible to assess and meet the needs of a specific area or population group, clearly state that these areas have not been assisted. Other agencies should be made aware of these gaps in assistance
- Where contingency planning shows that areas are vulnerable and may prove hard to access in the future, additional, prioritised efforts should be made to support local response capacity in advance.
- Some needs cannot be met without government intervention (for example, access to land or land ownership rights) and other needs may fall outside of an organisation's expertise and experience. However, organisations have a

responsibility to refer these needs to appropriate organisations, and to lobby for these needs to be met.

- Collaborative work is often required to develop strategies (for example, advocacy for access, referral systems, contingency planning) to overcome challenges that prevent humanitarian response meeting this commitment.
- Time bound and context-specific performance indicators should be defined and reviewed on a regular basis to measure progress towards meeting assistance and protection needs.

Timeliness

- Timeliness refers not only to a rapid response but also to the provision of the right services at the right time, dependent on living conditions, seasons, agricultural calendars and other factors.
- Programme plans need to include timeframes for delivery and monitoring systems. Plans should proactively identify and flag delays. The IASC humanitarian programme cycle (see the links to further guidance) provides more information on expected timelines for slow and sudden onset emergencies.
- Using forecasts and early warning systems to carry out contingency planning before a crisis allows communities, authorities and agencies to be ready to intervene on time, so that affected people can protect their assets before their lives and livelihoods are at risk.

Decision-making

- Factors that influence the decision to respond to a humanitarian crisis include availability of funds, access to information, level of preparedness, expertise of an agency or the need to demonstrate impact. Donor governments will also be influenced by political considerations. Decision-making should be based on an objective analysis of needs and capacities, but in reality, in-depth information will often be absent in the early stages of an acute disaster. That means that decisions will have to be made based on imperfect knowledge. Decision-making needs to be flexible and to respond to new information from ongoing assessments. Decision-making arrangements will vary within different organisations and for the response as a whole. The ultimate responsibility for decision-making should rest with national authorities.
- Decisions and decision-making processes should be well documented to allow for transparency and should be based on consultation and coordination with others (see Commitment 6).

Technical standards and good practice

- In general, agencies should be guided by national standards for all sectors – where needed, agencies should advocate for the use of globally agreed standards to complement national ones (see *Sphere Standards in National Humanitarian Response*)

Monitoring activities, outputs and outcomes

- Monitoring informs project revisions, verifies application of selection criteria and confirms if aid is reaching the people for whom it is intended. It enables decision-makers to respond to feedback from different groups (for example, to redress gender imbalances) and identify emerging problems or trends.
- Monitoring should measure progress against project objectives and include performance indicators, rather than only focusing on activities such as number of distributions or outputs such as the number of facilities constructed. Project outcomes relate to the desired end result of activities such as the use of facilities or changes in practice. Timeliness of results should also be monitored.
- Monitoring systems should be reviewed regularly to ensure that only useful information is collected. Monitoring activities should also involve and rely on affected people and key stakeholders (see Commitment 7).
- Agencies should make every attempt to use common, response-wide monitoring indicators.

Addressing poor performance

- The findings from monitoring must be used to correct mistakes, address weaknesses and improve the intervention. Changes as a result of monitoring should be documented (see Commitment 7).

Organisational capacity

- Organisational policies should reflect the importance of applying technical quality standards and developing and maintaining expertise in the agency's chosen areas of intervention. In some situations, an organisation may need to provide services that are outside their area of expertise until other agencies can do so.

Organisational policies, processes and systems

- Organisations should develop a documented evidence base for humanitarian action in order to improve outcomes, with systematic and rigorous monitoring and evaluation contributing to this process.
- An organisation that meets the CHS should be able to show how data from monitoring and evaluation is used to adapt programmes, policies and strategies, strengthen preparedness and improve performance in a timely manner (see Commitment 7). This might involve ensuring that staff can be recruited or redeployed quickly when needed or the existence of an emergency response fund.

Organisational decision-making

- Both the responsibilities and processes for decision-making within organisations must be clearly defined and understood, including who is responsible, who will be consulted and what information is needed to inform decision-making.

CHS Commitment 3

Communities and people affected by crisis are not negatively affected and are more prepared, resilient and less at-risk as a result of humanitarian action.

Quality Criterion: Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects.

Performance Indicators

1. Communities and people affected by crisis consider themselves better able to withstand future shocks and stresses as a result of humanitarian action.
2. Local authorities, leaders and organisations with responsibilities for responding to crises consider that their capacities have been increased.
3. Communities and people affected by crisis (including the most vulnerable) do not identify any negative effects resulting from humanitarian action.

Key Actions

KA 3.1:	Ensure programmes build on local capacities and that they work towards improving the resilience of communities and people affected by crisis.
KA 3.2:	Use the results of any existing community hazard and risk assessments and preparedness plans to guide activities.
KA 3.3:	Enable the development of local leadership and organisations in their capacity as first responders in the event of future crises, taking steps to ensure that marginalised and disadvantaged groups are appropriately represented.
KA 3.4:	Plan a transition or exit strategy in the early stages of the humanitarian programme that ensures longer-term positive effects and reduces the risk of dependency.
KA 3.5:	Design and implement programmes that promote early disaster recovery and benefit the local economy.
KA 3.6:	Identify and act upon potential or actual unintended negative effects in a timely and systematic manner, including in the areas of: a) people's safety, security, dignity and rights; b) sexual exploitation and abuse by staff; c) culture, gender, and social and political relationships; d) livelihoods; e) the local economy; and f) the environment.

Organisational Responsibilities	
OR 3.7:	Policies, strategies and guidance are designed to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. prevent programmes having any negative effects, such as, for example, exploitation, abuse or discrimination by staff against communities and people affected by crisis; and b. strengthen local capacities.
OR 3.8:	Systems are in place to safeguard any personal information collected from communities and people affected by crisis that could put them at risk.
Guiding questions for monitoring Key Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have local capacities for resilience (i.e. structures, organisations, leadership figures and support networks) been identified and do plans exist to strengthen these capacities? 2. Is existing information on risks, hazards, vulnerabilities and related plans used in programming activities? 3. Has the programme considered whether and how services could be provided by local civil society, government or private sector bodies? Are plans in place to support these bodies taking over the provision of relevant services? 4. Are strategies and actions to reduce risk and build resilience designed in consultation with affected people and communities? 5. In what ways (both formal and informal) are local leaders and/or authorities consulted to ensure response strategies are in line with local and/or national priorities? 6. Is the response designed to facilitate early recovery? 7. Has a market assessment of any sort been completed, to identify possible impacts of the programme on the local economy? 8. Has a clear transition and/or exit strategy been developed in consultation with affected people and other relevant stakeholders? 	
Guiding questions for monitoring Organisational Responsibilities	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there a policy that requires the execution of risk assessments and risk reduction exercises for vulnerable people in the organisation's programme areas? Is it known to staff? 	

2. Do policies and procedures exist for assessing and mitigating the negative effects of the response? Are they known to staff?
3. Are there specific policies and procedures in place to deal with situations of sexual exploitation, abuse or discrimination? Are they known to staff?
4. Are contingency plans in place for responding to new or evolving crises? Are they known to staff?
5. Does staff understand what is expected of them on issues of protection, security and risks?

What else do I need to know?

Community resilience

- Resilience can be strengthened by designing services that can reduce the impact of hazards (such as drought management and floods, hurricane- or earthquake-resistant structures).

Community hazard and risk assessments

- The more vulnerable in individual, community or country is, the more likely it is that there will be adverse effects.
- Women, men, children and different groups within society are exposed to different levels of risk. It is important that assessments take this into account.

Development of local leadership and capacity

- Local agencies and communities are usually the first to act and have in-depth knowledge of the situation and specific needs. Where possible, local NGOs should be seen as equal partners and given more autonomy in leading a response. This requires a commitment of international and local agencies to engage in open dialogue and constructive criticism.
- Wherever possible, programmes should employ local and national staff instead of expatriates.

Transition and exit strategy

- Services should be provided to support existing state and community systems rather than as parallel efforts that will not last beyond the duration of the response.
- Early exit-planning, in collaboration with the authorities and affected people encourages design of services that will continue after the programme has closed (for example, introducing cost-recovery measures, using locally available materials or strengthening local management capacity) and provides more time to prepare a transition.

Economic recovery

- Actions that strengthen local capacities and restore services, education, markets and livelihood opportunities promote early recovery.
- Actions that benefit the local economy include buying goods and services locally, and providing cash-based assistance (see 'Minimum Economic Recovery Standards 2010' in the links to further guidance).

Negative effects and 'do no harm'

- The high value of aid resources and the powerful position of humanitarian workers can lead to exploitation and abuse, competition, conflict, misuse or misappropriation of aid. Aid can undermine livelihoods, drive resource conflict and amplify unequal power relations between different groups and/or between men, women and children. These potential negative effects should be anticipated as possible and monitored, and actions taken to prevent them.

Environmental concerns and climate change (see also 9)

- Humanitarian response can cause environmental degradation (for example, soil erosion, depletion or pollution of groundwater, overfishing, waste production, natural resources degradation, deforestation and other environmental hazards), thus amplifying a crisis or vulnerability levels.
- Measures to reduce negative effects depend on the intervention. They could include reforestation, rainwater harvesting, efficient use of resources, and ethical procurement policies and practices. Major construction activities should only be performed following an environmental assessment.
- A rapid environmental impact assessment (REA) can help to determine the risks and makes it more likely that mitigation measures are put in place.
- Involving affected people and their concerns in this process is key. Support for the local management of natural resources should be integrated into programming.

Sexual exploitation and abuse by staff (see also 5.4)

- All staff share a responsibility to maintain an environment that is free of exploitation and abuse. Staff members have a responsibility to report any abuse they suspect or witness, whether within their own organisation or outside.

Organisational policy (see also 9.5)

- Organisations are encouraged to have a clearly documented risk management policy and system in place. NGOs that fail to systematically tackle corruption via their own anti-bribery policies and procedures and through collective action with other NGOs increase corruption risks for other actors.
- Policies and procedures should reflect a commitment to the protection of vulnerable people and outline ways to prevent and investigate the abuse of power.
- Careful recruitment, screening and hiring practices can help to reduce the risk of staff misconduct, and codes of conduct should make it clear what practices are

forbidden. Staff should formally agree to adhering to these codes and be made aware of the sanctions they will face if they fail to do so (see Commitment 8).

- Complaints and grievance procedures, including whistle-blowing policies, should be in place and staff should be made aware of how to access them.
- Green procurement policies can help to ensure that unintended negative environmental effects are avoided (see Commitment 9).

Safeguarding personal information

- All personal information collected from communities should be treated as confidential. This is particularly the case with regard to handling complaints about sexual exploitation and abuse (see Commitment 5). Assurances of confidentiality are essential to prevent the occurrence of further harm.
- The increasing use of electronic registration and distribution systems in humanitarian response makes the need for clear and comprehensive policies on data protection greater than ever before. Agreements obliging third parties such as banks and commercial organisations to take appropriate measures to safeguard information are essential. Clear guidance about the collection, storage, use and disposal of data aligned with international standards and local data protection laws is important.
- Systems to mitigate the risk of data being lost should be put in place. Data should not be held longer than is required and should be destroyed as soon as possible.
- Those receiving aid should be informed about their rights in relation to data protection, be able to access the personal information that an organisation holds about them and should expect any concerns they have about misuse of information to be investigated.

CHS Commitment 4

Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements, have access to information and participate in decisions that affect them.

Quality Criterion: Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback.

Performance Indicators

1. Communities and people affected by crisis (including the most vulnerable) are aware of their rights and entitlements.
2. Communities and people affected by crisis consider that they have timely access to relevant and clear information.
3. Communities and people affected by crisis are satisfied with their opportunities to influence the response.

Key Actions

KA 4.1:	Provide information to communities and people affected by crisis about the organisation, the principles it adheres to, how it expects its staff to behave, the programmes it is implementing and what they intend to deliver.
KA 4.2:	Communicate in languages, formats and media that are easily understood, respectful and culturally appropriate for different members of the community, especially vulnerable and marginalised groups.
KA 4.3:	Ensure representation is inclusive, involving the participation and engagement of communities and people affected by the crisis at all stages of the work.
KA 4.4:	Encourage and facilitate communities and people affected by crisis to provide feedback on their level of satisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of the assistance received, paying particular attention to the gender, age and diversity of those giving feedback.

Organisational Responsibilities

OR 4.5:	Policies for information sharing are in place, and promote a culture of open communication.
OR 4.6:	Policies are in place for engaging communities and people affected by crisis, reflecting the priorities and risks they identify in all stages of the

	work.
OR 4.7:	External communications, including those used for fundraising purposes, are accurate, ethical and respectful, presenting the communities and people affected by crisis as dignified human beings.
Guiding questions for monitoring Key Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is information about the organisation and response provided in accessible and appropriate ways to different affected groups? 2. Can women, men, girls and boys (especially those who are marginalised and vulnerable) access the information provided, and do they understand it? 3. Are affected people's views, including those of the most vulnerable and marginalised, sought and used to guide programme design and implementation? 4. Do all groups within affected communities feel they have opportunities to participate in decisions about the response that affects them? 5. Are all groups within the affected community aware of how to give feedback on the response, and do they feel safe using those channels? 6. Is feedback used? Can the programme point to elements that have been changed on the basis of feedback? 7. Are barriers to giving feedback identified and addressed? 8. Is data provided through feedback mechanisms disaggregated by age, gender and other relevant categories? 	
Guiding questions for monitoring Organisational Responsibilities	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do policies and programme plans include provisions for information sharing, including criteria on what information should and should not be shared? Are they known to staff? 2. Do policies include provisions on how to deal with confidential or sensitive information, or information that could potentially place staff or affected people at risk? Are they known to staff? 3. Is there a policy commitment and guidelines about the way in which affected people are represented in external communications or fundraising materials? Are they known to staff? 	

What else do I need to know?

Sharing information with communities

- The sharing of accurate, timely and accessible information strengthens trust, increases understanding, deepens levels of participation and improves the impact of a project. It can help to reduce the number of formal complaints received and is a key to being transparent.
- Sharing financial information with communities can also improve cost-effectiveness and help communities to identify and highlight waste or fraud.
- When an organisation does not share information appropriately with the people it aims to assist, misunderstandings and delays, inappropriate projects that waste resources, and negative perceptions about the organisation can develop that can generate anger, frustration and insecurity.
- Without accurate information, people cannot make informed decisions. They may be vulnerable to exploitation and abuse (including sexual abuse) if they don't know what they are entitled to, what behaviour they can expect from humanitarian workers and how to complain if they are not satisfied with the level of services provided.

Effective and inclusive communication

- Different groups (for example, mothers with young children, older men or women with disabilities) will have different communication and information needs and may well have different trusted sources of communication.
- Instead of using one-way communication, organisations should ensure not only that existing communication systems are used but also that people are consulted on their communications preferences and the degree of privacy required.
- Care is needed to ensure that communications technology, new and old, is used effectively and safely.

Participation and engagement

- Local populations are usually the first to react in a disaster and some degree of community participation is possible early during a response. Affected populations will have ideas on how to respond appropriately to the crisis and their views on programme design should be sought on an ongoing basis. Time spent consulting early can prevent the expenditure of time trying to fix inappropriate decisions later.
- Different levels of participation may be appropriate at different times. For example, in the early stages of an acute response, consultation might only be possible with limited numbers of affected people. Over time, there will be more opportunities for more people and groups to become involved in decision-making.
- As a result of the context or pre-existing differences in power (for example, based upon gender, race, class, caste, or other characteristics), participation will

not usually occur spontaneously. Instead, aid organisations may have to foster a process of mutual learning and dialogue to stimulate greater participation.

- Particular attention should be given to groups or individuals traditionally excluded from power and decision-making processes.
- Organisations should work with national, local and municipal authorities, supporting their relief efforts as much as possible.

Feedback

- Formal feedback can be sought through specific assessments (using group discussions or interviews), post distribution monitoring or questionnaires. Informal feedback received in the course of daily interaction should also be valued and used to develop trust and improve programmes on an ongoing basis (see the links to further guidance below).
- People may fear that critical feedback will lead to a loss of assistance or have negative repercussions. There may also be cultural reasons why criticism of an intervention is unacceptable. Exploring different methods of providing informal and formal feedback is important.
- All field-based staff should understand how to gain and maintain people's trust, welcome people's suggestions and comments, know how to respond to both positive and negative feedback and be observant of the reactions of different community members to the way services are provided.
- Feedback mechanisms should be designed in coordination with other agencies. They should be seen as separate from complaints mechanisms for serious infringements of practice or behaviour (see Commitment 5) although in practice there is usually an overlap in the type of feedback and complaints received. Acknowledging and following up on the feedback received and adapting the programme when appropriate is crucial if the process is to be trusted.
- Feedback collection must be integrated into a broader approach to receiving, reviewing and acting upon the feedback, as well as sharing the organisation's response to the feedback back to the community.

Promoting a culture of open communication

- An organisation should define and document its processes for sharing information, for example, its commitment to accurate and timely information sharing; what information it will share with the people it seeks to assist and other stakeholders; how decisions will be made about when and how to share information; and the criteria used in deciding not to share information.
- Meeting this Commitment also requires that organisations state publicly (for example, on their website or in promotional material) additional interests and commitments such as political or religious affiliations. The purpose of this declaration of additional interests is to encourage a 'no surprises' approach, giving all stakeholders an opportunity to better understand the nature of the organisation and its likely affiliations, policies, partnerships and relationships.
- Organisations should increasingly strive to share information about their

successes and failures openly to help promote a system-wide culture of openness and accountability. Organisations that are transparent and open in sharing information with their staff are more likely to be open with communities and the public.

Organisational commitment to participation and listening to communities

- Policies and strategies should outline how staff members are trained and encouraged to facilitate community engagement and decision-making, listen to affected people and manage negative feedback. Gender and diversity policies can also help to promote the values and commitments of the organisation and provide concrete examples of expected behaviour. Feedback from affected people should also inform strategy and programme development.

Restricting information, confidentiality and non-disclosure

- Not all information can or should be shared with all stakeholders. Decisions about what information to share should be based on an assessment of risk. For example, in some insecure areas, publicising information about cash distributions might put people at risk of being attacked.

An ethical approach to external communications

- Due care must be exercised when making use of stories and images that discuss and depict affected people as this can be seen as an invasion of their privacy – and as a breach of confidentiality if their permission is not sought. Fundraising material and photographs taken out of context can often be misleading. They can make the viewer assume that those receiving aid are all needy and helpless and may fail to highlight people's dignity and their capacity to help themselves. Policies and guidelines relating to external communications should be available to all staff and can help to ensure that these mistakes are not made.

CHS Commitment 5**Communities and people affected by crisis have access to safe and responsive mechanisms to handle complaints.***Quality Criterion: Complaints are welcomed and addressed.***Performance Indicators**

1. Communities and people affected by crisis, including vulnerable and marginalised groups, are aware of complaint reporting mechanisms established for their use.
2. Communities and people affected by crisis, consider the complaint reporting and handling mechanisms accessible, effective, confidential and safe.
3. Complaints are investigated, resolved and results fed back to the complainant within the stated timeframe.

Key Actions

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| KA 5.1: | Consult with communities and people affected by crisis on the design, implementation and monitoring of complaints-handling processes. |
| KA 5.2: | Welcome and accept complaints, and communicate how the mechanism can be accessed and the scope of issues it can address. |
| KA 5.3: | Manage complaints in a timely, fair and appropriate manner that prioritises the safety of the complainant and those affected at all stages. |

Organisational Responsibilities

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|----------------|---|
| OR 5.4: | The complaints handling process for communities and people affected by crisis is documented and in place. The process should cover programming, sexual exploitation and abuse, and other abuses of power. |
| OR 5.5: | An organizational culture in which complaints are taken seriously and acted upon according to defined policies and processes has been established. |
| OR 5.6: | Communities and people affected by crisis are fully aware of the expected behaviour of humanitarian staff, including organizational commitments made on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. |
| OR 5.7: | Complaints that do not fall within the scope of the organisation are |

referred to a relevant party in a manner consistent with good practice.

Guiding questions for monitoring Key Actions

1. Are communities and people affected by crisis consulted about the design of complaints mechanisms?
2. Are the preferences of all demographic groups taken into account, particularly those related to safety and confidentiality, in the design of complaint handling processes?
3. Is information about how complaints mechanisms work and what kind of complaints can be made through them provided to and understood by all demographic groups?
4. Are there agreed and respected timeframes for investigating and resolving complaints? Is the time between when a complaint is filed and its resolution recorded?
5. Are complaints about sexual exploitation and abuse investigated immediately by staff with relevant competencies and an appropriate level of authority?

Guiding questions for monitoring Organisational Responsibilities

1. Are there specific policies, budgets and procedures in place for handling complaints?
2. Are all staff provided with induction and refresher training on the organisation's policy and procedures for handling complaints?
3. Does the organisation's complaints-handling policy include provisions for sexual exploitation and abuse?
4. Is the organisation's policy commitment and procedures for preventing sexual exploitation and abuse shared with affected people?
5. Are complaints that cannot be addressed by the organisation referred in a timely manner to other relevant organisations?

What else do I need to know?

Designing a complaints mechanism

- Affected people and other stakeholders (including staff and groups who might be particularly vulnerable) should be consulted about: how they view complaints mechanisms; how complaints are currently dealt with; the ways in which they

would like to submit complaints to the organisation; what might potentially prevent them from complaining; and how they wish to receive feedback about complaints. The procedures should be designed to fit the requirements for each context and the feasibility of joint complaint mechanisms with other agencies should be explored.

- Staff members will need training to understand the rationale behind the complaints mechanism and the procedures for its operation. It is also important to consider how received complaints will be recorded and tracked, and how what is learned from them will be incorporated into future planning.

Raising awareness about how to make a complaint

- Time and resources will be needed to ensure that different groups within the affected population know what they can expect from agencies in terms of services, staff attitudes and behaviour, as well as what to do and where to go if they want to make a complaint because the agency has failed to meet these standards. They should also be assured that they can make a complaint confidentially and without fear of retaliation.
- An information campaign may be useful to help raise awareness of the system and procedures, and people should be given the opportunity to ask further questions about how it will work.
- Managing expectations is important, as communities may believe that the complaints process can solve all of their problems. This could generate frustration and disappointment if the expected changes are outside the control of the agency.

Managing complaints

- All complaints should be dealt with individually even though they may cover similar issues.
- A response should always be provided within a specified timeframe, and the complainant made aware of when to expect a response (for example, seven days for non-sensitive complaints).
- When the complaint falls outside the control and responsibility of the organisation, this should be explained clearly to the complainant. Where possible and in agreement with the complainant, they should be referred to the appropriate organisation. Coordination with other agencies and sectors will be required if this is to function effectively.
- Anonymous and malicious complaints present specific challenges because their source is unknown. They may be a warning signal to the organisation of underlying discontent and any follow-up will need to investigate if there is any previously unacknowledged cause for complaint.
- Only trained staff should investigate allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

Documentation

- Records should be kept of how the complaints mechanism was set up (including on what basis decisions were made), all complaints made, how they were responded to and within what timeframe. Care must be taken to ensure that information on complaints is kept confidential, in strict accordance with data protection policies, and that information is only stored for as long as is needed.

Protecting complainants

- Social and power dynamics must be assessed before deciding on the best way to interact with communities. Particular attention should always be paid to the specific needs of older people, women, children, people with disabilities and others who might be marginalised in order to ensure they have a say in the design and implementation of complaints-handling systems.
- Care must be taken in deciding who needs to know what information within the organisation. Given the social stigma associated with sexual abuse and the real danger that women and children reporting such abuse could face from perpetrators and their own families, it is essential to ensure that their complaint will be treated confidentially and reassure them that they will face no danger of retaliation. A whistleblowing policy should offer assurance of protection to staff who highlight concerns about programmes or the behaviour of colleagues.

Complaints handling process

- An organisation that meets the CHS should ensure that both its staff and the communities it serves have the opportunity to complain. Such complaints can be seen as an opportunity to improve the organisation and its work. Complaints can indicate the impact and appropriateness of an intervention, potential risks and vulnerabilities, and the degree to which people are satisfied with the services provided.
- The complaints process needs to be clearly explained to communities and staff, and mechanisms are needed for both sensitive (i.e. relating to corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse, or gross misconduct or malpractice) and non-sensitive information (for example, challenges to use of selection criteria).
- Guidelines should state which complaints fall within the agency's own remit, and when and how to refer them to other service providers. The established roles, responsibilities and timeframes must be clearly indicated. The right to appeal should also be built into complaints mechanisms.
- The possibility of working with other agencies on complaints mechanisms in specific locations, consortia or sectors should also be considered as this may be less confusing for communities and staff.

Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)

- An organisation and its senior management are responsible for ensuring that complaints mechanisms and procedures for SEA are in place, safe, transparent,

accessible and confidential. Where appropriate, organisations should consider including specific statements about cooperating with investigations into SEA cases in their partnership agreements.

Organisational culture

- Policies relating to an organisation's duty of care to the people it aims to assist, its codes of conduct and how it will protect potentially vulnerable groups such as women, children and people with disabilities, should be well publicised to all staff.
- Managers and senior staff should model and promote a culture of mutual respect between all staff, partners, volunteers and people affected by crisis. Their support for the implementation of community complaints mechanisms is vital.
- Organisations should have formal investigation procedures that adhere to the principles of confidentiality, independence and respect. Investigations must be conducted in a thorough, timely and professional manner, but also meet legal standards and local labour law requirements. Designated managers should have access to specialist advice or training on investigations and handling staff misconduct.
- A grievance procedure and whistleblowing policy should also be in place to deal with staff complaints.
- Organisations working with partners should agree on how they will raise and handle complaints (including against each other).

Staff behaviour and codes of conduct

- Organisations meeting this Commitment should have a staff code of conduct that is well publicised and endorsed by senior management.
- A child safeguarding policy should apply to all staff and partners, and inductions and training should be provided on expected standards of behaviour.
- Staff should know and understand the consequences of breaching the code (see Commitments 3 & 8).

Scope and referral

- Staff should be aware of how to handle complaints or allegations of abuse. In the case of criminal activity or where international law has been broken, liaison with the appropriate authorities will be necessary.

CHS Commitment 6**Communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance.***Quality Criterion: Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary.***Performance Indicators**

1. Communities and people affected by crisis do not identify gaps and overlaps in the response.
2. Responding organisations share relevant information through formal and informal coordination mechanisms.
3. Organisations coordinate needs assessments, delivery of humanitarian aid and monitoring of aid implementation.

Key Actions

KA 6.1:	Identify the roles, responsibilities, capacities and interests of different stakeholders.
KA 6.2:	Ensure humanitarian response complements that of national and local authorities and other humanitarian organisations.
KA 6.3:	Participate in relevant coordination bodies and collaborate with others in order to minimise demands on communities and maximise the coverage and service provision of the wider humanitarian effort.
KA 6.4:	Share necessary information with partners, coordination groups and other relevant actors through appropriate communication channels.

Organisational Responsibilities

OR 6.5:	Policies and strategies include a clear commitment to coordination and collaboration with others, including national and local authorities, without compromising humanitarian principles.
OR 6.6:	Work with partners is governed by clear and consistent agreements that respect each partner's mandate, obligations and independence, and recognises their respective constraints and commitments.

Guiding questions for monitoring Key Actions

1. Is information about the organisation's competences, resources, geographical areas and sectors of work shared in a timely way with others responding to the crisis?
2. Is information about the competences, resources, areas and sectors of work of other organisations, including local and national authorities, accessed and used?
3. Have existing coordination structures been identified and supported?
4. Are the programmes of other organisations and authorities taken into account when designing, planning and implementing programmes?
5. Are gaps and duplication in coverage identified and addressed?

Guiding questions for monitoring Organisational Responsibilities

1. Is there a clear commitment in organisational policies and/or strategies to work in collaboration with other actors?
2. Have criteria or conditions for partner selection, collaboration and coordination been established?
3. Are formal partnership arrangements in place?
4. Do partnership agreements include clear definitions of the roles, responsibilities and commitments of each partner, including how each partner will contribute to jointly meeting humanitarian principles?

What else do I need to know?

Complementary assistance

- Humanitarian organisations have an essential role to play in supporting the state's response and coordination function.
- Local organisations and civil society networks will have a significant amount of context-specific knowledge and experience but may need support in re-establishing themselves following the effects of a disaster.
- Collaboration and, where possible, the sharing of resources and equipment optimises the capacity of communities, host governments, donors and humanitarian organisation with different mandates and expertise. For example, joint assessments, trainings and evaluations can help to break down the barriers between organisations and ensure a more coherent approach (see the links to further guidance below).

Coordination bodies

- Efforts must often be made to encourage coordination, as local actors may not participate if coordination mechanisms appear to be relevant only to international agencies. The location of meetings or the language used can be a barrier to the participation of local actors. National and sub-national coordination mechanisms are required and clear reporting lines will need to be established. Participation in coordination mechanisms before a disaster establishes relationships and enhances coordination during a response.
- Where parallel coordination structures are necessary, there should be a clear strategy for linking with longer-term coordination bodies. The Cluster system is a recognised mechanism for the coordination of emergencies, but should support national coordination mechanisms.
- Meetings that bring together different sectors can enable people's needs to be addressed as a whole, rather than in isolation (for example, people's shelter, water, sanitation, hygiene and psychosocial needs are interrelated).
- In all coordination contexts, the commitment of agencies to participate will be affected by the quality of the coordination mechanisms. Coordination leaders have a responsibility to ensure that meetings and information sharing are well managed, efficient and results-oriented. The coordination body needs to determine the scope of its activities and commitments, as well as the overlap with other coordination bodies and how this will be managed (for example, in relation to accountability, gender and protection).
- A key coordination function is the ensuring of the application of and adherence to standards and guidelines. Achieving a coordinated impact is only possible through collaboration and mutual accountability. This can be done by suggesting that agencies adhere not only to technical standards but also, where relevant, to contextualised CHS performance indicators for their monitor and evaluation activities.

Working with the private sector

- The private sector can bring commercial efficiencies, complementary expertise and resources to humanitarian organisations. Information sharing, at the very least, is required to avoid duplication and to promote humanitarian good practice. Partnerships with the private sector should ensure that there are explicit benefits for people affected by crisis, whilst recognising that private sector actors may have additional objectives of their own.

Working with the military

- The military has particular expertise and resources, including those associated with security, logistics, transport and communication. However any association with the military should be in the service of, and led by, humanitarian organisations and conducted according to endorsed guidelines. Some organisations will maintain a minimum dialogue to ensure operational efficiency (for example, basic programme information sharing) while others may establish

stronger links (for example, the use of military assets).

- In all cases, humanitarian organisations must remain clearly distinct from the military to avoid any real or perceived association with a political or military agenda that could compromise the agencies' neutrality, independence, credibility, security and access to affected populations.

Sharing information

- Sharing information (including financial) between different stakeholders and different coordination mechanisms makes it more likely that programme gaps or duplication will be identified.
- It is important to respect the use of the local language(s) in meetings and in other communications and to examine barriers to communication so that local stakeholders are enabled to participate.
- Care must be taken to speak clearly and avoid jargon and colloquialisms, especially when other participants do not speak the same language. There may also be a need to provide interpreters and translators.

Institutional commitment to coordination and collaboration

- An organisation that meets the CHS needs to ensure that the Commitment to coordination is included in organisational policies and resourcing strategies. The organisation should provide a statement on how it will engage with partners, host authorities and other humanitarian (and where appropriate, non-humanitarian) actors.
- Staff representing agencies in coordination meetings should have the appropriate information, skills and authority to contribute to planning and decision-making. Coordination responsibilities should be clearly articulated in their job descriptions.

Working with partners

- Both local and national organisations should engage or collaborate with partners. A clear and shared understanding of each other's organisational mandate, and mutual roles and responsibilities, is needed if partnerships are to be effective and accountable.
- There may be different types of arrangements with partners, ranging from the purely contractual to shared decision-making and shared resources.
- In most situations, a partner organisation will have its own mandate and vision and will want to maintain its independence. But there will always be opportunities for mutual learning and development, and both parties stand to gain from the partnership, as they increase their knowledge and capacities and ensure better response preparedness and more varied response options.

CHS Commitment 7

Communities and people affected by crisis can expect delivery of improved assistance as organisations learn from experience and reflection.

Quality Criterion: Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve.

Performance Indicators

1. Communities and people affected by crisis identify improvements to the assistance and protection they receive over time.
2. Improvements are made to assistance and protection interventions as a result of the learning generated in the current response.
3. The assistance and protection provided reflects learning from other responses.

Key Actions

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| KA 7.1: | Draw on lessons learnt and prior experience when designing programmes. |
| KA 7.2: | Learn, innovate and implement changes on the basis of monitoring and evaluation, and feedback and complaints. |
| KA 7.3: | Share learning and innovation internally, with communities and people affected by crisis, and with other stakeholders. |

Organisational Responsibilities

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| OR 7.4: | Evaluation and learning policies are in place, and means are available to learn from experiences and improve practices. |
| OR 7.5: | Mechanisms exist to record knowledge and experience, and make it accessible throughout the organisation. |
| OR 7.6: | The organisation contributes to learning and innovation in humanitarian response amongst peers and within the sector. |

Guiding questions for monitoring Key Actions

1. Are evaluations and reviews of responses of similar crises consulted and incorporated as relevant in programme design?

2. Are monitoring, evaluation, feedback and complaints-handling processes leading to changes and/or innovations in programme design and implementation?
3. Is learning systematically documented?
4. Are specific systems used to share learning with relevant stakeholders, including affected people and partners?

Guiding questions for monitoring Organisational Responsibilities

1. Do policies and resources exist for evaluation and learning? Are they known to staff?
2. Does clear guidance exist for the recording and dissemination of learning, including specific guidance applicable to humanitarian crises?
3. Is learning identified at programme level, documented and shared within the organisation?
4. Is the organisation an active member of learning and innovation forums? How does the organisation contribute to these forums?

What else do I need to know?

Learning from experience

- Different approaches and methods suit different performance, learning and accountability purposes. Learning should take account of failures as well as successes and agencies can arguably learn more from the former.
- Effective monitoring uses qualitative and quantitative data, draws on a variety of methods to triangulate data and maintains consistent records.
- Clarity about the intended use and users of the data should determine what is collected and how it is presented. Care must be taken not to collect data that is not to be analysed or used.
- Monitoring systems should be made as simple and accessible as possible, whilst recognising that information should be representative of different groups.
- People affected by crisis are the best judges of changes in their lives and the use of open-ended listening and other qualitative participatory approaches, as well as quantitative methods, should be encouraged. Learning should also be shared and discussed with communities.
- The information from feedback and complaints mechanisms should be reviewed when evaluating a programme. A realistic and agreed action plan can help to ensure that evaluation and review recommendations are followed up (see also Commitment 5).

Innovation

- People affected by crisis have always been innovative in adapting to changing circumstances. This characteristic might benefit from support that involves them in a more systematic process of innovation and development.
- In recent years, there has been a greater focus on the use of innovative approaches, methods and tools for solving some of the challenges in humanitarian response. Funding streams have been made available to agencies wishing to develop new and creative ideas, such as the use of new technologies for sanitation and cash-based programming, or greater use of digital tools and media.

Collaboration and sharing of lessons

- In the interest of transparency and programme effectiveness, information from monitoring should be regularly shared with affected people. Monitoring performed by the people themselves can further enhance transparency and quality and encourage their ownership of the information.
- Collaborative learning with other agencies and academic bodies is a professional obligation and can introduce fresh perspectives and ideas, as well as maximise the use of limited resources. Collaboration also helps to reduce the burden of repeated evaluations in the same community.
- Peer learning exercises have been used by a variety of organisations and can be undertaken to monitor progress in real time or as a reflective exercise post-emergency.
- Any information collected through monitoring and evaluation should be analysed and presented in a brief accessible format that facilitates sharing and decision-making. Short summaries, briefing papers, meetings or films help to make information and knowledge more accessible.
- The creation of networks and communities of practice (including the involvement of academia) and opportunities to learn from peer groups – both in the field and in after-action reviews or learning forums – can make an important contribution to organisational practice and system-wide learning. Sharing challenges as well as successes amongst peers can enable humanitarians to identify risks and avoid future mistakes.
- The amount of evidence that is available across the sector is much greater than what is available to any single organisation. Economies of scale can be achieved through system-wide learning activities. There is also a strong indication that organisations learning and reviewing evidence together are more likely to provide the catalyst for organisational change than are lessons learned within a single organisation.

Evaluation and learning policies

- Key lessons and areas identified for improvement are not always addressed systematically and lessons cannot be considered learned unless they have

brought about demonstrable changes in current or subsequent responses.

- In its learning cycle, an organisation should include a performance review and improvement plan that is based on measurable, objective indicators.
- All staff should understand their responsibilities in relation to monitoring the progress of their work. They also need to understand how learning can contribute to their own personal development.

Knowledge management and organisational learning

- Knowledge management involves collecting, developing, sharing, storing and effectively using organisational knowledge and learning. Organisational learning should lead to practical changes such as improved strategies for carrying out assessments, or the reorganisation of teams to ensure a faster and more cohesive response, or clearer articulation of decision-making responsibilities.
- Longer-term national staff are often key to preserving local knowledge and relationships.

CHS Commitment 8

Communities and people affected by crisis receive the assistance they require from competent and well-managed staff and volunteers.

Quality Criterion: Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably.

Performance Indicators

1. Male and female staff feel supported by their organisation to do their work.
2. Staff satisfactorily meet their performance objectives.
3. Communities and people affected by crisis assess staff to be effective (i.e. in terms of their knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes).

Key Actions

KA 8.1:	Staff work according to the mandate and values of the organisation and according to objectives and performance standards.
KA 8.2:	Staff adhere to the policies that are relevant to them and understand the consequences of not adhering to them.

KA 8.3:	Staff develop and use the necessary personal, technical and management competencies to fulfil their role and understand how the organisation can support them to do this.
Organisational Responsibilities	
OR 8.4:	The organisation has the management and staff capacity and capability to deliver its programmes.
OR 8.5:	Staff policies and procedures are fair, transparent, non-discriminatory and compliant with local employment law.
OR 8.6:	Job descriptions, work objectives and feedback processes are in place so that staff have a clear understanding of what is required of them.
OR 8.7:	A code of conduct is in place that establishes, at a minimum, the obligation of staff not to exploit, abuse or otherwise discriminate against people.
OR 8.8:	Policies are in place to support staff to improve their skills and competencies.
OR 8.9:	Policies are in place for the security and the wellbeing of staff.
Guiding questions for monitoring Key Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the organisation's mandate and values communicated to new staff? 2. Is staff performance managed, under-performance addressed and good performance recognised? 3. Does staff sign a code of conduct or similarly binding document? If so, do they receive orientation on it and on other relevant policies that supports their understanding of the policy? 4. Are complaints received about staff or partners' staff? How are they handled? 5. Is staff aware of support available for their developing the competences required by their role and are they making use of it? 	
Guiding questions for monitoring Organisational Responsibilities	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are procedures in place for assessing human resource needs in relation to programme size and scope? 	

2. Does organisational planning make provision for future leadership needs and for developing new talent?
3. Do staff policies and procedures comply with local employment law and follow recognised good practice in managing staff?
4. Do all staff have updated job descriptions and objectives, including specific responsibilities and objectives?
5. Is the compensation and benefits structure fair, transparent and consistently applied?
6. Is all staff provided with an induction and updates on performance management and staff development policies and procedures?
7. Is all staff (and contractors) required to sign a code of conduct (that covers the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse) and provided with an appropriate induction on the code of conduct?
8. Does the organisation have a security policy and guidelines which are location-specific and known to staff?

What else do I need to know?

Staff and volunteers

- Any designated representative of the organisation, including national, international, permanent or short-term employees, as well as volunteers and consultants, is considered to be a member of staff. However, different terms and conditions apply to different types and levels of staff.
- National employment law will often dictate the status of an individual working for the organisation and such laws must be respected. All staff members must be made aware of their legal and organisational status.

Adhering to organisational mandates, values and policies

- Staff are expected to work within the legal scope, mission, values and vision of the organisation, which should be defined and communicated to them. Beyond this wider understanding of the role and ways of working of the organisation, an individual should work to a set of personal objectives and the performance expectations agreed to together with their manager.
- Organisations must make policies easily accessible, and staff must understand and apply the policies that are relevant to them, and accept the consequences if they fail to do so.
- The need for inductions and training relating to the organisational mandate, policies and codes of conduct will apply to all situations (even during a rapid

scale-up).

Performance standards and development of competencies

- Staff and their employers are mutually accountable for their skills development – including management skills. With the help of clear objectives and performance standards, they should understand what skills, competencies and knowledge (including, for example, the ability to listen well) are required to perform their current role. They should also be made aware of the opportunities for growth and development that might be available or required. Competencies can be improved through experience, training, mentoring or coaching.
- In the early phase of a disaster, opportunities for formal staff development may be limited but managers should, at a minimum, provide an induction and on-the-job training.
- There are various methods that can be used to assess a staff member's skills and behaviours, including observation, reviewing work output, direct discussions with them and interviewing their colleagues. Regular documented performance appraisals should allow managers to identify areas for support and training (see the links to further guidance below).

Staff capacity and capability

- Personnel management systems differ by agency and context but should be informed by good practice. They need to be considered and planned at a strategic level with the support of senior management. Organisation and project plans must take into account staff capacity, to ensure that the right numbers of staff with the right skills are in the right place at the right time to deliver short and long-term organisational objectives.
- While this does not mean that organisations must only undertake a project if they have managed to assemble all the necessary resources and expertise at the start, organisation-wide preparedness (involving operations, human resources, finance and other functions) is vital to envisioning how the resources required will be mobilised.
- Organisations need to plan how they will address peaks in demand for qualified staff in advance.
- Country-level roles and responsibilities will need to be clarified, as will internal decision-making responsibilities and communication.
- To avoid high staff turnover, organisations should avoid deploying staff for short periods of time and develop locally recruited staff who are likely to stay for longer periods of time. In multi-mandated agencies, development staff should be trained and available for humanitarian response.

Staff policies and procedures

- The style and complexity of staff policies and procedures will depend on the size and context of each agency. However simple or complex the agency may be, staff should participate in the development and review of policies where possible to

ensure that their views are represented. A staff manual facilitates knowledge of and consultation on policies.

- Local labour laws must be understood and respected.
- Organisational policy and practice should promote the role of national staff at management and leadership level to ensure continuity, institutional memory, and more contextually appropriate responses.
- An effective response is not simply about ensuring that skilled staff are present – it will also depend on the way that individuals are managed. Research from emergency contexts shows that effective management, frameworks and procedures are as important as, if not more important than, the skills of personnel in ensuring an effective response. Staff must be trained in how to apply standard operating procedures as this allows for higher levels of delegation and faster responses.

Staff guidance

- Job descriptions should make clear what is expected of each member of staff and should be kept up to date. In addition, each staff member should identify individual objectives that cover their work aspirations and the competencies they hope to develop or improve, and document these in a development plan.

Staff conduct (see also Commitments 3 and 5)

- It is paramount that the organisation's code of conduct is understood, signed and upheld, making it clear to all representatives of the organisation (including staff, volunteers, partners and contractors) what standards of behaviour are expected and what the consequences will be if they breach the code.

Staff competencies

- Focusing on competency and capacity development can motivate staff and lead to greater effectiveness. The organisation should have mechanisms for reviewing staff performance and assessing capacity gaps as well as a strategy for developing competencies and capacity to contribute to talent development. Performance review schedules must be flexible enough to cover staff who only work short-term as well as those who are on open-ended contracts.
- The organisation should agree with its partners on the competencies required for staff to meet the agreed Commitments.

Security and well-being

- Staff often work long hours in risky and stressful conditions. An agency's duty of care to its workers includes actions to promote well-being and avoid long-term exhaustion, burnout, injury or illness.
- Managers must make humanitarian workers aware of the risks and protect them from exposure to unnecessary threats to their physical and emotional health. Measures that can be adopted include effective security management,

preventative health advice, active support for working reasonable hours and access to psychological support when required.

- Managers can promote a duty of care through modelling good practice and personally complying with policy. Humanitarian workers also need to take personal responsibility for managing their well-being. Psychosocial support should be immediately available to workers who have experienced or witnessed extremely distressing events.

CHS Commitment 9

Communities and people affected by crisis can expect that the organisations assisting them are managing resources effectively, efficiently and ethically.

Quality Criterion: Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose.

Performance Indicators

1. Communities and people affected by crisis are made aware of community-level budgets, expenditures and results achieved.
2. Communities and people affected by crisis consider that the available resources are being used:
 - a. for what they were intended; and
 - b. without diversion or wastage.
3. The resources obtained for the response are used and monitored according to agreed plans, targets, budgets and timeframes.
4. Humanitarian response is delivered in a way that is cost effective.

Key Action

KA 9.1:	Design programmes and implement processes to ensure the efficient use of resources, balancing quality, cost and timeliness at each phase of the response.
KA 9.2:	Manage and use resources to achieve their intended purpose, minimising waste.
KA 9.3:	Monitor and report expenditure against budget.

KA 9.4:	When using local and natural resources, consider their impact on the environment.
KA 9.5:	Manage the risk of corruption and take appropriate action if it is identified.
Organisational Responsibilities	
OR 9.6:	<p>Policies and processes governing the use and management of resources are in place, including how the organisation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. accepts and allocates funds and gifts-in-kind ethically and legally; b. uses its resources in an environmentally responsible way; c. prevents and addresses corruption, fraud, conflicts of interest and misuse of resources; d. conducts audits, verifies compliance and reports transparently; e. assesses, manages and mitigates risk on an ongoing basis; and f. ensures that the acceptance of resources does not compromise its independence.
Guiding questions for monitoring Key Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are staff following organisational protocols for decisions regarding expenditure? 2. Is expenditure monitored regularly and the reports shared across programme management? 3. Are services and goods procured using a competitive bidding process? 4. Are potential impacts on the environment (water, soil, air, biodiversity) monitored, and actions taken to mitigate them? 5. Is a safe whistle-blowing procedure in place and known to staff, affected people and other stakeholders? 6. Are cost-effectiveness and social impact monitored? 	
Guiding questions for monitoring Organisational Responsibilities	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do policies and procedures exist for ethical procurement, use and management of resources? 2. Do these include provisions for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • acceptance and allocation of funds? • acceptance and allocation of gifts-in-kind? • mitigation and prevention of environmental impacts? 	

- fraud prevention, handling of suspected and proven corruption, and misuse of resources?
- conflicts of interest?
- auditing, verification and reporting?
- asset risk assessment and management?

What else do I need to know?

Efficient use of resources

- In high-profile acute emergencies, there is often the pressure to spend large amounts of money quickly and to demonstrate that agencies are doing something to address the situation. This can lead to poor project planning and insufficient emphasis on exploring different potential programme and financial options (for example, the use of cash) that may offer better value for money.
- In rapid onset emergencies, it may be necessary to adapt procedures to enable faster financial decision-making and to cope with challenges in the humanitarian context (for example, a lack of available suppliers to carry out competitive tenders). However, the elevated risk of corruption in these contexts means it is important to provide training and support to staff and establish complaints mechanisms to prevent adapted systems being open to corruption (see Commitments 3 & 5).
- Deploying experienced senior staff during this time can help to mitigate the risks and ensure that a balance is struck between providing a timely response and one that also maintains standards and limits waste.
- Collaboration and coordination between organisations can also contribute to a more efficient response (for example, by conducting joint assessments or evaluations and supporting interagency registration and logistics systems).
- At the end of the project, the assets and resources that remain will need to be donated, sold or returned responsibly.

Using resources for their intended purpose

- All humanitarian actors are accountable to both donors and affected people and should be able to demonstrate that resources have been used wisely, efficiently and to good effect.
- Fraud, corruption and waste divert resources away from those who need them most. However, an intervention that is not effective because it is understaffed or under-resourced cannot be said to be accountable. Economical does not always equal value for money. A balance will often need to be struck between economy, effectiveness and efficiency.
- (link to Commitment 3 regarding environment).

Monitoring and reporting on expenditure

- Financial management is an important aspect of programme management and good quality financial planning and monitoring systems are required to ensure that programme objectives are met. Systems and procedures should be in place to

mitigate key financial management risks and to track all financial transactions.

- Key financial risks that require specific skills and systems to mitigate are procurement, cash-transfer programming and stock management. Accounting records should satisfy accepted national and/or international standards and should be applied systematically within the organisation.
- All staff members have some responsibility for ensuring that finances are well managed but it is important to have people specially designated to compile financial reports. Staff should be encouraged to report any suspected fraud, corruption or misuse of resources.

Managing corruption risks

- The definition and understanding of corrupt practices is not the same in all cultures. A clear definition of the behaviour that is expected of staff (including volunteers) and partners is fundamental in addressing this risk (see Commitment 8).
- Being more open and transparent with project information, encouraging stakeholders to report abuses of power, careful on-site monitoring and treating community members with respect can help to reduce corruption risks.

Funding and gifts-in-kind

- Funding criteria and sources of funding should be documented and open to public scrutiny. The use of some funding sources could compromise the operational independence and impartiality of an organisation and efforts should be made to mitigate such risks by producing guidance for staff and encouraging transparency.
- Gifts-in-kind may also create ethical dilemmas. Giving gifts in many cultures is seen as an important social norm and refusing a gift would appear rude. If receiving the gift causes a sense of indebtedness, the receiver should politely refuse it. But if it is accepted, it is wise to declare this and discuss with a manager if concerns remain. Staff should be made aware of such policies and possible dilemmas.

Environmentally responsible organisations (see also Commitment 3)

- Organisations should commit to environmentally sound policies and practices and make use of existing guidelines to help address environmental issues in an emergency.
- Green procurement policies help reduce the impact on the environment but need to be managed in a way that prevents or minimises delay in the provision of assistance.

Corruption and fraud

- Fraud includes theft, diversion of goods or property and the falsification of records such as expense claims. Every organisation must keep an accurate record

of financial transactions that take place to show how funds have been used. Systems and procedures need to be set up to ensure internal control of financial resources and to prevent fraud and corruption.

- Recognised good practice in financial management and reporting should be supported by the organisation. Organisational policies should also ensure that procurement systems are transparent and robust and incorporate counter-terrorism measures.

Conflicts of interest

- Staff must ensure that there is no conflict between the aims of the organisation and their own personal or financial interests. For example, they must not award contracts to suppliers, organisations or individuals if they or their family stand to gain financially.
- There are various forms of conflict of interest and people do not always recognise that they are contravening organisational codes and policies. For example, using the organisation's resources without permission or taking gifts from a supplier might be construed as a conflict of interest.
- Creating a culture where people feel that they can openly discuss and declare any potential or actual conflicts of interest is key to managing them.

Auditing and transparency

- Audits can take several forms – internal audits check that procedures are being followed. External audits verify whether the organisation's financial statements are true and fair. An investigative audit is executed when an organisation suspects a specific problem – usually fraud.

Resources and further reading

General resources

CHS Alliance: www.chsalliance.org/resources

Commitment 1

ACAPS & ECB (2014) 'Humanitarian Needs Assessment: The Good Enough Guide': <http://www.acaps.org/img/documents/h-humanitarian-needs-assessment-the-good-enough-guide.pdf>

ALNAP & Groupe URD (2009) 'Developing a participatory approach to involve affected people in a humanitarian response'. The Participation Handbook (chapter 7): http://urd.org/IMG/pdf/MP_GB_CHAPITRE7.pdf

IASC (2015) 'Multi-sector initial rapid assessment guidance' (revised July 2015): https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/system/files/documents/files/mira_revised_2015_en.pdf

IASC (2006) 'Women, Girls, Boys and Men: Different Needs, Equal Opportunities'.
The Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action:
<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/gender-and-humanitarian-action-0/documents-public/women-girls-boys-men-different-needs-equal>

Mazurana, D., Benelli, P., Gupta, H., & Walker, P. (2011) 'Sex and Age Matter: Improving Humanitarian Response in Emergencies'. Feinstein International Center, Tufts University:
<http://www.alnap.org/resource/8144>

Commitment 2

IASC (2015) Reference module for the implementation of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle:
<https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/programme-cycle/space/programme-cycle-toolbox>

ALNAP & Groupe URD (2009) 'Developing a participatory approach to involve affected people in a humanitarian response'. The Participation Handbook (chapter 8):
http://urd.org/IMG/pdf/MP_GB_CHAPITRE8.pdf

Commitment 3

IFRC (2006) 'What is VCA? An introduction to vulnerability and capacity assessment':
<http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/disasters/vca/whats-vca-en.pdf>

Turnbull, M., Sterret, C. & Hilleboe, A. (2013) 'Toward resilience, a guide to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation'. Practical Action:
<http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ECB-toward-resilience-Disaster-risk-reduction-Climate-Change-Adaptation-guideenglish.pdf>

Groupe URD (2013) 'Reaching Resilience: Handbook Resilience 2.0 for aid practitioners and policymakers in Disaster Risk Reduction, Climate Change Adaptation and Poverty Reduction':
<http://www.reachingresilience.org/IMG/pdf/resilience-handbook.pdf>

Slim, H. & Bonwick, A. (2005) 'Protection: An ALNAP guide for humanitarian agencies':
www.alnap.org/resource/5263

SEEP Network (2010) 'Minimum Economic Recovery Standards':
<http://www.seepnetwork.org/minimum-economic-recovery-standards-resources-174.php>

Refer “further links” section here and in commitment 8 to section 5 for resources on PSEA, which needs to be updated (SG Bulletin, IASC PSEA webpage; publications from CHS Alliance (investigation and PSEA guides)

Commitment 4

ALNAP & Groupe URD (2009) ‘Developing a participatory approach to involve affected people in a humanitarian response’. The Participation Handbook: <http://www.alnap.org/resource/8531>

CRS (2013) ‘Communication Toolbox: Practical guidance for program managers to improve communication with participants and community members’: <http://www.crsprogramquality.org/storage/pubs/general/communication-toolbox.pdf>

ALNAP (2014) ‘Closing the Loop – Practitioner guidance on effective feedback mechanisms in humanitarian contexts’. ALNAP Practitioner Guidance. London: ALNAP/ODI: <http://www.alnap.org/what-we-do/engagement/feedback-loop>

Infoasaid (2013) Diagnostic Tools: <http://www.cdacnetwork.org/tools-and-resources/i/20140626100739-b0u7q>

Infoasaid (2015) E-learning course: <http://www.cdacnetwork.org/learning-centre/e-learning/>

Commitment 5

Danish Refugee Council (2008) ‘Complaints Mechanism Handbook’: <http://www.alnap.org/resource/8762>

IASC Task force on PSEA (2009) ‘Guidelines on Setting Up a Community Based Complaints Mechanism Regarding Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN and non-UN Personnel’: www.pseataaskforce.org/uploads/tools/1351822689.pdf

Save the Children (2013) ‘Putting Accountability into Practice’: <http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/library/programme-accountability-guidance-pack-save-children-resource>

Commitment 6

IASC (2012) ‘Reference module for cluster coordination at the country level’: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/coordination/clusters>

NRC (2008) ‘Camp management toolkit’: <http://www.nrc.no/camp#.VLz95ihb7ns>

Christian Aid (2012) 'Building the future of humanitarian aid: Local capacity and partnerships in emergency assistance':
<http://www.christianaid.org.uk/images/building-the-future-of-humanitarian-aid.pdf>

Knox Clarke, P. and Campbell, L. (2015) 'Exploring coordination in humanitarian clusters'. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI:
<http://www.alnap.org/resource/20360>

Commitment 7

ALNAP: Should include the ALNAP HELP database – either in text on sector learning, or in this links to further guidance section

The Sphere Project (2015) 'Sphere for monitoring and evaluation'. Sphere Unpacked series:
<http://www.sphereproject.org/silo/files/sphere-for-monitoring-and-evaluation.pdf>

Buchanan-Smith, M. & Cosgrave, J. (2013) 'Evaluation of Humanitarian Action: Pilot Guide'. ALNAP:
<http://www.alnap.org/what-we-do/evaluation/eha#>

Norman, B. (2013) 'Monitoring and accountability practices for remotely managed projects implemented in volatile operating environments'. Tearfund:
<http://www.alnap.org/resource/7956>

Catley, A., Burns, J., Abebe, D., Suji, O. (2013) 'Participatory Impact Assessment: A Design Guide'. Feinstein International Center, Tufts University, Somerville:
http://fic.tufts.edu/assets/PIA-guide_revised-2014-3.pdf

Hallam, A. and Bonino, F. (2013) 'Using Evaluation for a Change: Insights from humanitarian practitioners'. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI:
<http://www.alnap.org/resource/8980>

Commitment 8

Links to further guidance

CHS Alliance (2015) HR Tool:

<http://chsalliance.org/files/files/Resources/Tools-and-guidance/CHS-Alliance-Handbook-for-Managing-HR-Effectiveness-Final.pdf>

CBHA (2010) 'Core Humanitarian Competencies Guide: Humanitarian Capacity Building Throughout the Employee Life Cycle':
<http://www.start-network.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Core-Humanitarian-Competencies-Guide.pdf>

ECB (2007) 'Building Trust in Diverse Teams: The Toolkit for Emergency Response':
<http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/building-trust-in-diverse-teams-the-toolkit-for-emergency-response-115413>

People In Aid (2011) 'Debriefing: building staff capacity':
<http://chsalliance.org/files/files/Resources/Case-Studies/Debriefing-building-staff-capacity.pdf>

Refer "further links" section here and in commitment 8 to section 5 for resources on PSEA, which needs to be updated (SG Bulletin, IASC PSEA webpage; publications from CHS Alliance (investigation and PSEA guides)

Commitment 9

Groupe URD/UNEP 'Training toolkit: Integrating the environment into humanitarian action and early recovery':
<http://postconflict.unep.ch/humanitarianaction/training.html>

OCHA & UNEP (2014) 'Environment and Humanitarian action' (factsheet):
https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/EHA_factsheet_final.pdf

Mango (2013) Top Tips for financial governance (webpage):
<http://www.mango.org.uk/toptips/tt20gov>

Lewis, T. (2010) 'Financial Management Essentials: Handbook for NGOs'. Mango:
<http://www.mango.org.uk/guide/coursehandbook>

Bond (2012) 'Value for money – what it means for UK NGOs (Background paper)':
https://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/Value_for_money_-_what_it_means_for_NGOs_Jan_2012.pdf

Hees, R., Ahlendorf, M. & Debere, S. (2014) 'Preventing corruption in humanitarian operations'. Transparency International:
http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/publication/handbook_of_good_practices_preventing_corruption_in_humanitarian_operations