

Certification Review Project and the CHS Process
How they relate to each other
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This note outlines how the SCHR-sponsored Certification Review project and the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) process intend to work together as they move forward with their respective research and consultations with stakeholders.

1. Shared aims, separate processes

- Both processes share an aim of improving the quality, accountability and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance; promoting humanitarian principles and meeting our accountability commitments to affected people.
- The focus of the CHS process is to continue to work towards greater harmonisation, alignment of standards, and to promote the development and use a common core standard for the humanitarian sector.
- The focus of the Certification Review project is to explore how monitoring, verification, and certification mechanisms can contribute to quality, accountability and effectiveness.
- Each process is consulting with humanitarian stakeholders, but each has its own approach, perspective, timetable and objectives.
- The two processes are complementary, which will ensure that a broad range of stakeholders have opportunities to present their views around these important issues for the sector.
- This should lead to better triangulation and stronger evidence to support the findings and recommendations that emerge at the end of both processes.

2. Defining *what* to measure versus defining *how* to monitor, verify and report

- Both processes build on experiences and learning and outcomes of the JSI and other learning.
- The CHS is generating analysis on the feasibility of a common, measurable and verifiable common standard for humanitarian assistance.
- To do this, it has compiled common elements from existing standards and codes of practice into a unified framework for debate and discussion.
- The Certification project is exploring the role and added-value of verification and certification of humanitarian organisations and how this contributes to greater quality and accountability.
- To do this, the project has compiled common elements from different models, including HAP and People In Aid, as well as national-level NGO certification mechanisms into a draft model for debate and discussion, and has integrated elements of the proposed core standard into its assessment framework.

3. A commitment for close support and collaboration

- The Certification Review project contributed actively to the JSI process and continues to contribute inputs to the CHS process methodology and content, especially around the role of monitoring, reporting, verification and certification.
- Similarly, the CHS process is generating important information on the feasibility of a common standard and related criteria for humanitarian assistance, a key pre-requisite for any successful monitoring, reporting, verification or certification framework.
- Both processes are represented by their respective technical advisory groups to ensure information sharing, coherence and synergies.
- However, both processes will maintain their independence to ensure a wide range of stakeholder perspectives are reflected in any findings and recommendations emerging from each process.
- Both processes are firmly committed to collaborating together, integrating the relevant analysis that emerges from each process, and transparently sharing their findings and recommendations with all stakeholders.

- This means that the certification review will generate inputs on what stakeholders consider as an appropriate set of standards and indicators to demonstrate application of humanitarian principles, accountability and effectiveness, and share this with the CHS process
- For the CHS process, this means generating inputs on what stakeholders consider as appropriate means to measure and verify standards and the role of certification, and share this with the certification project.

4. Working towards practical, achievable and sustainable solutions at improving practices

- Both processes are firmly committed to building a strong evidence base and consensus amongst different stakeholders around any findings and recommendations.
- For the CHS process, this means that any proposed standard is accessible, useful and practical for use by aid workers in their daily work.
- For the Certification project, this means that any proposed monitoring, reporting, verification or certification mechanisms are complementary to existing approaches, accessible and affordable to all organisations, and make a clear contribution to improving practices.

5. Consultation processes and timetables

- The Certification Review project is now beginning field consultations in Ethiopia, Pakistan, Philippines, and Lebanon to test and validate the main elements of a draft certification model.
- The model synthesises and integrates many of the elements of the draft core humanitarian standard in its assessment framework.
- This will allow the project to provide inputs and feedback to the CHS process on the most relevant and appropriate means provide evidence of how any proposed standards can be measured and verified.
- Field research will be completed by May 2014, at which point the project will begin a final round of consultations with stakeholders on any proposed model on how it could add value for the sector.
- The project plans to finalise its findings and recommendations on the most appropriate model and approach to verification and certification and how to achieve it by end of September 2014.
- The CHS process is currently conducting a first round of consultations with stakeholders on the core standards, with a second stage to review and refine indicators for the standards to follow.
- Field research and consultations will then begin in June 2014, which will allow the CHS to draw on the learning and findings from the Certification project field research.
- The CHS intends to complete its consultations by December 2014 with recommendations on a core standard, indicators and how to achieve wide buy-in from stakeholders.
- Both processes plan to share their findings and recommendations at a joint conference in December 2014, and will look for ways to ensure wider discussion and follow-up of any recommendations following, such as through the World Humanitarian Summit or other forums.