



**ACT Alliance Secretariat  
Independent Verification Report  
2017-2-22**

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## 1. General information

Organisation Name:	ACT Alliance - Secretariat	Verification Ref / No:	
Type of organisation: <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Federated  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Membership/Network  <input type="checkbox"/> Direct assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Through partners		Organisation Mandate: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocacy  Verified Mandate(s)  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/> Development <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	
Organisation size: (Total number of programme sites/ members/partners)	143 members; 125 countries	Legal Registration:	Registered charity
Head Office Location:	Geneva	Field locations verified:	Nepal
Date of Head Office Verification:	October 4-5	Date of Field Verification:	November 7-11
Lead Auditor:	Johnny O'Regan	2 <sup>nd</sup> Auditor's Name: (indicate if Trainee)	
		Observer's Name and Position	Elissa Goucem (HO)

## 2. Scope

- Independent verification initial audit       Mid term Audit  
 Certification initial audit                       Recertification audit

### 3. Schedule summary

#### 3.2 Verification Schedule

Name of Programme sites/members/partners verified	Location	Mandate (Humanitarian, Development, Advocacy)	Number of projects visited	Type of projects
LWF	Sindhupalchowk	Humanitarian	1	Shelter, WASH, livelihoods, psychosocial
ICCO	Sindhupalchowk	Humanitarian	2	Shelter, livelihoods, WASH
LWF	Sanagoun	Humanitarian	1	Shelter, livelihoods, WASH

#### 3.2 Opening and closing meetings

##### 1) At HO

	Opening meeting	Closing meeting
<b>Date</b>	4/10/16	5/10/16
<b>Location</b>	Geneva	Geneva
<b>Number of participants</b>	9	6
<b>Any substantive issue arising</b>	N/A	N/A

##### 2) At PS

	Opening meeting	Closing meeting
<b>Date</b>	7/11/16	11/11/16
<b>Location</b>	Kathmandu	Kathmandu

<b>Number of participants</b>	17	4
<b>Any substantive issue arising</b>	N/A	N/A

#### 4. Recommendation

In our opinion, ACT Alliance conforms to the commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standard.

Detailed findings are laid out in the rest of this report.



Dublin, December 2016

John O'Regan

Quality Control by: Elissa Goucem, HQAI Quality assurance officer	Quality Control finalised on First Draft: 2016-12-23
Final Quality control by: Pierre Hauselmann, HQAI Executive Director	Final: 2017-02-22

#### Appeal

In case of disagreement with the conclusions and/or decision on certification, the organisation can appeal to HQAI within 30 days after the final report has been transmitted to the organisation.

HQAI will investigate the content of the appeal and propose a solution within 15 days after receiving the appeal.

If the solution is deemed not to be satisfactory, the organisation can inform in writing HQAI within 15 days after being informed of the proposed solution of their intention to maintain the appeal.

HQAI will take action immediately, and identify two Board members to proceed with the appeal. These will have 30 day to address it. Their decision will be final.

The details of the Appeal Procedure can be found in document PRO049 – Appeal and Complaints Procedure.

## 6. Background information on the organisation

### 6.1 General

ACT Alliance - Action by Churches Together was created in January 2010 bringing together 2 alliances that originally stem from the World Council of Churches (WCC): ACT International (humanitarian alliance since 1995) and ACT Development (development alliance created in 2007).

It is composed of 143 member organizations working in over 100 countries across the world. Members include a range of churches and church-related organizations who work in humanitarian assistance, long-term development and advocacy.

Altogether, ACT Alliance is a network whose members employ more than 30,000 staff and volunteers, and mobilize around \$2.5 billion a year, the vast majority of which is implemented independently by members. Financial flows through the ACT Secretariat (\$42.5 million in 2015) are mostly channelled through appeals: a system which allows members of the Alliance to fund a coordinated ecumenical response through other members (and through them local partners) who provide humanitarian assistance in disaster affected areas.

### 6.2 Organisational structure and management system

ACT Alliance has a General Assembly of all members which meets every 4 years. The Assembly elects a Governing Board of up to 19 representatives which meets annually. The Governing Board is supported by an Executive Committee of up to 7 persons from the Governing Board.

The Secretariat of the ACT Alliance (ACT Secretariat) has a mission of global coordination, collaboration and facilitation and to further this aim, it decentralised in 2015 – currently there are 16 staff members in Geneva and 11 who are regionally-based (Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, Asia & Pacific, and the Middle East and North Africa) and 1 vacant position in New York. The ACT Secretariat has its own staff rules and regulations and has additional HR support from LWF (eg for payroll). ACT is responsible for implementing strategy, coordinating finances, facilitating good practice and capacity building of the Alliance members; it represents the Alliance in global fora and supports international communications. Members themselves work together to implement the majority of the programmatic strategy. The ACT Secretariat receives recommendations, support and guidance from seven advisory groups, including the Quality and Accountability Advisory Group (QAG) and the Complaints Handling Advisory Group (CHAG). ACT also hosts 10 communities of practice around themes such as DRR, gender equality, and protection.

In joining the ACT Alliance, all members commit themselves to “actively participate in national and regional forums where they exist and work with and strengthen other ACT members”. ACT forums are shared platforms, without legal existence, comprising of ACT members and observers who are engaged in a particular country or region. Forums allow members to bring together their efforts and resources to implement the global ACT strategy, including coordinated appeals for humanitarian assistance and common advocacy programmes. These forums are convened by one of the member organizations. They are primarily

active in the field of humanitarian assistance where the appeals system encourages integrated approaches, and in the field of advocacy where unity is a factor of strength. Forums tend to work on issues related to development through an approach of exchange of practices and experience. ACT Alliance has approximately 59 forums, a small number being sub-regional or regional forums. Some have been working together for a number of years; have well established programs of cooperation, a MOU that guides their cooperation and a strategic plan. Others are quite new and are just starting to build relationships and discover the benefit of working together as a forum.

### The forum site (Nepal)

The Nepal forum, founded in 2010, has three full time staff- coordinator, security manager and M&E officer (currently vacant and being actively recruited). Each are line managed by the forum convener (currently LWF) until the position is rotated after two years. The forum coordinator is responsible for compiling reports and querying reports from individual agencies before consolidation and transmission to the secretariat in Bangkok via the convener. Decisions in the forum are on a consensus basis, including the allocation of un-earmarked funds, which, in the event of no decision being agreed, are allocated by ACT to ensure no conflicts of interest arise.

In April/May 2015, Nepal experienced two massive earthquakes that killed approximately nine thousand people, and resulted in immense displacement and destruction of livelihoods. A number of ACT members, already present (LWF, LWR, DCA and FCA), began an immediate response, working on sectors including shelter, water and sanitation, livelihood recovery, psychosocial support, food security and education. One further member, ICCO, with expertise in livelihoods joined the response operationally after approximately two months. Later, other ACT members including DKH, CA and FELM also joined hands to respond to the needs of the earthquake-affected people. Total funds received to date for the response has been USD15M.

### 6.3 Work with members

The ACT Secretariat and HQAI agreed that ACT Alliance members would be considered as the “partners” referred to in the Standard.

There are a range of processes for communicating CHS commitments to members. Forums facilitate members to provide general accountability training as well as on specific topics such as complaints handling. Working alongside other members (for example during the development of Emergency Response and Preparedness plans (EPRPs)) also provides practical exposure to CHS commitments. Specific members also provide more global support such as online training on accountability. The Quality and Accountability Advisory Group is another important driver – it provides updates to the membership of important developments (such as endorsement of the CHS and changes to the Quality and Accountability Framework). The regular (bi monthly) update sent to members includes a quality and accountability section. The communications department is also responsible for ensuring tools are communicated to members.

The annual members’ survey provides details of members’ progress in implementing accountability, including the extent to which members have complaints mechanisms, staff signature of the code of



conduct, child safeguarding policy, and self-assessment (or certification or verification) against accountability standards. It also queries other relevant areas including work on resilience, environmental sustainability, and human dignity. ACT appeals are another vehicle for examining members work on accountability as agencies describe the principles and standards they apply, and often Quality and Accountability features strongly in the external evaluations.

ACT is currently piloting a range of tools to improve how it tracks, analyses and reports on emergencies. A number are targeted specifically at accountability to affected populations, such as how:

- humanitarian principles are incorporated into engagements with affected populations
- projects, project-level indicators and organisational processes capture relevant commitments (e.g. context, needs assessments, vulnerability analysis, participation, learning, complaints, accountability outcomes)
- processes and tools (e.g. participation matrices, risk analysis, Codes of Conduct) can be used to enhance accountability.
- beneficiary selection and prioritisation are based on vulnerabilities
- funding is guaranteed and allocated to ensure predictability of funding.

The results of these exercises will be used to examine the extent to which ACT and members of the alliance are incorporating accountability into programmes. The intention is that they will form the basis of risk assessments to examine areas of prioritisation for filling accountability gaps at organisational and forum-level, though responsibility for leading on this task has yet to be decided. It is also not clear how findings might be aggregated to examine accountability at the alliance-level.

## 6.4 Certification or verification history

ACT Alliance Secretariat was HAP certified in 2013.

# 7. Sampling

## 7.1 Rationale for sampling:

The auditor considered all 22 active appeals in June 2016; many of these (including Uganda, South India, Myanmar) were due to be completed by the time of the verification visit and so were excluded. By the time the visit took place the number of active programme sites were predicted to be below the threshold that would require two programme site visits and so the decision was taken to select one programme site. Potential sites were South Sudan and Ecuador. However, Ecuador did not have sufficient active members to provide the coverage required. South Sudan had potential security/access issues and was significantly underfunded and therefore there was a risk of limited programming to verify. Three major appeals were considered in the shortlist for sampling purposes: Nepal, Philippines, and Syria based on the level of funding and number of active members. Syria was excluded on security

grounds. Nepal was chosen ahead of the Philippines because the emergency was more recent and therefore there was a greater number of members (and programmes) active during the period of the onsite visit. Despite many of the communities in Nepal being remote and difficult to access, the scale of the emergency (and response) offered the best opportunity for a robust analysis. Project sites were chosen based on the number of active projects ongoing in those areas.

7.2 Interviews:

**Semi-structured interviews (individual interviews or with a small group <6**

Type of people interviewed	Number of people interviewed
<b>Secretariat</b>	
Staff	9
Staff - regional	3
<b>Members HQ (by Skype)</b>	
LWF	2
LWR	2
ICCO	2
<b>Programme sites</b>	
ACT forum	3
LWF	2
LWR	2
ICCO	2

**Focus Group Discussions (interviews with a group >6**

Type of Group	Number of participants	
	Female	Male
Focus group – (Baramchi VDC)	14	
Focus group – (Baramchi VDC)		16
Focus group – (Pakare)	9	14
Focus group – (Piskar)	7	4

Focus group – (Sanaguan)	13	
Focus group – (Sanaguan)		10
Total number of participants	43	40

## 8. Report

### 8.1 Overall organisational performance

The ACT Secretariat has performed well against the CHS commitments and there is a clear commitment to quality and accountability and to the CHS. The strength of the Alliance is particularly evident in the focus on resilience and recovery; its way of working through members at forum level many of whom have a presence when a crisis happens helps ensure efficiency and effectiveness of delivery. The Alliance is a coordination mechanism, which helps improve coverage and minimise gaps and allows members to share coordination responsibilities outside the alliance and it takes learning seriously. The level of remove of the Secretariat from communities understandably makes outreach difficult, such as for example community access to its complaints mechanism. The main areas that are not sufficiently developed are supporting members to develop contextualized complaints mechanisms and information sharing plans.

### 8.2 Summary of weaknesses

Weakness	
Commitment 1	
Commitment 2	2.3 ACT Secretariat does not support members to ensure that unmet needs are systematically referred to organisations with relevant expertise.
Commitment 3	3.8 The ACT Secretariat does not support members to ensure that personal information collected from communities is systematically safeguarded.
Commitment 4	4.1 There is limited evidence of the ACT Secretariat supporting members to develop contextualised information sharing plans; communities had limited awareness of members' plans beyond the short term. 4.4b There are limited formal mechanisms to disaggregate feedback data, particularly on age and disability.
Commitment 5	5.1 The ACT Secretariat does not support members to undertake community consultation for complaints mechanisms and members undertook limited consultation with communities. 5.6 The ACT Secretariat does not support members to ensure they make communities aware of expected behaviour of staff and there was limited awareness at community level in Nepal of these expected behaviours.
Commitment 6	
Commitment 7	

Commitment 8

Commitment 9

9.4 ACT Secretariat does not support members to consider potentially negative impacts on local and natural resources.

9.6 ACT Secretariat does not have any specific environmental policies or policies on conflicts of interest, procurement or audit. ACT Secretariat does not formally support members to develop policies governing use and management of resources.

TOTAL Number

8

### 8.3 Strong points and areas for improvement:

#### 1. Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant

Score:3

ACT Alliance's policies and processes support ongoing context and stakeholder analysis and impartial assistance; joint strategies are comparatively rare at forum level but Emergency Response Preparedness Plans provide context and stakeholder analysis and are the main guiding document during a response. Members in Nepal found this a useful exercise and the response built on this through rapid needs assessments conducted by members according to their geographic and/or thematic areas of expertise. Programmes were designed and adapted based on needs and capacities, However, the level of disaggregation of data (for example on disability) constrains programme-targeting.

#### Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 1

Communities were satisfied that programmes are relevant and based on needs, determined in an impartial manner, and take account of their skills and capacities.

#### 2. Humanitarian response is effective and timely

Score: 3

Policies commit to effective and timely assistance that is adapted based on monitoring processes. ACT Alliance's systems facilitate the design of programmes based on safety and capacity constraints and taking swift action- aided by the number of members of the alliance with a presence in Nepal at the time of the earthquake. Alliance members use relevant sector standards and supported each other to work according to good practice. Programmes were adapted based on monitoring processes. Although forums do undertake advocacy with government and describe unmet needs in coordination fora, there are no formal mechanisms to refer identified needs that are beyond the scope of members.

#### Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 2:

Communities in Nepal were satisfied with the timing of assistance received, that their needs have been met by the response and that they were consulted by ACT members in relation to safety and access conditions.

### 3. Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects

Score: 2.5

Policies are designed to prevent programmes having negative effects and programmes are built on local capacities, designed to benefit the local economy and promote early recovery. EPRPs include high level risk assessments and members' way of working (through local organisations) enables local leadership. However, there are no specific processes to support members to ensure that personal information collected from communities is systematically safeguarded.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 3:

Communities in Nepal highly valued the approach taken by ACT Alliance members to strengthen local capacities and withstand future shocks (at present through the construction of earthquake-resistant structures). No negative effects of member's approaches were identified by communities who generally felt adequately represented in decision making fora.

### 4. Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback

Score: 2.5

ACT Alliance's policies and processes promote inclusivity and participation and this commitment was very evident in Nepal. ACT Alliance is very cognizant of the need to portray communities respectfully and accurately. Policies also commit to open information and communication in Nepal was in appropriate format and media. However, there is limited guidance or support for members to help them develop contextualized information sharing plans and there is limited procedures for disaggregation of feedback.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 4:

Communities were aware of their rights and entitlements (regarding organisational assistance) and were generally satisfied with access to information- except in relation to ACT members



plans for future assistance. Community satisfaction with access to information was noticeably higher in those communities with transparency boards. Communities expressed satisfaction with the opportunity to participate and influence the design and implementation of projects and monitoring/evaluation of outputs and outcomes.

#### 5. Complaints are welcomed and addressed

**Score: 2**

ACT Alliance's own complaints mechanism is well embedded and taken very seriously and managed appropriately, which helps promote a spirit of openness to complaints within the organization and with members. ACT undertakes capacity building of members to develop their own mechanisms though there appears to be limited focus on supporting members to ensure consultation with communities around complaints mechanisms or ensuring that staff communicate codes of conduct to communities.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 5:

Communities were not aware of ACT Alliance's complaints mechanism but where members had their own complaints mechanisms communities were aware of them and had confidence in their integrity. However, communities expressed a strong preference for resolving issues verbally with member's staff, which reflects the strong relationships with members' staff but might also be attributable to the lack of formal consultation with communities to ensure ownership of complaints mechanisms.

#### 6. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary

**Score:3.5**

ACT Alliance's commitment to coordination is evident through its own functioning as a coordination mechanism as well as in its engagements with other stakeholders. ACT shares information with members and coordination groups, and works to ensure that actions are complementary within the alliance in the first instance and also with national and local

authorities. This was all very evident in the Nepal response, where members coordinated closely and allocated responsibility for attending external coordination mechanisms.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 6:

Communities did not identify gaps or duplication in the assistance received.

#### 7. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve

**Score: 3**

Both the ACT Alliance and the Act Secretariat is committed to learning through its policies and procedures and demonstrates a willingness to learn from monitoring and evaluation exercises. It shares learning internally and externally through its website and participates in learning fora.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 7:

Communities reported that feedback they provided was used to change programme plans and make improvements.

#### 8. Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably

**Score 3**

The ACT Secretariat has appropriate human resources policies that are in line with legal requirements and understood by staff. Performance appraisals generally take place annually and staff found these to be meaningful exercises. Policies are in place for staff safety and security and the code of conduct is well understood. Although the ACT Secretariat makes good efforts to ensure it has the capacity to deliver programmes, this can be challenging due to the leanness of the structure. Individual training is negotiated with supervisors, which staff frequently do not avail of due to pressures of work and there is no overall staff learning and development plan.

For staff based outside of Geneva, the human resource system is based on that of the hosting member, although ACT Secretariat's staff rules and regulations apply to all staff.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 8:

Communities expressed satisfaction with members' staff skills, behaviours and attitudes and approach to the work.

9. Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose

Score: 2

The ACT Alliance, and the ACT Secretariat, generally has good policies to promote resource management though some (environment, conflict of interest and audit) are missing. The interaction between the ACT Secretariat and Act members in forums is very useful to balance quality, cost and timeliness of responses and it has reasonable financial controls in place to ensure efficiency and routinely monitors expenditure against budget. The ACT Secretariat takes corruption seriously and takes action when it is identified. However, although the environment is one of its strategic goals it has limited environmental procedures and does not formally support members to ensure that negative environmental effects are monitored or environmental impact assessments undertaken.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 9:

Communities in Nepal were satisfied that resources were used for the intended purpose

Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Findings

(Organisation representative – please cross where appropriate)

I acknowledge and understand the findings of the audit

I accept the findings of the audit

I do not accept some/all of the findings of the audit

Please list the requirements whose findings you do not accept

Organisation's  
Representative  
Name and  
Signature:

  
JOHN NDUNA

Date and  
Place:

06/03/2017  
GENEVA,

## Annex 1. Explanation of the scoring scale

In line with the CHS's emphasis on continuous learning and improvement, rather than assessing a pass/fail compliance with the CHS requirements, the CHS Verification Scheme uses a scoring system. It is graduated from 0 to 5 to determine the degree to which organisations apply the CHS and to measure progress in this application.

Be it in the framework of a self-assessment or in a third-party assessment process, it is key to have detailed criteria to evaluate (score) the degree of application of each requirement and commitment of the CHS. A coherent, systematic approach is important to ensure:

- Transparency and objectivity in the scoring criteria;
- Consistency and reliability between one verification cycle and another, or between the different verification options;
- Comparability of data generated by different organisations.

This document outlines a set of criteria to orient the assessment process and help communicate how the respective scores have been attributed and what they mean.

While verification needs to be rigorous, it needs also to be flexible in its interpretation of the CHS requirements to be applicable fairly to a wide range of organisations working in very different contexts. For example, smaller organisations may not have formal management systems in place, but show that an Organisational Responsibility is constantly reflected in practices. In a similar situation, the person undertaking the assessment needs to understand and document why the application is adequate in the apparent absence of supporting process. It is frequent that the procedures actually exist informally, but are "hidden" in other documents. Similarly, it is not the text of a requirement that is important, but whether its intent is delivered and that there are processes that ensure this will continue to be delivered under normal circumstances. The driving principle behind the scoring is that the scores should reflect the normal ("systematic") working practices of the participating organisation.

### What do the scores stand for?

The scores have thus the following values and attributes:

#### Score: 0

- Operational activities and actions systematically contradict the intent of a CHS Commitment and its requirements (Key Actions and Organisational Responsibilities).
- Policies and procedures directly contradict the intent of the CHS Commitment and requirement (Key Action or Organisational Responsibility) or;

- Complete absence of formal or informal processes or policies necessary for ensuring compliance against a commitment

Indicates that:

- There is a recurrent failure to implement the necessary actions at operational level.
- Practice at field level contradict the intent behind a CHS commitment and makes the delivery of the commitment unlikely.
- A systemic issue threatens the integrity of a CHS Commitment (i.e. makes it unlikely that the organisation is able to deliver the commitment).

In the framework of self-assessment a 0 indicates the first priority level for improvement.

A score of 0 corresponds to a Major Non Conformity in a certification process. It excludes the organisation from certification until the corresponding Major Corrective Action Request (CAR) is corrected. If a score of 0 appears while the organisation is certified, it has a short timeframe to address the issue before the certificate is withdrawn.

### **Score: 1**

Actions, policies and procedures respond broadly to the intent behind the CHS requirement. However:

- There are a significant number of cases where the design of programmes and activities does not reflect the CHS commitment.
- Relevant policies are not accompanied with sufficient guidance to support a systematic and robust implementation by staff (tokenistic policy approach), leading to an inconsistent delivery of the commitment.
- Absence of quality assurance mechanisms to ensure the monitoring and systematic delivery of actions the policies and procedures are supposed to support, which make it unlikely that staff are made accountable for implementing the policies.
- A significant number of relevant staff at HO and/or sites are not familiar with the policies and procedures and/or do not use them to guide their actions at operational level.

### **Indicates:**

- The key documentation is incomplete or missing, or that policies are in place, but not consistently translated into the right actions, or;
- A lack of knowledge by the relevant staff about the requirements or relevant procedure leading to an inconsistent application at operational level
- Actions at the operational level are not systematically implemented in accordance of the relevant policies and procedures.

A score of 1 means an issue that is serious but does not immediately threaten the integrity of the relevant CHS commitment. A number of issues that individually would deserve a score of 1 often indicate jointly a systemic issue and can lead to a score of 0.

In the framework of self-assessment a score of 1 indicates the second priority level for improvements.

A score of 1 is equivalent to a Minor Non Conformity in a certification process. It allows the certification of the organisation, but needs to be corrected within a certain timeframe (normally 2 years, although a shorter deadline can be identified if the CAR threatens to become systemic).

A Minor CAR that is not addressed within the specified timeframe becomes a Major CAR.

### **Score: 2**

Actions, policies and procedures respond to the intent behind the CHS commitment. However:

- Some actions at operational level are in line with the intent behind a requirement or commitment, but are not reflected in standard policies and tend to be person/field related.
- There are instances of actions at operational level where relevant policies are not fully reflected in the design of programmes and activities, without compromising the intent behind the specific commitment.
- Policies and procedures relevant to the CHS requirement exist but are partial or scattered, which makes it difficult to consistently and systematically deliver the commitment at operational levels.
- Some operational staff are not familiar with the policies and procedures, and/or cannot provide relevant examples of implementation

### **Indicates:**

- The organisation has implicit or informal approaches that are consistent with the relevant CHS requirement but not necessarily systematised or formalised, but common practice mostly compensate for the gap.
- Policies and procedures meet the intent of the relevant requirement, but there are some instances where they are not correctly applied at operational level, without compromising the integrity of the requirement, or/and;
- The organisation does not have sufficient quality assurance mechanisms to ensure a systematic implementation of relevant policies and procedures across the organisation.

A score of 2 means an issue that is not serious but deserves correction.

In the framework of self-assessment, a score of 2 indicates the third priority level for improvements.

In a certification process, it is equivalent to Conformity with observation. An issue scored 2 that is not addressed may become a Minor CAR.

### **Score: 3**

- Actions, policies and procedures respond to the intent of the CHS requirement.
- Staff are made accountable of the application of relevant policies and procedures at operational level, including through consistent quality assurance mechanisms.

- The design of projects and programmes and the implementation of activities is based on the relevant policies with which all relevant staff are. They can provide several examples of consistent application in different activities, projects and programmes.
- The organisation monitors the implementation of its relevant policies and supports the staff in doing so at operational levels.

**Indicates:**

- The CHS requirement is met.
- The organisation's system ensures that the requirement is met throughout the organisation and over time.

In the framework of self-assessment and third-party verification, a score of 3 is sufficient, but this does not mean it cannot be improved. This comes as a fourth priority.

A score of 3 means Conformity in the framework of a certification process.

**Score: 4**

As 3, but in addition:

- Field and programme staff act frequently in a way that goes beyond CHS requirement to which they are clearly committed.
- Relevant staff can explain in which way their activities are in line with the requirement and can provide several examples of implementation in different sites. They can relate the examples to improved quality of the projects and their deliveries.
- Policies and procedures go beyond the intent of the CHS requirement, are innovative and systematically implemented across the organisation.
- Communities and other external stakeholders are particularly satisfied with the work of the organisation in relation to the requirement and view it as an example of good practice in the sector.

**Indicates:**

- The requirement is implemented in an exemplary way across the organisation
- The system of the organisation ensures this high quality is maintained across the organisation and over time.

In the framework of self-assessment it indicates a quality of practices that the organisation should endeavour to promote with peers.

In the framework of certification, a score of 4 denotes Conformity with the requirement.

**Score 5:**



As 4, but in addition:

- Actions, policies and procedures at all levels and across the organisation go far beyond the intent of the relevant CHS requirement and could serve as textbook examples of ultimate good practice.

**Indicates:**

- Almost perfection. A score of 5 should only be attributed on exceptional circumstances.

### Confidential annex: List of non compliance and times for resolution

Non-compliance	MAJOR	MINOR	TIME FOR RESOLUTION
Commitment 1			
Commitment 2		2.3 ACT Secretariat does not support members to ensure that unmet needs are systematically referred to organisations with relevant expertise.	2 years
Commitment 3		3.8 The ACT Secretariat does not support members to ensure that personal information collected	2 years

	from communities is systematically safeguarded.	
Commitment 4	<p>4.1 There is limited evidence of the ACT Secretariat supporting members to develop contextualised information sharing plans; communities had limited awareness of members' plans beyond the short term.</p> <p>4.4b There are limited formal mechanisms to disaggregate feedback data, particularly on age and disability.</p>	<p>2 years</p> <p>1 year</p>
Commitment 5	<p>5.1 The ACT Secretariat does not support members to undertake community consultation for complaints mechanisms and members undertook limited consultation with communities.</p> <p>5.6 The ACT Secretariat does not support members to ensure they make communities aware of expected behaviour of staff and there was limited awareness at community level in Nepal of these expected behaviours.</p>	<p>2 years</p> <p>1 year</p>
Commitment 6		
Commitment 7		
Commitment 8		
Commitment 9	<p>9.4 ACT Secretariat does not support members to consider potentially negative impacts on local and natural resources.</p> <p>9.6 ACT Secretariat does not have any specific environmental policies or policies on conflicts of interest, procurement or audit. ACT Secretariat does not formally support members to develop</p>	<p>2 years</p> <p>1 year</p>

TOTAL Number	policies governing use and management of resources.
	8