



# Dan Church Aid CHS Certification Report

CERT-DCA-2016-002

Date: 2017-01-12

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**Community focus group discussion**

## 1. General information

Organisation Name:	Dan Church Aid	Verification Ref / No:	CERT-DCA-2016-002
Type of organisation: <input type="checkbox"/> National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Federated  <input type="checkbox"/> Membership/Network  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct assistance <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	
Organisation size: (Total number of programme sites/ members/partners)	16 Country Offices, 20 project sites, 193 partners	Legal Registration:	
Head Office Location:	Copenhagen, Denmark	Field locations visited:	Myanmar
Date of Head Office Verification:	12-13.10.2016	Date of Field visit:	17-21.10.2016
Lead Auditor:	Claire Goudsmit	2 <sup>nd</sup> auditor:	Sylvie Robert Trainee (Head Office)
		Observer's Name and Position	

## 2. Verification scope

### 2.1 Type of verification

- 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
Myanmar Country Office	Myanmar	Humanitarian, development & advocacy	3	Humanitarian & Development
TLMM	Taungoo		1	Humanitarian Mine Action
NAG	Mayway		2	Humanitarian & Development

#### 3.2 Opening and closing meetings

##### 1) At HO

	Opening meeting	Closing meeting
Date	05.10.2016	07.10.2016
Location	Copenhagen	Copenhagen
Number of participants	17	14
Any substantive issue arising		

##### 2) At PS

	Opening meeting	Closing meeting
Date	17.10.2016	21.10.2016
Location	Yangon, Myanmar	Yangon, Myanmar
Number of participants	17	16
Any substantive issue arising		

## 4. Recommendation

In my opinion Dan Church Aid conforms to the commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standard. I recommend certification.

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

Auditor's Name and Signature	Claire Goudsmit 	Date and Place:	November 2016, UK
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## 5. Decision

Quality Control by: Elissa Goucem Quality Assurance Officer	Quality Control finalised on: First Draft: 2016-11-22 Final: 2017-01-12
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Certification Decision:	
Certification	Intermediate audit
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certified	<input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance of certificate
<input type="checkbox"/> Preconditioned (Major CARs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Suspension of Certificate (Major CARs)
Deadlines: Fulfilment of corrective actions: <b>CAR 3.8: 12.01.2018</b> <b>CAR 5.2b: 12.01.2019</b> <b>CAR 5.3b: 12.01.2018</b> <b>CAR 5.6: 12.01.2019</b> <b>CAR 5.7: 12.01.2018</b> <b>CAR: 8.7: 12.01.2019</b>	
Follow up and verification of conformity by: Self Assessment: before 12 January 2018 Mid-term audit: before 12 January 2019	

Certification Decision: Pierre Hauselmann HQAI Executive Director	Date: 13 January, 2017
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## 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.

## 5. Background information on the organisation

### 5.1 General

DanChurchAid, first established in 1922, is an independent, non-profit, faith-based and ecumenical, non-missionary organisation rooted in the Danish National Evangelical Lutheran Church, based in Copenhagen, Denmark. DCA is a member of the ACT Alliance and cooperates with the Lutheran World Federation and the World Council of Churches.

DanChurchAid's stated purpose is "to help and be advocates of oppressed, neglected and marginalised groups in poor countries and to strengthen their possibilities of a life in dignity." DCA focuses on Africa and Asia and has programmes in the Middle East, Latin America and Central Asia. It has 20 country programmes operating from 16 Country Offices, working with approximately 184 church-based, other faith-based and secular partner organisations.

DCA has five organisational commitments:

- 1, Respect human rights standards and address discrimination and inequalities;
- 2, Strengthen partnership and develop new types of partnership both in Denmark and internationally;
- 3, Ensure effectiveness, efficiency and focus on DCA's goals and core priorities;
- 4, Ensure a long-term financial development that will make DCA more financially robust;
- 5, Ensure that DCA is an attractive, innovative and learning organisation for competent and committed employees.

DCA also has three goals for its international work:

- 1, Save Lives;
- 2, Build Resilient Communities;
- 3, Fight Extreme Inequality.

DCA has furthermore the goal of creating engagement for its communication work and work in Denmark..

The thematic focus areas for DCA's international work include: Active Citizenship; Right to Food; Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights; Humanitarian Action; and Safer Communities.

For the current strategic period (2015 – 2018) priority areas are Active Citizenship, Right to Food; Humanitarian Action and Safer Communities/Mine Action.

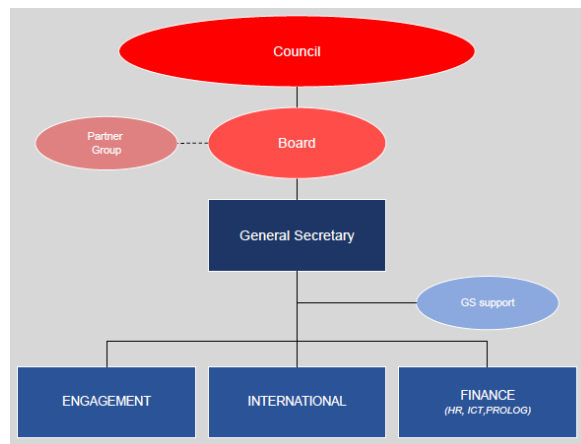
The International Strategy describes DCA understanding of its rights-based commitment as ensuring the incorporation of the five PANEL principles in its international work: Participation (P), Accountability (A), Non-Discrimination and Equality (N), Empowerment (E) and Link to Human Rights Standards (L).

DCA's funding streams include framework agreement with DANIDA, a framework partnership agreement with the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), contracts with Europe Aid Cooperation office and several UN agencies, and private donations from the Danish public through direct fundraising and second-hand shop sales.

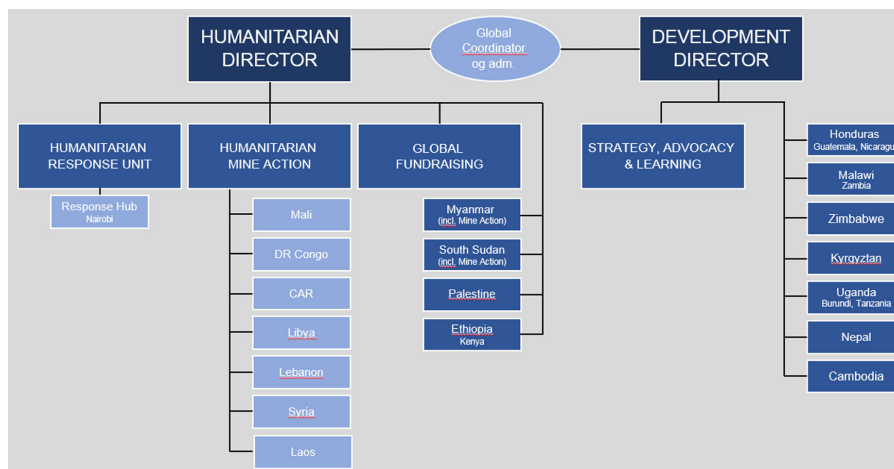


## 5.2 Organisational structure and management system

A Council made up of up to 30 members representing stakeholders of the organisation governs DCA. The Council is the supreme governing body of the organisation with responsibility for DCA’s vision, values and overall objectives and strategy. The Board is made of a maximum of 11 members (7 appointed by the Council and other elected by DCA staff) and is responsible for the political management of the organization in close cooperation with the operational Senior Management of DCA. Decision-making authorities is decentralised to the Country Directors, who are responsible for the performance of the country programme strategy and projects.



Governance organogram



Global management structure organogram

## 5.3 Work with Partners

Working in partnership is a core principle of DCA and is fundamental to its values and identity. DCA delivers its international work with the involvement of local-level community groups, authorities and relevant organisations. Most of DCA’s projects are implemented through national NGO’s, community-based organisations (CBOs) and grass-roots organisations.

DCA is clear that it aims to work with partners who are close to the communities with whom they work, that they follow DCA's standards on rights based assistance and gender equality, and on accountability. DCA communicates its commitment to the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) to its partners, focusing on strengthening local capacities, participation, accountability, complaint handling, feedback and learning. DCA is rolling-out the CHS across its offices and with its partners, in line with its Accountability Framework and CHS Action Plans at the global and country levels.

DCA has worked with its partners on the HAP standard in the past, and has begun to look at integrating the CHS into its processes for project development with partners. DCA has worked with some of its partners to develop a plan of action against the commitments and include these in its CHS Action Plan (2017). DCA is currently reviewing the way in which it supports the organisational capacity development of its partners and has drafted a Partner Assessment Tool (PAT) with the aim to better assess, measure and report on progress on partner capacity development over time. The PAT includes broad assessment of a partner's accountability commitments, but a number of key components are not explicitly highlighted e.g.. implementation of a code of conduct, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), identification of risks to people's safety and negative effects and implementation of complaint handling mechanisms. The partner assessment process and partner cooperation agreements do not include the capacities and constraints of DCA to support the partner or the project.

DCA is providing support to partners in Myanmar to improve how they understand and apply the CHS by offering guidance during proposal development and project monitoring visits and providing partners access to its online CHS E-Learning course. A Training of Trainers programme for partners on the CHS is planned for 2016/2017.

Partners in Myanmar are familiar with the CHS and DCA has discussed its commitment to the CHS at partner meetings and during the annual partner meeting (2016) and project development workshops. DCA is currently translating the CHS (in collaboration with others) into Myanmar and will distribute to its partners.

The partners included in this audit represent different types of partnerships, but partners generally expressed confidence in their relationships with DCA and welcomed DCA's approach on partnership. Partners staff regard DCA as an open and transparent organisation.

## 5.4 Certification or verification history

2008 – HAP Certification Audit, Copenhagen and Malawi

2010 – HAP MTPA, Copenhagen and India

2011 – HAP Recertification, Copenhagen and Ethiopia

2013 – HAP MTPA, Copenhagen and Gaza and West Bank (Middle East and North Africa Programme)

## 6. Sampling

### 6.1 Rationale for sampling:

A number of countries and country programmes were shortlisted based on factors that make them relevant to visit as part of the audit, including level of security, scope of programming (development,

humanitarian and advocacy), presence in-country, volume of partners and projects, level of country budget and accessibility of project sites within the audit timescale. Programme sites shortlisted were First, Myanmar, second, Nepal, and third Uganda. DCA had no objection to include Myanmar and as such this site was selected as part of the audit based on the following factors: Country office operating in Thailand since 2006 and in Myanmar since 2010; covers all mandates (development, humanitarian, HMA and advocacy); an average country budget of approx. 3.4 million USD; has 20 staff in country; 20 partners on 23 projects. Security and access levels to project sites were satisfactory.

DCA started engaging in Myanmar in the early 1990s supporting the Myanmar Council of Churches (MCC) inside the country and providing humanitarian support to refugees residing in camps along the Thai-Myanmar border, who fled conflict ridden areas in the South East. DCA is registered and has MOU with Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Relief and Resettlement. The current Country programme of DCA 2013-17 (revised to 2013-2016) aims to Advance democracy and protection in Myanmar, with specific objectives focused on (1) active citizenship (human rights, civil society strengthening and peace building, repatriation), (2) right to food/land with objective of building resilience, 3) reducing mine risk for communities through a safer community approach/ mine risk education, and (4) Capacity building and organisational strengthening of partners. Gender equality and Rights based approach continue to be critical elements. The country programme was developed based on learning and recommendations from partners during a review of the previous programme. DCA has a Myanmar-Thailand Accountability Framework (2016) and a CHS action plan (2017) including some partners.

**Disclaimer:**

It is important to note that the audit findings are based on the results of a sample of the organisation’s documentation and systems as well as interviews and focus groups with a sample of staff, partners, communities and other relevant stakeholders. Findings are analysed to determine the organisation’s systematic approach and application of all aspects of the CHS across its organisation and to its different contexts and ways of working.

**6.2 Interviews:**

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

Type of people interviewed	Number of people interviewed
Head Office	
Senior Management Team	5
Middle Managers and Staff	16
Partners	
Programme sites	
Management	4
Staff	4
Partners	4 (Yangon) / 5 (NAG) / 3 (TLMM)

Rights Holders	2 (TLMM) / 5 (NAG – Committee Leaders in 2 villages)
Total number of interviews	44

Focus Group Discussions (interviews with a group >6)

Type of Group	Number of participants	
	Female	Male
Community Group – community leader, committee leaders and members, rights holders (livelihoods, farmers, women empowerment)	9	5
Community Group – committee members, rights holders	6	6
Community Group – Committee leader, members and rights holders	6	7
Total number of participants	<b>21</b>	<b>18</b>

*NB. Whilst three community groups were visited with NA*

*G, only two community members were met with TLMM. This was due to logistics and the nature of the work being implemented. NAG projects work on community development and thus feasible to visit community groups easily, TLMM operates mobile clinics and beneficiaries of their services are widespread, and often have mobility issues. Having said this, the discussion with TLMM beneficiaries was insightful and offered a good understanding of how the project meets relevant components of the CHS.*

## 7. Report

### 7.1 Overall organisational performance

DCA has a strong engagement in the development of the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) and has advocated for the development of international quality and accountability standards over time i.e. represented on the HAP and SPHERE boards, Charter for Change and Accountability in Action forums. Since its first audit against the HAP Standard, DCA has successfully integrated accountability commitments into its strategic objectives and ways of working. DCA is assessing how it can fully incorporate the CHS commitments into its systems, and has invested in this process.

DCA strongly articulates its commitments to greater accountability and quality management throughout its policy documents, and DCA systematically communicates these to its staff and partners. DCA has a strong quality management system, which is implemented in a systematic manner, but although many CHS commitments are already integrated well into the system and programme and project management procedures, some key components of the commitments are not fully represented. These are therefore

addressed in an ad hoc manner and not systematically applied in all projects and with all partners. Most significantly, areas not addressed adequately include processes to identify and act upon negative effects, the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and assuring complaints are systematically accepted and adequately managed.

Working in partnership is a core tenant of DCA and partnerships with implementing organisations at the programme level are based on shared values and clear agreements. Country programmes and projects are developed in collaboration between DCA and its partners. DCA ensures that its partners have an in-depth understanding and knowledge of the communities they work with, and that they represent their needs, interests and capacities. This enables DCA to have well-informed context analysis, timely interventions, projects that address needs and vulnerabilities, build on strengths and capacities, and are adaptable to changes in the contexts.

## 7.2 Summary of non conformities

Non compliance	MAJOR	MINOR
Commitment 1		
Commitment 2		
Commitment 3		3.8. DCA does not systematically ensure that personal information collected from communities is adequately safeguarded.
Commitment 4		
Commitment 5		<p>5.2b. DCA does not clearly communicate or ensure that communities are informed about how relevant stakeholders can access its complaint mechanism and the scope of issues it can address.</p> <p>5.3b. DCA does not systematically ensure that complaint-handling mechanisms for communities routinely prioritise the safety of the complainant and those affected at all stages.</p> <p>5.6. DCA does not ensure that communities are aware of expected behaviours of staff, including commitments made on PSEA.</p> <p>5.7. DCA does not have in place formal referral mechanisms for complaints that do not fall within the scope of the organisation or that of its partners.</p>
Commitment 6		

Commitment 7		
Commitment 8		8.7. DCA does not systematically ensure that partner codes of conduct are implemented or that staff and partners are aware of the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)
Commitment 9		
TOTAL Number NCs		6

### 7.3 Strong points and areas for improvement:

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

Score: 3

DCA provides assistance that is appropriate and relevant to the needs of communities. This is assured through DCA’s policy commitments to impartial assistance, working in partnership, targeting and applying a rights-based approach in its work. Procedures and tools contained within the Programme & Project Manual (PPM) are systematically applied in the management of its programmes and projects. These ensure contextual and stakeholder analyses, and impartial assessments of needs and risks are conducted in the planning phases, which lead to the appropriate design of its programmes and projects. Programme and projects are reviewed on an ongoing basis and activities are adapted to changing needs, capacities and context.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 1

Communities in Myanmar stated that they are satisfied that their needs and capacities are considered during assessment and monitoring processes i.e. household surveys, needs assessments, visits by staff and discussions on their situations. Examples were given by communities of where DCA and partners adapted and added to activities in response to their needs.

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

Score: 2.9

DCA ensures that communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time.

DCA policy commitments, organisational structure, systems and procedures promote timely decision making with appropriate resource allocation and systematic, objective and on-going monitoring and evaluation of its work. DCA works in close collaboration with other actors and partners to respond to needs in a timely manner, minimise demands on communities and coordinate efforts.

DCA programmes and projects are designed with community based partner organisations conscious of the realities for a community, which facilitates a good understanding of local contexts, capacities and constraint and collection of disaggregated data. Programme strategies are designed upon a Theory of Change, derived from on a community rights based empowerment perspective and DCA's Participation, Accountability, Non-Discrimination, Empowerment, and Linking to Rights Based Approach (PANEL) Principles are integrated into its project work. DCA promotes the use of accountability standards and is in transition from using the HAP Benchmarks to integrating the CHS commitments into its projects. Accountability Frameworks with action plans are in place at a global level, for country offices and with some partners. Partners are trained in standards relevant to the projects i.e. HMA Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), targeting principles, DCA rights based approach, DCA Cash Transfer standards, WASH technical standards. After Cyclone Nargis partners received SPHERE training. However processes do not ensure that the safety of communities is systematically considered in the design of all project activities.

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

Partners and communities involved with humanitarian and HMA activities in Myanmar are satisfied with the level of consultation regarding safety and access issues, but communities involved in development projects are not consulted on these issues. After intense flooding in Myanmar, communities were impressed that DCA and partners distributed relief items in their villages within fifteen days in response to their requests.

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

Score: 2.6

DCA has a strategic goal of Building Resilient Communities and programmes enable the development of local leadership and organisations in their capacity as first responders. Programmes promote an appropriate representation of specific groups 'based on different identities'. DCA's International Strategy is based on a human rights and sustainable approach and programmes are designed and implemented in order to promote early recovery. Exit strategies are planned in the early stages of the work and DCA Right to Food Programme Policy and DCA Cash Transfer Programming Guidelines highlight the links with the local economy. Projects are designed based on an assessment, an understanding of local capacities and existing community hazard and risk assessments and preparedness plans, where available.

DCA country programme strategies identify risks at the country level. However people's safety and risks of sexual exploitation and abuse by DCA or partner staff are not routinely identified nor systematically considered in development project design processes. Potential and actual unintended negative effects are not systematically monitored and there are no specific guidance or timeframes in place to respond to negative effects when identified.

Training on CHS to staff and partners covers Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and explores how participants apply PSEA strategies in their organisations. However it was found in Myanmar that DCA has not explicitly discussed PSEA with partners or communities, thus indicating the training is not systematically implemented.

DCA's Privacy and Data Protection Policy includes privacy principles but does not include how to collect or store data, the ethics of collecting data and how to ensure personal information

collected from communities is systematically safeguarded, especially at the project level. Detailed training on how to assure confidentiality or privacy of information and data collection is not systematically covered. Adequate data protection is observed at DCA country office i.e. its complaint mechanism, restricted access on internet based filing, locked cabinets, but it does not assure that information from communities is adequately safeguarded.

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

Communities feedback that they are supported through project activities and training for individuals, committees and community-based organisations to improve their capacities. They feel empowered to organise themselves in order to access their rights and work towards their own resilience. Members of various community groups give positive feedback on their involvement with the projects. Communities were also satisfied that projects had considered their knowledge of hazards and risks, although PSEA is not explicitly discussed with communities. Communities are satisfied that project goods i.e. seeds and supplies are purchased locally. They are also satisfied that projects assessments and surveys explored local livelihoods and household income levels and that activities address these issues.

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

Score: 2.9

DCA promotes and ensures transparency and open communication through its policies and guidance documents, including its Communication Strategy, International Strategy, Partnership Policy, Gender Equality and Rights Based Commitments, Evaluation Policy, Targeting Guideline and Participation Guidelines and complaint handling systems. DCA PANEL principles are integrated in all stages of its work, which ensures inclusive representation, participation and engagement of people and communities at all stages of the work and support a particular attention to the gender, age and diversity of those giving feedback.

DCA accountability measures, including complaint handling systems, aim to provide people with an opportunity to give open and safe transparent feedback on projects and programmes, although indicators on the feedback of communities on levels of satisfaction are not included in all programme documents or annual reports. DCA works with partners to strengthen the communication and provision of appropriate information. However, information about expected behaviour in regards to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse is not provided to communities.

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

Communities have a clear understanding of DCA and partners, their principles and project deliverables. Community leaders and members participated in workshops regarding project design and were involved in how the activities were being implemented in their villages. Communities are motivated to self-organise into different groups i.e. women, youth, farmers, disabled, and to advocate for their rights and ensure they are represented. Communities expressed satisfaction with how DCA and partners staff communicates with them, the opportunities available to engage in project activities and to provide feedback to partners and to DCA staff.

Communities have a general understanding about how they should be treated by project staff visiting them i.e. with respect, but issues regarding prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse by staff or visitors are not addressed with communities by partners or DCA.



## 5. Complaints are welcomed and addressed

Score: 1.7

DCA has a global complaint handling system and contextualised mechanisms at the country level in place. A strong organisational culture that considers complaints an important part of being accountable and a means for learning and improvement exists. DCA communicates its complaint handling system on its website and systematically to all staff and key partner staff. But visited project partner staff and communities are not always clear about DCA's complaint process. Although DCA requires partners to have a complaint handling system in place, DCA does not systematically ensure that its partners' complaint handling systems are implemented effectively i.e. consistently designed, implemented and monitored in consultation with communities, that the safety of the complainant and others affected are prioritised at all times; that complaints are managed in a timely, fairly and appropriate manner. Although DCA requires partners to have a code of conduct for its staff in place and assess this in Partner Profiles, DCA does not monitor how partners implement these or systematically follow-up where it is not in place. DCA does not work with its partners on how to raise awareness of PSEA with communities.

Partners in Myanmar are satisfied that DCA deals with complaints in a timely and appropriate manner, commenting that staff are quick to respond and are committed to finding solutions to problems.

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

Communities perceive DCA and partners to be open to hear their concerns and feedback about project activities. Communities feedback that partners respond to their concerns and issues raised through regular communication, either with community leaders or in community meetings, in a respectful manner, which they are satisfied with. Communities, in general, are satisfied that they can raise complaints safely with partners directly i.e. via mobile phone, or most commonly through their community leaders, but not with DCA. The purpose of a suggestion box in one village was not understood or used. Communities highlight that partners discuss issues of human rights, respect and dignity with them, and they perceive staff that visit their villages to be respectful and treat people with dignity but are not aware of issues of sexual exploitation and abuse, and comment that this is not discussed with them.

## 6. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary

Score: 3.5

Communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance

Working in and through partnership is a fundamental principle of DCA and its commitments to collaborate and coordinate its work are made clear in its Statutes, Partnership Policy and programme policies and guidance. DCA collaborates with others in order to minimise demands on communities and maximise the coverage and service provision of the wider humanitarian effort. Collaboration, working within partnerships and in networks are key to how DCA operates and is a strategic objective for its work in Denmark and internationally. In Myanmar,

DCA participates in a number of different coordination bodies and collaborates with others widely to share work plans and coordinate work for effective distribution of effort. Roles, responsibilities and the interests of different stakeholders are identified in Country Programme Documents within the Theory of Change (TOC) methodology. Further analyses are included in contextual and stakeholder analyses, project baselines.

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

Communities are engaged with DCA and partners to identify the roles, responsibilities, capacities and interests of the members of their community committees, villages and local administrative representatives.

## 7. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve

Score: 2.8

DCA works towards the aim that communities and people affected by crisis are entitled to improved assistance as DCA learns from experience and reflection and has strong evaluation and quality management policies. DCA actively promotes and contributes extensively to learning and innovation in the humanitarian and development sectors and amongst peers. In cooperation with three ACT members and supported by the ACT Alliance Secretariat, DCA manages a Learning Lab and ACTLearn resources. Experience and learning is generally captured on DCA's internal system (DCAintra) and DCA have invested in promoting cross-cutting learning throughout the organisation. While learning and innovation are shared with internal and external stakeholders and partners, relevant learning is not systematically shared with communities.

DCA has a comprehensive planning and design process to ensure that relevant global and specific findings or recommendations from previous activities are reflected in its work at all levels. DCA uses learning from M&E, feedbacks and complaints to implement change at the global level, but DCA does not have the systems in place to systematically learn from complaints and feedback at country programme and project levels. DCA captures feedback from partners and communities in monitoring trip reports in an ad hoc manner. DCA and partners do not systematically include feedback or complaints from communities in monitoring reports.

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

Some community leaders participate in events where learning, related to project activities, is shared i.e. emergency preparedness training, and communities are involved in project learning activities i.e. monitoring and evaluation. Communities highlight that they do not receive feedback on the findings or outcomes of monitoring or learning events.

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

Score: 2.8

DCA has a Competence Strategy, which establishes the principles, goals and methods for competence development within DCA. Competence Development plans (global and local) are developed and monitored by the Competence Development Committee and Country Directors to assess needs for capacity and capability needs to meet its commitments.

DCA has strong processes e.g. clear job descriptions, staff manuals, fair and transparent recruitment procedures, Employee Development Reviews (EDR), to ensure staff understand how they can be supported to develop and use the necessary personal, technical and management competencies to fulfil their roles. The role of Strategy Advocacy and Learning (SAL) advisors is key to assure cross-organisational learning in programmes and projects and the LearningLab is key to promote blended learning opportunities internally and externally for staff development.

Understanding capacities and capabilities of DCA staff and programme partners are considered throughout departmental and country planning and implementation processes i.e. Theory of Change workshops, partner platforms, joint monitoring trips and during training courses. Partner Profiles, and the new Partner Assessment Tool examine partners' capabilities and capacity development needs to deliver its work and projects, for which funds are allocated within the country budget.

DCA has staff Security and Wellbeing policies and a Security Manuals for each Country Office. The DCA Code of Conduct is in place and establishes the obligation not to exploit or abuse or otherwise discriminate against people. It is included in staff induction and contracts, however not all staff are aware of DCA's Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) policy. Partner Agreements commit partners to adhere to and implement the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in projects, and DCA expects partners to have a Code of Conduct in place within their organisation. The Partner Profile includes the Code of Conduct, however the new Partner Assessment Tool (PAT) does not make specific reference to a code of conduct. Partners feedback that DCA does not provide specific support on developing codes of conduct within their organisations. DCA does not systematically ensure that partner' codes of conduct are implemented or that partners are aware of Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).

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

Communities are satisfied with the behaviour, competence and commitment of partner staff. Those that met DCA staff comment that they are respectful and treat them with dignity, and provide skills through training events i.e. on disaster preparedness.

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

Score: 2.8

DCA has policies and processes in place within its policy framework to govern the use and management of resources. DCA aims to manage resources effectively, efficiently and ethically, and use resources to achieve their intended purpose. DCA Value for Money Strategy, Theory of Change approach to programme design and Annual programme performance audits contribute to programmes being designed and implemented in a way that ensures an efficient use of resources, balancing quality, cost and timeliness at each phase of the response. Programme and Project Committees assess and approve projects and partner proposals based on a review and consideration of value for money for rights holders and efficient use of resources.

DCA Finance Management is responsible for the development and execution of visions and strategies. DCA PPM, FPPM and accounting manuals provide guidance on monitoring and reporting expenditure against programme and project budgets. For each project Partner

Agreements define the financial management and audit requirements, which are monitored by DCA programme and finance staff, together with partners. Project budgets are managed by finance officers and programme staff at the country level.

DCA has a strong Procurement Policy and Manual in place and all procurement follows strictly controlled procurement procedures. DCA has an Anti-corruption Policy signed by its staff and manages the risk of corruption through being transparent about its policy and how it intends to avoid corruption and manage suspicion of corruption. An anti-corruption clause is included in contracts with contractors, suppliers and service providers. DCA has well-established complaint handling systems at the HO and in country offices, with partners and some communities. Partner Agreements include the Code of Conduct and a clause on anti-corruption. DCA takes appropriate action when corruption is identified.

DCA and partner staff are encouraged to think about environmental impacts, and DCA has an Internal Climate Strategy in place. DCA and partners work at the local level to ensure that steps are taken to reduce harm to the environment when implementing projects and use local resources. However, the actual impact on the environment that activities have is not integrated into project monitoring and reporting processes. Environmental impacts of project activities are not systematically monitored.

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

Communities feedback that they have strong committees in place and receive information on project budgets and distribution of resources, and have received advice and some training on how to manage their resources and avoid fraud i.e. book keeping, seed bank and distributions management, recording decisions in committee meetings and in some cases setting-up complaint handling systems.

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

Date:

Representative

Place:

Name and  
Signature:

## 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 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 that:

- 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 that:

- 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 that:

- 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 that

- 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.