



SHARED COMMITMENTS

HOW TO WORK TOGETHER TO IMPLEMENT QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY PRINCIPLES IN THE FIELD

This section describes the issues at stake in terms of collaboration and interoperability during the different stages of a response to a crisis. It underlines the need for coherence, coordination and complementarity between the actors in order to help implement quality and accountability principles in the field.

This section is split into two parts:

1. The introduction looks at how the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) can help to reinforce coherence, coordination and complementarity between actors involved in facilitating an intervention.
2. A practical file underlines, for each phase of the project cycle and for each quality criterion of the Core Humanitarian Standard, the good practices that each operator, funder, MEAL advisor or evaluator can implement or facilitate to contribute to a high-quality and accountable intervention.

It is aimed at any actor involved in the different stages of a crisis response (operator, donor, evaluator, etc.).

INTRODUCTION

▲ How can the Core Humanitarian Standard help to implement quality and accountability principles in the field?

The concepts of quality and accountability⁶ involve numerous issues: **strategic issues** with regard to improving people's living conditions concretely and realistically while consolidating relations of trust and complementarity with the different stakeholders; **management issues** with regard to reducing internal problems and ensuring that resources are used more effectively; and lastly **ethical issues** with regard to acting responsibly vis-à-vis crisis-affected people, funders, partners, staff and civil society.

⁶ The COMPASS method is based on the definition of quality and accountability that is used in the Core Humanitarian Standard (p. 22):
Quality: the totality of features and characteristics of humanitarian assistance that support its ability to, in time, satisfy stated or implied needs and expectations, and respect the dignity of the people it aims to assist.
Accountability: the process of using power responsibly, taking account of, and being held accountable by, different stakeholders, and primarily those who are affected by the exercise of such power.

If you implement, support, fund or evaluate projects aimed at communities and people affected by crisis, you will directly or indirectly have to deal with the challenges of putting into practice quality and accountability principles. You will therefore have to deal with the following big questions:

- How can we monitor and analyse evolving needs?
- How can we develop agile projects that are adapted to the context?
- How can we implement project responsibly?
- How can we reinforce external and internal synergy?
- How can we put cross-cutting commitments, such as age, the environment, gender and handicap into practice?
- How can we identify the effects and impacts of a project?
- How can we contribute to reinforcing the resilience of populations?
- ...

... and how do we do all this in situations where there is a very heavy workload, adapting to the specific characteristics of each context, sector and operational zone, and remaining focused above all on the shared mission of improving people's living conditions?

The humanitarian and development sector does not lack tools, guides or good practices for all the quality and accountability questions that you might have. In September 2014, the participants at a workshop during Groupe URD's Autumn School on Humanitarian Aid⁷ listed no fewer than 150 reference tools for humanitarian and development actors⁸. As there is a risk of feeling a little lost faced with such a profusion of tools, the Core Humanitarian Standard can represent a general framework to guide different actors (What do I really need?) and increase the coherence between these different initiatives (What complementarity exists?)⁹.

▲ A shared definition of the quality and accountability of aid¹⁰

Due to the great diversity in the humanitarian and development sector, generic concepts such as quality and accountability have a different resonance from one actor to the next. Of course, first and foremost, they must meet people's basic needs responsibly, but each stakeholder also has numerous other preoccupations. Donors, for example, need to ensure that their implementing partners adhere to administrative and financial rules; national authorities need to make sure aid does not weaken their prerogatives, and reinforces their means of action, etc.

A humanitarian or development project, which is at the interface between all these issues, also has to take into account the point of view of the population, who are often the least able to express themselves, while also meeting the demands of the other stakeholders... Using a reference framework that reconciles the legitimate points of view of each stakeholder while focusing on the quality of the results and the impact for communities and people affected by crisis is the central challenge that the Core Humanitarian Standard attempts to meet.

⁷ <http://www.urd.org/Quality-in-humanitarian-actions>

⁸ Extract from the article, "Peer review - a way for the humanitarian sector to learn and improve", HEM, Groupe URD, Julien Carlier & Hugues Maury, <https://www.urd.org/Peer-review-a-way-for-the>

⁹ See the «quality & accountability map» tool developed by Groupe URD based on the criteria of the Core Humanitarian Standard to help organisations identify improvement needs and position quality and accountability initiatives that are relevant to them - www.urd.org

¹⁰ Extract from an article by Véronique de Geoffroy that appeared on Grotius in December 2014.

<https://grotius.fr/le-core-humanitarian-standard-chs-nouvelle-tentative-dembrigadement-du-secteur-ou-etape-innovante-et-porteuse/>

The nine quality criteria which make up the structure of the reference framework describe nine different and complementary dimensions of the quality and accountability of a humanitarian or development intervention. They rework and complement the twelve criteria of the Quality COMPAS' Compass Rose¹¹ as well as the OECD-DAC criteria which are often used for project evaluations. And lastly, they also include the essence of the 2010 HAP Standard, the People in Aid Code of Good Practice and the Sphere Core Standards.

The Core humanitarian Standard is therefore neither revolutionary nor totally new. Experienced professionals will find it to be simply an explanation of collective knowledge. But this shared definition of quality and accountability helps to resolve the confusion that has been created due to the many different standards that have been produced in the last twenty years. It also provides a clearer and more coherent expression of the criteria and principles that define a "good" intervention with communities and people affected by crisis.

▲ 360 degrees of Quality & Accountability

People can be affected by a crisis directly or indirectly; they can be victims and beneficiaries, but above all they are actors of their own destiny. Humanitarian or development aid should not be the only response to a crisis, but whenever it is implemented, the population, civil society and the authorities should be placed at its centre.

With a growing number of humanitarian and development organisations in numerous contexts, and particularly the growing influence of "non-traditional" actors, such as the military and businesses, it is important to specify the different roles in the value chain of a response, between:

- Operators (lead organisation and operational partners) who are in charge of implementing the response;
- Funding agencies who establish the conditions in which the response is funded;
- MEAL Advisors (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning) who establish the steering framework and support the operators;
- Evaluators who analyse the response and make recommendations.

! Important This typology of roles can be applied regardless of the status of the organisations involved (non-governmental, state, etc.) or their origin (local, national or international).

The different parties involved in the delivery of aid are jointly responsible for guaranteeing that there is optimal quality and accountability in relation to the context of the project. Each of the roles above is responsible for ensuring that there is coherence and complementarity with the other actors in order to implement a high quality and accountable response, with the population at the centre of activities and decision-making.

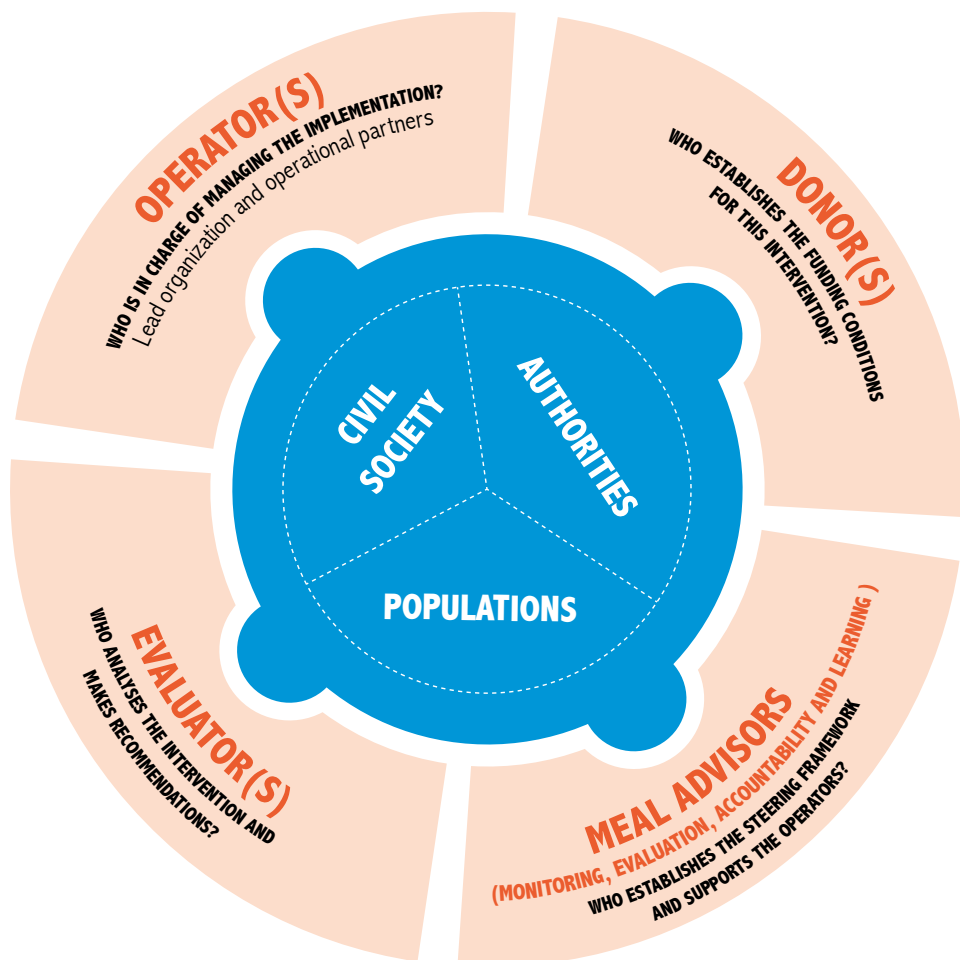
¹¹ The first version of the Quality COMPAS was not based on the Core Humanitarian Standard, which had not yet been developed, but on a quality reference framework of 12 criteria called the Compass Rose.

Experience from the field - Albania

NATO troops based in Albania were in charge of distributing relief items to refugees fleeing the conflict and NATO bombardments in Kosovo. NATO Member States disbursed funds to provide assistance for the refugees. The UNHCR was no longer in a position to coordinate relief efforts effectively, nor to guarantee protection for refugees who had fled into the Albanian territory, and were thus the responsibility of the Albanian State. Aid agencies soon became confused about who was in charge of coordinating relief efforts and who was responsible for allocating funding for project proposals. The UNHCR, whose mandate covered these activities? The Albanian government, who theoretically had the legitimacy to do so? NATO Member States, who were effectively providing funding? Or NATO troops, who had access to accurate information?

Commitment 6 – Communities and people affected by crisis receive coordinated, complementary assistance

A project can only be of good quality and improve if all the actors involved in delivering aid (MEAL Advisors, donors, operators, and evaluators) work in a coherent and complementary way. The Core Humanitarian Standard can help to give meaning to a collective intervention and find a common language. It can act as an interface between the different actors involved in the delivery of aid and thus facilitate operational interoperability.



This notion of “interoperability” is absolutely crucial in order to apply the principles of quality and accountability in the field. It raises the question of coherence and sharing between different actors and different steering systems. The aim is therefore not to standardize the systems but to ensure that they are able to interact and contribute to increasing the complementarity of the actors in charge of facilitating the implementation of a project.

▲ How to put the Core Humanitarian Standard into practice in the field

The Core Humanitarian Standard points in the right direction, but, on its own, it will not be able to improve the humanitarian and development sector in the long term, because it remains a declaration of good intentions, whereas a whole system that promotes better quality and accountability needs to be established¹².

“CHS” certification projects are currently underway, which may provide added value in certain situations, but these are not a magic bullet that will solve all the humanitarian and development sector’s problems of quality and accountability. In order to simplify and increase the coherence of the sector, and avoid adding extra constraints for organisations and their staff, it is important to diversify the ways of using the Core Humanitarian Standard.

One of the main principles of the Core Humanitarian Standard is its non-prescriptive nature: each organisation or group of organisations is therefore free to refer to it and adapt it to its practices on a voluntary basis. This freedom of choice allows them to apply the principles of quality and accountability in the field via Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning activities, and for each project cycle phase.

▲ Project cycle

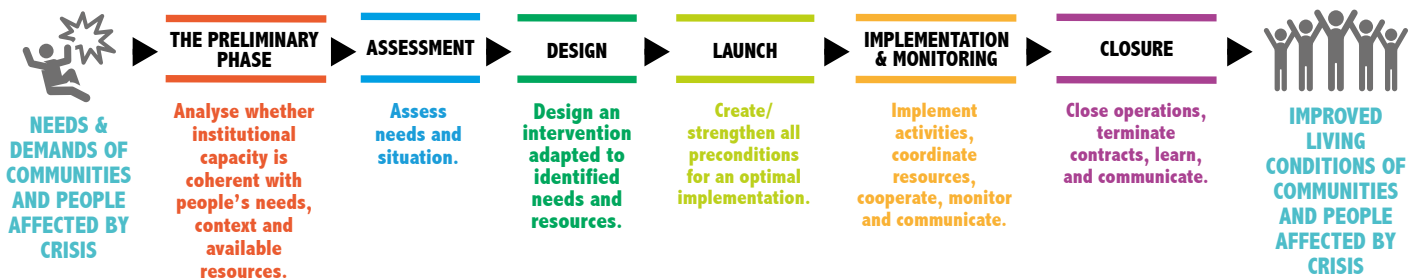
Operators, funders, advisors and evaluators can meet and organise their contributions around the six phases of the project cycle proposed by the COMPASS:

- 1. The preliminary phase** to decide whether to commence the Initial Assessment phase or not.
- 2. The Initial Assessment phase** to collect all the necessary information to a) decide whether to design a project, or not, and b) design it.
- 3. The design phase** to develop a relevant project strategy.
- 4. The launch phase** to create all the necessary conditions for the optimal implementation of activities.
- 5. The implementation and monitoring phase** to ensure that planned activities are carried out and achieve the intended results for communities and people affected by crisis.
- 6. The closure phase** to confirm the completion of activities, recognise the level of achievements, facilitate learning from field experience and allow the closure of any contractual files in accordance with national law, donor rules and internal regulations.

¹² Peer review - a way for the humanitarian sector to learn and improve”, HEM, Groupe URD, Julien Carlier & Hugues Maury, <https://www.urd.org/Peer-review-a-way-for-the>

! Important

- These six phases have been developed based on Groupe URD’s experience but the proposed method can be fully adapted to any other approach to project cycle management.
- Project cycle management is flexible: certain phases can be launched simultaneously to adapt the intervention to the realities of each context. For example, activities may be implemented before the launch phase is fully completed. The investment for each phase will also depend on each situation and can be consolidated later. For example, a limited Initial Assessment can be conducted, and this can be developed further during later phases.



➤ The key role of Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) activities operators

The quality and accountability of a project depends, above all, on the capacity of donors, advisors and evaluators to promote and facilitate the implementation of a MEAL system that:

- Formalises quality and accountability requirements adapted to the operational context, stakeholders’ expectations and existing capacities.
- Checks regularly that the project is well implemented and is adapted to needs;
- Is responsive to the views of the targeted population, including vulnerable and excluded groups.
- Drives decision-making.
- Learns from the intervention to improve future responses.

These MEAL activities can be described as follows:

Monitoring - Is the project well implemented and adapted to needs and the context?

Implementing a monitoring system implies much more than just recording activities to complete reports. It means continuously assessing both processes and results; using data to drive decision-making and planning; and being responsive to the views of communities and people affected by crisis.

Too often, teams focus on monitoring activities and inputs - which are easier to track than concrete changes for beneficiaries. This leads to poor understanding of the effectiveness of the project and poor steering of the project strategy to reach its intended results.

Changes in the context are also rarely included in the monitoring system, which can lead to teams being insufficiently informed. If the project takes place in a complex and volatile environment, the monitoring of key contextual elements may be vital to ensure that risks are anticipated and the project is implemented in an agile manner.

The COMPASS is organised around four key areas of analysis for project monitoring:

- 1. CONTEXT MONITORING** – Which external factors can influence the intervention? This is used to anticipate potential issues and build on opportunities.
- 2. IMPLEMENTATION MONITORING** – Are we doing what we said we would do? This analyses “how” activities are carried out by monitoring the progress being made, inputs such as finances, compliance (with laws, rules and contractual undertakings) and stakeholders’ involvement, including feedback mechanisms for beneficiaries.
- 3. CHANGES MONITORING** – Is the project on course to achieve the planned results (outputs, outcomes and impact) and is it having any unintended consequences (positive or negative)? This analyses the changes that the project brings to communities and people affected by the crisis. It is usually based on project indicators and learning outcomes. It is sometimes complemented with global performance indicators to measure progress regarding the institutional strategy.
- 4. TARGET GROUP MONITORING** – Who has been reached by the intervention? – This aims to understand the number and the types of people who have potentially benefitted from the project. It is at the centre of the triangle to show how it is linked to the other components - How much and what kind of assistance has been provided to communities and people affected by the crisis? By what organisations? What results have been achieved? In what operational context?

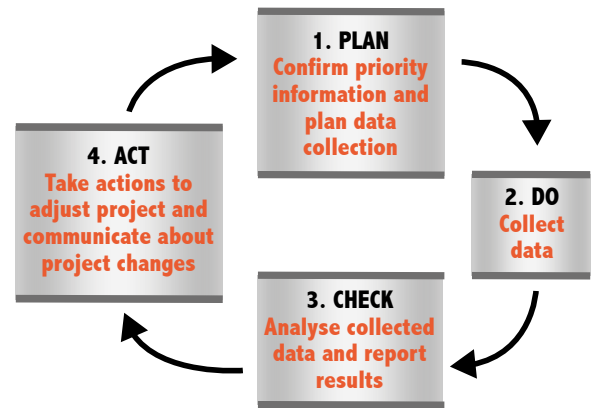
The COMPASS method considers that monitoring is carried out during the implementation of the project and designed during the previous project cycle phases. Monitoring is based on comprehensive data management and decision-making mechanisms that are progressively built during the previous project cycle phases.

- The assessment phase can provide baseline information for some of the selected project indicators.
- During the design phase, project indicators are selected and major monitoring activities are formalised, usually under a logical framework format.
- The launch phase is used to finalise the monitoring plan, mobilise the required resources, build monitoring skills, conduct or plan baseline surveys and develop relevant data collection methods and tools.



The COMPASS method also considers that monitoring is a continuous process organised around the four steps of the “Deming Cycle” or continuous quality improvement model:

1. Plan – Confirm priority information and plan data collection (“What to do” and “How to do it”). 2. Do – Collect data. 3. Check – Analyse collected data and report results. 4. Act – Take actions to adjust project and communicate about project changes.



Evaluation – Have we made a difference? Did we do so in the best way possible¹³?

Evaluation is “the systematic and objective examination of humanitarian action, to determine the worth or significance of an activity, policy or programme, intended to draw lessons to improve policy and practice and enhance accountability”¹⁴.

As underlined in the specific section related to evaluation, the Core Humanitarian Standard can help to prepare and conduct evaluations. It can be used to identify evaluation needs, design terms of reference or support the identification of key evaluation questions and related information to be collected. For more details, see the “Evaluation” section.

Accountability – How do we intervene “responsibly”?

The Core Humanitarian Standard defines “Accountability” as “the process of using power responsibly, taking account of, and being held accountable by, different stakeholders, and primarily those who are affected by the exercise of such power”¹⁵.

Accountability primarily concerns the target population: being accountable to the target populations means providing accessible and timely information to them, actively seeking their views, developing accessible, secure and responsive complaints mechanisms, and involving them, including vulnerable and excluded groups, in project design and implementation. The other stakeholders that it concerns include project human resources, partners and co-implementers, individual, private and public donors, and other groups influenced by the intervention, including the authorities and the population living in the area of intervention.

Experience from the field - Guinea

Sierra Leonean refugees were invited to sign up to the repatriation programme but many were critical of the way that it was handled. “We are in the best position to know what conditions will convince us to return to our country. But we were not consulted about the repatriation programme. We feel like we are being shunted around, like objects.”

Commitment 4 – Communities and people affected by crisis know their rights and entitlements, have access to information and participate in decisions that affect them.

¹³ Extract from: *Evaluation of Humanitarian Action Guide* – ALNAP – p. 14

¹⁴ *The evaluation of humanitarian action* – ALNAP – p. 27.

¹⁵ *Core Humanitarian Standard*, p. 19

Learning – How can we learn from the project to improve future interventions?

The Core Humanitarian Standard has a specific commitment directly related to learning. It focuses on prior experiences, learning during interventions and sharing lessons after the intervention.

▲ The growing influence of information and communication technologies: potential and challenges¹⁶

The use of information and communication technologies in Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning activities has changed the practices of humanitarian and development organisations a great deal.

They have made it possible to increase not only the quantity, but also the diversity and quality of the data that is collected, processed and analysed, thus allowing monitoring that is more holistic and precise, and thus more informed decision-making. The time it takes to process data has been drastically reduced (via the exponential use of mobile terminals instead of manual entries) and the method for sharing them has improved a lot, allowing shared monitoring of activities and certain indicators in real time, and thus improved flexibility of projects and better communication of data within operational teams and between field offices, coordination structures and headquarters.

Emerging technologies such as business intelligence, big data and artificial intelligence are also taking their first steps in the aid sector and will no doubt continue to revolutionise our project monitoring practices. Similarly, the sharing of data between organisations (for example, between open data processes and platforms) should contribute to more efficient measuring of project impact in the years ahead (possibility of cross-referencing data, reduction of the number of similar surveys meaning that it is possible to focus on quality, etc.).

New technologies applied to quality and accountability have also begun to transform relations with beneficiaries and the field of accountability as a whole: it is easier now to share information, and there are more and more communication channels allowing more horizontal communication and allowing feedback and complaints to be passed on (SMS, instantaneous messaging, social media, call centres, etc.) and there are more and more examples of IT being used in the implementation of projects (crowdsourcing, etc.).

The growing use of information and communication technologies in operational fields nevertheless raises numerous challenges that organisations need to meet with sufficient means: the capacity to attract sufficiently qualified staff to manage these new tools and methods; the capacity to collaborate with private IT service providers who do not have the same culture; training staff in relation to this paradigm shift (the importance, for example, of developing data literacy), sufficient investment in accompanying the change in practices linked to new information technology uses and the digitalisation of processes that are often complex and not mature, etc. It is also extremely important not to fall into the traps that this type of technology could create: infobesity that inexorably slows

¹⁶ This sub-section was written by CartONG. For more information about this organization, which provides humanitarian and development actors with specialized support in information management, mapping, analysis and data processing: <http://www.cartong.org>

down decision-making, a purely extractive approach to the data (without any feedback to the communities), over-simplification of field realities via algorithmic models (automatic selection or profiling of beneficiary households, automatic location of water points, etc.) to the detriment of qualitative data.

Lastly, it is important to underline the importance of using these new technologies responsibly and integrating the principles of do no harm and the right to privacy of the communities and people targeted by projects (principles that were recently repeated in connection with the implementation of the European General Data Protection Regulation). Data protection in all its forms (security, minimisation of collection, proportionality, consent, right to rectification and deletion...) should therefore be a fundamental analysis criterion of any project including the collection or management of data.

PRACTICAL FILES AND TOOLS

This section is divided into six sub-sections – one per phase of the project cycle as presented in the COMPASS method.

Each sub-section underlines in one page and per quality criterion of the Core Humanitarian Standard the good practices that each operator, funder, MEAL advisor or evaluator can implement or facilitate to contribute to a high-quality and accountable intervention.

THE PRELIMINARY PHASE - WE SHOULD....

QUALITY CRITERIA	GOOD PRACTICES
1. Humanitarian response is appropriate and relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ensure any decision is based on the best use of existing information about needs, risks, vulnerabilities and capacities.
2. Humanitarian response is effective and timely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure foreseeable constraints, such as limited access, delays, administrative issues, etc., are taken into account for intervening, including for the assessment > Make sure the proper decision-making process is in place to act and make decisions without unnecessary delays.
3. Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure that the local response capacities (Authorities; Local NGOs etc.) are taken into account to avoid potential duplication. > Ensure any existing preparedness or contingency plans are consulted to assess whether institutional capacity is coherent with people’s needs and capacities.
4. Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback	
5. Complaints are welcomed and addressed	
6. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Assess who the first responders are (authorities, local community based organisations, NGOs, etc.), and the connections we have with them. > Ensure our organisation has legitimacy / competencies related to the expected vulnerabilities.
7. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ensure that lessons from similar contexts are taken into account regarding potential opportunities and risks.
8. Staff are supported to do their jobs effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure the appropriate staff at managerial and technical levels are involved in making the decision about whether or not to implement a project. > Assess staff surge capacity and constraints.
9. Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure our organisation currently has the capacity to mobilise or obtain resources for an intervention at the right time.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT – WE SHOULD....

QUALITY CRITERIA	GOOD PRACTICES
<p>1. Humanitarian response is appropriate and relevant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Identify needs and the underlying problems that communities and people affected by crisis face. > Give priority to iterative assessments over in-depth assessments that use up a lot of resources and rapidly are no longer usable.
<p>2. Humanitarian response is effective and timely</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Analyse all communities' needs and not only those on which the organisation is able to intervene. > Identify existing and relevant technical standards and good practices applicable to the intervention. > Adapt the level of investment to the level of rapidity needed to intervene in a timely manner.
<p>3. Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Analyse local capacities and vulnerability factors. > Analyse the risk of negative potential impacts of the intervention (notably, on the relations between actors, the crisis economy and the environment).
<p>4. Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure that the communities affected by crisis are consulted within the assessment, and that particular attention is paid to specific issues related to gender, age, and disability. > Ask communities affected by crisis about their preferred means of receiving information about the project and contacting the organisation.
<p>5. Complaints are welcomed and addressed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Assess existing feedback and complaints system(s). Identify the cultural, social and power dynamics that could be an obstacle to the functioning of complaints mechanisms (security, equity, etc.). > Ask communities affected by crisis how they would feel most comfortable sharing feedback and complaints with the organisation.
<p>6. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Encourage joint assessments with relevant actors. > Make sure all internal and external existing assessments have been collected. > Identify appropriate coordination structures in place based on the sectors and regions of intervention. > Share the results of assessments with the appropriate coordination structures in place.
<p>7. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ensure that lessons from previous experience of providing aid in this context inform the assessment.
<p>8. Staff are supported to do their jobs effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure staff in charge of the assessment are familiar with the mandate and values of the organisation, and that these are communicated to the people met. > Make sure the appropriate staff at managerial and technical levels are involved in the assessment.
<p>9. Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure that the necessary financial, time-related and logistical resources are provided for the assessment. > Identify the potential impact on the environment (procurements and providers) of using local and natural resources.

DESIGN PHASE – WE SHOULD....

QUALITY CRITERIA	GOOD PRACTICES
1. Humanitarian response is appropriate and relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Develop an intervention strategy that meets immediate needs while attempting to influence some of the root causes of the underlying problems.
2. Humanitarian response is effective and timely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Take into account constraints when elaborating the intervention strategy (chronogram, activity planning, etc.). > Adapt the decision-making process to the level of urgency of the situation.
3. Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Use community-based risk analysis and community preparedness plans in the intervention strategy. > Identify the conditions necessary for withdrawal or handing over responsibility for the project. > Take into account negative effects when drawing up the intervention strategy. > Use the capacities of local businesses and service providers as much as possible.
4. Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ensure that communities and people affected by crisis participate and are involved in the targeting and the design of the intervention.
5. Complaints are welcomed and addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Consult communities and people affected by crisis on the characteristics of the complaints mechanism, the submission of complaints, the processing of complaints, and potential obstacles.
6. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Use stakeholder analysis to draw up a coordinated and complementary project in line with humanitarian principles. > Encourage cross-sector interventions, inclusiveness and the participation of local actors.
7. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ensure lessons from other projects are integrated into the project design (e.g. literature review, contacts, etc.).
8. Staff are supported to do their jobs effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure that the intervention is coherent with the mandate and values of the organisation. > Assess existing and potential staff capacities, and anticipate delays for recruitment.
9. Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Try to avoid any impact on the environment when using local and natural resources. If necessary, consider mitigation measures. > Make sure costs are estimated in a way that is relevant to the context.

LAUNCH PHASE – WE SHOULD....

QUALITY CRITERIA	GOOD PRACTICES
1. Humanitarian response is appropriate and relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ensure the strategy is still relevant to respond to needs, and adapt if necessary.
2. Humanitarian response is effective and timely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Include technical standards in the monitoring of the project. > Plan monitoring sufficiently frequently to allow reactivity.
3. Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Establish a monitoring mechanism that can track: 1.the progress made towards the pre-identified conditions of withdrawal; 2. the use of local businesses and service providers; 3. the potential negative impact of the intervention on the local economy.
4. Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure that the collection and processing of data takes into consideration age, gender, and diversity. > Inform target groups, including marginalised and vulnerable groups, about the organisation and what it intends to carry out. > Involve target groups in the design of monitoring mechanisms. > Make sure that factors that could modify the most appropriate ways to communicate will be monitored: security, migrations, literacy, socio-cultural codes, etc.
5. Complaints are welcomed and addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Consult communities and people affected by crisis about the characteristics of the complaints mechanism - submission of complaints - processing of complaints - potential obstacles. > Design a mechanism that is efficient and secure for the users, and able to fast track sensitive complaints.
6. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ensure that the monitoring mechanism makes it possible to monitor the progress of the interventions of other stakeholders, including local/national authorities.
7. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure that a specific time and resources are set aside for learning and piloting innovation.
8. Staff are supported to do their jobs effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure that the project is coherent with the mandate and values of the organisation. > Define personal performance goals with each staff member. > Make sure that staff have the necessary competencies and are informed about training and self-training opportunities. > Make sure that the staff adhere to policies that are relevant to them (including the staff code of conduct) and understand the consequences of not adhering to them.
9. Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Ensure risks of corruption are taken into account when choosing aid methods and partners. > Ensure the monitoring mechanism will monitor the risk of negative impacts on the environment when using local and natural resources. > Ensure mechanisms are in place to alert, investigate and sanction cases of corruption.

IMPLEMENTATION & MONITORING – WE SHOULD...

QUALITY CRITERIA	GOOD PRACTICES
<p>1. Humanitarian response is appropriate and relevant</p>	<p>> Track the evolution of: 1. the number and type of communities and people targeted by the project; 2. the implementation; 3. the context; and 4. needs.</p>
<p>2. Humanitarian response is effective and timely</p>	<p>> Include the technical standards of the operational sectors involved. > Make decisions to adjust the project when necessary. > If need be, refer all needs not covered to relevant organisations or advocate for them to be covered.</p>
<p>3. Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects</p>	<p>> Track: 1. Progress made towards the pre-identified conditions of withdrawal and/or handover; 2. Use of local businesses and service providers; 3. Potential negative impacts of the intervention; 4. Communities' and people's capacities and resilience. > Rely on local capacities.</p>
<p>4. Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback</p>	<p>> Adapt communication to the context and the different population groups targeted (security, migration, age, gender, disability, literacy, socio-cultural codes etc.). > Disaggregate data per age, gender and disability. > Ensure that communities and people affected by the crisis participate and can express their opinions about the project.</p>
<p>5. Complaints are welcomed and addressed</p>	<p>> Facilitate a feedback and complaints mechanism that is efficient, appropriate and secure for the users, and able to fast track sensitive complaints. > Identify the amount and type of feedback and complaints received to assess the use and effectiveness of the mechanism. > Inform people affected by the crisis about how to use the feedback and complaints mechanism, its scope and what they can expect from it (response time, security, the need to refer certain complaints, etc.).</p>
<p>6. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary</p>	<p>> Monitor the evolution of the response by local/national authorities and humanitarian organisations. > Make sure that coordination helps to minimise the demands made of people affected by the crisis and optimises access to services. > Share relevant information with selected stakeholders through appropriate channels.</p>
<p>7. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve</p>	<p>> Make sure time and resources are set aside for learning and the piloting of innovations (if any). > Make sure lessons and decisions about changes are shared with people affected by the crisis and other organisations.</p>
<p>8. Staff are supported to do their jobs effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably</p>	<p>> Make sure that the intervention is coherent with the mandate and values of the organisation. > Make sure that staff respect current policies and, if need be, carry out pre-established sanctions. > Make sure that staff have the necessary competencies and are informed of training and self-training opportunities.</p>
<p>9. Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose</p>	<p>> Make sure that, as the context evolves, the chosen operational strategy is still the most efficient to respond to targeted needs. > Make sure that cost estimates are updated on a regular basis to reflect the changing situation (i.e. devaluation, increased rent, etc.). > Closely monitor the use of natural resources. > Ensure mechanisms are in place to alert, investigate and sanction cases of corruption.</p>

CLOSURE PHASE – WE SHOULD...

QUALITY CRITERIA	GOOD PRACTICES
1. Humanitarian response is appropriate and relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Conduct a final project review.
2. Humanitarian response is effective and timely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > If need be, refer all needs not covered to relevant organisations or advocate for them to be covered.
3. Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Finalise the exit strategy that was planned to ensure long term positive effects or justify any changes. > Make sure environmental impacts have been properly managed/mitigated.
4. Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure that all groups of stakeholders are informed about the achievements and the termination of the project.
5. Complaints are welcomed and addressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Make sure all feedback and complaints have been managed before the closure of the project.
6. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Share final project information with other organisations intervening in the same area.
7. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Identify and disseminate the main lessons learnt from this experience and any innovations.
8. Staff are supported to do their jobs effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Anticipate the end of human resources contracts. > Organise an internal team event to promote team achievements.
9. Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Provide the necessary financial, time and logistical resources for the closure of the project. > Make sure that project resources (especially real estate and equipment) are used by relevant partners or stakeholders after project completion. > Share key information and lessons learnt related to corruption with the relevant partners and through the appropriate communication channels.