QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

COMPASS

2018 VERSION

IMPLEMENTING
FUNDING
EVALUATING
IMPROVING

PUTTING QUALITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY INTO PRACTICE
Guidelines, processes and tools to help implement the Core Humanitarian Standard in the field
The COMPASS is organised around four key and complementary actions of a humanitarian or development intervention:

Each person can choose the entry point that corresponds most to their role and responsibilities.

**IMPLEMENTING**

How can project steering mechanisms help respond responsibly to the needs of communities and people affected by crisis?

It is aimed primarily at: “Operators”  
Individuals and organisations in charge of implementing and supporting projects (particularly project teams and operating partners).

**FUNDING**

How can the funding process help promote and facilitate the implementation of high-quality and accountable projects?

It is aimed primarily at: “Funders”  
Individuals and organisations in charge of funding projects or an organisation (such as institutional donors and operators who include a funding component in their operational approach).

**EVALUATING**

How can an evaluation use the quality criteria of the Core Humanitarian Standard to complement the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, prioritise areas of analysis and identify relevant evaluation questions?

It is primarily aimed at: “Evaluators”  
The people and organisations in charge of evaluating projects (notably those who commission evaluations and the individuals who carry them out).

**IMPROVING**

How can institutional quality and accountability requirements be translated into a project Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) system tailored to the specific needs, demands and resources of an organisation, consortium or programme?

It is primarily aimed at: Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Advisors  
Individuals and organisations who are responsible for establishing the steering framework for projects (notably MEAL focal points and operational coordinators).

Each of these entry points is explained in a specific section of the COMPASS.

A joint section – “Shared Commitments” – underlines the need for coherence, complementarity and coordination between these different entry points.
1 POSSIBLE PATH FOR HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The different actors involved in a humanitarian or development intervention (operators, donors, evaluators, etc.) can organise their contributions around the six phases of the project cycle, as presented in the COMPASS:

1. **The preliminary phase**
2. **The initial assessment phase**
3. **The design phase**
4. **The launch phase**
5. **The implementation & monitoring phase**
6. **The closure phase**

**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.

**WHY USE THE COMPASS?**

* Quality and accountability of humanitarian and development projects

The COMPASS can help individuals and organisations from the humanitarian and development sector to:

- Put the quality and accountability commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standard into practice for field interventions;
- Strengthen the coherence, coordination and complementarity of humanitarian and development stakeholders;
- Consolidate the quality and accountability of interventions, in particular by strengthening internal synergies, the implementation of cross-cutting commitments (location, gender, etc.) and linkages between emergency, rehabilitation and development.

**IMPROVING THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF COMMUNITIES AND PEOPLE AFFECTED BY CRISIS**
WHAT IS THE COMPASS AND HOW DOES IT RELATE TO THE CORE HUMANITARIAN STANDARD?

▶ Quality and accountability recommendations, processes and tools for humanitarian and development projects

The COMPASS is a quality and accountability management method for humanitarian and development projects. It has been specifically designed by Groupe URD to help apply the quality and accountability commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standard in the field for any intervention zone, sector or context.

▶ An up-dated version of the quality COMPASS

The COMPAS was first developed by Groupe URD in 2004 and was organised around a quality reference framework, the Compass Rose, made up of 12 quality criteria. In 2014, Groupe URD joined HAP International, People In Aid and the Sphere Project in their efforts to harmonise standards and integrate the Quality COMPAS reference framework into the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS).

▶ The Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS)

The COMPASS is built around the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS). This is a voluntary code that describes the essential elements of principled, accountable and quality humanitarian action. The Core Humanitarian Standard sets out Nine Commitments centred on communities and people affected by crisis that organisations and individuals can use to improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian or development interventions.

It draws on key elements of several humanitarian standards and commitments including the Red Cross/Red Crescent and NGO Code of Conduct, the Sphere Handbook Core Standards and Protection Principles, the twelve criteria of the Quality COMPAS’ Compass Rose, the OECD-DAC criteria, the 2010 HAP Standard and the People in Aid Code of Good Practice.

// For more information, see: https://corehumanitarianstandard.org
HOW DOES THE COMPASS RELATE TO OTHER CHS INITIATIVES?

A collective effort

The COMPASS is part of a collective effort to help put the Core Humanitarian Standard into practice. An important role is played by the numerous organisations around the world who advocate in favour of using the CHS and promote it among humanitarian and development workers. For their part, the three founding bodies – the CHS Alliance, Sphere and Groupe URD – play complementary roles:

// The CHS Alliance\(^1\) assists its members and the wider community to promote and implement the CHS throughout their organisations.

// Sphere\(^2\) brings together a wide range of humanitarian agencies with the aim of improving the quality and accountability of humanitarian assistance. The Sphere Handbook establishes common principles and universal minimum standards in life-saving areas of humanitarian response.

// Groupe URD\(^3\) helps organisations to improve the quality of their programmes through evaluations, research, training, and strategic and organisational support.

Tools & support

The COMPASS is a methodological guide that includes recommendations and tools to implement the quality and accountability commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standard in the field. It has been developed to complement existing guides and tools for implementing the Core Humanitarian Standard at field, organisational and international/policy levels.

For more information on recommended tools and guidance to help implement the CHS:
https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/resources

For more information on quality & accountability guidance and tools, including the detailed COMPASS guide, the COMPASS dashboard and specific quality & accountability tools:
http://www.urd.org

\(^1\) https://www.chsalliance.org/
\(^2\) http://www.sphereproject.org/sphere/fr/
\(^3\) https://urd.org/
ABOUT GROUPE URD

Groupe URD, a think-tank for crisis and post-crisis contexts

Founded in 1993, Groupe URD is an independent think tank that specialises in analysing practices and developing policies for the humanitarian and development sector. Our multi-disciplinary expertise, based on continual field visits to crisis and post-crisis contexts, provides us with insight into the functioning of the sector as a whole. We believe in sharing knowledge and collective learning, and we help aid actors to improve the quality of their interventions via 6 areas of activity:

1. Training
2. Studies and Research
3. Evaluation
4. Strategic Support
5. Development of Tools and Methods
6. Organisational Support

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