The Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) sets out Nine Commitments that organisations and individuals involved in humanitarian response can use to improve the quality and effectiveness of the assistance they provide. The CHS places communities and people affected by crisis at the centre of humanitarian action. As a core standard, it describes the essential elements of principled, accountable and high-quality humanitarian aid. The Core Humanitarian Standard is a voluntary and measurable standard. It is the result of a global consultation process and draws together key elements of existing humanitarian standards and commitments.

To access the full standard in multiple languages including Arabic, English, French and Spanish, visit www.corehumanitarianstandard.org.

**Commitment 1**
Communities and people affected by crisis receive assistance appropriate and relevant to their needs.

**Quality Criterion:** Humanitarian response is appropriate and relevant.

Commitment 1 stresses the importance to understand the context and stakeholders, as well as the needs and risks. It also recommends to take into account the vulnerabilities and capacities of different groups.

**Commitment 2**
Communities and people affected by crisis have access to the humanitarian assistance they need at the right time.

**Quality Criterion:** Humanitarian response is effective and timely.

Commitment 2 highlights the need for effective systems that support timely, evidence-based decision-making, together with both adequate and timely geographical coverage of both assistance and protection needs. It requires anticipation, preparation, and the humanitarian community to act together to find ways to overcome challenges in relation with access, security, funding and logistics, as well as capacity and conflicting priorities.

**Commitment 3**
Communities and people affected by crisis are not negatively affected and are more prepared, resilient and less at-risk as a result of humanitarian action.

**Quality Criterion:** Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects.

This Commitment highlights the need to acknowledge and build on local and national capacity when responding to disasters, and to forge stronger links with local organisations. Ensuring that individuals, communities and countries have greater control over decision-making and become more resilient leads to a quicker recovery and a greater capacity to withstand future shocks.

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

**Quality Criterion:** Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback.

Commitment 4 recognises that communication enables crisis-affected communities. It allows them to access services and contribute to decisions, which leads to more effective programming.

The CHS Guidance Notes & Indicators supplement the Core Humanitarian Standard by explaining why each of the Nine Commitments is important and providing indicators and guiding questions to promote measurement of progress towards meeting the standard. The resource provides clarification on the Key Actions and Organisational Responsibilities in the Core Humanitarian Standard, and examines some of the practical challenges that may arise when applying it. Find out more at: www.corehumanitarianstandard.org/chs-guidance-notes-and-indicators.
Communities and people affected by crisis can expect the delivery of improved assistance, as organisations learn from experience and reflection.

Quality Criterion: Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve.

Communities and people affected by crisis receive the assistance they require from competent and well-managed staff and volunteers.

Quality Criterion: Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably.

Communities and people affected by crisis can expect the organisations assisting them to manage resources effectively, efficiently and ethically.

Quality Criterion: Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose.

The three founding bodies and copyright holders of the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) are Groupe URD, Sphere, and the CHS Alliance. They play complementary roles:

- **The CHS Alliance** assists its members and the wider community to promote and implement the CHS; the CHS Verification Scheme allows organisations to measure the extent to which they have successfully applied the Standard.
- **Groupe URD** helps organisations to improve the quality of their programmes through evaluations, research, training, and strategic and quality support. It has developed the Quality & Accountability COMPASS, which provides guidelines, processes and tools to help implement the CHS in the field.
- **Sphere** works with humanitarian agencies and individual practitioners to improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian assistance. The Sphere Handbook sets common principles and universal minimum standards in areas of humanitarian response. The Core Humanitarian Standard is one of the three foundational chapters of Sphere, informing and supporting the technical standards, together with the Humanitarian Charter and the Protection Principles.

Besides the CHS Alliance, Sphere and Groupe URD, there are numerous organisations around the world that advocate for, promote and implement the Core Humanitarian Standard.

For more information: info@corehumanitarianstandard.org