CAFOD
Renewal Audit – Summary Report – 2024/02/22

1. General information

1.1 Organisation

Type	Mandates	Verified
☒ International ☐ National ☐ Membership/Network ☐ Direct Assistance ☐ Federated ☒ With partners	☒ Humanitarian ☒ Development ☒ Advocacy	☒ Humanitarian ☒ Development ☒ Advocacy
Legal registration	CAFOD is constituted in the UK as a charitable company limited by guarantee (company number 09387398, charity registration number 1160384).	
Head Office location	London, UK	
Total number of organisation staff	397	

1.2 Audit team

Lead auditor	Sarah Kambarami
Second auditor	Hana Abul Husn
Third auditor	--
Observer	Victoria Lyon Dean
Expert	--
Witness / other participants	--

1.3 Scope of the audit

CHS Verification Scheme	Certification
Audit cycle	Third
Coverage of the audit	This audit covers the entire organisation and its work through partners in humanitarian, development, and advocacy mandates.

1.4 Sampling*

Total number of Programme sites in scope			22
Total number of sites for onsite visit			1
Total number of sites for remote assessment			3
Name of programme site	**Included in final sample (Y/N)**	**Rationale for sampling and selection / de-selection decision**	**Onsite or Remote**
Random sampling			
Zimbabwe Programme	Y	The Zimbabwe Programme was randomly sampled and selected for the onsite visit because it provides geographical diversity, and it has not been audited before. It is a well-established Country Office with a large	Onsite

		programme size and mixed mandates, enabling the audit team to see development, humanitarian, and advocacy projects in one location. Additionally, security was rated as medium risk (not high) and project sites were accessible within the timeframe of the audit.	
Ukraine Response	Y	The Ukraine response was randomly sampled and selected because it is a new response, partner led with no country office, covers the humanitarian mandate, and has the largest portfolio of funding, so presents a higher risk.	Remote
Nigeria Programme	N	The Nigeria Programme was not selected as it was too similar to the Zimbabwe Programme already sampled.	--
Central America Programme	N	The Central America Programme was not selected because it was included in many previous CHS audits, including the 2022 MTA.	--
Mozambique Programme	N	The Mozambique Programme was not selected because it was included in the 2020 Recertification Audit and does not provide geographical diversity.	--
Brazil Programme	N	The Brazil Programme was not selected because it was selected for the onsite visit in the CHS MTA in 2022.	--
Purposive sampling			
Discrete Humanitarian Responses Portfolio		This group of responses was purposively selected because they are discrete humanitarian responses managed from London which presents a different system of management from other sampled programmes. It also enables geographic diversity with a focus on responses in Haiti and India.	Remote
Middle East Programme		This programme was chosen to provide geographic diversity and the opportunity to look at development programming. OPT had not been audited before so was selected to be the focus of the remote assessment.	Remote

Any other sampling performed for this audit:

Using the 'Country Programme' unit for sampling purposes no longer fits the strategic approach taken by CAFOD which focuses on the management of 'Programmes'. In some cases, these are Country Programmes, but they can also be responses (covering multiple countries), or sub regional programmes, or groupings of projects, such as the discrete humanitarian responses. Therefore, the audit team sampled from the list of CAFOD's self-identified Programmes, rather than from a list of countries where CAFOD is operational.

Purposive sampling was performed to select the project sites in Zimbabwe. This was done to ensure that the selected projects covered the humanitarian, development, and advocacy mandates as well as a mix of different types of partners (CARITAS and non-CARITAS). Feasibility of access to project sites, as well as the timeframe of implementation of projects, were also taken into consideration.

Sampling risks identified:

At the initial sampling stage, the project selected for remote assessment from the Middle East Programme was in OPT. Due to the war in Gaza, it was not possible to interview the partner in OPT which presented the risk that we were limited in our evidence collection from diverse partners. To mitigate this, the audit team interviewed a different partner from the Middle East Programme, based in Lebanon.

The audit team is confident in the findings based on the evidence gathered from this sample.

It is important to note that the audit findings are based on a sample of an organisation's activities, programmes, and documentation as well as direct observation. Findings are analysed to determine an organisation's systematic approach and application of all aspects of the CHS across different contexts and ways of working.

2. Activities undertaken by the audit team

2.1 Locations Assessed

Locations	Dates	Onsite or remote
Head Office	2023/10/17 to 2023/10/25	Remote
Zimbabwe Programme	2023/11/06 to 2023/11/10	Onsite
Ukraine Programme	2023/11/29 to 2023/12/01	Remote
Middle East Programme	2023/11/29 to 2023/12/01	Remote
Humanitarian responses (discrete funding)	2023/11/29 to 2023/12/01	Remote

2.2 Interviews

Level / Position of interviewees	Number of interviewees		Onsite/ Remote
	Female	Male	
Head Office			
Management	3	2	Remote
Staff	8	3	Remote
Programme Sites			
Staff	5	3	Onsite
Partner staff	4	3	Onsite and remote
Total number of interviewees	**20**	**11**	**31**

2.3 Consultations with communities

Type of group and location	Number of participants		Onsite or remote
	Female	Male	
#1 - WASH project, female participants, Rushinga, Zimbabwe.	11	0	Onsite
#2 - WASH project, male participants, Rushinga, Zimbabwe.	0	15	Onsite
#3 - Peacebuilding project, female participants, Harare, Zimbabwe.	7	0	Onsite
#4 - Peacebuilding project, youth participants, Harare, Zimbabwe.	4	4	Onsite
#5 - Peacebuilding project, male participants, Harare, Zimbabwe.	0	4	Onsite
#6 - Emergency response project, female participants, Chimanimani, Zimbabwe.	10	0	Onsite
#7 - Emergency response project, male participants, Chimanimani, Zimbabwe.	0	8	Onsite
Total number of participants	**32**	**31**	**63**

2.4 Opening meeting

Date	2023/10/17
Location	Remote
Number of participants	10 (8 female, 2 male)
Any substantive issues arising	None

2.5 Closing meeting

Date	2023/12/13
Location	Remote
Number of participants	22 (15 female, 7 male)
Any substantive issues arising	None

3. Background information on the organisation

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3.1 General information	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) (est. 1960) is the official overseas development and relief agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. CAFOD is a company limited by guarantee, and registered as a charity with the Charity Commission for England and Wales. CAFOD is part of Caritas Internationalis, a network of approximately 160 Catholic aid organisations, and a member of the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC). Inspired by Gospel values and as part of the Catholic community of England and Wales, CAFOD's mission is to come together in partnership with others, locally and globally: • To reach those in greatest need, save lives and relieve suffering; • To support and enable people, communities and our local partners to be artisans of their own destiny; • To challenge and transform the structures and behaviours that drive poverty, vulnerability, inequality, injustice and exclusion and harm the natural world. • To educate, enable and inspire the Catholic community of England and Wales to act in solidarity for the common good. CAFOD's corporate strategy, *Our Common Home*, is underpinned by four interlinked commitments: • Integral ecology that benefits people, communities and the environment; • Local agency, voice and leadership; • A culture of encounter for transformative change; • Our ecological conversion to transform ourselves. CAFOD continues to work in the areas of sustainable development, humanitarian response, campaigning and advocacy, and development education (in the UK). For the financial year ending in March 2023, CAFOD's total expenditure was GBP 66.3 million, of which GBP 59.4 million was spent on charitable activities (89.6%). From this, the total expenditure on grants and programme payments for international development, disaster relief and advocacy was GBP 41.726 million. CAFOD employs around 400 staff and works in 33 countries worldwide with approximately 200 partners. It also funds and supports humanitarian programmes in other countries (four in 2023), primarily as contributions to Caritas Internationalis emergency appeals.
3.2 Governance and management structure	There have been no significant changes to the governance or management structure since the previous audit. CAFOD is governed by a Board of Trustees and managed by the CAFOD Executive Team. The Board meets at least four times a year and has three sub-committees: i) Strategy and Performance Committee (SPC), ii) Finance, Legal, Audit & Risk (FLAR) and iii) Remuneration Committee (RemCo). All People, Culture and Change work comes under the responsibility of RemCo and the Safeguarding lead for the Board sits on this sub-committee. The Strategy and Performance Committee has oversight of the CHS Audits and workplan.

CAFOD's Executive Team includes the Executive Director, together with the Directors of the International Programmes Group; the Advocacy Communications & Education Group; the Fundraising and Participation Group; the Finance, Information and Infrastructure Group; and the People, Culture and Change Group.

CAFOD continues to consolidate its staffing structure in line with *Our Common Home*. The International Programmes Group, in line with CAFOD's Integral Ecology Programme Model (IEPM) includes regional teams that have direct responsibility for the relationships with partners and the implementation of programmes and projects globally. The Emergency Response & Support Team provides specialist humanitarian surge capacity, and the Programme Quality & Partner Support team helps embed CAFOD's Programme Quality Standards across the international programmes work. It is this team that helps to formulate what CAFOD's quality standards are and then put in place systems to have oversight of these, including CAFOD's work on Safe, Accessible, Dignified, and Inclusive (SADI) programming, Partnership Approaches, Gender and Inclusion work, and systems for Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL).

CAFOD's organisational structure is shown below:
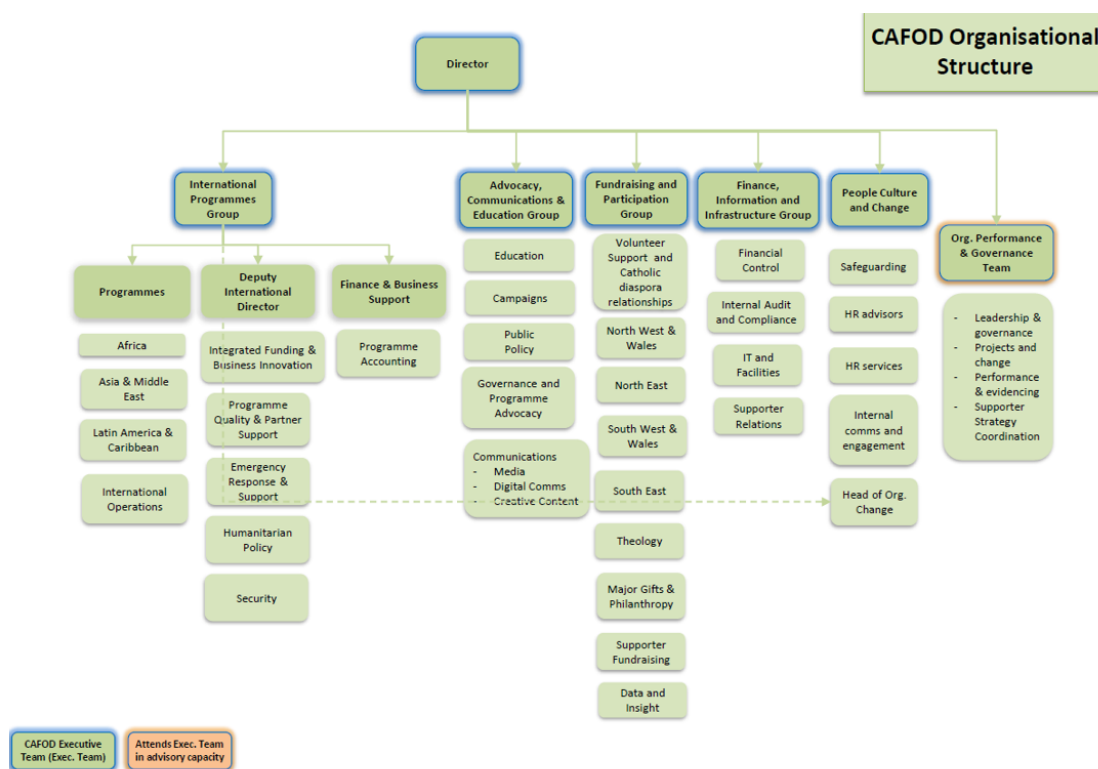
| 3.3 Internal quality assurance mechanisms and risk management | CAFOD's Risk Management Policy outlines the organisation's system for managing risk. CAFOD's approach is to seek to reduce risks that are a threat to the delivery of their objectives by putting in place actions that address the likelihood and impact of each risk to an acceptable level, recognising that the systems are designed to manage risk and not eliminate it. A Corporate level risk register is updated at least annually, reviewed by the Finance, Legal, Audit and Risk (FLAR) sub-committee and approved by the Board of Trustees. Group level risk registers feed into the corporate risk register. Risks are identified under key categories including Programmatic, Financial, Reputational, Environmental/External, Change & CAFOD Capacity, Governance (regulatory/compliance), HR and Security. CAFOD also has an Internal Audit and Compliance team which reports to the FLAR on a quarterly basis.

CAFOD continues to have several policies in place which are reviewed by the relevant Board sub-committee and revised on a regular basis. These policies cover a range of integrity issues including Anti-bribery, Conflict of Interest, Fraud and Loss, Anti-Money laundering, Counter Terrorism, Code of Behaviour, Complaints and Safeguarding. CAFOD systematically develops |

standards, procedures, tools, and ways of working in order to operationalise the policy level commitments.

EthicsPoint, CAFOD's complaint management system, is overseen by a member of the Executive Team and there is a Trustee Safeguarding Lead who helps ensure safeguarding issues are well managed and assures organisational improvement in safeguarding practices. The Partner Safeguarding profiles continue to provide data for KPIs on the number of partners meeting minimum safeguarding requirements. The KPIs are reviewed by the Board of Trustees on a quarterly basis.

At the programming level, there have been three key areas related to quality assurance that have been introduced or strengthened since the last audit.

Over the last 18 months, all CAFOD programmes have undergone a Programme Strategy Development Process. An accompaniment model was implemented with Programme Strategy Leads receiving guidance and support from technical advisors. An Annual Review and Adaptation Process was introduced in 2023 for Programme teams to make relevant adaptations to their programme strategies based on a reflection on critical learning questions and a review of contextual changes.

Throughout 2022 and 2023, CAFOD rolled out the revised SADI (Safe, Accessible, Dignified, and Inclusive) Framework. Systematic training for all staff and partners was undertaken. Using the SADI Design and Implementation Checklists, this framework is now a compulsory requirement in support of programme quality for all projects. The components of the SADI checklists include many of the CHS elements, either as indicators or guiding questions, covering areas such as: context analysis, diversity of needs, information sharing, community engagement, feedback and complaints, coordination, MEL, staff conduct, & financial stewardship.

Finally, due diligence processes for partners have been revised. CAFOD now works with each partner to complete a Safeguarding Profile and a Partner Organisational and Financial Profile (POFP), at a minimum every three years. The level of risk identified through these assessments impacts the amount of support, type of engagement and the levels of funding a partner can expect to receive from CAFOD. A 'passporting waiver' can be granted for either, or both, of these assessments if the partner can provide evidence of undergoing a similar due diligence process or assessment (e.g. CHS Audit, FCDO, START network etc.).

| 3.4 Work with partner organisations | Partnership is central to the way CAFOD works and 'amplifying local voice, agency and leadership' is a core part of CAFOD's strategy *Our Common Home.* CAFOD has three levels of engagement with partners (project, solidarity and strategic), with a detailed partnership policy and manual in place providing guidance and tools to facilitate equitable relationships through three distinct stages: 'exploring', 'maintaining & strengthening' and 'exit'. CAFOD's partnership principles include shared partnership objectives, mutual accountability, equitable relationships, subsidiarity & participation, capacity strengthening, and innovation.

All of CAFOD's international work is implemented through the partnership model. The majority of CAFOD's partners are local faith-based organisations, but CAFOD also works with international and secular partners. In recent years there has been a strategic decision to reduce the number of partners CAFOD works with (now just over 200 local partners compared to over 300 in previous years), while maintaining or increasing the overall level of grant funding to partners, to more effectively support the delivery of *Our Common Home*.

In its work with partners, CAFOD emphasises an accompaniment and capacity strengthening approach that is bespoke to each partner's strengths and limitations. Due diligence processes at the partner level have been revised, and require partners to complete organisation & financial (POFP), and safeguarding profiles which form the basis for a bespoke capacity strengthening plan. These are due to be updated at least every three years for each partner. CAFOD has also introduced a requirement for new Bespoke Partnership Agreements to be developed, focusing on the strategic nature of the partnership, while grant funding agreements remain in place as the legally binding contract related to resource allocation.

CAFOD continues to evolve its partnership approach, adapting systems to deliver more equitable partnerships. In April 2023, CAFOD teams were able to allocate multi-year funding to partners (up to three years) for the first time, providing greater financial stability to partners. In addition, CAFOD introduced a 'passporting' approach to the POFP and Safeguarding Profiles, enabling partners to submit evidence from other assessments or due diligence processes in place of the CAFOD requirements, reducing the administrative burden for |

partners. In 2022, CAFOD undertook a Partner Finance Research Project which explored partner experiences of CAFOD's funding and financing processes with a view to improving systems of resource allocation from the perspective of the partners. Finally, there has been a conscious shift towards increasing CAFOD's support to enable partners to access funding directly from donors.

4. Overall performance of the organisation

4.1 Effectiveness of the governance, internal quality assurance and risk management of the organisation	CAFOD's governance structure has effective engagement and oversight of the CHS certification process, particularly as the work is seen as part of a broader organisational agenda which enhances the work and provides additional focus on areas that need attention. CAFOD's Executive Team reports to the Board of Trustees on their CHS progress, which is embedded in organisational KPIs. Detailed progress on the CHS is provided to the Board's "Strategy and Performance Committee", who then report back to the full Board. The Board are updated on all CHS audits that take place and are actively engaged once they receive the report, seeking confidence that CAFOD is meeting all the CHS commitments as part of its broader commitment to quality and accountability.

CAFOD continues to have policies, procedures and oversight in place that provide a robust control environment in which staff are well informed and supported. This includes internal and external audits, a dedicated Finance, Legal, Audit & Risk (FLAR) Committee, and two key due diligence tools that ensure that partners comply with safeguarding and financial requirements. Budget holders are provided with regular financial reports and partners are required to have procurement policies in place that are equal to or exceed those of CAFOD. Risk is managed effectively throughout the organisation, systematically using risk registers, and other tools, to identify and mitigate risks at the global, programme and partner and project levels.

CAFOD's Programme Strategy Guidance provides a comprehensive approach to programme quality, evidencing and learning, and outlines the new Programme Strategy Annual Review and Adaptation process. The process is effective in prompting reflective programme discussions on learning questions, documenting significant progress, outcomes, failures, challenges, learning, emerging opportunities, and planned programme adaptations, resulting in an adapted Programme Strategy. CAFOD'S Annual Reflection and Discernment Process incorporates the Annual Review and Adaptation as well as mid-year Budget Review processes, providing another space for critical learning questions to be identified and lessons shared across the organisation.

At the partner level, CAFOD ensures effective implementation through a bespoke accompaniment approach that supports partners with their specific capacity strengthening needs. Staff and partners confirm that this has been a successful way to identify and address areas that need strengthening. The SADI Framework and partner due diligence tools are being effectively rolled out and are becoming well known by staff and partners. CAFOD has begun to monitor implementation of its global policies and standards for monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) through its SADI framework and related tools (e.g. compulsory SADI Design and Implementation Checklists), and many of the CHS requirements are incorporated into these tools. However, the roll out of the SADI checklists is still underway, resulting in some inconsistencies being noted in practice.

The Programme Quality & Capacity Strengthening Team now includes technical advisors on environment, inclusion & gender, and data quality, demonstrating an active response to areas where CHS audits had previously identified gaps in implementation. There is also a dedicated internal fund that can be accessed by partners to support programme quality capacity strengthening, which has been effective in providing quick access to funding for priority areas of work, particularly areas identified by the SADI assessments.

CAFOD has integrity policies in place that cover safeguarding, ethical resource management, and complaints handling, that are well understood by staff and partners and embedded systematically in partner organisations through due diligence and project level checks. CAFOD has effective systems in place to monitor any issues that are flagged through EthicsPoint and organisational KPIs, which also support the identification of high-risk partners for which to prioritise support. CAFOD continues to improve its ability to effectively monitor quality and risk areas through its efforts to digitalise forms and visualise data using Tableau,

while recognising that even more can be done to make effective use of these systems to improve quality across the organisation. Improvement is needed, however, in the systematic support provided to partners for managing complaints handling processes effectively.

4.2 Level of implementation of the CHS and progress on compliance	Overall, CAFOD has strong oversight of its implementation of the CHS, and progress on compliance, and demonstrates significant commitment to quality and accountability in its work with its partners across all programmes. CAFOD has undergone significant organisational shifts since it adopted its new global strategy and its Internal Ecology Programme Model (IEPM) which allows for a strengthened approach to implementing and monitoring progress on the CHS. CHS Commitments are embedded into programme quality standards and tools and are communicated effectively to partners.

CAFOD uses a CHS Corrective Action Plan to monitor progress where it has CARs and Observations, detailing corrective measures needed. The project is overseen by the IEPM project board, and through bi-monthly updates to the Executive Team as part of the organisational portfolio. In a separate Action Plan, CAFOD maps actions in the IEPM across to CHS indicators, including observations managed in other teams, such as the People Culture and Change Team, and shares biannual updates with the International Programme Leadership Team.

Since the last audit, CAFOD has been diligent in addressing the two open Corrective Action Requests (CARs). Improvements in systems and in practice have been noted, both for facilitating feedback from diverse groups, and for ensuring that communities are engaged in the design of complaints handling processes. As a result, both these CARs have been closed.

At this audit, CAFOD demonstrates a particular strength in its partnership approach (see 3.4), which permeates all aspects of CAFOD's system for improved quality and accountability. CAFOD consistently considers how to create a 'culture of encounter' and, through its programme quality approach, encourages celebration and promotion of local leadership, voice and agency. CAFOD works together with its partners to improve their respective systems and processes. Ways of working facilitate the development of local leadership and organisations in their capacity as first responders, and embed sensitivity to changing contexts, as well as consideration for varied constraints, limitations, capacities, and interests of partners.

As seen below (see 4.3), CAFOD continues to score highly across many of the CHS Commitments. In addition to CAFOD's partnership approach, another area of strength is CAFOD's attention to creating a safe and inclusive work force, with fair, transparent and non-discriminatory policies and procedures, paying particular attention to becoming an antiracist organisation.

This audit has, however, highlighted complaints handling as the main area of weakness, with Commitment 5 scoring lower than any other commitment. CAFOD has not demonstrated that there is sufficient capacity strengthening and oversight in place to ensure that their partners consistently manage complaints in a timely, fair, safe, and appropriate manner, and to ensure that their partners have systems in place to refer complaints that fall outside scope.

CAFOD has policies in place that address Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), as well as partner and project level due diligence tools to ensure that safeguarding requirements are met. However, not all partners emphasise CAFOD's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse when sharing information with communities about expected behaviours of staff.

CAFOD has put in place several checks to consider gender and diversity in their work and has invested in recruiting technical expertise in this area. The SADI framework continues to ensure issues of diversity and inclusion are considered throughout the lifecycle of a project. CAFOD has invested in data visualisation software and can now monitor data disaggregation KPIs and determine where more capacity building may be required in its partnerships. Marginalised groups, including women and youth, are encouraged to take an active leadership role in the implementation of project activities. However, in practice, some partners do not consider how to share information to meet diverse needs, and some do not pay attention to the diversity of those giving feedback.

CAFOD performs well on localisation, (see also 3.4), particularly in the area of clear and consistent agreements with partners that align with CAFOD's commitment to local voice,

agency, and leadership. Partners consistently praise CAFOD's bespoke approach to supporting their institutional development, and deeply appreciate the accompaniment approach CAFOD takes, including strengthening their capacity to access funds directly from other donors.

4.3 Performance against each CHS Commitment

Commitment	Strong points and areas for improvement	Feedback from communities	Average score*
Commitment 1: Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant	CAFOD has systematic reflection and consultative processes with partners embedded in its approach to ensure that assistance is aligned with an appropriate ongoing analysis of the context. CAFOD monitors whether projects are designed and adapted to meet the needs and capacities of communities, and whether diversity is sufficiently considered through its redesigned tools and forms, and in organisational KPIs. Project documents consistently demonstrate a thorough understanding of the context and stakeholders. However, inconsistencies in practice show that projects are not always designed based on an understanding of different vulnerable groups.	Communities confirm that assistance is appropriate and benefits all population groups, however they describe ways in which access could be improved for people with special needs and disabilities. Communities describe how partners are receptive to their needs, giving examples of how their feedback led to programme adaptations.	3.0
Commitment 2: Humanitarian response is effective and timely	CAFOD operates effectively and in a timely manner across its different operational contexts. CAFOD systematically supports its partners to develop project level monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) approaches for each project and has introduced a new annual process for monitoring and adapting strategies at the programme level. Relevant technical standards are used in project implementation and partners can access a range of technical support from CAFOD, if needed. There are inconsistencies, however, in the extent to which CAFOD ensures its partners have systems in place to refer unmet needs.	Communities are satisfied with the timeliness of the project interventions. Communities describe feeling safe, giving examples of how CAFOD's partners take their safety into consideration when designing projects.	2.9
Commitment 3: Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects	CAFOD works systematically to strengthen local capacity and enable the development of local leadership and organisations through its approach to partnership, its commitment to implementing the Charter for Change, and the ongoing efforts to prioritise the voice, agency, and leadership of local people. Projects are designed in a way that ensures longer term positive effects, benefitting the local economy and minimising the risk of negative effects for communities and the environment. Revised SADI project design and implementation checklists include indicators on responsible data management; however, these checklists have not been used with all partners yet and there are still some gaps in practice.	Communities appreciate the way that project activities have supported their resilience and confirmed feeling better equipped to cope with the challenges they face as a result. Communities demonstrate an awareness of different types of potential risks that could result from project activities and are able to describe the mitigation measures put in place by CAFOD, and their partners, to minimise those risks.	3.0

Commitment 4: Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback	CAFOD works systematically with partners to ensure that relevant information about CAFOD, the partner, expected behaviour of staff, and project related information, is communicated regularly to communities. Most partners use a variety of formats to share information, but some rely solely on verbal communication. CAFOD's projects are systematically designed to be implemented in ways that enable the active engagement and participation of different community groups. Partners are knowledgeable about CAFOD's approach to inclusion and participation and implement the work in ways that ensure the active engagement of diverse groups. All projects ensure that there are adequate channels to receive feedback from communities on their level of satisfaction with the project. However, when feedback is gathered and recorded, not all partners pay attention to the diversity of those giving feedback.	Communities are satisfied with the flow of information from CAFOD's partners, indicating they communicate respectfully and in ways that are easily understood. Some communities would prefer some visual displays of project information to supplement the verbal communication from partners. Communities confirm being actively engaged in project design, implementation, and monitoring, and can describe a range of channels available to them for providing feedback.	2.7
Commitment 5: Complaints are welcomed and addressed	CAFOD has put in place processes and tools to strengthen its ability to identify partners' support needs in welcoming and addressing complaints, and in putting referral mechanisms in place. Organisational KPIs contribute to CAFOD's understanding of which partners are high-risk and they prioritise training to those partners, checking, for example, whether partners have complaint mechanisms that cover sexual exploitation and abuse in place. Project documents show that staff and partners look for ways to improve the functionality of complaints mechanisms, and CAFOD's partners consistently consult communities on the design of complaints-handling processes. However, CAFOD has not yet demonstrated that it has undertaken sufficient capacity strengthening and oversight of partners to ensure that they manage complaints in a timely, fair, safe, and appropriate manner, and that partners have systems in place to refer complaints that fall outside of their scope. CAFOD's partners provide information and deliver workshops on expected behaviours of staff and on feedback and complaints processes. However, not all partners sufficiently inform communities of CAFOD's commitments on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse when sharing information about expected behaviours of staff.	Communities consistently report knowing various ways to communicate complaints and confirm being consulted on the design of complaints mechanisms. Communities have less clarity on how sensitive complaints would be handled. Communities confirm being aware, in general, about the expected behaviours of CAFOD and partner staff, but there is limited awareness on organisational commitments on PSEA.	2.1
Commitment 6: Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary	CAFOD has systematically embedded its commitment to its partnerships through its policies, research, and bespoke approaches. CAFOD supports its partners to attend coordination meetings to ensure that assistance delivered complements the work of relevant national and local authorities, and other humanitarian organisations. CAFOD staff maintain a wide range of relationships with	Communities confirm that CAFOD's partners complement the work of other organisations, and that there is no duplication.	3.2

	relevant networks and agencies, prioritising work with coalitions dedicated to locally led and principled humanitarian action. Project documents provide examples of a strong partner presence and dialogue with relevant stakeholders, referring to information sharing through coordination bodies, and showing reflections on complementarity. CAFOD's staff and partners show mutual respect and appreciation and describe ways of working that prioritise the voice, agency, and leadership of local people.		
Commitment 7: Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve	CAFOD has put in place several systems to support learning at the organisational, programme and project levels, with a consistent emphasis on using learning to adapt and improve practice. Communities of Practice and organisational networks (e.g. for SADI Safeguarding Focal Points) share learnings on specific themes from across the organisation. Improved digital systems and data visualisation software (Tableau) have improved access to data for decision-making. Project documents consistently demonstrate how lessons learnt and prior experience have been incorporated to improve design. CAFOD is an active member of several global and national networks and initiatives where learning and innovation is shared. CAFOD's website has a dedicated Policy and Research section which contributes learning and innovation in the sector. However, there is limited intentional or systematic sharing of learning with communities.	Communities can identify ways in which CAFOD, and its partners, improve the design of projects based on learnings from previous experience and can give many concrete examples of how their feedback and suggestions result in adjustments to project activities.	2.7
Commitment 8: Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably	CAFOD has put in place several systems to guide and improve oversight of performance management practices and professional development to ensure that staff are supported to do their jobs effectively. However, some staff report that training and personal development opportunities can be improved. CAFOD's staff and partners are all subject to policies that provide expectations for and regulate their behaviour. CAFOD works systematically to address racism and has a dedicated reference group and antiracism action plan. CAFOD's organisational policies and procedures promote fair, flexible, and equitable work conditions. Security and wellbeing policies and plans are in place, but not all staff are aware of them.	Communities confirm that CAFOD's partners are professional and effective in their roles, describing them as good listeners that check community satisfaction with their work. Communities show awareness of expected behaviours of partner staff, are well-informed and state that they are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.	2.9
Commitment 9: Resources are managed and used	CAFOD has a range of policies and tools in place to regulate the management and responsible use of resources. Potential risks are monitored through regular reporting cycles,	Communities confirm that CAFOD and partners use resources well and for their intended purpose, without	3.0

responsibly for their intended purpose	internal and external audits, and a dedicated Finance, Legal, Audit and Risk Committee. CAFOD works systematically with partners to consider the impact of their programmes on the environment. The updated partner due diligence tool checks that all relevant financial policies and procedures are in place, allowing for identification of gaps and planning for support needs prior to the release of funding. Staff are confident with systems in place to monitor corruption, fraud, conflict of interest and misuse of resources, and know how to raise alarms through EthicsPoint. CAFOD's partners confirm that CAFOD works with them to monitor and minimise risks, such as corruption, and provide support where needed.	waste or misuse and with far-reaching impact. They confirm that they know how to report corruption. Communities confirm participating in local actions to benefit the environment as part of programme activities.

Note: Average scores are a sum of the scores per commitment divided by the number of indicators in each Commitment, except when one of the indicators of a commitment scores 0 or if several scores 1 on the indicators of a Commitment lead to the issuance of a major non-conformity/ weakness at the level of the Commitment. In these two cases the overall score for the Commitment is 0.

5. Summary of open non-conformities

Corrective Action Request (CAR)	Type	Resolution timeframe	Status	New resolution timeframe (if applicable)
2022 - 4.4: CAFOD does not ensure that communities are systematically facilitated to provide feedback on their level of satisfaction with project quality and effectiveness, and that particular attention is given to the gender, age, and diversity of those giving feedback.	Minor	2024/07/04	Closed 2024/02/22	
2019-5.1: CAFOD has not yet demonstrated that it has undertaken sufficient capacity strengthening and oversight of partners to ensure they consult with communities on the design, implementation and monitoring of complaints handling processes.	Minor	2024/07/04	Closed 2024/02/22	
2024-5.3: CAFOD has not yet demonstrated that it has undertaken sufficient capacity strengthening and oversight of partners to ensure that they manage complaints in a timely, fair, and appropriate manner that prioritises the safety of the complainant.	Minor	By the 2027 Renewal Audit	New	
2024-5.7: CAFOD has not yet demonstrated that it has undertaken sufficient capacity strengthening and oversight of partners to ensure that they have systems in place to refer complaints that fall outside the scope of the organisation in a manner consistent with good practice.	Minor	By the 2027 Renewal Audit	New	
Total Number of open CARs	**2**			

6. Recommendations for next audit cycle

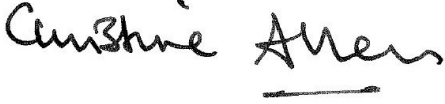| Specific recommendation for sampling or selection of sites or any other specificities to be considered	Consider selecting a programme for the onsite visit with a medium or large active humanitarian response.

7. Lead auditor recommendation

In our opinion, CAFOD has demonstrated that it continues to conform with the requirements of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability.

We recommend renewal of certification.

Name and signature of lead auditor: Sarah Kambarami	Date and place: Bonn, Germany 22nd February 2024

8. HQAI decision

Certificate renewed:	☐ Issued ☐ Preconditioned (Major CARs)
Next audit: before YYYY/MM/DD	
Registration in the Independent Verification Scheme maintained:	☐ Accepted ☐ Refused
Next audit: before YYYY/MM/DD	
Name and signature of HQAI Executive Director: Désirée Walter	Date and place: Geneva, 22 February 2024

9. Acknowledgement of the report by the organisation

Space reserved for the organisation	
Any reservations regarding the audit findings and/or any remarks regarding the behaviour of the HQAI audit team: *If yes, please give details:*	☐ Yes ☒ No

Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Findings:	
I acknowledge and understand the findings of the audit	☒ Yes ☐ No
I accept the findings of the audit	☒ Yes ☐ No
Name and signature of the organisation's representative:	**Date and place:**
Cunstine Allen	London, 9 March 2024

Appeal

In case of disagreement with the decision on certification, the organisation can appeal to HQAI within 14 days after being informed of the decision. HQAI will investigate the content of the appeal and propose a solution within 10 days after receiving the appeal.

If the solution is deemed not to be satisfactory, the organisation can inform HQAI in writing within 30 days after being informed of the proposed solution, of their intention to maintain the appeal.

HQAI will transmit the case to the Chair of the Advisory and Complaint Board who will constitute a panel made of at least two experts who have no conflict of interest in the case in question. These will strive to come to a decision within 30 days.

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

Annex 1: Explanation of the scoring scale*

Scores	Meaning: for all verification scheme options	Technical meaning for all independent verification and certification audits
0	Your organisation does not work towards applying the CHS commitment.	**Score 0:** indicates a weakness that is so significant that the organisation is unable to meet the commitment. This leads to: • **Independent verification:** major weakness. • **Certification:** major non-conformity, leading to a major corrective action request (CAR) – No certificate can be issue or immediate suspension of certificate.
1	Your organisation is making efforts towards applying this requirement, but these are not systematic.	**Score 1:** indicates a weakness that does not immediately compromise the integrity of the commitment but requires to be corrected to ensure the organisation can continuously deliver against it. This leads to: • **Independent verification**: minor weakness • **Certification:** minor non-conformity, leading to a minor corrective action request (CAR).
2	Your organisation is making systematic efforts towards applying this requirement, but certain key points are still not addressed.	**Score 2:** indicates an issue that deserves attention but does not currently compromise the conformity with the requirement. This leads to: • **Independent verification and certification:** observation.
3	Your organisation conforms to this requirement, and organisational systems ensure that it is met throughout the organisation and over time – the requirement is fulfilled.	**Score 3:** indicates full conformity with the requirement. This leads to: • **Independent verification and certification:** conformity.
4	Your organisation's work goes beyond the intent of this requirement and demonstrates innovation. It is applied in an exemplary way across the organisation and organisational systems ensure high quality is maintained across the organisation and over time.	**Score 4:** indicates an exemplary performance in the application of the requirement.

* Scoring Scale from the CHSA Verification Scheme 2020