

# Finn Church Aid

## Re-Certification Audit – Summary Report 2021/09/03

### 1. General information

#### 1.1 Organisation

Type	Mandates	Verified	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Membership/Network <input type="checkbox"/> Direct Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Federated <input type="checkbox"/> With partners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	
<b>Head office location</b>	Helsinki, Finland		
<b>Total number of country programmes</b>	12	<b>Total number of staff</b>	HO: 122 Int: 27 Local: 2455

#### 1.2 Audit team

<b>Lead auditor</b>	Jordi Capdevila
<b>Second auditor</b>	Aninia Nadig
<b>Third auditor</b>	--
<b>Observer</b>	--
<b>Expert</b>	--
<b>Witness / other</b>	--

#### 1.3 Scope of the audit

<b>CHS Verification Scheme</b>	Certification
<b>Audit cycle</b>	Second audit cycle
<b>Phase of the audit</b>	Recertification audit
<b>Extraordinary or other type of audit</b>	--

#### 1.4 Sampling\*

Randomly sampled country programme sites	Included in final sample	Replaced by	Rationale for sampling and selection of sites	Onsite or remote
Syria	No	South Sudan	Need to avoid sampling repetition of previous audits. Need for geographical balance (Africa), size of country programme and mandates (Humanitarian/Development/Advocacy)	Remote due to ongoing travel restrictions
Palestine	No	CAR	The program was considered too small and not comprehensive enough for the scope of the assessment. Replaced by CAR to keep geographical balance (Africa), ensuring relevant size of country programme and mandates (Humanitarian/Development/Advocacy)	Remote
Lebanon	No	Nepal	The program was considered too small and not comprehensive enough for the scope of the assessment. Replaced by	Remote

			Nepal to keep geographical balance (Asia), ensuring relevant size of country programme and mandates (Humanitarian/Development/ Advocacy)	
Jordan	Yes			Remote
<b>Any other sampling performed for this audit:</b>				
<p><b>Sampling risk:</b> Visits were not possible due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Interviews were conducted remotely with country staff and partners, and with four community groups. This limitation is highlighted in section 4.6. organisational performance against each commitment, when it comes to feedback from communities.</p> <p>FCA is at the beginning of its second 4-year audit cycle with HQAI. Over the first cycle, 2017-2021, FCA has worked steadily through each audit and has demonstrated improving performance over time. FCA has internal strong quality assurance and control systems in place to address requirements of the CHS, and other strategic commitments.</p>				

*\*It is important to note that the audit findings are based on a sample of an organisation's country programmes, its documentation and 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
FCA Head Office, Helsinki, Finland	2021/04/19 - 2021/04/29	Remote
FCA Country Office Juba, South Sudan	2021/06/21-2021/06/22-2021/06/28	Remote
FCA field office Yei, South Sudan	2021/06/22	Remote
FCA field office Mingkaman, South Sudan	2021/06/22	Remote
Partner offices, Juba, South Sudan	2021/06/23-2021/06/24-2021/06/25	Remote
FCA Country Office Kathmandu, Nepal	2021/06/29	Remote
FCA Country Office Amman, Jordan	2021/07/01	Remote
FCA Country Office Bangui, Central African Republic	2021/06/30-2021/07/02	Remote

### 2.2 Interviews

Position / level of interviewees	Number of interviewees		Onsite or remote
	Female	Male	
<b>Head Office</b>			
Management	6	5	Remote
Staff	5	2	Remote
<b>Country Programme Offices</b>			
Management	2	4	Remote
Staff	2	8	Remote

Partner staff	2	6	Remote
<b>Total number of interviewees</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>25</b>	

### 2.3 Consultations with communities

Type of group and location	Number of participants		Onsite or remote
	Female	Male	
Youth of Faith	2	3	Remote
Women of Faith	5		Remote
Female participants	5		Remote
Male Participants		5	Remote
Mixed group returnees/host communities	2	3	Remote
<b>Total number of participants</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	

### 2.4 Opening meeting

<b>Date</b>	2020/04/19
<b>Location</b>	Helsinki, Finland (remote)
<b>Number of participants</b>	18
<b>Any substantive issues arising</b>	no

### 2.5 Closing meeting

<b>Date</b>	2021/08/04
<b>Location</b>	Helsinki, Finland (remote)
<b>Number of participants</b>	12
<b>Any substantive issues arising</b>	no

### 2.6 Programme site

#### Briefing

<b>Date</b>	2021/06/21
<b>Location</b>	Juba, South Sudan (online)
<b>Number of participants</b>	9
<b>Any substantive issues arising</b>	No

#### De-briefing

<b>Date</b>	2021/07/02
<b>Location</b>	Juba, South Sudan (online)
<b>Number of participants</b>	2
<b>Any substantive issues arising</b>	No

## 3. Background information on the organisation

### 3.1 General information

The origin of Finn Church Aid (FCA) dates back to 1947, when the Finnish National Council of the Lutheran World Federation was established in Finland. FCA grew out of the Lutheran World Federation's Finnish National Committee, which worked on reconstructing Finland



after World War II. Over time, FCA shifted towards international aid and is today the largest Finnish humanitarian and development aid provider.

In 1995, Finn Church Aid became a Foundation with its own Board of Directors (BoD). Since 2010, FCA took the strategic decision to become more decentralised and establish more of a field presence. FCA focuses its international humanitarian interventions in fragile and complex environments. The challenge to find appropriate partners, particularly in complex contexts, has led FCA to be increasingly self-implementing. Today, FCA is a global actor with offices in 11 countries, one regional office and advocacy and fundraising offices in Bangkok and the USA. It is member of ACT Alliance.

Finn Church Aid's vision is of a world comprised of resilient and just societies where everyone's right to peace, quality education and sustainable livelihood has been fulfilled. Its mission is to act for human dignity. FCA is a faith-based organisation working with a rights-based approach guided by human right standards and principles. Its values are unconditional love for its neighbours, unyielding hope, courage and respect. FCA's three thematic focus are: Right to livelihoods (R2L), Right to peace (R2P) and Right to education (R2E).

### 3.2 Governance and management structure

Since the CHS Initial Audit in 2017, FCA has undergone significant changes in some areas of its organisational structure and management systems. In 2018, FCA started its "Process 2030". In April 2021, the new organisational structure started to be put in place, with the intention to wrap up the change process in September 2021. The change efforts were ongoing at the time of this audit. Process 2030 intends to respond in a localised way to a number of global trends, including environmental, geopolitical, demographic and technological changes, as well as changes in the aid sector itself. FCA orients its structure towards facilitating and supporting localised operations and decision-making and wants to become an impact-oriented, agile and decentralised organisation. The specific challenges identified include management's involvement in operations, complicated and scattered operations and complex decision-making processes. Solutions to these issues include a new Information and Communications Technology system which should help organise processes, data and knowledge.

FCA is governed by a BoD with 14 members including the Chair and Vice-Chair. The Directors are appointed for a 3-year term by the Church Council of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland. Roughly two-thirds of Directors are not connected to the Church. The BoD approves the strategy and annual work plan and budget.

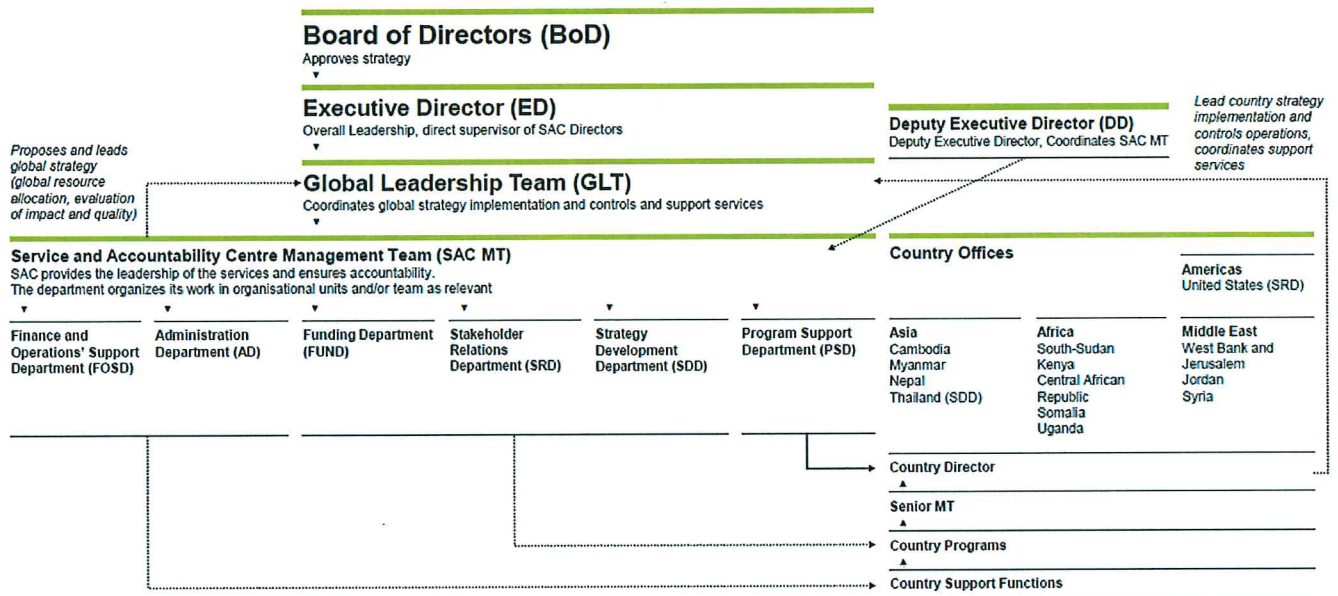
At the operational level, and in line with FCA's aim to de-centralise its operations and strengthen its support to Country Offices (CO), the operational core of the Helsinki office is now referred to as Service and Accountability Center (SAC), and is led by an Executive Director (ED). The newly created Global Leadership Team, composed of the ED, the Deputy ED and three Country Directors, is due to meet regularly to propose and lead FCA's global strategy.

The SAC Management Team includes the Directors of the various SAC Departments (see Organogram). In its efforts to become more quality and accountability focused, FCA strengthened its internal quality control with an internal auditor (part of the Directors Office) reporting directly to the Board of Directors.

Country Directors are directly supported by the Program Support Department (PSD), which liaises closely with the other Departments. FCA places particular attention to streamlining a number of principles and approaches, such as risk management (under the Finance and Operation's Support Department-FOSD for CO level, and under the Administration Department-AD for the global level), Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning-MEAL, (under the Programme Support Department) and the do-no-harm principle (under the Quality and Accountability Unit, Administration Department). AD also guides the overall assessment and development of the organisation's quality assurance.



# FCA 2030



### 3.3 Internal quality assurance mechanisms and risk management

FCA's Quality assurance and management efforts are guided by its Global level Quality and Accountability Framework, which sets out the organisational policy position. In accordance with the framework, FCA has built its approach to quality management and accountability on its commitment to the CHS. Compliance with the CHS is verified annually through external audits conducted by the Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative (HQAI), and internal monitoring is carried out by the FCA Service and Accountability Centre. The external audits examine 3-4 country programmes (CP) every second year, hence these audits do not capture the exact state of CHS compliance in each programme. In order to reinforce quality assurance, a systematic assessment of FCA's adherence to the CHS has been put in place recently with the introduction of a Self-Assessment on Quality and Accountability that is based on the CHS indicators, to be conducted in each CP. The self-assessment helps the CPs to evaluate how well they are doing in terms of accountability and quality, and to identify good practices and areas for improvement. The assessment should help CPs identify strengths and weaknesses, and provide a quality and accountability baseline to develop an Accountability Improvement Plan. CPs should also link the assessment findings and resulting improvement plans e.g. with CP MEAL Plans, staff capacity building plans, and the Country Program's annual and longer term planning processes.

The Partner Assessment Tool, which is a pre-requisite for finalising Cooperation Agreements for funded activities, now includes more explicitly CHS commitments including PSEA, Code of Conduct and Complaints and Feedback mechanisms. The CO Self-Assessment considers how CO partners comply with each CHS commitment, which may lead to the identification of possible partner capacity assessments and capacity building plans. However, FCA has not yet put in place a systematic process to review on a regular basis each Partner Organisation's Quality and Accountability progress.

Other internal control measures include FCA Global Programme evaluations, which are conducted on a regular basis.

FCA's approach to risk management comprises contextual, organisational and programmatic risks, in line with FCA Risk Management Policy. Risk assessment is also embedded in the project design and implementation phases. The Compliance & Risk Team under the Finance and Operations' Support Department reviews and supervises FCA's key

risks. Together with the Administration Department, the team conducts the overall corporate risk assessment, monitoring and management. The Board of Directors is responsible for approving the corporate risk assessment. FCA's Internal Auditor conducts regular audits based on risk analyses and input from Senior Management and the Board. The Auditor reports to the Audit Committee set by FCA Board of Directors.

### 3.4 Work with partner organisations

The principles of FCA partnerships are complementarity of roles and capacities, shared understanding of common goals and commitments, mutual respect of values, as well as transparency, accountability and learning from each other. FCA's partners can include local communities and community-based actors, national and international NGOs, churches and other faith groups, ACT Alliance and other global networks, educational institutions, public and private sector, and the UN. FCA has signed the Charter of For Change and reaffirmed the Principles of Partnership, both emphasising localisation of humanitarian aid, and transparent and accountable collaboration with partners.

FCA works with a total number of 36 local partners for project implementation. About 55% of projects are implemented through or jointly with national and local partners. FCA has introduced a Partner Assessment Tool to assess, monitor and document partner's organisational strengths and weaknesses, in order to strengthen partners' capacity building and organisational development. The Initial partnership assessment, which includes more explicitly CHS commitments, is a pre-requisite for finalising Cooperation Agreements for funded activities.

Contracts with partners include the right for the internal auditor to undertake audits of the partners. While FCA is a faith-based organisation (FBO), it does not limit its partnerships to other FBOs. FCA does work with its partners to build their capacity and improve their quality and accountability mechanisms, but this is not yet fully implemented in a systematic way across the organisation. The organisation does not have a Partnership Policy in place, but it is in the process to develop a partnerships' management guideline to improve partners' continuous assessment and support.

## 4. Overall performance of the organisation

### 4.1 Effectiveness of the governance, internal quality assurance and risk management of the organisation

FCA's management system has undergone a substantial reform in 2021, with the redefinition of the structure at head office level, now called Service and Accountability Center (SAC), in order to promote accountability and efficiency across the organisation. FCA continues to build its programmes on a defined strategy following the same set of procedures and tools for humanitarian, development and advocacy programmes across all countries where FCA operates. Decision-making is decentralised to Country Directors, who are responsible for country programme implementation and the cooperation with implementing Partner Organisations.

The substantial amount of Policies and Procedures in place and the ongoing review of such policies and procedures requires a considerable effort to ensure adequate roll out across the organisation, to which FCA is fully committed. This however continues to generate some challenges to staff.

Quality assurance at CO level is done by monitoring and reporting, including monthly HO-CO calls, quarterly and annual reviews and reporting. The Service and Accountability Center ensures quality assurance, through a multi-layered approach, including regular and ad hoc remote/physical checks across the organisation, internal and external audits. CO undertake as well monitoring and evaluative processes to support quality assurance of project and programmes. Related M&E guidelines and procedures are contextualised in country programme specific Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Accountability (MEAL) plans. Evaluation and audit results are employed for improvement and learning on different levels of organisation.

Risk management is part of planning and reporting cycle at different levels in the organisation. Country level risk matrices comprises Contextual, Organisational and Programmatic risks, such as context (security/safety), corruption, financial risk/fraud, Human Resources/staff turnover/staff competencies, legal, funding, partnerships, quality and accountability, child safeguarding, implementation challenges, data management, etc.



#### 4.2 How the organisation applies the CHS across its work

FCA continues to be committed to implementing the CHS at all levels of the organisation. The CHS is used as a tool to improve programme work, at the community level and with partners. FCA continues to roll out a self-assessment for Country Offices against the CHS, and the subsequent development of an improvement plan. However, not all County offices have finalised this process. FCA's understanding of the local context and stakeholders is strong thanks to its local level partnerships and staff. FCA and its partners have a joint approach to working with communities based on dialogue, participation and feedback. Staff performance measurement and personal development practices have been strengthened, with an updated development discussion form including the definition of personal annual objectives and facilitating feedback from the employee to the supervisor and about employee and workplace wellbeing.

FCA considers CHS certification audits as an opportunity to improve, setting out the required plans and actions to address identified observations and CARs in a systematic way, although not all required actions identified in the previous audit cycle have been finalised at the time of this recertification audit and therefore remain outstanding. Training on CHS is provided to staff and Partners. COVID-19 has continued to delay some of the planned improvement actions, such as the finalization of the new safeguarding policy and the revised Code of Conduct. Other actions are progressing but with adapted implementation timelines. For instance, FCA's new climate and environmental approach is currently being rolled out at CO level, including capacity-building opportunities, with particular efforts geared at early project phase identification. However, it is not yet fully in place across all CO and PO, limiting the consideration of the impact on the environment when using natural resources.

In the Maintenance Audit 2020, only one minor CAR was noted, stating that "People affected by crisis are not fully aware of the expected behaviour of FCA staff, and organisational commitments made on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse". Since then, FCA has developed a new information sharing guidelines, which offers practical guidance to programme staff on What, When and How to share information with affected communities, including the requirement to share information on expected FCA and partner staff behaviour, PSEA, Code of Conduct, and child safeguarding commitments. Roll out training sessions have been conducted, and a copy of such sessions has been made available in FCA's FABO training platform as well as on Yammer and FCA's intranet. Information sharing is contained in FCA's updated Project Planning Guidelines. Notwithstanding these efforts, FCA has not yet completed the roll out of these guidelines across all CO programmes and implementing partners, thus not fully resolving this issue yet.

#### 4.3 PSEA

FCA demonstrates an organisational culture where commitment to safeguarding and PSEA is taken seriously according to defined policies and procedures throughout the organisation. FCA ensures that projects take into consideration needs and risks, identify potential negative effects and work with partners to implement strategies and guidance in order to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse. Complaints Response Mechanisms (CRM) are in place across the organisation, covering PSEA amongst other aspects. Complaints focal points are appointed in each Country Office, supporting the implementation of the CRM. FCA's implementing partners are required to have a Code of Conduct or abide to FCA's CoC, including commitment to PSEA, and to have in place CRM or ensure access to FCA's CRM. Nevertheless, the organisation does not always have a clear understanding of how partners' CRM are functioning, especially in regard to sensitive complaints including cases of SEA or how the complaints referral works. Not all partners share specific information regarding expected staff behaviour with communities, something that FCA's CO do systematically, but such information is not always necessarily understood by community members.

#### 4.4 Localisation

FCA implements half of its projects through a wide range of local partnerships, involving local and international organisations and networks, local civil society actor and national governments. FCA works currently with some 36 local partners for project implementation. About 55% of projects are implemented through or jointly with national and local partners.

The cooperation with partners is based on clear agreements, outlining each other's roles and responsibilities. FCA is committed to build the capacities of its partners, support local leadership, and promote early recovery and resilience of communities and local stakeholders. Partners undergo a due diligence process, including an initial partnership assessment, where corrective measures and capacity gaps are identified. Nevertheless, FCA does not perform a systematic follow up of their partners' progress and required capacity needs based on the initial assessment.



#### 4.5 Gender and diversity

FCA ensures inclusive representation, participation and engagement of people and communities at all stages of the work. This is achieved by clear policies and followed up by application of guidelines and procedures ensuring impartiality and gender and diversity awareness.

Staff regulations include a Code of Conduct and ensure fair, transparent, non-discriminatory procedures that are compliant with national employment law. The organisation communicates in a way that is respectful, culturally appropriate and takes into consideration the communication needs of vulnerable and marginalised groups.

FCA shows to have a solid combination of frameworks and staff/partner awareness of the importance of data disaggregation, including sex and age, but not all projects consider disaggregation along abilities.

#### 4.6 Organisational performance against each CHS Commitment

Commitment	Strong points and areas for improvement	Feedback from communities	Average score*
<b>Commitment 1:</b> Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant	FCA meets its commitments to undertake contextual analysis and needs assessments and use this information to design and deliver impartial programmes that target vulnerable people in high-risk settings. FCA analyses context at various levels, i.e. through detailed multi-year context analyses, updated by yearly analysis through the Country Programme Annual Planning and Reporting (CPAP/R) templates and at country programme and project proposal level – both for self-implemented and partner proposals. However, FCA does not consistently include affected communities in its context analyses. FCA disaggregates data by sex and mostly by age, though not systematically by ability. FCA makes a consistent effort to adapt programmes to changes in context and circumstances, including during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.	Based on a limited sample: Interviewed communities state that the targeting of beneficiaries (and at times host community members) was well communicated and fair. None of the community discussions suggested that people with disabilities were excluded from the project. They also confirmed that they are consistently involved at the needs assessment stage and throughout the project, and that needs of identified at-risk groups are well understood and addressed. They stated that FCA and partners considered their suggestions and complaints.	2.7
<b>Commitment 2:</b> Humanitarian response is effective and timely	FCA's programming is in line with its strategic plan and it considers the balance between its commitments and capacities. However, the audit found a lack of staff capacity at country office level. Decreased funding in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis also has an impact on project delivery and MEAL capacity at country office and partner levels.  FCA has a systematic MEAL approach in place, which allows it to incorporate learnings in ongoing projects and programmes and to adapt these in a timely manner as needed and supported by an FCA pool of unearmarked funds. FCA's design and MEAL processes ensure that projects are safe for communities or otherwise adapted. While FCA generally refers unmet needs in an informal manner, based on its strong networks, the organisation lacks a systematic approach to needs referral.	Based on a limited sample: Interviewed communities confirm that they can safely access the assistance and services provided by FCA and its partners and that they can express any concerns with regard to their safety. They also stated that their needs were addressed appropriately and that any changes or delays in the project were well communicated to them. Finally, they said that FCA and partners staff were knowledgeable about their work.	2.4

<p><b>Commitment 3:</b> Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects</p>	<p>FCA has made significant efforts to incorporate the 'Do no harm' principle into programmes and projects, although it is not yet fully implemented at all CO and PO levels. FCA prioritises community safety and security in its context analyses and risk assessments. Sensitive personal data is kept safe at FCA CO level, but not consistently at partner level. FCA's Data Protection Guidelines are still at draft stage.</p> <p>Community resilience, leadership roles and capacities as first responders are consistently supported by FCA's programmes.</p> <p>FCA's emergency approach focuses on timeliness and effectiveness. Staff and partners in country programmes expressed strong satisfaction with technical support for safeguarding and complaints handling</p>	<p>Based on a limited sample: Interviewed communities state that they felt FCA and partner programmes respected their sense of risk and ensured their safety in the context of the project. They said they understood the duration of the project and that the project helped them to be more resilient against economic hardship and inter-communal violence.</p>	2.4
<p><b>Commitment 4:</b> Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback</p>	<p>FCA continues to be committed to transparent, accurate and timely information sharing. FCA is committed to ensure that rights holders and communities are consulted and engaged in the identification of their priorities and risks at all stages of its work. Community participation and consultation are assured at all stages of the project. Feedback on right holders' level of satisfaction is also received through FCA and partner complaints mechanisms. Right holders are encouraged to identify their preferred feedback mechanisms. FCA and partner organisations ensure that community participation is inclusive of vulnerable and marginalised groups.</p> <p>Information to right holders is contextualised and translated into local languages to facilitate its dissemination across communities, although not all Country Offices do so. FCA shares general aspects on PSEA with communities, however, information regarding FCA Code of Conduct and staff behaviour is not always shared with communities, especially in partner-led projects. FCA Partner Assessment Tools review partners' participatory planning processes and community engagement practices, but information sharing across communities in partner-led projects is not systematic.</p> <p>FCA's public communication products and practices demonstrate commitment to presenting communities and people affected by crisis as dignified human beings.</p>	<p>Based on a limited sample: Interviewed communities confirm that they feel well informed, including around organisational commitments on PSEA, staff behaviour and project details, although in partner-led projects, staff behaviour and Code of Conduct is not always shared. Community members confirm as well that they feel the information provided to them is appropriate and is understood, and that they participate and engage with FCA during all phases of the project cycle management, where their feedback regarding their level of satisfaction is sought by FCA and PO, although responses back to communities are not always provided by FCA or its PO.</p>	2.3
<p><b>Commitment 5:</b> Complaints are welcomed and addressed</p>	<p>FCA has a strong organisational commitment towards accountability to affected populations and communities, which is reflected in its Complaints Response Mechanism (CRM), which is accessible through FCA's website. The CRM covers both operational and sensitive complaints including sexual exploitation and abuse, corruption and other</p>	<p>Based on a limited sample: Interviewed communities confirm that they are aware of FCA's commitment to PSEA and about expected staff behaviour, although staff behaviour is not always discussed in partner-led</p>	1.7



	<p>abuses of power. FCA Country Offices have developed country specific CRM and is currently reviewing its Code of Conduct and creating a new Safeguarding Policy to strengthen its accountability processes, including the CRM.</p> <p>FCA manages complaints in a timely, fair and appropriate manner that prioritises the safety of the complainant and those affected at all stages, although in some occasions, FCA has experienced some delays in responding to sensitive complaints. FCA regularly monitors its complaints handling processes, although such monitoring is not systematic in partner-led projects. An annual complaints report is produced. Training on complaints handling is regularly provided to FCA staff and partners. FCA consults communities on the design, implementation, and monitoring of the complaints handling processes, although is done less often in partner-led projects.</p> <p>FCA encourages and supports its implementing partners to have a CRM in place, which is not always the case.</p> <p>FCA CO and PO usually refer sensitive complaints outside their mandate, but without a clear procedure for identifying referral pathways. FCA is currently working on a new set of Guidelines for Managing Investigations, which should also address referral pathways.</p>	<p>projects, and that they feel safe to make complaints to or about the organisation and partners, without fear of any repercussions in doing so. Community members confirm as well that they had the opportunity to contribute to the design and implementation of the complaints management system, although in partner-led projects has not always been the case, and they are aware of how to access the complaint handling system. Community members have indicated that they are not aware of the expected timeframe for complaints' resolution.</p>	
<p><b>Commitment 6:</b> Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary</p>	<p>FCA is an active member of the humanitarian community, from local to global levels including the Cluster coordination system, ACT Alliance, INEE and local actors and authorities. This ensures that FCA's programmes are complementary to local response and coordinated with other response actors. This includes timely information sharing at all levels.</p> <p>FCA is working to develop a stronger partnership approach, but still often chooses to self-implement projects. It does not have a partner strategy, but says it plans to develop one. Partnerships are structured around Cooperation Agreements and based on partnership assessments. These are not yet systematically followed up by partner support.</p>	<p>Based on a limited sample: Interviewed communities state that FCA's projects were complementary to those of other organisations. In consortium response with numerous organisations involved, community members were not always able to point out FCA's specific role.</p>	2.8
<p><b>Commitment 7:</b> Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve</p>	<p>FCA is making significant efforts to make organisational and programme-based learning a priority. To this end, it developed a Knowledge Management Plan and is working on an organisation-wide digitalisation process. Some challenges remain in terms of systematising and improving the organisational information management and making it fully operational for learning. Also, not all CO and partners feel fully integrated into FCA's organisational learning approach.</p>	<p>Based on a limited sample: Interviewed communities confirm that FCA uses their feedback to adapt and improve its projects.</p>	2.5



	<p>FCA's partners are not consistently included in learning approaches and CO and partners do not systematically share learning and innovation with affected communities. Learnings are shared internally, on FCA's public website and external sites such as Reliefweb.</p>		
<p><b>Commitment 8:</b> Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably</p>	<p>FCA staff works according to the mandate and values of the organisation and to agreed objectives and performance standards. The organisation's staff policies and procedures are fair, transparent, non-discriminatory and compliant with local employment law.</p> <p>FCA staff have up-to-date job descriptions. A Personal Performance Assessment takes place at least once a year for all staff. FCA offers regular training opportunities to improve staff skills and competencies. FCA's Code of Conduct and PSEA policy are well known, including the consequences of breaching the code of conduct, and staff know how to report a complaint or grievance. However, not all country offices and partners have translated key information into local languages. FCA staff go through induction trainings, which include FCA's policies. In general, FCA has the management, staff and capacity to deliver its programmes. Nevertheless, there is a shortage of staff in certain areas and country offices, such as complaints investigation and Monitoring and Evaluation.</p> <p>FCA undertakes initial partner assessment process. FCA provides project related capacity building opportunities to PO staff, but FCA has not defined capacity building plans for all its PO. Follow up on required support to partners is not systematically done. Partners confirmed that they have a Code of Conduct in place, and their staff are aware of it.</p> <p>FCA is guided by the duty of care responsibility of its staff. CO have country-specific safety and security plans, which is not always the case for partners.</p>	<p>Based on a limited sample: Interviewed communities indicate that they perceive FCA and partner staff to be competent and effective in their work, in terms of knowledge, attitude, behaviour and skills. They know what behaviour to expect from FCA Staff but not always regarding partner staff. Communities know how to raise a concern and report a complaint in case they experience malpractice, inappropriate behaviour or misconduct.</p>	<p>2.3</p>
<p><b>Commitment 9:</b> Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose</p>	<p>FCA continues to implement a robust financial and resource management system across the organisation and in its work through partners. Financial management, including monitoring and reporting on expenditures, and procurement procedures, are in place. FCA continues to be committed to duty of care, transparency and efficiency of financial operations, including the proper use of funds. Cost efficiency and cost effectiveness are taken into consideration to optimise resources expenditure.</p> <p>FCA's risk management framework includes monitoring and is supported by relevant compulsory training. All staff have access to the Complaints Response Mechanism in case</p>	<p>Based on a limited sample: Interviewed communities confirm that they consider the partners resource management to be appropriate, empowering participating community members</p>	<p>2.5</p>

	<p>they have a suspicion of corruption, fraud, conflict of interest or misuse of resources. FCA’s internal compliance approach takes places through a multi-layered approach, including regular and ad hoc remote/physical checks across the organisation, internal and external audits.</p> <p>Private funding is subject to due diligence review. Nevertheless, current policies and regulations do not specifically address how institutional (non-corporate) funding and donations could compromise the operational independence and impartiality of the organisation.</p> <p>FCA assesses partners on their financial capacity and monitor them closely through defined reporting mechanisms, in line with FCA safeguarding commitments and polices.</p> <p>FCA is making efforts to improve how it assesses and minimises the impact of its work on the environment. However, its new climate and environmental approach has not been fully rolled out at country office level.</p>		
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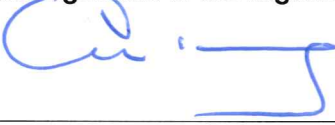
\* *Note:* Average scores are a sum of the scores per commitment divided by the number of indicators in each commitment.

## 5. Summary of non-conformities

Corrective Action Requests (CARs)*	Type	Resolution due date	Date closed out
2021-2.3: FCA does not have a system in place to refer unmet needs and to advocate for needs to be addressed.	Minor	2023/08/04	
2021-5.4: FCA has not yet ensured that all its partner implemented projects have Complaints Response Mechanisms in place capable of ensuring a systematic approach to dealing with sensitive complaints.	Minor	2023/08/04	
2019-5.6: People affected by crisis are not fully aware of the expected behaviour of FCA staff, and organisational commitments made on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse	Minor	2021/06/26	2021/08/04
2020-5.6: People affected by crisis in partner implemented projects are not always fully aware of the expected behaviour of staff	Minor	2023/08/04	
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>4</b>		

\* *Note:* The CARs are completed by the audit team based on the findings.

## 9. Acknowledgement of the report by the organisation

<b>Space reserved for the organisation</b>	
Any reservations regarding the audit findings and/or any remarks regarding the behaviour of the HQAI audit team:  <i>If yes, please give details:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Findings:</b> I acknowledge and understand the findings of the audit  I accept the findings of the audit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Name and signature of the organisation's representative:</b>   <b>Jouni Hemberg</b> Executive Director	<b>Date and place:</b>  10.9.2021 HELSINKI

## 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.*



## 6. Sampling recommendation for next audit

<b>Sampling rate</b>	As per normal procedure for Maintenance Audits.
<b>Specific recommendation for selection of sites</b>	Include visits to communities and specially linked to partner implemented projects as soon as conditions allow during the next audit cycle

## 7. Lead auditor recommendation

<p>In our opinion, FCA has demonstrated that it continues to conform with the requirements of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability.</p> <p>We recommend maintenance of certification.</p>	
<p><b>Name and signature of lead auditor:</b></p>  <p><b>Jordi Capdevila Gorrera</b></p>	<p><b>Date and place:</b></p> <p>4th August 2021 Barcelona, Spain</p>

## 8. HQAI decision

<b>Certificate:</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certification renewed <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate suspended	<input type="checkbox"/> Certificate reinstated <input type="checkbox"/> Certificate withdrawn
<b>Next audit:</b> Surveillance audit before 2022/08/04	
<p><b>Name and signature of HQAI Executive Director:</b></p> <p>Pierre Hauselmann</p>	<p><b>Date and place:</b></p>  <p>Châtelaïne, 3 September 2021</p>

## 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.	<p><b>Score 0:</b> indicates a weakness that is so significant that the organisation is unable to meet the commitment. This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Independent verification:</b> major weakness;</li> <li>• <b>Certification:</b> major non-conformity, leading to a major corrective action request (CAR) – No certificate can be issue or immediate suspension of certificate.</li> </ul>
1	Your organisation is making efforts towards applying this requirement, but these are not systematic.	<p><b>Score 1:</b> 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Independent verification:</b> minor weakness</li> <li>• <b>Certification:</b> minor non-conformity, leading to a minor corrective action request (CAR).</li> </ul>
2	Your organisation is making systematic efforts towards applying this requirement, but certain key points are still not addressed.	<p><b>Score 2:</b> indicates an issue that deserves attention but does not currently compromise the conformity with the requirement. This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Independent verification and certification:</b> observation.</li> </ul>
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.	<p><b>Score 3:</b> indicates full conformity with the requirement. This leads to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Independent verification and certification:</b> conformity.</li> </ul>
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.	<p><b>Score 4:</b> indicates an exemplary performance in the application of the requirement.</p>

\* Scoring Scale from the CHSA Verification Scheme 2020