



Women Support Association (WSA)
CHS Verification Audit Report

WSA-VER-2017-012

Date: 2018-02-25

	Date	Name
Q control by HQAI	2017-11-28 2017-12-11	EG - PH EG
Organisation's comments	2018-02-13	
Q control by HQAI	2018-02-17 2018-02-23	EG EG
Control Executive Director	2018-02-23	PH

Table of content

1. GENERAL INFORMATION	3
2. SCOPE.....	3
3. SCHEDULE SUMMARY	4
3.1 VERIFICATION SCHEDULE	4
3.2 OPENING AND CLOSING MEETINGS	5
4. CONCLUSIONS.....	5
5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE ORGANISATION.....	5
5.1 GENERAL.....	5
5.2 ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.....	6
5.3 WORK WITH PARTNERS	7
5.4 CERTIFICATION OR VERIFICATION HISTORY	7
6. SAMPLING	8
6.1 RATIONALE FOR SAMPLING	8
6.2 INTERVIEWS:.....	8
7. REPORT	9
7.1 OVERALL ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE.....	9
7.2 SUMMARY OF WEAKNESSES.....	11
7.3 STRONG POINTS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:.....	13
8. ORGANISATION'S APPROVAL	19
9. HQAI'S DECISION	21
ANNEX 1: EXPLANATION OF THE SCORING SCALE	22
ANNEX 2: LIST OF ACRONYMS	26

1. General information

Organisation	Women Support Association (WSA)		
Type	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Membership/Network <input type="checkbox"/> Federated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Through partners		
Mandate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy		
Verified Mandate(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy		
Size (Total number of programme sites/ members/partners – Number of staff at HO level)	2 regions in Ethiopia 11 partners/ donors 12 staff at HO level	Sampling Rate (Country programme sampled)	Not relevant for national organisations
Lead auditor	Sylvie Robert	Second auditor	/
		Others	/
	Head Office	Programme Site(s)	
Location	Ethiopia, Addis Ababa	Ethiopia, Southern Nation and Nationalities Peoples Region (SNNPR)	
Dates	18-19 September 2017	20-23 September 2017 28-30 September 2017	

2. Scope

Initial audit

Mid-term Audit

Maintenance audit

Final/Recertification audit

3. Schedule summary

3.1 Verification schedule

Name of Project sites	Location	Mandates	Number of projects visited	Type of projects
Project Sites				
SNNPR	Towns of: Arba Minch Konso Jinka	Humanitarian Development	4	Access, Service and Utilization of Reproductive Health (ASURE-Health) Project Climate Information and Assets for Resilience in Ethiopia (CIARE) Enhancing Sustainable Natural Resource Management and Resilient to Climate Changes of Women in Self Help Groups (SHG) Enhancing the Social and Economic Empowerment of Women
Donors/ Partners				
Christian Aid (CA) Ethiopia	Addis Ababa			
CST together	Addis Ababa			
Dan Church Aid (DCA)	Addis Ababa			
Development Fund (DF)	Addis Ababa			
EOC DICAC	Addis Ababa			
Management Agency Ethiopia Social Accountability Program (ESAP)	Addis Ababa			
Women and Children Affairs Office	Jinka			

3.2 Opening and closing meetings

3.2.1 At Head Office:

	Opening meeting	Closing meeting
Date	18 September 2017	26 September 2017
Location	Addis Ababa	Addis Ababa
Number of participants	5	3
Any substantive issue arising	/	/

4. Conclusions

In our opinion, Women Support Association (WSA) shows a high level of commitment to the CHS and its inclusion in the Independent Verification scheme is justified.

Detailed findings are laid out in the rest of this report.

Lead Auditor's
Name and
Signature

Sylvie Robert



Date and
Place:

2018-02-25
Addis Ababa

5. Background information on the organisation

5.1 General

Women Support Association (WSA) is an indigenous, non-political, non-religious, non-profit humanitarian and development oriented organisation working in Ethiopia for the improvement of the social, economic, and physical well-being of the poor women in particular and the community in general. (Source: 'WSA Profile')

WSA was established in 1995. It is registered and licensed by Charities and Societies Agency (CSA) as an Ethiopian Residents Charity.

WSA's vision is to see Ethiopian Women Empowered.

WSA's mission is to create conducive environment for women to realize and utilize their potentials for sustained livelihood.

The organisation's thematic focuses are:

- Women livelihood diversification
- Women social service
- Women and climate
- Women resilience capacity and emergency response

WSA works through the formation and management of women Self Help Group (SHG), and the engagement of men and boys in the program. It aims to create space

for discussion among targeted women, their families, community representatives and stakeholders on women socio economic problems. WSA is bringing influential bodies and concerned government offices on board. The organisation creates space for learning, reflection and continued discussion among staffs and partners, and aims at ensuring transparency and accountability at program and organizational levels.

The organization operates in 2 regions of Ethiopia:

- **Southern Nation and Nationalities Peoples Region (SNNPR)**
- **Amhara National Regional State**



The 9 regions and 2 chartered cities of Ethiopia

5.2 Organisational structure and management system

WSA structure: The highest body of the organization is **the General Assembly (GA)**. The supreme policy making and supervisory body of the organization is made of volunteers from different professions.

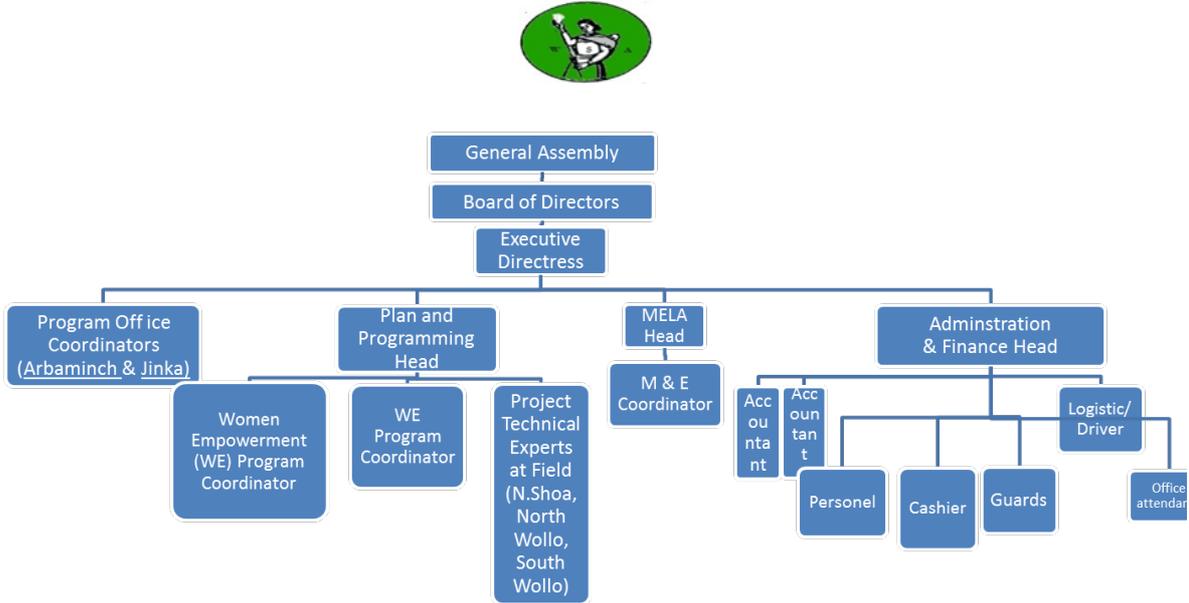
The GA designates **a Board of Directors** who is in charge of devising the overall strategic directions and overseeing the entire performance of the organization according to the directives and policies approved by the GA. The Board is responsible for all its duties to the GA. The Board of Directors appoints **the Executive Directress or Director** who is responsible to run the day-by-day organisational activities.

The **Senior Management Team (SMT)** led by the Executive Directress (ED) consists of the Planning and Program Head, the Finance and Administration Head, the Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Accountability (MELA) Head and the Program Office

Coordinators (POC) who are engaged in collective decisions on the strategic implementation of the organization.

WSA staff: In 2016 WSA deployed a total of 123 staffs.

WSA organogram:



WSA funding: In 2016, WSA secured a total of ETB 16,742,025 (approx. USD 750 000) from its funding partners, namely Christian Aid (CA) Ethiopia, CAFOD, SCIAF, Trocaire joint Ethiopia office, The Development Fund (DF) of Norway, Dan Church Aid (DCA) , Concern Worldwide, Consortium of Self Help Group (SHG) Approach Promoters and the Ethiopia Social Accountability Program-ESAP II Management Agency.

WSA used about 97% of this amount in 2016. Programme activities represent 71% of expenditures, the remaining 29% covering administrative costs.

5.3 Work with partners

WSA is working in collaboration with numerous actors at both national and international levels, including with the Ethiopian Government.

WSA does not work with intermediate partners to deliver assistance (humanitarian or development) to the affected populations and implements directly all its projects. In only one context, the Ethiopia Social Accountability Program - ESAP II, WSA worked as a lead agency with 5 local and civil society actors to jointly implement projects.

5.4 Certification or verification history

WSA has no other certification relevant to the scope of this audit.

6. Sampling

6.1 Rationale for sampling

WSA works in two regions in Ethiopia; Amhara and SNNPR.

SNNPR offered the opportunity to visit two Project Offices and one satellite office with key WSA management staff as well as various projects which were representative of WSA activities. The security conditions of SNNPR were better than in the northern part of the country and access (by air and road) to remote project locations was possible.

SNNPR was thus selected for project visits.

Disclaimer:

It is important to note that the audit findings are based on the results of a sample of the organisation's documentation and systems as well as interviews and focus groups with a sample of staff, partners, communities and other relevant stakeholders. Findings are analysed to determine the organisation's systematic approach and application of all aspects of the CHS across its organisation and to its different contexts and ways of working.

6.2 Interviews:

6.2.1 Semi-structured interviews (individual interviews or with a small group <6

Type of people interviewed	Number of people interviewed
Head Office	
WSA HO staff	6
Partners/ Donors	10
Programme sites	
WSA PO Arba Minch	5
WSA PO Jinka	6
WSA Konso satellite office	2
Total number of interviews	29

6.2.2 Focus Group Discussions (interviews with a group >6

Type of Group	Number of participants	
	Female	Male
6 Women group	66	
4 Complaints Handling Committee (CHC) consisting of community, government partner and WSA staff	7	8

Total number of participants	73	8
------------------------------	----	---

7. Report

7.1 Overall organisational performance

7.1.1 Strengths and opportunities

Building on local capacities and working towards improved resilience of communities and people affected by crisis

➤ **WSA area of expertise is well recognised**

WSA's mission is to create conducive environment for women to realize and utilize their potentials for sustained livelihood. WSA's approach through the establishment and strengthening of women led institutions is focused on empowering communities and building their capacities to claim their rights and entitlements.

WSA's major project implementation strategy is to organise women and girls into women led institutions (Self Help Groups-SHGs/ Cluster Level Associations-CLAs, which are then regrouped into a Federation). It systematically uses this approach to implement projects with different thematic focuses: business development, reproductive health, climate change and adaptation and social service development, etc.

WSA programmes are thus built from the onset on local capacities and work towards improving the resilience of their target communities.

WSA is highly recognised for its technical expertise on this approach in the Ethiopian context. It is unanimously acknowledged by WSA's partners and donors. One donor considers that WSA is one of the best of its partners as the Self Help Groups (SHGs) approach is a strong empowering approach towards marginalised groups.

Important efforts towards Quality and Accountability

WSA's commitment and efforts towards quality and accountability have been recently translated into a Revised Quality and Accountability Framework. WSA designed this framework using the CHS 9 commitments where the organisation's capacities are linked to the 9 CHS commitments.

Amongst other processes, WSA has set up a Complaints Handling Mechanism.

Effective partnership and coordination

WSA has a dynamic approach towards cooperation and coordination at all levels and is considered a proactive organisation in coordination by its partners and donors.

WSA works in partnership with international and national Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), donors, and Government. WSA is also a lead agency with local and civil society actors to jointly implement projects through the Ethiopia Social Accountability Program (ESAP). Finally, WSA is working with different networks and consortium organisations assuming various roles. WSA is represented in *fora* at both national and international levels.

WSA works closely with the local Government administration, at Woreda and Kebele levels and has agreements in place with key Ethiopian Governmental offices (Women and Youth Affairs).

Linking emergency and development

WSA is building its capacities towards better flexibility and proved in various occasions that the organisation could adapt and rely on its technical expertise to respond to slow onset emergencies in a challenging context. A number of situations actually illustrate how WSA successfully adapted its programmes to changing needs, for example during the recent drought, although WSA is bound by the projects agreed with their partners/donors.

7.1.2 Weaknesses and challenges

WSA works in a challenging context on donor-driven projects

WSA focuses on limited projects and resources and is dependent on donors to implement projects. This exclusive relationship does not always give WSA all the necessary flexibility to ensure the best quality and accountability in all delivered projects.

It is also worth noting that Ethiopia is a challenging context balancing development, rights-based and emergencies related to refugees. The country is currently experimenting a crisis (climate and manmade) throughout a global development context. While WSA has successful examples of project adaptation to respond to crisis, its exclusive relationship with donors and Government can be counterproductive for a timely adaptation to changes.

Finally, Ethiopia applies the '30/70' law which is a challenge for the organisations working in the country, but even more for WSA given the exclusive donor-driven nature of its projects.

Challenging human resources

Although WSA intends to retain staff, its Human Resources are struggling with an important turnover and therefore challenging capacities. The turnover has increased significantly over the last few years, including for senior staff. This has a direct impact on programmes' delivery and affects the achievement of a number of the CHS Commitments as highlighted throughout the verification audit report's findings.

While the Senior Management Team and Executive Directress are very involved and committed, institutionalisation of skills and good practices within WSA is a challenge in this context of high turnover.

Do no harm

Although WSA has a Code of Conduct in place, it is not known by all staff and the management of breaches is not systematic. Flexibility can be inappropriately applied.

WSA has no formal system in place to act upon potential or actual unintended negative programme effects. Furthermore, WSA project management current framework can lead to potential conflicts of interest with WSA staff and thus has the potential to exacerbate unintended negative effects.

WSA high level policies *versus* implementation

A number of WSA high level policies are either in a draft stage or very recent. Institutionalisation is in progress and further guidance is needed to ensure implementation. Furthermore, the high internal staff turnover is a barrier to the organisation's development and is not easing the internalisation process of the policies. Projects' implementation is contrasted and at an average level.

WSA commitments and efforts towards enhanced quality and accountability are not always reflected properly and in a systematic way throughout the organisation.

Guidance to be built

A number of manuals and guidance are in place although there are gaps and overlaps. For example, WSA has no project management manual in place.

There is a need for the organisation to finalise procedures and guidance, as well as the translation of these into practical tools for the field.

Complaints Handling Mechanism

WSA fosters a culture that actively solicits and acts on stakeholders' feedback. However, while WSA has a Complaint Handling Mechanism in place, it is not fully functional at this stage and the system is not allowing for proper contextualised implementation.

7.2 Summary of weaknesses

Weaknesses	Type
Commitment 1	
1.4 WSA high level policies do not specifically refer to impartial assistance.	Minor
1.6 There is no formal structured system for the ongoing analysis of the context.	Minor
Commitment 2	
2.1 Processes do not ensure that constraints are taken into account to design realistic proposed actions.	Minor
2.2 Due to decision making on donors budget release as well as capacity issues internal to the organization timeliness is not always ensured.	Minor
2.5b Programs are not systematically adapted based on monitoring results when dependent on donor and government acceptance.	Minor
2.5c Poor performance is not systematically addressed when change depends on donors or Government agreement.	Minor
2.6 Programmes' commitments are not fully in line with WSA organisational capacities, specifically in terms of human capacities.	Minor
Commitment 3	
3.2 WSA does not have a system in place to ensure the systematic use of communities' hazard and risk assessment.	Minor
3.6 WSA system does not allow identifying and acting upon potential or actual unintended negative programme effects.	Minor
3.7 WSA staff is not aware and familiar with WSA policies, strategies and guidance to prevent programmes having any negative effects.	Minor
3.8 WSA has no system in place to secure sensitive information adequately.	Minor

Commitment 4	
Commitment 5	
5.1 Communities and people affected by crisis were not consulted on the design of the complaints handling processes, and the organisation does not consult them on the monitoring of the processes.	Minor
5.3 WSA does not manage complaints in a timely, fair and appropriate manner that prioritises the safety of the complainant and those affected at all stages.	Major
5.4 WSA Complaints Handling Policy does not describe how a complaint should be safeguarded and refers to a sexual harassment policy which does not exist.	Major
5.5 WSA Complaints Handling Mechanism is not understood by WSA staff in a consistent manner.	Minor
5.6 Communities and people affected by crisis are not all aware of the expected behaviours of staff.	Minor
Commitment 6	
Commitment 7	
7.2 There is no management process that ensures lessons and corrective actions identified through M&E, feedbacks and complaints lead to change and/or innovations in practice.	Minor
7.3 Learning and innovation are not consistently shared internally.	Minor
7.5 Processes to document and make accessible knowledge and experience within WSA are not functional.	Minor
Commitment 8	
8.1 Staff understanding of and abiding by WSA's mandate and values are not consistent throughout the organisation.	Minor
8.2 WSA staff is not fully aware of the policies – including the CoC - that affect them and their work, the benefits of the policies and the consequences of not applying them.	Major
8.4 WSA high staff turnover leads to inconsistent management and insufficient staff capacity to deliver programmes.	Minor
8.7 WSA staff do not have a copy of the Code of Conduct and are not aware of its content.	Minor
Commitment 9	
TOTAL Number	22

7.3 Strong points and areas for improvement:

Commitment 1: Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant

Score: 1,8

WSA conducts ongoing analysis of the context through various mechanisms, as well as initial assessments to inform the project response. The organisation's long term presence in its areas of intervention and its specific approach close to communities enhances thorough knowledge of the context and communities.

However the organisation has no formal structured process for sharing, analysing and following up its ongoing analysis of the context. WSA neither have its own risk analysis tools, and despite some successful examples, it has no formal mechanisms in place to adapt programmes. Furthermore, the ultimate decision for adjustment to changes in the context of operations would always depend on donor's acceptance.

WSA high level policies set out commitments although they do not reflect specifically the organisational culture towards impartial assistance. Policies such as the organisation's gender policy are in place but not yet fully institutionalised.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities:

Communities are generally satisfied with the assistance received although some of the groups met expressed concerns.

Commitment 2: Humanitarian response is effective and timely

Score: 1,7

WSA has a thorough knowledge of and connections with the communities throughout the projects cycle. However communities' participation starts from the project detailed formulation while the main choices have already been made based on donors' thematic and geographic resource allocation. Unmet needs are referred by WSA to other stakeholders.

WSA has a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system in place and an M&E manual which commits to ensure systematic, objective and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of activities and their effects. However systematic and timely M&E is not ensured throughout all projects and adaptation of programmes as well as poor performance ultimately relies on the acceptance by donors and the Government.

WSA is committed to various Standards related to quality and accountability, although all staff is not aware of those. WSA faces a staff retention challenge, which leads to a lack of human capacities to deliver its programmes in line with its programmes' commitments. As a result WSA projects sometimes face delays in the implementation.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities:

Communities confirm their involvement once the main areas of intervention have already been chosen, as well as some delays in implementation.

Commitment 3: Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects

Score: 2

Strengthening local capacities is part of WSA global approach. WSA's major project implementation strategy is to organise women and girls into women led institutions. WSA programmes are thus built from the onset on local capacities and work towards improving the resilience of their target communities. WSA also promotes early recovery and benefits the local economy through projects having as an objective to contribute to improve the socio-economic situations of vulnerable women.

WSA has a Program Designing Team (PDT) which aims to produce quality program proposals and concept notes. However these ToRs do not consider the use of the result of existing community hazard and risk assessments and preparedness plans to design and guide activities. WSA does not have its own risk analysis tools in place, and risk assessment as a whole remains a theoretical exercise.

WSA global approach through the Self Help Groups (SHGs) and field level structure enables close communication with the communities, easing the identification of potential unintended negative effects. However WSA has no formal system in place to act upon potential or actual unintended negative programme effects. Furthermore, the current framework and allocation of staff roles and responsibilities can create conflicts of interest and exacerbate unintended negative effects.

WSA has most policies and strategies in place, including WSA Staff Ethics and Code of Conduct (CoC), although their application can be at stake as WSA staff is not yet fully aware of these. WSA current system does not allow securing sensitive information adequately.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities:

Communities provide very positive feedback about WSA programmes and/ or projects reinforcing local leadership as well as promoting their representation in local organisations as well as Governmental representations at field level.

Communities recognize that WSA uses their own knowledge and analysis of hazards and risks to guide activities, although this is done mostly through the ongoing project implementation.

Some communities' representatives highlight challenging situations with WSA staff being unsolved.

Commitment 4: Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback

Score: 2,3

WSA external communications are accurate, ethical and respectful.

WSA is committed to information sharing at grassroots level and provides information to communities and people affected by crisis about the organization and the principles it adheres to, as well as its programmes and deliverables. WSA uses a variety of approaches, tools and supports to communicate with and collect feedback from communities, although the language used is not always appropriate. However, there is

no evidence that WSA provides information to communities about the expected behaviours of staff.

WSA theoretical approach through the women Self Help Groups (SHGs) enhances inclusive representation, participation and engagement of people and communities at all stages of the work. However, within WSA interventions, communities are engaged at the assessment/early design stage only if WSA was already present in the location.

WSA policies are or in a draft stage or very recent (WSA is in the process of drafting its communication strategy), and communities and people's engagement is not yet described for all the stages of the work conducted by WSA, especially for the initial assessment stage. Additionally, the fact that WSA strategic plan is still in a draft stage, combined with WSA high turnover, result in the fact that staff may not always be fully aware and familiar with the policies and guidelines that cover this requirement.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities:

Communities' representatives confirm that they have opportunities to provide feedback to WSA on their level of satisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of the projects. However communities sometimes confirm their involvement once the project design is already decided upon.

Communities sometimes confuse WSA with other organisations and projects, and while some groups know well WSA, other do not and express concerns about who the staff is.

Commitment 5: Complaints are welcomed and addressed

Score: 0

WSA commitment and efforts towards accountability are high and WSA Complaints Handling Policy acknowledges that it fosters a culture that actively solicits and acts on stakeholders' feedback. However, WSA organisational culture on complaints is not understood by its staff in a consistent manner, mostly due to high staff turnover, and inductions and trainings are not always delivered timely.

WSA Complaint Handling Mechanism is currently only partially working for various reasons: average appropriateness of means to collect complaints, level of staff commitment, lack of consultation from the communities at the design stage and of global understanding of the mechanism, insufficient formal path to refer complaints, etc. Furthermore, there is no strong internalised mechanism in place to protect complainants, specifically if the complaint is sensitive, and the complaints' documentation is not always properly safeguarded.

As a result the complaints' management is not always effective or safe for the complainants and those affected. Furthermore, the Complaint Handling Policy mentions a Sexual Harassment Policy which is not in place.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities:

Communities state that they were not consulted on the design of the complaints handling processes; neither do they consider that their consultation on the monitoring of complaints handling processes is satisfactory. Some communities' representatives consistently reported that they do not know nor understand the way the complaints handling system works.

Generally, communities' representatives confirm their reluctance to contact the Complaints Handling Committee, especially if their issue involves WSA staff, because WSA staff is sitting within the Complaints Handling Committee.

Finally, while some of the communities' representatives are aware of the expected behaviour of WSA staff, including commitments on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, others stated they are not.

Commitment 6: Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary

Score: 2,8

WSA draft Strategic Plan Document 2017 to 2021 underlines the commitment to coordinated efforts for the empowerment of women and girls. WSA Quality and Accountability Framework also highlights coordination and complementary assistance in line with humanitarian principles.

WSA has a proactive approach through cooperation and coordination at all levels to ensure that its interventions complement the action of national and local authorities and other actors. WSA is working with different networks and consortium organizations assuming different roles and is considered a very proactive organisation in coordination by its partners and donors. WSA is represented in fora at both national and international levels.

WSA is recognised as strong in information sharing at grassroots level. However WSA capacity to share global information externally is less acknowledged: information is not systematically sharable through appropriate communication channels.

WSA works in partnership with international and national Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), donors, and Government. WSA signs cooperation agreements with all its partners. Those agreements are provided by each partner and are following their obligations.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities:

Communities confirmed that the projects they are involved in respond to needs that are not covered by other institutions.

Commitment 7: Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve

Score: 1,5

WSA initial assessments take into account lessons learned from past experiences, including those of other actors, and relevant technical standards. However, WSA informal ways to capitalise on experiences as well as high staff turnover constitute a barrier to the systematic use of prior lessons and experience to design all programmes.

WSA draft policies and procedures describe how the organisation evaluates and learns from its practice and experience, but WSA has no project/ programme management manual in place providing concrete guidance about it. WSA uses learning from M&E, feedbacks and complaints to implement change in an ad hoc and non-systematic way.

WSA contributes actively to learning and innovation in various ways, but processes within WSA to document and make knowledge and experience accessible throughout the organisation are not functional.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities:

Communities' representatives noted as a very positive experience their participation in monitoring and review visits in other projects and geographical areas.

Commitment 8: Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably

Score: 0

WSA staff contract highlights WSA vision and mission which is also described in details in the Human Resources (HR) manual. WSA staff signs a Code of Conduct (CoC) that is attached to their contract. They receive an initial orientation as well as refreshment inductions to ensure proper understanding of their responsibilities as well as of possible sanctions for failing to fulfil their obligations.

In practice flexibility is applied on the basis of a subjective analysis by WSA management staff in the field. WSA staff know that the Staff Ethics and Code of Conduct exists and it is available in WSA offices but no one has a copy of it and staff hardly know what it entails. Furthermore, WSA Staff Ethics and Code of Conduct is in English only, although it is in the process of being translated into Amharic. As a result it is not understandable by some of WSA staff. WSA staff is not fully aware of the policies – including the CoC - that affect them and their work, the benefits of the policies and the consequences of not applying them. Sanctions for not adhering to the policies are not systematically applied.

WSA staff turnover is very high: as a result the understanding of WSA mandate and values is not consistent throughout the organisation. WSA staff turnover is a huge challenge and a barrier for the organisation, and in practice, WSA does not deliver staff induction and training as planned in WSA main policies and procedures.

WSA intends to retain staff and institutionalise staff skills. WSA Human Resources (HR) Policy manual describes the vacancies, recruitment, selection and hiring process as well as the conditions of employment. It also describes the staff capacity and training as well as the staff assessment performance appraisal. WSA has Job Descriptions (JD), work objectives and feedback processes in place which clearly state what is required from staff. WSA staff policies and procedures comply with local employment law. WSA Human Resources Policy manual as well as a Staff Ethics and Code of Conduct detail conditions (rights and obligations) for security and wellbeing of WSA staff. However, WSA staff (especially new staff) is not fully aware and familiar with the organisation's policies.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities:

Some communities' representatives say they struggle to understand who WSA staff is, due to the high turnover experienced in the organisation.

Commitment 9: Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose

Score: 2,2

WSA has developed global policies and manuals governing the use and management of resources in place although WSA management framework to govern the use and management of resources does not formally describe all resource management aspects.

WSA Manual for Procurement & Property Administration & Management is designed to enable the organisation to effectively and efficiently use resources. As a national organisation working on donor-driven projects, WSA often uses the tools and procedures required by its donors. The organisation frequently faces challenges to submit reports on time, which can lead to delayed disbursements and issues with timeliness.

WSA internal control system has a set of rules for payments in place to manage corruption risks. However WSA Financial and Accounting Policy Manual do not specifically refer to an anti-corruption clause.

WSA global approach and projects are conducted in an environment-sensitive manner, specifically those projects which include the management of natural resources.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities:

Communities are involved with cash management though the savings approach of the Self Help Groups. Communities' representatives do not mention the risk of corruption as a concern in the framework of their work with WSA.

8. Organisation's approval

Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Findings

(Organisation representative – please cross where appropriate)

I acknowledge and understand the findings of the audit

I accept the findings of the audit

I do not accept some/all of the findings of the audit

Please list the requirements whose findings you do not accept

Organisation's Women
Support Association
(WSA)

Date April 16/2018
Place: Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia

Representative:

Martha Namera

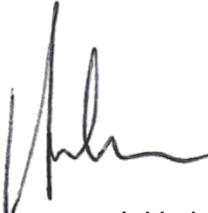
Signature:



Date of document: 2018-02-25

9. HQAI's decision

Quality Control by: Elissa Goucem and Pierre Hauselmann	Quality Control finalised on: First Draft: 2017-12-11 Final: 2018-02-25
---	---

Approval of the report Pierre Hauselmann Executive Director Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative 	Date: 2018-02-25
---	---------------------

Appeal

In case of disagreement with the conclusions and/or decision on certification, the organisation can appeal to HQAI within 30 days after the final report has been transmitted to the organisation.

HQAI will investigate the content of the appeal and propose a solution within 15 days after receiving the appeal.

If the solution is deemed not to be satisfactory, the organisation can inform in writing HQAI within 15 days after being informed of the proposed solution of their intention to maintain the appeal.

HQAI will take action immediately, and identify two Board members to proceed with the appeal. These will have 30 day to address it. . Their decision will be final.

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

Annex 1: Explanation of the scoring scale

In line with the CHS's emphasis on continuous learning and improvement, rather than assessing a pass/fail compliance with the CHS requirements, the CHS Verification Scheme uses a scoring system. It is graduated from 0 to 5 to determine the degree to which organisations apply the CHS and to measure progress in this application.

Be it in the framework of a self-assessment or in a third-party assessment process, it is key to have detailed criteria to evaluate (score) the degree of application of each requirement and commitment of the CHS. A coherent, systematic approach is important to ensure:

- Transparency and objectivity in the scoring criteria;
- Consistency and reliability between one verification cycle and another, or between the different verification options;
- Comparability of data generated by different organisations.

This document outlines a set of criteria to orient the assessment process and help communicate how the respective scores have been attributed and what they mean.

While verification needs to be rigorous, it needs also to be flexible in its interpretation of the CHS requirements to be applicable fairly to a wide range of organisations working in very different contexts. For example, smaller organisations may not have formal management systems in place, but show that an Organisational Responsibility is constantly reflected in practices. In a similar situation, the person undertaking the assessment needs to understand and document why the application is adequate in the apparent absence of supporting process. It is frequent that the procedures actually exist informally, but are "hidden" in other documents. Similarly, it is not the text of a requirement that is important, but whether its intent is delivered and that there are processes that ensure this will continue to be delivered under normal circumstances. The driving principle behind the scoring is that the scores should reflect the normal ("systematic") working practices of the participating organisation.

What do the scores stand for?

Score	Key actions	Organisation responsibilities
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational activities and actions systematically contradict the intent of a CHS requirement. Recurrent failure to implement the necessary actions at operational level. A systemic issue threatens the integrity of a CHS Commitment (i.e. makes it unlikely that the organisation is able to deliver the commitment). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and procedures directly contradict the intent of the CHS requirement. Complete absence of formal or informal processes (organisational culture) or policies necessary for ensuring compliance at the level of the requirement and commitment.
	<p>Score 0 means: The organisation does not work currently towards the systematic application of this requirement/commitment, neither formally nor informally. This is a major weakness to be corrected as soon as possible.</p>	
1	<p>Some actions respond to the intent behind the CHS requirement. However:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a significant number of cases where the design and management of programmes and activities do not reflect the CHS requirement. Actions at the operational level are not systematically implemented in accordance with relevant policies and procedures. 	<p>Some policies and procedures respond to the intent behind the CHS requirement. However:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant policies exist but are incomplete or do not cover all areas of the CHS. Existing policies are not accompanied with sufficient guidance to support a systematic and robust implementation by staff. A significant number of relevant staff at Head Office and/or field levels are not familiar with the policies and procedures. Absence of mechanisms to ensure the monitoring and systematic delivery of actions, policies and procedures at the level of the commitment.
	<p>Score 1 means: The organisation has made some efforts towards application of this requirement/commitment, but these efforts have not been systematic. This is a weakness to be corrected.</p>	

Score	Key actions	Organisation responsibilities
2	<p>Actions broadly respond to the intent behind the CHS requirement:</p> <p>Actions at operational level are broadly in line with the intent behind a requirement or commitment.</p> <p>However:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of the requirement varies from programme to programme and is driven by people rather than organisational culture. • There are instances of actions at operational level where the design or management of programmes does not fully reflect relevant policies. 	<p>Some policies and procedures respond to the intent behind the CHS requirement. However:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies exist but are incomplete or do not cover all areas of the CHS. • Existing policies are not accompanied with sufficient guidance to support a systematic and robust implementation by staff. • A significant number of relevant staff at Head Office and/or field levels are not familiar with the policies and procedures. • Absence of mechanisms to ensure the monitoring and systematic delivery of actions, policies and procedures at the level of the commitment.
<p>Score 2 means: The organisation is making systematic efforts towards application of this requirement/commitment, but certain key points are still not addressed. This is worth an observation and, if not addressed may turn into a significant weakness.</p>		
3	<p>Actions respond to the intent of the CHS requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The design of projects and programmes and the implementation of activities is based on the relevant policies and reflects the requirement throughout programme sites. • Staff are held accountable for the application of relevant policies and procedures at operational level, including through consistent quality assurance mechanisms. 	<p>Policies and procedures respond to the intent of the CHS requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies and procedures exist and are accompanied with guidance to support implementation by staff. • Staff are familiar with relevant policies. They can provide several examples of consistent application in different activities, projects and programmes. • The organisation monitors the implementation of its policies and supports the staff in doing so at operational level.
<p>Score 3 means: The organisation conforms with this requirement, and organisational systems ensure that it is met throughout the organisation and over time.</p>		
4	<p>As 3, but in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field and programme staff act frequently in a way that goes beyond CHS requirement to which they are clearly committed. • Communities and other external stakeholders are particularly satisfied with the work of the organisation in relation to the requirement. 	<p>As 3, but in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures go beyond the intent of the CHS requirement, are innovative and systematically implemented across the organisation. • Relevant staff can explain in which way their activities are in line with the requirement and can provide several examples of implementation in different sites. • They can relate the examples to improved quality of the projects and their deliveries.

Score	Key actions	Organisation responsibilities
	<p>Score 4 means: The organisation demonstrates innovation in the application of this requirement/commitment. 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>	
5	<p>As 4, but in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions at all levels and across the organisation go far beyond the intent of the relevant CHS requirement and could serve as textbook examples of ultimate good practice. 	<p>As 4, but in addition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies and procedures go far beyond the intent of the CHS requirement and could serve as textbook examples of relevant policies and procedures. • Policy and practice are perfectly aligned.
	<p>Score 5 means: On top of demonstrating conformity and innovation, the organisation receives outstanding feedback from communities and people. This is an exceptional strength and a score of 5 should only be attributed in exceptional circumstances.</p>	

Annex 2: List of Acronyms

AF	Accountability Framework
AGM	Annual General Assembly
CA	Christian Aid
CAE	Christian Aid Ethiopia
CAFOD	Catholic Agency For Overseas Development
CCRDA	Consortium of Christian Relief Development Association
CEW	Community extension Worker
CHC	Complaint Handling Committee
CHM	Complaint Handling Mechanism
CHP	Complaint Handling Policy
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard
CIHD	Core group for Inclusive Human Development
CLA	Cluster Level Association
CoLA	Cost of Living Adjustment
CoSAP	Consortium of Self Help Approach Promoters
CSA	Civil Society Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CST	Trocaire
CWW	Concern World Wide
DCA	Dan Church Aid
DF	Development Fund of Norway
DRCR	Drought Recovery and Resilience Capacity through Self Help Groups
ED	Executive Directress/Director
EIFFDA	Ethiopian Interface Forum For Development Association
EOC DICAC	Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission
ESAP	Ethiopia Social Accountability Program
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FBOs	Faith Based Organizations
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HQAI	Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative
HO	Head Office
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resource Manual

LCEW	Lead Community extension Worker
LEGS	Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards
LRRD	Link between Relief Rehabilitation and Development
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MELA	Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Accountability
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PDR	Performance Development Report
PDR	Performance Development Review
PO	Project Office
POC	Programme Office Coordinator
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PTE	Project Technical Expert
PDT	Program Designing Team
PO	Project Office
POC	Project Office Coordinator
PS	Project Sites
PTE	Project Technical expert
QMM	Quarter Management Meeting
SHG	Self Help Group
SCIAF	Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund
SMT	Senior Management Team
SNNPR	Southern Nation and Nationalities Peoples Region
TOR	Terms of Reference
WSA	Women Support Association