PLAN INTERNATIONAL - GERMANY
INDEPENDENT BENCHMARKING REPORT

HUMANITARIAN QUALITY
ASSURANCE INITIATIVE

Table of Contents

1. GENERAL INFORMATION 3

2. SCOPE 3

3. SCHEDULE SUMMARY 4

    3.2   VERIFICATION SCHEDULE 4

    3.2   OPENING AND CLOSING MEETINGS 4

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 9

6. SAMPLING 9

    6.1 RATIONALE FOR SAMPLING: 9

    6.2 INTERVIEWS: 10

7. REPORT 11

    7.1 OVERALL ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE 11

    7.2   SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT WEAKNESSES..11

    7.3 STRONG POINTS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT BY COMMITMENT 12

        1. Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant 12

        2. Humanitarian response is effective and timely 13

        3. Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects... 14

        4. Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback 15

        5. Complaints are welcomed and addressed..16

        6. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary......................17

        7. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve................................18

        8. Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably.. 19

        9. Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose 20

ANNEX 1. EXPLANATION OF THE SCORING SCALE.....................................22

LIST OF ACRONYMS..26

1. General information

Organisation Name:	Plan International Germany	Benchmarking Ref / No:	
Type of organisation: ☐ National ☒ International ☐ Federated ☒ Membership/Network ☒ Direct assistance ☒ Through partners		Organisation Mandate: ☒ Humanitarian ☒ Development ☒ Advocacy Verified Mandate(s) ☒ Humanitarian ☐ Development ☐ Advocacy	
Organisation size: (Total number of programme sites/ members/partners)	GNO is the biggest NO in the Plan Federation. It is partnering with 15 to 16 Plan COs (out of 51) for DRM activities.	Legal Registration:	
Head Office Location:	Hamburg, Germany	Field locations verified:	Tanzania (HQ in Dar es Salam and PU Kibondo)
Date of Head Office Verification:	August 11-12, 2016	Date of Field Verification:	August 15-19, 2016
Lead Auditor:	Claire Boulanger	2nd Verificator's	none
		Observer's	none

2. Scope

☒ Benchmarking audit   ☐ Mid term Audit

☐ Certification initial audit   ☐ Recertification audit

3. Schedule summary

3.2 Verification Schedule

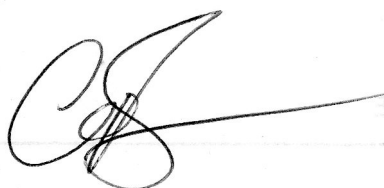| Name of Programme	Location	Mandate	Projects visited	Type of projects
Programme Unit Tanzania	HQ : Dar es Salam PS : Kibondo	Humanitarian	4	Vocational training Child protection activities (foster families and CFS).

3.2 Opening and closing meetings

1) At HO

	Opening meeting	Closing meeting
Date	August 10, 2016	August 11, 2016
Location	Hamburg	Hamburg
Number of participants	11	10
Any substantive issue arising	None	None

2) At PS

	Opening meeting	Closing meeting
Date	August 17, 2016	August 19, 2016
Location	Kibondo	Kibondo
Number of participants	14	22
Any substantive issue arising	None	None

Auditor's Name and Signature	Date and Place:
Claire Boulanger	Paris, October 19, 2016

5. Background information on the organisation

5.1 General

Plan International was originally created during the Spanish War, based on the idea to create a sustainable relationship between a child and a sponsor, who will support the child's education and health on a long-term basis. Over the years, Plan has grown into a federation of 20 National Offices and 51 country offices worldwide, becoming one of the leading INGOs in the field of child centred development and child protection (see 5.2 for details).

Plan's vision is to develop programmes to "create a better future for children who live in developing countries and whose quality of life and ability to fulfil their potential is affected by extreme poverty, the failure of care by adults, discrimination and exclusion by society, or catastrophic events such as conflict or disasters ». Grass roots work, child centred community development, community engagement, rights based approach are key underlining principles of Plan's intervention.

GNO (German National Office) was originally created as a sponsorship and development organisation, to support country offices primarily with fundraising activities. The earthquake in Haiti was a turning point for GNO as it was for Plan International at global level, which shifted to more direct implication in emergencies through emergency grants managements, and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) expertise in programme delivery.

Over the years, GNO has become the biggest National Organisation within the Plan federation, with an annual budget of 160 Mns € out of o global budget of 800€.

GNO's International Programme Department has grown from 5 to 40 people in 5 years. Main drivers for this growth were GNO board and top management's strategy to:
- Mobilize institutional grants to develop Plan's own projects, and in particular German government grants (GFFO and BMZ), but also European grants (ECHO...).
- Turn Plan into a politically and operationally active NGO in child protection. As a result, Plan has decided to not only do sponsoring, but also develop projects supporting children's health, education and rights both in developing countries and in disaster contexts. As a result of this strategy, advocacy has become an important part of Plan's work. Additionally in the context of the 2015 refugee crisis in Germany, GNO has started to develop emergency domestic programmes in Hamburg, applying the principles of CPiE at home, with particular influence on the policy and positions of the German government.

GNO's International Programme Department created two teams: the Development team and DRM team, which both belong to the Department. The DRM team started to develop in 2012, turning over the last 4 years from 2 staff into a 20 staff team. GNO's

request to have an independent benchmarking against the CHS comes in a time when the organisation would like to consolidate and strategize its structure, its processes and its resources after a period of quick growth which involved hiring a significant number of new staff and experience new ways of working.

5.2 Organisational structure and management system

The Plan Federation is organized around:
- Plan International Inc, originally registered in Rhode Island, USA and now based in Woking, UK. Plan International Inc is composed of different entities:
  - ➢ International Headquarter (referred to as IH).
  - ➢ 4 Regional Offices,
  - ➢ 51 Country Offices (COs), which are in charge of implementing projects and programmes in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. In addition Plan International is establishing its presence in the Middle East.
- National Offices: these are independent organisations (with their own boards and own governance system), which provide support and resources to Plan International Inc's Country Offices throughout the whole project management cycle in terms of technical and financial support, advocacy, donor lobbying etc. For example they bring in grants, expertise (either through direct intervention or through training), and surge capacity (possibility to mobilize staff in emergency situation through an international roster of experts). The Plan Federation includes 20 National Offices, whose weight and importance vary according to the significance of their budget and expertise. GNO is one of the biggest organisations within the Federation, alongside with Canada. National Offices with DRM capacity include Germany, UK, Canada and Australia, among other countries. The UK National Organisation is based in London and is a different organisation from Plan International Inc. National Offices have traditionally been based in northern, industrialized countries with primarily a role of fostering sponsorship and fundraising.
- Field Country National Offices: these are offices based in "Southern" countries, who are de facto joining the NO team, as they are registered as an independent organisation and have their own board and own governance system. This group includes Colombia, Brazil, India, and Thailand. Ecuador is being discussed.

At global level, Plan's governance includes:
- Members' Assembly (MA), where all NOs send representatives in proportion to their weight within the Federation (Germany has 3). The Members' Assembly has to approve (delegates from all national offices). They decide on global budget, strategy, Chair of the international board. The international Members Assembly meets twice a year.
- International Board of Directors: they are elected for 3 years by the MA, and appoint the international CEO, which manages Plan International Inc and all its entities. International Board meets 4 times a year and has 2 audio conferences. Strategic decisions concerning Plan are being made at the International Board.

- Two consulting bodies:
  - ➢ Global management committee (GMC): representation of all regional directors, executive team of IH and 5 national directors representing the Americas, Scandinavian countries, big European countries, small European countries and Asia. As the largest NO, GNO was asked to chair the GMC.
  - ➢ National Directors Team: a strategic body, without decision-making role, which meets twice a year to discuss international strategy, budget (opportunities and challenges), programmes, marketing strategies... The National Directors Team represents the national directors in the International Board and the Members' Assembly where it has an observatory statute. Chair changes every 2 years (last Chair was GNO).

NO boards (including GNO) are accountable to the Members' Assembly and are expected to work in line with IH values and policies. Accountability lines between IH and NOs, and between NOs and COs are thin, in the sense that they are not in a direct line management, appraisal, or compulsory reporting relationship. As a result, leverages for implementation and change are mainly: the financial weight of the NO (which is strongly accountable to its institutional donors) and a good working relationship at all levels.

GNO works with 15-16 COs on DRM activities, bringing support throughout all phases of the project management cycle and strategic planning, which can involve, among other things, financial support (e.g. GFFO/German institutional grants or unrestricted funding), technical expertise (as part of the roster team or upon specific request) or capacity building. Though GNO has a history with CO Tanzania on Development activities, GNO's partnership with CO Tanzania is a relatively recent one on the DRM side, and works mostly as a donor/partner relationship, i.e., CO Tanzania is accountable to GNO about the implementation of GFFO grants whereas GNO is accountable to GFFO about those projects. The relationships between NOs and COs are framed by FADs (Funding Agreement Document), which are internal Plan agreements signed between the two entities to cover:
- NO and CO roles and responsibilities
- Rules and regulations
- Implementation
- Reporting deadlines, financial report.

5.3 Work with Partners

GNO works mostly in partnership with other Plan Country offices, which are subject to and adhere to the same Plan IH policies as Plan Germany, and UN agencies such as UNHCR. Nevertheless, in some projects Plan also works in partnerships with non-Plan organizations, which are generally local, national or international NGOs. Tanzania was chosen for the PS part of the audit, because it was important for GNO to audit a GFFO funded project. Tanzania was the more accessible site sampled by the auditor with such a charateristic but this limited the opportunity to observe at field level the practice of partnerships with non Plan organisations. The analysis below is thus based on a documents review and interviews with staff at HO and PS as well as with Plan's partners in Tanzania.

Plan's commitment to effective partnerships is stated in different core policies. "Forming effective partnerships and alliances" is a specific goal of Plan's Global strategy. Its specific policy on partnerships, "Building better partnerships" affirms the need to work through teamwork and mutual partnerships. Under section « Collaboration and partnerships », Plan's global DRM strategy outlines a broad approach to partnership at all levels, with a specific objective of contributing to local and sustainable capacity building. Interviews with partners, local authorities and partners demonstrate that Plan is regarded as an organisation committed to partnership (see Commitment 6) and local capacity building. Its core policies, such as the Child protection policy, the Anti-Fraud and Anti Bribery and anti corruption policy apply to its implementing partners, and are part of the partnership agreements.

Plan's Guide for Needs assessment includes a section on stakeholders mapping and analysis, including potential partners, which allows the organisation to identify potential local partners, especially when there is long term presence of a national Plan. "Building better partnerships" recognizes the challenges of working with partners, especially in terms of their capacity, and states that Plan has to "know" its partners, offering a series of general guidance and key actions to ensure efficient partnerships. The commitment to a due diligence on partnerships is built into the Programme Quality Policy and Partnership Standards and tools such as the Partnership Assessment Forms, Child Protection Implementation Assessment and the Standard partnership agreements.

However, these tools, though strong in assessing the commitment of potential partners to core values such as Child protection, do not cover all 9 commitments of the CHS. It is also not clear how the tools contribute to shape the Partnership agreements, specifically in terms of performance monitoring or identification of gaps in capacity.

Although the roles and responsibilities of all partners in specific programmes are clearly stated in formal Partnership agreements, these do not specify commitments to key areas of the CHS such as community participation, feedback or complaints mechanisms. The monitoring and evaluation largely depends on donors' requirements, which makes the follow up project specific and may not allow Plan to identify and act upon systemic poor or under performances of partners. This can limit the due diligence on partnerships and the actual delivery of Plan's commitment to the CHS to the communities.

Plan is committed to building partners capacity, in line with its strategic objective to build effective partnerships. The organisation allocates specific resources to this area and offers trainings in areas such as Sphere Standards, gender sensitivity and needs assessments. Support to partners is also provided directly through the work of Plan's DRM Officers and specialists in terms of project design, management, implementation and monitoring. However, there is no evidence that capacity building exercises are oriented by systematic and comprehensive partners capacity assessments or profiling exercises.

(Docs 7, 12, 19, 37, 40, 77, 98, 244, 277, 278, 291, 282 and interviews with partners, communities and local authorities)

5.4 Certification or verification

Plan International Germany has undergone a self-assessment against the CHS between March and July 2016. Plan international was a member of HAP International but never asked for certification against the HAP standard, and is now a member the CHS Alliance.

6. Sampling

6.1 Rationale for sampling:

Potential country offices to be sampled included:
1. Colombia
2. Ecuador
3. Nicaragua
4. Niger
5. Burkina Faso
6. Mali
7. CAR
8. Ethiopia
9. Sudan
10. Tanzania
11. South Sudan
12. Pakistan
13. Myanmar
14. Philippines

Criteria for choosing PS were 1) security 2) access 3) volume of GNO activity in CO. Eventually, Tanzania was chosen on the ground of benefiting from a significant GFFO grant.

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:

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

Type of people interviewed	Number of people interviewed
Head Office	13
DRM Staff members + GNO senior management	
Programme sites	18
Senior Management in Dar es Salam and Kibondo	
Staff members in Kibondo	
Partner (UNHCR) in Kibondo	
Total number of interviews	31

Focus Group Discussions (interviews with a group >6)

Type of Group	54 participants	
	Female	Male
Youth Vocational training Group Nduta	6	9
Child Protection Committee Members	6	6
Youth Vocational training Group Mtendeli	9	13
Foster families Mtendeli	3	2
Total number of participants	24	30

7. Report

7.1 Overall organisational performance

Overall, GNO DRM works in line with the CHS requirements.

Main strengths relate to Plan's community engagement and strong values / policies on child protection. As a result, Plan works on a needs-based approach, engaging communities and making itself accessible to them. At global and field level, Plan is seen as a team player, strongly involved in coordination processes, sharing information and learning with others, and contributing to strengthening child protection principles. With strong policies on security, risk, fraud and corruption, Plan comes across as an organisation committed to transparency and due diligence.

In some areas, there might be gaps between Plan's principles and commitments and actual achievements, due to a lack of clear systems and control mechanisms. In the area of M&E and complaints Plan has scattered policies and procedures, which can overcomplicate the actual implementation and monitoring of Plan's commitments.

For example, accountability is a key principle for Plan, however structured complaints mechanisms accessible to communities need to be strengthened and harmonised,

Plan sees itself as a learning organisation and does get involved into capacity building inside and outside the organisation, however there is a need to better support, systematize and disseminate monitoring, evaluation and learning mechanisms throughout the organisation.

Finally, Plan has strong HR policies, however they might not be systematically applied and implemented.

7.2   Summary of important weaknesses

	Score 0	Score 1
Commitment 1		1.5b
Commitment 2		2.5b
		2.5c
		2.7a
Commitment 3		3.2
		3.6a
Commitment 4		4.4a
Commitment 5		5.1
		5.2a
		5.2b
		5.3a
		5.3b
		5.4
Commitment 7		7.1
Commitment 9		9.4
TOTAL Number		15

7.3 Strong points and areas for improvement by Commitment

1. Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant

Score: 2,5

Strong points

At HO and PS, Plan bases its assistance on both needs and capacities of communities, with specific attention paid to the most vulnerable groups. Plan is gender and age sensitive, and will take at least those two indicators into account in needs assessments. There is a continuous analysis of the evolution of context, stakeholders and needs, which PLANs monitors through direct contact with beneficiaries (focus group discussions, follow up visits, feedbacks from on-going programs) and by participating in coordination bodies. Reports on context, activities and needs come regularly from the field. Approach is clearly impartial, as Plan has strong tools and policies on inclusion, non-discrimination, and response to the most urgent needs.

Areas for improvement
- Systematizing procedures and making documents consistent with one another. For instance, data is not systematically disaggregated in all relevant documents.
- GNO does not have a clear and systematic guidance of its own on monitoring changes in the context (i.e.: indicators of change, frequency and type of reporting). The conditions in which changes in the context are monitored is very donor driven.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 1

Overall, communities in the sampled programme site feel that the assistance they receive from Plan is appropriate and relevant, i.e.: adjusted to their needs and to the context, impartial and keen to target vulnerable groups. Some communities said they were consulted on their needs during a workshop organized by Plan. Other said that although they were not directly consulted, the choices made by Plan were relevant to their specific needs and context.

However some communities mentioned that they did not receive feedback from Plan after expressing changing or additional needs in the course of the program. Others indicated lack of clarity in criteria for receiving assistance (NFI), leaving the impression that Plan might be biased in providing assistance.

2. Humanitarian response is effective and timely

Score: 2

Strong points

Plan works according to the relevant standards of the sector. Tools are in place for effective and rapid deployment, such as contingency planning, global DRM roster (which allows mobilizing high level experts to support on-going programs), Rapid Needs Assessment tool… At project level, work plans are in place with timeline and comments around conditions of implementation. Risk is assessed at minimum along with needs, and referral lines are in place.

Areas for improvement
- Most risk policies and procedures cover institutional risk, but not so much potential risks affecting communities.
- Monitoring practices are not consistent and systematic. For instance, monitoring on activities and output is very systematic; monitoring on outcomes is less consistent and less systematic. M&E expertise is not required at program design level, with two consequences: no systematic use of monitoring results to adapt and improve the programs, and inconsistencies in the choice of program indicators. Although there are a number of M&E policies, procedures and tools, there is a lack of systematic approach on M&E principles, procedures and tools, resulting in loss of time, information and effectiveness.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 2

Communities in the sampled programme site expressed mixed feelings. Some felt that programs are delivered on time, that they are relevant and that Plan is willing to respond to expressed needs. Others felt that requests and needs remained unanswered for months, without them knowing what the rationale for this delay was, or that their requests were turned down without understanding the reason. Some communities mentioned that they are not informed about delays: sometimes programs are on hold for weeks, then material arrives and everything needs to be done right away. Others indicate lack of clarity.

3. Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects

Score: 2,4

Strong points

Plan has a very strong and comprehensive policy on Child protection, which declines into strategies, policies, procedures and practice on the prevention of exploitation and abuse (by staff and other stakeholders) as well as on resilience and on the strengthening of local capacities.

As Plan's underlying principle of intervention, the CCCD approach includes building programs of local capacities. Plan's policies and practices strongly commit to working on communities resilience and strengthening their capacities as first responders, through the nature of projects (youth projects, CP, PSS) and the modes of implementation (Child protection committees, foster families, child clubs, peer educators, incentive workers, etc.). Community-based groups receive relevant and systematic training in order to be able to fulfill their responsibilities. Plan promotes representation of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, and in particular has developed a set of policies and tools to enable children participation, and to mainstream gender sensitivity. PLANs projects encourage self-support, early recovery and autonomy of communities, through for instance livelihood programs and cash transfer activities.

Plan has a set of procedures and tools in order to identify and act upon negative, unintended effects on communities' safety, culture, gender, and social/political relationships, and upon sexual exploitation and abuse by staff. When un-intended negative effects appear, Plan acts upon them in a timely manner. Plan has a very strong personal data protection system, which is systematically implemented on all sites of program implementation.

Areas for improvement
- Risk analysis, which Plan does but not in a comprehensive and systematic manner engaging communities for the identification of risks potentially affecting them
- Exit strategies are not systematically outlined and developed when putting DRM programs in place.
- Although cash transfer activities tend to grow in Plan's DRM response, analysis about the benefits of intervention on the local economy is not yet mainstreamed and systematized. In addition, Plan does not have specific mechanisms to monitor unattended effects of its intervention on local economy, on livelihoods and on the local environment.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 3

Communities in the sampled programme site see Plan with a high profile, and solid expertise in protecting children. In their views, Plan has contributed to reduce risks and potential negative effects, actively helping to solve problems as they come up (for example: issues with children who were left alone when parents attended distributions, or girls at risk of GBV when picking up wood). They acknowledge trainings dispensed by Plan, while pointing out that these are good advice that can only be applicable if people feel at peace and safe. They would like to see the training topics extended.

4. Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback

Score: 2,5

Strong points

Plan uses relevant mechanisms to channel information to communities, including face to face and focus group discussions, community leaders (including peer and inventive workers), signs translated in local languages and easily accessible to communities. Plan's child protection policy is widely disseminated on translated and printed material, but also through systematic awareness raising messages. As a result, communities are aware of Plan's code of conduct and expected behaviour of staff. Plan has strong regulations and media guidelines regarding use of children's image and interviewing processes.

Community involvement is a strong underlying principle of Plan's intervention, and embedded in a number of policies, guidance or strategic documents, including Global or DRM strategies, child protection policies, needs assessments and evaluation tools. Documents on resilience and partnerships provide additional guidance to community participation. Field experience evidences that community participation takes place at all stages of the project, from needs assessments to evaluation.

Feedback from communities is outlined in some policy documents (e.g.: accountability and feedback systems based on communities), and takes place through a number of monitoring and follow up mechanisms. As in other areas of its work, Plan is gender and age sensitive in setting up feedback mechanisms.

Areas for improvement
- Monitor how feedback from communities is actually encouraged and implemented.
- Open communication is implicit through many documents and practices, however Plan does not have a clear policy on information sharing.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 4

Communities in the sampled programme site were told about their rights and entitlements. They are encouraged to participate in programs, and scope of their participation was clearly explained to them.

Communities receive information through direct contact with Plan staff, inventive workers and peer educators. However some did not seem to know exactly what they would receive as part of their program. Some communities indicated examples of inappropriate management of feedback (lack of follow up, feedback not welcomed, equipment requested to carry on participation activities was not provided, etc.).

5. Complaints are welcomed and addressed

Score: 1.7

Strong points

Plan's complaints handling policy is outlined through a variety of documents covering child protection, abuse, sexual exploitation and abuse, fraud and corruption. Plan has drafted a guidance document on communities based accountability and feedback systems, and has a whistle blowing policy as part of its code of conduct, which is advertised under the form of the "Speak up" posters. Some global procedures are adjusted locally, specifically concerning investigation and reporting lines, and referral systems. As a result, communities are aware of the expected behaviour of Plan staff, including regarding sexual exploitation and abuse. And referral systems are in place when a complaint cannot be handled by Plan.

Area for improvement

- In the field, Plan is keen to offer communities a variety of channels for feedback and complaints, and to mainstream complaints and feedback mechanisms into its activities. However, there is no formally established complaints mechanism, but rather a range of semi-formal ones. In the absence of formal and clearly communicated mechanisms, it is unclear to staff and communities how they can lodge a complaint, or escalate feedback, and generally the complaints and whistle blowing systems are more easily activated by staff than by communities. In this profusion of policies and procedure, staff are not systematically aware of the existing and applicable guidance document on setting up a complaints mechanism. Additionally there is no formal consultation process to ask the preferences of communities, which makes access even more difficult for them.

- Policy and strategy documents underline Plan's commitment to welcoming and addressing complaints, and there have been several examples at HO and PS of fraud and corruption cases reported at the highest level of the organisation that have lead to disciplinary procedure and dismissal. However complaints are not systematically managed in a timely, fair and appropriate manner that prioritises the safety of the complainant, and they are not systematically documented, tracked and used as a learning opportunity.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 5

Communities mentioned several ways they would raise a serious complaint, including calling the Tanzanian police, referring to IRC, to DRC or talking to staff Plan. Most mention they have been made aware of Plan's protection policy, which includes prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. Indications in local language about recognizing abuse are posted by Plan in different sections of the camp, including Plan facilities.

However some communities mentioned that they are uneasy filing a complaint, either because they think it would not make a difference, lack of feedback or feeling it would not be welcomed.

None mentioned having had a discussion with Plan about their preferences to raise a complaint.

6. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary

Score: 3,2

Strong points

Plan's policy and strategy documents indicate a very clear commitment to working in coordination with other stakeholders. At global level, Plan is one of the key players in the Global protection cluster on child protection issues, and is given the role of lead agency on child protection issues in the field. In addition, Plan has a strong partnership policy, which outlines working principles with partners.

As part of needs assessments, Plan identifies roles and responsibilities, capacities and interests of its stakeholders, and has the tools for a comprehensive stakeholders mapping. At field level, Plan interacts with other INGOs, local government, and local organizations through coordination meetings and working groups, where needs, gaps and programs are being discussed. The information and the expertise is shared with others both at global and field level: Plan has taken part in the development of the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (within the Child Protection Working Group of the UN global protection cluster) and has participated in collective projects such as the Interagency Study on Child-Friendly Feedback and Complaint Mechanism. In the field, specific trainings are organised for partners and for communities involved in Plan's activities, and data coming from Plan is seen as accurate and reliable.

Area for improvements

- Despite strong principles on partnerships, partnership agreements are not designed, implemented and managed in a systematic and consistent manner throughout the organization.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 6

Communities in the sampled programme site point that there are many NGOs, that each of them has a role, and that it is very difficult to understand how they work and what they do. However Plan's mandate is clear to them, and they see Plan coordinate with other organizations. They feel that coordination takes place, and that Plan's commitments are reliable ("Plan talks, and then acts").

7. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve

Score: 2

Strong points

Plan is committed to learning and improvement, as part of its program quality policy. A number of policy documents provide guidance on how to Plan evaluations, organize knowledge management throughout the organization, conduct research and use feedback and learning in future programming.

Plan has produced tools (e.g.: Knowledge management tool called "AAR / After Action Review") in order to learn from experience, and there are a number of examples where change occurred in programs based on the results of monitoring activities.

Events and channels to share learning internally include for example after-lunch sessions, where Plan collaborators are invited to present an experience or an innovation. Learning is recorded through evaluation activities, and made available on shared online tools (Planet and Plan Academy). With external stakeholders, learning is being shared as part of information in coordination meetings with other agencies, and as part of training activities with partners and community leaders in the field.

With an active participation in global child protection mechanisms (e.g.: global protection cluster), Plan is seen as a key contributor to child protection issues, and has participated in elaborating grounding standards and collective guidance documents.

Areas of improvement

- As a result of the wide range of policies and procedures concerning monitoring, evaluation and learning, staff is not systematically aware of relevant M&E policies, guidelines and tools. In addition, staff expressed need for more exchange of experience/expertise amongst M&E experts throughout Plan, and pointed out a lack of M&E input at program design level, resulting in not always having in place the proper indicators at early stages of the project.
- Staff feels that M&E activities focus on quantitative data and are very output oriented. Qualitative information should be more systematically documented, lessons learnt more systematically recorded, and evaluations indicators should focus on outcomes.
- Feedback and complaints are not systematically used as tools, along with results of monitoring activities, to implement change.
- Poor performance is not systematically tracked and acknowledged as such, resulting in occasional delays in being addressed.
- Staff expressed mixed feelings about PALS, Planet and Plan Academy as knowledge management and learning tools, point out complexity, inadequacy, lack of update and relevance.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 7

Communities have seen some changes occur in programs over time, with new types of items or activities being distributed and implemented. Plan sits down with them to talk about programs. Overall, communities are satisfied with quality of programs, though some mentioned that some needs remain uncovered and promises were made with no follow up.

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

Score: 2,85

Strong points

Plan describes itself as an equal opportunity employer, and staff policies and procedures are clear, fair, transparent and non discriminatory. Plan's Code of conduct and Child Protection policy cover exploitation and abuse, and are attached to the contracts. Staff and other Plan stakeholders are systematically briefed about the child protection policy, which clearly outlines expected and prohibited behaviours. Policies are in place for the security and well being of the staff.

Plan staff has a clear sense of mandates and values of the organization, and of what is expected of them. Work PLANs are in place with performance indicators and regular appraisal. Performance management extends to non- Plan staff involved in Plan's activities (incentive workers, peer educators). Staff is aware of the policies that are most relevant to them, and in particular the Child protection policy, the code of conduct and the anti-fraud and anti-corruption policy, and is aware of the consequences of not adhering to them.

Job descriptions are in place, and Plan takes measures such as the Global DRM Roster to adjust capacities in line with programs' needs and expectations.

Development of skills and competences is encouraged by Plan and outlined in a set of policies and procedures (including guidance on talent management, on appraisal interviews, etc.). Among other systems, the Plan Academy provides learning opportunities on issues related to present position.

Areas for improvement

- Orientation and induction processes and packages could be systematized and monitored, so that staff has a common understanding of core documents, and knows where to find them.
- Though training and staff development take place, Plan does not have a clear policy or procedure document allowing clear access of staff to training and development opportunities.
- Staff pointed out a recurrent under-staffing problem in emergencies, and insufficient M&E resources.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 8

Communities in the sampled programme site see Plan as a competent organization, which acts consistently, makes itself accessible and can be trusted. However communities indicate that some staff are less competent and do not engage with the

same dedication in their activities.

9. Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose

Score: 2,40

Strong points

Policies and procedures governing the use and management of resources are in place and cover all the requirements of this commitment. Programs are designed and processes are in place to ensure efficient use of resources, considering value for money and timeliness. Use of resources is being monitored, and some strategies (including procurement) are in place in order to minimize waste.

Plan has strong policies on corruption (zero tolerance policy) and there are a number of examples demonstrating that Plan takes appropriate action when corruption cases are identified.

Plan monitors expenditures against budget and is regularly audit by donors (including ECHO). Annual financial statements are audited and certified by PWC.

Areas for improvement

- Plan has a global environment strategy applying to operations, but it is hardly known to staff, and it does not constitute policy and guidance on considering impact on the environment when using local and natural resources.
- Though staff pay attention and develops solutions to minimize waste, there is not a comprehensive policy on waste that could apply to the entire organisation.
- Timeliness has been pointed out as an issue, in situations where procurement policies tend to slow down delivery of material necessary to proceed with the project.

Feedback from people affected by crisis and communities on Commitment 9

Communities in the sampled programme site are not systematically informed about new programs, and therefore do not feel in a position to judge whether resources have been properly used and managed. Overall, communities feel that Plan delivers the adequate type of goods and material, but sometimes in insufficient quantities, which may create some resentment in the community. However they did receive an explanation on delays due to procurement issues, and had discussions with Plan about storage of goods to avoid shortage of supplies during the rainy season.

Quality Control by: Elissa Goucem, Pierre Hauselmann	Quality Control finalised on: 2016-11-16
	First Draft: 2016-10-07
	Final: 2016-10-31

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
Representative
Name and
Signature:

Date and
Place:

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 the scores stand for

The scores have thus the following values and attributes:

Score: 0

• Operational activities and actions systematically contradict the intent of a CHS Commitment and its requirements (Key Actions and Organisational Responsibilities).

• Policies and procedures directly contradict the intent of the CHS Commitment and requirement (Key Action or Organisational Responsibility) or;

• Complete absence of formal or informal processes or policies necessary for ensuring compliance against a commitment

Indicates that:

• There is a recurrent failure to implement the necessary actions at operational level.

• Practice at field level contradict the intent behind a CHS commitment and makes the delivery of the commitment unlikely.

- A systemic issue threatens the integrity of a CHS Commitment (i.e. makes it unlikely that the organisation is able to deliver the commitment).

A score of 0 corresponds to a Major Non Conformity in a certification process. It excludes the organisation from certification until the corresponding Major Corrective Action Request (CAR) is corrected. If a score of 0 appears while the organisation is certified, it has a short timeframe to address the issue before the certificate is withdrawn.

Score: 1

Actions, policies and procedures respond broadly to the intent behind the CHS requirement. However:

- There are a significant number of cases where the design of programmes and activities does not reflect the CHS commitment.
- Relevant policies are not accompanied with sufficient guidance to support a systematic and robust implementation by staff (tokenistic policy approach), leading to an inconsistent delivery of the commitment.
- Absence of quality assurance mechanisms to ensure the monitoring and systematic delivery of actions the policies and procedures are supposed to support, which make it unlikely that staff are made accountable for implementing the policies.
- A significant number of relevant staff at HO and/or sites are not familiar with the policies and procedures and/or do not use them to guide their actions at operational level.

Indicates that:

- The key documentation is incomplete or missing, or that policies are in place, but not consistently translated into the right actions, or;
- A lack of knowledge by the relevant staff about the requirements or relevant procedure leading to an inconsistent application at operational level
- Actions at the operational level are not systematically implemented in accordance of the relevant policies and procedures.

A score of 1 means an issue that is serious but does not immediately threaten the integrity of the relevant CHS commitment. A number of issues that individually would deserve a score of 1 often indicate jointly a systemic issue and can lead to a score of 0.

A score of 1 is equivalent to a Minor Non Conformity in a certification process. It allows the certification of the organisation, but needs to be corrected within a certain timeframe (normally 2 years, although a shorter deadline can be identified if the CAR threatens to becomes systemic).

A Minor CAR that is not addressed within the specified timeframe becomes a Major CAR.

Score: 2

Actions, policies and procedures respond to the intent behind the CHS commitment. However:

- Some actions at operational level are in line with the intent behind a requirement or commitment, but are not reflected in standard policies and tend to be person/field related.
- There are instances of actions at operational level where relevant policies are not fully reflected in the design of programmes and activities, without compromising the intent behind the specific commitment.
- Policies and procedures relevant to the CHS requirement exist but are partial or scattered, which makes it difficult to consistently and systematically deliver the commitment at operational levels.
- Some operational staff are not familiar with the policies and procedures, and/or cannot provide relevant examples of implementation

Indicates that:

- The organisation has implicit or informal approaches that are consistent with the relevant CHS requirement but not necessarily systematised or formalised, but common practice mostly compensate for the gap.
- Policies and procedures meet the intent of the relevant requirement, but there are some instances where they are not correctly applied at operational level, without compromising the integrity of the requirement, or/and;
- The organisation does not have sufficient quality assurance mechanisms to ensure a systematic implementation of relevant policies and procedures across the organisation.

A score of 2 means an issue that is not serious but deserves correction.

In a certification process, it is equivalent to Conformity with observation. An issue scored 2 that is not addressed may become a Minor CAR.

Score: 3

- Actions, policies and procedures respond to the intent of the CHS requirement.
- Staff are made accountable of the application of relevant policies and procedures at operational level, including through consistent quality assurance mechanisms.
- The design of projects and programmes and the implementation of activities is based on the relevant policies with which all relevant staff are. They can provide several examples of consistent application in different activities, projects and programmes.
- The organisation monitors the implementation of its relevant policies and supports the staff in doing so at operational levels.

Indicates that:

- The CHS requirement is met.

- The organisation's system ensures that the requirement is met throughout the organisation and over time.

A score of 3 means Conformity in the framework of a certification process.

Score: 4

As 3, but in addition:
- Field and programme staff act frequently in a way that goes beyond CHS requirement to which they are clearly committed.
- 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.
- Policies and procedures go beyond the intent of the CHS requirement, are innovative and systematically implemented across the organisation.
- Communities and other external stakeholders are particularly satisfied with the work of the organisation in relation to the requirement and view it as an example of good practice in the sector.

Indicates that
- The requirement is implemented in an exemplary way across the organisation
- The system of the organisation ensures this high quality is maintained across the organisation and over time.

In the framework of certification, a score of 4 denotes Conformity with the requirement.

Score 5:

As 4, but in addition:
- Actions, policies and procedures 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.

Indicates:
- Almost perfection. A score of 5 should only be attributed on exceptional circumstances.

List of acronyms

BID: Best Interest Determination
CCCD: Child Centred Community Development
CD: Country Director
CERF: Central Emergency Response Fund
CFS: Child Friendly Space
CM: Case Management
CMT: Country Management Team
CO: (Plan) Country Office
CP: Child Protection
CPiE: Child Protection in Emergencies
CSP: Country Strategic Plan
DPP: Disaster Preparedness Planning
DRM: Disaster Risk Management
ECCD: Early Childhood Care and Development
ECHO: European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department
ERM: Emergency Response Manager
FAD: Funding Agreement Document
GFFO: German Federal Foreign Office
IH: (Plan) International Headquarters (Plan Inc in Working)
HO: Head Office (Hamburg for GNO)
MEAL: Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MHA: Ministry of Home Affairs
NFI: Non-food items
NO: (Plan) National Organisation
PQP: Programme Quality Policy
PS: Programme site (Country Office Tanzania)
PSS: Psychosocial Support PU Program Unit
PU: (Plan) Programme Unit
RBA: Right Based Approach (to development)
RNA: Rapid Needs Assessment
RO: (Plan) Regional Office
RTE: Real Time Evaluation
SOP: Standard Operating Procedures
UASC: Unaccompanied and Separated Children