

Initial Audit – Summary Report IA 2020/07/23

1. General information

Organisation

HelpAge International

Type	Mandates	Verified	
<input type="checkbox"/> National <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Membership/Network <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Direct Assistance <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> International <input type="checkbox"/> Federated <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> With partners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/> Development <input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy	
Head office location	London		
Total number of country programmes	16	Total number of staff	350

Audit team

Lead auditor	Jo Thomson
Second auditor	Jordi Capdevila
Third auditor	-
Observer	-
Expert	-
Other	-

Scope of the audit

CHS Verification Scheme

Audit Stage	Certification	Independent Verification	Benchmarking	Other
Initial audit (IA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
First maintenance audit (MA1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mid-term audit (MTA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Second maintenance audit (MA2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recertification audit (RA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extraordinary audit	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Short notice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (<i>specify</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sampling

Randomly sampled country programme site	Included in final sample	Replaced by	Rationale / Comments	Selected for onsite visit or remote assessment
Mozambique	Yes		Chosen in order to assess HAI direct implementation through own country office and because not included in HAI self-assessment.	Planned as an onsite visit but changed to remote due to COVID-19 restrictions.
Malawi	Yes		Chosen because not included in HAI self-assessment.	Remote
Indonesia	Yes		Chosen because not included in HAI self-assessment.	Remote

Any other sampling performed for this audit:

Additional interviews were undertaken with Nairobi and Bangkok Regional offices, and Malawi and Indonesia partner staff to gather further evidence due to the cancellation of the programme site visit as a result of COVID-19 restrictions.

We have taken into account all the available evidence presented to us during the audit and have used the information provided by the CHS Alliance verified self-assessment of Help Age international. The audit confirmed that HAI has internal quality assurance and control systems in place to address requirements of the CHS, and other strategic commitments. Despite the limitations inherent to the exclusive use of remote auditing methodologies for the present process, we believe that the evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our conclusions and recommendation.

We have recommended additional mitigation measures that should be taken in the next audits. See section 6 for recommendations on sampling and onsite visit at the next audits.

2. Activities undertaken by the audit team

Locations assessed

Locations	Dates	Onsite or remote
London Hub Office	2020/05/04-07	Remote
Nairobi Regional Office	2020/05/04	Remote
Bangkok Regional Office	2020/05/05	Remote
Mozambique Country Office	2020/05/11-14	Remote
Beira Field Office (Mozambique)	2020/05/11-14	Remote
Malawi Country Office	2020/06/2-4	Remote
Indonesia Country Office	2020/06/2-4	Remote

Interviews

Position / level of interviewees	Number of interviewees	Onsite or remote
Head Office		
Management	12 (11F/1M)	Remote
Staff	0	Remote
Regional Offices		
Management	9 (4F/5M)	Remote
Staff	0	Remote
Country Programme(s)		
Management	5 (1F/4M)	Remote
Staff		Remote
Partner staff	8 (6F/2M)	Remote
Others (specify)	0	
Total number of interviews	34 (22F/12M)	All remote
<i>NB: no distinction made between management and staff positions</i>		

Consultations with communities

Type of group	Number of participants	
	Female	Male
No consultations conducted due to COVID-19 restrictions.	0	0
Total number of participants	0	0

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Opening meeting

Date	2020/05/04
Location	Remote
Number of participants	21
Any substantive issues arising	No

Closing meeting

Date	2020/06/26
Location	Remote
Number of participants	9
Any substantive issues arising	No

Programme site(s) briefings

Key staff from the Regional Offices, Country Offices and partners participated remotely in the opening meeting. Due to the limitations to the audit from Covid-19, separate briefings were not conducted with staff at programme sites.

3. Background information on the organisation

General

HelpAge International (HAI) is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 19 October 1983 and registered as a charity on 17 November 1983. HAI is the secretariat of a network of members, the HelpAge Global Network.

HAI mission is to promote the wellbeing and inclusion of older women and men, and reduce poverty and discrimination in later life. HAI works with older women and men in low and middle-income countries for better services and policies, and for changes in the behaviours and attitudes of individuals and societies towards old age. HAI main thematic areas include health and care, social protection, advocacy and humanitarian response.

HAI has offices in 16 countries. HAI works with 154 network members in 85 countries. HAI employed 415 staff on average globally in 2018/2019. Around 12% of HAI workforce is employed in its London Hub office, with an additional 6% of staff appointed in and paid from the UK, while living and working in another country.

Governance and management structure

HAI secretariat is based in London, and it has 4 regional hubs in Chiang Mai, Thailand for Asia; Nairobi, Kenya for Africa; Amman, Jordan for Euroasia/Middle East; and Bogotá, Colombia for Latin America and the Caribbean.

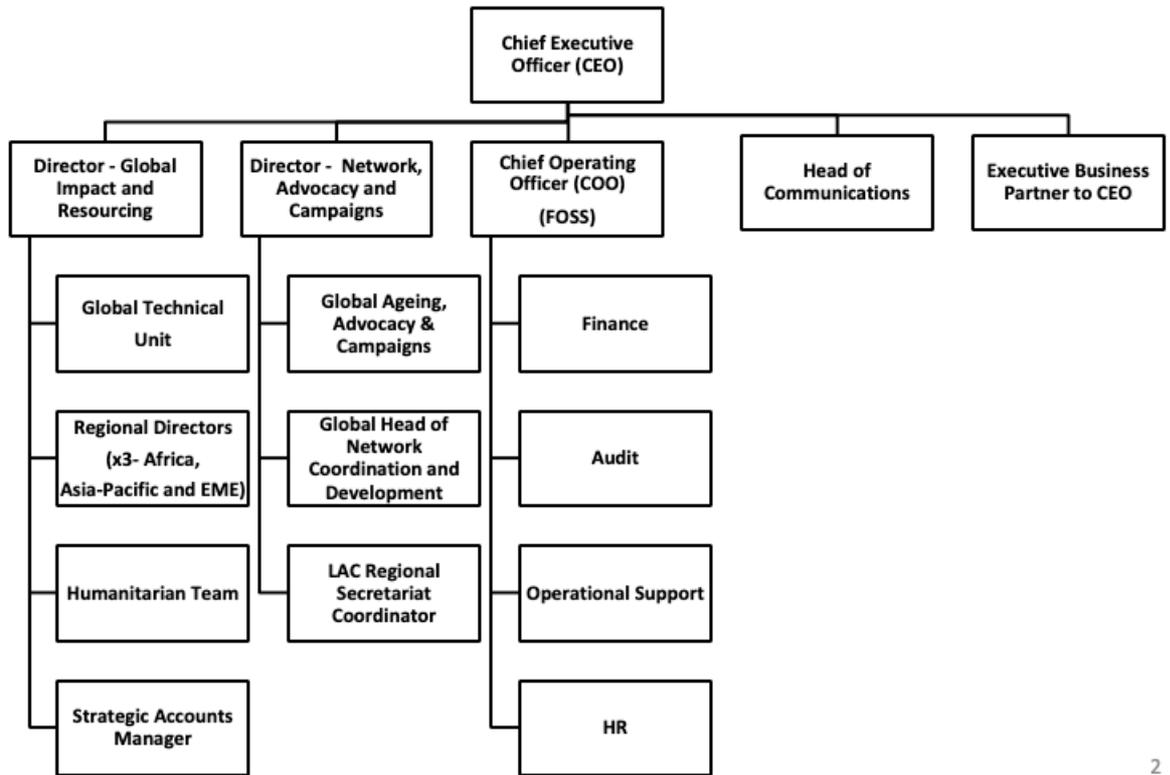
HAI has a Board of Trustees. The Trustees are responsible for the overall management and direction of the charity, and they are responsible for ensuring that the major risks facing HAI are managed appropriately and regularly reviewed. The Articles of Association allow for a minimum of eight and a maximum of 15 Directors, at least six of whom are nominated by the members and up to nine appointed by the Board of Directors, having regard to their relevant qualifications and skills. The overall gender and geographical composition of the Board is also taken into account. The current Board consists of 14 Trustees, including six nominated by member organisations. The Board of Trustees meets twice a year and is supported by six permanent sub-committees: Executive, Finance and Audit, Governance, People's, Resource Development and Ageing Policy.

Day to day management is exercised by HAI Directors and Leadership Group. Chaired by its Chief Executive Director (CEO), the Directors Group includes the Directors for Global Impact and Resourcing, Network, Advocacy, Communications and Campaigns, the Chief Operating Officer, and the Regional Directors for Africa, Euroasia & Middle East (EME), and Asia. The Leadership Group is composed by the Heads of the different sections, such as the Global Technical Unit, Network Development, Operations, Finance, etc.

HAI works both with formal network members and other independent partner organisations at an operational level in the implementation of specific contracts.

HAI has recently completed a full decentralization process, including devolution of desks to the regions, and increased autonomy of the Country Offices directly managed by HAI Secretariat, with increased responsibilities and decision-making powers on areas such as operations, finances, HR, coordination, capacity building, or programme monitoring.

HAI organisational overview is shown below:



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Effectiveness of the internal quality assurance systems

HAI’s commitment to quality assurance mechanisms and processes are reflected in its evaluation and learning approach as outlined in the Evaluation Policy, the MEAL Policy and the Evaluation Guidance Pack. MEAL is noted as one of HAI’s organisational priorities for 2018-20 in the Step for Changes strategic review.

The New Humanitarian Approach, the Accountability and Quality Framework, and the Project Design Guidelines provide further guidance for evaluation and learning from humanitarian response programmes.

MEAL responsibilities are managed by the Global Technical Unit. The team is responsible for providing technical leadership and support across HAI’s thematic areas and for advancing the organisation’s agenda on programme quality and learning and evidence to strengthen programme improvement, across regional and country offices and with network members, among other duties.

Internal audit is also an important internal quality assurance system for HAI, as outlined in its Internal Audit Charter. The Global Internal Auditor conducts a review every year of several programmes and country offices, including staff compliance to policies. Issues that emerge from internal audits are reported back to the Finance & Audit Committee and followed up during subsequent checks by the internal auditor. HAI Annual Report includes the results of the annual external financial audit of HAI financial statements.

Work with partner organisations

HAI work consists of an extensive network of members, present in 85 countries, with 154 organisations affiliated to the network. Membership of HAI is a formal relationship which is open to any bona-fide organisation involved in issues of individual or population ageing. HAI works both with formal network members and other independent partner organisations at an operational level in the implementation of specific contracts. Most HAI activities are carried out in partnership with older people's organisations, community development organisations and nongovernmental organisations. The organisation also works with academic institutions on research projects and with local and national governments and international agencies to ensure that ageing issues are at the centre of development policies. HAI's substantive partnership structure helps not only to extend the reach out of the organisation, but also to strengthening the capacity of local organisations working with older people, connect experience with government thinking and build a global alliance of organisations working to raise the voice of older people in development processes. HAI also implement some programmes directly, especially in difficult circumstances such as conflict and emergencies.

HAI commitment to partnership cooperation is outlined in its Partnership Management Manual, establishing the expectations and requirements that are placed on partners and HAI itself and is applicable to all HAI offices worldwide. The Partnership Management Manual outlines the due diligence requirements for partners implementing HAI funded programmes. This is an essential part of HAI's governance, ensuring that all contracts with partners are appropriately managed and therefore safeguarding the effective delivery of programmes and the impact these achieve. Partnership due diligence is conducted by HAI country offices, who are responsible for partnership selection. This includes an organisational information and assessment process which also includes identifying any actions required by the partner candidate to ensure full compliance for a partnership to proceed or be maintained. The Partnership Management Manual also outlines a set of guidelines for the risk categorisation of partnerships.

HAI New Humanitarian Approach has introduced a Humanitarian Capacity Development (HCD) Framework Tool, to check specifically the partners' strengths and weaknesses regarding their humanitarian response capabilities. This information informs HAI when choosing the right partner, and helps to identify potential capability gaps prior to implementing emergency response actions with these.

4. Overall performance of the organisation

Effectiveness of the management system and internal quality assurance and governance

HAI takes a systematic approach to its management systems, internal quality assurance and governance systems. This is demonstrated through HAI's commitment and associated policies and procedures for: the decentralization process as outlined in the Humanitarian Approach policy; partner capacity assessment and partnership contractual and management procedures and tools; monitoring, evaluation and learning approaches as outlined in the Evaluation Policy, MEAL Policy and Evaluation Guidance Pack; its systematic internal audit approaches; and its reporting and accountability structures from the field through to the Board of Trustees.

The Humanitarian Approach policy outlines HAI's commitment to decentralization with the recent devolution of management responsibility to its regional and country offices, network members and partner organisations, increasing their autonomy within a solid policy and procedural framework. This framework includes the Humanitarian Approach, Accountability and Quality Framework, and Project Design Guidelines.

Network Members and partners are selected and managed within a quality assurance system. This includes HAI's Partnership Management Manual, due diligence requirements, partner capacity assessment and strengthening processes, contract management, and a number of programme management policies and tools to support the implementation of quality programmes.

HAI takes a systematic approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEAL), as demonstrated through the implementation of its Evaluation Policy, MEAL Policy and Evaluation Guidance Pack. MEAL is noted as one of HAI's organisational priorities for 2018-20 in the Step for Changes strategic review.

Internal audits are regularly and systematically conducted by the Global Internal Auditor and governed by the Internal Audit Charter. Issues that emerge from internal audits are reported to the governing body and there is a formal system in place to ensure follow up.

Overall organisational performance in the application of the CHS

HAI has demonstrated a systematic commitment to the application of the CHS. It has committed significant resources to a self-assessment process conducted by external consultants in 2019 and an independent verification audit in 2020. The CHS is well socialised throughout the organisation and with network members and partners interviewed. All levels of personnel from the Board of Trustees, the leadership, management, staff, network members and partners have been involved in some form with either policy development, training, discussions or direct implementation of various aspects of the CHS. Training on the CHS and its requirements across the whole organisation is still in progress, with significant investment in particular focus areas such as complaints management, information sharing with affected people, fraud and corruption and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) although efforts have been hampered due to COV-19 restrictions. While there is good awareness of CHS requirements and a range of systems which promote compliance with particular parts of the CHS, HAI does not currently systematically assess all of its regional and country offices, or network members and partners against the whole CHS.

Performance on PSEA

HAI is investing significantly in PSEA and has demonstrated its commitment to continuing to improve practice in this regards, with a satisfactory result on the CHS PSEA Index. HAI has a Protection Policy for Vulnerable Adults and Children and associated Working Practice Guidelines which integrate exploitation and sexual abuse within a broader protection approach. The Humanitarian Approach commits HAI to a 'do no harm' approach.

In its humanitarian responses, HAI consistently and systematically implements its Humanitarian Approach, Rapid Needs Assessment for Older People, Accountability and Quality Framework, and Project Design Guidelines although PSEA risk and vulnerability assessment could be undertaken more explicitly. The Accountability and Quality Framework specifies that information on HAI's Code of Conduct and Protection Policy must be shared with affected people in appropriate languages and formats. HAI is investing significantly in strengthening its complaints response mechanisms (CRM) although due to COVID-19 restrictions, the implementation of the CRM Guidelines including training is still in progress. The CRM Guideline covers complaints relating to sexual exploitation and abuse, and other abuses of power.

The Protection Policy and Code of Conduct defines HAI's values and the expected behaviours of its staff and partners, including not to exploit, abuse or otherwise discriminate against people. The Code of Conduct makes clear

reference to PSEA principles, including the duty to report allegations or suspicions of SEA and sexual harassment.

HAI is strengthening its organisational safeguarding culture with: PSEA and complaints management as standing agenda items at Board and People Sub Committee meetings; the appointment of a global safeguarding advisor; country level complaints committees with dedicated staff; training for staff and partners; consultations and communications with communities on CRM; and a global reporting structure to more systematically record, escalate, track and respond to complaints received at field level. Implementation of the CRM Guideline including training for field staff and partners is underway although COVID-19 restrictions have delayed full implementation.

Performance on localisation

HAI has demonstrated a very strong commitment to localisation. The Humanitarian Approach guides HAI's recent devolution of management responsibility to its regional and country offices, network members and partner organisations, increasing their autonomy within a solid policy and procedural framework. This decentralization process is still being implemented, with HAI scoring 2.3 on the CHS Localisation Index. Areas of strength include building on local capacities and leadership through local partners and Older peoples Associations, strong coordination through local structures including the cluster system, and communication in languages and mediums that are accessible.

Performance on gender and diversity

HAI's commitment to gender equality and diversity is clearly evident through its Strategy 2030, Gender Equality Policy and Humanitarian Approach policy documents which commit HAI to understanding and responding to the diversity of older age and to advancing equality. HAI scored 2.8 on the CHS Gender and Diversity Index. The Humanitarian Inclusion Standards, developed by HAI, focus explicitly on the inclusion of disadvantaged and marginalised people and are well socialised and operationalised with HAI field offices, network members and partners. The Sex and Age Disaggregated Data (SAAD) Minimum Standards, Project Quality Standards, Gender Minimum Standards and RNA-OP prescribe for the collection, analysis and reporting of gender, age and disability disaggregated data. HAI actively advocates to other agencies to adopt the Humanitarian Inclusion Standards and has developed its own Gender Minimum Standards.

Organisational performance in the application of the CHS

Commitment	Strong points and areas for improvement	Feedback from communities	Average score
Commitment 1: Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant	<p>HAI has policies, procedures and practices in place to ensure its humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant, generally conforming with this commitment with some areas still to be addressed.</p> <p>HAI was a key contributor to the development of Sphere's Humanitarian Inclusion Standards for older persons and people with disabilities. These standards are actively implemented and advocated by HAI with staff, partners and within the sector more broadly. HAI systematically assesses needs and capacities using its Rapid Needs Assessment for Older People (RNA-OP) tool and this information informs the design of humanitarian response programmes. The Strategy 2030, Gender Equality Policy and Humanitarian Approach</p>	The auditors were unable to conduct the site visit and gather feedback from communities due to COVID-19 restrictions.	2.7

	<p>commit HAI to understanding and responding to the diversity of older age and to advancing equality. Ongoing contextual analysis is undertaken systematically through After Action Reviews (AAR), Real Time Evaluations (RTE) and ongoing monitoring however stakeholder analysis could be undertaken and documented more systematically. Regular internal coordination meetings, which provide the forum to share new contextual information, are held according to protocols outlined in the Humanitarian Approach however these could be undertaken and documented more systematically.</p> <p>It was not possible to verify the perspectives of affected people through this audit due to the COVID-19 restrictions.</p>		
<p>Commitment 2: Humanitarian response is effective and timely</p>	<p>HAI has policies, procedures and practices in place to ensure humanitarian responses are effective and timely with some minor weaknesses still to be addressed.</p> <p>The Humanitarian Approach commits HAI to adhere with international standards of humanitarian action including the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), Red Cross Code of Conduct, DEC Emergency Committee Accountability Framework, Sphere Standards and the Humanitarian Inclusion Standards, the last of which was co-authored by HAI in 2018. Programme designs are informed by RNA-OPs although these do not include a dedicated analysis of constraints or risks. Programme level risk registers are not systematically completed. Partner capacities are assessed through due diligence and capacity assessment tools including a recently introduced Humanitarian Capacity Development Framework tool.</p> <p>Timeliness of humanitarian responses is guided by protocols within HIA's Humanitarian Approach and HAI's own Global Emergency Fund enables an immediate 'assess and assist' response to conduct RNA-OP and provide immediate assistance. HAI accesses START and DEC funding mechanisms, both of which include deadlines to enable timely responses. HAI systematically assess the timeliness of responses through the conduct of AARs. HAI assesses and refers unmet needs to relevant agencies in a systematic manner. HAI country offices and partners are active in national coordination networks including the cluster system. HAI's MEAL Policy commits it to monitoring its humanitarian programme responses however documented monitoring reporting against activities, outputs and outcomes is limited.</p> <p>It was not possible to verify the perspectives of affected people through this audit due to the COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>The auditors were unable to conduct the site visit and gather feedback from communities due to COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>2.1</p>
<p>Commitment 3: Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities</p>	<p>HAI has policies, procedures and practices in place to ensure humanitarian responses strengthen local capacities and avoid negative effects, with some minor weaknesses still to be addressed.</p>	<p>The auditors were unable to conduct the site visit and gather</p>	<p>2.5</p>

<p>and avoids negative effects</p>	<p>HAI's Humanitarian Step Change 2018-2020 approach and commits HAI to a localisation agenda and building the capacity of its own regional hubs, network members and partners. HAI's Humanitarian Approach and implementation model commits HAI to actively developing local leadership and capacities through the employment of local staff and working through partners. This is supported through the partner capacity assessment process and capacity building plans.</p> <p>The Humanitarian Approach commits HAI to a 'do no harm' approach. Numerous policies and the staff Code of Conduct commit HAI to the safeguarding of personal and sensitive information. The RNA-OP process conducted at the commencement of all humanitarian responses, enables HAI and partners to assess general risks, however, RNA-OPs and programme design documentation do not include explicit risk analysis nor is there a process in place to ensure risks are systematically reassessed throughout implementation.</p> <p>It was not possible to verify the perspectives of affected people through this audit due to the COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>feedback from communities due to COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	
<p>Commitment 4: Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback</p>	<p>HAI has policies, procedures and practices in place to ensure humanitarian responses are based on communication, participation and feedback and conforms with this commitment.</p> <p>HAI's Accountability and Quality Framework commits it to information sharing and open communication with all stakeholders including staff, the Board, the public, donors and affected people in appropriate languages and formats. Accountability and transparency is noted as a quality area in the Project Quality Standards. HAI developed and advocates for the Humanitarian Inclusion Standards which commit to seeking and acting on the feedback of older people. The MEAL policy, Evaluation Guidance Pack and Humanitarian Approach all commit HAI to engaging with and seeking feedback from older people at various stages of work. The Complaints (and feedback) Response Mechanism Guideline recognises the importance of seeking and responding to feedback as a contributor to program quality and accountability. Interviews with staff and partners demonstrated their knowledge of these commitments and described implementation in a variety of ways including through consultations with older people committees, community leaders, at household level and through community meetings. All external communications, images and stories reviewed during the verification audit were consistent with HAI's stated Values presenting dignified and respectful images.</p> <p>It was not possible to verify the perspectives of affected people through this audit due to the COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>The auditors were unable to conduct the site visit and gather feedback from communities due to COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>3</p>

<p>Commitment 5: Complaints are welcomed and addressed</p>	<p>HAI has policies, procedures and practices in place to ensure complaints are welcomed and addressed, with some minor weaknesses still to be addressed.</p> <p>HAI is investing significantly in strengthening its complaints response mechanisms (CRM) and its organisational culture in regards to complaints management. The CRM Guideline document outlines the processes to receive, respond to, and manage questions, feedback and complaints from external stakeholders including in regards to programming, sexual exploitation and abuse, and other abuses of power however due to COVID-19 disruptions, the implementation of the CRM Guidelines including training is still in progress. There are some inconsistencies between the CRM Guideline and the Protection Policy. Recently implemented or planned approaches include: safeguarding and CRM as standing agenda items at Board and People Sub Committee meetings, appointment of a global safeguarding advisor, country level complaints committees with dedicated staff, training for staff and partners, consultations and communications with communities on CRM, and a global reporting structure to more systematically record, escalate, track and respond to complaints received at field level. This reporting structure should facilitate systematic management of complaints through the HAI system, however its implementation is not mandated in the CRM Guideline or policy document. The Protection Policy commits HAI to developing Awareness Raising Actions Plans however this commitment is not fully implemented. While the CRM Guidelines address the referral of complaints beyond the scope of HAI, this was not covered in staff training, or in safeguarding or protection related policy documents and mapping of external safeguarding support services in each country was not done systematically.</p> <p>It was not possible to verify the perspectives of affected people through this audit due to the COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>The auditors were unable to conduct the site visit and gather feedback from communities due to COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>2</p>
<p>Commitment 6: Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary</p>	<p>HAI has policies, procedures and practices in place to coordinate and complement the activities of other actors with some areas still to be addressed.</p> <p>HAI Accountability and Quality Framework commits HAI to working with different stakeholders including local government authorities, partners and donors, although these are not yet fully socialised with field offices or partners. HAI's Partnership Management Manual and partnership agreements establish the rules governing the cooperation with implementing partners, including due diligence assessments informing partner selection and identifying partner's capacity gaps. HAI country office staff and partners coordinate with government authorities and other humanitarian actors, participating in the cluster system meetings and other coordination forums, enabling access to a general understanding of other stakeholders, however evidence reviewed show that HAI do not take a</p>	<p>The auditors were unable to conduct the site visit and gather feedback from communities due to COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>2.3</p>

	<p>systematic approach to stakeholder analysis. Information is shared with government authorities and donors depending on the situation and feedback is provided to communities during final review processes. However, in the absence of a specific procedure or protocol, information sharing is uneven and not systematic across the organization.</p> <p>It was not possible to verify the perspectives of affected people through this audit due to the COVID-19 restrictions.</p>		
<p>Commitment 7: Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve</p>	<p>HAI has policies, procedures and practices in place to continuously learn and improve with some weaknesses still be to addressed.</p> <p>MEAL is noted as one of HAI's organisational priorities for 2018-20 in the Step for Changes strategic review. HAI MEAL approach includes a number of knowledge and evaluative products/actions, providing systematic mechanisms to evaluate humanitarian programmes and document information that could be used for learning. However the organisation does not take advantage of these procedures, falling short of ensuring a structured learning system across different humanitarian programmes, and across countries and regions that could inform programme proposals. HAI internal knowledge platform is still being rolled out and it is not yet fully operational. In the meantime, there is no effective alternative knowledge recording and sharing platform. Externally, HAI has made significant contribution to sector technical guidelines and advocacy tools. The organisation involves and supports partners in sector learning activities. Knowledge sharing with other humanitarian stakeholders and communities is not guided by a systematic information sharing procedure.</p> <p>It was not possible to verify the perspectives of affected people through this audit due to the COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>The auditors were unable to conduct the site visit and gather feedback from communities due to COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>1.7</p>
<p>Commitment 8: Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably</p>	<p>HAI has policies, procedures and practices in place to support and treat staff fairly and equitably with some weaknesses still be to addressed.</p> <p>HAI's delivery model is based on decentralized HAI country offices and implementing through local partners and network members. HAI's new Humanitarian Approach outlines the strategy to respond to rapid onset emergencies, envisaging additional prequalification of humanitarian partners for rapid mobilisation. This approach is however not fully socialised with all country offices. HAI has policies and procedures to ensure staff are supported to do their job effectively and are treated fairly and equitably. All staff have job descriptions, receive regular training on policies and have annual performance appraisals, including personal development plans. The Partnership Management Manual outlines HAI's commitment to learning and capacity development for its partners. Capacity building is provided to partners in line with the gaps identified in due diligence and partnerships</p>	<p>The auditors were unable to conduct the site visit and gather feedback from communities due to COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>2.1</p>

	<p>assessment processes. HAI has fully implemented its staff code of conduct which obliges staff not to exploit, abuse or discriminate against people. However, evidence reviewed show that safeguarding policies are read and signed but not fully understood by all staff. Partnership agreements require that partners have similar policies and procedures. HAI has a comprehensive Security Management System and Staff Wellbeing Policies to support staff safety, security and well-being, although access to psychosocial support for national staff is not available in all countries.</p> <p>It was not possible to verify the perspectives of affected people through this audit due to the COVID-19 restrictions.</p>		
<p>Commitment 9: Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose</p>	<p>HAI has policies, procedures and practices in place to ensure that resources are used responsibly and for their intended purpose with some weaknesses still be to addressed.</p> <p>Several of these policies are applicable to partners, such as the Serious Incident Reporting Policy and the Code of Conduct. Others regulate the transactional relationship between HAI and the partners when implementing a contract. The Ethical Fundraising Policy and the Screening Against International Sanction List Policy guide HAI's fundraising strategy and activities and oblige HAI to observe ethics and legality when accepting funds. HAI's Corporate Risk Management Matrix outlines operational risks. Other procedures and guidelines include risk assessment processes, although evidence reviewed shows these are not conducted consistently. HAI has a strong and robust approach to monitoring and reporting expenditure against budget on a regular basis, with the results informing programmatic decisions. Internal and external audit practices are undertaken regularly. HAI's commitment to balancing quality, cost and timeliness, maximizing value for money in programme design and procurement processes, is outlined in several policies and guidelines. However, evidence reviewed shows that HAI does not systematically undertake efficiency analysis of resource usage/value for money. HAI manages the risk of corruption and takes appropriate action if it is identified, including applying their zero-tolerance approach by dismissing staff when necessary.</p> <p>It was not possible to verify the perspectives of affected people through this audit due to the COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	<p>The auditors were unable to conduct the site visit and gather feedback from communities due to COVID-19 restrictions.</p>	2.3

5. Summary of weaknesses

Weaknesses	Type	Recommended resolution date
2020-2.1: HAI does not take a systematic approach to ensuring constraints are analysed and addressed in programme designs.	Minor	2022/06/30

2020-2.5: HAI does not adequately document the monitoring of activities, outputs and outcomes of humanitarian programme responses.	Minor	2022/06/30
2020-3.7: RNA-OPs, programme design documentation, Protection Policy and Guidelines do not appear to include explicit risk identification and analysis at a programme level, nor is there a process in place to ensure programme level risks are systematically reassessed throughout implementation.	Minor	2022/06/30
2020-3.6: HAI does not systematically identify and act upon potential or actual unintended negative effects in a timely and systematic manner.	Minor	2022/06/30
2020-5.7: Commitments and procedures relating to the referral of out-of-scope complaints, have not been systematically implemented.	Minor	2022/06/30
2020-7.1: Programme proposals do not include or identify lessons learned from previous programmes, especially from different countries and regions.	Minor	2022/06/30
2020-7.5: HAI does not have mechanisms in place to systematically record and share knowledge throughout the organisation.	Minor	2022/06/30
2020-8.2: Staff do not adhere to or understand all policies that are relevant to them.	Minor	2022/06/30
2020-9.4: HAI does not systematically undertake environmental impact assessments, in accordance with its own relevant policies.	Minor	2022/06/30

6. Sampling recommendation for next audit

Sampling rate	No specific recommendation. Sampling as per the scope of HAI's programme portfolio at the time of the next audit.
Specific recommendation for selection of sites	<p>It is recommended to sample sites that demonstrate implementation of both DEC funded and non-DEC funded humanitarian responses.</p> <p>The sampling should also include sites that demonstrate both direct implementation by HAI and implementation led by a partner or network member.</p> <p>Due to the impact of COVID-19 preventing site visits on this initial verification audit, it is recommended that, at a minimum, a site visit to HAI's London Hub, a country programme and a Regional Office be included in the next audit.</p>

7. Lead auditor recommendation

In our opinion, HelpAge International shows a high level of commitment to the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability and its inclusion in the Independent Verification scheme is justified.	
Signature of lead auditor:  Jo Thomson, Lead Auditor, HQAI	Date and place: 2020/07/20 Australia

8. HQAI decision

Independent Verification Decision

Registration in the Independent Verification Scheme: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accepted <input type="checkbox"/> Refused	
Next audit: Mid-Term Audit, before 2022-08-20	
 Pierre Hauselmann, Executive Director, Humanitarian Quality Assurance Initiative	Date and place: Geneva, 20 th August 2020

9. Acknowledgement of the report by the organisation

Reservations regarding the findings / remarks regarding the behaviour of the audit team:	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no
If yes, please give details:	
Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Findings: I acknowledge and understand the findings of the audit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no I accept the findings of the audit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
Name and signature of HelpAge International representative:  Cherian Mathews Director of Global Impact and Resourcing	Date and place: 2nd September 2020 London

Appeal

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

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

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

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

Annex 1: Explanation of the scoring scale

0	Major non-conformity or Major weakness
	Your organisation currently does not work towards applying this requirement, either formally or informally. It's a major weakness that prevents your organisation from meeting the overall commitment.
1	Minor non-conformity or Minor weakness
	Your organisation has made some efforts towards applying this requirement, but these efforts have not been systematic.
2	Observation
	Your organisation is making systematic efforts towards applying this requirement, but certain key points are still not addressed.
3	Conformity
	Your organisation conforms to this requirement, and organisational systems ensure that it is met throughout the organisation and over time – the requirement is fulfilled
4	Exceptional conformity
	Your organisation's work goes beyond the intent of this requirement and demonstrates innovation. It is applied in an exemplary way across the organisation and organisational systems ensure high quality is maintained across the organisation and over time.