Mission East
Maintenance Audit – Summary Report MA2 2020/07/01

1. General information

1.1 Organisation

Type	Mandates	Verified
☐ National ☐ Membership/Network ☐ Direct Assistance ☒ International ☐ Federated ☐ With partners	☒ Humanitarian ☒ Development ☐ Advocacy	☒ Humanitarian ☒ Development ☐ Advocacy
Head office location	Copenhagen, Brussels & Berlin	

Total number of country programmes	8	**Total number of staff**	244

1.2 Audit team

Lead auditor	Birgit Spiewok
Second auditor	-
Third auditor	-
Observer	-
Expert	-
Other	

1.3 Scope of the audit

CHS Verification Scheme

Audit Stage	Certification	Independent Verification	Benchmarking	Other
Initial audit (IA)	☐	☐	☐	☐
First maintenance audit (MA1)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mid-term audit (MTA)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Second maintenance audit (MA2)	☒	☐	☐	☐
Recertification audit (RA)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Extraordinary audit	☐	☐	☐	☐
Short notice	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other *(specify)*	☐	☐	☐	☐

1.4 Sampling

Randomly sampled country programme site	Included in final sample *(Yes/No)*	Replaced by	Rationale for selection / Comments	Selected for onsite visit or remote assessment
North Korea	No	Iraq	At the time of the MA2, Mission East did not have any active programming in-country. Also, the international coordinator was not present in DPRK at this time.	remote
Nepal	Yes			remote

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

2. Activities undertaken by the audit team

2.1 Locations assessed

Locations *(offices, projects at country programme level)*	Dates	Onsite or remote
Staff at HO	8 & 10 June 2020	remote
Staff at Country Office Nepal	9 &10 June 2020	remote
Staff at Country Office Iraq	27 May & 8 June 2020	remote

2.2 Interviews

Position / level of interviewees	Number of interviewees	Onsite or remote
Head Office		
Management		
Staff	3	remote
Country Programme(s)		
Management	2	remote
Staff	2	remote
Partner staff	-	
Others (specify)		
Total number of interviews	**7**	remote

2.3 Opening meeting

Date	2020/06/08
Location	remote
Number of participants	8
Any substantive issues arising	-

2.4 Closing meeting

Date	2020/06/10
Location	remote
Number of participants	8
Any substantive issues arising	-

3. Background information on the organisation

3.1 Governance and management structure	Mission East is an international relief and development organisation, which works to help vulnerable populations, supporting communities' capacities to organize and assist themselves, through activities ranging from disaster relief to development assistance. It was established in 1991 and its original focus was on former Soviet republics in Eastern Europe. Mission East has Head Offices in Copenhagen, Brussels and Berlin. As at end of 2019, Mission East had 244 staff of which 102 were based in Afghanistan. Mission East is governed by a board of five members who are all European based. The Managing Director reports to the Board.
	The vision of Mission East is to empower people and communities in crisis affected countries to lift themselves out of poverty and marginalization. Mission East works in response to community needs, in Disaster Response and Rural Community Development. As well as direct implementation, Mission East works with and through local and international partners. Mission East's 'Values in Action' are honesty, integrity, compassion, respect for all people and valuing

the individual. In its work, ME follows three key approaches: Resilience; Inclusion; Accountability & Partnership.

Mission East (ME) has not had any major changes in its organisational structure or management system since the last surveillance audit.

3.2 Effectiveness of the internal quality assurance systems	Mission East has well established internal quality assurance systems. This includes a comprehensive reporting system including annual Quality & Accountability reporting, complaints mechanism reporting twice a year and monthly workbook reporting. The Quality & Learning Department now consists of a two-person team providing in-person and remote tailored support to the country programmes to strengthen MEAL awareness and application. The department is also responsible for managing the CHS certification processes. They support the ME team by conducting CHS and organisational policy refresher trainings, supporting the country teams in developing their CHS Improvement Plans, and organizing targeted coaching for system and process adherence to ensure all staff are aware and apply the principles and minimum standards. There are no major changes in ME internal quality assurance systems since the MTA.
3.3 Work with partner organisations	Mission East also works with and through 30 partner organisations and these represent a wide range of civil society organisations in the countries in which it has programming. Mission East sometimes elects to directly implement some of its humanitarian response and this decision is usually based on whether they can find local partners that can respond quickly and to the standards required. Similarly, Mission East directly implements some non-humanitarian programming where it feels that there are no local partners with the required capacity to implement the project to the levels required. Partnership arrangements are governed by 'Partner Grant Agreements', 'Terms and Conditions', and 'Strategic Partnership Commitments'. Mission East has standard templates for these documents. Mission East builds capacity of local organisations with which it works. Capacity building is based on gaps identified through partner assessments and ongoing monitoring and covers compulsory trainings. There are no major changes in how ME works with its partners since the MTA.

4. Overall performance of the organisation

4.1 Effectiveness of the management system and internal quality assurance and governance	Within Mission East, there is a high level of commitment from staff to genuinely live and apply the standard to drive quality. Being a small organisation provides opportunities for information and learning to be shared quickly and there are clear and open pathways for communication between HO and PS. This facilitates quick decision making, through monitoring and adaptation in practice. In the past three years, Mission East has worked towards having the necessary systems, policies and guidance in place to ensure and demonstrate how it applies the CHS. Mission East is a learning organisation and demonstrates how it identifies weaknesses through monitoring or complaints systems, takes measures to remedy the shortcomings and has processes in place to track mitigation of poor performance. It is noteworthy that Mission East addresses weaknesses in a participatory function, engaging with field staff, partner organisations and communities to find the best possible solutions, taking into consideration local circumstances. The management and the Quality & Learning Department demonstrate commitment to ensuring that weaknesses are solved in a systematic manner by identifying the root causes and developing global and country level improvement plans.
4.2 Overall organisational performance in	ME continues to show very high commitment to and overall high compliance with the CHS. The organisation systematically works towards accountability and transparency and uses the results of the audits for improvements in organisational structure, policy development, and adapting and expanding procedures in line with the CHS commitments. This work is reflected both at HO and at field level.

the application of the CHS	Mission East monitors all corrective actions addressing non-conformities and observations made during the surveillance audits via their annual assessment against the organisation's Quality Commitment Framework, of which CHS is a component.
	In the initial audit, 8 minor CARS and 18 observations were identified. Except for one, all of the CARS were centred around policies or guidance frameworks. Substantial work was done by ME to address these issues and at the time of the MA1, 5 out of 8 minor CARs had been fully addressed and were closed. The three remaining CARS were extended until the Mid-Term Audit in June 2019 to allow for further verification of their application at field level. The Mid-Term Audit verified and closed those three non-conformities. One observation (2.3) had not been addressed and this became one new non-conformity with a resolution timeframe of two years.
	Although at the time of the MA2 the organization had taken systematic action to close the non-conformity by installing several procedures in consultation with the country programmes, these procedures and tools have not been fully rolled-out in all field sites and application of the procedures and systematic practice could not be fully verified. Therefore, the CAR will remain open to be fully addressed by mid-2021. It will be reviewed at next audit.
	Since not all organisational commitments have been assessed for continued compliance in the past two surveillance audits and in line overall risk management, the auditor decided to also assess the continued compliance with CC 2.7, as it is linked with the CAR on 2.3 and had not been assessed during the MTA. ME showed full compliance with this organizational requirement.

4.3 Average score per commitment

CHS Commitment	Average score*
Commitment 1: Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant	2.8
Commitment 2: Humanitarian response is effective and timely	2.7
Commitment 3: Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects	3.0
Commitment 4: Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback	2.7
Commitment 5: Complaints are welcomed and addressed	2.9
Commitment 6: Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary	3.0
Commitment 7: Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve	3.0
Commitment 8: Staff are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably	3.0
Commitment 9: Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purpose	2.8

5. Summary of non-conformities

Corrective Action Requests (CAR) / Weaknesses *(YYYY – indicator)*	Type (minor / major)	Resolution due date	Date closed out
2019 – 2.3 The organisation does not ensure that all unmet needs identified during the project cycle are referred in a systematic and accountable way.	Minor	2021/07/25	

6. Sampling recommendation for next audit

Sampling rate	In line with HQAI sampling rates, 2 country programmes of which one is remote and one field visit.
Specific recommendation for selection of sites	Armenia (office closure in 2019 and in the process of handover to partner organisation) may be an interesting programme to be selected for review. Iraq or Afghanistan (largest programmes) may be adequate for assessment (remote or onsite, if security conditions allow)

7. Lead auditor recommendation

In our opinion, Mission East Mission East has made substantial progress towards full resolution of the minor CAR and continues to conform with the requirements of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability. The CAR on 2.3 will remain open to be fully addressed by mid-2021. We recommend maintenance of certification.	
Name and signature of lead auditor: *Birgit Spiewok* Birgit Spiewok, Lead Auditor	**Date and place:** 01 July 2020 Berlin

8. HQAI decision

☒ Certificate maintained ☐ Certificate suspended	☐ Certificate reinstated ☐ Certificate withdrawn
Next audit Re-certification before: 2021-07-25	
Name and signature of HQAI Executive Director: *Pierre Hauselmann* Pierre Hauselmann	**Date and place:** 2020-07-07 Geneva, Switzerland

9. Acknowledgement of the report by the organisation

Space reserved for the organisation	
Any reservations regarding the audit findings and/or any remarks regarding the behaviour of the HQAI audit team: *If yes, please give details:*	☐ yes ☑ no
Acknowledgement and Acceptance of Findings: I acknowledge and understand the findings of the audit I accept the findings of the audit	☑ yes ☐ no ☑ yes ☐ no
Name and signature of Mission East representative: Peter Drummond Smith, Interim Managing Director *[signature]*	**Date and place:** 20 August 2020 Brussels, Belgium

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.