HUMANITARIAN QUALITY ASSURANCE INITIATIVE

HQAI INSIGHTS

ORGANISATIONS IMPROVE SIGNIFICANTLY BETWEEN INITIAL AND RENEWAL AUDITS.

WHAT WE'VE ASSESSED:

HQAI analysed the change in average scores between the Initial Audit and the first Renewal Audit – a 3-year cycle – **across 12 organisations.** These organisations are engaged in either the **HQAI CHS Certification scheme** or the **HQAI CHS Independent Verification scheme.**

The analysis builds on earlier work conducted jointly by HQAI and the CHS Alliance, which had already shown that CHS scores improve over time. HQAI's annual control measures serve to monitor and confirm this trend, demonstrating **the impact our audits and strengthened control systems have on our partners' quality and accountability.**

WHAT THE RESULTS SHOW:

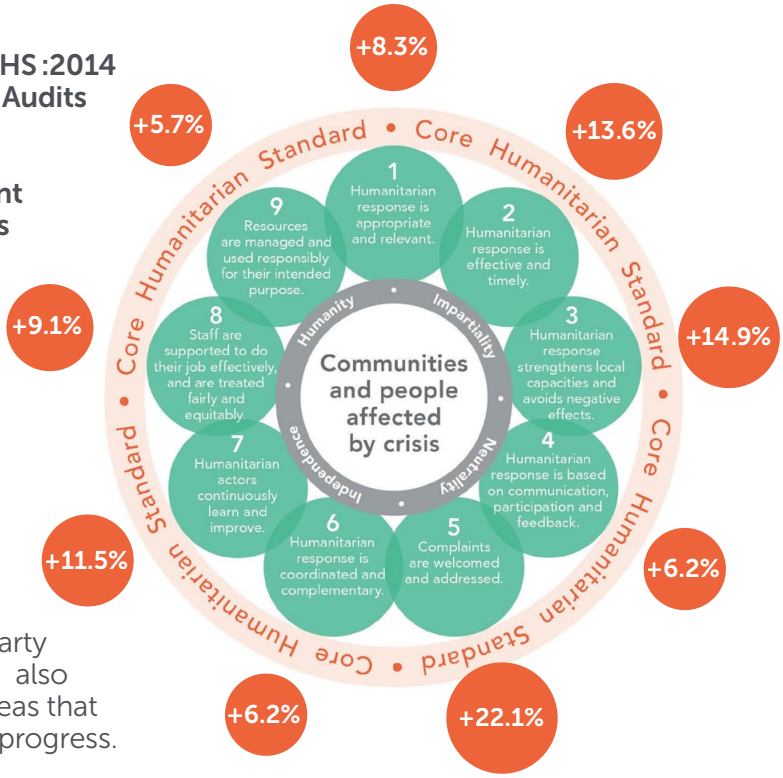
On average, organisations improve across all nine CHS :2014 Commitments between their Initial and Renewal Audits (+13%).

The data also shows that the most significant improvements happen in areas where organisations initially perform lower.

Commitment 5 is a striking example. It often records the lowest scores at the Initial Audit (average score at Initial Audit 1.6). Yet, it also shows the **greatest improvement rate: +22%** by the Renewal Audit.

Commitment 6 is already relatively strong at the Initial Audit (average score at Initial Audit 2.7), putting less pressure on improvement. As a result, the growth rate is more modest, at **+6.2%**.

This pattern confirms the added value of third-party audits: they not only measure compliance, but also encourage organisations to focus their energy on areas that need the most attention – and achieve measurable progress.



SPOTLIGHT ON SAFEGUARDING: THE PSEAH INDEX

The trend becomes even more evident when looking at Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Sexual Harassment (PSEAH). **The PSEAH Index measures all safeguarding-related indicators of the CHS** and is produced for every Initial and Renewal Audit.

The 12 organisations improved their average scores under the PSEAH Index by 14.5% over the 3-year cycle.. This demonstrates that the aid actorsv not only strengthen general accountability, but also **make a concrete difference in safeguarding practices.**

CONCLUSION

Across the board, organisations improve their CHS scores between Initial and Renewal Audits. More importantly, audits **lead aid actors to focus on weaker areas and achieve significant progress where it matters most.**

© HQAI 2025-10-01