

UN Implementing Partner PSEA Capacity Assessments Fully Covered by HQAI CHS Audits

HQAI CHS audits can objectively inform 100% of UNICEF’s PSEAH assessment for CSOs. As part of ongoing efforts in the aid community to reduce duplication and streamline administrative efforts, this objective coverage has the potential to result in significant savings for UNICEF, other UN agencies* and their partners, without compromising on the rigour of assessments.

* UN agencies have agreed to accept the findings of PSEA assessments completed by other UN agencies (UN Partner Portal), and thereby avoid duplication of PSEA Assessments by multiple UN agencies on shared partners.

HQAI proposes an approach that leverages the use of professionally validated audit data for multiple purposes. As part of a collaboration between HQAI, the UK, Denmark and Luxembourg, HQAI has assessed the level of coverage between CHS audits and selected due diligence and capacity assessments (DANIDA, DG ECHO, FCDO, UNICEF PSEA).

From Theory...

To lead the groundwork, HQAI and its partners produced a desk-based mapping against these different assessments. This step concluded that **100% of the information needed for an UNICEF PSEA assessment can be covered by HQAI CHS audit evidence.**

| Scores | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2+3 |
|-------------|--|--|---|---|
| Definition | Not covered by HQAI CHS audits – The existing information does not answer the assessment question. Additional information would need to be collected. | Partially covered by HQAI CHS audit - The information necessary to answer the question is normally part of the evidence for the HQAI CHS audit but requires further processing. | Fully covered by HQAI CHS audit – The required information is provided by [the audit]. The assessment question can be answered directly based on the findings of HQAI. | % of assessment question that are ranked either a 2 or 3. |
| UNICEF PSEA | 0% | 57% | 43% | 100% |

The mapping further concluded that CHS audits can inform the following sections of due diligence requirements:

- safeguarding, PSEAH, code of conduct;
- governance and internal quality control;
- quality project management;
- downstream delivery with implementing partners;
- complaint mechanism and do no harm.

To Actual Bridging...

In the pilot phase, HQAI conducted a CHS certification audit on the national organisation Friendship Bangladesh and **used the audit evidence to also inform all other selected assessments** (“bridging”; one audit to answer five requirements). The pilot partners concluded to a sweeping success of the approach and confirmed the estimated 100% coverage of UNICEF’s PSEA tool in practice.

A further milestone was reached when FCDO finalised guidelines on how to use CHS audits as a primary source of information in their due diligence assessments, including their PSEAH section, and decided to continue collaboration on passporting options based on HQAI CHS audits.

To Passporting.

As part of the efforts to avoid multiple requests of equivalent information from organisations, **due diligence and capacity assessments holders can recognise HQAI CHS audits as proxies for their own assessment tools (“passporting”)**. With careful collaboration and commitment, due diligence passporting holds the potential of significant sector-wide savings (financial, admin and HR resources) **without compromising on accountability and rigour.**

Key Benefits of Due Diligence Bridging and/or Passporting:

Faster Vetting: Passporting cuts duplication, saving time and resources for quicker partner approval.

Cost Savings: Organisations and funders save resources by avoiding repetitive assessments and leveraging existing evaluations.

Reduced Risk: Using trusted data improves decision-making and minimises partnership risks.

Quality and Accountability: Systematised passporting ensures consistent evaluation with common benchmarks, boosting trust across the sector.