HUMANITARIAN QUALITY ASSURANCE INITIATIVE

Verification against the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability

Tearfund

October 16, 2015

1.   General information

Organisation Name:	Tearfund	Verification Ref / No:	Tearfund-2015-10-12
Type of organisation: ☐ National ☒ International ☐ Federated ☐ Membership/Network ☐ Direct assistance ☒ With partners		Organisation Mandate: ☒ Humanitarian ☒ Development ☒ Advocacy Verified Mandate(s) ☒ Humanitarian ☒ Development ☒ Advocacy	
Organisation size: (Total number of programme sites/ members/partners)		Legal Registration: (NGO, Church, etc)	INGO
Head Office Location:	Teddington, London	Field locations verified:	Manila/Roxas, Philippines
Date of Head Office Verification:	May 18-20, 2015	Date of Field Verification:	May 22-28, 2015
Lead Auditor:	Johnny O'Regan	2nd Verificator's Name: (indicate if Trainee)	Veronika Martin
		Observer's Name and Position	

2.   Scope

☐   External verification   ☐   Mid term Audit

☒   Certification audit   ☐   Recertification audit

The scope of the work included the activities of its geographic regions where Tearfund is responsible for direct implementation and partners receiving single disaster response grants in excess of STG100,000. The verification team visited the programme being directly operated by Tearfund and so the report generally addresses partnership where this is specifically required by the standard.

3. Schedule summary

3.2 Verification Schedule

Name of Programme sites/members/partners verified	Location	Mandate (Humanitarian, Development, Advocacy)	Number of projects visited	Type of projects
Head Office	Teddington, UK			
SHIELD- Community Visit	Talon	Humanitarian	1	Core Shelter, Shelter Repair Kit, Livelihoods
SHIELD- Community Visit	Balijuagan	Humanitarian	1	Core Shelter, Shelter Repair Kit, Livelihoods
SHIELD- Community Visit	Bay Bay	Humanitarian	1	Core Shelter, Shelter Repair Kit, Livelihoods
SHIELD- Community Visit	Dumulog	Humanitarian	1	Core Shelter, Shelter Repair Kit, Livelihoods
SHIELD- Community Visit	Loctugan	Humanitarian	1	Core Shelter, Shelter Repair Kit, Livelihoods
SHIELD- Community Visit	San Jose	Humanitarian	1	Core Shelter, Shelter Repair Kit, Livelihoods
SHIELD- Community Visit	Liong	Humanitarian	1	Core Shelter, Shelter Repair Kit, Livelihoods
SHIELD- Field Office	Roxas City	Humanitarian		Core Shelter, Shelter Repair Kit, Livelihoods
SHIELD- Community Visit	Jumaguicjic	Humanitarian	1	Core Shelter, Shelter Repair Kit, Livelihoods

3.2   Opening and closing meetings

1) At HO

	Opening meeting	Closing meeting
Date	18/5/2015	20/5/2015
Location	Teddington, London	Teddington, London
Number of participants	5	6
Any substantive issue arising	None	None

2) At PS

	Opening meeting	Closing meeting
Date	22/5/15	27/5/15
Location	Manila	Manila
Number of participants	7	3
Any substantive issue arising	None	None

4.   Recommendation

In our opinion, Tearfund conforms to the commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standard. We recommend certification.

Detailed findings are laid out in the rest of this report.

Auditor's Name and Signature	Johnny O'Regan	Date and Place:	Dublin, 27/07/2015

Johny o'Regan

5.   Background information on the organisation

5.1   General:

Tearfund UK was created in 1968 by the Evangelical Alliance as a response to the Biafra civil war in Nigeria. Tearfund undertakes long-term development work to address the causes of poverty, disaster response activities to reduce death and suffering caused by disasters and conflict, and advocacy to address the underlying causes of poverty and influence those who can change policies and actions affecting the poor. Tearfund is a member of the Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) in the UK, which launches and coordinates responses to major disasters overseas including through appeals to the public. Tearfund works with the Integral Alliance, a grouping of 22 international Christian NGOs with a focus on coordinating disaster responses. Tearfund works has particular expertise in:

- Development work, including water, sanitation, and livelihoods
- Emergency Response: Primary Health and Nutrition; Public Health Education; Water and Sanitation; Shelter; Household and Livelihood; Security.
- Mitigation: Sustainable Recovery; Capacity Building; Development Education; Protection.
- Advocacy (Climate Change / Environmental Sustainability; Poverty /Economic Justice; Basic Services to the Poor); HIV/AIDS; Gender Equality and Disaster Management.

Tearfund normally works with local partners and as a faith based agency priority is given to strengthening local church capacity to respond to the disasters affecting their communities. However, in the case of large scale disasters or if local partners have limited capacity, Tearfund may establish an operational programme. Tearfund is currently working in 44 countries, and directly implementing operations in seven countries.

Tearfund's 12 Quality Standards for Emergency Response distill internal and external accountability, codes, guidelines and principles committed to by Tearfund regarding how relief projects should be undertaken at community level. The Quality Standards are the basis for all programmatic guidelines and procedures.

5.2   Organisational structure and management system:

The Board of Trustees, appointed by members at the Annual General Meeting, is responsible for Tearfund's strategic direction and formally meets quarterly. The Board works in consultation with the Executive Team comprised of the Chief Executive and five Heads of Departments: People and Organisational Development, International: Global programmes; International: countries, Global services, and Global fundraising. The International Countries department is organized around four geographic regions (Eurasia, Latin America and the Caribbean; East and Southern Africa; Asia; West and Central Africa). Within those regions, strategy formulation, decision making and delegation of authority is decentralized to Country Representatives within defined financial limits and in line with Tearfund policies and procedures. The International Countries department includes a Humanitarian Support Team that provides coordination, facilitation, advisory and surge support in a disaster.

Decision making processes in a crisis

Humanitarian Review meetings involve detailed situation analysis by stakeholders including geographical teams and the Humanitarian Support Team (HST). It might consider capacity to respond to slow onset crises or triggers for a meeting of the Crisis Operations Group (COG). The COG (including additional finance, logistics, technical personnel) monitors developing disaster situations and develops the initial emergency response strategy with supporting budget and funding strategy. It meets at least once per week usually until the real time review. For very large disasters, the Executive Team provides input around considerations such as organisational capacity. Thereafter, country level processes consider engagement in terms of accessibility, cost, logistics, coverage, and complementarity. After the strategy has been approved, the Crisis Coordination Meeting (CRICOM) monitors and co-ordinates the outworking of the agreed response for the duration of an appeal budget, meeting at least quarterly.

Tearfund in the Philippines

Typhoon Haiyan (locally known as Yolanda) was the most severe typhoon ever recorded making landfall when it struck the Philippines on November 8, 2013. Over four million people were displaced and more than six thousand people died. The DEC launched its appeal to the British public days later. Tearfund's initial strategy was to provide support/ capacity building to partners, all of whom are members of the Integral Alliance. Partners constructed 210 semi-permanent structures with the first 6 months as well as providing emergency roofing, non-food items and food distributions to 3940 households. Tearfund commenced direct operations in April 2014 on Panay and East Negros islands. The main focus has been shelter; 270 shelters were planned for each island as well as financing for shelter repair and livelihood interventions by supporting affected people to develop micro-enterprises. Tearfund's DEC funded programme is expected to last until October 2015

5.3   Certification or verification history:

Tearfund was recertified by People in Aid and received its Kite Mark, which certifies that Tearfund is 'Verified Compliant with the People In Aid Code' until 2016.

Date	Audit Type	Sites audited
June 18, 2008	Certified	London, Liberia
Dec 2009-January 2010	MTPA	London, North Sudan
December 22, 2011	Recertified	London, Haiti
October 2013	MTPA	London, Kenya

6.   Sampling

6.1   Rationale for sampling

A review of country programme offices led to the short listing of three countries offering a fair picture of Tearfund's activities and way of operating. These are detailed in the following table:

Rank	Country	Pros and cons
1	Philippines	comparatively limited security and health concerns, auditors both have experience in-country
2	DRC	at present no major security concerns but this is liable to change, working in a francophone country adds an additional challenge
3	South Sudan	at present security is manageable but this is liable to change, obtaining visas can be problematic.

Within the Philippines, the verification team (by agreement with Tearfund) selected Panay Island, which was one of two sites where Tearfund directly implemented operations. Therefore this report only focuses on Tearfund's direct response and does not examine Tearfund's intervention through partners.

6.2   Visited sites:

6.3   Interviews

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

Type of people interviewed	Number of people interviewed
Head Office	
Management	10
Staff	12
Programme site	
Management	5
Staff	13
Total number of interviews	40
Head Office	
Management	10
Staff	12
Programme site	
Management	5

Focus Group Discussions (interviews with a group >6)

Type of Group	Number of participants	
	Female	Male
Individuals	8	5
Focus Groups with beneficiaries of Tearfund's direct programmes (including shelter, shelter repair, livelihoods)	85	24
Total number of participants	93	29

7.   Summary

See meaning of scores in Annex 1

7.1   Summary by criterion

1.   Humanitarian assistance is appropriate and relevant

Score: 3

Tearfund is committed to targeting the most vulnerable for aid and has systems to guide and promote this and it adapts programmes where it becomes aware of changes in needs or context. In the Philippines, Tearfund provided the highest level of assistance (shelter) to the most needy based on a rigorous analysis and community consultations but because it did not provide them with means (such as livelihoods) the programme did not have sufficient focus on their vulnerabilities and capacities.

2.   Humanitarian response is effective and timely

Score: 2

Tearfund has numerous systems in place to respond to humanitarian emergencies in a timely manner. In spite of this, Tearfund's direct operations response in the Philippines was not timely and therefore not as effective as it might have been. Significant delays resulted from the decision to implement programs directly as well as delays in internal approval processes. Some of these delays were as a result of the desire to deliver high quality assistance and it is clear that Tearfund takes protection and community safety seriously. Unmet needs are referred to other organisations with the capacity or mandate to address those needs. Tearfund has systems (and willingness) to address poor performance although in the case of the Philippines, the feedback generated was generally not broad or deep enough to achieve this goal.

3.   Humanitarian response strengthens local capacities and avoids negative effects

Score: 3

Tearfund's policy to work with local partners promotes strengthening of local capacities and Tearfund systems help to avoid negative side effects. However, its programs were not always designed to maximize resilience and recovery, for example in the Philippines, it did not offer affected populations a holistic aid programme. Tearfund made targeting decisions based on community consultations; however adherence to best practices on reducing vulnerability would have ensured that badly affected households would have received livelihood support as well as shelter and therefore aided the most vulnerable in a more sustainable recovery. Tearfund undertakes meaningful consultation with local leaders and promotes representation of marginalised populations in local leadership. Tearfund provided strong disaster risk reduction support to communities in the Philippines; it has developed exit strategies and promoted linkages with government programmes.

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

Score: 3

There is a clear commitment to transparency in the organisation and Tearfund is committed to having a strong field presence and involving communities in feedback and decision-making. Representation of affected communities is gathered through a range of mechanisms. In the Philippines, feedback was often limited to prescribed topics, which reduced opportunities for meaningful participation.

5. Complaints are welcomed and addressed

Score: 2

Tearfund commits time, staff, and resources to systematically implementing feedback and complaint mechanisms and, where necessary, escalates the results to the highest levels of the organization. In the Philippines, the quality of feedback and complaints was compromised due to capacity gaps among field staff who did not have a sufficient grounding in accountability and community rights. Communication regarding sexual exploitation and abuse is not always appropriately communicated at the field level.

6. Humanitarian response is coordinated and complementary

Score: 4

Tearfund has a focus on coordination and complementarity generally and particularly through the Integral Alliance. It coordinates well with other agencies in the UK and national and local government in the Philippines.

7. Humanitarian actors continuously learn and improve

Score: 3

Tearfund is focused on continuous improvement and is constantly exploring new mechanisms for and approaches to learning. It sometimes struggled in the Philippines with learning because of staffing and capacity gaps in the initial phase of the response and more recently with generating learning on the ground. However, macro level learning from the Philippines (and other responses) has been brought to other programmes.

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

Score: 3

Tearfund takes staff development seriously and has a range of mechanisms to support staff and ensure that programmes are adequately resourced. The Philippines programme had some critical management gaps in the initial phases of the response that have now been resolved. Junior staff in the Philippines that interact with communities are generally rule and procedure focused rather than having fully grasped Tearfund's philosophy and values around accountability.

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

Score: 2

Tearfund generally has good policies, systems and procedures around resource management and monitoring. The main concern in the early stages of the Philippines programme was around efficiency owing to management changes and capacity gaps. The main concern at present is around efficiency as a result of the geographic spread of the programme. Tearfund's commitment to the environment, financial management and anti-corruption is clear from its policies, procedures and scrutiny of these issues at senior management level.

7.2   Summary of non conformities

See meaning of Minor and Major nonconformities in Annex 1

Non compliance	MAJOR	MINOR
Commitment 1		1.5b Tearfund policies do not commit to collect disaggregated data to include the 1.5b Tearfund policies do not commit to collect disaggregated data to include the diversity of communities.
Commitment 2		2.2a As illustrated by the Philippines response, decisions are not systematically made without unnecessary delays
Commitment 5		5.1 Communities are not systematically consulted on the design, implementation or monitoring of complaints handling processes 5.6 Communities and people affected by crisis are not systematically made aware of the expected behaviour of staff, particularly commitments on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.
Commitment 6		6.6 Tearfund's partnership agreements do not fully reflect each partner's capacities and constraints.
Commitment 9		9.1 As illustrated by the Philippines response, programmes are not always designed and implemented as efficiently as possible
TOTAL Number	0	6

7.3   Major strengths and weaknesses

Major Strengths

Tearfund is a mature organisation with capable management and staff and a genuine commitment to the accountability agenda. It generally has very strong systems and

procedures, including those to respond to disasters in a timely and effective manner and an understanding of the need for rigorous analysis. It takes programmatic contextualisation and adaptation very seriously and is focused on delivering high quality aid to communities, with a clear focus on reaching the most vulnerable, all of which was evident in the Philippines. It coordinates well with other organisations, particularly fellow members of the Integral Alliance but also with national and local government. Tearfund's thirst for continual improvement is evident through its commitment to implementing systematic feedback mechanisms, programmatic monitoring and its pursuit of a learning agenda in the sector. It has robust mechanisms to ensure that issues are escalated to senior management level to be addressed and good practice reflected upon and replicated.

Major Weaknesses

The timeliness of Tearfund's direct response in the Philippines was sub optimal and, at the time of the verification visit (18 months after the typhoon struck), not all of the promised 570 shelters had been constructed and livelihoods programmes had recently begun. A principal reason was delays due to the decision to undertake direct operations (mainly because Tearfund was making efforts to respond solely through partners) as well as slowness in some internal decision making procedures. Delays setting up offices, hiring staff and numerous changes in the leadership negatively affected the efficiency and effectiveness of the early phases of the response and programmatic spread continues to adversely affect the efficiency of the programme. A number of staff in the Philippines that interact regularly with communities do not have a sufficiently strong grounding in Tearfund's ethos and accountability, which has limited Tearfund's ability to learn (and adapt programmes) based on complaints and feedback mechanisms.
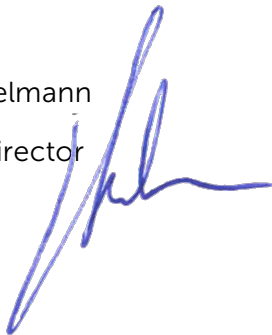
The team acknowledges that some of these issues were highlighted by Tearfund's own internal systems and that where Tearfund becomes aware of issues, they are addressed decisively. The team further recognises that these issues described above are in relation to the Philippines and, while serious, may not be representative. However, they are primarily as a result of decisions taken (or not taken) at the central level.

8. Decision

Quality Control by:	Quality Control finalised on:
Elissa M. Goucem	First Draft: 2015-06-21
	Final: 2015-07-30
Certification Decision	**Date: 12 March, 2016**

Certification Decision	
Certification	Intermediate audit
☒ Certified ☐ Not certified (Major CARs)	☐ Maintenance of certificate ☐ Suspension of Certificate (Major CARs)

Pierre Hauselmann

Executive Director

ANNEX 1: Scoring scale

Score	Key actions	Organisational responsibilities
0	Operational activities and actions systematically contradict the intent of a CHS requirement. Recurrent failure to implement the necessary actions at operational level. A systemic issue threatens the integrity of a CHS Commitment (i.e. makes it unlikely that the organisation is able to deliver the commitment).	Policies and procedures directly contradict the intent of the CHS requirement. Complete absence of formal or informal processes (organisational culture) or policies necessary for ensuring compliance at the level of the requirement and commitment.
	A score of 0 is equivalent to a major nonconformity in a certification process, resulting in a major corrective action request (CAR). A certificate is not granted until major non-conformities are eliminated, withdrawn if they appear during the cycle and cancelled if they are not corrected within a short timeframe, identified by the auditor in the report.	
1	Some actions respond to the intent behind the CHS requirement. However: There are a significant number of cases where the design and management of programmes and activities do not reflect the CHS requirement. Actions at the operational level are not systematically implemented in accordance with relevant policies and procedures.	Some policies and procedures respond to the intent behind the CHS requirement. However: Relevant policies exist but are incomplete or do not cover all areas of the CHS. Existing policies are not accompanied with sufficient guidance to support a systematic and robust implementation by staff. A significant number of relevant staff at Head Office and/or field levels are not familiar with the policies and procedures. Absence of mechanisms to ensure the monitoring and systematic delivery of actions, policies and procedures at the level of the commitment.
	A score of 1 is equivalent to a minor nonconformity in a certification process, resulting in a minor corrective action request (CAR). A minor nonconformity allows a certificate to be granted, but requires corrective actions within a specified time frame. Minor nonconformities that are not closed within the given time frame become Major nonconformities. An array of nonconformities that in isolation would be minor can indicate jointly a major nonconformity.	

2	Actions broadly respond to the intent behind the CHS requirement: Actions at operational level are broadly in line with the intent behind a requirement or commitment. However: Implementation of the requirement varies from programme to programme and is driven by people rather than organisational culture. There are instances of actions at operational level where the design or management of programmes does not fully reflect relevant policies.	Policies and procedures broadly respond to the intent behind the CHS requirement. However: Relevant policies and procedures exist but are partial and not always accompanied with sufficient guidance to support a systematic and robust implementation by staff. Some staff are not familiar with the policies and procedures, and/or cannot provide relevant examples of implementation. The organisation does not have sufficient quality assurance mechanisms to ensure systematic implementation across the organisation.
	A score of 2 is equivalent to an observation in a certification process, Observation do not lead to a corrective action request, but the attention of the organisation is drawn on an issue that may deteriorate into a minor nonconformity if not addressed.	
3	Actions respond to the intent of the CHS requirement: The design of projects and programmes and the implementation of activities is based on the relevant policies and reflects the requirement throughout programme sites. Staff are held accountable for the application of relevant policies and procedures at operational level, including through consistent quality assurance mechanisms.	Policies and procedures respond to the intent of the CHS requirement: Relevant policies and procedures exist and are accompanied with guidance to support implementation by staff. Staff are familiar with relevant policies. They can provide several examples of consistent application in different activities, projects and programmes. The organisation monitors the implementation of its policies and supports the staff in doing so at operational level.
	A score of 3 is equivalent to compliance with the specific requirement of the standard in a certification process.	

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. Communities and other external stakeholders are particularly satisfied with the work of the organisation in relation to the requirement.	**As 3, but in addition:** Policies and procedures go beyond the intent of the CHS requirement, are innovative and systematically implemented across the organisation. 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.
	A certification process does not identify levels of application beyond compliance. A score of 4 is thus also a compliance with the specific requirement of the standard. However it indicates an exemplary way of complying with the requirement.	
5	**As 4, but in addition:** Actions 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.	**As 4, but in addition:** Policies and procedures go far beyond the intent of the CHS requirement and could serve as textbook examples of relevant policies and procedures. Policy and practice are perfectly aligned.
	Same as 4, but indicates an almost perfect way of complying with the requirement of the standard, e.g. because the organisation receives outstanding feedback from communities and people. A score of 5 should only be attributed in exceptional circumstances.	