

# Standards vs. Targets Learning Activity Handout

## Background

Sphere, and the other members of the [Humanitarian Standards Partnership](https://www.spherestandards.org/humanitarian-standards/standards-partnership/)<sup>1</sup> (HSP), recognise the following definitions of standards and indicators (from [The structure of standards](https://handbook.hspstandards.org/en/sphere/#ch002_002_001_002)<sup>2</sup> on page 6 of the Sphere Handbook).

- **The standards** are derived from the principle of the right to life with dignity. These are general and qualitative in nature, stating the minimum to be achieved in any crisis. The equivalents in the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) are the “commitment” and “quality criterion”.
- **Key indicators** serve as signals to measure whether the standard is being attained. They provide a way to capture process and programme results against the standard and over the life of the response. Minimum quantitative requirements are the lowest acceptable level of achievement for indicators and are only included where there is sectoral consensus.

In the underlined sentence, “Minimum quantitative requirements” describe the **targets** which are presented with some indicators.

## Learning activity

The activity you have just completed was designed so that you could explore the relationship and differences between **standards** and **targets** for yourself. Now that you have done this, the definitions presented in the Handbook and above should make more sense.

### Standard:

People can safely view the beautiful landscape

### Key indicators

#### Number of crates

- 1 per person

## Key takeaways

- 1 Pursuing **targets** rather than **standards** is to assume that everyone is born with equal **needs**, rather than equal **rights**, which is a potentially harmful error.
- 2 Always consider the **context**, including the **needs**, **capacities** and **vulnerabilities** of the people you are trying to assist.
- 3 People affected by crisis should **participate actively** at every stage of the response.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.spherestandards.org/humanitarian-standards/standards-partnership/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://handbook.hspstandards.org/en/sphere/#ch002\\_002\\_001\\_002](https://handbook.hspstandards.org/en/sphere/#ch002_002_001_002)