

**15th Board meeting of the
Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
7th May 2009
Maison Internationale de l'Environnement 2, Genève**

Approved Minutes

Present

Antonio Donini – Independent (Vice-Chair)
Matthew Carter – CAFOD
Matthew Frost – Tearfund
Lisa Henry – DanChurchAid
Andreas Kamm – Danish Refugee Council (Chair)
Jemilah Mahmood – MERCY Malaysia
Jonathan Mitchell – CARE International (Treasurer)
Mamadou Ndiaye – OFADEC
Agyedho Othwonh Bwogo – Independent

Apologies

Rezaul Chowdhury – COAST Trust
Dr Ivone Atar Adaha – Independent
Mary Anderson – Independent

Ex Officio

Nicholas Stockton – HAP Executive Director
Monica Blagescu – HAP Policy Services Coordinator
Pascale Guillot – HAP Finance and Donor Relations Manager (for item 5b)
Cowan Coventry and Geoffrey Salkeld – external consultants (for items 6 & 7)

The 15th Board meeting started at 9.00.

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed Agyedho Othwonh Bwogo and Matthew Frost to the Board.

2. Adoption of agenda

Decision: Agenda adopted as proposed.

3. Minutes of the 14th Board Meeting

Decision: The draft minutes were approved.

4. Matters arising

- a) **Nomination of independent Board Members:** The two independent Board member vacancies had been filled with the election of Dr Ivone Atar and Agyedho Othwonh Bwogo.
- b) **SCHR consultation on certification:** JMi reported that MA, with JMi's support, facilitated a discussion on humanitarian accountability, HAP and certification at a recent meeting in the US of the Inter-Agency Working Group (Mercy Corps, CRS and IRC alongside other HAP members). Questions around the applicability of certification to large and decentralised organisations and factors that affect the

decisions of large agencies to engage in external compliance verification and certification were explored.

NS thanked JMi and MA for taking the initiative to organise the discussion.

Action: Notes from the IWG meeting in the US will be circulated to the Board when they become available.

- c) **CARB Feedback to Standard Review Process:** The Secretariat was asked to ensure that the Standard Review would receive feedback from the CARB. To ensure that this happens, two of the independent CARB members have agreed to serve on Standard Review Steering Committee.
- d) **Revision of Standard Review ToR:** As requested, research into the impact of the Standard on the lives of disaster survivors has been prioritised in the revised ToR.
- e) **Follow up on funding applications:** No follow-up was required after the October Board meeting because InterAction decided not to proceed with a joint application. NS noted that other funding issues are to be discussed in the Director's report.
- f) **HAP and the GHD:** The Secretariat circulated a copy of the GHD Principles and a brief note on linkages with the HAP Standard. A suggestion was made that members of the Board highlight linkages between the HAP Standard and the GHD Principles at other fora.

Action: The evaluation to investigate factors affecting progress on strategic partnerships (GHD).

- g) **2010-2011 Workplan and Budget:** the process is scheduled for September and will include the total sum of days under each sub-section as requested.
- h) **Selection of auditor:** the selection of the 2009 auditor is due to take place later in the year.

Action: PG to consult the Treasurer on the selection of the auditor from a shortlist.

- i) **Mid-term strategic review:** due to difficulties in identifying a suitable mid-term reviewer, the Secretariat focused on planning the external evaluation. The mid-term review ToR had been incorporated in the evaluation ToR.
- j) **2008 Humanitarian Accountability Report:** the Report was produced earlier and printed for circulation during the GA as proposed by the Board.

5. Director's Report

- a) **Programme update:** see Appendix 1.
- b) **Finance update:** NS informed the Board that the Secretariat proposes a reduction in activities and budget compared with the budget approved in October 2008, and that a contingency plan is in place from August if no further funding is secured to cover the deficit.

Discussion points

The Chair noted that it is reassuring to see a contingency plan already in place. The Chair and MC suggested that the first contingency be to seek financial support from members. MN noted the advantage of having scenarios and contingency plans.

The Board suggested that options for sustainable income sources are discussed during the strategic planning process and that individual Board members actively seek to provide support to the Secretariat in raising funds.

Action: the Treasurer to have a briefing on the financial situation with the Secretariat every two months (starting from July) and inform the Board of any critical developments.

PG presented the 1st quarter financial report. There were no further questions of clarification.

6. HAP Evaluation

- a) **Process:** GS noted that the Chair is the client for the evaluation. A draft evaluation report will be available by the end of June, to inform the start of the strategic planning process. GS noted that errors of facts will be corrected based on feedback from the Board and the Secretariat, and differences of opinion will be kept in the final report, to be available by the end of July.

Action: the draft evaluation report to be circulated for review to all Board members.

- b) **Discussion with consultant:** the discussion focused on priority questions that the Board would like addressed through the evaluation. Members of the Board recommended the following as priority questions:
- Where has change occurred and what is the evidence that HAP is making a difference? How effective has HAP been in promoting accountability to beneficiaries?
 - What scope is there for the Secretariat to take a greater lead to set directions for the Partnership. How does HAP listen to beneficiary voices?
 - Why do agencies engage with HAP and why do they enrol in certification? Why are large NGOs not making progress towards certification? What makes small and medium organisations opt for certification? Should HAP focus only on them as key target groups and less so on large agencies at this stage in the development of the partnership?
 - The Chair noted that DRC is already seeing evidence of the positive effect of certification on the organisation, staff and communities.
 - MC requested that the consultant looks beyond large agencies. JM_i added that the question concerning the appropriateness of certification for large agencies should not be disregarded. AB added: how much of HAP is internalised by the large agencies? How much responsibility do head office staff take in sharing information about HAP with the field?
 - How do UN agencies and other quality and accountability initiatives perceive HAP and its role?
 - Due consideration should be given to the feedback from the GA.
 - The evaluation should disaggregate the views of donors, the views of agencies that are certified, enrolled in certification and those that are not engaging with the certification process, and the differences and/or similarities in opinions and experiences of staff at different levels within organisations.

MB updated the Board on progress and current plans in the Standard review process; timely delivery of the evaluation report will inform the review.

7. 2010-2012 Strategic Plan

- a) **Process:** CC noted that the staff strategic planning workshop is scheduled for June 3rd- 5th; at the end of the process, members will be approached with some specific strategic options to steer the final draft, which will be delivered the last week in July to NS. The Strategic Plan will be presented to the Board in October. GS and CC will work closely to ensure that evaluation and strategic plan are aligned.
- b) **Discussion with consultant** focused on two main questions:
- The Board would want the strategic plan to deliver the following:
 - Understanding of key issues that affect HAP's ability to deliver its mission, and drivers that influence options/choices (outspoken advocacy agenda versus working collaboratively within the sector);
 - Balance between ambition and resources; strategy on mobilising resources;
 - Energy within the strategic targets, i.e. HAP is not "just about accountability", but about the impact that the humanitarian system is having on the lives of millions of people;
 - Support in anticipating scenarios and clarity about the choices that are being made while protecting the HAP niche.
 - The following were discussed as strategic issues that the plan needs to address for HAP to move forward:
 - How the HAP Standard/certification can be applied to multi-level, multi-mandate organisations and how will tensions in the membership between multi-mandate organisations be addressed? AD added that the plan should include a strategy for extending advocacy into the "political arena".
 - The perceived proliferation of standards and collaboration with partners.
 - Is there conflict between advocacy for beneficiary accountability and the organisational development agenda? One working hypothesis that should be examined is that "large NGOs don't like beneficiary accountability": why is this the case and how will this affect HAP's progress?

8. AOB

- JMa noted that more time should be allowed for discussion on items proposed during the General Assembly. The Chair noted the suggestion for future action.
- LH suggested that the GA be more constructively critical and strengthen the peer review element amongst members in relation to their membership obligations.
- The mandates for MN and AK are ending; the Chair will continue through to the next GA, when a new Chair will be elected

9. Dates of next meetings

Decision: the following dates were agreed

- ***16th Board Meeting: 26 October 2009***
- ***17th Board Meeting: 10 May 2010 (revised date proposed by Secretariat)***
- ***8th General Assembly: 11-12 May 2010***
- ***18th Board Meeting: 20 October 2010***

Decision: Board to provide timely feedback on the draft workplan and budget in October.

The Chair thanked all those present and the session was adjourned at 16:00.

These minutes are a fair and accurate record of the 15th Board Meeting

Chair:

Andreas Kamm

Date:

Treasurer:

Jonathan Mitchell

Date:

Appendix 1:

Executive Director's Report

2009: Year to date Progress against Workplan

Policy Services

- Members' Accountability Workplan Guidelines updated.
- Annual Report distributed to the General Assembly.
- Accreditation standard development ToR prepared.
- Standard Review:
 - INTOSAI and Transparency International to advise
 - Steering Committee formed and first meeting held
 - Dialogue initiated with ACFID (Australia), InterAction (USA) and BOND (UK).
- Q & A inter-operability pursued:
 - HAP/People In Aid propose joint baseline analysis to members
 - Dialogue continued with the Sphere Project on the HAP Standard Review and the Sphere Handbook revision (particularly the Common Standards)
 - HAP-Sphere-People In Aid information note sent to the ECB Project Director and to focal people of HAP members engaged in the Project
- Discussion initiated with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative on joint research.
- External study on the effect of complaint handling processes on programmes, staff and the lives and perceptions of disaster survivors commissioned.
- Joined Q&A Initiatives' Working Group on online community of practice; to prepare joint funding application to SIDA for scoping e-learning technologies.
- Briefing on the HAP Standard with the UK Charity Commission, One World Trust and Alertnet/Emergency Information Service.
- 1st issue of the 2009 HAP Newsletter produced and disseminated.
- HAP 2007 Standard translated into French.
- HAP certification endorsed in draft DANIDA humanitarian policy
- HAP certification in process of being adopted by Norwegian MFA

Development Services

- New Emergencies Policy:
 - New Roving Representative appointed (Maria Kiani – former training officer in HAP Pakistan).
 - Members surveyed on NEP priorities.
- Pakistan – HAP Pakistan office being closed due to registration difficulties, slower than expected progress towards achieving HAP franchise status, and general operational concerns.
- Membership services:
 - Organizational Development Advisor appointed (Lyla Rogan) to lead HAP's baseline analysis service.
 - 15 baselines requested. Secretariat is now struggling to meet demand for this service.
 - Merlin (HQ & field), Women's Commission (HQ) completed.
- Growth of membership: Increasing flow of enquiries and membership applications, resulting in large part from targeted membership drives in Sweden, Norway and the Netherlands.
- Delivered two investigations training workshops on cost recovery basis
- Delivered two CRM trainings on cost recovery basis
- Provided training to Kenya in-country network on PSEA on cost recovery basis
- Delivered CRM training on ATHA course in Sweden
- Took part in UN ECHA PSEA Taskforce meetings and discussion at global level
- Provided technical support to Myanmar Quality and Accountability Coordinator and member and non-member agencies, field support two weeks.
- Developed proposal and concept for "inspectorate" project to include PSEA specifically for the Standard Review Process

Regulatory Services

- Certification: CAFOD HQ Audit completed
- Mid term Audits: OFADEC HQ and Field Audit completed
- Accreditation:
 - Baseline of ACT conducted in April 2009 inter alia, to gather information for ACT preparedness to undertake certification audits. LWF Head Office baseline analysis in June 09 as "field-site" for ACT (also as baseline for LWF separate certification process)
 - HAP invited to take part in ACFID Code of Conduct review with a view to making ACFID certification "HAP-compliant".
 - HAP approached by CERF (Central Emergency Response Fund) to assist in creating OCHA-CERF quality assurance system
- Complaints:
 - One complaint received against a HAP member – case referred to member and file open.
 - One complaint received against non-HAP member - advice provided.
 - HAP Trained Investigator provided on request to one member.

Governance and management

- CARB holding first meeting simultaneously with the Board
- HAP evaluation process launched
- Strategic planning process launched
- Satisfactory audit completed
- Five new members approved by the Board
- Donor visits made to Australia, ECHO, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UK.
- Funding applications submitted to Australia, Canada, ECHO, Netherlands, and Switzerland. Applications in preparation for USA (OFDA & BPRM), Norway and DFID. Discussions opened through SC-UK with Diana Memorial Fund and Comic Relief.
- All due reporting requirements met
- Cash-flow management: expenditure review has identified CHF 370,000 savings and revised expenditure parameter of CHF1.8 million in force from May.
- Contingency plan for short time working prepared for implementation from August 2009, should new donations of CHF 390,000 not be realised by end July. Working time cuts will be made in proportion to shortfall against this target. (This would imply a worst case scenario of a CHF150,000 reduction in HAP's reserves). Strong verbal commitment received from Norway, plus reasonably positive indications from ECHO, DFID, Netherlands, Australia and Canada justify optimistic outlook for 2009.
- From April 2009, the HAP Secretariat has, for the first time since 2004, a staff establishment in line with the authorised budget.

Nicholas Stockton
Executive Director
Geneva - 1 May 2009