

# **Humanitarian Accountability Partnership - International**

*"making humanitarian action accountable to beneficiaries"*

## **Accountability and Quality Management Standards Development**

### **Workshop Report**

**Dhaka, Bangladesh**

**31<sup>st</sup> May to 1<sup>st</sup> June 2006**

<b>HAP-I Staff</b>		<b>Participants</b>	
Sheryl Haw	HAP I	Sanwar Ali	Oxfam GB
Zia Choudhury	HAP I	Dr Benedict Alo D'rozario	Caritas
Jennifer Birdsall	HAP I	Jagannath Dutta	CARE International
Emmanuel Minari	HAP I	Stephen Halder	WVI
Dr. Rakib Abu	Workshop Administrator	Tofazzel Hossain	Resource Integration Centre
<b>Guest Facilitators</b>		Suman SMA Islam	SCF UK
Monica Oliver	CARE International	Gayathri Jayathevan	Oxfam GB
Sultan Ahmed	Independent	Allen Jelich	DRC
Sahadev Mahat	Independent	Saim Khan	Progress Together Foundation
Phoeuk Sok	Oxfam GB	Hari Krishna	Oxfam US
<b>Apologies</b>		Marta Marañón	DARA International
Shareen Ghani	MERCY Malaysia	Fazlur Rahman	CARE Bangladesh
Remedios Gorgonio	Oxfam GB	Kaiser Rejve	Oxfam GB
Awadia Mohamed	CARE International	Khodeza Rume	Oxfam GB
Geoff Shepherd	WVI	Paula San Pedro	DARA International
Vita Siregar	Oxfam GB	Charles Sarker	Christian Aid
Ingvild Solvang	CARE International	Johny Sarker	DfID
Jenny Wells	Caritas	Saiful Islam Shaheen	Independent
<b>Beneficiary Representatives</b>		David Shields	CRS
Zainal Abedin Katenga	Independent	Velina Stoianova	FRIDE
Safia Begum	Independent	David Verboom	Echo
Zala Uddin Matubbar	Independent	David White	Oxfam GB
Ambia Begum Dangi	Independent		

### **Executive Summary**

31 participants met, many for the first time, to familiarise themselves with the HAP International accountability standards development process, to work through the first draft of the standards and indicators and input into the process. Their combined field and management experience was astounding and went along way to further refine and improve the standards and indicators.

A big thank you for all who attended and fully participated in this challenging and extremely crucial process.

Sorry to the 7 participants that were unable to make the workshop. 4 were redirected to respond to the Indonesian earthquake, and 3 were sadly unable to extract visas from the respective High Commissions.

### **Opening Address**

Many thanks to Farid representation Oxfam Bangladesh for your encouraging words that underlined the need to increase accountability in the humanitarian aid sector. Oxfam Bangladesh co hosted the workshop and assisted with visa application, location support

# Humanitarian Accountability Partnership - International

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amongst many other small and very important tasks that together ensure a smooth running workshop. With special recognition of Kaiser Rejve, Anil Tambay and Hassan Ali.

## Purpose of Workshop

To draw together experienced field practitioners and other interested quality and accountability stakeholders so that:

- Our combined experience and knowledge could be shared as we reflected on accountability issues
- We could jointly identify gaps and find solutions
- We could discuss the current draft of the HAPI standards and ensure that they are:
  - Relevant
  - Measurable
  - Feasible
  - Affordable
  - And add value to the work we are entrusted to do.

## Standards Development Process Update

A summary of the history and current stages of the accountability standards was presented.

Key time line:

## Time Table 2006

Activity	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Identify beneficiaries for ESC												
Identify interviewers for consultation												
Consultation with beneficiaries and managers												
First draft of standards to Reference Group												
Field testing of Standards & Indicators												
Regional <u>W/shops</u>					Asia 31-1	Africa 3-4						
Redraft Standards & Indicators												
Collation of Manual												
Certification trials set up.												

## Quality Initiatives

An overview of current quality initiatives was shared with participants, including a summary update for each initiative on their current status and focus.

- SPHERE
- ALNAP
- Clinton Initiative
- People In Aid
- ECB2
- MANGO
- Group URD / Quality Compas

# **Humanitarian Accountability Partnership - International**

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The aim of this session was to indicate how the quality initiatives have different focuses in quality assurance and how HAP-I sees this standards development process working within the sector.

## **Beneficiary Concerns**

HAP International invites beneficiary representatives to attend all process development meetings as underpinning the standards development work is the main vision of HAP-I:

## **A Humanitarian system championing the rights and the dignity of its intended beneficiaries**

HAP-I has 8 beneficiary representatives from around the world on the accountability standards editorial committee. At the Bangladesh workshop HAPI, with the help of Oxfam Bangladesh, invited 4 beneficiary current / former recipients of aid to share their experiences of aid support during a disaster they had had to live through.

The testimony and sharing of concerns deeply impacted the overall workshop. A striking comment made was *"we are honoured to be invited to take part in this workshop. We hope that you will listen, that you will hear and that you will learn."* It is our desire to do just that. Please see the input collated from the discussions and insights shared by our 4 guests in Annex B.

## **Pakistan Earthquake**

A number of participants expressed their appreciation for the new developments that HAP-I has taken into placing an accountability advisor quickly on site after an emergency to assist members and interested non members in how to improve accountability in the heat of an emergency response. Emmanuel Minari updated us on what HAP-I has achieved so far in Pakistan, highlight the ups and downs and lessons learnt.

The key lesson take was that field managers appreciated the support and wanted to know and ensure they were being as effective as possible and ensuring accountability practices were being adhered to.

## **Complaints Mechanisms**

Zoning in on Standard 6, which is often seen as threatening, mainly due to some real and some perceived fears of what will be the impact of actually soliciting complaints.

A number of key points were discussed about why it was important to ensure beneficiaries have a mechanism to complain / feedback:

- Can act as an early warning about problems arising within the community / programme related activities
- Can allow a non judicial dispute resolution mechanism
- Is a vital opportunity for listening and learning (important "customer" feedback), thus builds trust
- Will help in effectiveness and efficiency use of resources – less mistakes
- Redress power balance between aid agencies and recipients of aid.
- Improve security: a community that knows they are being heard are more likely to remain calm and supportive.
- Above all though, having a complaints mechanism is about taking responsibility. It is about being accountable.

The aim of further developing this standard is to help develop *simple procedures and mechanisms that give beneficiaries access to safe means of voicing complaints on areas relevant and within the control of the agency.*

# **Humanitarian Accountability Partnership - International**

*"making humanitarian action accountable to beneficiaries"*

## **Day One Conclusion**

The evaluation of day one highlighted that participants felt that the sessions had been too rushed and not enough time given to actually working on the standards. Taking this into account, the day two agenda was changed to allow a number of hours for concentrated work to be undertaken on each standard.

## **Standards Development Work**

All 7 standards were worked on in working groups. Indicators were refined, surplus points removed and the means of verification honed further.

In the final draft the means of verification section will in fact been removed. It is in this current version to help the understanding and practical application insight of the standards and indicators.

See **Annex C** with the revised accountability standards and indicators. Input from the workshop linked to good practices and tools seen as necessary have been include din this next version – **dated 6<sup>th</sup> June 2006**

## **Tools and Good Practice**

A tool is something that gives one advantage to do their work more efficiently and effectively. The collation of tools put together by ECB2 in their "How to Guide" was shared with participants alongside the standards and indicators. The working groups were able to further add a number of good practice suggestions and tools they felt would compliment this selection. (See Annex C). However, due to time contrraints linked to the revised agenda for Day Two, we were not able to look at individual tools or good practice support links. It was recommended that this would be further prioritised in the Nairobi workshop. The ECB2 guide will be sent to all participants to comment and feedback on post the workshop.

## **Field Testing Plan**

There are at present 4 planned opportunities HAP-I has created for further consultation and input in the indicator and verification development and refining process:

1. Regional Workshops: Bangladesh and Kenya
  - Targeting: Regional Field Staff, Beneficiaries & Donor Representatives
2. Feedback Forms – linked to the draft standards and indicators sent out
  - Targeting: HAP Members, Reference Group Members, and other Interested Parties
3. Voluntary Self-Assessments
  - Targeting: Agency Representatives who would like to participate through testing 1 or more of the standards and indicators at their field site. This would entails requesting the testing methodology pack form HAP-I and completing the framework of questions.
4. HAP-Assisted Voluntary Field Site Trials
  - Targeting: 3 HAP-I members of different sizes and locations. HAP-I will visit 3 member field sites and over a period of 3-4 days review with the member how they understand and view the standards and indicators. The field test will also zone in the "business case" of applying the indicators to ascertain affordability, criticality and feasibility.

## **Debate "Accountability and Quality Management are inseparable?"**

2 participants were asked to support or oppose the motion and what followed was a lively and interactive debate which tracked the history of quality assurance and quality

# **Humanitarian Accountability Partnership - International**

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management and how important this was to ensure accountability. Equally vital was the related of the constraints and context humanitarian relief works faced daily. The motion was won, though it was clear that systems should be developed, trained and in place before emergencies, lessons learnt and ploughed into the system to ensure each emergency response is more and more effective.

Thanks you to David Verboom and Jagannath Dutta for taking up the challenge to lead us in this debate.

## **Conclusion**

The overall objective of this workshop was:

1. Accountability and quality management discussions would have increased our awareness and given us further understanding on how to move this forward in our programmes. **Achieved**
2. An improved and refined set of standards and indicators would be agreed upon. New draft attached – **not all input has been added as further discussions are expected with the Nairobi workshop.**
3. Good practice methods will have been identified and collated to add to the accountability manual. **This was touched on and will be followed up more fully at the Nairobi workshop – see good practice tools suggested in the standards attached.**
4. This workshop helps us bring in a new and radical development in the humanitarian sector. **Achieved – we are a step closer – well done everyone!**

## **Annexes:**

**A:** Evaluation Summary from Participants – alongside response from HAP-I

**B:** Summary Translation of Beneficiary Representatives Working Group Input – many thanks to Sultan Ahmed for leading this group and for his translation for us.

**C:** Revised Accountability Standards and Indicators – draft 2 – dated 6<sup>th</sup> June 2006

## **Written by**

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HAP International

10<sup>th</sup> June 2006