

QUICK REFERENCE – ideas for resource allocation as part of emergency response project proposals to support accountability to disaster survivors

The table below contains some ideas that can be adapted based on programme focus and context. Activities may also be integrated into existing approaches without requiring additional costs (e.g. questions on beneficiary satisfaction can be inserted into pre-existing monitoring formats).

If you would like to...	Consider budget allocation (and staff time) for...	Reference ¹
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with disaster-affected communities to identify the most appropriate means for sharing information 	Transport and meeting costs for field visits, etc.	<i>Strengthen information dissemination (Benchmark 2)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt and disseminate information to disaster-affected communities in appropriate formats and using appropriate media 	Translation of materials, training community committees, holding community meetings, running radio adverts, hiring theatre groups, producing notice boards, leaflets / posters, photographs, etc.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep staff and partners informed on latest project decisions and progress updates. 	Meeting and material production costs.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify beneficiary representatives who can accurately represent the needs of women, children, elderly, disabled and other vulnerable groups 	Transport and consultation costs, etc.	<i>Ensure participation and informed consent (Benchmark 3)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable participation of beneficiaries and their representatives in project design and needs assessment, implementation, monitoring and evaluation 	Transport, conducting participatory activities (venue, refreshments, reimbursement for time?), training of beneficiary representatives, etc.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with disaster-affected communities to identify the most appropriate means for receiving and processing complaints 	Transport and meeting costs for field visits, etc.	<i>Establish mechanisms for complaint handling (Benchmark 5)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and run an effective complaint and response mechanism 	Setting up means of receiving complaints (e.g. 'phone number, training complaints committees, complaints register and other supplies etc), developing a complaints filing and tracking system, means of responding, etc.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise staff and community awareness to ensure understanding of complaints handling procedures 	Transport, training/meeting costs, other communication costs, etc.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build staff and volunteer (both agency and partner) awareness on the agencies expectations around a) key commitments, and b) ways of working with disaster-affected communities (including the staff code of conduct). 	Training costs, development and production of induction materials, etc.	<i>Build staff competencies (Benchmark 4)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct specific capacity building activities so that staff and volunteers (both of the agency and partners) have a good command of approaches/tools needed to achieve the above. 	Training costs, development and develop induction materials for all new staff, etc.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translate key organisational documents into local languages so that they are accessible to all staff. 	Translation services, printing costs, etc.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct systematic assessments/reviews of programmes with specific focus on quality and accountability 	Rapid assessment costs, regular review meetings to document lessons learnt, real time evaluations, etc.	<i>Ensure continual learning (Benchmark 6)</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use learning to adapt and improve programmes in real time 	A degree of budget flexibility to respond to learning. For example, common complaints often relate to the incorrect inclusion or exclusion of someone from the beneficiary list. Such complaints can be solved relatively easy with contingency planning and if resources are available.	

April 2010

¹ For more details see the HAP 2007 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management, which is available to download free via www.hapinternational.org

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the benefits of strengthening accountability?

HAP members have reported a number of positive impacts as a result of strengthening accountability. These include: increased ownership and projects that meet the needs and preferences of disaster-affected communities; increased trust between the agency and the community; improved staff security, satisfaction and retention; saving of money; early detection of problems allowing these to be addressed by the agency before they escalate; identification of fraud.

Why consider resources as part of the programme budgets?

HAP Members' experience to date has highlighted three relevant learning points in terms of ensuring accountability from the early stages of an emergency response²:

- 1) Accountability should be part of programmes from the early planning and implementation stages (including in relief, recovery and disaster risk reduction programmes).
- 2) Dedicated resources (staff time and funds) **may be** needed, and should be allocated in programme budgets and funding proposals for activities that support more accountable approaches and better quality programming.
- 3) Accountability is a process and strengthening it requires ongoing consultation with disaster-affected communities, alongside awareness-raising and sensitisation of project staff.

Consider activities need to ensure quality and accountability from the early planning stages can:

- i. Ensure sufficient resources are available to carry out activities linked to ensuring accountability and quality management.
- ii. Remind staff at all levels of the organisational commitment to designing and implementing programmes that take into account the needs of disaster-affected communities.
- iii. Reiterate the level of support from senior managers for such practices.
- iv. Integrate accountability to disaster-affected communities as a crosscutting theme in reporting, monitoring and evaluations.
- v. Guide field staff on their agency's approach to accountability as part of the emergency response programme.

How much should be budgeted?

Different agencies take different approaches to strengthening and ensuring on-going accountability, and these approaches may change over time. Some choose to focus on strengthening overall programmes, others undertake discreet activities as a means to kick-start improved accountability. Ultimately accountability should become integrated into 'the way of doing things'. As such the actual costs will depend on a number of factors including: the nature of the context; the programme size; existing staff capacity; and the degree of existing processes and practice within the agency that encourages accountability to disaster survivors.

As an example of two approaches, World Vision in Sri Lanka dedicated about 3% of their total programme budget to specific quality and accountability activities. Tearfund in Northern Kenya dedicated about 1.5% of their total budget but as an organization they are aiming to include an "Accountability and Quality" budget line in all programme proposals, with a suggested target of 2-5% of the total budget.

Where should staff capacity for accountability activities be found?

Staff capacity could be in the form of:

- a) Increased capacity among existing field positions at each project site (with associated responsibilities for accountability integrated into relevant staffs' job profiles).
- b) Dedicated accountability staff to facilitate improved practice across programmes. Learning to date has shown that, as improving accountability is everyone's responsibility, dedicated quality and accountability staff (when used) should have clear terms of reference that emphasises their role as facilitators of a process, so that accountability is not perceived solely as their responsibility.

Are donors supporting more accountable programming?

Donors are becoming increasingly interested in both contributing to work that strengthens quality and accountability in the aid sector and supporting programmes that demonstrate accountability. HAP's current and past funders, a number of who also have in place policy guidelines and funding criteria that recognise the importance of accountability to disaster-affected communities, include: Danida (Denmark), ECHO, IrishAid, Sida (Sweden), AusAID (Australia), OFDA (USA), and DFID (UK)

More information...

Is available via www.hapinternational.org Examples of tried and tested approaches and tools from HAP members can be found on our [Case studies and Tools](#) page.

² For example, learning from Medair in Pakistan and Indonesia, World Vision in Sri Lanka, and Tearfund in Pakistan.