

## Information from HAP, Sphere and People in Aid For Agencies in the ECB Country Consortia

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### Sphere and HAP

Sphere and the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) share a common base, emerging out of the belief that disaster survivors have a right to life with dignity. Sphere provides standards about the minimum requirements (water, sanitation, food, nutrition, shelter and health care) to alleviate suffering and satisfy basic rights to life with dignity for disaster survivors. HAP provides a Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management including six benchmarks (accountability framework and management system, information dissemination, participation and informed consent of disaster-affected communities, staff competencies, complaint handling, continual improvement) which, when applied, provides assurance that the power of humanitarians is neither misused or abused and that disaster-affected communities receive the best possible humanitarian service.

### HAP and People in Aid

Furthermore, HAP and People In Aid share a belief that aid agencies should be able to demonstrate their commitment to programme quality through independent verification of their management systems.<sup>1</sup> Agencies that have been through both the People In Aid and HAP certification processes report little overlap or duplication. Their HR departments, for example, who usually lead on the organization-wide improvements in HR and people management practice sought through implementing the People In Aid Code, have been pleased to be acknowledged as part of the organisation's overall commitment to quality and accountability, sought by the HAP certification process.

### Commitment to working together

The revision of the Sphere Handbook and the review of the HAP 2007 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management will take place from 2008 until 2010, to culminate with the publication of a new edition of the Sphere Handbook and the adoption of the HAP 2010 Standard. One of the considerations in the respective revision processes is to explore options and demonstrate interoperability between the Sphere Handbook (the Common Standards in particular) and the HAP Standard, as well as to reference or include the People In Aid Code.

The recent HAP-Sphere deployment to Myanmar further demonstrates the respective commitment to providing joint practical support to interested agencies. HAP and People in Aid have also sealed their commitment to working together by offering interested agencies simultaneous baseline analyses.

### Linkages between HAP, Sphere, PiA and the ECB Project

*"Rather than duplicating the work of others, the ECB Project has made a commitment to working with and through important existing sector standards and networks, such as [Sphere](#), [People in Aid](#), [ALNAP](#), [HAP International](#) and [Nethope](#)."*

How will this commitment be turned into practice? HAP member agencies are taking part in the review of the HAP Standard, and most will contribute to the revision of the Sphere Handbook. Some HAP and People in Aid member agencies and agencies that use the Sphere Handbook are also likely to be engaged in the ECB Project Phase II. To promote joint implementation of the Sphere Handbook, the HAP Standard and the People In Aid Code; to build on the individual and collective efforts to date in countries such as Bangladesh, Kenya, Somalia and Myanmar; and to optimise human and financial

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<sup>1</sup> HAP member agencies share an obligation to comply with the HAP Accountability Principles and a commitment to compliance monitoring and certification. The HAP Standard offers HAP member agencies a means to measure, validate and improve their commitment, and the certification scheme enables them to monitor compliance and be recognized accordingly.

resources, below is a list of options that agencies in the ECB country consortia may benefit from, with continuous support from the ECB Project management, HAP, Sphere and People in Aid:

#### Contribute to and learn from the Sphere and HAP standards

- The ECB Project could take stock of learning and build on previous field-level engagements. In Bangladesh, for example, HAP staff have been working with member agencies and their partners since cyclone Sidr, a national Peer Support Group has been formed, and there is considerable interest from in-country staff to contribute to the planned Standard Review consultations and field testing.
- The ECB Field Facilitator, Sphere and HAP staff could dovetail in-country multi-stakeholder consultations at other locations to secure effective engagement from staff and beneficiary communities in the revision of the HAP and Sphere standards and the ECB process.
- Agencies from the ECB consortia that are members of HAP and use the Sphere Handbook could:
  - Second staff to either the HAP or Sphere review processes for a period of 3 to 5 weeks. The staff would continue to work within their own agency and gain valuable experience on the implementation the HAP Standard and the use of the Sphere Handbook by playing a role in agency-specific or inter-agency activities to review the respective standards; OR
  - Help recruit or host a local consultant (who has first-hand experience of disasters or has been at the receiving end of humanitarian aid) for a period of 4 to 6 weeks, to facilitate an effective consultation process with beneficiary communities and local staff.
- Members of the HAP Standard Review Reference Group may choose to contribute to the ECB process, where relevant, and vice-versa, to cross-fertilise learning. The Reference Group plays an advisory role to the review process and is formed of representatives from all key stakeholders of HAP, such as disaster-affected populations, the donor community, and member and non-member agencies such as the UN, development NGOs, civil servants and academics. They are expected to provide input and feedback at different stages in the review process.

#### Explore joint implementation of the HAP and Sphere standards and the People in Aid Code

- Agencies from the ECB consortia, both members and non-members of HAP would benefit from testing the application of the emerging HAP 2010 Standard alongside parts of the new Sphere Handbook or the full People In Aid Code. For participating agencies, such work may constitute progress towards HAP certification (or re-certification), quality assurance in relation to the respective aspect in the Sphere Handbook, and progress towards qualification for a People In Aid quality mark.
- Agencies from the ECB consortia could benefit from various tools offered by People In Aid to analyse and improve their performance in HR. Using these tools, reviews can be undertaken in association with a HAP Standard baseline analysis.

If you would like more information or would prefer to discuss your specific interests, contact:

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