

HAP Accreditation Standard and Accreditation Scheme

Terms of Reference for the Development Process

HAP-International is a partnership of humanitarian agencies dedicated to building a system of self-regulation based upon quality management and accountability principles, with a specific commitment to making humanitarian action accountable to its intended beneficiaries. In addition to providing capacity building support to members and other agencies enrolled in the certification scheme, contributing to research on the cost effectiveness of quality management of humanitarian action, and establishing a system of quality management certification, HAP-International seeks to demonstrate to the "humanitarian system" more widely the potential for improving humanitarian outcomes through quality management and quality assurance.

In January 2007, the HAP Board adopted the HAP 2007 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management.¹ Rooted in extensive research, consultation and field trials, the HAP Standard sets six affordable, realistic and mission-critical benchmarks for ensuring that the needs of beneficiaries drive humanitarian action. Agencies that are in compliance with the Standard receive a certificate of recognition.

Having managed the HAP Certification scheme for agencies of different sizes and types since 2007, the key strategy for HAP moving forward is to increase the accessibility of the scheme and, where possible, to drive down the costs for managing it. HAP proposes to achieve this through accreditation: a procedure by which HAP formally recognizes the competence of another body to certify agencies as compliant with the HAP Standard. To be accredited, a body will need to demonstrate that they meet the qualifying norms and requirements as outlined in the HAP Accreditation Standard, to ensure the integrity and reliability of the HAP certification quality mark.

This paper outlines the process for the development of the HAP Accreditation Standard and the Accreditation Scheme.

I. Aims of the process

- To research and review options for the development of a HAP Accreditation Standard and Accreditation scheme
- To identify potential agencies to be accredited and consult relevant stakeholders in the development of the Accreditation Standard
- To prepare the HAP Accreditation Standard
- To develop tools and materials that enable the successful development of the HAP Accreditation scheme.

¹ "The Guide to the HAP Standard" was produced and published in March 2008.

II. Key areas to be addressed

1. *Content of the Accreditation Standard*
 - Qualifying norms for agencies applying for accreditation
 - Governance, management and other procedural and capacity requirements of HAP accredited agencies
 - Means of verification for the viability of agencies to run HAP certification franchises
2. *The accreditation process*
 - Guidelines for assessing agencies requesting accreditation
 - Steps in the application process. Options include but are not limited to; the HAP Secretariat directly approaching potential accredited bodies in markets with high demand for certification and/or having an open application process; i.e. interested agencies submit application for accreditation and propose viable certification business model
 - Clarify working arrangements between:
 - The accredited agency and the HAP Certification, Accreditation and Review Board (CARB)
 - The accredited body and the HAP Secretariat / Regulatory Services: including markets of operation and issues of direct competition
 - Different HAP accredited bodies, including issues of direct competition
3. *Quality assurance*
 - Of certification process undertaken by accredited bodies (accredited agencies will forward audit reports to the HAP CARB for certification decision)
 - Of auditors; clarify whether auditors used by the accredited body will be registered by HAP or registered by accredited bodies and quality assured by HAP
4. *Capacity building*
 - Develop capacity building packages on managing the HAP certification scheme that can be tailored to meet the specific needs of accredited agencies

III. Components of the process:

The HAP Secretariat will manage the Standard development process.

Guiding principles

- Guided by ISO guidelines for the development of international standards
- Robust stakeholder involvement, including technical experts and bodies (with diverse governance and management arrangements) that may be interested in accreditation
- Use of both internal and external resources and skills
 - HAP member agencies that operate different governance structures (in particular those operating as networks and partnerships) will take part in the consultation
 - An advisory group and the HAP CARB will be consulted in the process

Outputs

- Accreditation Standard
- Accreditation audit guidelines
- Accreditation procedures: steps in the process
- Guidelines for quality assurance

IV. Proposed Milestones

By Feb 2010

- Research completed into options for accreditation; learning from other sectors
- Market research completed to understand in more detail feasible markets
- Consultations with advisory group and other key stakeholder undertaken
- Communication strategy developed

By May 2010:

- Standard drafted and agreed with the CARB
- Accreditation Standard presented at the HAP Board meeting
- Capacity building and other documentation for the accredited agencies developed

By end 2010

- One potential accredited agency identified in the each of the following: UK, Sweden, India and Kenya

By mid 2011

- Accreditation process started with 4 agencies in the UK, Sweden, India and Kenya

By end 2011

- One organisation accredited and managing a HAP certification scheme

The milestones above will be adjusted depending on feedback from key stakeholders.

For more details on the Accreditation Standard Development Process

Visit

<http://www.hapinternational.org>

Contact

Monica Blagescu mblagescu@hapinternational.org

Katharina Samara ksmara@hapinternational.org