

Welcome to the 15th issue of the HAP Newsletter!

March through mid July has been a busy time for the HAP Secretariat: responding to increasing demand for capacity building and organisational development support in several countries, including Haiti; consultation and preparation for a new deployment to Dadaab; certification audits and accountability self-assessments; the completion of the 2007 Standard review consultations and public consultation on the first draft of the HAP 2010 Standard; the release of a new report and the commissioning of a new study; the collection of 12 new practical tools and case studies for field staff; joint activities with peer quality and accountability initiatives at the head office and in the field; and briefing papers and policy engagements with donors and UN agencies. You can read more about our activities in this issue of the newsletter, or you may want to [visit our website](#).

If you missed the 8th **General Assembly**, you can read here a brief summary about it. We've also included an update on the Standard review and the transition process from the HAP 2007 Standard to the **2010 version**. A summary of the 2009 Humanitarian Accountability Report launched in May is available in the **New Reports, Tools and Case studies** section, which also includes: main findings from a commissioned study on complaint handling; highlights from a report on the impact of HAP's deployment to Sri Lanka; new practical tools and case studies; and a guest article from ActionAid. Our **Roving Team** share learning on the functioning of camp committees in Haiti and provide more information on a new deployment to Dadaab.



Congratulations to the Danish Refugee Council and Concern Worldwide!

The **Danish Refugee Council (DRC)** is the first agency to apply for and successfully complete a re-certification with the [HAP 2007 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management](#). The DRC achieved certification in 2007 and underwent a mid-term progress review in late 2008 and early 2009. In March 2010 the agency was audited against the HAP 2007 Standard both at its head office in Denmark and programme site in Kosovo. As part of the re-certification process, DRC submitted self-assessment reports from a further 23 country-based programme sites.

By successfully completing the quality audit process against the HAP Standard, **Concern Worldwide** became the 8th international aid agency to be certified by HAP. The certification audit covers all of Concern activities, including humanitarian, development and advocacy. Concern was audited in February and March 2010 at its head office in Ireland and at the Bangladesh programme. It also submitted self-assessment reports from a further 16 country-based programme sites.

HAP Certification is valid for a period of 3 years. A mandatory mid-term progress audit takes place 18 months after certification to verify that commitments made, progress plans and corrective action requirements are current.

Details about HAP's quality assurance services and other certified agencies are available by following [this link](#).

In this issue

New members	2
The 2010 Standard	3
New reports and tools	4
Guest article	8
From the Roving Team	9
HAP's General Assembly	11
Secretariat Highlights	12

We're on Facebook and YouTube

Visit us on
[Facebook](#)

Visit us on
[YouTube](#)

If you have any suggestions on how we can improve this newsletter, or would like to contribute to future issues, [please contact us](#)



HAP membership reaches 56!

Four new members have joined the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership since March 2010. Oxfam America became a Full Member, while Lutheran World Relief (LWR), Christian World Service Aotearoa (New Zealand) and the Disaster Emergency Committee (UK) became Associate members.

In Focus: The UK Disasters Emergency Committee

Formed in 1963, the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) is an umbrella organisation for [13 humanitarian aid agencies](#) that are UK registered charities: ActionAid, Age UK, British Red Cross, CAFOD, Care International UK, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, Islamic Relief, Merlin, Oxfam, Save the Children, Tearfund, and World Vision. Nine of the DEC members are also members of HAP.

The main objectives for the DEC are:

- creating an efficient appeal mechanism through the media for national fundraising and public response
- ensuring that funds raised are used in an effective, timely and fully accountable way
- facilitating agency co-operation, co-ordination and communication (in the UK)
- raising standards in the implementation of humanitarian responses

At times of overseas emergency, the DEC brings together a unique alliance of the UK's aid, corporate, public and broadcasting sectors to rally support in the UK for emergency response, and ensure that funds raised go to DEC agencies best placed to deliver effective and timely relief to people most in need. The DEC is committed to reporting back clearly to donors and to encouraging improvements in the member agencies' humanitarian response.

The DEC wants to contribute to driving up the quality of humanitarian responses and the extent of humanitarian agencies accountability without duplicating the investment in accountability and learning made by its Member Agencies. The six priorities in the DEC Accountability Framework are designed to support this effort.

1. We run well managed appeals: Efficient and effective fundraising; Timely and appropriate allocation; Review of performance; Accountability to stakeholders.
2. We use funds as stated ensuring sound financial management at agency and partner levels
3. We achieve intended programme objectives and maximise the potential for programmes to achieve objectives and outcomes which respond to a demonstrated need
4. We are committed to agreed humanitarian principles, standards and behaviours. Fulfilling the principles embodied in the Red Cross Code of Conduct, Sphere, People-in-Aid
5. We are accountable to beneficiaries. Taking account of, giving an account to and being held to account by disaster survivors
6. We learn from our experience, improving performance based on lessons learnt



For more information on the DEC, please visit their [website](#).

A full list of HAP members can be accessed [here](#).

Update on the HAP Standard Review

The community-based consultation hosted by SEEDS on 26 March in Orissa (India) marked the end of the review phase of the HAP 2007 Standard. Since the review started in 2009, consultation meetings, focus group discussions and workshops were hosted by ACFID, CARE International, COAST Trust, Concern Worldwide, CWS Pakistan/Afghanistan, DEC, DRC, LWF, Muslim Aid, Naba'a, NCA, OFADEC, PMU Interlife, SEEDS, the ECB Project and the IASC.

A total of 1,595 individuals contributed to these [consultations](#), held in Bangladesh, Georgia, India, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Lebanon, Norway, Pakistan, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Southern Sudan, Switzerland, Uganda and the UK. While people contributing to the review were not demographically or democratically representative of either aid workers or disaster-affected communities as a whole, they were balanced with regard to gender and geographical representation. Contributing individuals also brought to the process authentic experiences from the perspective of both affected populations and front-line aid workers.

To complement the breadth of experience and suggestions collected through consultation meetings, the Secretariat also sought input using online survey; individuals from over 120 organisations in 52 countries sent their views online, including on a joint HAP-Sphere questionnaire, or by email. Several semi-structured interviews by phone also took place.

Main points emerging from the consultations and recommendations submitted by the Working Group on Handling Complaints of Exploitation and Abuse and the Partnerships Working Group were discussed during a meeting of the [Standard Review Steering Committee](#) on 29 March in Geneva. Following this, a preliminary draft of the 2010 Standard was prepared, and sections from it discussed during break out groups at the General Assembly in May.

While it was agreed that no additional benchmarks will be added to the 2010 Standard, the [first draft](#) made available for public review includes a separate section for agencies working with partners, and is more explicit on its application to multi-mandate agencies (relief, development and advocacy programmes) and on protection from exploitation and abuse by aid workers. The preparation of this draft was guided by criteria set by the Board and the Steering Committee, including the ISO/IEC Directives Part 2, *Rules for the Structure and Drafting of International Standards* (fifth edition, 2004).

Efforts have been made to improve coherence and complementarity with other relevant and interested initiatives: colleagues from INTOSAI, People In Aid and the Disasters Emergency Committee continued their input into the preparation of the 2010 draft, and HAP Secretariat staff provided extensive comments on the Sphere Common Standards draft. A briefing paper on how the HAP Standard relates to other relevant initiatives will be produced shortly after the 2010 version is published.

Once the HAP 2010 Standard is published, replacing the 2007 edition, a 48-month transition period is launched. One year after publication of the new Standard, all certifications issued by HAP (new certifications or re-certifications) will be to the HAP 2010 Standard. Forty-eight months after publication by HAP of the 2010 Standard, any existing certifications issued to HAP 2007 Standard shall not be valid. If you have more questions about this, don't hesitate to contact [Monica Blagescu](#) or [Katharina Samara](#).



Participants in the Sphere-HAP review workshop hosted by the ECB Project in Dhaka, Bangladesh in 2009 (Photo M Blagescu)

SEEKING YOUR INPUT

If you did not submit feedback on the first draft of the **2010 Standard** by 16 July, please [look out for the second draft](#), which will be made available for public review in August.

New HAP Reports, Tools and Case Studies



Group of women participating in a HAP consultation, Maasia, Kenya, November 2009 (Photo: S Patel).

A free copy of the HAP Commissioned Report *The right to a say and the duty to respond* (Helen Baños Smith) can be downloaded from the HAP website [here](#).

The right to a say and the duty to respond

Complaints and response mechanisms have received significant attention in recent years as part of aid agencies' efforts to improve accountability and the quality of their service. Yet limited research has been undertaken so far to collect evidence of the effectiveness of these systems and their impact on service provision.

In 2009, HAP commissioned a study into the views and experiences of staff from four aid agencies and disaster affected-communities in Uganda and Bangladesh. In the report based on this study, Helen Baños Smith concludes that:

- To be fit for purpose, complaint and response mechanisms (CRMs) cannot work in isolation from the other areas of accountability addressed in the HAP Standard.
- Unless community dynamics are carefully considered by the agency, CRMs risk reinforcing existing power imbalances.
- Cultural and linguistic factors and the local context need to be given due consideration in identifying most appropriate means through which communities will raise complaints.
- While staff knowledge and skills in addressing complaints are important, it is their attitudes and behaviours that will affect communities' confidence in raising issues of concern.
- While complaints need to be addressed as close as possible to the place where they are raised, staff need clear guidance on how to escalate more complex or sensitive allegations.
- Donor attitude and engagement was seen to affect aid agencies' efforts to improve accountability to affected communities.
- Leadership and senior management support are essential to effectively handle complaints and improve accountability.
- Accountability starts at home: staff need access to a safe and confidential system to raise complaints without fear of retaliation.

The 2009 HAP Humanitarian Accountability Report was launched at the HAP General Assembly in May.

The Report opens with an overview of the principal developments and apparent trends in relation to accountability in the humanitarian system in 2009. John Borton, the independent consultant who prepared *Chapter 1*, highlights three main challenges to efforts to improve accountability to crisis-affected communities:

- Most evaluations of humanitarian action do not assess accountability to beneficiaries and affected communities either *explicitly* or *systematically*
- Accountability to beneficiaries and affected communities is poorly developed within at least two UN agencies that perform critical roles within the humanitarian system
- Accountability to beneficiaries and affected communities is poorly developed within most of the Clusters that are integral to current humanitarian reform efforts.

Within each of these *areas of challenge*, there are also examples of good practice that the chapter highlights.

The 2009 HAP Secretariat Report was published separately. It offers a progress report against the Strategic Plan and the Annual Workplan, covering the period between 1 January and 31 December 2009.

Continued on next page

Continued from page 4

Chapter 2 reports on the fifth annual survey of perceptions of humanitarian accountability. Based on perceptions of 377 respondents, the 2009 Survey concludes that, while there is growing optimism about progress being made in accountability across the aid sector, gaps still remain in accountability to specific stakeholders groups, particularly so to intended beneficiaries and host governments.

Chapter 3 highlights some positive practices and challenges of accountability and quality programming as perceived or experienced by 539 disaster survivors in Southern Sudan. While not claiming to represent the range of perspectives of aid recipients or a comprehensive picture of accountability in Southern Sudan, the chapter presents some of the issues that were consistently raised by persons from different states and diverse communities in relation to aid efforts in 2009, with particular focus on accountability.

Based on annual progress reports submitted by HAP member organisations to the Secretariat, *Chapter 4* provides a summary of main activities undertaken by members to improve programme quality and accountability.



Download a free copy of the [2009 Humanitarian Accountability Report](#)

“What happened next?”

Report on the impact of HAP’s deployment in Sri Lanka

In July 2009 HAP’s Roving Team was deployed to Sri Lanka for three months. By working closely with interested agencies responding to the humanitarian crisis in the North of the country, the Team aimed to improve awareness and practice of humanitarian accountability and quality management. Six months later, a follow-up visit explored the impact of the deployment.

During the follow-up visit, agencies shared with each other and with Emily Rogers from the HAP Roving Team evidence of good practice that built on the support received from the HAP team during the deployment. Some examples focused on programme implementation, by strengthening practice in Menik Farm, while others related to development of new policies and guidelines, which would continue to drive improvements in practice. A few highlights from changes undertaken by agencies as a result of the HAP team deployment are included below:

- *Using the findings from the self-assessment ACTED developed an Accountability Framework* – a statement of commitments, including quality standards for emergency response, and an improvement plan to guide practice and monitor progress over the next year.
- *Beneficiary feedback is better linked to decision-making processes*: CARE improved methods of reporting beneficiary feedback in programme review meetings, and modified the standard reporting format from field staff so that it now includes beneficiary feedback as a component.

Information on past HAP deployments during new emergencies is available on the [Field Support](#) pages of the HAP website.

HAP will continue to capture and share learning and evidence of impact from its field deployments.

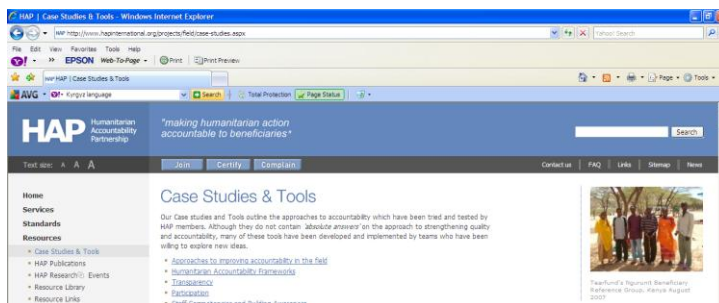
Continued on next page

For more details on the Sri Lanka follow up visit, download the full report:

[“What happened next?”](#)

- *Using creative means to communicate basic information to beneficiaries:* Save the Children used coloured ‘tokens’ to communicate to communities the contents of a complementary food pack and how contents varied by family size. Each beneficiary family was met in advance of the distribution to be explained the process and to receive the token. The result was a smoother distribution process.
- *Enabling staff to raise complaints and receive a response:* OfERR, a partner of Christian Aid and DanChurchAid, developed a new approach for receiving, processing and responding to complaints from staff. It also drafted related procedures to handle complaints more effectively.
- *Strengthening relationships with partners:* Muslim Aid drafted a partnership manual and consulted with partners on its content. The manual captured learning to date on working with partners, and will help the agency in managing different models of partnership more systematically and clarifies processes for selecting and monitoring partners.

The majority of aid workers consulted during the follow up visit signalled that the HAP deployment was a catalyst for agencies to strengthen practice. The learning from this deployment and evidence of impact from agencies that received support from the HAP Roving Team reinforce the value of HAP’s deployment operations, including in complex emergency settings.



Case studies and tools

With contributions from HAP members, other interested agencies and Secretariat staff, new tools and case studies have been added to our online collection.

[Practical HAP examples in Zimbabwe](#) (DanChurchAid) outlines how the HAP Principles of Accountability were applied at project sites while working with partner CCare, and includes a couple of practical examples related to information sharing and complaints handling.

[From a Partners Perspective](#) (Christian Aid). In 2007, Christian Aid facilitated the training of key programme staff from their partner CCSMKE on accountability. As a result, CCSMKE worked to share information on project budgets, hold community planning sessions, and ensure project committee and community participation in monitoring and evaluation. The benefits of these changes are already seen in the communities where CCSMKE works and are outlined in this case study.

Tools

[NGO checklist for developing or revising codes of conduct](#) (HAP) is a checklist for organisations developing or revising their staff code of conduct. This checklist includes critical questions to consider as an organisation and policies or statements to include in any code of conduct.

[Quick Reference – ideas for resource allocation to support accountability](#) (HAP) provides some suggestions that can help in the development of emergency response project proposals; these can be adapted based on programme focus and context.

[Thinking about impact – a study from Cyclone Sidr \(participants handout\)](#) and accompanying [facilitator notes](#) (HAP). This real-life example can be used to generate discussion on quality and accountability (in particular exploring impact), as an introduction to the benchmarks of the HAP 2007 Standard, and to encourage discussion on how the Sphere Standards and HAP Standard 'fit together'.

Tools from World Vision: As part of efforts to ensure accountability as part of the Haiti response World Vision developed and translated a number of tools including:

- [Information provision guidelines](#) for staff on how to provide information to communities.
- [Community Feedback Log](#); this includes details of a transitional feedback mechanism put in place during the initial phase of the response designed primarily to capture allegations of inappropriate behaviour by staff. A more systematic complaints and response mechanism is planned to follow.

Three tools have been uploaded onto the HAP website to support agencies in developing or revising their codes of conduct. Namely, the People In Aid [Policy Guide and Template; Codes of Conduct](#) and [Policy Guide and Template; Whistleblowing](#) and the new HAP [NGO Checklist for Developing or Revising Codes of Conduct](#).

VISIT

[Case Studies and Tools](#)

and the new section [Etudes de cas et outils en Français et Créole](#).

If you would like to share any case studies or tools, please [write to us](#).



Complaints Desk set up by CCare (partner of DanChurchAid); staff checking data in the distribution lists in Zimbabwe.

Accountability and power dynamics: Learning from ActionAid's Tsunami Response

ActionAid started its Sri Lanka Tsunami response in December 2004. The initial focus of the programme was on psycho-social care and the provision of shelter, food and water to affected populations; in its latter phase, the programme assisted communities to rebuild their lives and increase resilience, and mobilised them to influence policies and institutions on disaster management, peace building, protection of women, and land, housing and fishery rights. By the end of the programme in June 2009, ActionAid reached over 10,000 poor and marginalised people in 7 districts in partnership with 30 local organisations.

The Tsunami response involved the largest emergency fund that ActionAid ever handled. Amid widespread distrust in aid agencies amongst the affected population, ensuring accountability to communities and the public was critical for ActionAid so as to earn acceptance and recognition locally. Mindful of this, ActionAid designed and institutionalised **social audits** as a rigorous process to account for expenditure to communities. A **transparency board** publicly displayed expenditure against a budget (see photo). A **vigilance committee** – an elected body representative of the poor and marginalised – verified expenditure through sharing information on original bills and vouchers in public. The vigilance committee also organised a **community review**, where other representatives of communities physically verified outputs, and a **public hearing**, where anyone in the communities could report on irregularities, raise questions and bring their grievances to ActionAid and partners.

In general, social audits proved effective in ensuring transparency in beneficiary selection and in validating that aid had actually reached the poorest and the most marginalised according to agreed criteria.

Vigilance committees often demanded that ActionAid and partners revised lists of beneficiaries to include widows, sex workers, and the elderly or sick, groups that may have been initially missed out.

However, the language of financial accountability was perceived as a threat by those in positions of power, many of which spread misgivings about misuse of resources by selected community members, ActionAid and partners. Moreover, the rich and powerful accessed accountability mechanisms more easily than the poor, in an attempt to distort allocation of resources in their favour; they often questioned and challenged the list of people to be assisted through housing or income generation activities. ActionAid was able to expose the underlying interests of such groups by sharing information openly, consulting multiple sources, dealing with claims in an open and transparent fashion, and providing evidence to demonstrate when claims were unfounded. By adopting an approach that focused on accountability to the most poor and marginalised, the organisation intervened where power imbalances were obvious at community level.

Community dynamics have a profound effect on the extent to which accountability approaches will succeed in any given context; thus power relations at community level must be given due consideration when agencies take active steps to improve accountability. In a society characterised by widening inequality and divided by civil war, accountability has the potential to transform unequal power relations, but it may also perpetuate power imbalances if these are not carefully considered.

ActionAid responded to individual issues raised in the social audit, but did not explicitly monitor how the social audit was working and factors that influenced it. Participatory power analysis with a women's network, experimented in the final stage of the Tsunami response programme, confirmed the importance of facilitating such analysis as part of an ongoing monitoring and evaluation system, so that accountability approaches can be constantly adapted.



For more information on this work, [contact the author: Yuko Yoneda](#) at ActionAid.

From the HAP Team in Haiti

Camp Committees: a challenge of accountability

After two months of working with operational agencies, the HAP team in Haiti found that the structure and functioning of camp committees are a major accountability challenge for the humanitarian response. In some cases, rather than improving accountability, committees become the channel through which survivors of Haiti's recent earthquake are exposed to unaccountable and corrupt practices.

The challenge

While the humanitarian community allocates significant power to these committees, the HAP team found that there is a lack of knowledge about them within camp populations and that some committees use their power for personal gain.

Some of the aid workers themselves believe that a weekly meeting with the committees is sufficient in addressing expectations to engage with affected communities. Others admitted that, while they believe themselves to be working with and through the committees, they don't know who they are or who they represent; "there are a lot of things going on that we are not on top of or aware of" one said.

Support from the HAP Roving Team

To ensure accountability, humanitarian agencies need to assess whether camp committees are representative of the community and committed to impartial and non-corrupt practices before being granted decision-making power and resources. As part of such assessment, several questions need to be addressed, such as:

- How are committee members elected or appointed?
- Do committees share information with the camp population? Do they share information on their needs with the aid agencies?
- Do committees represent diverse groups, including the most vulnerable?
- How much and what type of power do committees already have?
- What checks and balances are in place to prevent corruption?
- Are there safe means for camp residents to make a complaint or to report abuse or corruption when the committee itself is involved?
- How is collaboration between the humanitarian community and the committees affecting power dynamics in the community?

The HAP team explored these questions with an agency newly taking over the management of a number of camps, to assist them in planning their management approach with particular attention to effective participation of disaster-affected communities. This offered the agency a good understanding of the actual challenges and, with support from the HAP team; they could develop a plan for moving forward.

What next?

Some committees are undoubtedly well functioning and enable effective participation and representation of disaster-affected communities. Other committees, however, are variously not representative, corrupt, or used for political or personal purposes. These cases need to be addressed as a matter of priority. Without mechanisms in place to ensure the accountability of camp committees, the humanitarian community risks putting people affected by the disaster through further hardship and abuse.

In the coming months, the HAP team will advocate for a wider adoption of assessments regarding camp committees. This will include an analysis of committees' composition, election processes, relations between committees and pre-existing governance structures, and the extent to which committees listen and respond to the voice of

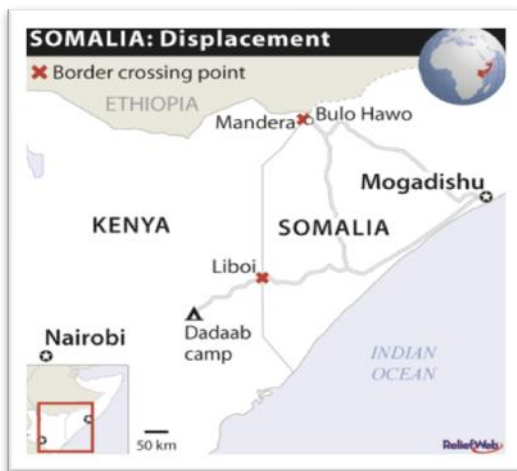
Did you know ?

The [New Emergencies Policy](#) (NEP) is a commitment by HAP member agencies to make a special collective effort to apply the HAP Principles of Accountability from the beginning of all new humanitarian emergencies.

The HAP Roving Team is deployed to provide members with practical support when they need it most.

For more information on HAP's engagement in Haiti, visit [HAP in Haiti](#) page on the HAP website, or contact [Troels Sorensen](#).

HAP Deployment to Dadaab



Dadaab in northern Kenya is one of the oldest and largest refugee camp complexes in the world. Established in 1991/2, the three Dadaab camps (Ifo, Dagahaley and Hagadera) were set up to accommodate 90,000 refugees escaping the conflict in Somalia. Over the years, with the conflict in Somalia continuing unabated, the number of refugees in Dadaab continued to rise.

In essence, there are two operations running simultaneously in Dadaab: on the one hand, agencies are providing services for the 20-year-old protracted refugee crisis; on the other, they are conducting emergency operations for the influx of new arrivals. In addressing the needs of this large refugee population, aid agencies face a number of operational challenges such as coping with the influx of new arrivals, shortage of land, camp congestion, overstretched financial and human capacities, and tensions with the host community.

For HAP, Dadaab presents a challenging location for the deployment of its Roving Team under the [New Emergencies Policy \(NEP\)](#). During NEP deployments, the Roving Team works with HAP members and other stakeholders interested in receiving individual support and engaging in collective action to promote accountability to disaster-affected populations and improve the quality and impact of their humanitarian response.

In March, the HAP Roving Representative consulted over 36 staff members from operational agencies during a visit to Nairobi and Dadaab. The consultations highlighted challenges and areas of concern, level of interest in collective action to strengthen accountability, and the type of support that agencies would benefit from during a HAP deployment. All staff expressed interest in a HAP deployment to Dadaab and considered such support to be timely and beneficial. They also identified information sharing and complaints handling as key areas which need strengthening. During a teleconference on the deployment on the 12th of May 2010, HAP members and UNHCR re-emphasised these areas, which have become the focus of the deployment.

The HAP Roving Representative deployed to Dadaab will work with HAP Members (CARE, Danish Refugee Council, Oxfam GB, Norwegian Refugee Council, Lutheran World Federation and Save the Children), UNHCR and other interested agencies operational in the camps. The overall aim of this three-month deployment will be to strengthen understanding and practice of humanitarian accountability with a particular emphasis on facilitating improved information sharing, participation and complaints handling for refugees and host-community in Dadaab. To achieve this aim a series of activities such as inter-agency meetings, training sessions, workshops and hands-on direct support for staff will take place. Consultations will be held with the refugees and host community so that they shape the information sharing and complaints handling systems that will be developed.

Lutheran World Federation (LWF) seconded one of its staff (Rita Mamai) to HAP for the duration of the Dadaab deployment. Rita works in the Kakuma refugee camps and her collaboration will offer a unique opportunity to exchange learning between operations in Kakuma and Dadaab.

The Dadaab deployment is co-hosted by UNCHR (providing office space and logistical support) and CARE (providing accommodation to the HAP Team).

LWF is covering all the costs for the secondment. CARE, Danish Refugee Council, Save the Children and UNHCR have made financial contributions towards the costs of the deployment.

For more information on the the HAP team in Dadaab , contact [Maria Kiani](#).

HAP's 8th General Assembly: a summary

The 8th General Assembly held on the 6th and 7th May in Geneva featured the launch of the 2009 Humanitarian Accountability Report and the election of eight members to the HAP Board.

Outgoing Chair, Andreas Kamm (Danish Refugee Council), inaugurated the General Assembly (GA) by referring to the successes of the HAP Secretariat and members over the past year. He highlighted that membership increased by 50 per cent since the last GA, and that representatives from more than 100 agencies in 42 countries contributed to the revision of the 2007 HAP Standard in 2009 alone.

Over the course of the two days, representatives of member agencies reported their achievements, challenges and lessons learnt from the past year. A number of agencies highlighted positive improvements in their operational programmes as a result of support received from the HAP Secretariat and from other members. In focus group discussions, participating agencies reflected on findings from the recent independent evaluation of HAP and on their experience as members or supporters with a view of providing further suggestions to the new HAP Executive Director to be appointed later this year. Sections from a preliminary draft of the HAP 2010 Standard were also discussed.

Andreas Kamm closed the General Assembly by expressing thanks to the Board, the general Membership and the Secretariat for support and guidance during his term as Chair of HAP International. He noted that, while most agencies make commitments to standards and codes of conduct, the real challenge continues to be compliance.

Secretariat Staff News

In April 2010, **Sheryl Haw** took up the position of International Director at Micah Network. During the six years that Sheryl worked with us, she helped to develop the HAP 2007 Standard and the quality assurance process; most recently, as Chief Auditor, she led the certification audits for 8 members. We look forward to working with Sheryl in her new role. Join us in wishing her all the best!

After two years in HAP's Complaints Handling Unit, **Coleen Heemsker** has taken up the new post of Audit Officer in the Regulatory Services team. Coleen will manage the certification audits and support agencies as they follow up on audit findings.

Jamie Munn is welcomed to the post of Organisation Development Advisor, primarily taking on responsibility for facilitating most of the HAP Standard baselines. Jamie has taken up the post made vacant when **Lyla Rogan** relocated to Boston. Happily, Lyla continues to work with the team on a consultancy basis and we hope to maintain a long relationship with her!

The post of Field Support Officer has been upgraded to that of Accountability Advisor (Roving Team) and we have been very pleased to promote **Emily Rogers** from the former position to the latter, acknowledging her expertise, experience and commitment to HAP's work in new and escalating emergencies. Emily joined **Troels Sorensen** in Haiti, replacing Senior Accountability Advisor **Elie Gasagara**, as his secondment to HAP from World Vision ended in June. Many thanks are extended to Elie for his extremely hard work.

Norbert Ayer, our longest-standing member of staff, retired in May after seven years with HAP. **Andrea Musu** replaced Norbert looking after our IT management on behalf of Evolutis Services Informatiques.

Gregory Gleed joined the Secretariat in July for a six-month internship as Research and Communication Assistant. Join us in welcoming Greg to the team!

MEET THE NEW BOARD

All Board members who stood for re-election were successful and will continue for another term. The newly elected members of the HAP Board are:

- Manu Gupta from SEEDS India
- Rein Paulsen from World Vision International
- Jenny Wells from Act for Peace, Australia.

Antonio Donini is the new Chair of the Board, Matthew Carter the Vice-Chair, and John Mitchell continues in his role as Treasurer.

Draft minutes from the 8th General Assembly can be downloaded [here](#).

Other Highlights from the HAP Secretariat

Below are several highlights from activities undertaken between March and July. This is not a complete list, but if you would like to know more about what the Secretariat has been up to, just [contact us!](#)

We briefed members, donors and other agencies in **the UK, the US, India, Southern Sudan, Sweden and Germany** and facilitated **baseline analyses** for **SEEDS** in Orissa, India; for **Act for Peace** both at their head office in Sydney and at programme sites in Vanuatu; and for **Oxfam America** in Boston and Washington. We facilitated a training session on Humanitarian Accountability for **Tearfund** partner networks and, in India, we are progressing on our discussions for potential collaboration with RedR, Sphere and Credibility Alliance.

Colleagues from Naba'a and Christian Aid were coached by our staff during two **Complaints and Response Mechanism (CRM)** workshops in Arabic, targeting the Middle East regional partners of Naba'a and Christian Aid partners, respectively. Another CRM workshop took place in Orissa, India, in cooperation with SEEDS and Lutheran World Service India Trust. A one-day training organised jointly with Christian Aid in London provided practical training to staff from its partner agencies on how to develop a CRM. A workshop on **conducting investigations** into allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by aid workers was also delivered in Bukavu, the DRC. We also **conducted an investigation** on behalf of a member agency.

Eighteen-month mid-term **progress audits** were conducted for two agencies: for DanChurchAid at their head office in Denmark and programme site in India, and for **MERCY Malaysia** at their programme site in Bangladesh. We also completed the **OFADec re-certification** audit in Senegal (both programme and head office).

A **follow up study** on the effectiveness of measures taken to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by aid workers was commissioned, with field visits taking place in **Thailand, Kenya and Haiti**.

As part of efforts to **improve coherence** between the HAP Standard and certification process and the DEC Accountability Framework and verification process, we joined the **DEC** in their assessment of **Merlin** and attended a DEC consultation workshop on the preliminary draft of the HAP 2010 Standard in London, UK. We also discussed with the Sphere Project options for bringing closer the two revision processes and provided feedback on the **Sphere Common Standards** draft.

We identified with the **NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project** options to promote accountability to affected communities through clusters, **contributed** to a meeting on *Accountability to affected population within clusters* hosted by CARE International in Geneva, provided feedback to the **Dashboard**, and contributed to the OCHA-led feasibility study into **Joint Humanitarian Impact Evaluations**.

We made contributions or facilitated sessions at: a learning workshop of the **ECB Project** in Nairobi, Kenya; the gender-based violence workshop for **Dtalk** in Dublin, Ireland; the **UN Peacekeepers** Annual Conference in the US; the bi-annual meeting of **quality and accountability initiatives** held in London, UK; the **IASC-Good Humanitarian Donorship** meeting in New York, US; and the **ATHA Core Training** course hosted by Sida, in Harnösand, Sweden.

We also attended various meetings and workshops, including the **People In Aid Workshop** for HR managers in humanitarian agencies; the **DEC AGM**; the **KPMG** international event *Accountability: Blame and responsibility*.

Supporters of HAP

HAP is grateful for the continued financial and political support provided by the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (USA), Danida (Denmark), DFID (UK), ECHO (European Union), IrishAid (Ireland), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (the Netherlands) and the Oak Foundation (Switzerland).

We would also like to thank DanChurchAid for leading the ACT Alliance in raising funds and securing support from Danida for the two HAP deployments to Haiti.

We acknowledge the generous support from donors in 2009 including the Ford Foundation (USA), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Norway), Oxfam (UK), and SIDA (Sweden).

The Humanitarian Accountability Partnership International

MIE 2, Chemin de Balxert, CH-1219 Châtelaine
Genève, Switzerland

www.hapinternational.org