

4th BOARD MEETING - APPROVED MINUTES
December 9, 2004
Maison de l'Environnement II - Geneva

1. Welcome and Introduction

Chair: Denis Caillaux, Care International

Board Members: Deputy Chair: Ellen Jorgensen (Women's Commission), Treasurer: Andreas Kamm (DRC), Ton van Zutphen (World Vision), Jasmine Whitbread (Oxfam), Maurice Herson (Oxfam), Mamadou Ndiaye (OFADEC), Antonio Donini (independent).

Staff: Nicholas Stockton, Zia Choudhury, Helena Zihlerl, Noria Mezlef

2. Adoption of Agenda

Proposed agenda adopted: issues 5c, 7b and 9 will be combined for the discussion

3. Approval of the September 2004 Board Meeting

The minutes of September 2003 Board meeting were approved

No comments were made regarding decisions from the September meeting.

4. Matters arising

Discussion: The criteria for independent members: Some Board members feel that the requirements are too restrictive to be able to find suitable candidates for nomination, although the Secretariat expressed the view that members were not making sufficient effort to identify appropriate candidates.

Decision: The Secretariat to simplify the criteria for selecting independent board members for presentation at the next board meeting.

5. Chairman's Report

a. Membership-update

A number of UK based organizations are in contact with HAP-I

CAFOD: has applied for full membership.

DEC: clear statement to join as an Associated member from 1st January 2005

Medical Aid for Palestine: clear statement to join as an associate member

Islamic Relief and Muslim Aid: both organizations have expressed interest in joining

Others:

InterAction: Inconclusive discussions have been held with Ken Giunta and Jim Bishop

MSF Holland: Good discussions but MSF International advised against membership. Also change of director at MSF Holland .

Discussion: Necessity to ensure a diverse membership. The secretariat is happy to respond to opportunities that occur but the members also have a crucial role in attracting new members.

Decision:

(1) The Secretariat to continue to pursue contact with potential new members

(2) Denis to pursue informal discussion with ACF about possible HAP-I membership

(3) Jasmine to pursue informal discussions with ACF, SCF (UK) and Concern about possible HAP-I membership

(4) Ton to make contact with German NGOs

(5) The Secretariat to brief IFRC and ICRC on developments within HAP-I

(6) Ellen to pursue contact with IRC about possible HAP-I membership

b. Board members – update

c. Funding - update

Discussion: concerns about the funding situation of HAP-I: The Secretariat will most probably face a cash flow problem in 2005, only one firm commitment (Ford Foundation) in the pipeline. So far applications have been made for 135% of HAP-I budget for the 2 years period, with only 6% currently committed. Some donors want ALNAP, Sphere and HAP-I to present an integrated strategic plan. It is not a merger the donors want to see but a credible way of working together. It is clear that donors are talking to each other about HAP-I.

Funding Update:

Care: Netherlands and Canada: from Canada not too much to report, the initial response from CIDA was positive, fairly confident they will provide some funding but it might be late

Netherlands: 2 meetings, they are considering a 2 year commitment, but the person in charge is on a maternity leave, she should be back in January 2005. The MFA approached some donors to propose a common approach

DRC: Danida argue that HAP-I should now be self-reliant. After three negative responses, it now seems that Danida might reconsider its position.

Women's commission was not tasked to approach any specific donors but was in contact with the Ford Foundation, will be in touch with Taryn Higashi (Deputy Director Peace & Social Justice Program/Human Rights) to find out if HAP-I can be also included to her portfolio. Department of Global Civil Society (Lisa Jordan) committed 100,000 USD, no further details on it yet.

Oxfam: DFID have stated an interest, but no commitment as yet, and no reply expected for months. The **DEC:** provided £20,000 to Oxfam for HAP-I's Darfur project.

World Vision was asked to approach the **USA**. On 14 December, Nick, Denis, Ellen will meet OFDA with WV. The baggage of the Ombudsman is still a problem. This meeting is a good opportunity to be seen as credible although no immediate expectations of funds from OFDA, nor complete confidence that likely OFDA funding conditions could/should be met. World Vision also approached WV Germany and MFA, not really positive specially that HAP-I is not known in Germany; need to adopt longer term awareness raising strategy perhaps with Oxfam Germany.

Swedish Sida: an application has been sent by the Secretariat. No commitment yet made but initial response was positive. We don't have a Swedish member, Andreas to advise the Secretariat on that.

Norway: Asked NRC for assistance in approaching the Norwegian Government, but no reply from as yet.

Switzerland - SDC: Medair did not submit the application. This case also illustrates the potential weakness of a member-led funding strategy. Board members may be committed to HAP-I, but this does not necessarily mean that HAP-I is a priority for fundraising departments.

AusAid: ACFID believe that HAP-I will be given funding for 2 years, although the Mission in Geneva has not been supportive to date.

Ireland: An application was invited and duly submitted. However, not likely to provide a large contribution. It would be advantageous to have an Irish member; perhaps board members could encourage Concern to join.

Discussion:

(1) **US funding:** are there ethical or practical concerns over US funds?.

(2) **HAP- I membership:** they members need to be more active in promoting HAP-I. It is essential that members mention their affiliation to HAP-I whenever they can and to ensure that all staff know about the membership of HAP-I.

(3) Fundraising support: lending a fundraiser to HAP-I for a short period: Oxfam and World Vision will explore this possibility

(4) Contingency plan: The Secretariat requested advice on the contingency plan to adopt. The Secretariat suggested that we need to distinguish between a short-term cash flow issue and the deeper and more important commitment question. We believe that the underlying commitment to HAP-I is growing, although we will have to show progress and results soon if this trend is to be continued. However, donors are still unimpressed by the lack of financial commitment made to HAP-I, especially by the larger members. The Secretariat does not want to go through a re-budgeting exercise for 2005, although it will review the 2006 budget and prepare a provisional 2007 budget in the process. It was reiterated that the HAP-I's budget is already a "core" budget, and while it is possible to hold expenditure below budget, the 4 major activities set out are all essential. The Secretariat is not in favor of delaying these activities, as this would reinforce the view that HAP-I is achieving nothing.

(5) Short-term cash flow assistance: The Chair asked board members to let him know if they could provide short term loans to HAP-I against written funding commitments.

(6) Swiss taxes: 8% of the total 2003 and 2004 incomes are reserved for possible taxes to be paid to the Swiss administration. This is a worst-case scenario figure and we will most probably be able to reduce considerably the amount payable.

(7) Donors meeting: Since donors want better harmonization among the various Q&A initiatives it was suggested that HAP-I should organize a meeting with the donors in Geneva. This would be a good opportunity to present to the donors the progress that has been made since last year regarding the cooperation between the different initiatives.

Decisions:

(1) All members tasked to follow up on funding applications

(2) Nick, Denis and Ellen to attend the meeting with OFDA in Washington on 14 December

(3) Board members to inform Denis about capacity of their organisations to provide temporary cash-flow support for HAP-I Secretariat

(4) The Secretariat to invoice members for 2005 membership fees

(5) The Secretariat to review workplan to identify activities that could be combined or postponed

(6) The Secretariat to organise a donors meeting in Geneva with the major donors missions

d. Review of General Assembly

Discussion: The format of the GA with a session for policy matters related to HAP-I and a session for a general debate on humanitarian matters was broadly supported. However the morning session was too short. It would also be better to have the Board meeting before the GA.

Decision: (1) To hold the next board meeting the day before the General Assembly in April 2005. (2) The Secretariat to arrange April General Assembly Debate on Darfur.

6. Treasurer's Report

a. Audit update

Process to select an auditing company is underway. The audit should be finalized by end of March 2005.

b. Income and expenditure against budget

The financial situation from January to October 2004 was presented; a balance at the end of 2004 will be available.

7. Director's Report

a. Main Activities of the Secretariat

See document attached: Highlights of Progress against HAP-I Secretariat Workplan in 2004

b. HAP-I funding situation

See 5c

c. Members workplan – update

The Secretariat has received 8 out of 9 workplans. Among the workplan at least 12 focal countries have been selected, quite good spread. NRC has not yet submitted their workplan. The Secretariat will circulate the Workplan Peer Support/Learning proposal for comments in the near future. A focal point should be nominated by each member organization. In February first annual accountability reports will be due from members.

Decision: (1) The Secretariat to draft a letter for Denis concerning NRC

(2) The Secretariat to provide an update on accountability workplans at the April GA and board meetings

(3) The Secretariat (Zia) to circulate Workplan peer support/learning proposal before the end of 2004

d. Darfur – update

Lot of enthusiasm in the field from different organizations, including SCF, IRC and the Spanish Red Cross. The ICRC subsequently insisted that the Spanish Red Cross withdraw their offer to host. DEC funding is welcomed but if HAP-I is to pursue the work in Darfur, the project needs to be hosted by one or more members. A proposal will be submitted to the members.

Decision: The Secretariat (Zia) to circulate proposal for an accountability project in Darfur

e. Membership of Sphere

HAP-I was approached by Sphere to be part of their management committee. Becoming a member of Sphere will be a very symbolic move. The Board members endorsed the proposal with the assumption that it will be on a non-fee basis.

Decision: The Secretariat to submit an application for membership of Sphere before 3 January.

f. Advocacy on accountability and quality

Discussion: How to be a more effective accountability advocate? In attending meetings such as the Good Donorship meeting the Secretariat could play an advocacy role on behalf of the members.

Decision: The Secretariat to draft a discussion paper on HAP-I's advocacy role for presentation to the April Board meeting

8. Accreditation Proposal – for discussion and approval

Discussion: A general agreement on the proposal submitted by the Secretariat. There are legitimate concerns about how this will work. If HAP-I is moving from the “stair-case” approach the members want to understand what they will be losing. The pros and cons of the accreditation/certification model and the potential downsides of the approach are not yet clear. As a partnership the members have to be ready to take this new step. Fears that the accreditation process will slow down the production of the accountability manual. The Secretariat reminded the Board that accreditation is included in the HAP-I Statutes. The Secretariat believes that accreditation/certification could be a powerful instrument for reform but at this stage there is no certainty that it can be achieved. There are two critical elements: (1) going from abstract standards to agreed indicators of compliance and (2) to be able to establish confidence in an affordable peer review mechanism. Both are difficult challenges.

Decision: (1) The Secretariat to “explore” the potential for developing the proposed accreditation/certification system with appropriate NGO networks and associations (2) The Board approved the revised table of contents for the proposed Manual of Accountability to Humanitarian Beneficiaries. (3) The Board authorised the Secretariat to invite representatives of suitable NGO

networks and association to participate in the Editorial Steering Committee for the preparation of the HAP-I Manual for Humanitarian Accountability

9. Financial Contingency Plan

See 5 c

10. Any others business

The Chair asked the board members to engage more and to have more regular contact between board meetings.

11. Date of Board meeting in 2005

Jasmine will not be available the first week of April and on 22 April. Andreas wont be available on 5 April.

Decision: The next board meeting will be held in April the day before the General Assembly. The Secretariat to send email to board members with proposed date for next board meeting and GA.