

Humanitarian Accountability Partnership - International

"making humanitarian action accountable to beneficiaries"

6th BOARD MEETING

**September 16, 2005 – 09:00 to 16:15
Maison de l'Environnement II – Geneva**

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Welcome and Introduction

Chair: Denis Caillaux, Care International

Board Members: Deputy Chair; Treasurer: Andreas Kamm (DRC), Ton van Zutphen (World Vision), Jasmine Whitbread (Oxfam), Antonio Donini (independent).

Absent: Ellen Jorgensen (Women's Commission); Mamadou Ndiaye (OFADEC); Magda Ali (independent),

Staff: Nicholas Stockton, Noria Mezlef

2. Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was revised due to the cancellation of the SGS benchmarking presentation. Draft agenda was adopted

3. Approval of 5th Board Meeting

Decision: The minutes of the Board Meeting held on 26 April 2005 was approved with a clarification regarding the timetable for the Advocacy Working Group that should submit an advocacy strategy paper at the April 2006 Board meeting

4. Matters arising (update of decision of 5th Board Meeting)

Fundraising: (1) The TOR of the working group for the Fundraising Strategy is available. A strategy paper should be presented at the April 2006 Board meeting. A donor representative should be involved in the working group. The Fundraising-working group should link its work with the Advocacy working group. (2) Care International cannot confirm their financial support to HAP-I start up costs until clarification of Care USA involvement with the Emergency Capacity Building Project Accountability and Impact Measurement and the link with HAP-I. Despite the strong commitment of Care International to HAP-I; any additional funding to HAP-I depend heavily on Care members and in this case Care USA. (3) After the OFDA meeting that took place last year in December 2004 it was decided that it was premature to submit a funding application. Should now re-establish the contact to do the follow-up. (4) The Secretariat expressed its disappointment regarding the non-action of most of the members to facilitate the fundraising. Oxfam GB reiterated its offer to "lend" a fundraiser to HAP-I but will need to have a better idea of the skills required, duration and work to be undertaken.

Decision: (1) Care International to clarify the position of Care USA vis a vis the ECB (2) Secretariat to prepare bullet points on the "fundraiser specialist post"

Sphere Project: Misunderstanding among the Board Members regarding the actions that should have been taken after the 5th Board meeting.

Decision: HAP-I will not request Sphere Board to provide written clarification on the rejection of HAP-I's application to join the Sphere Board. HAP-I members that are also on the Sphere Board should ensure better coordination at the governance level.

ICVA Tsunami Proposal: after the reluctance from agencies in Aceh the proposal might be re-launched. The role that HAP-I could play in the process is not clear, may be a useful platform to promote HAP-I Principles but the Secretariat does not have the resources to be “operational” in more than one or two locations at once.

Decision: Due to the difficulty and frustration in implementing field operation with other initiatives the Secretariat should focus on working bi-laterally with HAP-I members through the implementation of the New Emergencies Protocol.

Field Recruitment: The Secretariat believes that the members should maintain their own roster of accountability experts while the Secretariat will support learning through accountability training.

Decision: Board approved the Secretariat proposal

Inter-Agency Working Group: **(1)** Update on the New York meeting: 7 agencies involved with the mandate to look at accountability issues and impact measurement. Project is willing to engage with HAP-I in developing standards and to include HAP-I in their pilot. The workplan that should be developed within the next two months will determine the role HAP-I might play. **(2)** Concerns: possible duplication with HAP-I with a development of two parallel processes with huge overlap and with the proliferation of field manuals. The impact on the fundraising effort could be negative: active involvement of some agencies with the two initiatives is confusing; the donors might consider it as a disengagement vis a vis HAP-I. **(3)** Recommendation: It is essential for HAP-I to demonstrate what has been done and what is being done to avoid any duplication and to produce ASAP the Accountability Manual.

Standing Complaint Committee: With the changes within the composition of the Board the Committee should also be reconstituted.

Decision: The Board to elect a new Standing Complaint Committee with the first task to review its function and role.

Board Meeting: *Decision: the next Board meeting should coincide with the ICVA Steering Committee but should make sure that Mamadou Ndiaye who is Board member of the two organisation can attend both.*

5. Director's Report

The Director's report including a verbal update on the different programmes (Capacity Building, Standards Development and Research) given by the respective staff in charge raised the following points and decisions:

- **(1)** In term of certification and compliance need to determine if HAP-I wish to go beyond Principle 1. By including this Principle it will mean that HAP-I will look at the agencies compliance to all principles, standards, codes they have signed off including their internal code. HAP-I membership should take a strategic decision on this issue. **(2)** Support of the Board members to identify suitable facilitators and people for the Editorial Committee

Decision: (1) To organise telephone interviews with all CEOs of HAP-I members. (2) Secretariat (SDM) to draft TOR and Board members to provide names for facilitators and Editorial Committee

- Board members stated their support to the work being done but expressed their concern about the ambition and workload the Research and the Standards Development will be facing with a risk of not being able to achieve their task. The Secretariat recognises the risk especially for the Research but the strategy is not yet finalised and will ensure the proper delivery.
- The Secretariat raised its concern that the Accountability Workplan concept is in danger due to the insufficient engagement and resources allocated by the members' agencies. Only 2 agencies have

provided the Secretariat with their annual report on the implementation of their accountability workplan.

- Aceh Visit: the Secretariat emphasised the monitoring role of the Secretariat, an essential part of HAP-I mandate. The general point of view is that the level of compliance is extremely poor. Board requested to draft more detailed TOR for future monitoring visit in order to better explain to the field staff the objective of such mission. It was also asked to include into the report (if the raw material was available) the perspective of the beneficiaries view.

Decision: to revise the Aceh monitoring report to include beneficiaries perspective

A financial report for the 1st semester of 2005 and HAP-I organigram was distributed to the Board Members.

6. Joint Session with ICVA Board

Introduction:

- Welcome participants and a brief “tour de table”
- Short presentation on ICVA and HAP-I respective mandate, governance, members, activities and secretariat 's structure.
- Introduction of the proposal to collaborate on the Standards Development Project: HAP-I' point of view is that it is desirable to develop a partnership with ICVA for this process. The idea is to develop a dialogue with members of ICVA.
- HAP-I is different from the Ombudsman Project. It is not about setting up a coercive system but a large group of humanitarian agencies that will collectively and voluntary work on quality management.
- HAP-I is not a donor project but an emanation from humanitarian organisations
- Brief presentation of the Accountability and Quality Management Standards Development process with the establishment of a Management Reference Group (with 4 working group on Project Scoping-Good Practices- Business Case and Implementation) and an Editorial Steering Committee. 1st meeting of the Reference group schedule for 10th and 11th November in Geneva. From February to June 2006: pilot of the agreed standard. July 2006: second meeting of the Reference Group. October 2006: completion of the manual

General Comment & Questions:

- Existing procedures to handle complaints
- Certification/labelisation of HAP-I members
- Difference between the Management Reference Group and the Steering groups
- Welcome the initiative to organise such joint session
- Common cause: to cover the accountability deficit
- Accountability to donors exist though can be improved, how to be accountable to the beneficiaries is more challenging.
- Very difficult process but wish to be part of it in principle
- Humanitarian organisations working with no legal framework
- Involvement of the beneficiaries in the process
- ICVA secretariat willing to participate to the process but felt that the project was further forward than they had been lead to believe.
- ICVA Board willing in principle to work on a common project
- Concern about moving too fast, need to make sure that there is a buy-in from the organisations in the field
- The project is being managed with an appropriate sense of urgency but the timetable is flexible

Decision: (1) Consensus of ICVA and HAP-I Board to work together. (2) ICVA will inform its members of the possibility to be part of the Reference Group. (3) Organise ICVA and HAP-I Board meetings at the same time.

7. New Emergencies Protocol

Three concerns raised: **(1)** protocol should not be yet another layer of coordination. **(2)** Can be viewed as an obligation to take collective action – individual agency action is often sufficient. **(3)** Definition of “emergency” needs to be clarified. The Secretariat reiterates that the Protocol is the tool to implement the New Emergencies Policy as adopted by the Board in June 2004 and the General Assembly in December 2004.

Decision: Following further consultation within member agencies the Protocol will be revised as necessary and then put forward for approval at the next board meeting.

8. SGS NGO Benchmark

Decision: SGS to be invited to present their NGO Benchmark Project at next Board meeting

9. Governance

Oxfam GB succession: 3 possible options for the replacement of Jasmine Whitbread as board member: CEOs of Oxfam GB – Newly recruited International Director – Deputy International Director. Essential to have either CEO or Operations Director on the Board. Two-month gap should be expected before the decision, during this period Ivan Scott will be the contact person.

Review of Independent nominations: The resumé of Mr. Harsh Mander was submitted to the Board for review.

Role of Chair: Chair expressed concern about not being able to fulfil his dual role of HAP-I Chair and Care International representative, feeling of conflict of interest. Propose to consider that the future chair should be one of the independent members but meanwhile to allow another Care International representative to sit on the Board. The proposal raised the issue of creating a precedent and the difficulties HAP-I is facing in nominating independent members.

No Decision taken at this time

10. Shelter Project – Associate Membership Application

Shelter Project has applied for associate membership but has stated it is unable to pay fees. On the grounds that the Shelter Project is a voluntary body, it was agreed that fees could be waived. Associate Membership thus approved.

11. AOB

The next board meeting should coincide with the ICVA Executive Committee to seek collaboration at the governance level.

Decision: Secretariat to check with ICVA when their next Board meeting should take place.