

# **HAP INTERNATIONAL**

*Humanitarian Accountability Partnership International*

**1<sup>st</sup> BOARD MEETING**  
**12 December 2003**

**FRIDAY 12 DECEMBER**

**Hotel Ramada**

Chair: Denis Caillaux, Care International

Participants: Howard Bell (Care International), Igbale Rogova (Kosova Women's Network), Ton van Zuphten (World Vision), Ellen Jurgensen (Women's Commission), Maurice Herson (Oxfam), Nick Stockton, Andreas Kamm (DRC), Alistair Dutton (Cafod), John Scott Murphy (Cafod/Caritas Australia, first session only), Mamadou Ndiaye (OFADEC), Agnès Callamard, Noria Mezlef, Maximilien Zimmermann, Helena Zihelr

## **I – WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION**

Apologies from Maurice Herson, who has to leave early.

Apologies from Soren Jessen-Petersen, unable to attend due to illness.

Agenda is reviewed and modified. The meeting will begin with a discussion on HAP Int. relationships with other initiatives.

John Scott-Murphy, from Caritas Australia, is participating to the board meeting as a second Cafod representative, with the agreement from the Chair. He will leave after the first session on relations with other initiatives.

## **II – RELATIONS WITH OTHER INITIATIVES**

Objectives: (i) Discuss current situation as far as these initiatives are concerned (e.g. closure of Sphere?, ICVA, etc.); (ii) Discuss and identify possible options and avenues to strengthen collaboration and cohesion among these actors.

### **Discussion:**

Denis Caillaux introduces and leads the discussion with the following questions: How pro-active do we want to be as far as our relationships with other inter-agency initiatives are concerned?

There may be three types of agencies: *Global NGOs* – interaction organizations: ICVA, Voice; *Accountability specific organisations* outside Europe: Acfoa, Interaction; *Central organisations*: Sphere, Alnap, HAP International. We need to figure out what kind of relationship we want to have with Sphere and ALNAP, then later on we can see about the others. The question of the relationships of HAP International with other existing projects or organisations (e.g. Sphere, SCHR, ICVA, ALNAP, etc.) has been raised many times. During this pilot phase, HAP International organised a series of meetings with the directors and boards of these initiatives. With People in Aid, it also published a document presenting the various initiatives. Unfortunately, the other initiatives – originally associated with us - refused to pursue the initiative. HAP International has planned to pursue its collaborative activities in 2004. But to what end?

## ALNAP

ALNAP and HAP International are very different and there should be very little fear of overlap between the two initiatives. Alnap is an international, broad-based network undertaking cutting edge research, and seeking to strengthen learning among organizations. Evaluations constitute its main focus and tool. Unlike HAP International, it is not a self-regulatory mechanism. There is a fundamental complementarity between HAP International and ALNAP.

## Sphere

The relations with Sphere may be more complex. Should HAP International and Sphere become closer?

HAP International focus on beneficiaries and channel their complaints. It is not involved in setting standards, but in doing and enforcing standards. This is what is special about HAP International.

The origins of HAP (the ombudsman project) are linked to Sphere. The Ombudsman Project was set up to ensure that Sphere standards were implemented. However, when HAP was set up, both Sphere and HAP worked very hard to dissociate one from the other. HAP did not want to be perceived as Sphere enforcing mechanism, and vice versa.

Since then, it has been difficult to patch up the relations between the two initiatives. So far, the future of Sphere does not seem to have been associated with HAP International. In fact, it looks as if the future of Sphere is imagined without HAP International! When HAP International was set up, some members of Sphere management committee were very clear that they did not want HAP International to monitor the implementation of Sphere standards. The reason might be “territorial” or because of they envision the creation of a Sphere specific policing mechanism.

## IASC

Another actor that needs to be brought is the IASC: Inter-Agency Standing Committee, which brings together on a regular basis representatives of all UN agencies and NGOs, including at Executive and technical level. NGOs are represented through ICVA, SCHR and Interaction.

## Donors

Another issue raised concerns our relations with donors: they have expressed concerns over the years over the seemingly lack of coherence between all initiatives and wondered whether funding these initiatives is really a good use of their resources. Donors may be able to see the differences and complementarity among the various initiatives but the remaining overlap on some issues needs to be addressed.

## Overview

We should realize that a common policy would not happen tomorrow, but we should work towards positive and constructive interaction with other initiatives.

What is really essential is for each full member to immediately start on the work plan, since during this process we might find where Alnap or Sphere can help us. Operational work might make us understand where relations can be built.

We should show that we are willing to work with others, that we have no territorial claims, that we are open.

## Decisions:

**1 - Meetings with the Chairs of these respective initiatives should be organized.**

**2 - Specific meeting between the Chairs of HAP International and ICVA to discuss the nature of the relationships between ICVA and HAP International**

**3 - HAP International should consider whether it might, at some stage, have a function in the IASC, and what are the steps required to get there.**

### **III - REVIEW OF BOARD AND BOARD MEMBER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Three issues need to be addressed:

- The relationship between the Board and the General Assembly.
- Identify missing policies.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> independent board member.

The discussion begins with the last point.

#### **Independent Board Members**

At this stage, three board members have agreed to sit on the board: Soren Jessen-Petersen, Igballe Rogova, Helen Sirleaf-Johnson. Two of the independent members should have experienced a humanitarian crisis. The fourth independent member should belong to this category. The other names that have been circulated include:

- Mary Robinson – but she is a trustee of Oxfam, which is against the independency criteria.
- Gracia Marchal
- Jean Zigler
- Mary Anderson – she is a consultant for many of the member agencies, thus against the contradiction criteria.
- Sima Samar, Afghanistan Commissioner for Human Rights

It is important to look at the kind of profile we want for the 4<sup>th</sup>. We also need to review board members that have a political image, or aspiration.

Suggestions for the fourth board members include:

- Representatives from a Refugee Agency here in Geneva,
- The fourth member should be as close to the beneficiaries as possible: this will not be the case with a Geneva-based representative.
- We should look for a qualified woman to maintain the gender-balance within the Board, and for a woman from Asia or Latin American to ensure regional balance.
- A representative from a local partner agency funded by one of the member agency will not qualify.

In terms of process: Full members elect, the General Assembly nominates. This can be done electronically, even though it is not the best option. We should shake the membership to produce more nominations, to get the process on the way.

#### **Decisions:**

**1. The Chair to circulate a message to the whole membership informing them about our search for a fourth independent member, and asking them to send us nominations. we are looking for**

- a. Someone that represent beneficiaries**
- b. Regional balance: Asia or Latin America**
- c. Gender balance: a woman**

#### **The General Assembly and Board relations.**

It is difficult at this stage to identify a meaningful role for the General Assembly. It elects the Board members, but somehow it is cut from the center of discussion. Attending the General Assembly may be a

burden for a lot of people, we should try to be more imaginative and use it as a vehicle to attract new members.

- We should try to find ways to involve the General Assembly on several key issues when they meet.
- For those that come a long way it would be good if we tried to have the meetings back to back with something else.
- We should select one central policy issue where you invite guest-speakers for part of the meeting. That worked well in September with Randolph Kent, but we were not sure the guest-speaker approach should be tried for the first GA meeting. Randolph Kent could be re-invited as his proposal for the reform of the UN humanitarian financing system will not go away.
- If the next General Assembly will be in December next year, everybody should have started their work plans and this should then be the issue. The General Assembly should be the time when both full and associate members present discuss the implementation of their accountability work plans (problems, solutions).
- Workshops can be good for people to understand why they are here.
- It could be à la carte on a 2<sup>nd</sup> day.

### **Board meetings**

How often do the board members need to meet?

- Twice a year or if necessary more.
- Flexibility is great, but diaries fill up fast. Better to plan several meetings and then cancel them if you do not need them.
- 3 meetings for this year since it is a transitional year.
- April of this year is too early. Nick will just have started and members would have just begun developing their work plans. June would be better.

### **Decisions:**

**1. The Board should meet 3 times in 2004: June, September and December, after the General Assembly.**

### **Identification of missing policies.**

#### **Issues raised included:**

- How far do we codify? In order for HAP International to be accountable, we need to have transparent rules.
- The key word is communication, which the Board will play in creating contacts, promoting ideas.
- I have been invited to participate in the Davos forum to lead a discussion on the accountability of NGOs. The question is to what extent do we want to talk about / present ourselves.
- We should think to present the concept etc of HAP International in different kinds of forums. Agnès has done this well. I hope that Nick will do a tour around the board members' offices during the next year.
- It is vital that each member advocates what HAP I is about and explains the concept of accountability to beneficiaries. It is a division of labor between all members. It would be valuable to keep each other informed about what each one does. The value is in promoting the concept at it is new.
- The Work Plan presents and is based on strategic objectives. We should not need to engage into another strategic exercise immediately.
- HAP International will get their political anchors through its success with the accountability work plans.
- We should have a segment at the end of the General Assembly where we would open up to partners / individual observers, a sort of open session.

### **Decisions**

**1 – Secretariat to develop procedures for General Assembly Meetings (including Observer status) to be discussed at the next Board meeting.**

**2 – Secretariat to produce internal grievance and disciplinary procedures to be discussed at the next Board meeting for approval.**

**3 – Board Members to explore possibilities of organizing HAP International presentations to their trustees. Report back at the next Board meeting in June.**

**4 – HAP International Strategic and Operational Work Plan to be reviewed at the next board meeting. In particular, key initiatives and meetings to be discussed as part of a mapping exercise undertaken by the Secretariat.**

## **IV - REVIEW OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY ISSUES**

Objectives: to review, discuss and brainstorm on issues raised during the General Assembly; identify possible policy issues and questions for immediate and review future review.

### **Associate Members and board membership:**

AM had not all understood they could not sit on the board of HAP International. They thought it to be a problem since they do not have any representative. We may lose some associate members over this and should keep in mind the sensibility of the question. Associate members cannot become full members because of the criteria selected as far as FM are concerned (e.g. operational humanitarian organizations.)

We should keep it simple: there are rules that we have agreed to, let's stick to with them. This is linked to the discussion about the role of the General Assembly. If we include some issues in the General Assembly it will make it meaningful and the associate members can feel that they have some influence.

### **Observer status**

Opinions regarding the extent and nature of observer status included:

- It is a beautiful instrument, which enables us to associate witnesses to our work. But we have to define the limit of their impact.
- Some observers may drive things in a certain direction, rather than just observe.
- Observers should only be allowed to observe in the General Assembly, but we should then set up HAP I workshops where they can interact and contribute to the discussion.
- We should have a segment at the end of the General Assembly where we would open up to partners / individual observers, a sort of open session.

### **Decision reflected above under Missing Policies:**

**1 – Secretariat to develop procedures for General Assembly Meetings (including Observer status) to be discussed at the next Board meeting.**

## **V – STANDING COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE**

The Board should elect 3 members and 3 alternates. The results of the discussion and vote:

**The elected members of the SCC are:**

- 1. Igballe Rogova**
- 2. Andreas Kamm**
- 3. Ton van Zutphen**

**The alternates are:**

- 1. Matthew Carter; 2. Ellen Jorgensen**

Other issues and clarification raised during the discussion include:

- The idea of a Standing Complaints Committee of three was to have the Board work as an appeal procedure
- The Secretariat / Executive Director should do the recording. The SCC will be the "judges". The Board is the higher appeal.
- The complaints mechanism will evolve over time, the driver of the evolution being the number and nature of complaints received. We have to see how it will work, whether HAP I will be the direct recipient or whether the complaints will come through the members.
- The Complaints procedures document will be posted on the site.

## **VI - HAP INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP**

**Objectives:** (i) To confirm membership applications; (ii) to review and discuss the current state of membership (full and associate); (iii) to identify priorities and actions for the next six months.

### **Full Membership Applications:**

The Secretariat presented the membership applications, summarized under various tables for a friendlier review. All organizations are meeting the eligibility criteria, although the NRC is still missing some information. As far as criteria 4 is concerned, many organizations have responded NO to our questions. However, this is not a basis for refusing the application. It demonstrates the commitment of the agencies and underlines the scope and nature of work to be undertaken. This is a very good benchmark. What you have to decide is how you would like the Secretariat to present the applications

- We will have to rely on the secretariat, to do a first screening of application and present recommendations
- We tasked the secretariat to do the analysis
- What do we mean by operational? If you want to be strict, operational only applies to agencies legally responsible for an operation. We should interpret it in a liberal way that will allow more agencies to become full members, including those working through local partners.

### **Decision:**

**1 - Applications for full membership from Care International, DRC, Medair, NRC, Ofadec, and Tear Fund are approved**

### **Membership Fees:**

Clarification was required on:

- Whether the fees are calculated on the basis of expenditures –
  - YES
- Whether the expenditures include gifts in kind.
  - No formal agreement has been reached on this point.
- Basis for the formula adopted.
  - Five scenarios, with two different formulas each were developed and discussed during a Drafting Committee meeting and later a board meeting. Eventually, a formula was adopted reflecting various considerations, including: independence of HAP International vis-à-vis a large member; solidarity across the sector; fairness: the fees should reflect the respective size of the member agencies and the extent to HAP International services provided to them; HAP International capacities to service a large number of small to very small agencies, etc.
- Who is responsible for agreeing the formula
  - The board approves the fees structure: Annual fees for the classes of membership are determined each year by the Board, and are payable for each financial year. The 2004 formula has already been largely circulated, on the website and in all membership application forms. However, the invoices to members have not yet been issued. Changing

the formula in the middle of the year will not be fair. The same formula should be applied throughout 2004.

Discussion focused on:

- Situation of international federation, such as Care International, and whether the membership fees should be calculated on the basis of the overall turn-over of the movement or just the secretariat. All large federations will be facing the same problem. For strategic reasons, International Secretariat may prefer a membership based on the entire movement. However, they are not able to cover the membership fees required.
- World Vision is experiencing a different problem. It has a ceiling limitation of 20,000 to pay to other organizations. It will need to explore acceptable alternatives with HAP International to cover its fees. WVI will contribute much more than USD 20,000 not as a subscription fee but as fees for services.
- Small agencies contributions: OFADEC is having a problem with the proposed fee, but it could cover a USD 500 fee.
- The image of the membership-based organization, funded at 10% only by its members

**Decisions:**

**1 – The Executive Director and Treasurer to review the 2004 membership fees formula and propose alternative formula for 2005 to be discussed at the next board meeting;**

**2- For exceptional reasons, the membership fees formula for 2004 is revised as follows: the membership fees ceiling for agencies with an annual budget superior to USD 300 million is decreased to USD 20,000 (instead of the original USD 30,000) and the flat rate for agencies with a budget inferior to 5 million is decreased to USD 500 (instead of the original USD 1,000).**

**Associated Membership Applications**

Some small organizations have applied for associate membership. They can cover their fees but will need support in terms of attending General Assembly.

**Decision:**

**1 - Application for associate membership from CDP, Swedish Sida, and ACFOA approved.**

**2 – Board confirms HAP International membership to People in Aid and reiterates HAP International commitment to People in Aid Code. Formal implementation of the People in Aid Code is postponed.**

**VII – NEXT MEETING DATES**

**Decision:**

**Next board meeting is 11 June 2004**

**VIII - AOB**

Agnès Callamard: requested that the Board let HAP International Secretariat know whether and when it is not satisfied with the quality of its financial reporting, and what is needed to improve the quality of the financial reporting.

- WVI will appreciate more details as far as capacity building expenses are concerned

**Decision:**

**Contact list for all board and General Assembly members, including mailing addresses, to be circulated to all**