

The Humanitarian Accountability Partnership *"making humanitarian action accountable to beneficiaries"*

3rd BOARD MEETING APPROVED MINUTES **Friday September 10, 2004** **By Teleconference**

CHAIR: Denis Caillaux, Care International.

BOARD MEMBERS ATTENDING: Ellen Jorgensen (Women's Commission), Jasmine Whitbread (Oxfam GB), Mamadou Ndiaye (OFADEC), Ton Van Zutphen (World Vision)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Andreas Kamm (DRC), Ellen Sirleaf Johnson (Independent), Soren Jessen Petersen (Independent),

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Nicholas Stockton, Zia Choudhury.

1. Welcome and Introduction.

- Denis acknowledged that teleconferencing is not conducive to effective Board Meetings, but there are some obvious advantages. Denis suggested that more substantive discussions should be carried forward to the December 2004 meeting.
- Denis welcomed Jasmine Whitbread, new Board Member from Oxfam GB.
- Sadly, Igballe Rogova (Kosova Women's Network) has resigned from the Board, due mainly to her poor health. The Board expressed their regrets and sympathy for Igballe and requested the Secretariat to pass on their best wishes to her.
- Andreas Kamm was unable to attend due to another more urgent meeting.

2. Adoption of Agenda.

The draft agenda was adopted

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved unaltered.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

Accreditation and 'Franchising'.

Nick presented some of the ideas HAP-I has been developing on Accreditation. According to ISO (International Standards Office), national certification bodies are "*accredited*" with the authority of an international standard setting organization (such as HAP-I). These accredited bodies then have authority to "*register*" and "*certify*" organizations that adopt and comply with the international standards. HAP-I has been discussing on an informal basis this type of approach with DEC, ACFID and InterAction, and there seems to be considerable interest. HAP-I believes that accrediting networks of NGOs, or individual organizations, is one potential way of promoting accountability and certification to a wider range of humanitarian agencies. HAP-I wishes to develop a mechanism that reaches smaller agencies, and prevents the Accountability agenda from being dominated by larger western-based organizations. HAP-I also recognizes

the difficulties of effectively promoting sector wide changes, through its own small secretariat based in Geneva. HAP-I is looking for ways to bridge the gap between the accountability workplans of the members and our wider vision for an accountable humanitarian sector. The “franchise” model offers a practical way in which this gap might be closed, although it would have longer term implications for the membership criteria for HAP-I.

The Chair and Board Members expressed interest in the ideas, and feel there are many advantages to the system, including a prevention of North-South divide, and a more effective expansion of the accountability agenda through decentralization of support functions and certification powers.

Action: It was agreed that HAP-I will present a proposal for developing a HAP-I system of accreditation at least 4 weeks before the December BM.

Jasmine asked for clarification on differences between the terms membership, accreditation, certification and registration.

Action: It was agreed that Jasmine and Nick should continue this discussion “offline”.

5. Chairman’s report / comments.

CAFOD has undergone extensive changes in leadership recently, and they were uncomfortable about joining HAP-I until the new leadership was in place. The new management has expressed a strong interest to join HAP-I very soon, and by December they will also decide whether to put someone forward for a position on the Board.

Denis has asked Soren Jessen Petersen whether he felt he could continue as an Independent Board Member, given the demands and associations of his new post as head of the UN in Kosovo. Denis is still awaiting his reply.

Denis and Nick expressed their concerns about the failure to select the full complement of Independent Board Members (IBMs).

Nicholas pointed out that the GAP (Global Accountability Project) guidelines for accountable organizations places great importance on the presence of Independent members on a Board.

Action: Denis informed the meeting that he and Nicholas will closely follow developments regarding existing IBMs, and also ask all Members to make more effort in proposing good Independent candidates (to date, none have been proposed).

Jasmine asked what the existing criteria for IBMs are, and what the blockages to finding them have been. Mamadou asks whether we should change the criteria. Nick states that the BM and IBM criteria try to ensure:

- a gender and diversity balance,
- a minimum of 2 members without any connection to HAP-I Members
- that 2 BMs have previously been beneficiaries of Humanitarian relief
- that 2 BMs are eminent persons.

Nick and Denis agree that it is difficult to meet the criteria.

Action: Nicholas will review the criteria for IBMs, and report back to the December Board meeting.

Denis has written to the Chairs of SPHERE, ALNAP and People in Aid to try to arrange a meeting to consider matters of strategic cooperation and convergence.

6. Director's verbal update.

Tahmina Rahman, HAP-I Consultant, is developing a proposal for the Manual on Humanitarian Accountability. Part of her work includes putting together reference groups of up to 100 people.

The Manual is a key part of HAP-I's work, and Nick asked for continued support and involvement from Board and Members for this process.

Accountability Work Plans (AWPs) have now been submitted by 7 out of 9 Members. Four AWPs have been commented on by HAP-I, and a further three will be completed within one month. HAP-I is now going to establish Peer Review Group, so that Members support and critique one another in a systematic and constructive way.

A HAP-I initiative to convene a meeting of NGO leaders and Sudan experts to consider how to improve the strategic environment for humanitarian operations in Darfur was not successful, although Nick argued that this was still necessary.

Zia's visit to Darfur was considered successful, with numerous independent meetings being held with members and non-members. In addition, two multi-agency discussions were held in North Darfur and Khartoum. There was much interest amongst agencies to promote accountability to beneficiaries, primarily through improving information flow to beneficiaries, and through establishing a grievance procedure for beneficiaries. In North Darfur agencies were more prepared to begin these activities soon. The Spanish Red Cross in North Darfur have volunteered to take responsibility for establishing and leading multi-agency information and grievance procedures, as they are in a camp coordination role and felt that they were best placed to improve communications with beneficiaries¹. In South Darfur there was also much interest, but more reluctance to act quickly, mainly due to agencies' concerns about lack of time to engage in 'additional work', and their need for more support and expertise to get the processes started. Requests were made by interested agencies to have a further visit from HAP-I in October 2004, and also to send an Accountability Advisor for 3-6 months to support the Spanish Red Cross. HAP-I will prepare a TOR in the coming week, and ask for Member's feedback.

The preparations for a debate during the December General Assembly are going well. A provocative topic has been selected, along the lines of "this house believes that it would be in the best interests of humanitarian beneficiaries to find an alternative to UN led humanitarian coordination" David Rieff, Randolph Kent and Rony Brauman have already agreed to participate in the debate.

¹ (New information, gathered after the BM- The Spanish Red Cross have had to withdraw their offer, as their in-country hosts, the ICRC, did not see promoting accountability (in the proposed manner) as one of the SCR's responsibilities, and also they felt it was too complicated. HAP-I have already made requests for more detailed feedback from ICRC)

Other Questions and Comments:

Comment: Ellen reminded the Secretariat that her AWP had not yet been commented on. (A. This will be done within one month)

Question: Ellen asked for information on IRC in Sudan, and their interest levels with HAP-I. (A. The IRC Field Managers Bob Kitchen and Michelle Beg in Darfur showed much interest, and Bob asked why IRC was not yet a member of HAP-I ?)

Question: Mamadou asked whether HAP-I is attending Code of Conduct celebrations in Hague. (A. No, we are not. Nicholas' views on Code of Conduct may be raised again at December meeting.)

Question: Mamadou asked whether we have any link to GAP. (A. Yes we do. Nick is due to attend a major conference in Thailand convened by GAP)

Comment: Mamadou expressed the view that the Darfur field visit was a good opportunity for HAP-I to do something concrete.

Question: Jasmine asks for more detail on why the Sudan meeting initiative by Nicholas, was halted. Denis said that he and Barbara Stocking were now taking this idea forward.

Comment: Ton mentioned the multi-agency proposal to the Gates Foundation, which has several HAP-I members involved. There are some lines in the proposal for Accountability activities, and Ton suggested that the Gates Proposal and the HAP-I Accountability Manual proposal need to be carefully coordinated to prevent overlap. (A. Yes, agreed)

Comment: Denis stated that the Members should be more active in Darfur, and that although it is good that non-members are taking an interest, it is important that for HAP-I members should be taking more of a lead. Denis will continue the discussion separately with Zia and Nick.

7. Budget for 2002-2005.

Nicholas informed the Board that the 2005-2006 budget is directly linked to the revised HAP-I work-plan. HAP-I has also presented a multi-year budget, to move away from short term planning.

Jasmine asked whether there are any principles to guide the level or limits of the budget size. Nicholas explained that an upper limit of CHF 2 million was established when HAP-I was first created. The current budget proposal is well below that upper limit.

Denis mentioned that he and Nicholas believe the previous year's budget was over inflated, but that the new one is more realistic. Denis also voiced his very strong concerns that the members are not moving forward fast enough with securing funds. After 31st December 2004, HAP-I has no secured funds.

Decision: The budget is approved.

8. Fundraising and Membership fees for 2005-2006

Nicholas informed the Board that Membership fees are only 10 percent of this year's revenue, and that it is unrealistic to expect that the Secretariat could survive on membership fees alone. The proposed lower level of fees for 2005-2006 should reduce the financial disincentive to new members.

Summary of the funding situation:

- WVI will approach USAID/ OFDA, but not very hopeful.
- OGB will approach DFID

- HAP-I has approached the Swedish Government directly (as no Member is based in Sweden). There have been some positive discussions to date.
- NRC has not yet confirmed that they will approach the Norwegian Government.
- WV in Germany will approach German government, but not sure of likely success.
- Care Netherlands will approach the Dutch Government.
- Care International will ask CARE Canada to approach the Canadian Government.
- Medair will approach the Swiss Government, but not very optimistic.
- DRC will approach the Danish Government.
- HAP-I is approaching AusAID and the Ford Foundation.

Denis asked all Members to accelerate their efforts on fundraising. We should not limit Donor generosity- if a donor offers us more money, we should take it.

Action: Denis will follow up individually with all members, when he returns next month from his planned trip to Asia.

Jasmine asked what the worst-case scenario is, if funds are not raised before 31st December 2004. Nicholas explained that there are not many options, except suspension of HAP-I's work and issuance of redundancy notices to staff. HAP-I staff would not wish to divert funds allocated for programme activities, towards paying staff salaries.

9. Plans to Introduce HAP-I to Serbia and Chechnya.

Ton reported that World Vision, DRC and HAP-I have been making plans to introduce Accountability initiatives in Russia, Ingushetia, Chechnya and Serbia.

10. Dates of Board Meetings in 2005

Nicholas asked how many Board Meetings we should have per year.

Action: Board members to inform Denis within 3 weeks how many meetings per year they would prefer. No date is set for 2005 meetings.

The General Assembly will be on December 8th and the next Board meeting on December 9th.

11. Any Other Business

No comments.

Denis closed the meeting, after thanking everyone.

END