

Humanitarian Accountability Partnership - International

"making humanitarian action accountable to beneficiaries"

Protocol for the Implementation of the New Emergencies Policy

The New Emergencies Policy¹ represents the commitment of the members of HAP-International to make a special collective effort to apply the HAP Principles of Accountability from the outset of all new humanitarian emergencies. This protocol sets out a simple mechanism for putting this commitment into practice, and exploring the case for collective action. Implementation of the protocol is voluntary.

The Protocol

1. **Definition-** A "humanitarian emergency" is an urgent response designed to save lives subject to imminent threat. A "new" humanitarian emergency is the response that is mounted as a consequence of recent and significant increase in vulnerability, which occurs after, for example, natural hazard events, forced displacement, deteriorating security or exhaustion of local coping strategies.
2. **Purpose-** Early and collective action to promote accountability to beneficiaries in new emergencies will significantly improve the quality and impact of our humanitarian work.
3. **Capacity-** Members undertake to commit sufficient resources to deliver meaningful accountability to beneficiaries in new emergencies.
4. **Focal Person-** Each member will appoint a New Emergencies Focal Person, able to represent the member organisation and to be authoritative on its humanitarian policies and programme.
5. **Declaration-** Any Member or the Secretariat can initiate a meeting of the Accountability Focal Persons, giving a minimum of 48 hours notice, if they perceive a new emergency situation is established or imminent.
6. **Tele-conferencing-** New Emergency Meetings will normally take place using telephone conferencing facilities, and shall not exceed two hours in duration.
7. **Participation-** All members active in, or expecting to be active in responding to the new emergency will endeavour to participate in the meeting.
8. **Meeting facilitation –** The initiating agency will chair the meeting. A brief record of the discussion and any action points will be prepared by the Secretariat and circulated to all members within 48 hours of the meeting.
9. **Agenda-** The standard agenda for a New Emergency meeting will be as follows:
 - a. **Situation-** The initiating organization will provide a brief summary of the new emergency situation. Members will be invited to share their perspectives.
 - b. **Responses-** Members will provide a brief description of their intended response.
 - c. **Other relevant activities and plans-** Information concerning other quality and accountability agents that may be active in this emergency, or may be interested in working with HAP-I will be shared.
 - d. **Opportunities and Challenges-** Members will highlight their views on the major opportunities for, and challenges to, promoting accountability in this emergency. Pertinent lessons learned from past experience can be shared.
 - e. **Action-** Options for action will be considered (as described below), and decisions on the next steps for undertaking collective action will be taken.

¹ The New Emergencies Policy was approved by the HAP Board in June 2004 and endorsed by the General Assembly in December 2005. To download the full text from the website: [click here](#)

10. **Learning-** Members will review and share learning from collective and individual accountability practices undertaken in new emergencies, with a view to improving the quality of options for action.

Options for Action.

The feasibility and appropriateness of the following options for collective action should be considered². These are offered for guidance only. We are not limited to these options, which themselves should also be reviewed and revised as we learn.

What Action?	Example
Joint project appraisal and implementation activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint assessment • Shared beneficiary information system. • Community information centres or notice boards
Joint capacity building of staff working in new emergency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-agency induction, orientation or training. • Accountability leadership peer support working group
Joint awareness raising of accountability issues amongst other stakeholders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accountability workshops. • Generic accountability promotion media resources
Joint learning activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social audit • Real time evaluation • Peer reviews • Joint evaluations • Beneficiary focus group meetings
Joint quality management support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated human resources for promoting quality and accountability of agencies' responses. • Shared complaints handling system
Joint preparedness activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Accountability focal persons at county office level. • Accountability capacity building for staff in HQ and Country offices. • Development of roster of accountability advisors. • Recruitment of accountability advisors. • Intensive capacity development for selected emergency staff.

² "Collective efforts" do not replace or disregard individual agency efforts.