



The 2010 Humanitarian Accountability Report



Humanitarian
Accountability
Partnership

Front cover:

Destroyed buildings in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, following the massive earthquake of January 12, 2010.

Photo: © Robin Moore, <http://robinmoore.photoshelter.com>

The 2010 Humanitarian Accountability Report

Published by

The Humanitarian Accountability Partnership International
Maison Internationale de l'Environnement 2 (First Floor, Room 1-08)
Chemin de Balexert 7
CH-1219 Châtelaine
Genève
Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 788 16 41
Fax: +41 22 797 38 61

www.hapinternational.org

Table of contents

Acronyms	4
Summary	9
An Overview of Humanitarian Accountability in 2010	11
1.1. Introduction	11
1.2. The year in question	12
1.3. Principal developments in relation to NGOs	15
1.4. Principal developments in relation to the Red Cross family	29
1.5. Principal developments in relation to the UN and multilateral organisations	30
1.6. Principal developments in relation to donor organisations	43
1.7. Principal developments in relation to cross-sector networks	50
1.8. Reflections on themes and challenges	53
1.9. Concluding assessment	58
References	60
Perceptions of Humanitarian Accountability—Annual Survey	67
2.1. Method	67
2.2. Findings	68
Voices of Disaster Survivors—Haiti 2010	83
3.1. Research method	84
3.2. Cross-cutting contextual issues	85
3.3. Summary of discussions	87
3.4. In summary	100
HAP Members' Accountability Work Plan Implementation Reports	103
4.1. Introduction	103
4.2. Structure of the chapter	104
4.3. Summary of individual reports	104
4.4. Emerging trends from HAP members' reports in 2010	118
4.5. Goals for 2011	120

Acronyms

AF	Accountability Framework
AGDM	Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
ALWG	Accountability Learning Working Group
APAN	All Partners Access Network
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CBHA	Consortium of British Humanitarian Agencies
CCC	Cooperation Committee for Cambodia
CDA	Collaborative Learning Projects
CDAC	Inter-Agency Working Group on Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities
CERF	Central Emergency Response Fund
CES	Charities Evaluation Service
CFLI	Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives
CFSI	Community and Family Services International
COAST Trust	Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust
CRM	Complaints and response mechanism
CSO	Civil society organisation
CWS-P/A	Church World Service – Pakistan/Afghanistan
DEC	UK Disasters Emergency Committee
DECAF	UK Disasters Emergency Committee Accountability Framework
DFID	Department for International Development
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations

DR Congo	Democratic Republic of the Congo
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DRLA	Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy
DRSS	Disaster Response Support Service
ECB	Emergency Capacity Building
ECHO	Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission
ECOSOC	UN Environmental and Social Council
ELRHA	Enhanced Learning and Research for Humanitarian Assistance
EPN	Emergency Personnel Network
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator
ERD	Evaluative Reports Database
FHA	Focus Humanitarian Assistance
GHD	Good Humanitarian Donorship
GHD-SHARE	GHD Sessions for Humanitarian Awareness Raising and Exchange
GHP	Global Humanitarian Platform
GMAF	Global Management Accountability Framework
GOVNET	DAC Network on Governance
GPPI	Global Public Policy Institute
Group URD	Urgence Réhabilitation Développement
HAF	Humanitarian accountability framework
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HAR	Humanitarian Accountability Report
HERR	Humanitarian Emergency Response Review
HFP	Humanitarian Futures Programme
HRI	Humanitarian Response Index

IAS	International Aid Services
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
ICAI	International Commission for Aid Impact
ICRC	International Committee for the Red Cross
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ICVA	International Council for Voluntary Agencies
IDP	Internally displaced person
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IDRL	International Disaster Response Law
IFRC	International Federation of the Red Cross
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
INSARAG	Humanitarian Emergency Response Review
INTOSAI	International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
JHIE	Joint humanitarian impact evaluation
LFHH	La Fondation Heritage pour Haiti
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MAP	Medical Aid for Palestinians
MTPA	Mid-Term Progress Audit
MTSP	Medium-Term Strategic Plan
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NHRP	NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project
OCHA	Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
OFADDEC	Office Africain pour le Développement et la Coopération
PA	Participatory assessment
PAF	Performance accountability framework
PCNC	Philippine Council for NGO Certification
PCP	Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy
P-FIM	People First Impact Method
PQASSO	Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations
PSEA	Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
Q&A	Quality and accountability
QDDR	Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review
RC/HC	Resident Coordinator/Humanitarian Coordinator
RTE	Real time evaluation
SCHR	Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response
SEA	Sexual exploitation and abuse
SGS	Société Générale de Surveillance
TI	Transparency International
ToR	Terms of reference
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNHCR	United National High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
VOICE	European Humanitarian NGO Network
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene

WFP	World Food Programme
WIN	Water Integrity Network
WRC	Women's Refugee Commission
WVI	World Vision International
YEU	Yakkum Emergency Unit

Summary

The 2010 Humanitarian Accountability Report contains four chapters, as follows:

CHAPTER 1: An Overview of Humanitarian Accountability in 2010. The opening chapter provides an overview of the principal developments and apparent trends in relation to accountability in the humanitarian system. The purpose of the annual humanitarian accountability review is to offer an informed and independent view of progress made by the humanitarian system towards meeting HAP's vision of a humanitarian system championing the rights and the dignity of disaster survivors.

From the materials reviewed, the chapter concludes that there have been some positive developments in 2010—such as “a significant increase in the proportion of evaluations considering accountability to intended beneficiaries and local communities with several evaluation reports making strong calls for strengthened systems of accountability to disaster affected populations” and “evidence that certification against the HAP Standard, validation using the DEC Accountability Framework and UNHCR's AGDM Strategy can have a positive impact on organisational performance and accountability towards affected populations”. Areas that either did not show progress or which remain of continuing concern are also highlighted. Such areas include: a continued failure to address the issue of too many, inexperienced NGOs being able to access affected populations in high profile emergency responses, and weaknesses in and failures of leadership within the humanitarian system, whether in relation to Humanitarian Coordinators and Cluster Leads or of donors and senior managers not maximising the potential benefits of accountability improvement processes.

CHAPTER 2: Perceptions of Humanitarian Accountability—Annual Survey. This chapter reports on the sixth annual survey of perceptions of humanitarian accountability. Based on perceptions of 781 respondents, the 2010 Survey shows a gradual improvement in the accountability deficit—the gap between accountability to intended beneficiaries and to other stakeholder groups—with accountability to intended beneficiaries now perceived as

being essentially on par with accountability to the general public and host governments.

CHAPTER 3: Voices of Disaster Survivors—Haiti 2010. Since 2007, the Humanitarian Accountability Report has presented the views of people with first hand experience of receiving aid, using quotes that typified the sentiments most often expressed to HAP staff during programme-site activities in different countries. The 2010 Report includes a more detailed overview based on focus groups held with 261 survivors of the earthquake that took place in Haiti in January 2010. While the chapter does not claim to represent the range of perspectives of aid recipients in Haiti, it shares some of the issues that were consistently raised during HAP's deployment in the country and highlights some themes and trends related to the international community's earthquake response, with particular focus on accountability.

CHAPTER 4: HAP Members' Accountability Work Plan Implementation Reports. This chapter provides a summary of the main activities undertaken by members as they reported them to the HAP Secretariat in their annual Accountability Work Plan Implementation Reports. It also highlights some of the main trends and challenges in HAP members' efforts to improve humanitarian accountability in 2010, and draws attention to some of the main accountability goals that members will aim to achieve in 2011.

Based on a review of reports submitted by 33 members and covering the period 1 January to 31 December 2010, the chapter concludes that "HAP Members' 2010 Accountability Work Plan Implementation Reports highlight an impressive range of efforts aimed at improving the quality and accountability in humanitarian action and beyond." Full copies of members' reports are available on the HAP website.

CHAPTER 1

An Overview of Humanitarian Accountability in 2010

1.1. Introduction

HAP International's vision is of a humanitarian system championing the rights and the dignity of disaster survivors. The purpose of this chapter is to assess the progress made during 2010 towards achieving this vision.

As in previous years, this chapter is based on a desk review of relevant websites, publications and document sources, including 40 of the evaluations published during the year, and on interviews with selected key informants.¹ Due to the number of activities and developments to be reported on within a limited space, descriptions are necessarily brief. However, links are provided for those wishing to find out more about particular developments.

The chapter is structured as follows:

Section 1.2 provides a reminder of the main events and developments during the year. **Section 1.3** describes the principal accountability-related developments within the NGO community drawing a distinction between:

- a) Organisations and initiatives working to improve accountability through approaches including third party compliance verification and certification; and

¹ This chapter was written by John Borton, an independent consultant and researcher focusing on humanitarian emergencies and the operation of the humanitarian system. Felicidad Imperial-Soledad (former Executive Director of the Philippine Council for NGO Certification); Marie-Luise Ahlendorf (former Senior Programme Coordinator, Transparency International); and Monica Blagescu (former Policy Services Coordinator, HAP) reviewed initial and final drafts. Their helpful feedback is gratefully acknowledged. The chapter does not purport to represent the views of the HAP Secretariat or the HAP membership.

- b) Organisations and initiatives working to improve accountability through approaches other than third-party compliance verification and certification.

Sections 1.3 to 1.7 describe the principal developments in relation to accountability within:

- the NGO sector;
- the Red Cross/Red Crescent family;
- the UN and other multilateral organisations;
- the donor community; and
- cross-sector networks.

Section 1.8 reflects on themes and challenges arising from the previous sections that struck the reviewer as significant.

Section 1.9 draws some overall conclusions from the review.

1.2. The year in question²

In global economic terms 2010 will probably be remembered as the year in which economic growth resumed for Asian economies such as China and India, following the 2008-09 recession, but remained stagnant for Europe and the USA—signalling a discernible shift in economic and thus political power from ‘the west’ to ‘the east’. The debt crises in Greece and Ireland were stark reminders of how over-extended some European economies had become and in Ireland’s case forced deep cuts in the aid programme of one of the better-performing humanitarian aid donors. The Democratic Party’s losing control in the US House of Representatives and the election of a Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition in the UK marked a move to the right in the political complexion of key western countries.

From a humanitarian perspective, 2010 will long be remembered for two disasters: the 12 January earthquake in Haiti and the severe flooding that

² A list of emergencies in 2010 can be downloaded from the HAP website:
<http://www.hapinternational.org/projects/publications.aspx>.

began in July in Pakistan. The sheer scale of the Haiti earthquake, severely damaging the capital city of one of the poorest countries in the world, proved a severe challenge for the international community. The Inter-agency Real Time Evaluation in Haiti conducted three months after the earthquake found that:

Despite the quick mobilisation of aid, the quality of the achievements was drastically affected by serious constraints linked to the magnitude of the disaster, the uncontrollable flow of frequently inexperienced small NGOs, the inappropriateness of many practices in urban contexts, and weak global leadership. (Grünewald, Binder and Georges 2010 p.8)

Innovations in information and communication were a positive aspect of the response in Haiti (discussed in Section 1.8.). A comparison of the two disasters reveals inequities in the resourcing of the responses (Box 1).

→ **Box 1. Inequities in international resourcing of the responses in Haiti and Pakistan Comparison of key statistics for the Haiti earthquake and Pakistan flood disasters³**

	Haiti	Pakistan
Estimated deaths	230,000	1,802
Estimated affected population	3 million	20.3 million
CAP Appeal request	US\$ 1.5 billion	US\$ 1.9 billion
CAP Appeal funding (at 2/2/11)	US\$ 1.1 billion	US\$ 1.1 billion
Coverage of CAP Appeal	73.7%	59%
CAP funding/affected person	US\$ 366/affected person	US\$ 54/affected person
Pledges	US\$ 2.8 billion	US\$ 92 million

In November 2010, UNICEF announced that serious underfunding of its emergency operation in Pakistan was jeopardising life-saving programs for children and families.⁴

As in previous years, information on funding trends is only available for 2009 rather than the year in question. The headline results for 2009 (Development Initiatives 2010) were as follows:

- Humanitarian aid fell by 11% from US\$16.9 in 2008 to US\$15.1 billion in 2009, though it is still US\$2.5 billion above 2006 and 2007 levels.

³ Data from: USAID Factsheets for estimated deaths and numbers affected; Financial Tracking Services, Summary data for the Haiti Revised Humanitarian Appeal (January – December 2010) and Pakistan Floods Relief and Early Recovery Response Plan (August 2010 – July 2011) viewed on 2 February 2011.

⁴ "Underfunding for Pakistan flood emergency jeopardising life-saving operations for children" 5 November 2010, http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media_56742.html.

- Government aid, which had risen to US\$12.8 billion in 2008, fell to about US\$11 billion in 2009, the biggest annual decline of the decade. Even so, this is still substantially higher than the humanitarian assistance from governments in both 2006 and 2007.
- Private contributions to humanitarian delivery agencies increased by about 50% over the 2006-2008 period, to reach at least US\$4.1 billion in 2008.

2010 also saw the publication of two noteworthy critiques of the international humanitarian system (Box 2).

→ Box 2. Two critiques of humanitarian aid

Linda Polman

Published in the UK as “War Games: the story of aid and war in modern times” and in the US as “The Crisis Caravan: what’s wrong with humanitarian aid?” the central thesis of Linda Polman’s polemical book (according to the respective dustcovers) is that “the humanitarian aid industry, the media and warmongers the world over are locked in a cycle of mutual support” and that it is time “to hold humanitarians responsible for the sometimes deadly consequences of their deeds”. The author was particularly critical of MONGOs (‘My Own NGO’), a self-coined term describing the phenomenon of small NGOs seeking to provide aid more cheaply and flexibly than established aid organisations.

The book received significant press and TV coverage in Europe and the North America (e.g. Anthony 2010; The Daily Show 29 September). Whilst some reviewers felt that it was ‘sensationalist’, ‘over-generalised’, ‘anecdotal’ and ‘slapdash’, many gave it credence. A sympathetic review in The New Yorker (Gourevitch 2010a) provoked a correspondence and a rejoinder which included the following points:

Humanitarians scoff at politicians, governments, and corporations who say that they hold themselves to account, and yet in themselves they find this an acceptable form of impunity.

...humanitarianism is an industry. So we should examine it and hold it to account as such. To treat humanitarian or human-rights organisations with automatic deference, as if they were disinterested higher authorities rather than activists and lobbyists with political and institutional interests and biases, and with uneven histories of reliability or success, is to do ourselves, and them, a disservice. (Gourevitch 2010b)

Whilst researchers and commentators working in the humanitarian sector responded to Polman’s book (e.g. Humanitarian Policy Group 2010; Maxwell 2010), there were few, if any, published responses from humanitarian agencies themselves, though it is understood at least one of the larger INGOs did engage the author in a correspondence.⁵ The lack of reaction led the President of VOICE (the European humanitarian NGO network) to ask “Why is it that a book such as *War Games* by Linda Polman has not created an uproar of the humanitarian community?” (Eberwein 2010)

⁵ “Jetlag mellows me: Oxfam and I agreed on 80 percent of what we said.” Linda Polman on Twitter 7 October 2010

Mark Duffield

Assessing the impact of increased security arrangements since 9/11 on the interaction and relationship between humanitarian personnel and the local population, Mark Duffield introduced the term 'bunkerisation' to the humanitarian lexicon and concluded:

There is little of value within the fortified aid compound. Reinforced by frequent staff rotations, aid workers are remote from, and often fearful of, the people they aspire to help. (Duffield 2010)

1.3. Principal developments in relation to NGOs

1.3.1. Organisations and initiatives working to improve accountability through approaches including third party compliance verification and certification

Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) International

Ten full members and four associate members joined HAP during 2010 bringing the total membership to 64. Two full members (Concern Worldwide and COAST Trust) successfully completed certification audits and two certified members (OFADEC and Danish Refugee Council) successfully completed re-certification audits⁶. This brought the total number of certified members to nine.⁷ Seventeen full members have completed HAP Standard baseline analyses and, during 2010, three of these (CWS Pakistan/Afghanistan, Sungi Pakistan, and the Norwegian Church Aid) began preparations for certification audits, whilst Tearfund UK Emergency Responses began preparations for a re-certification audit.

The *2010 HAP Standard in Accountability and Quality Management* was approved by the Board in October, following an extensive and rigorous process lasting nearly two years, and was published in January 2011.⁸ After a transition period, the 2010 edition of the HAP Standard will replace the 2007 edition.

⁶ The planned recertification audit for Mercy Malaysia was postponed till March 2011.

⁷ OFADEC; Danish Refugee Council; MERCY Malaysia; DanChurchAid; Tearfund UK Emergency Responses; CAFOD; Christian Aid; Concern Worldwide; and COAST Trust.

⁸ Available at <http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/2010-hap-standard-in-accountability.pdf>

Changes in the 2010 edition include:

- An expansion of the scope of the Standard so that as well as humanitarian programmes, it can also be applied to other aspects of an organisation's work, including development and advocacy;
- A strengthening of elements on financial accountability and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse to reflect feedback on the 2007 edition;
- Increased coherence with other accountability system; and
- Provision under each benchmark of a separate section for organisations working with partners.

During the preparation of the 2010 HAP Standard, links were strengthened with other quality assurance processes including People In Aid, the UK DEC and AusAID, so as to improve 'alignment' and 'inter-operability' between the HAP Standard and their own processes. The International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions is also actively promoting the HAP Standard and the certification process as part of their engagement with donors and national audit institutions to move towards a single audit system. It is hoped that such 'alignment' processes, coupled with the increased scope and comprehensiveness of the 2010 HAP Standard, will better enable HAP to provide a firm basis for accountability and quality improvements in the humanitarian sector.

HAP continued to provide field support to members and non-members. During 2010, deployments took place in Haiti, Kenya and Kyrgyzstan in addition to special support arrangements for agencies responding to the floods in Pakistan.

In Haiti, an initial joint HAP and Sphere Project team worked with ACT Alliance staff during February. This was followed by a six-month (March to September) deployment that was hosted by the RedR-Bioforce Disaster Response Support Service (DRSS). The team worked closely with the Sphere Project and the DRSS (as part of a 'hub' providing practical support, capacity building and technical expertise) and with People In Aid, ALNAP, Collaborative Learning Projects (Listening Project and Do No Harm), CDAC (see below), ICVA and InterAction. Highlights of the team's work included:

- Delivery of 15 training workshops for 260 staff from 11 HAP members and 28 non-HAP members;
- Development and testing of a camp committee assessment tool to strengthen community participation. Use of the tool was found to improve

camp governance structures and increase the participation of particular groups, such as women and people living with disabilities;

- Support to the development of a Joint Complaints and Response Mechanism established by three HAP members in St. Therese camp;
- The formation of an Accountability Learning Working Group; and
- Support to the Haiti Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Coordinator.⁹
- Support to agencies working in the large and growing Dadaab refugee camp in Northern Kenya was provided by a two-person deployment over three months.¹⁰ A particular focus of the deployment was on facilitating improved information sharing, participation and complaints handling for refugees and the host community. The World Vision staff member who led phase two of HAP's deployment in Haiti facilitated an after action review of the deployment in Dadaab.¹¹

In response to the severe flooding in Pakistan it was agreed that HAP member Christian World Service Pakistan/Afghanistan (CWS P/A) would take the lead in championing accountability. HAP is also supporting the work of other Pakistan-based HAP members as well as OCHA and CDAC.¹²

Following the ethnic violence in Kyrgyzstan in June, HAP members working in the region requested HAP support for their own efforts and those of non-HAP members to improve accountability in the response. A consultant adviser worked in the country during September and October.¹³

→ **Box 3. Research reports published by HAP during the year.**

"The right to a say and the duty to respond: The impact of complaints and response mechanisms on humanitarian action" (Baños Smith 2010) reviewed the experiences and learning of four (unnamed) agencies in Bangladesh and Uganda to better understand the positive and negative impacts of complaints and response mechanisms in humanitarian settings.

"Change starts with us, talk to us!: Beneficiary perceptions regarding the effectiveness of measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian aid workers: a HAP commissioned study" (Davey, Nolan and Ray 2010) was based on consultations with beneficiaries in Haiti, Kenya and Thailand.

⁹ <http://www.hapinternational.org/projects/field/hap-in-haiti.aspx>

¹⁰ Dadaab is one of the oldest and largest refugee camps in the world. It has a population of over 270,000 and, with the escalating conflict in Somalia, an average of 4,000 new arrivals join each month.

¹¹ <http://www.hapinternational.org/projects/field/hap-in-dadaab.aspx>

¹² <http://www.hapinternational.org/projects/field/pakistan2010.aspx>

¹³ <http://www.hapinternational.org/projects/field/hap-in-kyrgyzstan.aspx>

People In Aid

During 2010, two HAP members (Concern Worldwide and Tearfund) were verified compliant with the People In Aid Code and awarded the Quality Mark 2 certificate, bringing the total members verified as compliant to 12. Eight members made a public commitment to the People In Aid Code, to continuously improve their HR and people management skills, and were awarded the Quality Mark 1 certificate bringing the total number of 'committed' members to 13. Membership of People In Aid grew to 178 due, in part, to a collective decision by the national chapters of Oxfam to join individually.

In March, People In Aid hosted the 'International Strategic HR Conference 2010' in London and in May ran two 'Humanitarian HR' (formerly the Emergency Personnel Network) conferences in Paris and Mombasa. The Paris conference focused on 'Talent Management', whilst the Mombasa conference (run in association with the Inter-Agency Working Group) focused on 'Talent Management and Diversity'. Through the use of blogs and podcasts a total of 450 additional people were also involved.¹⁴

In June, People In Aid InterActive (www.peopleinaid.net) was launched providing discussion forums, calendar and wikis. Humanitarians from over 600 agencies have joined the discussions.

The report "Addressing Staff Retention in the Horn of Africa" was published in March, following a collaboration involving People In Aid and the ECB Project's Horn of Africa Consortium.

Two reports were published on leadership, a particular concern of People In Aid members: "Engaging Tomorrow's Global Humanitarian Leaders Today" (Dickmann et al. 2010) was prepared in association with Cranfield University's School of Management, and funded by ELRHA,¹⁵ and "Leadership and Talent Development in International Humanitarian and Development Organisations" (Centre for Creative Leadership and People In Aid 2010) was prepared in association with the Centre for Creative Leadership.¹⁶ These were launched at the "International Leadership Summit" held in November in London.¹⁷

Other work undertaken during the year included facilitating a consultation process to achieve common agreement on the core humanitarian and leadership competencies for CBHA organisations (see below) and developing a training resource in staff care and personal resilience for InterAction.

¹⁴ Conference reports are available at www.peopleinaid.org

¹⁵ <http://www.elrha.org/?q=node/76>

¹⁶ <http://www.peopleinaid.org/pool/files/publications/leadershiptalentdevelopment.pdf>

¹⁷ <http://www.peopleinaid.org/events/summit2010.aspx>

SGS Benchmarking of NGOs

Société Générale de Surveillance's (SGS) third-party benchmarking service for NGOs awarded 15 new or repeat certificates during 2010. This brought the total number of organisations with valid certificates to 76, up by five organisations from the end of 2009.¹⁸

→ Box 4. Update on organisations working at the national level to improve accountability through approaches including compliance verification and certification

Cambodia: Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)

At the Annual Feedback Forum in May 2010, five more NGOs were awarded certificates of compliance with the CCCs Code of Ethical Principles and Minimum Standards for NGOs in Cambodia. This brings the number of certified NGOs to 21. Since the formation of the voluntary certification scheme in 2007 a total of 56 NGOs have applied for certification.

India: Credibility Alliance

During 2010, 24 Credibility Alliance members were certified to the 'Minimum Norms' level and 42 members were certified to the 'Desirable Norms' level bringing to the total number in both categories to 141. With support from the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI), Credibility Alliance has been undertaking a programme to promote accountability, transparency and good governance among voluntary organisations in India. By the time of the Annual Report 2009–2010, 550 voluntary organisations had participated in 20 meetings across the country.

Pakistan: Pakistan Centre for Philanthropy (PCP)

PCP's website list 51 organisations as having been recently certified. During 2010 PCP established its online Donor and Non-profit Organisations Database as part of the Sustaining Diaspora Philanthropy Efforts in Asia supported by the Asia Pacific Philanthropy Consortium. PCP has been raising awareness of certified NPOs working in the areas affected by the severe floods as well as undertaking assistance distributions itself.

Philippines: Philippine Council for NGO Certification (PCNC)

Following the approval of a revised vision/mission statement for PCNC at the 2009 Annual General Assembly, its Board has been exploring ways in which the review and certification scheme can be enhanced including criteria for accountability to beneficiaries. Data presented at the assembly showed that, in the period from its creation in 1999 to March 2010, PCNC undertook 1,311 evaluations of organisations and awarded 1,071 certifications.

UK: Charities Evaluation Service (CES)

During 2010 another 45 organisations were awarded the PQASSO Quality Mark bringing the total to 56.

USA: InterAction

Revisions were made to: the 2010 Self Certification Plus Compliance Form (completion of which is mandatory for all InterAction members every other year) and to the InterAction Standards. The revised Standards were issued in January 2011. In July 2010 information on the use of private funds donated in response to the 12 January earthquake by 40 InterAction member agencies was published in the "Haiti Accountability Report 2010".

¹⁸ <http://www.ngobenchmarking.sgs.com/index.htm>

1.3.2. Organisations and initiatives working to improve accountability through approaches other than third-party compliance verification and certification

CDA Collaborative Learning Projects—The Listening Project

2010 saw the completion of the evidence-gathering phase of the Listening Project with the completion of listening exercise reports from 20 different countries. This brought the total number of people who had been interviewed by the project since late 2005 to nearly 6,000.

During the year, three more issues papers on crosscutting themes were published:

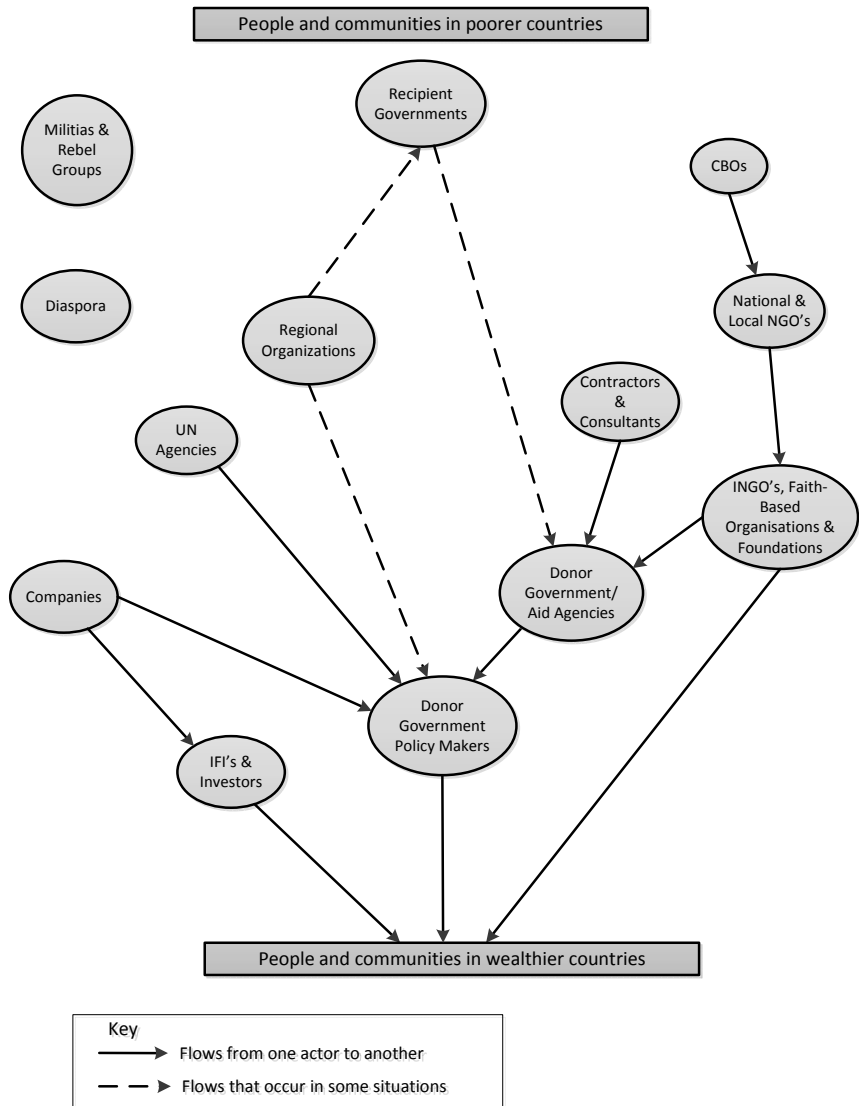
- “Structural Relationships in the Aid System” (CDA 2010a) explores the number and type of organisations operating in recipient societies and the complex and often un-transparent relationships between them, which create a difficult system for local people to navigate;
- “The Importance of Listening” (CDA 2010b) highlights key issues in the current approach of aid agencies towards listening to people at the receiving end of international assistance efforts, including: why listening is important; whose voices are heard and not heard; and why aid agencies find it hard to listen to the beneficiaries of their programmes; and
- “The Role of Staffing Decisions” (CDA 2010c) examines how the staff of international and local assistance agencies shape people’s perceptions of assistance efforts and how agencies can support or undermine local capacity and sustainability through their hiring decisions.

The Structural Relationships paper includes a diagram showing peoples’ perceptions of who is accountable to whom in the aid system (see Figure 1). The absence of any dotted or full line to “people, communities and countries in need” is striking.

The Listening Project held three feedback workshops in Bogota, London and Manila during 2010. The Listening Project’s final publication that will draw together and reflect on all the evidence and analysis generated is planned for 2011.

Figure 1. People's perceptions of who is accountable to whom in the aid system

Reproduced with permission from CDA (2010a) "Structural Relationships in the Aid System".



UK Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC)

The third Annual Assessment process against the DEC Accountability Priorities was completed in early 2010. The validators (the international audit company Ernst and Young)¹⁹ concluded that the DEC Accountability Framework (DECAF)²⁰ “has had a positive effect on members agencies’ and is now a mature process ripe for review.”²¹

An extensive review of the DECAF was undertaken in 2010. One of the clear messages that emerged from the review was that the Annual Assessments had helped drive improvements in agency systems and practices particularly in relation to learning and accountability to beneficiaries. The review produced a revised version of DECAF “DECAF2” that will be used for the Annual Assessments beginning in 2012.

Since the adoption of the DEC Evaluation Policy in 2009, a third of the expenditures in each DEC appeal have been evaluated through independent evaluations commissioned by member agencies. The evaluations have been paid for with funds received through their share of each DEC appeal. On average, this means that four to five evaluations are undertaken by member agencies in relation to programmes funded through DEC appeals. As part of the Policy, the evaluations are required to assess the level of involvement of beneficiaries and the level of accountability to them, and assess the extent to which the NGO Red Cross Code of Conduct is respected and the Sphere Minimum Standards met. The DEC’s Evaluation Policy is now having a direct and positive impact on the overall evaluation results by virtue of a) the number of external evaluations of humanitarian action that are undertaken and placed in the public domain, and b) the proportion of evaluations judged to have explicitly considered accountability to intended beneficiaries.

In May, the DEC became an associate member of HAP.

Emergency Capacity Building (ECB) Project

Phase II of the ECB Project continued in 2010 and is scheduled to finish in 2013. According to information provided to the Quality and Accountability Initiatives meeting, the ECB Project has no plans for a third phase.²²

¹⁹ For 2010, the validation contract was awarded to One World Trust; validation of the fourth annual assessment will take place in early 2011.

²⁰ Whilst the term ‘DECAF’ is often viewed as being synonymous with the annual assessment process, in fact the DECAF also includes three other components, namely appeal reporting, external evaluation and learning activities.

²¹ DEC Annual Report 2009-2010, p.26.

²² Minutes of the Quality and Accountability Initiatives Meeting, 21 June 2010, London.

The ECB Project consortia in Indonesia and Bangladesh developed Disaster Response Engagement Protocols to provide a common understanding of how ECB Project agencies should interact in their response to a disaster. The Protocols were put to the test in Indonesia as part of the consortium's response to the Mentawi Island Tsunami and the Mt Merapi volcanic eruption that occurred almost simultaneously in October. Faced with difficulties of access in Mentawi, it was decided to trial a coordinated response model in the Mentawi Island response and a joint response model in the Mt Merapi response. A review of the effectiveness of the two models is planned for early 2011.

During the year, joint evaluations were undertaken of the following ECB consortia actions:²³

- The response to the West Java and West Sumatra earthquakes (Wilson et al. 2010);
- An inter-agency group led by two ECB members of the response in Haiti using the "People First Impact Method"²⁴ (O'Hagan, Love and Rouse 2010);²⁵ and
- A 'one year on' review of the situation of communities affected by Cyclone Aila (ECB Bangladesh Consortium 2010).

Sphere Project

A major activity during 2010 was the Sphere Handbook revision process. Chapter drafts were made available for public review in the middle of the year and the final text was approved at the end of the year. Launch events for the English version of the Sphere Handbook 2011 are planned for April 2011 with additional language versions to be launched later in 2011.

²³ *Evaluations of cash for food programmes in Kenya and the response to the food crisis in Niger were also undertaken but the reports were not available at the time of writing.*

²⁴ *The People First Impact Method is a simple low cost methodology that allows communities to speak for themselves in identifying the impact of assistance on their lives and routes by which the impact was achieved. http://www.sphereproject.org/component/option,com_docman/task,doc_view/gid,395/Itemid,203/lang,english/*

²⁵ *Unfortunately neither the Kenya, Sahel or Haiti evaluations were placed on the ALNAP Evaluative Reports Database during 2010 and so were not included in the sample assessed for this chapter.*

Changes in the Sphere Handbook 2011 include:

- Integration of emerging issues such as cash transfers, early recovery and civil-military relations;
- Climate change, disaster risk reduction and psychosocial issues have been added as cross-cutting issues;
- Vulnerability and context analysis have been strengthened in the sectoral chapters;
- The Humanitarian Charter has been significantly modified;
- A new chapter including protection principles has been added;
- Six core standards are identified: people-centred humanitarian response; coordination and collaboration; assessment; analysis and design; performance, transparency and learning²⁶; and aid worker performance; and
- The sectoral chapters have been updated and are structured around the minimum standards and associated key actions (new), key indicators and guidance notes.

The Sphere Project 2009 Training Report was published in June 2010: 110 Sphere trainers and organisations reported on 448 Sphere training and learning activities reaching around 9,000 participants in 76 countries on four continents.

The Sphere Project deployed additional trainers to Haiti following the earthquake and collaborated with HAP and other organisations in the Quality and Accountability Support Team set up by the ACT Alliance. The Sphere trainers worked closely with the Haitian Department for Civil Protection as well as with national and international NGOs, the clusters and other Sphere practitioners. A Creole version of the Sphere Handbook 2004 was published in addition to a French version of the 2009 publication "Taking the initiative. Exploring quality and accountability in the humanitarian sector: Introduction to eight initiatives."

²⁶ One of the indicators of the Performance, Transparency and Learning Standard in the 2011 Handbook is: "Performance is regularly monitored in relation to Sphere Core and relevant technical Minimum Standards, or similar global performance standards, and the main results shared with key stakeholders, including the relevant coordination bodies". This indicator is expected to improve the monitoring of the humanitarian performance not only at the operational level but potentially also at the global level through aggregation of the results from separate operations.

Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR)

An overview of the lessons learned during SCHR's peer review process on Accountability to Disaster-Affected Populations was published in January 2010 and presented in various fora.²⁷ Though in part modelled on the peer review process used by the OECD-DAC, the results of the peer review for the nine participating organisations were not published. The process opted to not use a single definition of accountability, finding it more helpful to use the definitions of accountability of each individual organisation. All nine organisations involved in the process developed action plans in response to the peer review.²⁸

1.3.3. Other developments in relation to NGOs

One World Trust

One World Trust continued its work on NGO and CSO self-regulation. A study of NGO/CSO self-regulation initiatives in 'the global South' undertaken jointly with World Vision (Lingán, Cavendar, Palmer and Gwynne 2010) identified 90 national level initiatives in 54 'southern' countries. Of these 90, 66 were currently active, 10 inactive and 14 still in development. Among the active initiatives, the majority (65%) involved codes of conduct/ethics. However, the study found that only 47% of these had any means of monitoring or verifying compliance, and only 16% had certification schemes. The paper concluded:

Leaving compliance to promises is not enough however and can undermine an initiatives' ability to improve practice, build public trust and provide a credible signal of quality within the sector.

(Lingán, Cavendar, Palmer and Gwynne 2010 p.11)

Similar findings emerged from a global level analysis of over 350 initiatives using One World Trust's database on CSO self-regulation (Lloyd, Calvo and Laybourn 2010). Again codes of conduct were found to be the most common form of self-regulation, but in this case the proportion with a compliance system was just 27%. Another One World Trust study explored NGO approaches to accountability in relation to their advocacy activities. The most common approach was found to involve specifically developed codes of conduct, but:

²⁷ <http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/schr-peer-review-lessons-paper-january-2010.pdf>.

As this was reviewed in HAR 2009, the contents are not summarised here.

²⁸ Information on progress in implementing these action plans was not available at the time of writing. Information on other activities undertaken by SCHR during the year were not readily available as SCHR does not maintain a website.

... very few codes have specific operational standards against which practice can be measured and reviewed. None address the issue of beneficiary participation in advocacy agenda setting, practice or evaluation. (Hammer, Rooney and Warren 2010 p.24)

Transparency International (TI)

The *Handbook of Good Practices Preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Operations* developed by TI in collaboration with five NGOs was launched in Geneva at the beginning of February 2010. A Pocket Guide was published later in the year. The Handbook is structured in three main sections:

1. Institutional policies and guidelines;
2. Programme support functions; and
3. Corruption through the programme cycle.²⁹

French and Spanish versions of the Handbook are due for publication in 2011.

TI's 90 national chapters continued their anti-corruption work including that in relation to humanitarian aid. By way of example, TI's local partner in Haiti, La Fondation Heritage pour Haiti (LFHH), worked with the Haitian government following the earthquake to: raise awareness of the corruption problem; support grass roots transparency efforts and provide anticorruption training to a coalition of local civil society organisations and grass roots groups in the camps. LFHH also established three hotlines for citizens' complaints about corruption within assistance and reconstruction initiatives. TI plans to launch a new Haiti aid monitoring project in early 2011 with the support of ECHO to empower affected communities to monitor aid provision, engage the government and NGOs and identify and address corruption risks.

Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)

Following an extensive collaborative process the second edition of the INEE Minimum Standards for Education was published in April 2010, replacing the first edition published in 2004.³⁰ The new edition: reflects developments in the field of education in emergencies and post-crisis recovery since 2004 including the cluster approach; incorporates the experiences of INEE members in using the minimum standards; and is intended to be more user-friendly.

²⁹ http://www.transparency.org/publications/publications/humanitarian_handbook_feb_2010

³⁰ http://www.ineesite.org/uploads/documents/store/Minimum_Standards_2010_eng.pdf

Inter-Agency Working Group on Communicating with Disaster Affected Communities (CDAC)

In January CDAC³¹ established an office in an emergency media centre in Haiti and “provided an important coordination platform for an unparalleled communications effort” (Quintanilla 2011). Services provided by CDAC Haiti and its members included daily radio shows and support to local radio stations and media organisations. CDAC and its members collaborated closely with Ushahidi and other SMS crowd sourcing organisations and with humanitarian agencies and their outreach workers. Millions of SMS messages about humanitarian services were sent and disseminated.³²

CDAC also established a similar platform and service in Pakistan in response to the extensive flooding that began in July. Here the SMS gateway was managed by IFRC. Infoasaid (see below) provided daily humanitarian news broadcasts in local languages.

CDAC formed four working groups in 2010 to map existing approaches and initiatives, improve coordination between them and help sharpen CDAC’s strategic focus. These groups are:

- Documentation Working Group led by ALNAP;
- Outreach Working Group led by Infoasaid;
- Technology Working Group led by Frontline SMS; and
- Online Working Group led by Internews.

They are due to present initial reports in March 2011.

Infoasaid

Infoasaid (shortened from ‘information as aid’) is a two-year DFID-funded consortium project between Internews and the BBC World Service Trust. Both organisations are CDAC members, while Infoasaid coordinates closely with CDAC. Infoasaid’s objective is to improve how aid agencies communicate with disaster-affected communities with a focus on providing humanitarian information.

³¹ Current membership of CDAC is: British Red Cross; BBC World Service Trust; CAFOD; CARE International; HelpAge International; International Media Support; Internews; Irish Red Cross; Merlin; Save the Children Alliance; Thomson-Reuters Foundation; UN OCHA; World Vision International.

³² <http://www.cdac-haiti.org/>

In 2010 Infoasaid teams supported the humanitarian response in Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan and Southern Sudan. Infoasaid is also preparing a series of Media and Telecoms Landscape Guides for 27 of the world's most disaster and conflict-prone countries. The guides provide information for each country on:

- Media consumption habits and news and information flows in each country;
- The main media organisations, channels and audiences;
- Local partners who can help to produce radio and TV programmes and public service announcements; and
- Mobile phone coverage and mobile phone and Internet usage patterns.

So far guides for Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan have been published.³³

Enhanced Learning and Research for Humanitarian Assistance (ELRHA)³⁴

"Professionalising the humanitarian sector: A scoping study" (Walker and Russ 2010) commissioned by ELHRA and undertaken jointly by the Feinstein Center, Tufts University and RedR UK was published in April 2010.

Over 90% of the 1,500 people providing input to the study wanted to see humanitarian work professionalised. The study's two main proposals were that:

- A system of certification be developed to be applied at the international level but that would also be capable of being applied nationally; and
- A truly international professional association for humanitarian workers and the necessary supportive academic and training infrastructure should be established.

In June, ELRHA hosted an international working forum on humanitarian professionalisation where it was agreed to follow-up the scoping study by:

³³ <http://infoasaid.org/media-and-telecoms-landscape-guides-0>

³⁴ ELRHA is a collaborative network dedicated to supporting partnerships between Higher Education institutions in the UK and humanitarian organisations and partners around the world. ELRHA support staff are hosted by Save the Children, London. www.elrha.org.

- Bringing together relevant organisations and initiatives to develop and test an internationally recognised humanitarian certification process that would provide a concrete development pathway for field level staff; and
- Further exploring and validating the most appropriate model by which an international framework for the professional certification of humanitarian staff and volunteers could fit into a wider system of professionalisation for the humanitarian sector.

To support these processes, an international reference group was established in late 2010 and ELRHA plans to begin formal work with this group in January 2011. (ELRHA 2010)

1.4. Principal developments in relation to the Red Cross family

ICRC

In 2010 ICRC's Directorate did not consider the Accountability Framework prepared during 2009 due to the four-yearly change in the composition of the Directorate and an associated change in priorities. It is hoped that the Directorate will consider the Accountability Framework in 2011.

IFRC

Developments in IFRC in 2010 included:

- The finalisation of the "IFRC Management Policy for Evaluations" that provides guidance and standards for all evaluation activities by the IFRC Secretariat, and guidance to support the practice of evaluation among all National Societies;³⁵
- Following the adoption of Strategy 2020 in 2009, a federation-wide reporting system has been introduced focusing on a limited number of proxy indicators;
- The IFRC's programme planning training course was updated to include specific focus on accountability and the need to demonstrate changes for disaster-affected populations;

³⁵ <http://www.ifrc.org/Docs/pubs/policies/IFRC-Management-Policy-for-Evaluations-Draft.pdf>

- Participatory planning in relief and recovery programmes in Haiti and Pakistan were strengthened through the early deployment of recovery planning specialists/teams;
- Real Time Evaluations were carried out in Indonesia/Philippines, Haiti and Pakistan; and
- The increased adoption of beneficiary complaints mechanisms and beneficiary satisfaction surveys. (IFRC 2011)

Recognising that “for the first time in the history of mankind, more people live in an urban environment than a rural one”, the World Disasters Report 2010 focused on urban risk. (IFRC 2010)

1.5. Principal developments in relation to the UN and multilateral organisations

This section considers accountability and quality developments in relation to:

- Humanitarian Reform Process (though within the UN system this phrase is no longer used and is now replaced by terms such as *improved humanitarian architecture*);
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee; and
- Individual UN agencies that play a major role in humanitarian action.

Efforts to improve the humanitarian architecture and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee involve and comprise NGOs as well as UN agencies. However, as the IASC and the leadership of these bodies lie primarily within the UN system, they are dealt with here.

1.5.1. Improved Humanitarian Architecture³⁶

a) The cluster approach

Significant weaknesses in the cluster system were exposed during the initial response in Haiti. Internal criticisms by the Emergency Relief Coordinator after the first month³⁷ were reiterated in the subsequent Inter Agency Real Time Evaluation in Haiti conducted three-month mark. (Grünewald, Binder and Georges 2010)

The second IASC evaluation of the cluster approach (known as “the Cluster 2 Evaluation”) was completed in April 2010. Undertaken jointly by the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPi) and Groupe URD, and overseen by a steering group of UN, NGO and donor stakeholders, the evaluation assessed the operational effectiveness and main outcomes of the cluster approach since its introduction in 2005. Case studies were undertaken in Chad, the DRC, Haiti, Myanmar, the occupied Palestinian territory and Uganda, and the results drawn together in a synthesis report. (Steets et al. 2010)

Key findings in relation to accountability and participation included:

- Accountability of the clusters to the Humanitarian Coordinators was “minimal” in five of the six case studies;
- Although cluster leads at the country level are required by their ToR to “ensure utilisation of participatory and community based approaches in sectoral needs assessment, analysis, planning, monitoring and response”, the evaluation found that except for some notable positive examples, clusters had not “been active or effective in strengthening participatory approaches, either by promoting participatory or community based approaches among their members, or through including affected populations in their own activities” (Steets et al. 2010, p.59);
- No evidence was found in the six case studies of clusters actively promoting participatory or community-based approaches among their members; and

³⁶ The four pillars of the original Humanitarian Reform Process were: better coordination of humanitarian action (through the cluster approach); faster, more predictable and equitable humanitarian funding; improved humanitarian leadership (through Humanitarian Coordinators); and more effective partnerships (added following the adoption of the Principles of Partnership by the Global Humanitarian Platform in July 2007).

³⁷ http://turtlebay.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2010/02/17/top_un_aid_official_critiques_haiti_aid_efforts_in_confidential_email

- Most clusters failed to communicate their work effectively or use participatory approaches in their own activities.

Factors identified as contributing to the failure to use or promote participatory approaches include:

- Local contextual factors and restricted access in some countries;
- The perception that participatory approaches are time-consuming and therefore not practical in emergency situations;
- Activities, such as information sharing, technical discussions and the preparation of appeals, which form the bulk of activity for many clusters, are not seen as amenable to participatory approaches; and
- In most cases, clusters are led by UN organisations which may not be directly operational but work through NGO implementing partners. Consequently the cluster leads may have little field presence or direct interaction with beneficiaries.

With regard to integrating national and local authorities (where appropriate) and civil society organisations into the coordination and provision of humanitarian response, the evaluation found that the clusters had “largely failed” and had thereby “undermined national ownership”. Efforts to strengthen ownership had been made, but with limited success. (Steets et al. 2010 p.60)

The evaluation made six sets of recommendations. Recommendation 3—“Enhance the focus on strengthening the quality of humanitarian response in cluster operations and activities”—included the following three sub-recommendations:

- As a contribution to creating more accountability to affected populations, strengthen the role of clusters in using and promoting participatory approaches;
- Facilitate the participation of national and local NGOs and strengthen their capacities; and
- Further strengthen the role of clusters in defining, adapting, using and promoting relevant standards.

Following the presentation of the evaluation to the IASC in April, a Task Team was established to prepare a management response plan. However, it took

until January 2011 to finalise this plan as a result of challenges including prioritising the proposed responses and actions.

b) Improved humanitarian financing

Work to strengthen the operation of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) continued during 2010. In January, guidelines known as the Revised Life Saving Criteria were published with the intention of clarifying the definitions and determining criteria for CERF's grant elements. The guidelines define "life-saving" by:

using the basic humanitarian principle of placing the people and communities affected in the focus and applying a rights-based approach traced back to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular the right to life with dignity. (CERF 2010 p.1)

The draft Performance Accountability Framework (PAF) that had been presented to CERF's Advisory Group in late 2009 was used as the basis for detailed discussions on performance and accountability issues with UN agencies and the IOM in early 2010. On the basis of these discussions and feedback received (including from HAP), a revised draft was endorsed by the Advisory Group in July.³⁸

An independent evaluation of the CERF commenced in late 2010. The results are scheduled to be presented to the UN General Assembly in late 2011. Among the key areas to be examined are the "level and nature of accountability between CERF-recipient actors, to the RC/HC, beneficiaries, and others".³⁹

c) Improved humanitarian leadership

Whilst 2009 saw increasing calls for stronger humanitarian leadership, in 2010 the calls may fairly be said to have reached a clamour.

While the Cluster 2 Evaluation concluded that "[o]verall, the cluster approach has managed to strengthen the predictability and degree of leadership" (Steets et al. 2010 p.28), it found that significant differences existed between lead organisations, as well as countries.

The evaluation team still encountered many cases where [cluster] coordinators had not enough or no clearly dedicated time for coordination, had insufficient

³⁸ <http://ochaonline.un.org/cerf/>

³⁹ "Five Year Evaluation of the CERF" Concept Note 30 March 2010, Evaluation and Studies Section OCHA.

coordination and facilitation skills, had not been trained and/or were too junior. As a result, humanitarian actors often perceive cluster meetings as inefficient (Steets et al p.28)

The Inter-agency Real Time Evaluation in Haiti highlighted “weak global leadership” as a particular constraint (Grünewald, Binder and Georges 2010 p.8). The IASC Review of the response prepared at the six-month mark concluded that:

*.... there was a perception of a coordination deficit in the initial phase of the response operation, and a sense in which others (e.g. the military actors) felt they had to step in to supplement humanitarian leadership on the ground, which was not providing sufficient strategic vision or overall visible coherence.*⁴⁰
(IASC 2010a p.2)

In December the IASC Principals selected “Humanitarian leadership and coordination” as one of the five focus areas for work under their initiative to “develop a new business model for humanitarian response”. (IASC 2010c)

UNICEF and ICVA are leading the humanitarian leadership and coordination work.

→ Box 5. Challenges for the organisational structures and cultures of UN agencies posed by the Humanitarian Reform Process

A study focussing on UNHCR but of relevance to other UN agencies within the humanitarian reform process highlighted the challenges posed for humanitarian organisations with ‘tall hierarchies and vertical organisational cultures’ by the Humanitarian Reform Process with its “facilitative leadership, partnership and horizontal coordination processes” (Gottwald 2010 p.40). The author concluded that, for the Humanitarian Reform and Cluster Approach to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian coordination, all external and internal stakeholders of the humanitarian reform process need to work together to ensure that their tall hierarchical organisations “are reformed into participative and dynamic learning organisations that are apt to confront the challenges of the 21st century” (p.42).

Gottwald, Martin (2010) “Competing in the humanitarian marketplace: UNHCR’s organisational culture and decision-making processes” New Issues in Refugee Research Paper No. 190 October. Geneva: UNHCR.

⁴⁰ To be fair, the paragraph continues “Whatever the validity of this criticism in the initial weeks following the earthquake, huge strides were made over the subsequent months to strengthen the coordination of the response.”

1.5.2. The Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP)⁴¹

The 2010 GHP meeting brought together 41 participants in February in Geneva. The main subjects covered were: the Principles of Partnership, humanitarian space, humanitarian-military relationships, and the 'new business model'. The latter was prompted by a discussion paper "Local Capacity and Partnership: A New Humanitarian Business Model". The record of the meeting noted that:

All participants acknowledged the current and potential future global challenges and the need to identify new ways of thinking working and advocating for humanitarian action. (GHP 2010)

It is understood that the February 2011 GHP meeting will focus on the 'new business model', particularly on ways of supporting local communities and local actors.

1.5.3. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)⁴²

The IASC serves as the principal strategic coordination mechanism among major humanitarian actors and therefore plays a central role in carrying forward the range of processes that comprise the Humanitarian Reform Process. Led by the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC),⁴³ the IASC Principals met twice during the year and the IASC Working Group three times. Three aspects⁴⁴ of the IASC's work during 2010 are highlighted here:

- Accountability to affected populations;
- The IASC PSEA Review; and
- The Principals and the 'new business model'.

⁴¹ The Global Humanitarian Platform (GHP) brings together high level participants from the UN NGOs and the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and the UN to discuss issues of strategic and policy interest to ensure better humanitarian outcomes.

⁴² The IASC comprises the following: the IASC Principals; the IASC Working Group; and various Sub-Working Groups, Task Forces, Reference Groups and other groups established by the IASC Working Group.

⁴³ In September Valerie Amos succeeded John Holmes as Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

⁴⁴ It is also worth noting that during 2010 the IASC published: the Framework on Durable Solutions for IDPs (IASC 2010b); the Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons (Global Protection Cluster 2010) and three Inter-Agency Real Time Evaluations (RTEs) of the response to the displacement crisis in Pakistan (Cosgrave, Polastro and Zafar 2010); the 2009 typhoons in the Philippines (Polastro, Roa and Steen 2010) and the Haiti Earthquake (Grünwald, Binder and Georges 2010).

a) Accountability to affected populations

The 76th IASC Working Group meeting in New York in April 2010 included a session on accountability to affected populations with presentations by SCHR⁴⁵ and by ICVA drawing on an earlier preparatory meeting held in Geneva organised by the NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project.⁴⁶ The discussion resulted in four agreed actions that included the (rather un-ambitious) requirement that “all IASC organisations, Clusters and IASC Subsidiary Bodies should give priority to exploring accountability to affected populations in their guidance and practice, in particular through better information sharing, increased participation (in needs assessments, planning and monitoring), and feedback and complaints mechanisms”. Other agreed actions were that:

- Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams should explore integrating accountability to affected populations, at process and outcome levels, into humanitarian planning, programming and operations at country level;
- The guidance to, and training for Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams should incorporate accountability to affected populations; and
- The progress of IASC organisations, including the scope for joint accountability mechanisms, should be reviewed at the July 2011 Working Group meeting. OCHA was tasked with collating the experience of individual agencies in preparation for this meeting.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ SCHR (2010) SCHR Peer Review on Accountability to Disaster-Affected Populations: An Overview of Lessons Learned January Geneva: SCHR <http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/schr-peer-review-lessons-paper-january-2010.pdf>

⁴⁶ <http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/geneva-accountability-meeting-report-17-march-2010.pdf>

⁴⁷ Slightly edited version of the relevant agreed actions Final Summary Record and Revised Action Points 76th Working Group Meeting 7-9 April 2010.

→ **Box 6. The NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project**

The NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project was a DFID-funded consortium of six NGOs (ActionAid, CAFOD, CARE, IRC, Oxfam, Save the Children) and ICVA working on three-year project planned to run from November 2008 to October 2011. With the change of Government in the UK and the announcement of changed priorities the project was ended a year early in October 2010. In November a final report “Fit for the future? – Strengthening the leadership pillar of humanitarian reform” was published. It is hoped that the project will be reframed with a wider European NGO membership to restart in 2011.

b) IASC Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Review

The objective of the “IASC Review of Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN, NGO, IOM and IFRC Personnel” (Reddick 2010) was to assess the extent to which PSEA policies had been implemented. The review facilitator worked together with 14 agencies which conducted a self-assessment of their own policies and guidance, and the extent of their directives and support to the field. Field research was undertaken in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Nepal.

The review found that:

- Progress made on the establishment of PSEA policy had not been translated into managerial and staff understanding and acceptance of these policies;
- Policies and technical guidance had not been communicated to the field with sufficient authority or clear direction;
- With the exception of three of the 14 agencies, implementation was found to be “either patchy, poor or non-existent”;
- The most critical gap in organisational support to PSEA is that of “visible senior management leadership to actively promote PSEA policies and to proactively support PSEA activity, while holding field managers accountable for implementation” (Reddick 2010 p.7);
- With a few exceptions “community-level awareness-raising and complaints mechanisms are not in place. Without these, vulnerable individuals will not make complaints” (Reddick 2010 p.7); and

- The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) had made much better progress on embedding PSEA within its organisational culture than had the humanitarian sector.

In considering the review, the IASC Working Group agreed to establish an IASC PSEA Task Force to develop recommendations to the Principals and pilot “scaled-up PSEA actions” in five countries.

c) IASC Principals: “Developing a new business model for humanitarian response”

In December 2010, in a lunchtime discussion, the IASC Principals discussed the lessons from the Haiti response and other issues facing the wider humanitarian system and agreed to launch a process intended to identify ways of addressing outstanding issues and provide greater prioritisation of work to provide a more predictable and higher quality humanitarian response. The process termed “developing a new business model for humanitarian response” involves work on the five identified issues being led by pairs of agencies within the IASC:

- The evolving context (WFP and ICRC);
- Humanitarian leadership and coordination (UNICEF and ICVA);
- Building capacity for preparedness and early recovery (UNDP and SCHR);
- Accountability (UNHCR and InterAction); and
- Advocacy and communication (OCHA).

The IASC Principals and the Working Group will consider the proposals developed by the five streams in February and March 2011.

1.5.4. Principal developments in relation to individual agencies

UNHCR

In June an evaluation of the Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM) Strategy was published (Thomas and Beck 2010).

→ **Box 7. UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM) Strategy**

The AGDM strategy grew out of three evaluations of UNHCR's protection policies on women and children and the function of community services during 2001-2003. Impetus was added to the organisation's response to evaluations by the West Africa sexual exploitation scandal of 2002, and resulted in development of the AGDM Strategy and an Action Plan launched in 2007. The aim of the AGDM strategy was to ensure a broad participatory, rights- and community-based approach within UNHCR operations, based on an analysis of protection risks from the standpoint of age, gender and other social and economic factors.

Mechanisms for embedding AGDM within the work of UNHCR's country operations have included:

- Participatory Assessment (PA) tool to ensure that persons of concern were able to participate in defining the protection agenda;
- Multifunctional team approach which involved the participation of all staff functions in carrying out, analysing and responding to the results of Pas; and
- Accountability Framework (AF) which requires senior staff throughout the organisation to self-assess their performance on a three point scale (fully, partially not at all) in relation to one or more of the four areas:
 - Age, gender and diversity mainstreaming in operations;
 - Enhanced protection of women and girls of concern to UNHCR;
 - Enhanced protection of children of concern, including adolescents; and
 - Response to adult and child survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence and work to prevent SGBV.

From: Thomas and Beck 2010.

The evaluation found many ways in which the AGDM strategy was having a positive impact on UNHCR's way of working. For instance:

- 70% of questionnaire respondents felt they had seen a change in the operational culture of UNHCR with increased interactions with persons of concern in general, and vulnerable or marginalised groups in particular; and
- The participatory assessments were found to have given staff a renewed sense of purpose through contact with persons of concern.

However, the evaluation was critical of the fact that currently the AGDM Strategy does not have the weight of being official UNHCR policy. The achievements of the AGDM strategy have therefore been made without adequate leadership and oversight by either the Executive Committee (comprising representatives of 79 governments) or the highest levels of UNHCR management. It concluded that such leadership and oversight is necessary if the goal of "changing the way UNHCR does business" is to be achieved.

In May, development work was completed on the Global Management Accountability Framework (GMAF) which identifies the roles, accountability, responsibility and authority of all UNHCR job categories at headquarters, and in regional and country offices. Through an initial pilot project, 40 job descriptions were rewritten using the GMAF as a reference grid. It is planned that all UNHCR job descriptions will in future be aligned with the accountability/ authority/ responsibility format.

Refugee statistics for 2009 (published in 2010) revealed that more than half of the world's refugees now live in urban areas and less than one-third live in camps (UNHCR 2010). As with other agencies, UNHCR has been identifying and disseminating good practices in urban operations. One example from Iran is a text messaging service launched in 2010 for registered refugees that will enable the rapid dissemination of information on registration updates, education and medical services, etc. (Türk 2010)

OCHA

Since 2009 OCHA's Evaluation and Studies Section (ESS) has been leading collaborative work with other humanitarian accountability and learning actors to explore ways of mainstreaming joint humanitarian impact evaluations (JHIE). A JHIE Working Group was set up in November 2009 and, in 2010, consultations were held with 67 humanitarian actors and affected populations in Southern Sudan and Bangladesh (with support from HAP) and in Haiti. The consultation is thought to have been the most systematic attempt to consult with governments and affected populations during the design phase of a major evaluative exercise. The consultations revealed strong support for the idea of undertaking pilot JHIEs with more than 95% of international respondents in favour. There was also strong support from governments in Haiti and Bangladesh, and from municipal leaders and local NGOs in all three countries. The affected populations were supportive but expressed concerns as to the format and process of the pilots. As a result of the consultations, the JHIE Working Group proposes to undertake two pilot JHIEs, one on a natural disaster and one on a complex emergency setting in 2011/12. One pilot JHIE will focus on lesson learning, and the other on accountability, to test and provide guidance on these different approaches.

ESS also led the work of the IASC in: commissioning and managing Real Time Evaluations (RTEs); establishing an IASC RTE Working Group; developing new standardised operating procedures for RTEs, including automatic trigger mechanisms and the use of flash appeals for funding RTEs.

WFP

The number of WFP country programmes implementing cash and voucher schemes continued to increase during 2010). By the end of the year 25

countries were piloting or implementing such schemes⁴⁸ reaching over 10 million beneficiaries equivalent to approximately 10% of WFP's total number of beneficiaries. A food security specialist and influential commentator stated: "WFP is getting more effective: providing vouchers, working with markets, using cash—it's a cultural transformation".⁴⁹

Cell phones are increasingly being used to send food entitlements or credits to beneficiaries. In Syria for instance, Iraqi refugees receive their entitlement in the form of a text message code to their phone and are then able to exchange the electronic vouchers for food items including fresh foods, such as cheese and eggs, which would not normally be part of a traditional aid ration. In September 2010, the scheme was extended to cities outside Damascus.

Despite the 'cultural transformation' in the way in which food assistance is being provided, the voice of beneficiaries continues to be remarkably absent from much of WFP's corporate documentation. For instance, WFP's 2009 Annual Performance Report "the main accountability and learning tool for WFP and one of the primary oversight mechanisms for the Executive Board and donors" did not appear to utilise any input from the 101.8 million beneficiaries of WFP food assistance during 2009. In the same vein an evaluation of a three-year, US\$1.3bn programme providing food assistance to 4.9 million beneficiaries in Ethiopia did not refer to interviews with beneficiaries of communities or include their views on the assistance provided. (Robertson, O'Loughlin and Hoogendoorn 2010)

This weakness was however recognised in WFP's Annual Evaluation Report for 2009:

Two areas that require further attention, based on the analysis for this Annual Evaluation Report, are:

- i) Beneficiary accountability, which has been receiving a great deal of attention in the wider humanitarian world in recent years and is the focus of work by initiatives such as the Humanitarian Accountability Project [sic]; and*
- ii) The need for more systematic use of programme standards, be they internal or external – such as the Sphere Minimum Standards in Disaster Response. (WFP 2010 p.17)*

⁴⁸ Cash and Vouchers Factsheet January 2011 Rome: WFP

⁴⁹ Simon Maxwell (2010) "Panel 4 Summary: Intelligent Food Aid: Moving beyond Bags of Rice & Maize" <http://home.wfp.org/stellent/groups/public/documents/newsroom/wfp223784.pdf>

UNDP

In June the Democratic Governance Group and the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery published “Fighting Corruption in Post-Conflict and Recovery Situations: Learning from the past” drawing on case studies from Afghanistan, the DRC, Iraq, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste. (UNDP 2010)

UNICEF

In May 2010 a revised version of UNICEF’s Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (known as the CCCs) was published (UNICEF 2010). Initially developed in 1998 and reviewed in 2004, the CCCs “constitute UNICEF’s central policy on how to uphold the rights of children affected by humanitarian crisis ... [and]... are a framework for humanitarian action, around which UNICEF seeks to engage with partners.” The 2010 edition of the CCCs is intended “to bring UNICEF’s humanitarian policy in line with evolving humanitarian contexts, including humanitarian reform and the cluster approach.”⁵⁰

Insights into accountability issues within UNICEF and in relation to UNICEF’s role in the clusters (where it has cluster lead responsibilities for WASH, Nutrition and Education and sub-cluster responsibilities for Child Protection and Gender Based Violence), was provided by an evaluation of the Programme of Cooperation between DFID and UNICEF (Bhattacharjee, Sida and Reddick 2010). The team found “indications that humanitarian action is not viewed as a core activity within the wider organisation” and that whilst there had been improvements in UNICEF’s capacity for humanitarian response over the ten-year period of the DFID programme, these had largely been due “to personal championing, first by the Executive Director and latterly by the Deputy Executive Director, strongly supported by a core group of donors” (Bhattacharjee, Sida and Reddick 2010 p.ii). The evaluation concluded:

A sounder institutional footing is needed if the organisation is to consolidate these gains. This evaluation has concluded that a real evolution is required and that humanitarian action needs to be made a strategic priority by the Board through the vehicle of the Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP). With the revision of the MTSP being planned, now is the time to consider making humanitarian action a core strategic focus rather than an important but supporting activity of UNICEF as it is currently configured. (Bhattacharjee, Sida and Reddick 2010 p.ii)

⁵⁰ <http://www.unicef.org/publications/index.html>

1.6. Principal developments in relation to donor organisations

1.6.1. Multilateral donors and initiatives

Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD)

During 2010 membership of the GHD grew to 37 with the addition of Brazil. In July Switzerland took over the GHD chairmanship. GHD's principal activities during year included:

- Preparing ToR that reaffirm “the role of the GHD group as an informal donor-led forum with a clear focus on improving donor behaviour, while underlining the commitment of the group to engagement with partners in the wider humanitarian community”;
- Revamping the GHD website;⁵¹
- Continuing the regular GHD-SHARE (Sessions for Humanitarian Awareness Raising and Exchange) in which existing members provide orientation and mentoring support to the personnel of newer members and those new to the humanitarian environment; and
- Undertaking a joint donor monitoring mission to Haiti in June to enhance GHD commitments in the international response.

→ Box 8. Aid Transparency Initiatives

Publish What You Fund published its first assessment of donor behaviour on aid transparency in 2010 that claims to be the most methodical and complete analysis of donor aid transparency to date. It found that the aid information currently made available by donors is poor and that they all need to improve their transparency.

<http://www.publishwhatyoufund.org/>

The **International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI)** launched in Accra 2008 brings together donors, developing countries and civil society organisations to help donors and their partners meet their Accra Agenda for Action commitments on aid transparency. IATI involves and works closely with DAC, its Creditor Reporting System and the DAC Working Party on Statistics, but aims to provide access to a much wider set of information. During 2010 IATI finalised a new universal standard for project classifications and definitions and is in the process of establishing an on-line registry that will enable users to access significantly more information, and more up to date information about aid than is currently possible. In December 2010 Bangladesh became the 17th partner country to endorse IATI.

<http://www.aidtransparency.net/>

Tiri—Making Integrity Work is an independent, international NGO registered in the UK that works with governments, business, academia and civil society to support “integrity builders” around the

⁵¹ <http://www.goodhumanitarianandonorship.org/gns/home.aspx>

world. One of its supported networks is the Network for Integrity in Post War Reconstruction <http://www.tiri.org/>

The Water Integrity Network (WIN) was formed in 2006 to support anti-corruption activities in the water sector worldwide. WIN estimates that corruption in developing countries raises the price of connecting a household to a water network by up to 30 per cent and that in many countries almost half the water supply is lost to unmonitored leakages and illegal connections. WIN is based in Berlin and currently comprises 700-800 organisations and individuals working on integrity issues in the water sector.

<http://www.waterintegritynetwork.net/>

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC)

During 2010 the results of five peer reviews of DAC members were published: New Zealand, Portugal, Germany, United Kingdom, and Belgium, together with a special review of Poland. The peer review of Germany noted "insufficient accountability linkages" between German NGOs and German development co-operation funding institutions.⁵²

In January, following three years of development and testing, the DAC Network on Development Evaluation approved the Quality Standards for Development Evaluation which provide guidance on the evaluation process and product. These were subsequently endorsed by the DAC itself and included in a second edition of the "Evaluating Development Cooperation: Summary of Key Norms and Standards". (OECD DAC 2010a)

In May the DAC Network on Development Evaluation, together with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) and ALNAP launched a Haiti Evaluation Task Force to promote a more coherent and collaborative approach to the evaluation of the international response to the Haiti earthquake. The Task Force prepared a concept note on how a support office might strengthen evaluation capacities and improve coordination and use of evaluation findings and is preparing a synthesis of the findings of evaluations undertaken so far. Task Force representatives undertook consultations in Haiti in October 2010.

The DAC Network on Governance (GOVNET)⁵³ aims to improve the effectiveness of donor assistance in support of democratic governance in developing countries. Its work-stream on aid and domestic accountability is intended to enhance donor approaches to strengthening governance and effective state-citizen relations. Reports published by GOVNET during the year included studies of:

⁵² http://www.oecd.org/document/28/0,3746,en_2649_34603_46254684_1_1_1_1,00.html

⁵³ http://www.oecd.org/departement/0,3355,en_2649_34565_1_1_1_1,00.html

- How donors have responded to corruption in practice based on studies in Afghanistan, Indonesia and Mozambique (OECD DAC 2010b); and
- Tax reforms that indicated that, as well as raising domestic resources for services, effective tax reforms can also enhance accountability between citizens and the state, thereby helping to build effective states (OECD DAC 2010c).

Directorate-General for Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO)

Following approval of the Treaty of Lisbon, ECHO's status within the Commission was significantly changed in February 2010 with the transfer of Civil Protection Units in the DG Environment and the appointment of a new commissioner Kristalina Georgieva with a portfolio incorporating international cooperation, humanitarian aid and crisis response.

A mid-term review of the Action Plan of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid noted that a review of best practice in local participation planned for 2010 had had to be postponed to 2011 when it is hoped that it might be undertaken "as a joint review on the potential role of EU donors in supporting beneficiary participation in humanitarian aid programming and on possible opportunities to develop a common EU approach." (European Commission 2010 p.22)

→ Box 9. Key Findings of the Humanitarian Response Index 2010

Published in December 2010, HRI 2010 was prepared on the basis of a questionnaire survey completed by nearly 2,000 respondents and more than 500 interviews with humanitarian actors in 14 crisis-affected countries.

The report has five main findings. The findings together with recommendations to donor governments to make their aid more effective and more closely aligned with the principles contained in the GHD declaration were:

1. Increasing politicisation of humanitarian assistance means millions of people are not getting the aid they need.
2. A lack of political commitment and investment in conflict and disaster prevention, preparedness and risk reduction threatens to intensify the impact of future humanitarian crises.
3. Slow progress in reforming the humanitarian system means that aid efforts are not as efficient or effective as they should be.
4. Continued gaps in the protection of civilians and lack of continued safe humanitarian access means that vulnerable populations are at risk of harm.
5. Donor governments are collectively failing to improve their transparency and "downward" accountability towards affected populations.

The annual ranking exercise of 20 donors identified Denmark, Ireland and New Zealand as the top three and Belgium, USA and Italy as the bottom three.

DARA (2010) The Humanitarian Response Index 2010: the problems of politicisation
Madrid: DARA. www.daraint.org

1.6.2. Developments in relation to selected bilateral donors

Australia

In November 2010 an independent panel was set up to undertake a review on the future direction of Australia's aid program based on an examination of "whether the current systems, policies and procedures for the aid program maximise effectiveness and efficiency". The review will be completed by April 2011.⁵⁴

→ Box 10. 'Non-Western' or 'Non-Traditional' Donors

According to the Global Humanitarian Assistance Report 2010, humanitarian aid from non-DAC donors fell sharply from US\$1.1 billion in 2008 to just US\$224 million in 2009. (Development Initiatives 2010) In part, this was due to a large one-off contribution in 2008 (US\$0.5 billion by Saudi Arabia to WFP's special food crisis appeal). As well as the data on non-DAC donors in the GHA Report 2010, two useful studies on non-western donors were published during the year.

One was a mapping study by GPPi which looked in detail at Brazil, China, India, South Korea, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates (Binder, Meier and Steets 2010).

The other was an ODI study providing a field level perspective on the mechanisms and approaches of non-DAC donors in Pakistan, Lebanon and Darfur (Harmer and Martin 2010). They detected a "discernible recent trend towards centralising coordination and decision-making in aid policy and allocations" among non-DAC donors that would help improve transparency, coordination, efficiency and accountability (p5), but they found little evidence of community/beneficiary involvement in the design or assessment of projects funded by non-DAC donors, apart from the Lebanon where "indigenous civil society (and within this beneficiaries) were actively involved in shaping the response effort". (Harmer and Martin 2010 p.10)

In a separate study Antonio Donini made the point (once again) that the humanitarian system is dominated by the "Northern/Western humanitarian movement" that "dictates the language and the rules of the game of humanitarian action" and displays "blindness"

⁵⁴ <http://www.aidreview.gov.au/index.html>

towards the “parallel”, or “shadow” humanitarianisms such as Islamic humanitarianism and locally-organised humanitarian actions. (Donini 2010 p.221)

UK

In May 2010 the Conservative and Liberal-Democrat parties formed a new coalition government. A number of changes and change processes were initiated in relation to the UK aid programme, including funding reductions for some programmes (e.g. Box 6). A draft Structural Reform Programme was published in July and incorporated into DFID’s Business Plan 2011-2015. The stated priorities of the Structural Reform Programme included:

- Increasing effectiveness of British aid by improving transparency and value for money;
- Increasing the focus on boosting economic growth and wealth creation; and
- Improving the coherence and performance of British aid and development policy in fragile and conflict-affected countries, with a particular focus on Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Three separate reviews were launched, including a Humanitarian Emergency Response Review (HERR). According to the Inception Report the objectives of the HERR are to ensure:

- DFID achieves maximum impact for affected populations and delivers value for money in its humanitarian response;
- DFID and Her Majesty’s Government continue to deliver humanitarian aid quickly and effectively, especially through humanitarian partners and drive positive change throughout the humanitarian system;
- DFID is fit for 21st century humanitarian challenges.

The HERR is due to report in spring 2011.

In October 2010 an Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI) was announced with the objective of scrutinising UK aid, “focusing on the delivery of value for money for the UK taxpayer and maximizing the impact and effectiveness of the UK aid budget”. A Chief Commissioner who reports directly to Parliament through the International Development Select Committee heads

the ICAI; this arrangement is intended to ensure both independence and accountability. ICAI launched a public consultation in January 2011.⁵⁵

Switzerland

Following reports from Swiss disaster response teams in Haiti about the questionable quality of assistance being provided by certain international organisations, Toni Frisch, Head of Swiss Development Co-operation's Humanitarian Aid Department and chair of the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG), launched an initiative to develop a certification system for international organisations responding to disasters. Presentations were given: during the ECOSOC Humanitarian Segment meeting in New York in July; at the INSARAG global meeting in Kobe in September; at UNHCR ExCom meeting in Geneva in October; at the joint GHD/IASC consultation in Geneva in October; and at two specific meetings with various humanitarian agencies in Geneva in July and October.⁵⁶ The next steps were outlined in October and include setting up a consultation group, mapping already existing initiatives and clarifying and fine-tuning the concept and the 'problem statement'. Since then, however, it is understood that the initiative has oriented towards the framework offered by International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles programme led by the IFRC (Box 11).

→ Box 11. International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL)

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies began its IDRL programme in 2001 to investigate how legal frameworks could contribute to improving the delivery of disaster relief. During 2006-2007, a set of IDRL guidelines were developed through a process involving high level regional forums in which over 140 governments, 140 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and 40 international organisations, NGOs and NGO networks participated. The resultant *Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance* were approved by governments and Red Cross and Red Crescent actors at the 2007 International Conference for the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

The justification for the Guidelines is seen as being:

... because most countries do not have special laws in place for facilitating and regulating international relief. The result is a common set of problems, including:

a. Unnecessary red tape ...

b. Poor quality and coordination from some international providers ...

Experience has shown that the wake of a major disaster is the wrong time to try to develop new rules and systems to address these kinds of problems.

⁵⁵ <http://icai.independent.gov.uk/news/>

⁵⁶ GHD (2010) "Draft report – Good Humanitarian Donorship meeting, Geneva, 20 October" 2010

The Guidelines are designed to help governments to prepare for them before disasters strike. (IFRC 2008 p.4-5)

The core ideas seen as underpinning the Guidelines are:

- Domestic actors have the primary role;
- International relief providers have responsibilities;
- International actors need legal facilities; and
- Some legal facilities should be conditional.

In 2011, States, National Societies and the IFRC itself will be invited to report to the 31st International Conference on their accomplishments in using the Guidelines.

The IDRL website⁵⁷ contains a database of over 600 international and national legal instruments relevant to disasterrelief and IDRL case studies.

USA

In September, President Obama signed a Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development—the first of its kind by a US administration. Recognising that “development is vital to national security and is a strategic, economic, and moral imperative for the United States” the Directive called “for the elevation of development as a core pillar of American power and charts a course for development, diplomacy and defence to mutually reinforce and complement one another in an integrated comprehensive approach to national security.”⁵⁸ This was followed in November by the USAID Forward Reform Agenda—a package of comprehensive reforms in the structure, staffing and way of working in USAID.⁵⁹

In December Secretary of State Hilary Clinton released the State Department and USAID’s first ever Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) entitled Leading Through Civilian Power. The QDDR expanded on the September Presidential Policy Directive in setting out a sweeping reform agenda for the State Department and USAID. A stated goal of the QDDR was “re-establishing USAID as the world’s premier development agency”.⁶⁰

In a separate development, at the end of the year USAID launched the Foreign Assistance Dashboard, the goal of which is to enable the public to examine, research and track US Government foreign assistance investments in an accessible and easy-to-understand format. The Dashboard currently contains Department of State and USAID budget and appropriation data.⁶¹

⁵⁷ <http://www.ifrc.org/what/disasters/idrl/index.asp>

⁵⁸ <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2010/09/22/fact-sheet-us-global-development-policy>

⁵⁹ <http://www.usaid.gov/press/factsheets/2010/fs101118.html>

⁶⁰ <http://www.state.gov/s/dmr/qddr/>

⁶¹ <http://www.foreignassistance.gov/Default.aspx#>

1.7. Principal developments in relation to cross-sector networks

Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP)

Following the 12 January earthquake in Haiti, ALNAP supported the response and learning from it, through activities including:

- Disseminating the ALNAP Lessons Paper on Earthquake Responses;
- Establishing a Haiti Learning and Accountability portal in French as well as English;⁶²
- Hosting a two day meeting in May in collaboration with the DAC Network on Development Evaluation and the UN Evaluation Group entitled Evaluating the Haiti Response: Encouraging Improved System-wide Collaboration; and
- Collaborating in the subsequently formed Haiti Evaluation Task Force.

The State of the Humanitarian System pilot report (ALNAP 2010) (the final draft of which was reviewed in HAR 2009) was formally launched in several international locations in early 2010. It was well received, and was viewed as providing a valuable overview of the progress of efforts to improve the system and remaining gaps and weaknesses. A learning review in consultation with key stakeholders recommended building on the pilot study and expanding its scope and methodology to produce a full state of the system assessment. This was endorsed by the ALNAP membership and the first full version of “The State of the Humanitarian System” is planned for publication in 2012.

Following earlier work on innovation in international humanitarian action (Ramalingam, Scriven and Foley 2009), ALNAP worked with other stakeholders to develop the idea of establishing a grant-making fund to support operational innovations to better assist those affected by disasters. The resultant Humanitarian Innovations Fund was launched in October 2010 in conjunction with ELRHA and with support from the UK DFID. Subsequent funding from Sida brought the total amount available to US\$2.3million. The first call for proposals is expected in early 2011.

⁶² <http://www.alnap.org/current/Haitilearningportal.aspx>

➔ **Box 12. Consideration of accountability to intended beneficiaries and local communities in the evaluations reviewed**

A set of 40 evaluations of humanitarian action published in 2010 and downloaded from ALNAP's Evaluative Reports Database (ERD) were reviewed.⁶³ This represented a significantly larger sample than the 23 reports reviewed in HAR 2009 and the 22 reports reviewed in HAR 2008. Factors contributing to the increase in the number of reports contained in ALNAP's ERD included increases in the number of:

- Evaluative reports being undertaken by members of the UK Disasters Emergency Committee in line with the requirements of the 2009 Evaluation Policy for the Use of Appeal Funds by DEC Member Agencies;⁶⁴
- Evaluations being commissioned by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (the sample includes the six country case studies undertaken as part of the IASC Cluster Approach Evaluation 2nd Phase as well as three Real-Time Evaluations); and
- Evaluations and real-time evaluations being submitted to the ERD by Catholic Relief Services (five in 2010).

The 40 reports were reviewed from three perspectives:

1. Proportion interviewing beneficiaries as part of the evaluation process

Thirty one of the reports (77.5%) interviewed beneficiaries of humanitarian assistance as part of the evaluation process. Though comparisons with previous year should be treated with caution (due to the limited number of evaluations in the sample and differences in the composition of the sample) this result appears to represent a slight improvement over the results presented in HAR 2009 (74%) and HAR 2008 (68%).

2. Proportion explicitly considering accountability to intended beneficiaries and local communities

Twenty four reports (60%) were judged to have explicitly considered accountability to intended beneficiaries and local communities. This result compares with just 13% in HAR 2009 and 45% in HAR 2008). The principal factors contributing to this remarkable improvement would seem to include:

- The impact of the UK DEC's evaluation policy adopted in 2009 which requires members to undertake independent evaluations to consider, amongst other things:
 - the extent to which the Code of Conduct standards and Sphere had been respected; and
 - the level of involvement of and accountability to beneficiaries.
- The fact that almost all of the 17 evaluation reports commissioned by the IASC included consideration of accountability to intended beneficiaries and local communities

⁶³ 65 reports listed as having been published in 2010 were downloaded from ALNAP's Evaluative Reports Database on 4th January 2011. Forty evaluations of humanitarian action were then selected for inclusion in the sample. Some were excluded for focusing more on development than emergency/humanitarian context; some were judged to be policy reviews or research reports rather than evaluations; four evaluations were not available in English. On completion of the analysis it was realised that two reports had been published in December 2009 but they were nevertheless retained in the sample. Six (15%) of the evaluations had been commissioned by UN agencies; 17 (42.5%) had been commissioned by the IASC or undertaken as interagency evaluations; 6 (15%) had been commissioned by donor organisations; 9 (22.5%) had been commissioned by NGOs or NGO groupings; 2 (5%) had been undertaken other organisations.

⁶⁴ <http://www.dec.org.uk/item/356>

Several of the reports in this category covered the issue of accountability to beneficiaries well and made strong calls for strengthened systems of accountability, most notably:

- The IASC Cluster Approach Evaluation (Steets et al. 2010);
- The IASC Real Time Evaluation of the response in Haiti (Grünwald et al. 2010);
- The IASC review of sexual exploitation and abuse (Reddick 2010);
- The evaluation of UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming Strategy (Thomas and Beck 2010);
- The evaluation of the DFID/UNICEF programme of coordination (Battacharjee et al. 2010); and
- The HAP study of the impact of complaints and response mechanisms on humanitarian action (Baños Smith 2010).

The number of IASC commissioned studies in this list is noteworthy and points to a good standard being set by this key body within the humanitarian system.

Sixteen reports (40%) did not explicitly consider accountability to intended beneficiaries and local communities. As in previous years there were several evaluation reports where the term 'accountability' was not used once (despite the consideration of accountability being a specified requirement of the ToR) and others where the consideration of accountability was solely from the perspective of financial accountability and accountability towards donors.

3. Proportion systematically assessing accountability to intended beneficiaries and local communities

Despite several studies having strong coverage of accountability issues (see above) in the final analysis all but one were judged to have omitted consideration of key components of accountability to beneficiaries and so did not qualify as having been systematic in their assessment. The one report judged to have done so was the evaluation of UNHCR's Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming Strategy (Thomas and Beck 2010).

The annual ALNAP meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur in November on the theme of "The role of national governments in international humanitarian response to disasters". The meeting brought together a range of humanitarian and government actors including officials from government departments or agencies responsible for disaster response in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The final panel session proposed a range of steps to build relationships between governments and international humanitarian actors.⁶⁵

The ALNAP project Strengthening Humanitarian Evaluation Capacity in Action commenced and a workshop was held in September. The starting point for the workshop was:

- The full benefit of investments in evaluation are not being realised in part due to the cultural disconnect between evaluation systems and the operational focus of many humanitarian organisations; and

⁶⁵ <http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/meeting-report-alnap's-26th-meeting-final.pdf>

- A growing scepticism that evaluations rarely contribute to improvements in response.

During 2011 the project plans to develop a self-assessment tool/questionnaire and a briefing paper for operational managers.

Work to systematically explore and improve leadership within the humanitarian sector was carried forward by ALNAP together with the Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy (DRLA), Humanitarian Futures Programme (HFP), and People In Aid. During 2010 the four organisations undertook preliminary explorations in the inter-related areas of operational leadership (led by ALNAP), strategic leadership (led by HFP), transformational leadership and organisational change (led by DRLA) and leading people (led by People In Aid). During 2011 the four members will work to improve the understanding of how leaders can effect change within their organisation and across organisations.

Quality and Accountability (Q&A) Initiatives Group

The Q&A Group held only one meeting in 2010, in June in London. The minutes record that a proposal to discuss potential collaboration and/or integration ran out of time. It is understood that a steering group including HAP, People In Aid, the ECB Project, ALNAP and the Sphere Project was set up to take forward the development of a joint community of practice on quality and accountability. However, it is understood that little progress was made partly due to a lack of funds.

1.8. Reflections on themes and challenges

The rapid growth in the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT) as a vehicle for improved communication with affected populations.

Awareness of the potential role that mobile phones and ICT held for humanitarian action had been growing in the years before 2010 as a result of the work by organisations such as 'Ushahidi' and 'Frontline SMS'. However it is clear that 2010, and the Haiti response in particular, dramatically increased the role of ICT in humanitarian action and the awareness of the potential role of such technologies in the humanitarian operations elsewhere from here onwards (e.g. US Department of State 2010).

Whilst the proximity of Haiti to the USA and the very significant role played by the US military (includes decisions to promote the use of unclassified information and to launch the All Partners Access Network) are unlikely to apply in most other humanitarian operations, it appears that the role of ICT in humanitarian action changed significantly and irreversibly in 2010. Organisations such as CDAC, Infoasaid, Google, Crisismappers, ICT4Peace, Ushahidi and

FrontlineSMS were also been involved in the response to the Pakistan flood disaster. The WFP has begun to issue food credits to beneficiaries via SMS messages in selected countries.

Whilst such technologies offer tremendous potential for improving the accountability of humanitarian actors to the affected population, at this point it would seem that they have predominantly been used to move operational information from agencies to beneficiaries and affected communities rather than the other way round. Where affected populations have provided information back to agencies it has often been on issues such as the extent of a flood or population movement, rather than agencies actually listening to the affected populations in expressing their needs or their views on the assistance being provided.

The challenge of establishing systematic ways of listening to survivors has been recognised by the first coordinator of the CDAC programme in Haiti who called for “significantly more resources, training and expertise ... to move dialogue with affected populations into mainstream humanitarian practice.” (Quintanilla 2011) Whilst the task of integrating ICT into agency procedures for consulting with communities, facilitating their participation in programming decisions and systems for complaint handling present significant challenges, it is encouraging that organisations such as CDAC, HAP, and ALNAP have already begun to discuss how this might be achieved.

The disjointedness of current efforts to improve quality and accountability

Whilst this chapter reveals the large number of activities intended to improve the quality and accountability of humanitarian action, it is striking how disjointed many of the activities appeared to be. New initiatives seem to be established with little apparent reference to, or coordination with, existing initiatives and programmes. Similarly, existing initiatives are being carried forward by different groups of actors often in parallel to, and with limited engagement with, initiatives that are quite closely related. Given the apparently high level of activity and effort underway, it is legitimate to ask what factors may be contributing to the ‘disjointedness’ and what steps might be considered for improving the situation.

Five factors are suggested here:

- a) Limited sources of information that provide an overview of developments;
- b) Too many agencies;
- c) The continued use of a range of definitions of ‘accountability’ across the humanitarian system and the lack of a widely shared vision of what an ‘accountable’ humanitarian system would look like;
- d) Insufficient collaboration within and leadership by the quality and accountability initiatives; and

- e) A continued lack of accountability to affected populations within the leadership and governance levels of the humanitarian system.

a) Limited sources of information that provide an overview of developments

The international humanitarian system generates surprisingly few publications that provide an overview of developments within the sector. Consequently it is difficult for even well-resourced agencies and programmes to keep track of all developments that may be of potential relevance to them and to others that may be considering new initiatives. ALNAP's "State of the System" reports are a welcome development in this regard, but the reality is that, under current plans, they will only be published every two years. Whilst this overview chapter within *The HAP Humanitarian Accountability Report* represents a unique attempt to provide an annual summary of quality and accountability-related activities within the humanitarian system, it is unable to capture all activities and, due to the pace of developments, some information is already out-of-date by the time of its publication in May of each year. A more effective mechanism for keeping all those involved in quality and accountability efforts abreast of developments, to reduce duplication and overlap, seems to be needed, perhaps involving the publication of more frequent updates (perhaps two to three times per year) and their distribution electronically to a wider readership.

b) Too many agencies

The international response to the Haiti earthquake revealed once again that, in certain operations, the combination of the scale of the disaster, the level of media coverage and the inability of host governments and the humanitarian coordination mechanisms to manage the number of agencies permitted to operate can result in an influx of agencies that actually hampers the overall effectiveness of the response. The Inter-Agency Real Time Evaluation referred to "the uncontrollable flow of frequently inexperienced small NGOs" as being a serious constraint that hampered overall achievements. (Grünwald, Binder and Georges 2010 p.8) Both the 1996 Joint Evaluation of the Emergency Response in Rwanda (Borton et al. 2006) and the 2006 Tsunami Evaluation Coalition (Telford and Cosgrave 2006) highlighted this phenomenon. In the decade and a half since the Rwanda evaluation, the humanitarian system has failed to address this issue satisfactorily and it is now contributing directly to external critiques of the humanitarian system, such as that by Linda Polman.

Following reports of poor quality assistance being provided by an inexperienced international organisation, the Swiss Development Co-operation's initiative to build support for a certification system for international organisations

responding to disasters revealed a growing frustration with this situation among key actors within the system. It is telling that the initiative reportedly led to a focus on International Disaster Relief Law (IDRL), for it would appear that a framework meshing international and national law is probably the most direct and effective way of preventing access to affected populations by inexperienced and poor quality NGOs. Increased engagement with, and support for, IDRL by international and national NGOs and UN agencies would appear to offer the best prospect for preventing or ameliorating similar NGO influxes in future operations.

c) The continued use of a range of definitions of ‘accountability’ and the lack of a commonly shared vision of what an ‘accountable’ humanitarian system would look like

Another factor that likely contributes to the ‘disjointedness’ of efforts to improve quality and accountability is the continued use of a range of definitions of ‘accountability’ across the humanitarian system. A widely shared vision of what an ‘accountable’ humanitarian system would look like is also lacking. This issue was raised in *The 2008 Humanitarian Accountability Report* and also by the SCHR Peer Review process, which found itself unable to apply a single common definition that was acceptable to all its members, but was instead obliged to utilise definitions of accountability adopted by the nine participating agencies and networks. The lessons paper on the peer review noted that:

Staff across all the organisations called for a more precise discourse on accountability to disaster-affected persons, unpacking the term and using explicitly the specific component elements that ‘accountability’ implies. (SCHR 2010 p.6)

HAP and its members must surely be those best placed to provide the requested ‘unpacking’ and explanation. More energetic efforts by HAP and its members to disseminate this across the humanitarian system would seem to be required.

d) Insufficient collaboration within and leadership by the quality and accountability initiatives

Quality and accountability improvements are needed by the humanitarian system not only as a way of improving overall performance but also as a way of defending itself from external criticism. The number and range of activities revealed by this chapter and the growth in the membership of HAP indicates the high level of demand within the humanitarian system for such improvements. It is a disappointment therefore, that in a context of increased opportunity that the very forum that brings the various Q & A initiatives together

appears to be losing steam rather than providing energetic leadership. From three meetings a year in 2007 and 2009 and two meetings during 2008 the Q&A Group managed to hold just one meeting during 2010. Whilst several of the Q&A Group members are achieving increased levels of collaboration in the field, it would seem that, at the global level, the initiatives are not attaching sufficient priority to collaboration for the benefit of the overall humanitarian system.

Pressure for a re-energising and possibly re-organising the Q&A Group is building. Whilst recognition of the need for change within and across the membership of the Q&A Group would be preferable to pressure from outside the Group, change is clearly needed if greater collaboration and more vigorous collective advocacy for quality and accountability improvement in the humanitarian system are to be achieved.

e) Continued lack of ownership of accountability to affected populations within the leadership and governance levels within the humanitarian system

The critical role of leadership and governance levels in driving improvements in accountability within organisations was reaffirmed by many of the accountability studies published during 2010 (e.g. Baños Smith 2010; SCHR 2010; Reddick 2010; Thomas and Beck 2010; Bhattacharjee, Sida and Reddick 2010). However, several of these studies also noted that the leadership by management and/or governance levels had been inadequate (Reddick 2010; Thomas and Beck 2010). One of the challenges posed to Oxfam by the SCHR Peer Review was whether the agency “is prepared to connect some managerial muscle to the accountability bones it has already grown, in order to strengthen the push on its accountability efforts” (Oxfam 2010 p.7). However, what the studies do not reveal are the reasons why the necessary levels of support were not forthcoming. Calls for a strengthening of leadership within the humanitarian system increased during 2010 and the field is now the subject of a number of related initiatives and conferences. It would seem prudent to ensure that such initiatives incorporate leadership in relation to accountability and quality improvement.

Whilst the IASC has been slow to engage directly with the agenda of accountability to affected populations, this began to change in 2010 with an initial consideration of accountability to affected populations by the IASC Working Group in April, followed by the launch of the ‘new business model’ process at the end of the year by the IASC Principals and their request that ‘accountability’ be one of the five areas to be considered.

The use of the term ‘new business model’ in relation to the humanitarian system appears to have originated in work by the World Economic Forum’s

Global Agenda Council on Humanitarian Assistance which resulted in a paper titled “A New Business Model for Humanitarian Assistance? A Challenge Paper” (International Alert 2009). The paper emphasised “national capacity-building as the key scaffolding of risk management and disaster response, implying new roles for aid donors and private-sector partners. We called this a new ‘business model’ for humanitarian action” (Maxwell in International Alert 2009). The term was then taken up by the Global Humanitarian Platform at its meeting in February 2010 to describe:

...new modes of humanitarian action that are required because of the new humanitarian challenges caused by climate change and the decline of humanitarian space, the need for sustainability and the need to better understand the local context. (GHP 2010)

By December the term was being used by the IASC Principals in relation to ways of addressing outstanding issues and achieving a greater prioritisation of work within the Humanitarian Reform process and its goal of providing a more predictable, higher quality response.

Whilst certain clusters (notably the WASH cluster) have developed excellent guidance materials on improving accountability to affected populations, the evidence from the Cluster 2 Evaluation and the various Inter-Agency Real Time Evaluations is that the Humanitarian Reform Process has been painfully slow in engaging with the whole agenda of accountability to affected populations. Even now within the UN and the Clusters, ‘accountability’ is often seen as an issue of accountabilities between organisations and agencies within clusters or between clusters. The ‘new business model’ process (whether appropriately named or not) initiated by the IASC Principals and the new Emergency Relief Coordinator in December 2010 offers a significant opportunity for the agenda of improving accountability to affected populations to play a more central role in the humanitarian reform process.

1.9. Concluding assessment

So, what progress was achieved towards HAP’s vision “of a humanitarian system championing the rights and the dignity of disaster survivors” during 2010?

It is possible to list a number of positive developments in relation to the accountability of humanitarian actors to disaster affected populations and communities, notably:

- A significant increase in the proportion of evaluations considering accountability to intended beneficiaries and local communities, with several evaluation reports making strong calls for strengthened systems of accountability to disaster affected populations;
- Progress by OCHA and partners in bringing the idea of Joint Humanitarian Impact Evaluations to fruition;
- A strengthening presence of quality and accountability initiatives in major operations;
- The development and refinement of both the HAP Standard and the Sphere Handbook;
- Increasing evidence of the need for compliance systems to form part of NGO self-regulation if practice and quality is to be improved;
- Developing support and momentum for greater professionalisation within the humanitarian sector;
- The agenda of accountability to disaster affected populations being given initial consideration within the IASC and the 'new business model' process having the opportunity of making significant inroads into the humanitarian reform process;
- The increased use of ICT in humanitarian operations and techniques using mobile phones that give flexibility and dignity to beneficiaries of food assistance;
- A growing awareness of the enormous potential that ICT offer for improving accountability toward disaster affected populations; and
- Evidence that organisational processes such as certification against the HAP Standard, validation using the DEC Accountability Framework and UNHCR's AGDM Strategy can have a positive impact on organisational performance and accountability towards affected populations.

Inevitably there were also areas that either did not show progress or which were highlighted as continuing areas of concern. These included:

- The continued use of a range of definitions of 'accountability' across the humanitarian system and the lack of a widely shared vision of what an 'accountable' humanitarian system would look like;

- A continued failure to address the issue of too many, inexperienced NGOs being able to access affected populations in certain, high profile emergency responses;
- The continuing evidence of weaknesses in and failures of leadership within the humanitarian system, whether in relation to: humanitarian coordinators and cluster leads; the senior management not actively promoting PSEA policies and practices, or of donors and senior managers not maximising the potential benefits of accountability improvement processes such as UNHCR's AGDM;
- A continuing dearth of evaluations that assess accountability to intended beneficiaries and local communities in a thorough and systematic way;
- Continuing examples of so-called accountability tools that do not give voice to disaster affected populations or seek their views on the assistance provided to them; and
- Insufficient collaboration within, and leadership by, the quality and accountability initiatives.

In some of these areas the lack of progress appears worryingly persistent. Similar to previous years, the overall message seems to be one of continuing progress but still with a long way to go before HAP's vision is realised.

References

ALNAP (2010) 'The State of the Humanitarian System: Assessing performance and progress', London: ALNAP.

Anthony, A (2010) 'Does Humanitarian Aid Prolong Wars?', *The Observer*, 25 April 2010, available at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2010/apr/25/humanitarian-aid-war-linda-polman>.

Baños Smith, H (2010) 'The Right to a Say and the Duty to Respond: The impact of complaints and response mechanisms on humanitarian action', Geneva: HAP.

Battacharjee, A; L Sida and M Reddick (2010) "Evaluation of DFID-UNICEF Programme of Coordination: Investing in humanitarian action Phase III, 2006-2009", New York: UNICEF.

Binder, A, C Meier; and J Steets (2010) 'Humanitarian Assistance, Truly uUniversal? A mapping study of non-western donors', Research Paper 12, Berlin: Global Public Policy Institute.

Borton, J et al. (1996) 'Humanitarian Aid and Effects', *Joint Evaluation of Emergency Assistance to Rwanda*, Study 3, Copenhagen: JEEAR.

CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (2010a) 'The Listening Project Issue Paper: Structural relationships in the aid system', Cambridge MA: CDA.

CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (2010b) 'The Listening Project Issue Paper: The importance of listening', Cambridge MA: CDA.

CDA Collaborative Learning Projects (2010c) 'The Listening Project Issue Paper: The role of staffing decisions', Cambridge MA: CDA.

Center for Creative Leadership and People InAid (2010) 'Leadership and Talent Development in International Humanitarian and Development Organisations', Brussels/London: Center for Creative Leadership/People in Aid.

Central Emergency Response Fund (2010) 'Live Saving Criteria', available at <http://ochaonline.un.org/Default.aspx?alias=ochaonline.un.org/cerf>.

Cosgrave, J, R Polastro and F Zafar (2010) 'Inter-Agency Real Time Evaluation (IA-RTE) of the Humanitarian Response to Pakistan's 2009 Displacement Crisis', *Final Report*, Geneva: Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

Davey, C, P Nolan and P Ray (2010) 'Change Starts with Us, Talk to Us!: Beneficiary perceptions regarding the effectiveness of measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian aid workers: A HAP commissioned study', Geneva: HAP.

Donini, A (2010) 'The Far Side: The meta functions of humanitarianism in a globalised world', *Disasters*, 34(2): 220-237.

Duffield, M (2010) 'The Fortified Aid Compound', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 4(4): 453-474.

Dickmann, M, B Emmens, E Parry and C Williamson (2010) 'Engaging Tomorrow's Global Humanitarian Leaders Today', Bedford/London: Cranfield University School of Management/People in Aid.

Eberwein, W (2010) *Speech to the ECHO Annual Partners Conference*, 22 October 2010, Brussels, available at http://ec.europa.eu/echo/about/actors/partners_en.htm.

ECB Bangladesh Consortium (2010) 'One Year On: Plight of cyclone Aila communities continues', Dhaka: Emergency Capacity Building Project.

Enhanced Learning and Research for Humanitarian Assistance (2010) 'International Working Forum on Professionalising the Humanitarian Sector', *Forum Report*, London: ELRHA.

European Commission (2010) 'Commission Staff Working Document On the mid-term review of the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid Action Plan: Assessing progress and priorities in the EU's implementation of humanitarian action', Brussels: DG Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection.

Global Humanitarian Platform (2010) *Strengthening Partnership for Effective Humanitarian Action*, 2-3 February available at <http://www.globalhumanitarianplatform.org/doc00004251.html>

Global Protection Cluster (2010) 'Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons', Geneva: IASC.

Global WASH Cluster (2009) 'WASH Accountability Resources: Ask, Listen, Communicate', *Global WASH Cluster*, New York: UNICEF.

Grünewald, F, A Binder and Y Georges (2010) 'Inter-Agency Real-Time Evaluation in Haiti: Three months after the earthquake', *Final Report of Groupe URD and GPPI*, Geneva: Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

Gourevitch, P (2010a) 'Alms Dealers: Can you provide humanitarian aid without facilitating conflicts', *The New Yorker*, 11 October 2010.

Gourevitch, P (2010b) 'The Moral Hazards of Humanitarian Aid: What is to be done?' *The New Yorker*, 4 November 2010.

Hall, J, and J Howell (2010) 'Working Paper: Good practice donor engagement with civil society', *Office of Development Effectiveness*, Canberra: AusAID.

Hammer, M, C Rooney and S Warren (2010) 'Addressing Accountability in NGO Advocacy Practice: Principles and prospects of self-regulation', *Briefing Paper*, 125, London: One World Trust.

Harmer, A, and E Martin (2010) 'Diversity in Donorship: Field lessons', *HPG Report*, 30 March, London: Overseas Development Institute.

Humanitarian Policy Group (2010) 'Aid and War: A response to Linda Polman's critique of humanitarianism', *ODI Opinion*, 144, London: Overseas Development Institute.

IASC (2010a) 'Response to the Humanitarian Crisis in Haiti Following the 12 January 2010 Earthquake: Achievements, challenges and lessons to be learned', Geneva: Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

IASC (2010b) *IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons*, Geneva: IASC.

IASC (2010c) 'Main themes from the IASC Principals Lunchtime Discussion, "Lessons learnt from Haiti: Next Steps for the Humanitarian System" 'Developing a New Business Model for Humanitarian response' Held at WHO, Geneva, December 15 2010 Geneva: Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

IFRC (2010) *World Disasters Report 2010: Focus on urban risk*, Geneva: IFRC.

IFRC (2011) *SCHR Peer Review: Accountability Disaster Affected People*, Geneva: IFRC.

International Alert (2009) 'A New Business Model for Humanitarian Assistance? A challenge paper', *World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Humanitarian Assistance*, London: International Alert.

Lattu, K et al. (2008), *To Complain Or Not To Complain, Still the Question: Consultations with humanitarian aid beneficiaries on their perceptions of efforts to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse*, Geneva: HAP.

Lingán, J, A Cavender, T Palmer and B Gwynne (2010) 'Responding to Development Effectiveness in the Global South', *Briefing Paper*, 126, London/ Geneva: One World Trust/World Vision.

Lloyd, R, V Calvo and C Laybourn (2010) 'Ensuring Credibility and Effectiveness: Designing compliance systems in CSO self-regulation', *Briefing Paper*, 127, London: One World Trust.

Maxwell, S (2009) 'Preface', in International Alert, *A New Business Model for Humanitarian Assistance? A Challenge Paper*, in International Alert (2009) 'A New Business Model for Humanitarian Assistance? A challenge paper' *World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on Humanitarian Assistance*, London: International Alert.

Maxwell, S (2010) 'Review of "War Games: The story of aid and war"', *Modern Times' Development Policy Review*, 28(6): 771–775.

NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project (2010) *Fit for the Future? Strengthening the leadership pillar of humanitarian reform*, London: NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project.

OECD DAC (2010a) *Evaluating Development Cooperation: Summary of key norms and standards*, (2nd ed.), Paris: OECD.

OECD DAC (2010b) 'Working Towards more Effective Collective Donor Responses to Corruption: Synthesis report and recommendation, *Anti-Corruption Task Team, DAC Network on Governance*, Paris: OECD.

OECD DAC (2010c) 'Citizen-State Relations: Improving governance through tax reform' Paris: OECD.

O'Hagan, Paul with Katy Love and Angela Rouse (2010) 'An Independent Joint Evaluation of the Haiti Earthquake Humanitarian Response' Port au Prince: CARE/Save the Children.

Oxfam (2010) 'Oxfam Accountability Report 2010' Oxford: Oxfam.

People In Aid/ECB (2010) 'Addressing Staff Retention in the Horn of Africa Report' People in Aid Emergency Capacity Building Project Horn of Africa Consortium Project. March. London/Nairobi: People in Aid/ECB

Polastro, Riccardo; Bernado Roa and Nicolai Steen (2010) 'Inter-Agency Real Time Evaluation (IA-RTE) of the humanitarian response to typhoons Ketsana and Parma in the Philippines' DARA. Geneva: Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

Polman, Linda (2010a) *War Games: The story of aid and war in modern times* Viking Penguin: London

Polman, Linda (2010b) *The Crisis Caravan: What's wrong with humanitarian aid?* Metropolitan: New York

Quintanilla, Jacobo (2011) 'When communication really matters: the experience of CDAC in Haiti' HPN Online News 11th January 2011 <http://www.odihpn.org/report.asp?id=3166>

Ramalingam, Ben; Kim Scriven and Connor Foley (2009) 'Innovations in international humanitarian action' ALNAP 8th Review of Humanitarian Action: Performance, Impact and Innovation' London: ALNAP.

Reddick, Moira (2010) 'Global Synthesis Report: IASC Review of Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN, NGO, IOM and IFRC Personnel' June. Geneva: Inter-Agency Standing Committee.

Robertson, Tim; Bill O'Loughlin and Annemarie Hoogendoorn (2010) Mid-Term Evaluation of the Ethiopia Ethiopia Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation

10656.0 (2008-2010): 'An Operation Evaluation' Office of Evaluation. Rome: World Food Programme

Steets, Julia; François Grünewald; Andrea Binder, Véronique de Geoffroy et al. (2010) 'Cluster Approach Evaluation Synthesis Report' April. GPPI and Groupe URD. Geneva: Inter-Agency Standing Committee

Telford, John and John Cosgrave (2006) 'Joint evaluation of the international response to the Indian Ocean tsunami: Synthesis Report' Tsunami Evaluation Coalition.

Thomas, Virginia and Tony Beck (2010) 'Changing the way UNHCR does business? An evaluation of the Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming Strategy, 2004-2009' Pre-publication edition June. Policy Development and Evaluation Service. Geneva: UNHCR.

Türk, Volker (2010) Agenda item 3, 22 June 2010 Presentation by International Protection Director Division of International Protection, 48th Meeting of the Standing Committee. Geneva: UNHCR.

UNDP (2010) 'Fighting Corruption in Post-Conflict and Recovery Situations: Learning from the past' Democratic Governance Group, New York: UNDP.

UNHCR (2010) '2009 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons' June Division of Programme Support and Management. Geneva: UNHCR.

US Department of State (2010) Haiti Earthquake: Breaking New Ground in the Humanitarian Information Landscape Humanitarian Information Unit White Paper July Washington DC: US Dept. of State.

Walker, Peter and Catherine Russ (2010) 'Professionalising the Humanitarian Sector: A scoping study' A report commissioned by ELRHA (Enhanced Learning and Research for Humanitarian Assistance). London: ELRHA.

Wilson, Pauline et al. (2010) 'Report of the joint evaluation of the Indonesian ECB consortium's response to the West Java and West Sumatra earthquakes' Indonesia Emergency Capacity Building Joint Evaluation. Jakarta: Emergency Capacity Building Project <http://www.ecbproject.org/home>.

WFP (2010a) 'Measuring Results, Sharing Lessons Annual Evaluation Report 2009' Office of Evaluation. May. Rome: WFP.

WFP (2010b) Annual Performance Report 2009 Executive Board Annual Session 7-11 June 2010 Rome: WFP.

CHAPTER 2

Perceptions of Humanitarian Accountability—Annual Survey

Since 2006 HAP has been capturing perceptions of humanitarian accountability through an annual survey. When asked about how accountable humanitarian agencies were to their intended beneficiaries, 37% of respondents in 2010 indicated that agencies were highly accountable.⁶⁶ While this represents a slight decrease from 39% in 2009, it is a significant increase from the low perceptions captured in 2006.⁶⁷ Furthermore, results from the 2010 survey show a gradual correction in the accountability deficit—the gap between accountability to intended beneficiaries and to other stakeholder groups—with accountability to intended beneficiaries now perceived as being essentially on par with accountability to the general public and host governments.

2.1. Method

The 2010 survey was available online and publicised widely.⁶⁸ A total of 781 responses were received during the five and a half weeks (from 15 December 2010 to 21 January 2011) during which the survey was open. This response

⁶⁶ High refers to those responses marked between 7 and 10, medium to between 4 and 6 and low from 1 to 3 on a spectrum from 1 to 10 when answering the question, “When marked out of a maximum score of 10 (with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest) how do you rate the accountability of humanitarian agencies to intended beneficiaries in 2009?”

⁶⁷ Just 20% of respondents to the 2005 Perception Survey believed agencies were “doing enough” to warrant a claim of being accountable to beneficiaries.

⁶⁸ HAP used SurveyMonkey® to run the survey. A call to participate was announced and advertised across the following communication platforms: emails were sent to over 2000 contacts from the HAP Database; the survey was announced on the HAP website and Facebook group; ReliefWeb posted a permanent link to the survey for its duration; CASA, ALNAP, One World Trust, Danish Refugee Council, Voice and other organisations ran announcements of the Perception Survey in newsletters and on their website. The 2010 survey was administered and analysed by Stephanie Matti, HAP’s Research and Communication Assistant.

rate is the highest since the beginning of the survey in 2006; it is also more than double that of 2009.⁶⁹

The survey consisted of 14 questions. Questions one to five related to the respondents' background; six to nine asked respondents to provide their perceptions of the past, current and future trends in accountability; the next three questions referred to the respondents' views of organisational practice, including questions related to levels of participation by disaster-affected communities in performance assessments and to the extent to which organisations foster an environment in which communities feel they can raise complaints; and the final two questions allowed respondents to provide additional comments on humanitarian accountability in 2010 and to indicate whether HAP could contact them in the future. The full text of the survey is reproduced at the end of this chapter.

The number of respondents limits the ability of this survey to make sweeping statements about the humanitarian sector. The main contribution of this longitudinal survey, however, is to track trends in perceptions of humanitarian accountability and its practical application.

2.2. Findings

→ Box 13. Summary

The majority of respondents were staff of international NGOs working in Africa and Asia, with slightly higher representation from headquarters (42%) than programmes sites (32%). A majority of respondents (63%) worked for HAP members or HAP certified agencies. Of the 781 respondents in 2010, 106 respondents or 13.6% identified themselves as disaster survivors. Over two-thirds of respondents (79.7%) perceived that there had been an increase in overall discussion and interest in accountability in 2010 when compared with 2009; this is in line with 2009 findings in which 79.5% perceived an increase when compared with 2008. Similarly, the percentage of respondents who considered that their agencies were doing enough to ensure humanitarian accountability remained stable at 54%, up one percentage point from 2009.

2.2.1. Who responded?

The vast majority of respondents worked for international NGOs (61%). Of the rest, 17% worked for national civil society organisations, 7% for UN agencies, 5% for the donor community, 1% for host governments, 3% for research

⁶⁹ There were 381 respondents in 2009, 658 in 2008, 291 in 2007, 165 in 2006, and 320 in 2005.

bodies, 1% for quality assurance initiatives and 5% indicated their affiliation as 'other'.

The majority of respondents stated that the region of their work was either global (23%), Asia (31%) or Africa (23%). Other respondents worked in the Americas (10%), Europe (9%) and the Middle East (3%). The South Pacific region was under-represented with only 0.4% of respondents. These figures represent a significant increase in respondents working in the Americas, up from 2.7% in 2009. This is likely to reflect increased humanitarian action in the region in response to the earthquake in Haiti in 2010. These figures do not otherwise differ greatly from previous years.

In terms of function, 42% of respondents were from headquarters and 32% from programme sites. Headquarters-based senior managers were the single largest group of respondents (17%), followed by programme site-based managers (16%) and headquarters-based programme management staff (15%). As in previous years, the percentage of programme site staff engaged in policy/ advisory work had the lowest representation at 4%. A further 12% declared their main function to be programme site staff and 10% as headquarters-based policy/advisory work. Those who indicated that their main function was 'independent consultant' or 'other' made up the remaining 7% and 19%, respectively.

Respondents had the option to indicate if they worked for a HAP member agency, a HAP certified agency, an agency that had received capacity building support from the HAP Secretariat, a partner agency of a HAP member and/or an agency with no relationship to HAP. Of the respondents, 45.5% came from HAP member agencies. This represents a 5% decrease when compared with the 2009. This may be explained by the much higher response rate in 2010 (781 in 2010 compared with 381 in 2009). A further 17.5% of respondents indicated that they worked for a HAP certified member agency, 24% worked for agencies that had received HAP capacity building support and 17% from agencies partnering with HAP members. Only 17% stated that they worked for an agency that had no relationship to HAP, while 14% were unsure of their agency's relationship with HAP. Of the 778 respondents that answered this question, 266 indicated that the agency they work for fits into more than one of these categories.

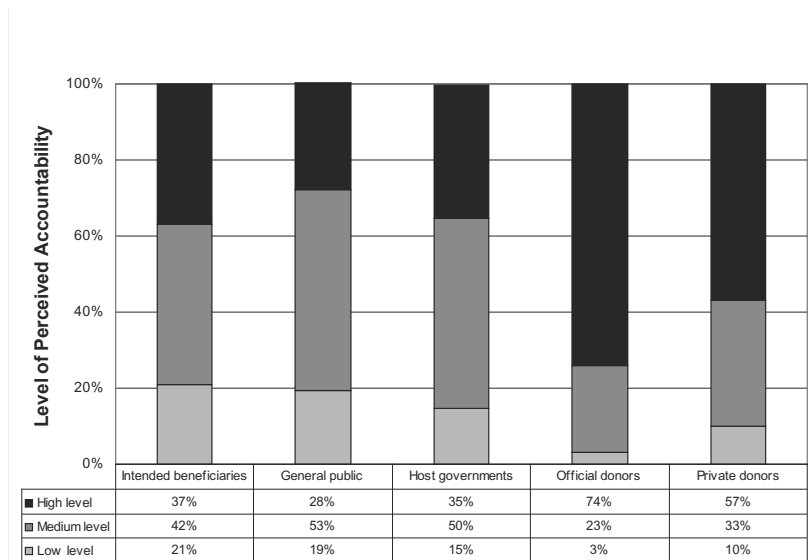
Respondents to the 2010 survey also had the option to indicate whether they considered themselves disaster survivors or if they had received aid in the past. From the total number of respondents, 106 identified themselves as such, representing 13.6% of the total number of respondents. This was almost double the figure for 2009 (7%).

2.2.2 Perceptions of humanitarian accountability to different stakeholder groups

Respondents were asked to rank the perceived accountability of humanitarian agencies to different stakeholder groups—intended beneficiaries, the general public, host governments, official donors and private donors—ranking them from 1 to 10 (with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest). The 2010 findings continue to support the trend set in previous annual reports, with low levels of accountability to disaster survivors, the general public and host governments. These stakeholder groups continue to score significantly lower than the donor community (see Figure 2).⁷⁰

As in previous years, official donors are perceived to be the stakeholder group to whom humanitarian action is most accountable. In previous years disaster survivors have come in as the stakeholder group to which humanitarian action is least accountable alongside the host governments. In 2010, accountability to intended beneficiaries was perceived as being slightly higher (37%) than accountability to the general public (28%) and to host governments (35%) in the highest bracket (7 to 10 inclusive). However, when this was expanded to include both high and moderate levels (4 to 6 and 7 to 10 inclusive), accountability to intended beneficiaries ranked slightly lower with 79.2% compared to accountability to the general public (80.7%) and host governments (85.3%).

⁷⁰ In keeping with previous years, respondents were asked to rate perceptions of accountability on a 1-10 scale. In order to manage the data, the results have been collected into three levels of accountability: high (7 to 10); medium (4 to 6); and low (1 to 3).

Figure 2. Rating of humanitarian accountability by stakeholder group

In 2010, 37% of respondents ranked the accountability of humanitarian agencies to intended beneficiaries as high (7 or above), 42% in the middle of the scale (4 to 6), and the remaining 21% as low (3 or below). While this represents a slight decrease from 2009 figures, it still represents a significant improvement in perceptions of accountability to intended beneficiaries since HAP first collected data in 2006.⁷¹

By extracting the answers from respondents who identified themselves as disaster survivors, the bulk of recipients (45.5%) perceived a moderate level (4 to 6) of accountability to intended beneficiaries. Of this subset, 86% felt that the current level of accountability offered an improvement over the previous year. One respondent noted that “there is increasing awareness among disaster affected people that accountability by aid organisations is being demanded by the people. This is changing the face of accountability not just to donors but to beneficiaries too”.

⁷¹ For example, in 2009 only 15% ranked the accountability of humanitarian agencies to intended beneficiaries low (3 or below)

In 2010, for the first time since the beginning of the annual survey, perceptions of accountability to intended beneficiaries were actually lower than the previous year. In the period from 2006 to 2009 there was an increase of 31% in respondents perceiving a high level of accountability towards beneficiaries. This dropped 2% in 2010. Perceptions of accountability to other stakeholder groups are in line with previous years.

A number of variables might account for this negative shift in perceptions of accountability to intended beneficiaries. An analysis of perceptions of accountability to intended beneficiaries by respondents based in the Americas shows that the number who perceived a high level of accountability (6 to 10) was only 26%, 11% less than the average across all regions. Further, the percentage of respondents of this subset indicating a low level of accountability to intended beneficiaries was 28%, 7% higher than the average. Of the 23 respondents based in the Americas who included their address, more than half specified an address in Haiti. One of the key differences between 2010 and previous years, therefore, was the large number of respondents from the Americas and Haiti in particular; that this subset had lower perceptions of accountability to beneficiaries than respondents from other regions affected the overall results. This is supported by the comment of one respondent that “my disappointment with the humanitarian sector regarding accountability is stemmed [sic] from working in Haiti following the earthquake”. This may either be due to lower levels or increased expectations of accountability.

The global financial crisis and the subsequent funding difficulties faced by many humanitarian agencies may be another factor behind the decrease in perceived accountability to intended beneficiaries. One respondent commented that “accountability to beneficiaries seems to have become the first casualty of budget cuts. A shame, since it seemed we were all making progress in this area until last year.”

Accountability to intended beneficiaries, host governments and the general public remains significantly lower than accountability to the donor community. HAP has traditionally identified this gap as the ‘accountability deficit’—a situation where the principal stakeholder group (the intended beneficiaries of humanitarian aid) is at the bottom of the accountability league tables. HAP and its members are committed to working in partnership to improve the practice that informs these perceptions, working towards a situation in which the intended beneficiaries are the stakeholder group to which humanitarian action is most accountable. In 2010 this shift is gradually becoming visible, with accountability to intended beneficiaries now perceived as being essentially on par with accountability to the general public and host governments.

Figure 3. Cross-year comparison of perceived accountability rating to four stakeholder groups

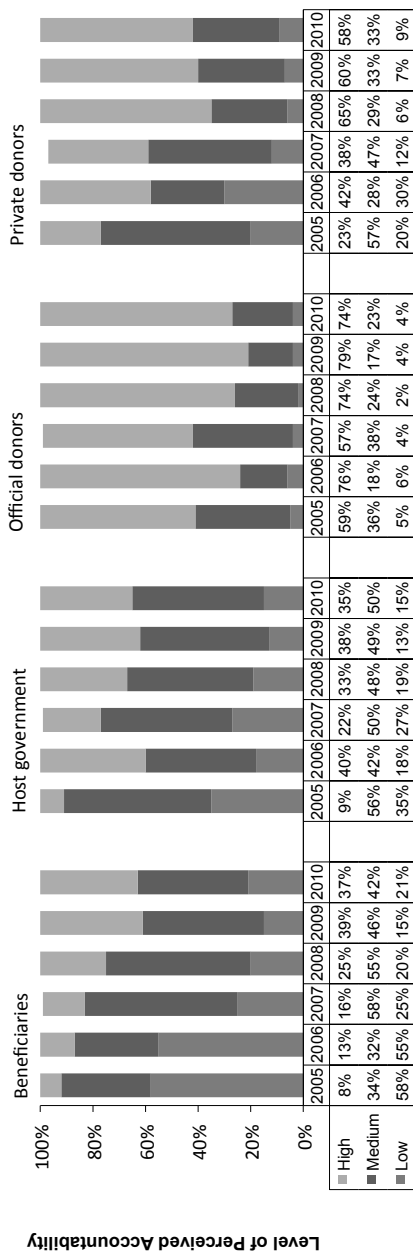
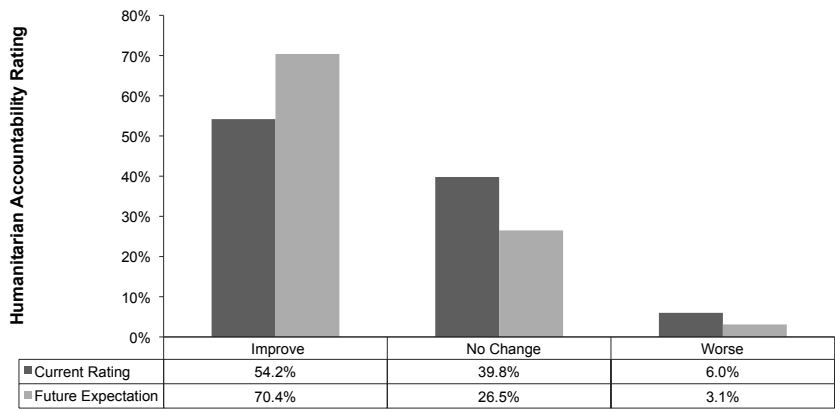


Figure 3 shows respondents' perceptions of humanitarian accountability in 2010 and their expectations for 2011. 54.2% of respondents stated that *overall* humanitarian accountability had improved since 2009, up slightly from 53.4% in 2009. Only 6% believed that it had worsened and 39.8% saw no change. When asked to share their views for next year, more respondents expected that accountability to intended beneficiaries would improve by the end of 2010 (70.4%, up from 59% in 2009), 26.5% believed that it would stay the same, and 3.1% that it would deteriorate.⁷²

Figure 4. Humanitarian accountability rating: current and future



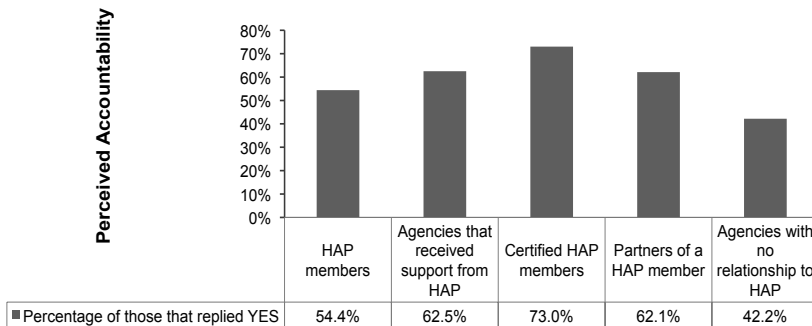
⁷² In the 2009 survey when asked to predict outcomes for 2010, 59% of the respondents expected accountability to intended beneficiaries to improve, 41% felt that the situation would stay the same, and 5.6% expected it to deteriorate.

The perception of trends in humanitarian accountability by respondents working in the Americas was consistently lower than that of respondents from different regions. Only 51.6% of respondents based in the Americas believed that accountability of humanitarian agencies to their intended beneficiaries improved in 2010, in contrast to the 54.2% average. Meanwhile only 66.1%, in contrast the average of 70.4% expected it to improve in 2011. Across all indicators respondents from the Americas proved to be more pessimistic about accountability towards intended beneficiaries than their counterparts in different regions of the world.

2.2.3. Organisational practice of humanitarian accountability

In answering whether their organisation had done “enough to ensure humanitarian accountability”, respondents were asked to consider HAP’s definition of accountability.⁷³ The answers show that only a slight majority (55.5%) of respondents felt that their organisations had done enough to ensure humanitarian accountability in 2010. When disaggregating data from different respondent groups, 65.6% of programme site-based staff compared to 48.8% of headquarters-based staff and 40.9% of independent consultants felt that the organisation that they worked for was doing enough to ensure humanitarian accountability.

Figure 5. Do you feel that your organisation is doing enough to ensure humanitarian accountability?



⁷³ The definition is as follows: ‘Accountability is the means by which power is used responsibly. Humanitarian accountability involves taking account of, giving an account to and being held to account by disaster survivors’.

The results in Figure 5 show that respondents from HAP certified agencies had the highest rate of perception that their organisation is doing enough to ensure humanitarian accountability, with 73% of respondents. Agencies with no relationship to HAP had the lowest with 42.2%. These findings would seem to confirm that HAP membership, particularly HAP certification, is associated with enhanced levels of organisational commitment to humanitarian accountability, another trend established through the perceptions survey in previous years.

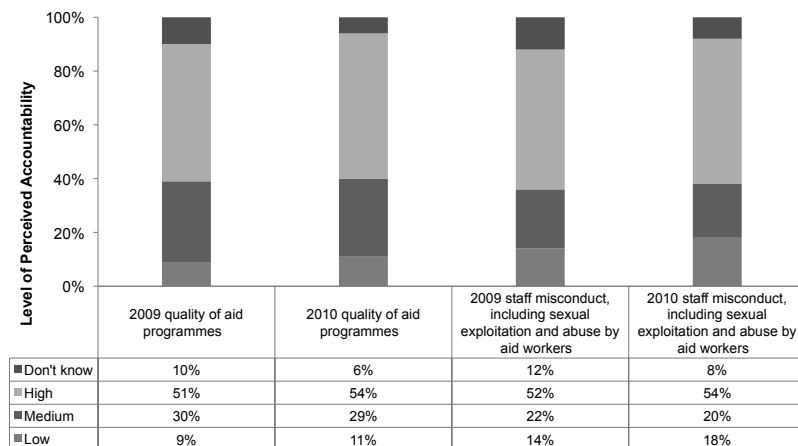
2.2.4 Voices of disaster-affected populations

When asked whether the views of disaster-affected communities are considered when an organisation monitors and evaluates its performance, 51.3% of the respondents answered affirmatively, while 40.4 answered “no” and 8.3% “I don’t know”. These findings are similar to the results from 2009 when this question was added.

The second two-part question in this section focused on collecting perceptions of the effort that organisation make to foster an environment where disaster-affected communities can raise complaints about the quality of aid programmes *and* about staff misconduct (including sexual exploitation and abuse). Respondents were asked to rank their responses out of ten (with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest). Of the respondents, 54% rated their agency’s effort to foster an environment that enables disaster-affected communities to raise complaints on the quality of aid programmes as high (7 to 10), 29% rated their agency as moderate in this regard (4 to 6), 6% answered “I don’t know” and 11% felt that their agency was not fostering such an environment (1 to 3).

Similarly, 54% of respondents felt that rated the effort of their agency to foster an adequate environment to allow disaster-affected communities to raise complaints about staff misconduct including sexual exploitation as high, 22% rated their agency as medium in this regard, 8% of respondents did not know while 18% of respondents felt that their agency was not fostering such an environment. Compared to 2009 when this question was added to the survey, there has been a small improvement in perceptions across both elements of the question, and a decrease in respondents answering “I don’t know”. Figure 6 provides a cross-year comparison of 2009 and 2010 for the second question.

Figure 6. How do you rate your agency's efforts to foster an environment where disaster-affected communities can raise a complaint about...



2.2.5. Increasing levels of discussion and interest around accountability issues

An overwhelming number of the respondents (80%) felt that there had been an increase in discussion of and interest in humanitarian accountability issues over the past year; the findings of the 2009 survey of perceptions of the preceding year had the same result. Meanwhile 16% of respondents felt that there had been no change and 4% that there had been a decrease in interest around accountability. Most headquarters based staff (83.7%) perceived an increased level of interest in and discussion of accountability, while over three quarters (78.9%) of programme site staff expressed this view. However, among independent consultants, only 66.7% believed that there had been an increase in such discussion. These figures represent a consistent trend of improvement.

In 2010, 204 respondents took the opportunity to elaborate on their answers by providing comments on humanitarian accountability in 2010. Selected comments are reproduced in the next box.

→ Box 14. Selected quotes from survey respondents

'Because deadlines are short and humanitarian responses are usually one-offs, it becomes difficult to build the continuity that emergency victims deserve and expect from us.'

'The responses in Haiti and Pakistan have again shown that the entire humanitarian system has much work to do to strengthen their accountability to local people. Hopefully there will be system wide evaluations to these responses that will help with the entire system to learn.'

'Humanitarian accountability is not globally consistent. In regions where a few organisations recognize and advocate for accountability, it seems to improve and be accepted as an important aspect of humanitarian work. However, there are other regions in which little or no emphasis is placed on humanitarian accountability.'

'Humanitarian accountability must be acknowledged and ensured by host governments and donors as well as humanitarian organisations working directly with affected communities.'

'Accountability to beneficiaries is on to the agenda and pressure needs to be kept on keeping it high [...]. This could be done with more emphasis being placed on it by institutional donors.'

'It's hard to rate humanitarian agencies overall, [...] with some showing excellent progress in accountability and others not even considering it.'

'Active participation of people of concern is not yet a firm component of humanitarian interventions.'

'[...] intended beneficiaries and other local stakeholders must participate more actively in planning, monitoring and evaluation. Accountability to beneficiaries still treats them too much as if the objects of assistance, not as co-actors.'

'I see advocacy as an accountability void, and an area that could benefit greatly from strengthened accountability.'

'Accountability to beneficiaries seems to have become the first casualty of budget cuts. A shame, since it seemed we were all making progress in this area until last year...'

'The global financial crisis has had a negative impact on the funding and work of humanitarian agencies with competition for funds becoming the priority.'

'Cluster coordination is increasingly complex (in large scale emergencies) with many stakeholders somewhat removed from decision making and discussions at the table.'

Perceptions of Accountability in Humanitarian Action in 2010

We are looking for your views

The Humanitarian Accountability Partnership would like your views in this short survey, which will only take 3 minutes of your time to complete. Your answers will be treated in confidence, and published as aggregated findings in the forthcoming 2010 Humanitarian Accountability Report. The survey closes on **21 January 2011**.

Please consider the following when answering the survey: Accountability is *the means by which power is used responsibly*. Humanitarian accountability involves taking account of, giving an account to and being held to account by disaster survivors.

About you

1. My region of work is ...

2. My main function is ...

Other (please specify)

3. I mostly work/consult for ...

Other (please specify)

4. The agency that I mostly work / consult for ... (Tick all those that apply to your agency.)

☐

is a Member of HAP

☐

is a Certified Member of HAP

☐

has no relationship with HAP

☐

has received capacity building support from HAP

☐

is partnering with a Member of HAP

☐

I do not know

5. If you consider yourself a disaster survivor or have received aid in the past,

☐

Please tick here

Humanitarian accountability in 2010

In 2010, humanitarian agencies responded to: flooding in Afghanistan, Benin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chad, China, Columbia, India, Niger, Pakistan, the Philippines and Vietnam; droughts in Chad and Niger; tropical storm Agatha, typhoon Megi; hurricane Karl; earthquakes in Chile, Haiti and Tajikistan; civil tensions in Kyrgyzstan; as well as the ongoing crises in Afghanistan, DRC, East Timor, Georgia, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, the Palestinian Territories, Sudan/Darfur, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Northern Uganda, Zimbabwe and other 'forgotten emergencies'.

6. When marked out of a maximum score of 10 (with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest), how do you rate the accountability of humanitarian agencies to the following stakeholder groups in 2010?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Intended beneficiaries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
General public	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Host government/authority	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Official donors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Private donors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Accountability trends

In 2009, humanitarian agencies responded to: flooding in Argentina, Burkina Faso, Chad, Guatemala, Haiti, Kenya, Niger, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand; cyclones Bijil and Jade; droughts in Ecuador and Paraguay; hurricane Jimena and typhoons Ketsana, Koppu, Mujigae, Parma; earthquakes in Bhutan, Honduras, and Indonesia.

7. Do you feel that there has been an increase, decrease or no change in levels of discussion and interest around humanitarian accountability over the last year?

8. Do you think that the accountability of humanitarian agencies to their intended beneficiaries improved, deteriorated or remained much the same in 2010 when compared to their performance in 2009?

9. Do you expect that the accountability of humanitarian agencies to their intended beneficiaries will improve, deteriorate or remain much the same in 2011?

Organisational practice of humanitarian accountability

10. Do you feel that your organisation is doing enough to ensure humanitarian accountability?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

11. Do you think that the views of disaster-affected populations are given sufficient consideration by your agency when it monitors and evaluates its performance?

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Don't know

12. Out of a maximum score of 10 (with 1 being the lowest and 10 the highest), how do you rate your agency's efforts to foster an environment where disaster-affected communities can raise a complaint about:

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know
a. the quality of aid programmes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. staff misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse by aid workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

We greatly appreciate the time that you have taken to complete this short survey. Thank you!

For more information on HAP, visit www.hapinternational.org

13. Other comments on humanitarian accountability in 2010 that you would like to add:

14. If you would like HAP to contact you with information on similar topics in the future and when the 2010 Humanitarian Accountability Report becomes available please include your full contact details below.

Name:

Company:

Address:

Address 2:

City/Town:

ZIP/Postal Code:

Country:

Email Address:

CHAPTER 3

Voices of Disaster Survivors — Haiti 2010

As HAP's deployment under the New Emergency Policy came to an end in Haiti,⁷⁴ a series of focus group discussions (FGDs) with disaster-affected populations were held in Port au Prince and Leogane. The purpose of these discussions was to gain an insight into community perceptions of the quality and accountability of aid delivery.⁷⁵

The perceptions and opinions of disaster-affected communities have not been triangulated with data from other sources. Therefore, this chapter does not claim to represent an exhaustive study of the different community perspectives present in Haiti; it is illustrative, however, of the key community concerns raised during HAP's engagement.

This chapter highlights the complexity of humanitarian response and aid delivery from the perspective of the people aid organisations seek to assist. Several themes and trends in community perceptions of aid delivery emerge and are reviewed. These include the difficulties that agencies face: sharing information with intended beneficiaries, engaging intended beneficiaries in different stages of the project cycle, and dealing with concerns and complaints of people affected by the earthquake.

This chapter comprises of four main sections: the first section presents the method used to collect the information; the second section covers recurrent contextual issues raised during the discussions; the third section covers the core of the discussions in relation to the quality and accountability of aid as expressed by earthquake-affected communities; and the fourth section is an overarching summary of the points discussed.

⁷⁴ For more on HAP's NEP deployment in Haiti, please refer to <http://www.hapinternational.org/projects/field/hap-in-haiti.aspx>.

⁷⁵ For the 2010 Humanitarian Accountability Report, these discussions took place in Haiti due to the significant humanitarian response following the earthquake on 12 January 2010. As part of this response many HAP-member agencies initiated or scaled-up their operations in the country.

3.1. Research method

Participants

A total of 19 FGDs and two semi-structured interviews were conducted over a period of seven days from 16 September 2010. These were held in ten different locations: six internally displaced person (IDP) camps in the Port au Prince area, three communities in the hills around Port au Prince and one community in the hills around Leogane. The two semi-structured interviews were conducted in an IDP camp in the Port au Prince area.

Several HAP members facilitated access to the various locations visited during the course of the discussions. These agencies also assisted in identifying participants from various demographic groups of the disaster-affected population. The discussions took place in groups taking into account age, gender and committee/non-committee member status of participants. At some locations the FGDs were not planned well in advance. In these cases, the lead researcher organised participants in an ad hoc manner.

All of the communities visited had received humanitarian aid following the earthquake. In total, 261 disaster-affected persons were interviewed over a period of seven days in ten locations. Of the 261 participants, 137 were male and 124 were female.

The research team

Four local facilitators were recruited from the disaster-affected communities by the HAP researcher to facilitate the focus group discussions.⁷⁶ The local facilitators were briefed on the research topic and questions, and how to facilitate group discussions in an unbiased and ethical manner. The focus group questions had been prepared in French prior to the briefing. During the briefing, each facilitator translated the questions into Creole. This was followed by a discussion about the suitability of the questions and the translation.

The guiding questions for the focus groups were centred on the HAP Accountability Principles. In total, 16 questions⁷⁷ were asked. A series of contextual questions were asked at the beginning of the discussions in order to ascertain the type of aid received in the community and how long respondents had been living in the area. The majority of questions were designed to

⁷⁶ The research team consisted of four local researchers Castelot Val, Robensen Julien, Mackenzy Dor, Rose Saintilmon, and Gregory Gleed, HAP Research and Communication Assistant.

⁷⁷ The focus group discussion guide is available at <http://www.hapinternational.org/resources/category.aspx?catid=674>.

generate information on the quality and accountability of programming as perceived by respondents. At the end of each focus group a participant was asked to summarise the main points and participants suggested further questions or made further remarks.

Limitations of the research method

The stratification of groups by demographic characteristics was not always possible. This was due to a number of issues including the distances respondents had to travel to attend, poor weather conditions and the timing of the FGDs. For example, as a result of the scheduling of the FGDs predominantly during working hours, middle-aged men were underrepresented at some locations due to work commitments. In an attempt to overcome this limitation, separate FGDs specifically targeting this demographic were held on the weekend.

At the beginning of the FGDs, the local facilitators informed the participants of the confidentiality of their answers to reassure them that their feedback would not influence the aid that they were receiving. However, the presence of uninvited community members at and around some of the discussion groups may have influenced the willingness of participants to provide full and accurate answers. These uninvited individuals were requested to leave, but on several occasions they did not.

The questions for the FGDs were initially formulated in English then translated by a professional translator into French. The questions were then translated into Creole by the local facilitators. Responses by participants were transcribed directly into French in note form. While local facilitators were instructed to take care in keeping an accurate record of the discussions, the potential for bias in the multiple translations is acknowledged here.

3.2. Cross-cutting contextual issues

The research was undertaken nine months after the earthquake. The materials that had been distributed for temporary shelter during the initial phase of the emergency had seriously deteriorated. Meanwhile, the sporadic redistribution of tarpaulins had done little to stem the deteriorating living conditions of IDPs living in the camps. At the time of research, the wet season was just beginning and would be followed soon after by the hurricane season. An elderly man described the problems faced by IDPs living in the camps: "we cannot sleep in the tents. At night the rain comes in and we have to stand, and during the day the tents are too hot. When we do get to sleep we get sore ribs because the ground is hard."

Security

The lack of security was a commonly cited problem: “it’s not reassuring at all to live and certainly not to sleep. If one day there is a fire, can you imagine the terror that there would be with all this plastic? And, if you had a difference with a person he could simply rip your tarpaulin to do you harm.” The tents are inherently insecure as they cannot be locked and can easily be ripped. As a result, thieves targeted them. Respondents spoke about the problem of not being able to keep their valuables securely and the constant threat of theft and physical harm.

The geographical location of the camps around Port au Prince also led to heightened insecurity, with many camps situated in secluded areas or in areas vulnerable to mudslides and flooding. Respondents spoke about frequent flooding in their shelters, often involving mud and dirt, which forced them to remain standing throughout the night.

Health

Respondents in many of the locations visited complained that the material used for the tarpaulins was causing illnesses. The tarpaulins were associated with fevers, allergic reactions, and breathing problems. Concerns were also raised about the knock-on affects of these health implications. One respondent noted, “the tarpaulins are our worst problem. We have problems breathing because of all the plastics and I think that our children will have trouble studying at school because of the plastic.”

Participants in several locations mentioned the poor quality of the water. One respondent mentioned that the water they used when washing was making them sick. In many of the locations, participants indicated that the water they received was visibly untreated: “the water that we get is not treated. There is some kind of dirt in the bottom.”

Overall, hygienic conditions were perceived to be poor in the larger camps, particularly due to broken toilets. In some cases people were forced to use plastic bags as an alternative while in other cases the sewerage overflow ran through the camp. A group of women living in one camp were concerned that the toilets were causing health problems: “The toilets are giving us and other young women infections.” They also mentioned that the showers were unsuitable for women as the person showering was visible to people passing by.

Land ownership

Of the six camps visited, five were situated on privately owned land. The issue of housing and relocation were particularly pertinent those respondents living on privately owned land as there was a high degree of uncertainty about what might happen if the camps were closed. One respondent expressed

this uncertainty in her remark: “I think we will end up in the sea.” In many instances the participants mentioned deadlines for eviction. At one location, participants mentioned that the landowners denied access to water-delivery trucks. At another location, participants directed this frustration towards an agency operating in the camp. Only one participant was aware that the agency was unable to build more toilets and showers because of restrictions imposed by the landowner. This participant noted that the IDPs were “not comfortable” because “the landowner does not want us to dig holes in the ground for toilettes and showers. The landowner is also refusing to let us build a drainage system.” Through the course of this particular discussion it became evident that the frustration directed towards the agency was not actually a result of inadequate service provision on behalf of the agency, but that it stemmed from the private-land ownership. This issue was later discussed with representatives of the agency who confirmed that there were issues with the landowner blocking construction on the site. In this case community frustration over service provision may have been mitigated through better information sharing strategies.

3.3. Summary of discussions

On numerous occasions, very positive views about the role of aid agencies were expressed. Some respondents noted the joy that they feel when aid workers arrive in their community: “it always gives us hope when we see the car.” For the most part, those respondents that felt that they had received adequate information on the delivery of aid, that were presented with opportunities to participate in community consultations, and that were able to lodge complaints were considerably more positive towards aid agencies than those who felt that they had not.

3.3.1. Information Sharing

The communities in which coordinated information dissemination strategies had been formulated and implemented, expressed higher satisfaction with the agencies delivering aid than the communities where efforts to share information had been piecemeal. Such strategies included verbal information dissemination during meetings with the communities and dissemination in writing through the use of information boards.

How information was accessed

Three information dissemination strategies were identified: community meetings, information boards and flyers. Information was most commonly

shared through meetings organised by aid agencies. These meetings were usually held with the committee or local representatives.

Some agencies had boards clearly describing the projects that the organisation was implementing and their donors. This information was written in Creole and the boards placed in a visible location in the community. In approximately half the locations visited, information boards had been erected but did not contain any information. FGD participants in these locations spoke of their confusion about the boards, as they had not been provided with any information as to their purpose: "There is a box and a board, but it has been here for two weeks and nobody has explained what to do with it."

In one location, the use of flyers was mentioned: "Sometimes agency representatives come and mobilise us on a particular subject using flyers containing information about a meeting on that topic." Meetings would then be held to discuss the topic of concern.

Managed versus un-managed camps

During the course of the FGDs two types of camps were visited: managed and unmanaged. Managed camps had an aid agency that was recognised as facilitating overall activities in the camp. In a managed camp, an aid agency established itself within the camp and had a sustained presence, delivering a majority of the aid. This is not to say they alone distributed aid in the camp. Unmanaged camps had no NGOs that had established themselves within the camp for a sustained period and received aid from a variety of NGOs. Unmanaged camps had multiple NGOs delivering aid since the earthquake, but this aid was sporadic and for shorter periods of time.

Respondents from managed camps commonly spoke of learning about aid efforts through meetings organised by aid agencies. FGD participants at these locations were able to distinguish what assistance had been delivered by which agencies. In managed camps the logos of aid agencies were visible on staff clothing, several tents and on the vehicles.

FGD participants in unmanaged camps listed many more agencies that were active in their area than FGD participants from managed camps, but were unsure about their exact names, citing several variations. They also had difficulty in identifying which agency had delivered what aid in the area.

Timely information at the project site

Concern was raised in many of the camps about the limited information provided to explain the discontinuation of aid projects. FGD participants in many locations spoke of basic service projects ending mid-course, including water delivery and canteens.

Beneficiaries in one rural community mentioned that agencies that had provided basic health services prior to the earthquake no longer operated in their community. These participants now had to travel long distances to a private clinic, which, in many cases, they could not afford.

The school year was about to begin at the time of the research. On several occasions mothers had been informed that their child was going to attend school, but had not received any further information. One woman said: "The organisations took our children's names for the reopening of classes, but they never came back to tell us the details. School starts very soon and we do not know what to do."

The lack of information was used to explain outbreaks of aggression at different distribution sites: "To get water we have to go down to the road to where the organisation has placed three water tanks in the neighbouring camp. On our side the organisation placed two tanks. But there was a problem and we never received any water. No one has told us why. As a result, we have to struggle to get water. Sometimes stones are thrown and there are fights. Why should we see blood run for a bit of water?"

The local facilitators had an opportunity to raise this issue with the staff from the relevant agency. They stated that the water tanks had been placed in a location where the water-delivery trucks could not access them easily. As a result, the tanks had never been filled. It was evident that there was confusion between the two camps over access to water and that this had led to a violent response from the community, which believed that the neighbouring camp was using their water.

Limited information on beneficiary selection

A lack of information about beneficiary selection fostered a range of opinions about why certain areas received certain forms and levels of aid compared with others. The numerous IDP camps around Port au Prince allowed affected people to observe the aid agencies across several locations. Consequently, in many locations people compared their situation with those in nearby camps.

FGD participants in one camp believed that less aid was delivered to them because of their passive attitude, compared with a more aggressive neighbouring camp. They felt neglected and believed that the agencies were not impartial in their delivery of aid. "I think we are too peaceful. Maybe that is why the NGOs are neglecting us. From what we can observe, aid is distributed more often in the camps where people are more aggressive." These people had not received any information about why certain locations received more assistance from the same agency than others.

There was a common perception that aid organisations that had established themselves in certain locations were deterring other aid organisations, “If you are able to give sandals, for example, let everyone know about it and do not block the way for others to come and give trousers.” Many participants spoke of the aid being delivered in neighbouring camps. They perceived that the aid organisations were preventing them from receiving similar aid and asked for the agencies to stop hindering the provision of aid from other agencies.

Information and trust

In a number of camps, focus group participants stated that some aid agencies had made promises which were not kept and that some agencies simply never returned: “The NGOs do their research and tell us what they want to accomplish, but they never keep their promises.”

At most locations participants spoke of one or two projects that they believed were promised but not delivered. In one camp, people said that they had been promised livelihood training opportunities, temporary housing, micro financing, financial support to celebrate mothers day, schooling for the children and a generator, but that none of these had been delivered. While it is possible that the communities may have misunderstood what aid workers told them (this could not be verified during the research), it underlines the need for more effective information sharing.

The perception of undelivered promises directly affected beneficiary participation: “They made us promises. We are still waiting for what they promised. We think the organisations are mocking us. Because of this, people are less and less interested in attending the meetings organised by the NGOs.” One participant went further, “I completely close the door on organisations. They are not serious at all.”

3.3.2. Beneficiary participation

In some locations FGD participants spoke of organisations holding consultations that extended beyond the committee to the wider community. At these locations, the community felt involved in the work of the aid agencies, and expressed positive views towards them. In these communities, aid workers were well known and well respected. One woman stated that “some members came from an organisation and we discussed our needs and what they would be able to provide. They came back later and gave us tarpaulins, charcoal burners and some money to start a business.” She added that “before the 12 January, I did domestic work and I owned my own business. The only condition that the organisation has is that we manage our money well. They come past and visit my business and see what has been done with the money. They also did a sort of training on what to do with our money. Only if manage

our money well will they continue to help us. Because of the organisation my children eat well and you see that our faces are happy.”

The importance of beneficiary participation to the effective delivery of aid was discussed in the majority of FGDs. The following quotes typify the statements gathered on this topic:

‘I would like the NGO to examine out needs and necessities very closely. If they cannot detect this, all their efforts will be in vain.’

‘If agencies really want to help us they should learn to understand us and our basic needs, and react quickly because we really need them.’

‘I want the NGOs to ask us what we need from them, what we would like in terms of aid and also that they inform us of their plans.’

Camp representation

In the majority of camps visited, a committee had taken on the role of representing the community and interacting with the aid agencies. In some cases the committee had adopted a name that gave them the semblance of a local NGO. In many cases these committees represented the primary point of contact between the aid agencies and the affected population. This created a situation where responsibility was given to these committees by the agencies to effectively manage the delivery of aid. In cases in which there was poor governance and corruption at the committee level, the aid organisation faced significant difficulties in ensuring the aid was distributed on an impartial basis.

FGD participants commented that camp committees were not representative of the community. The committees were generally composed of middle-aged men in positions of authority within the community who established the committees of their own initiative. In many cases FGD participants felt left out of the aid process and that the aid agencies were not taking their concerns seriously. Participants mentioned that it was only the committees that met with the aid agencies:

‘The organisations have meetings with the committee, but they never contact us. Everything is arranged with the committee and we never hear about what was said.’

‘No. It is only the committee that participate in the meetings.’

‘When the organisation mobilises people for meetings, it only mobilises the committee.’

'Even if we want to say something, we don't have the chance; only the committee has the right.'

'They have meetings with the committee and they don't tell us anything.'

In several of the camps, participants alleged that the camp committee was corrupt. One focus group accused the committee choosing the same people for cash-for-work programmes, and selling positions on the programmes: "Organisations should be aware of who participates in the cash for work programmes. It is always the same people who are chosen to participate. Even if there is a rolling register, it is still the same people on the work teams. Sometimes the committee manages to sell places in the programme."

In one of the larger camps the committee represented the 5,000 residents of the camp. This committee was accused of various forms of corruption. During a discussion with women, one participant stated that a large number of people would arrive at the camp from outside during aid distributions: "I think the committee is selling coupons because during distributions we see lots of people from outside the camp leaving with aid in taxis and we don't get anything. The members of the committee call their families and tell them about the distributions."

In one large unmanaged camp, people spoke about the role of the committee in securing the delivery of aid and in distributing it. When questions were asked about participation and complaint handling by aid agencies, FGD participants responded that such issues should be discussed with the committee. After the FGD, a representative from the aid agency that had facilitated access to the camp informed the local facilitators that the organisation had encountered many problems with the committee in the past. The committee was described as being criminally inclined and "dangerous at all levels." As a result, the aid agency had stopped dealing with the committee; instead, it started to distribute aid from a neighbouring location in an effort to bypass the camp committee. The FGD participants did not understand why they now had to walk further to access the distribution points.

Camp committee representatives at various locations spoke about the inadequate response by the agencies to their demands, and the low priority that aid agencies gave to communicating and collaborating with committees: "When there are meetings between the committee and agency staff members our demands are never accepted. It is the agency that proposes and at times imposes projects."

Camp committee representatives evoked the need for a greater understanding of the situation on the ground by aid agencies and the important role that committee participation can play in facilitating this.

'In order to understand the needs of the community, the agencies need to acquaint themselves with those who represent the camp, this way we can show them our needs.'

'We have ask that when the aid agencies present their programmes to the committee that they are aware of what is happening in our communities and that they take our needs into account.'

The legitimacy of some camp committees was undermined because of corruption; in other cases the committees struggled to cope with the burden of the responsibility. One committee member spoke about the difficulty of selecting 25 individuals out of 500 for the cash for work programme. The same committee member spoke of being verbally threatened: "I have been verbally threatened because an agency does not provide a sufficient number of cards for everyone that has been surveyed." Committee members also complained of being physically abused by members of their own community who blamed them for issues related to the distribution of aid: "One day a member of a community who had a problem with a cash-for-work programme came into our tent and threw the desk on top of me."

Community participation and the suitability of aid interventions

In many FGDs, the participants explained that the aid being distributed was not appropriate to their needs. One participant said: "The aid does not correspond to our needs, the organisations come and gives us hope but then they don't do anything."

A young male participating in a FGD of young adults went further and spoke about how he felt humiliated by the aid they were receiving: "don't come and ridicule us with hygienic papers, sweets, and soap bars from hotels that we can only use once". In the same FGD other participants spoke about how the cash-for-work programme in their camp was a forest replanting scheme, at the same time they were given charcoal burners that required the cutting down of more trees. This lack of consistency and appropriateness led the participants to question the seriousness of the aid agencies.

Throughout the course of the FGDs, adolescent men were the one demographic group that maintained that they did not have specific programmes orientated towards their needs. They spoke of not being able to take part in community meetings. Meanwhile the majority of interventions were focused towards children, adolescent women and women more generally. They said that they felt ignored and neglected.

In one camp participants spoke about how they had expressed concern about the toilets that were being built. The aid agency proceeded with their original plan without communicating why this decision had been made. These toilets then overflowed into the camps following a heavy rainfall. This resulted in the residents of the camp using plastic bags that were then discarded around the camp. The toilets were constructed in way that was perceived to be unsuitable; as a consequence they became unusable. While there may have been a legitimate reason why the aid agency decided to place the toilets where they did, the lack of response to community concerns led the intended beneficiaries to feel that they had been ignored.

In several locations the allocation of resources to children's nurseries was questioned. In one FGD, parents indicated that they had begun to remove their children from the nursery because they believed that the resources going to the nursery could be better allocated. They believed the money would be better spent on cash-for-work programmes as they were having difficulty feeding themselves and their children. In another camp, participants spoke about how they thought the nursery was simply an excuse for a school so that the aid agencies could report that they were providing a school when they were not: "They think that the organisation is passing off the children's playgroup as a real school... a way of ticking a box without doing anything serious."

In one large unmanaged camp an aid agency provided a food canteen specifically for children. A member of the committee openly admitted that they would take some of the food from the hands of the children, because they were so hungry: "the canteen than the organisation have given us is only for the children, but the organisation forgets that we are hungry as well. Sometimes we take the food from the hands of the children."

A group of participants did not want to reveal to the agency where they lived because they thought it would negatively influence the aid that they received: "When the organisation gave us materials to construct a school, we accepted them but it was a difficult task. We had to borrow money to pay some men to transport the materials. We didn't tell the agency where we were from. We were scared that they wouldn't give us materials again because of the difficulties in transporting them to where we live."

The appropriateness and quality of aid were commonly cited problems, in addition to calls for more effective needs assessments and beneficiary selection: "I appreciate the work of the organisation but I would like it if staff members would be present to take into account our difficulties and worries, it is important for them to know our needs."

Vulnerable groups

In two IDP camps the local facilitators interviewed members of the community who had mobility problems and disabilities. The first camp was particularly difficult to access and navigate as it was situated on a steep hill. Prior to these interviews, a focus group was organised with a cross-section of the community. During the course of this focus group a young woman spoke about how the handicapped and the elderly would collect their own water and food with great difficulty: “we don’t have old people or children here, everyone tries to look after themselves. The old and the handicapped fetch their water and food by themselves. Despite the fact that they are exhausted and trembling, they have to. They are given no priority in this camp.”

After the FGD an elderly man and woman were interviewed. Neither had been in direct contact with the aid organisation operating in their community. The elderly woman would help other community members in exchange for food, and the elderly man was only able to buy food when he could find work. The elderly man complained about having to fetch his own water. They both recommended that the aid agencies meet with people like them directly in order to understand their needs.

In another unmanaged camp a FGD was organised with a blind man, a young boy in a wheelchair, a pregnant woman, a group of young adults and a group of elderly men. The way that aid was distributed posed particular difficulties for those with limited mobility. The blind man had never taken part in an aid distribution. The pregnant woman had been able to attend a water distribution but on most occasions she was short-of-breath due to the long distance making it difficult for her to arrive before the end of the distribution. The mother of the handicapped boy spoke about similar problems accessing aid distributions because of the time it took her to arrive. The mother recommended that agencies have a “special provision for the handicap access. This way we would be able to benefit from their assistance. During the distributions people do not take us into account. Once I’ve put my son in his wheelchair and gone down, the distribution is over.”

In unmanaged camps participants noted that aid was distributed to people in the area in a random manner. In these unmanaged camps the distributions would start by trying to prioritise the pregnant and elderly at the beginning of the line but the younger community members would always push to the front. This would often result in fighting: “For the distributions we are given cards. These cards prioritise pregnant women and the elderly, but the young fight and go to the front.” One man requested that “the NGOs assist us during aid distributions, I mean, sometimes the NGOs come with members of the police, when this happens we don’t have fights during the distributions.”

3.3.3. Complaints handling

The participants noted that in many circumstances they had wanted to lodge complaints, but they did not feel that they could do so.

‘When we want to complain, we don’t know where to turn. Nobody has ever provided answers to these problems.’

‘[Staff of one NGO] broke a fence four months ago, but they did not fix it. We would complain a lot about this NGO if we could.’

Three reasons were given for the feeling that they could not complain: the committee was responsible for handling complaints, poor staff representation and a lack of appropriate mechanisms in place to lodge a complaint.

As mentioned previously the camp committees were the primary point of contact between the intended beneficiaries and many aid agencies. Several committees said that they had complained to aid agencies but that nothing had subsequently been done. Participants also spoke about bringing complaints to the committee but not receiving any follow up.

Available channels to raise complaints

In four out of the ten locations visited, aid agencies had set up complaint boxes as a means by which communities could raise complaints. Not a single participant in the FGDs had attempted to use these. There are a number of reasons for this. First, the intended beneficiaries were not informed about the purpose of the boxes. In one case a committee member of the committee explained that how he was confused about the purpose of the boxes, he noted that ‘the aid organisation has not told us anything; they just put a small box there without explaining anything. I don’t know if it’s to give them money.’

Second, the boxes were not locked. As a result they did not offer a guarantee of confidentiality. “We were told to write a letter when we had a problem and drop it in the box. But the problem is that the letters are not secure, the boxes are not locked.” Only once during the FGDs did beneficiaries mention that they could lodge a complaint directly with an agency representative. However, when this was possible there was rarely any significant response to their complaints. As a result, participants said that it was not very useful to complain to staff members. The use of emails by one committee and a group of women was also mentioned, but in both cases mentioned they did receive a response. This made the committee feel humiliated, since they had volunteered to be committee members for an aid agency that did not communicate with them when needed.

On two occasions participants spoke about lodging a complaint and achieving redress when no viable means to complain were in place. A woman explained how she became aware that the committee had received a large consignment of tarpaulins but only distributed a small number. She subsequently confronted the committee who said they had only received 20. She felt she could not use the complaint boxes or approach a staff member, so she went in person to the office of the agency, which she knew because she had volunteered there previously. When she arrived she was forced to wait outside until a representative from the organisation would hear her complaint. The woman was informed that 220 tarpaulins had been given to the committee. Several days later the organisation personally distributed the tarpaulins to the intended beneficiaries that had not received one during the first distribution.

Similarly, a camp committee spoke about how they were particularly dissatisfied with one staff member in the WASH cluster. After complaining several times to staff representative in the camp, the committee approached the head office. As a result of the subsequent meeting, it was agreed that the concerned staff member would no longer go to the camp.

According to the FGD participants, the most efficient process by which to lodge a complaint was through a toll free telephone number, advertised among the communities. In some communities, people spoke about how they had communicated concerns and complaints via the free number. On the next visit to the project site, the respective organisation addressed issues of the concerned individuals. In some communities, intended beneficiaries mentioned that they were not able to lodge a complaint or that there was no follow up after an issue had been reported using the toll free number. In all instances in which the system had been successful in addressing a complaint issue, the beneficiaries spoke positively about their experience raising concerns this way, and, as a result, these aid agencies were held in higher esteem than those that did not have similar mechanisms in place.

3.3.4. Aid workers

The following positive views were expressed about aid workers:

'It always makes us happy to see the NGO car.'

'What they give is good because we are in need. They are doing a favour for us.'

However, there was a consistent call for greater staff representation: "Our biggest problem is that the NGOs don't put representatives on the ground,

and when there are representatives they are not always there, so when we want to lodge a complaint it is impossible.”

In many circumstances the participants recognised the difficult situation in which aid workers were trying to operate: “I think the staff members want to do their work correctly, but when they arrive in the field they encounter difficulties.” However, it was more common for participants to state that aid workers were not working to their full capacity: “the aid workers are helping the Haitian people, but I think they can do better.”

Attitudes matter

In one of the large unmanaged camps participants spoke about the unprofessional attitude of the staff members when conducting a needs assessment. They stated that they felt humiliated by the staff because they were joking and laughing as they went from tent to tent.

In another large unmanaged camp, beneficiaries spoke about how unmarked cars regularly turned up and started throwing aid out of the back of the car. On one occasion someone from the community had asked the individuals distributing aid which organisation they worked for. The individuals refused to identify themselves and departed shortly after. In the same camp, beneficiaries believed that aid workers were using aid delivery as an excuse to visit a nearby beach: “Sometimes the organisation would come and distribute little bags. This was usually on their way to the beach.”

There was often reference to aid workers and money. Several locations spoke of aid workers coming in their expensive cars with their cameras to take a few photos then leaving without having achieved anything: “The organisations put on a media show to defend their own personal interests.” Many aid workers visited the camps see the desperate situation in which they were living, the participants were angered when these visits did not result in programmes to alleviate these issues. The participants remarked how the highest paid aid workers were foreigners usually from the home country of the agency. One participant thought that this was a way of enabling large amount of the aid money to return to the home countries of the aid agencies.

The view that aid workers choose to intervene in easily accessible areas to increase exposure was also expressed: “we have noticed that aid organisations don’t go up into the hills because they want to stay where they are visible.” The research found that easily accessible locations did report a larger amount of aid interventions in the period since the earthquake.

3.3.5. Other cross-cutting themes

Sustainability

The demand for long-term sustainable solutions was an overarching theme of the FGDs. The poor living conditions called for a more permanent solution to be found to the housing crisis. There appeared to be difficulties in the camps with the transition from the initial-assessment stage to a more long-term development orientated approach. The demand for services such as permanent housing, livelihood trainings, infrastructure, schooling and jobs certainly contrasted to the continuation of the delivery of basic provisions that dominated the types of interventions being specified by participants. An elderly woman commented: “to really help us, I think they need to work on important issues like education, housing, electricity, food, roads, health and clean water.” In a similar vein, agencies that had been present in the same locations since the earthquake, received greater praise from participants: “I would like to say that this organisation is the best, because it has always been with us. The others just pass by.”

Dependency

In all FGDs the need to secure employment was recognised as a key issue. In most FGDs, participants associated dependence on aid with a lack of economic opportunity. “As long as we are given aid, we will remain children. We will not be free. It is like we are slaves. If they want us to be adults they must give us work.” Participants spoke about the lack of employment opportunities as a key factor in being dependent on aid agencies. It is unsurprising therefore that during the majority of FGDs there were requests for more cash-for-work programmes and employment opportunities.

Livelihood trainings and academic opportunities were also requested as many young adults had very little to occupy their time:

‘It bothers me to see the youth waste their time playing dominoes all day, not doing anything useful or interesting. I hope that the NGOs could do something so they can work for money or so they can go to school and advance in life.’

‘I would like the organisation to be aware that the youths don’t have anything to do, they have no income and they want to work or start a small business.’

3.4. In summary

Despite the diversity of participants in the focus groups, many had similar experiences that affected their perceptions of the aid efforts following the earthquake. Participants' perceptions of the difficulties of living in insecure and unhygienic conditions dominated many of the discussions along with the risk of potential eviction from current locations.

The level of information sharing in all camps was minimal. Respondents spoke of having rarely participated in meetings with aid agencies, if at all. This led to frustration and confusion amongst intended beneficiaries and had a negative effect on community-agency relations. At locations where boards were used to communicate information about aid agencies and where community consultations were not limited to camp committees, focus group participants expressed positive views of particular aid organisations.

Overall, community in the decision making process in the larger camps was rare. A lack of opportunities for communities to effectively participate in decisions that directly affected them resulted in the view that aid agencies were not taking them seriously. In some cases this led communities to avoid attending future meetings.

In many locations the camp committees had a significant role to play in the delivery of aid. The research identified three factors which undermined the delivery of quality aid programmes: first, beneficiaries mentioned that some complaints raised with the camp committee were not followed up with further action; second, bias and corruption led to only select members of the community receiving aid; and, third, camp committees had limited capacity to effectively carry out their duties. In all the locations visited where committees played a significant role in the delivery of aid, aid agencies engaged in limited community consultation beyond the camp committee, information sharing processes were inefficient in reaching out to the most vulnerable people, and there were no viable channels through which complaints could be lodged. Corruption by the camp committee was mentioned in all but one IDP camp visited.

In many cases the suitability and appropriateness of the aid was questioned, with people describing the humiliation of receiving certain goods that did not match their needs. In the absence of appropriate options to communicate concerns to the agency delivering aid or the opportunity to participate in the provision of relevant aid programmes, it became apparent that aid agencies were not be able to adequately respond to the needs of the communities. It was noted that the aid delivered by agencies that did not consult with communities and that did not respond to community concerns was viewed of little value to beneficiaries.

Beneficiaries with mobility issues and other disabilities spoke about the complete absence of aid interventions in which their specific needs and circumstances were taken into consideration. In many cases these people were dependent on their neighbours or acquaintances to secure basic necessities. This was highlighted as a breakdown in agencies' commitment to address the needs of those in most need.

The ability to raise a concern or complaint varied considerably. Not one complaint-handling approach was viewed as being effective at all the locations visited. Complaint boxes were viewed as ineffective in all camps where these had been installed. Focus group participants in one camp mentioned confusion about their purpose, while participants in the other camps indicated that the boxes were not secured by key and therefore did not guarantee confidentiality. In one location visited where the boxes were viewed as being insecure, participants spoke of being able to approach a member of staff, though this was not seen as a suitable solution either. The method perceived to be most effective was the toll-free complaints hotline.

The perceptions of beneficiaries on the overall aid efforts depended on the perceived quality and relevance of the aid they had received. In all of the sites visited at least three aid agencies had implemented programmes since January 2010. The situation in each location varied considerably in terms of the size of the camp and the geographical location; nonetheless the local facilitators were consistently told that certain aid agencies were better than others. The reasons given were the level of engagement between aid agencies and communities and the lack of appropriate interventions, which were linked to limited consultation. Effective engagement identified during the focus groups included coordinated information dissemination by aid agencies, opportunities to participate in decision-making processes which led to immediate results, and the ability to raise concerns and complaints with the respective aid agency. From the voices of beneficiaries gathered it became clear that an integrated approach to improving accountability resulted in positive perceptions of aid agencies and in the delivery of aid that was valued by communities.

CHAPTER 4

HAP Members' Accountability Work Plan Implementation Reports

4.1. Introduction

When an organisation becomes a full member of HAP, it makes a commitment to implement the HAP Principles of Accountability, to prepare a detailed annual Accountability Work Plan for implementing the Principles, to monitor its performance and to submit an annual implementation report to the HAP Secretariat. Implementation reports contain information about the organisation's progress toward the goals outlined in the Work Plan, including the implementation of complaints handling mechanisms, and the organisation's key accountability goals for the following year.

This chapter summarises the annual Accountability Work Plan Implementation Reports submitted by HAP members for the period 1 January to 31 December 2010.

Of the 50 full members of HAP at the end of 2010, 40 joined prior to 2010 and were therefore required to submit a report. Of these 40, 30 submitted reports in time for inclusion in this chapter.⁷⁸ Ten members were unable to submit reports in time due to a range of difficulties including changes in key staff and the demands of new operations. These members are expected to submit a report prior to the HAP General Assembly that takes place in May 2011 in Geneva. Individual reports will also be made available on the HAP website.

⁷⁸ The ten full members that joined prior to 2010 but did not submit a report in time for inclusion in this summary were: Australian Council for International Development, Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique et au Développement, Amel Association, Association Najdeh, Coordination of Afghan Relief, Community Development Center, Kinder USA, Muslim Aid, Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society Pakistan, Society for Safe Environment and Welfare of Agrarians in Pakistan.

While annual reports were not due from the ten full members that joined HAP in 2010, two (Children First and Oxfam America) have taken this opportunity.

Associate members are not required to develop Accountability Work Plans, but are encouraged to report on activities, achievements and challenges in implementing the HAP Principles of Accountability. People In Aid submitted an update for 2010.

4.2. Structure of the chapter

This chapter will be structured as follows. The first section will present a brief summary of the Accountability Work Plan Implementation Reports submitted by each organisation. The second section will draw attention to the key trends and challenges that emerged from these reports. The third section will highlight some of the key objectives that organisations set for 2011.

4.3. Summary of individual reports

Given the requirements and structure of the process for achieving and renewing HAP certification, there were significant similarities between the reports of those members that are working towards certification, those that have achieved certification and those that are working towards mid-term progress audits (MTPAs) or re-certification audits. For this reason, reports submitted by certified members, full members that have undertaken a baseline analysis against the HAP Standard, and other full members are considered separately.

Members' reports will be examined in the following order:

Certified members⁷⁹

1. Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST Trust)
2. Concern Worldwide

⁷⁹ All nine certified members submitted reports in time for inclusion in this chapter. These reports are ordered according to how recently they achieved certification starting with the most recent. This is done to convey a sense of actions that typically follow upon certification and the preparations that are required for the recertification process that must take place within three years of the original certification.

3. Catholic Agency For Overseas Development (CAFOD)
4. Christian Aid
5. DanChurchAid (DCA)
6. MERCY Malaysia
7. Tearfund
8. Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
9. Office Africain pour le Développement et la Coopération (OFADEC)

Full members that have undertaken a HAP Standard baseline analysis⁸⁰

1. ACT Alliance
2. CARE International
3. Church World Service – Pakistan/Afghanistan (CWS – P/A)
4. Diakonia
5. Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FHA)
6. Lutheran World Federation, Department for World Service (LWF)
7. Merlin
8. Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)
9. Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
10. Oxfam America
11. Sungi Development Foundation
12. Women's Refugee Commission (WRC)
13. World Vision International (WVI)

⁸⁰ While a baseline analysis against the HAP Standard is not a requirement in the certification process, it is recommended for organisations that plan to apply for certification. The baseline analysis seeks to establish where an agency currently stands in relation to the HAP Standard and its level of compliance with each of the requirements, thus helping the agency to affirm existing good practice, identify gaps and determine areas for improvement. While a baseline analysis draws heavily on information provided by staff, beneficiaries and other stakeholders, it is undertaken by an external facilitator – such as HAP Secretariat staff – in order to provide objectivity and impartiality. Not all the members listed here have undertaken HAP Standard baseline analyses at both their head office programme sites.

Other full members

1. Children First
2. Community and Family Services International (CFSI)
3. International Aid Services (IAS)
4. Medair
5. Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP)
6. Naba'a
7. Oxfam GB
8. PMU InterLife
9. Save the Children UK
10. Yakkum Emergency Unit (YEU)

4.3.1. Certified members

The focus of activities for **COAST Trust** and **Concern Worldwide** in 2010 was on the completion of HAP Standard certification audits. The COAST Trust certification audits were conducted at the head office in Dhaka and their programme site in Cox's Bazar. The Concern Worldwide certification audits were conducted at the head office in Dublin and in the Bangladesh country office, with self-assessments at 16 other programme sites.

In preparation for certification, the **COAST Trust** developed an Accountability Framework, an Accountability Work Plan and a strategic plan to guide the organisation's implementation of the HAP Standard. COAST Trust also established an information disclosure policy and a complaint-handling policy. Wide consultations were held on the draft the policies and to inform staff and beneficiaries about the practical implications of these new policies.

In an effort to ensure a high level of accountability, a system has been established whereby internal auditors will monitor COAST Trust projects. An external team was also commissioned to evaluate the various COAST Trust projects and internal management. Findings from the external team included: the need to establish a sustainability plan; the importance of support loans during and after coastal natural disasters; and the need for manuals that are easily accessible to staff. COAST Trust complaints handling processes were streamlined, while the terms of reference for new staff members were strengthened.

In 2010 **Concern Worldwide** was active in revising and implementing a range of policies that aim to embed the HAP Principles of Accountability across their operations. Concern Worldwide reviewed and revised its Humanitarian Accountability Framework based on consultations with staff members and the findings of the HAP Standard baseline analysis. In 2010, Concern Worldwide also: sought feedback on a draft version of the Complaints and Response Mechanism Guide; revised the Programme Participants Protection Policy and finalised the relevant guidelines before disseminating them to all countries of operation; approved the revised Code of Conduct including aspects related to child protection; and completed both the Contextual Analysis Guide and Competency Framework. Concern also formulated a strategy to ensure accountability to both intended beneficiaries and partner organisations, and commissioned an external survey of partner organisations in 13 countries to assess how to improve accountability and effectiveness. In addition, Concern rolled out its Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Guide, initiated a process of revising job descriptions and Performance Development Reviews, and evaluated a pilot version of the CRM Guide.

After achieving certification in 2009, both **CAFOD** and **Christian Aid** were primarily involved in sharing information and capturing good practice, and expanding the implementation of the HAP Standard in country offices, particularly when working with partners.

CAFOD focused their accountability activities on assisting their strategic partners to move towards the improved application of standards of accountability. Towards this goal, CAFOD programme teams worked with 20 strategic partners throughout the year to assist them in meeting the HAP Principles of Accountability. This was supported by one-on-one assistance by CAFOD programme staff, and transparency and information sharing workshops with CAFOD partners. Participatory accountability assessments were carried out in collaboration with CAFOD partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America. CAFOD also worked to ensure that the HAP Standard is known and upheld by CAFOD staff through: the incorporation of accountability sessions into CAFOD's Corporate Induction Programme; the development of an intranet site providing accountability tools and resources for staff; and the dissemination of International Programme Evaluation Policy Guidelines. The Complaints Management System – International Programmes (CMS-IP) was also developed and launched in 2010 with training provided for staff.

Following certification in 2009, **Christian Aid** focused on rolling out the HAP Standard across six country programmes in 2010 and promoting the

HAP Principles of Accountability among partner organisations.⁸¹ The HAP Principles were incorporated into Christian Aid's relationship with partners and beneficiaries in all areas of humanitarian, development and advocacy work. To promote this, Christian Aid developed materials and provided introductory training sessions for Christian Aid staff, partners and government officials. These sessions included information on complaints handling, information sharing and community participation. Christian Aid also facilitated self-assessments of country offices, analysed the country-specific context of the Accountability Framework and recruited an Accountability Officer. Christian Aid supported partner organisations in Lebanon, Indonesia and Haiti to become HAP members. In 2010 Christian Aid established guidelines for the country-level contextualisation of its Open Information Policy, Accountability Framework and CRM; the organisation also consulted with partners about the possible development of a 'bill of rights' for Christian Aid's intended beneficiaries in Central America. A further 12 Christian Aid country offices have committed to the adoption of the HAP Standard in 2011.

After achieving certification in 2008, both **DanChurchAid** and **MERCY Malaysia** undertook the HAP Standard MTPA in 2010. With the key accountability policies and frameworks in place, the focus of these organisations was on improved information sharing procedures and complaints handling.

DanChurchAid continued to place a high importance on accountability, establishing it as a key activity in the DanChurchAid Vision and Plan 2011-2015. Towards this goal, DanChurchAid strengthened its complaints handling processes, improved information sharing and worked with partner organisations to increase accountability in general. Complaints handling systems have been established in Ethiopia and Cambodia, while similar processes have been improved in Angola and Malawi. All of DanChurchAid's new humanitarian projects have accountability signboards in place. In 2010, DanChurchAid produced its first annual Complaints Report and Corruption Report (available on the DanChurchAid website) and implemented a policy of publishing all DanChurchAid programme evaluations and follow-up action on the organisation's website. Partner assessments are now in place across all projects and programmes, with accountability standards and expectations widely discussed. All staff members are required to sign the DanChurchAid Code of Conduct.

In July 2010 **MERCY Malaysia** undertook its MTPA. This process led to the creation of an improved complaint-handling system and information sharing processes. Both contextualised Humanitarian Accountability and complaint-

⁸¹ This includes country offices in: Burkina Faso, Burundi/Rwanda, Haiti, India, Nicaragua and Tajikistan.

handling frameworks are now being introduced through the different MERCY Malaysia projects; in 2010, the Humanitarian Accountability Framework was contextualised and piloted in Cambodia. In an effort to increase information sharing, MERCY Malaysia made both the organisation's Constitution and its Complaints and Response Management Policy available online. A new needs assessment form that allows input from intended beneficiaries was rolled out. During the year, MERCY Malaysia assessed and improved its accountability by: revising the Staff Grievance Policy and including it in the Human Resource Manual; developing accountability policy manuals for each department within the organisation; and producing the second version of the Complaints and Response Management Manual with revisions based on lessons learnt. The hiring process was also revised with a greater focus on reference checks.

Tearfund achieved certification in June 2008 and undertook the MTPA in December 2009. Priorities for Tearfund in 2010 included addressing the minor non-compliances and recommendations raised during the MTPA and expanding the key learning system to incorporate lessons learnt. Tearfund translated and distributed the Quality Standards Field Guide to staff members and Tearfund partner organisations, in addition to making it available on the Tearfund website. Evaluation reports and key learning documents were also made available on the website. Tearfund continued to focus on what participation means in practice through induction and training sessions for staff and partners. The organisation carried out a learning review among senior managers of their experience in implementing feedback and complaints-handling processes in projects in the DRC, Darfur, South Sudan and Afghanistan. Job description templates were also revised.

The main focus of both the **Danish Refugee Council** and **OFADEC** in 2010 was on re-certification having both been certified against the HAP Standard in 2007.

The **Danish Refugee Council (DRC)** achieved re-certification after an audit of the organisation's international activities in March 2010. Throughout the year, the DRC focused on revising and updating old, or establishing new, guidelines on different aspects of accountability including: revision of its Global Humanitarian Accountability Framework to include a more comprehensive Accountability Improvement Plan; revision of the Age, Gender and Diversity Vision; commencing a revision of the field staff complaint handling procedure; and revising the field instructions for accountability standards in partnerships including the Operation Handbook. The DRC also developed a further four contextualised Humanitarian Accountability Frameworks in addition to maintaining the 11 that had already been implemented. These contextualised frameworks were published in local languages. The Cooperation and Management Standards were incorporated into the induction training of new international staff.

The main focus for **OFADEC** in 2010 was on the re-certification process. Throughout the course of the year particular attention was paid to improving the approach to complaints handling and further embedding the HAP Standard across programmes. In 2010 OFADEC developed and implemented a staff complaints handling mechanism; the one complaint received was dealt with according to this process. OFADEC introduced a policy whereby all new staff members must commit to respecting the organisation's Codes of Conduct. Information about sexual exploitation and abuse, and OFADEC's procedure manual covering all aspects of the organisation's activities were made widely available. OFADEC also fostered greater interaction and communication between intended beneficiaries and staff members through regular meetings about the implementation of projects, the inclusion of beneficiaries in advisory committees and the evaluation of projects by beneficiaries. In June 2010 beneficiaries undertook an evaluation of OFADEC's implementation of accountability principles.

4.3.2. Members that have undertaken a baseline analysis against the HAP Standard

ACT Alliance became a full member of HAP in September 2008 and undertook a HAP Standard baseline analysis at the Secretariat and the Uganda office in 2009. While the organisation envisaged that it would become certified in 2010, due to internal organisational changes stemming from the amalgamation of ACT International and ACT Development to create ACT Alliance in 2010, this was postponed until 2011. The ACT Alliance includes nine HAP member organisations in addition to the Secretariat (including two that are HAP certified). To meet its obligation of implementing the HAP Principles of Accountability, the ACT Alliance: established the Code of Good Practice; progressed towards completing the Internal Procedures Manual; and set accountability as a key aim in the 2011-2014 Strategic Plan. ACT Alliance has an active Accountability Working Group and established working group to review and revise its emergency appeal system. In 2010 ACT Alliance piloted the Impact Assessment Guide and related processes in select countries and began a pilot of ACT Alliance's complaints mechanism. ACT Alliance and its members supported HAP deployments in Haiti and southern Kyrgyzstan.

In 2010 **CARE International** worked towards greater accountability through the dissemination and piloting of the Humanitarian Accountability Framework available in four languages. CARE International used the lessons learnt from the pilot to develop an Accountability Framework that applies equally to both humanitarian relief and long-term projects. During the year, CARE International provided a number of staff training sessions on accountability including training for field-level leadership and CARE's Standing Team of

Quality and Accountability Specialists. Rapid Accountability Reviews were held to facilitate conversations about the understanding of humanitarian accountability in project planning and evaluation. Country offices in Pakistan, Ethiopia, Ghana and Niger put in place Quality Accountability staff positions, while CARE Peru implemented a comprehensive humanitarian accountability system. An accountability mapping study was also commissioned.

Church World Service Pakistan/Afghanistan (CWS-P/A) undertook a HAP Standard baseline analysis in October 2009. The main focus for 2010 was the development of policies to meet the shortcomings that were identified in the baseline analysis. Throughout the year, CWS-P/A developed: a policy that includes narrow criteria to explain non-compliance with the HAP Principles of Accountability; Information Sharing Guidelines and a communications strategy; and a participation strategy. The organisation's Humanitarian Accountability Framework was made available on the CWS-P/A website with a revised mission statement that highlights the organisation's commitment to accountability. Meanwhile the CWS-P/A complaints-handling policy was approved and piloted in programmes in the Swat Valley. CWS-P/A conducted 16 one-day training sessions on the HAP Standard and the Sphere Handbook in Pakistan and five in Afghanistan. Job descriptions were also revised. In response to the Pakistan floods, CWS P/A took a leading role in promoting the HAP Standard.

Diakonia became a HAP member in 2009. Since then, Diakonia has been undergoing an extensive reorganisation and decentralisation process. As a result, full implementation of the Accountability Work Plan has been postponed till April 2011. In 2010 Diakonia began a global humanitarian initiative to develop and disseminate policy, strategy and toolkits to support Diakonia staff and partner organisations in planning humanitarian programmes that meet the HAP Standard. Towards this goal, Diakonia integrated the humanitarian toolkit into the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Handbook. The organisation also undertook a humanitarian skills assessment which formed the basis of the capacity development plan, and held Accountability Working Groups every second month. Accountability will be incorporated into the terms of reference of future evaluations.

Focus Humanitarian Assistance (FHA), an affiliate of the Aga Khan Development Network, became a member of HAP and undertook a HAP Standard baseline analysis in 2009. The main focus of FHA's accountability activities in 2010 was on reviewing and revising outstanding issues identified in the analysis. In 2010, FHA developed a draft Humanitarian Accountability Framework with a focus

on monitoring and evaluation. FHA established a toolbox containing all the organisation's policies and information relating to humanitarian accountability to be made accessible to all projects and staff. In addition, an open

communication system for receiving feedback and complaints was developed and implemented.

Lutheran World Foundation (LWF) undertook a HAP Standard baseline analysis at its head office and the Uganda country office in 2009. The main focus of LWF's accountability activities in 2010 was on revising the outstanding issues identified in preparation for HAP certification audits in 2011. In order to further improve quality and accountability, LWF: rolled out its Accountability Framework and drafted an accountability start-up kit to help country offices with practical tools and guidance; updated the Operations Manual which includes accountability policies; approved and disseminated the LWF Open Information Policy; and established a complaints mechanism for training and workshop sessions conducted or sponsored by LWF. LWF also drafted and disseminated its Complaints Mechanism and Investigation Guidelines. These processes and procedures have been contextualised in country programmes in Cambodia, Kenya, Nepal and Uganda. LWF worked with Save the Children and World Vision to implement a joint Complaints Mechanism in one camp in Haiti. Regular staff performance reviews were held and focus group discussions were conducted with intended beneficiaries.

In 2009 **Merlin** undertook HAP Standard baseline analyses at its head office and programme sites in the DRC. Throughout the year, the organisations has worked to further improve the quality and accountability of its programmes by: disseminating the Guide to Programme Management; finalising the Humanitarian Accountability Framework, which has been translated into French and is available on the Merlin website; developing a self-assessment system to monitor the implementation of the HAF; formulating an internal guide to Merlin's different accountability tools; and setting up a complaint-handling system as part of its response in Pakistan. Considering the particular role in surgical response, the organisation has also developed a Patients Charter in Pakistan to explain the services that intended beneficiaries could expect, and investigated the issue of informed consent of beneficiaries. Merlin also made changes to job descriptions to reflect its Accountability Framework and continued to conduct learning-focused evaluations.

Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) became a full member of HAP in July 2009. At the beginning of 2010 NCA undertook HAP Standard baseline analyses at the head office in Oslo and the Ethiopia programme; this was followed by accountability self-assessments of all programme sites. A work plan for the 2010 period was established to fill the gaps identified. In 2010, NCA: developed a global Accountability Framework; worked towards the development of country-specific Accountability Frameworks and Non-Compliance Risk Assessments; put in place Guiding Principles for how to work with partners on issues of accountability; and developed the Guiding Principles for Information and Communications in Order to Improve Transparency and Accountability

Guidelines. To improve information sharing NCA updated its English website. Throughout the year, NCA worked towards the development of staff training sessions on the HAP Principles and is in the process of improving monitoring and evaluations tools and practices including a revised Incident Reporting System. Job descriptions and staff accountability responsibilities were updated, while the template for performance reviews was revised.

In 2010 **Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)** undertook a HAP Standard baseline analysis at its head office with a baseline analysis is planned for the Georgia country office in 2011. The NRC also developed an action plan to improve accountability and quality management at the programme site in Dadaab, Kenya, by strengthening its compliance against the HAP 2007 Standard. Additional accountability activities undertaken in 2010 include: the introduction of the HAP Standard to all head office staff and country programme directors; the finalisation and implementation of the NRC Global Monitoring and Evaluation System in all country programmes; and the extension the induction course for new staff and inclusion of modules on monitoring and evaluation. The initiation of a Quality and Accountability Improvement Project will be finalised in 2011.

Oxfam America became a member of HAP in May 2010 and undertook HAP Standard baseline analyses at its head office and one programme site in Sudan. Following the baseline analysis, the organisation has focused on developing an action plan to addresses the gaps identified. Measures undertaken to this effect include: manager training and the development of a Code of Conduct, employee evaluation surveys and a framework for reporting ethics violations. Oxfam America has made a formal commitment to establish a systemic approach to information sharing with external stakeholders and to improve internal communication. Basic training sessions for key staff members were conducted on monitoring and evaluation systems in addition to revised induction training. While violations reporting and complaints handling mechanisms are well established within Oxfam America, the organisation is committed to promoting these mechanisms in communities and with partner organisations.

Due to security concerns HAP was unable to facilitate a baseline analysis of **Sungi Development Foundation** in 2009. As a result, Sungi conducted a guided self-assessment in consultation with HAP staff. The focus of Sungi's accountability activities in 2010 were based on the issues identified in this process. In order to further embed accountability in its organisational culture, Sungi: organised special staff sessions on the HAF, encouraging staff feedback; formed Humanitarian Quality Management Committees and Disaster Management Committees; worked towards revising Sungi's Emergency Response Manual; and held training sessions to build staff capacity and knowledge about the Code of Conduct and the HAP Standard. Village

information boards including information on complaints handling procedures were displayed at programmes sites, complaints mechanisms were revised to incorporate feedback, and intended beneficiaries were actively involved in planning and review meetings.

The **Women's Refugee Commission (WRC)** advanced its commitment to accountability through several key activities and outputs in 2010. These included finalising an orientation manual that includes a matrix of the guidelines, standards and conventions that guide WRC advocacy. To increase the internal dissemination of staff commitments, the organisation developed accountability binders containing all relevant documents; these were also made available on the WRC website. WRC also initiated the process to include issues of sexual abuse and exploitation (SEA) in its complaints-handling approach. WRC's Ethical Guidelines for Working with Displaced Populations were provided to all staff; 33% of staff members have signed them. Orientation sessions were held on the HAP Standard for new members, and fact-sheets for intended beneficiaries were developed, translated into nine languages and disseminated at programme sites.

Key policies developed by **World Vision International (WVI)** in 2010 include: the Programme Accountability Framework which extends the Humanitarian Accountability Framework to include long-term development programmes; a Quality Assurance Framework that was piloted in Haiti; and a new strategy for humanitarian and emergency response in which accountability is a central focus. The organisation also made publicly available its first Global Accountability Report. In order to promote greater sharing of information WVI adopted an Open Information Policy. In 2010 WVI also aimed to increase the knowledge and understanding of its staff members through: supporting the functioning of working groups as part of the World Vision Accountability Community of Practice, conducting 10-day learning labs, and organising inter-programme visits by staff to facilitate the sharing of practical experiences. WVI also conducted a review of the organisational processes that contribute to PSEA including child protection, whistleblower policies and community complaints mechanisms. The organisations supported HAP's deployment to Haiti and worked with LWF and Save the Children to implement a joint complaints handling mechanism in Haiti.

4.3.3. Other members

After becoming a HAP member in 2010, **Children First** has worked towards establishing an accountability world plan based on ongoing feedback from, and coordination with, the HAP Secretariat and other relevant stakeholders. The organisation piloted a project to identify gaps in its accountability approach

including Children Learning Forums. project will inform best practices for humanitarian accountability and quality management in the future.

Community and Family Services International (CFSI) became a member of HAP in March 2009. In 2010 CFSI worked to address the gaps identified during an accountability self-assessment carried out by staff at the head office in Manila and country offices in the Philippines, Myanmar and Timor-Leste. CFSI adopted a Strategic Plan (2010-2014) reflecting the organisation's commitment to humanitarian accountability, and made a commitment to implement the draft Accountability Framework. The organisation conducted accountability workshops for Philippines-based staff to clarify and promote the application of the Accountability Framework in addition to learning sessions on the HAP Standard targeting staff and other key stakeholders. The draft complaints handling procedure was reviewed and refined, and CFSI established an SMS feedback system for intended beneficiaries in the Philippines. Information and 'Tell us what you think' cards were included in each Family Hygiene Kit distributed in Luzon, Philippines. Employment contracts, induction materials, Performance Evaluation Reporting templates and the CFSI brochure were all revised to include reference to the Accountability Framework.

International Aid Services (IAS) became a full member of HAP in December 2009. In 2010 IAS developed an interim Accountability Work Plan for the period January 2010 to December 2011. A monitoring and evaluation policy, guidelines for receiving and handling complaints, and an information disclosure policy were also developed. Training materials including a starter pack and an implementation guide for IAS's accountability commitments were compiled. HAP Standard awareness workshops were held for IAS staff, beneficiaries and partner organisations in Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda. Project information was communicated to intended beneficiaries in local languages while the HAP Principles of accountability were made available on posters.

The focus of **Medair's** accountability activities in 2010 was on improving the knowledge of both intended beneficiaries and staff members about accountability. Medair rolled out a new accountability system in addition to conducting focus groups and semi-structured interviews with intended beneficiaries as part of needs assessments. Locally recruited community mobilisers trained in the HAP Principles of Accountability facilitated community participation, while Monitoring and Evaluation Officers and Field Communications Officers were appointed to promote accountability at programme sites. A HAP session was also included in inductions for internationally recruited staff. Medair used innovative methods to share information, particularly with intended beneficiaries, including DVD technology and before-and-after photos. Key information including contact details was included in written and pictorial form on information boards. A mobile phone

line devoted to community feedback and complaints was established and widely advertised.

Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) has been a full HAP member since 2008. In 2010 MAP developed a number of policies to promote greater accountability within the organisation, including: a Proposal Assessment Process and Project Evaluations system; an Ethical Fundraising Policy published on the MAP website; a system of internal reviews and external evaluations to improve project implementation; and a system for reporting to intended beneficiaries and partner organisations (available in both Arabic and English). The finance section of the Operations Manual was also updated following a review of financial procedures. Projects were evaluated through independent review or by local evaluators to increase the voice and contributions of intended beneficiaries. MAP also conducted two workshops for MAP staff in the Occupied Palestinian Territory to assess MAP's work against the HAP Standard, the findings of this review will contribute to the preparation of the Accountability Framework, HAP Standard baseline analysis and certification process. The format of staff contracts were standardised, and consent forms for photographs, case studies and interviews were established.

In 2010 **Naba'a (Developmental Action Without Borders)** undertook a number of activities to promote increased accountability within the organisation. Amongst these, it held a five-day interactive workshop attended by 20 participants from local, regional and international NGOs. The workshop was used as an opportunity for participants to share practical experiences and reflections on complaints handling. Regular training sessions for staff members were also held on a range of issues including monitoring the violation of child rights. Information about the Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy was disseminated to all staff members.

During 2010 **Oxfam GB** revised the organisation's accountability tools and resources to reflect its understanding of mutual accountability with partner organisation and the shared responsibility to intended beneficiaries. In the course of year Oxfam GB piloted the programme guidance and monitoring system which incorporates the Talking to/ Hearing from Communities process. Oxfam GB revised its Global Performance Framework (to include an indicator of accountability) and the Complaints Policy (based on learning from three years of implementation). In addition, Oxfam GB conducted joint evaluations and contributed to collaborative thinking on how to implement the Key Elements Paper with emergency capacity building partners while also developing a guide for implementing the Partnership Policy. As part of the Haiti response, Oxfam GB established a complaints telephone hot line. The organisation also participated in the UN study on PSEA, and, based on feedback, decided to appoint a member of staff with responsibility for PSEA.

PMU InterLife became a member of HAP in July 2009. Shortly afterwards, it agreed on an Accountability Work Plan for the November 2009 to October 2010 period. The focus of PMU's accountability activities in 2010 was on the introduction of a Humanitarian Accountability Framework, which was approved in August 2010, and on preparation for a HAP Standard baseline analysis at the beginning of 2011. In 2010, PMU conducted a CRM workshop in Bukavu, DRC, with about 20 participants from the DRC, Burkina Faso, Burundi and Rwanda. PMU also drafted and piloted a handbook which includes a Monitoring Guide for Humanitarian Projects in the DRC and Pakistan.

Save the Children UK is currently undertaking preparations for a transition of the organisation to Save the Children International (to be completed by December 2012). The standardisation of monitoring and evaluation across the organisation is a key priority in this transition. As a result of logistical constraints associated with the transition, the development of the Accountability Framework was delayed. In 2010 Save the Children UK worked towards improving its accountability by: including accountability as a strategic goal for 2011-2013; establishing a Monitoring and Evaluation Design Group and Steering Committee to design and implement a five year strategy for Monitoring and Evaluation processes and tools; reviewing the Monitoring and Evaluation Emergency Standard Operating Procedure; conducting accountability training sessions for staff; and establishing complaints mechanisms in many humanitarian responses. Save the Children UK also worked to increase accountability to children through developing a Child Participation and Accountability to Children Standard Operating Procedure and establishing a child-focused section of the website.

In 2008 **YAKKUM Emergency Unit (YEU)** participated in a peer review of Accountability to Affected Populations by SCHR. The review found that YEU "demonstrated good practices to promote accountability to disaster-affected populations" and recommended that YEU further institutionalise best practices of accountability. In 2010 YEU disseminated information about accountability and the HAP Principles to all programme sites and staff members; the latter were also integrated into the recruited system. YEU also developed a list of frequently asked question, basic information about the organisation and information about how intended beneficiaries can actively participate, to be delivered when projects are first established. During the year, YEU worked towards establishing a complaints handling mechanism. YEU aims to undertake a HAP Standard baseline analysis and to apply for certification after completing the current accountability work plan in 2012.

4.3.4. Associate members

In 2010, the International Aid Services and CAFOD were verified compliant with the **People In Aid** (PIA) Code and were awarded Quality Mark 2 certificates. Concern Worldwide and Tearfund were re-awarded Quality Mark 2 following audits. Seven other NGOs were awarded the PIA first Quality Mark.

During the year, PIA helped to run consultation on the revision of the 2007 HAP Standard Benchmark 4 with the aim of ensuring compatibility between the People In Aid Code and the people-related elements of the HAP Standard. In addition, one of the PIA staff members is training to be a HAP auditor to facilitate the ongoing commitment to joint HAP and PIA audits.

4.4. Emerging trends from HAP members' reports in 2010

A number of accountability trends emerge from HAP members' report in 2010. These include a greater emphasis on working with partners to improve accountability, contextualising accountability frameworks and other organisational approaches, information sharing in particular, and the increased utilisation of information technology to improve accountability to communities. 2010 saw an increase in the number of members applying the HAP Principles of Accountability or the HAP Standard across their programmes, including advocacy, development and humanitarian relief.

As in previous years, the reports show the continued commitment of HAP members to improving accountability to their intended beneficiaries. One of the approaches through which systematic change is achieved relates to revising and developing policies to increase accountability. Strengthening staff capacity (both knowledge and practical skills) and implementing complaints-handling systems continue to be the focus of several members. Revisions of job descriptions and performance appraisals also featured prominently in 2010.

2010 also saw an increase in HAP members working with partner organisations to improve accountability with them and to intended beneficiaries. An increase is also apparent in the use of terminology such as "mutual accountability" and "shared responsibility". In 2010 HAP members aimed to improve their accountability to partner organisations by focusing on the development of joint accountability strategies, on supporting accountability assessments of partner organisations and on working with partners to prioritise those areas where improvements are needed in the implementation of the HAP Standard. Christian Aid, for example, supported some of its partner organisations to apply for HAP membership.

The year saw increased emphasis placed on information sharing, including with partners and other key stakeholders. Members also mentioned improved internal communication, particularly more effective approaches to disseminating accountability policies and tools. A number of organisations also developed open information and information sharing policies. Several members invested in making better use of the website and internal sites to keep staff at different programmes better informed on key policies and tools. For example, LWF, WRC and MAP all worked to translate information on their websites into different languages.

A number of innovative approaches to handling complaints and sharing information emerged, many of these drawing on the potential of technology. A number of organisations including CFSI, Oxfam GB and Save the Children UK implemented telephone hot-lines as an avenue for receiving complaints and more general feedback. Medair used radio programmes to disseminate more information about its programmes. Meanwhile Save the Children UK developed a child-focused section of its website to connect with key intended beneficiaries.

A number of challenges to improving accountability and meeting related objectives were also raised. These include the allocation of limited time and resources, organisational restructuring, and changes in circumstances at programme level.

As in previous years, the most cited challenge was the demand that improving accountability places on often-limited time and resources, particularly when accountability is seen as an add-on rather than a *modus operandi*. For example, MAP argued that, due to its small size, it is not possible to “allocate staff exclusivity to the fostering of accountability standards.” The ACT Alliance mentioned that the time and resources required to effectively respond to complaints presented a challenge. Christian Aid, the Danish Refugee Council, OFADEC and Oxfam GB also raised the broader issue of time and resources. Arguably, such comments point to the need for agencies to be more realistic in planning the level of resources required to deliver quality programmes that are accountable to communities, and the need for some agencies to secure donor support for accountability processes.

The challenge of changing organisational culture towards one of quality and accountability was mentioned in several reports. For example, YEU noted that maintaining “the spirit of accountability” across its programmes posed a challenge, especially with changes in staff. Similarly, MERCY Malaysia commented on the difficulties of getting staff to implement new policies.

Meanwhile, CARE International noted that, while they experienced increased awareness of complaints handling approaches, application was still uneven.

Major structural changes within organisations made it difficult for some organisations to meet their accountability targets. In 2010 both Diakonia and Save the Children UK underwent extensive restructuring processes. As a result, some accountability targets were postponed.

Communication problems arising from cultural differences and low literacy levels were also mentioned as challenges. For example, YEU noted that it was challenging to encourage complaints from communities where criticisms are not openly conveyed. CFSI mentioned the difficulties faced by staff in distinguishing between culturally appropriate expressions of hospitality and gratitude, and efforts to bribe or otherwise unduly influence decision-making. Meanwhile, Medair and Save the Children UK both mentioned the challenge that low literacy rates posed for effective community involvement, and the need to invest in more innovative approaches.

One of the main learning points highlighted by most members is that HAP membership—be it the development of accountability work plans or support from the HAP Secretariat at both policy and practice levels, preparation for HAP audits or achieving HAP certification—enabled them to improve their relationship with communities and saw an increase in different stakeholders' levels of satisfaction with the quality of programmes implemented. While the full potential of sharing learning through the annual reports may not have yet been achieved, the openness of HAP members about progress in improving accountability and challenges in 2010 is worthy of notice. HAP members' 2010 Accountability Work Plan Implementation Reports highlight an impressive range of efforts aimed at improving the quality and accountability in humanitarian action and beyond.

4.5. Goals for 2011

As part of their 2010 Accountability Work Plan Implementation Reports, HAP members were encouraged to outline key goals for 2011. As in previous years, organisations are committed to working towards improved accountability through approaches that include capacity building activities, the development and implementation of accountability policies, or revising pre-existing tools based on learning at programme level. Some members also plan to implement the HAP Standard more widely within their organisation, to reach beyond humanitarian relief programmes.

The trend of focusing on contextual accountability approaches seen in 2010 looks set to continue with Christian Aid, DanChurchAid and Concern Worldwide planning to adapt key accountability documents to different country programmes. MERCY Malaysia set the goal of developing context-specific Accountability Frameworks in at least 70% of projects, while the Danish Refugee Council and the Norwegian Church Aid aim to have established them for each country of operation by the end of 2011.

Enhanced collaboration and sharing of learning between different country offices and different partners are also likely to be a high priority for 2011. MERCY Malaysia and LWF both aim to increase peer assessment and learning activities between different project offices. Several HAP members are looking to increase the number of joint approaches when working with partners, including through training sessions, improved information sharing and better learning from each other.

Some members will focus on regular accountability self-assessments followed by quick response to gaps that are identified, while others such as Tearfund, WRC, DanChurchAid and International Aid Service plan to work on improving staff codes of conduct or whistle-blowing policies.

2011 is likely to see greater use of various forms of technology to improve quality and accountability of programmes. CFSI aims to communicate its Accountability Framework to a broader audience through the use of social media sites and its own website. ACT Alliance aims to establish a complaints link on its website for stakeholders to access, while DanChurchAid, Medair and the Sungi Development Foundation noted their intent to improve information sharing to staff and external stakeholders through regular internet updates. Christian Aid will work to develop DVD training materials on key aspects of the HAP Standard. Pursuing strategies to better engage with certain intended beneficiary groups such as children, parents, and people with disabilities were also mentioned.

The reports submitted by HAP members in 2010 indicate that at least four more members will undertake HAP Standard baseline analyses and at least six members will apply for HAP certification in 2011. Three members are scheduled for mid-term progress audits.

HAP International

Maison Internationale de l'Environnement 2
Chemin de Balexert (First Floor, Room 1-08)
CH-1219 Châtelaine
Genève, Switzerland

www.hapinternational.org

ISSN 1662-8829