

**Minutes of Q&A meeting December 1st 2008,
German Foreign Ministry, Berlin.**

Present: Alison Joyner (Chairing), John Mitchell (ALNAP), Jonathan Potter (PeopleIn Aid, minuting), Matt Bannerman (ECB), Monica Blagescu (HAP).

1. Welcome and apologies: Apologies had been received from Groupe URD, CDA and Coordination Sud. Matt Bannerman (MattB) from ECB was welcomed and stressed ECB's commitment to these meetings and discussions.

2. Minutes: minutes of the last meeting had been agreed and should now be posted on every participant's website. Groupe URD and Sphere will now translate them and circulate the translations.

ACTION: all to check number of downloads of minutes to date (and who, if possible). For next meeting agenda.

3. Matters arising:

a) shared FAQ and article: MattB was updated. The objective had been an article reaffirming initiatives' common accountability goal and individual distinctiveness, aimed at donors, NGOs and fieldworkers.

ACTION: John to contact Francois to check progress/take this forward - and inform the group

b) Q&A strategic discussion paper: MonB explained the background to the internal discussion paper HAP had circulated for information. It was to inform the HAP Board about the Q&A initiatives and possibilities for interoperability.

ACTION: HAP to contact ALNAP about a strategic-level draft paper on interoperability for the next meeting.

4. Participation. INEE had contacted Sphere about attending the meetings. It was agreed they would be welcome to participate in future.

5. Updates: written updates had been provided by ECB, Sphere, ALNAP and People In Aid and are pasted below.

HAP updated at the meeting:

- 7 new members since the last meeting, including People In Aid
- 5 agencies certified, one in mid-term review
- HAP now identifies members which are 'enrolled in the certification scheme': 9 other agencies enrolled in the certification scheme, including UNHCR which has completed a baseline analysis at the Head Office
- Consultation on accreditation options starting with agencies such as ACT International
- After-action review in Bangladesh and joint deployment with Sphere in Myanmar
- Review of the 2007 Standard has been initiated, including impact of the standard on the lives of disaster-survivors.
- Impact of complaints-handling mechanisms: a study is being commissioned.

- Save UK approached HAP with a view to starting a consultation for an “inspectorate” on child sexual exploitation and abuse.
- New cost-recovery services launched, see website.

People In Aid mentioned its new ‘Partner Member’ and ‘Network Member’ categories. **ACTION:** MonB to introduce Myanmar Quality and Accountability Coordinator to People In Aid in London.

6. Update on training materials: Sphere updated the meeting on the to and fro between Sphere and the consultants. Sara Davidson is working further on the paper, how to use accountability materials at different points in the project cycle and in different contexts .Emma Jowett will then develop the paper into the training materials. Emphasising how badly needed these materials were AJ stressed that the delay was the right approach to ensure the quality required. Paper will be ready end January, training materials in February. ECB confirmed they could field-test in April, in French and Spanish.

7. In the field:

- a) DFID is funding 6 months of an accountability post in Myanmar, hosted by Save UK and working on HAP and Sphere.
- b) DRC: Sphere will send a short reconnaissance mission to eastern DRC. HAP offered their experience of a similar mission to Peru.
- c) The ECB country/regional consortia – Bangladesh, Bolivia, the Horn of Africa, Indonesia and Niger - are natural places for further collaboration between the Q&A initiatives.
- d) CWS have supported HAP and Sphere in Pakistan and Myanmar. An RRT for Asia, organized/supported by CWS, is being developed.

ACTION: AJ will check if she can circulate the RRT ToR for ECB and People In Aid to perhaps contribute their thoughts. Marvin Pervez is the CWS contact.

ACTION: new emergency information will be circulated to all participants in these meetings by HAP under its protocol. This will ensure collaboration with ECB, for example, if an emergency takes place in a country or region in which an ECB consortium is active.

8. Collective and individual futures: AJ proposed we emerge with some action points as a group, for us to develop together and offer to the public.

a) Social networking: JM and MonB shared their respective discussions with Maria Thorin at SIDA: could we use Web-2 as a comms tool for the initiatives and use new technology for their separate activities e.g. evaluation modules and BSO distance training? ALNAP’s Ben would be willing to prepare a concept note for a shared interactive platform, where one platform could replace many for fieldstaff. It could develop into something broader than social networking.

This concept paper could touch on many things. Specifically mentioned were CVs of Q&A resource people such as trainers, a joint calendar of events, field staff ‘facebook’ pages showing courses attended, connections between networks, allowing access to information and events for those with less resources.

ACTION: JM to tell SIDA we have started this conversation.

ACTION: Ben R to prepare concept note by end January, talking to each initiative and ask ECB for potential users.

ACTION: teleconference February 10th on the concept note, to be organized by ALNAP. To be European afternoon as MattB is in Bolivia.

It was agreed more generally that we needed a coordinated approach on distance learning, revision processes and other activities which will, to donors and end-users, seem to overlap.

b) JP had asked whether pressures on income were going to affect activities and whether they were a catalyst for more joint action. It was agreed that there were areas for collaboration and cost-savings but that didn't mean doing less. We needed to continue to show the added value of each activity.

Many points relevant to this discussion are mentioned elsewhere in the minutes eg: distance learning tools on all the initiatives, joint deployments or joint support for deployments, joint thinking on use of new media for communications, strategic-level thinking on interoperability (related to revisions and other). A longer discussion took place on in-country activities.

- i) It was suggested that region-by-region plans for the initiatives be shared
 - to look at events to take place in these regions, related to revision processes or other.
 - to coordinate, through MattB, how an ECB consortium might support the initiatives' separate or joint ongoing process.
- ii) HAP will be consulting with Sphere and People In Aid as part of their revision process, aligning hopefully with ECB in the field.

ACTION: initiatives to pool information about field visits so we don't duplicate and we do ensure maximum possible resource-sharing.

ACTION: People In Aid, HAP and Sphere to put something to MattB which summarises what the 5 ECB regions might want to learn about the initiatives' plans and activities eg HAP/Sphere revision processes.

ACTION: plan a joint annual travel and training calendar for coordination, and for NGOs and others to see what we plan. Part of 8a.

9. Any other business: MattB raised the issue of joint fundraising. ECB would like to be more strategic about the fundraising it needs to do and would like to discuss identified needs for the initiatives which would benefit the initiatives collectively.

ACTION: To be an agenda item for next meeting.

Next meeting: hosted by HAP in Geneva, 8th May. HAP to chair and URD to minute-take.

Updates supplied prior to the meeting:

1. INEE.

Training and capacity-building:

- INEE regional Capacity-Building workshop for Asia, 1-3 April 2008 in Manila, the Philippines
- INEE regional Capacity-Building workshop for Europe/the Caucasus, 28-30 May, Tbilisi, Georgia
- INEE training workshop the Ministry of Education in Cote d'Ivoire, 18-20 June, Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire
- INEE regional TOT for the Indian Ocean, 10-12 December, Antananarivo, Madagascar
- over 70 training workshops organized by INEE members in the field in 2008

Support to application:

- Support to the education cluster in Myanmar and the education sector group in Georgia on the utilization of the INEE Minimum Standards, in particular for inter-agency coordination and capacity-building
- Evaluation of the INEE Minimum Standards in Uganda (looking at awareness, utilization, institutionalization and impact of the standards) in April 2008 and follow-up application visit in September 2008 (somewhat similar to a Sphere deployment)
- Development of four case-studies on the use of the INEE Minimum Standards: NRC in Somaliland, PACE-A in Afghanistan, CIDA and Government of Norway

Promotion and partnerships:

- New translations: Bangla, Chinese, Myanmar language
- Development of Frequently Asked Questions brief on INEE and the INEE Minimum Standards
- Linkages with the IASC Education cluster and participation in Education Cluster Working Group
- Signature of INEE/Sphere Companionship

Next steps:

- Update of the INEE Minimum Standards Handbook in 2009-2020
- Support to application through capacity-building activities, tool development, case-study documentation and application visits

2. People In Aid

1. New mission statement and strategic priorities for 2009-2012 have been decided. These are not a radical change:
“People In Aid advocates, supports, and recognises good practice in the management of people in the humanitarian and development sector worldwide.”
Our strategic priorities are to:
 - Advocate good practice
 - Strengthen capacity

- Stimulate and facilitate learning
- Recognise achievement
- 2. Members' survey responses were very flattering and reaffirming.
- 3. We have a communications consultancy currently looking into how we communicate and market ourselves.
- 4. Very successful set of workshops run with the IAWG in Nairobi, and a simulation on staffcare in Washington DC.
- 5. 6 NGOs due to be audited shortly (Tearfund, CAFOD, Islamic Relief Germany, IAS, Redr and Save UK). The Board has reaffirmed its position that implementation of the Code should not be a condition of membership.
- 6. Rewards surveys continuing to be successful: 38 US and European NGOs in one, and a newly-launched local salary survey has attracted 66 NGOs in 22 countries covering 30,000 staff.

3. Emergency Capacity Building Project Phase II

Members of the Q&A group will be familiar with the project design for ECB Phase II, having provided feedback at various stages of proposal development. In brief:

ECB Phase II will work through 3 objectives:

1. **FIELD CAPACITY BUILDING** - Improve field-level capacity to prepare for and respond to emergencies in disaster prone countries
2. **ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING** - Increase the speed, quality and effectiveness of emergency preparedness and response mechanisms within and across IWG agencies
3. **PARTNERSHIPS** - Contribute to improving the humanitarian sector's emergency preparedness and response through collective dialogue, knowledge sharing, learning, and collaborative work with other partners and organizations

Three cross-cutting themes define the focus of the project:

- A. **DRR** - to help communities reduce their vulnerability to disasters and to support cohesion within and beyond the IWG agencies on risk reduction issues
- STAFF CAPACITY** - to respond faster in emergencies and raise the quality of response with better trained and more rapidly deployed staff
- B. **ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPACT MEASUREMENT** –to improve accountability to people affected by emergencies and improve the measurement of impact

Funding was approved by the Gates Foundation in July. The Gates grant meets approx. 40% of the Project's budget over 5 years.

In October the IWG selected five country/regional consortia that will be the focus of Objective 1, from a total of 21 expressions of interest. These five are: Bangladesh, Bolivia, the Horn of Africa, Indonesia and Niger. Consortia in these countries include Government ministries, UN agencies and other national and international NGOs, as well as the IWG agencies.

Planning workshops will be held in these five countries/regions between February and April 2009. These workshops represent a potential opportunity to embed the work of networks in the group into consortia planning.

Under Objective 3 of ECB Phase II, the Project will seek to form strategic partnerships with a range of other networks and humanitarian actors, in order to continue to broaden the reach of ECB activities and support important developments in the humanitarian community.

Scoping discussions already held with e.g. People In Aid, ALNAP, HAP, Sphere, Provention. Several areas of common interest and potential synergy identified.

Specific focus of ECB Phase II on supporting the testing, refinement and uptake of existing humanitarian quality standards, 'bridging the gap' between principles and practice.

Update on specific ECB workstreams related to Q&A:

- Good Enough Guide now available in Arabic, Bahasa, Hindi, as well as Spanish and French. Currently in use in DRC.
- ECB Common Assessment platform endorsed by UN RC/HC in Indonesia. OCHA in discussions with GoI about using platform as basis for national rapid assessment tool.

New ECB website launched November 2008 – [link](#) to Q&A networks info on home page

4. Sphere

- Quality and Accountability support people in Myanmar, July to September + November, in collaboration with HAP
- ToTs in: Venezuela in Spanish, June 2008, hosted by Venezuelan Red Cross; in Gambia, hosted by Concern Universal, early November 2008
- Signing of 'Companionship Agreement' with InterAgency Network for Education in Emergencies Minimum Standards – which now become 'Companion Standards' to Sphere.
- Plans for the revision process advancing – fundraising, identification of focal point, aiming for a start of the process April/May 2009. Close collaboration with HAP (on Humanitarian Charter and Standards Common to All Sectors) and INEE (cross-referencing of Sphere and INEE MS throughout both revised editions), in coordination with their respective revision processes. Close collaboration with clusters/Humanitarian Reform, as appropriate.
- Development of elearning tool relaunched in collaboration with Technology-Assisted Lifelong Learning (Oxford University) and Forced Migration on Line. Will be developed as a freely available (on and offline) accompaniment to the revised version of the Handbook, for 2010
- New team member Aninia Nadig, Senior Officer Materials and Promotion (50%), since October. Attending ALNAP meeting
- New Sphere Project Manager as from early 2009

Updates end.