

Minutes of Q&A meeting May 8th 2009, hosted by HAP in Geneva, 11-4pm.

Present: Nick Stockton (HAP, chairing), Dayna Brown (CDA – by phone from 2.30), John Damerell (Sphere), John Mitchell (ALNAP), Jonathan Potter (People In Aid, minutes), Marian Hodgkin (INEE).

Apologies: Nathalie Herlemont (Coordination Sud), Matt Bannerman (ECB).

Absent: Francois Grunewald (Groupe URD), Francois Fiard (Coordination Sud).

JD and MH were welcomed to their first meeting. The process of minute-taking was explained: that minute-taker circulates a draft for comment and then circulates the final version. MH summarised her objectives as being sharing learning between networks, understanding and communicating complementarities, and possible joint work.

1. Minutes of the March telecon were approved.

ACTION POINT: All should now upload them to websites.

2. Outstanding follow-up action points from Berlin meeting (December 08).

- a) Downloads/hits on Q&A minutes on our websites. With the figures available it was clear visits and downloads were among the lowest on each website.
- b) Progress on FAQ, article and shared vision: the article is not being revised further or submitted. There was a feeling that revisiting a shared vision might be necessary, but that interoperability (ie where operational coherence can be shown to be of value to mutual members/audience) has and will progress the idea of complementarity more readily.

ACTION POINT: All agencies to actively promote Q&A complementarity and interoperability to all audiences.

ACTION POINT: FAQ to be updated. INEE, Listening Project to submit their summaries (same structure as current ones) to JD in French or English. Deadline end June.

ACTION POINT: All to read the whole document and track suggested changes; to avoid revisiting the whole document these should only be changes required because of the expansion in numbers of agencies included. Again to JD by end June. JD will then revise whole document, in light of proposed changes, by end July.

- c) Interoperability: this remains of interest to our mutual members/audiences. Definitions included: i) bilateral/trilateral manifestations of the initiatives' agreement as a group to act on their complementarities; ii) a common interest in working together to ensure potential for overlap or competition is minimised and our 'customers' understand what they can ask us for. A strategic level paper was not thought necessary at the present time but examples of interoperability in practice should be systematically documented and shared.

ACTION POINT: All to add examples of interoperability to the FAQ, promote them separately, and include them in the training module (see point d).

- d) Joint materials: JD reported that the final copy of the ‘Introductions to Humanitarian Accountability Initiatives’ paper is ready to be circulated to us all. On final approval it will be turned into training materials, projected to be completed by end June.

ACTION POINT: JD to propose actions for promoting the paper eg posting it on our websites.

ACTION POINT: JD to confirm by e-mail how the training materials will be being produced and solicit feedback from us all.

- e) Sharing of information:

- RRT ToR: this is about a standby team in Asia being proposed by CWS, another possible interoperability option.

ACTION POINT: JD to check if RRT ToR can be circulated to all.

- NEP: It is in HAP’s new emergency protocol to advise other Q&A initiatives at the point when a possible deployment is being seriously considered. (see 9c of the HAP NEP Protocol at <http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/m673-New%20Emergencies%20Protocol%2018-1-06.pdf>)
- Field visits: coordinating this would be easier with a calendar in the CoP. Until then visitors could be briefed about all Q&A initiatives ready to field questions, and initiatives can share information about visits.

- f) Fundraising

- Matt (ECB)’s email about fundraising was read out.
- Joint advocacy should be considered before joint fundraising to govt donors
- Sida had offered, at HAP’s GA, to pass on any message from Q&A to a meeting of the GHD in second week June. This would not be exclusively, if at all, about funding.

ACTION POINT: any initiative interested in making a point to the GHD to contact JP with max 3 key points to raise no later than May 22nd. JP to tell those not at the meeting of this opportunity. It was agreed that consensus may not be necessary on every point submitted.

- g) Communities of Practice. An update was given by JP, and next steps were outlined following on from the meeting with Sida earlier this week. There should be advantage in taking forward technological solutions together if Sida did not agree to fund this.

ACTION POINT: Any comments to Ben (People In Aid), who is the lead and will take the proposal forward

- h) Chairs’ meeting: Sphere had reviewed the proposal and concluded there was no pressing need for a meeting of Chairs. It was agreed not to pursue this idea until a need arose.

3. Other matters

- a) Updates. A few clarifications were offered on the initiatives’ updates (below).
- b) RedR/Bioforce: had asked to join the group. They are welcome to join, with their emergencies proposal suggested as their pre-meeting update.

- c) Next meeting date: London November 16th. Dayna to chair, Groupe URD to minute (as unable to do so today as planned). A telephone meeting before then could be called by anyone if issues arising from ongoing work suggest it.

The following updates were received from initiatives before the meeting.
Listening Project, INEE, Sphere, ALNAP, People In Aid, HAP.

The Listening Project:

The Listening Project has begun producing a series of *Issue Papers* that highlight some of the patterns, themes, lessons, and further questions that have emerged throughout the first thirteen Listening Exercises. These papers have been (and will continue to be) discussed in *Feedback Workshops*, and will inform future Listening Exercises and the final publication. Additional Issue Papers will be drafted soon to explore other common themes. The papers can be found on the CDA website, or through direct links below. We welcome feedback and further distribution to your colleagues and others interested in the findings!

- *International Assistance as a Delivery System* ([English](#)) ([French](#))
- *The Cascading Effects of International Agendas and Priorities* ([English](#)) ([French](#))
- *Presence: "Why Being Here Matters"* ([English](#)) ([French](#))
- *"Discuss Together, Decide Together, Work Together"* ([English](#)) ([French](#))

Listening Exercise (LE) and Feedback Workshops (FW) in the works:

1. Afghanistan (just completed)
2. Washington, DC FW (just completed)
3. Lebanon LE this week and FW on 12th
4. Jordan FW on May 14th
5. Mindanao (LE planned for late June-early July plus a FW in Manila)
6. Mali (LE summer)
7. Senegal (FW summer)
8. Burma/Myanmar (August)
9. Solomon Islands (August/September)
10. Australia FW (September/October)
11. NYC FW (summer 2009)

INEE

INEE Minimum Standards Update Process:

- Hired Alison Joyner as INEE Minimum Standards Update Consultant (March-December 2009).
- Conducted two sessions on the INEE Minimum Standards Update at INEE's Global Consultation (31 March-2 April)
- Launched online consultation on the INEE Minimum Standards (til May 25th) - see below and please fill out the survey!

- Joint presentation with Sphere to the IASC Working Group meeting in March, leading to the IASC WG's involvement in the Sphere/INEE revision/update processes.
- First INEE Minimum Standards Update Focal Point Meeting will take place on June 24-25th in Geneva
- A facilitator's guide for in-person consultations and feedback collection tools and protocols for focal points are being developed

Sphere/INEE Companionship:

- Identified key areas for the companionship: training, tool development, communications and advocacy, handbook update/revision processes, documenting experiences of utilization of the two sets of standards together.
- Developed paper on Sphere/INEE Companionship, covering rationale, history and operationalization next steps.

Q/A initiatives:

- Provided feedback on Sphere-commissioned paper entitled "an introduction to Q/A initiatives in the humanitarian sector".
- Collaboration with Deborah Bickler, Sphere/HAP deployment in Myanmar, on translation, training and implementation of the INEE Minimum Standards

Application of the INEE Minimum Standards:

- Developed 5 point application strategy: tool-development, training focused on implementation, documenting experiences, support to institutionalization, application visits.
- Developed a brief on using the INEE Minimum Standards for monitoring purposes, which formed the basis for a training of BPRM officers, and the subsequent revision of BPRM's template for requests for proposals.
- Upcoming application visit to eastern DRC by INEE Coordinator for Minimum Standards in July, to support the education cluster's use of the INEE MS.

SPHERE

Handbook Revision Process:

- Presentations and meetings with relevant agencies/individuals to be involved in the revision including participating in the 73th IASC working group meeting in Washington 18-20 March 09 in addition to a number of meetings with UN agencies e.g. UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, OHCHR, etc.
- All focal points for the revision have been identified (except for the Children cross-cutting issue).
- Agreements with agencies providing focal point support are under signature.
- First launch Revision workshop planned in Geneva 11-13 May 09.
- Most of the focal points provided a preliminary preparatory report about the anticipated revisions of the handbook.
- New focal points are identified for the emerging new topics (Disaster Risk Reduction, Early Recovery, Cash Transfer programming, etc.)

- A package to guide organisations on how to conduct consultations on the Sphere revision developed.

E-learning:

- Started the development of 2 introductory modules on Sphere (1. Introduction to Sphere, 2. Humanitarian Charter)
- Started the content authoring for a first prototype case study to learn how to apply the Sphere Standards in Practice

Training:

- A training report is being developed for all Sphere Trainings that took place in 2008.

Materials:

- New brochure for the Sphere Project produced.
- A special leaflet created for the revision.

Working with other Q&A Initiatives:

- Working member of the Community of Practice initiative with People in Aid, ALNAP and HAP.
- Working on the inter-operability paper between Sphere and HAP with HAP.
- Finalised the Q&A paper entitled “An introduction to initiatives in the humanitarian sector”. Training materials development based on this paper will follow.
- Developed a paper on the INEE Companionship and linkages between Education and the Sphere Standards.

Deployments:

- Scoping mission to DRC completed.
- A decision to proceed with the deployment to DRC achieved by the Sphere Board.
- Contacts with potential host agencies and consultants established.
- DRC deployment ToR underdevelopment
- Sphere support visit to Myanmar by a consultant is underway to support the joint Sphere/HAP Q&A position..
- Selection of the evaluator of the Myanmar DFID funded Q&A position is underway
- Discussing with HAP feasibility of deployment in Kenya

Companionships:

- Operationalisation of INEE companionship agreement is underway.
- Maintaining discussions with other potential Companionship candidates, e.g. LEGS and SEEP

ALNAP

The main updates since March are:

A) Collaboration

1. Supporting OCHA / Humanitarian Reform Unit and Cluster Leads on accountability and performance issues
2. Collaborating with OCHA Evaluation on mechanism for joint impact assessments
3. Assisting Tearfund with work on DRR and capacity building
4. Presentations to Save UK on leadership competencies, as part of Leadership Development. Upcoming session at British Red Cross Leadership Conference
5. Working with RedR, People In Aid, BOND and Humanitarian Futures on sector-wide leadership initiative (development and humanitarian); 1st meeting in London on 28th April at Save UK, over 25 attendees
6. Contribution to ECOWAS senior management development "distance learning" package on networks
7. Advising BOND on NGO Effectiveness Initiative
8. Working with People in Aid, HAP, Sphere on Q/A community of practice
9. Work with Sida on TEC Follow up LRRD Evaluation (meeting in Geneva in May)
10. Work with Prof. Michael Barnett on humanitarian incentives
11. Initial discussions with Ky Luu, former head of OFDA and now at Tulane University, on Humanitarian Leadership Study
12. Initial Discussions with Shelter Centre, with planned session at their November 2009 meeting in GVA to help think through strategy
13. Contribution to House of Lords event on Climate change and humanitarian action, opened by John Holmes
14. Meeting in London on "Media and affected population", part of the follow up on recommendation from ALNAP meeting on Media

B) Research and Development Work

1. 8th Review of Humanitarian Action published next month - chapters on performance, impact, innovations
2. Working with Provention on lessons paper on urban crisis, to be published in June 2009
3. Beginning to develop and pilot "innovations cases studies" as a new ALNAP product. Also developing a mechanism for sector-wide innovation exchange, to be discussed further at the November meeting in London
4. State of the System Report underway, to be published end of 2009
5. Work on leadership, evaluation capacities and beneficiary surveys to be initiated over next 3-4 months
6. Network-to-network learning initiative follow up

C) Internal

1. Working with Rick Davies on developing a monitoring system for ALNAP's work
2. New website launched next month
3. New comms process to be completed by end of summer
4. New format Annual Report out at end of Summer

People In Aid

1. We awarded quality marks to RedR, Save the Children UK, Merlin, International Aid Services, Islamic Relief Deutschland, People In Aid and 13 Ugandan NGOs.
2. New strategy to be signed off April 29th – details were in last report.
3. We expect member drop-off this year: 4 non-renewals so far but some new ones joining (the whole Actionaid family for example).
4. Our Chair (from BRCS) moves on at the April meeting, being replaced by Neil Casey, a UK-based consultant.
5. Budget for 09-10 shows reduced staff costs, lower income and more emphasis on activities being self-funding. It's an 'almost worst-case' budget and we're sure it'll turn out better.
6. New membership categories launched: partner membership (local NGOs nominated by our existing full members) and network members (South-based NGO networks).
7. Both EPN Nairobi and EPN Gatwick are on the subject of facilitating change. EPN Online continues to draw people in: 608 people from 74 countries and 150 organisations; 62 local NGOs are participating; India, Kenya and Pakistan in the top 5 users (with UK and US).
8. 3 new staff starting (replacing 3): Adam Bentham as Comms Officer; Katja Pesari as Operations Manager and Christine Williamson as HR Services manager for Support and Certification.
9. We are co-chairing ELRHA (Enhancing Learning and Research for Humanitarian Assistance), aimed at bringing UK Higher Education institutions closer to INGOs. Small grants facility advertised last week: if you haven't seen it please ask.
10. Collaborations: have worked on joint baseline study of Merlin with HAP and hope to do more; are working on leadership issues with ALNAP and others; have agreed to take lead role for the joint Communities of Practice proposal with Sida. Partnership with other organisations is a key theme of discussions currently.
11. We are now registered as a foreign entity in Australia, making good progress in Central America, about to take on a consultant in East Africa.

HAP

- Membership services:
 - 5 new members
 - 14 organisations enrolled in certification process (increased by 6 since December 2008)
 - 2 complaints received/processed (1 concerning a non-member).
 - 1 investigation facilitated at request of a full member
 - 2 SEA Investigators workshop held in UK
 - Complaints handling workshops run in Myanmar, Cambodia, Kenya and Ethiopia

- Policy
 - 2008 Humanitarian Accountability report published (Chapter 1 by John Borton) - includes progress reports from 21 members
 - 1st meeting of HAP Standard Review Steering Committee
 - Approached by European Court of Auditors on behalf of [INTOSAI](#) to explore possible adoption of HAP Standard as the basis of single audit policy for disaster assistance activities
 - Approached by CERF to support/advise on creation of CERF accountability framework
 - HAP certification scheme endorsed in Danish humanitarian policy/strategy paper
 - Norwegian MFA to promote HAP certification as a response to critical report from National Audit Office about Norwegian NGOs
 - In discussion with group of major conservation organisations on quality assurance and certification
 - PSEA inspectorate project with SC-UK presented to UN-NGO Task Force Principals meeting
 - In discussion with Transparency International on possible joint project on preventing corruption
- Governance & management
 - HAP Certification and Accreditation Review Board elected
 - HAP evaluation process started. (The evaluator, Geoffrey Salkeld likely to get in touch with Q & A initiatives)
 - Strategic planning process for 2010-2012 started.
 - 2 staff returned to work from long-term sick leave
 - OD Advisor and Roving Team Representative appointed
 - Pakistan Office being closed
- "Inter-operability"
 - Positive experience of joint baseline analysis exercise with People In Aid. Second joint baseline planned
 - Joint HAP/Sphere project in Myanmar continuing
 - Dialogue with Sphere continuing on harmonising respective standard review processes