

Realising our commitment to Accountability to Affected People (AAP)



A set of resources for response-wide AAP

May 2024

Accountability to Affected People (AAP) is central to principled humanitarian action, and key for protecting and restoring human dignity and ensuring an appropriate and effective humanitarian response. Our accountability to people affected by crisis is paramount and must be acted upon at all times.

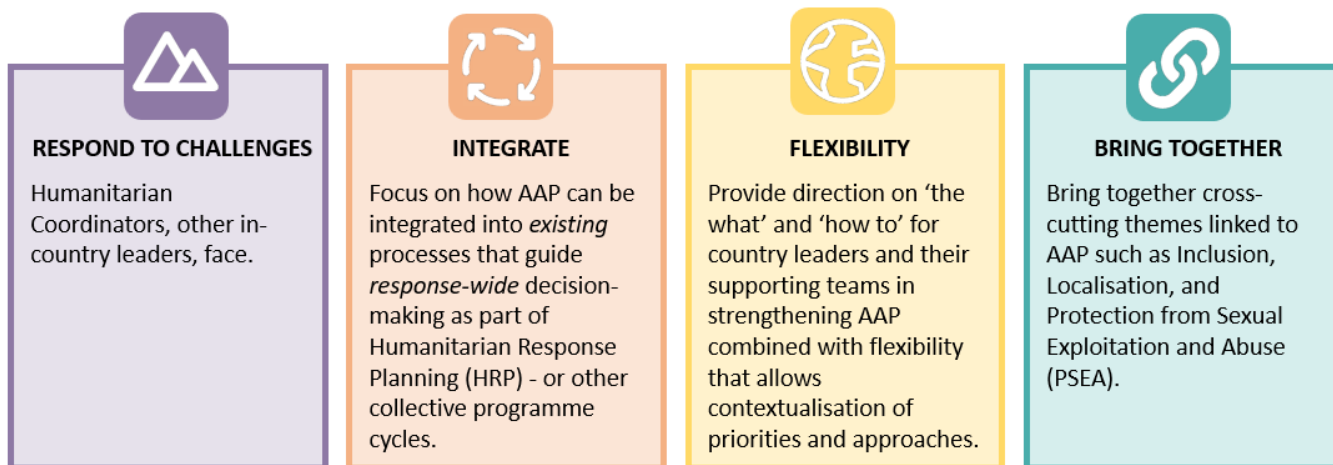
In 2022 the [IASC Principals reaffirmed their commitment to AAP](#), confirming their pledge to operationalise the required shifts to ensure that we are collectively more accountable to the people we

serve. This includes ensuring that Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators (RCs/HCs) and Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs)/UN Country Teams (UNCTs) prioritise their collective accountability to people in crisis and that AAP becomes a key metric for their performance. The [IASC Standard Terms of Reference for Humanitarian Country Teams \(HCTs\)](#) and HCT compact makes clear that in-country humanitarian leadership be held to account for how people are engaged throughout an overall response.

IASC resources for Collective AAP

To enable RCs/HCs and HCTs/UNCTs to deliver on these commitments, the [IASC Taskforce 2 on Accountability to Affected People](#) further developed a suite of resources for Collective AAP, building on the previous achievements of [IASC Results Group 2](#)¹ and the WFP/IFRC time bound Taskforce. Humanitarian Coordinators, other in-country leaders, and the wider community of practitioners were engaged in identifying challenges, prioritising needs, and refining these resources, with country-level learning, experiences, and piloting further shaping each resource.² The resources should continue to evolve as needed based on further learning, new contextual challenges, and in response to other developments within the humanitarian sector. By focusing on Collective AAP, they complement the existing wealth of resources focused on AAP for individual organisations.

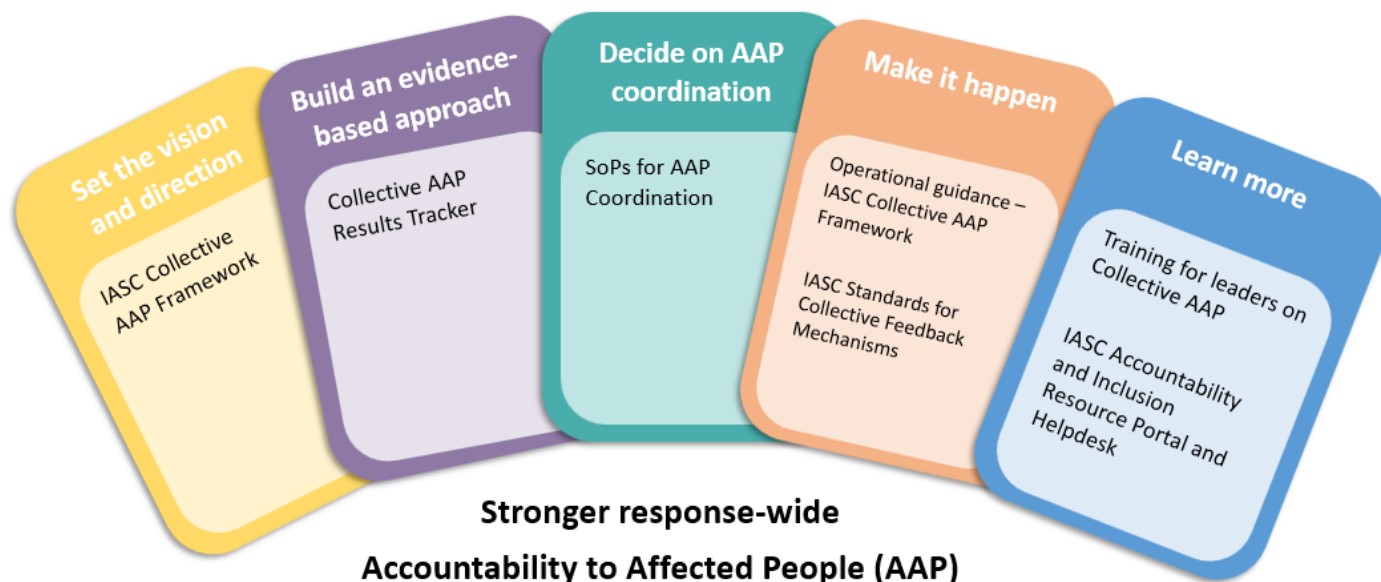
Critically, the resources:



¹ The IASC Results Group 2 on AAP led by UNHCR and UNICEF for AAP completed its mandate on 31 March 2022.

² The Collective AAP Framework was shaped based on experiences from several contexts over two years and a series of workshops in Afghanistan, Bangladesh (Dhaka and Cox's Bazar), Ethiopia, Lebanon, South Sudan, and Turkey (Gaziantep). In developing the CFM Package WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF, IFRC, OCHA engaged their offices in 19 countries. The training for leaders on collective AAP was led by IOM and informed by input from 100 in-country leaders (from across 25 organisations and 70 countries) and a further 18 months of consultation and review.

An overview: the deck of resources for response-wide AAP



The [Collective AAP Framework](#) guides HCTs/UNCTs on *what is expected* for collective accountability, setting out six outcomes with associated actions aligned to each stage of Humanitarian Response Planning (HRP). It provides the lens for country leaders to prioritise and drive improvements in response-wide accountability, collaborating with their respective HCTs, donors, and individual agencies and NGOs, to develop country-specific AAP Action Plans, or equivalent, that set the vision and direction for improvement and galvanising support. The **Operational Guidance for the Collective AAP Framework** provides additional practical steps and resources for realising the outcomes in the Collective Framework.

Complementing the Collective AAP Framework, **the Results Tracker** is a tool for measuring *how well* the system is doing on collective accountability and inclusion against the nine Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) commitments. It enables leaders to build an evidence-base of response-level AAP efforts compared with community experiences, to identify gaps, and to prioritise action for strengthening AAP. It aims to help country teams establish a baseline against which progress can be monitored, through a set of systems-level and community-level indicators.

The **Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) for AAP Coordination** improves the predictability of AAP Coordination by providing leaders with visibility on where AAP coordination can be situated within different coordination configurations. It includes an **AAP Working Group Terms of Reference** that can be adjusted should this be the preferred approach.

For in-country leadership wanting to learn more about how Collective AAP can strengthen and be integrated into their work and humanitarian response planning there is an [online self-paced training on Collective AAP](#).

Further resources provide practical guidance on implementing stronger Collective AAP, for use by technical leads under the leadership of HCs/RCs and their HCTs/UNCTs. The **IASC Standards for Collective Feedback Mechanisms** provide a means for different kinds of actors (UN agencies, INGOs, national and local actors) to align and link individual, joint, and interagency systems for listening and responding to community feedback. This serves as a guide for different users and contexts to ensure we improve how we collectively solicit, receive, manage, and importantly act on feedback.

Finally, the [Accountability and Inclusion Resource portal](#) provides an up-to-date bank of over 700 resources (spanning best practices, guidelines, tools, and examples) for practitioners working on Collective and individual agency AAP. Further technical support and advice can be accessed through its [Helpdesk](#).

How to sustain our efforts?

Realising response-wide AAP requires a concerted effort from response-wide operational leaders – Resident / Humanitarian Coordinators, Humanitarian Coordination Teams, UN Country Teams, and Cluster leads - supported by technical leads. Specifically:

1. In-country leaders can use the set of IASC AAP resources to **intentionally operationalize** their agency commitments to strengthening response-wide AAP in each response. Country experiences provides opportunity for peer-to-peer learning across HCTs/UNCTs and among support practitioners to further strengthen how our humanitarian system delivers on our accountability to the people we serve.
2. [IASC members](#), through their country offices and sectors, as response leaders and in their engagement through HCTs, can **maintain oversight and momentum for delivering on Collective AAP throughout the programme cycle**.
3. **Building a common understanding of Collective AAP priorities within the country/response among donors**, will enable them to adjust funding strategies and streams to proactively support Collective AAP efforts.
4. Efforts to strengthen how we engage with and hear from people in crisis, must go hand-in-hand with efforts to ensure **community insights are used at the collective level**, including adapting programmes and advocating/fundraising for durable programming.
5. **Enable Local/National actors** to co-design and drive this agenda alongside International Actors.
6. **Maintain focus on system level progress and change** with donors and the humanitarian community – from **local to global**.

What is Collective AAP?

[Accountability to Affected People \(AAP\)](#) is a commitment by humanitarians to use power responsibly: to take account of, give account to, and be held to account by the people they seek to assist. It requires humanitarians to involve people affected by crises in key decisions and processes that impact them and have effective communication and feedback channels that engage all affected people, inclusive of their gender, age, disability status and other diversities.

Collective AAP focuses on the humanitarian response as a whole, including locations and people not receiving assistance, complementing and building on individual organisations' AAP efforts. It approaches accountability as a system and focuses on purposefully hearing and acting on the views, feedback, and perceptions of people in each stage of Humanitarian Response Planning or other collective programme cycles.

Collective AAP recognises:

- People's needs and concerns are not linked to one organisation. An understanding of the overall needs and preferences of affected people, identifying where gaps exist, is key to guiding prioritisation.
- Broader issues may be overlooked if not addressed collectively.
- Collective efforts – as opposed to multiple individual efforts – reduced the burden on communities.
- Given increasing levels of need and reduced global funding, strong accountability is vital to identify priorities and build trust with communities.

Ultimately...

Ensuring people in crisis have opportunities and agency to shape decisions that affect their lives will help to improve the quality, accountability, effectiveness, and appropriateness of humanitarian programmes. In turn contributing to improved humanitarian access, security, and acceptance by affected population.