**Minutes of the IASC AAP PSEA Task Team Meeting, 8th of July 2016**

1. **Debrief on the WHS** *(relates to work streams 1 and 2 of our workplan)*
2. Debrief on Gates foundation side event: Rethinking the Humanitarian System: Opportunities, challenges, and considerations in local and national engagement
* The side event was the outcome of a consultation process of national NGOs in Asia, Africa and South America focussing on rethinking the humanitarian system to achieve real impact.
* We need to capitalise on the strong potential, capacities and experience of local actors and national NGOs. Local capacities need to be fairly paid, with policies to avoid poaching of staff by INGOs and UN.
* We need to go beyond the global discourse on localisation, and translate it into facts: currently only 2% of the humanitarian funding is going directly to national NGOs.
* There is a worrying trend with the discussion on localisation: international NGOs becoming local NGOs, which will not be sustainable nor will it bring actual change on the ground.

Actions :

* *“As local as possible and as international as necessary”: Advocate for a clear definition of what is genuinely “local “and “national”. Ensure local and national organisations are involved to determine what is possible and what is necessary.*
* *Advocate with the STAIT team to ensure the STAIT webinar “As local as possible, as international as necessary: Practical steps “ taking place on July 19th actually includes national speakers.*
* *ALNAP had a workshop on coordination in July and will circulate the key points of the subgroup on improving the inclusion and leadership of national actors in coordination structures. The meeting raised questions such as*
	+ *How could the cluster system facilitate national NGOs participation?*
	+ *How could donors fund national NGO staff time to actually attend coordination meetings?*
	+ *How could alternative approaches to physical participation such as web based platforms in South East Asia play a role to increase local actor’s voices?*

Localisation is about supporting local actors where they are and not trying to transform them to bring them into our system.

“Why do you want me to get on a boat if I know I will get sea sick? If you want to work with me, bring your boat on the shore, come on land and work with me” *Representative of local NGO, talking about the participation to existing coordination systems in Mali*

1. Debrief on the People at the Centre special session

Each of the 4 commitments proposed for this session has been endorsed by a number of organisations: it is now essential to monitor how they are actually translated into reality. Communities should be involved to monitor progress:

*Action*

* *OFADEC is advocating with OCHA to have a transparent and inclusive follow-up committee to monitor implementation of the WHS commitments. OFADEC will update the task team on progress made by the 30 participants to the WHS coming from affected communities who have a role in monitoring changes on the ground..*
* *It is essential to have a consistent approach and methodology to monitoring of the WHS commitments, both at global level and at national level, to ensure the changes are happening on the ground. The Near Network agreed to monitor what is happening to the commitments related to localisation.*
* *The task team to play a role to build awareness about the monitoring process*
1. Debrief on the side event on Quality and Accountability with CHS

Very concrete recommendations from Lisa Grande HC in Iraq :

* All organisation submitting projects to Humanitarian Response Plans must demonstrate they are working to Sphere standards and quality criteria of the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS)
* Clusters to develop work plans based on CHS and deliver assistance according to Sphere.
* Only organisations applying CHS and Sphere to be eligible for CERF funding.
* Humanitarian Country Teams biannual review according to CHS quality criteria and Sphere standards.

To do this IASC needs to Change TOR for Humanitarian Coordinators and cluster lead agencies (include direct responsibility for integrating CHS & Sphere standards)

*Action*

* *Discuss with OCHA now on how to move these recommendations forward, specifically regarding the HC TORs, to ensure the reinforcement of HC responsibilities for PSEA (which is part of the December 2015 IASC Principals statement) is accompanied by a specific statement regarding AAP.*
* *Ensure linkages with the initiative currently discussing RC TORs to strengthen responsibilities on PSEA, in order to also add include AAP in this revision*
1. **Ecosoc Side event on PSEA** *(relates to workstream 3 of our workplan)*

**Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA): Translating Articulated Commitments into Concrete Action for Preventing and Addressing SEA**

This PSEA side event following on the WHS Side event on PSEA gathered Member State participants.

Specific highlights:

* Discussions about how to scale up good practice.
* Emphasis on the importance of building capacity amongst local responders & national organizations in preventing and responding to SEA, based on relationship of **Trust** to tackle the root causes of SEA issues.
* While it is inherently difficult to get external funding for misconduct issues, one donor said PSEA prevention and response system should be funded.
* Discussion around the role of technology to increase anonymity and allay fear of retaliation.

*Action*

* *Interaction to send out the summary of both sides events’ discussion*
* *While SEA prevention actions are targeting humanitarian workers, we need to also reduce vulnerabilities to SEA. It is essential to continue our advocacy towards improving funding humanitarian responses, to avoid fundamental gaps in the response.*
1. **Revision of the IASC CAAP** *(relates to workstreams 1,2,3 of our workplan)*

A small group of TT members had an initial discussion highlighting key questions and essential changes that need to be reflected. 3 options came out:

1. **Rework on the commitments to reflect essential changes**: Equal partnership with local actors, essential linkages between AAP and PSEA, collective approaches, Centrality of Protection, changed humanitarian landscape.
2. **Keep the commitments as they are but tweak the language in their description**: tweaking would however not do justice to the importance of the changes we want to reflect.
3. **Reduce the commitments to 2: one on AAP and one on PSEA:** this option risks to emphasize a false dichotomy between AAP and PSEA while we want to highlight the essential linkages between them. At the same time having only 2 commitments will not be profound enough to speak to the operational reality.

*Action*

* *Set up a new meeting with the small group of TT members to continue the revision along the lines proposed by the co-chairs.*
* *Ensure a balanced focus on leadership and participation, which reflects the multiple layers of leadership at communities, national actors and international level, as well as the multiple layers of participation*
* *Reflect the changes in the humanitarian landscape, with increasingly mobile communities, which are highly skilled in most instances, highly connected, and have their own networks to support them.*
1. **Update on PSEA work** *(relates to workstream 3 of our workplan)*

The Global SOPs on Inter agency cooperation and joint complaints mechanism as well as the best practice guide for setting up and maintaining CBCM were endorsed by the IASC principals on June 7th. They are now IASC documents, which will be translated into French with a final version done by August 2016. An Arabic and Spanish version are envisaged depending on funding.

1. **World Vision : telling our stories** *(relates to obj 1.3.2 of our workplan)*

Luphathe Nyathi presented a few examples on closing the loop and on listening to children’s voices to influence programming.

* *Members are encouraged to read the report and to circulate additional good practices*
1. **GPPI report** *(relates to obj 1.2 of our workplan)*

Task team members had raised questions around the report “Drivers and Inhibitors of Change in the Humanitarian System”, especially around the section related to accountability. One of the authors provided some clarifications to the task team on the reasons behind the choice of the research methodology. You can find both the questions and the detailed clarification in annex.

1. **Protection Mainstreaming TT community of practice** *(relates to obj 1.1 of our workplan)*

The Community of Practice was created as a response to a request from the field to share experience and challenges faced in specific contexts. The platform is hosted within the GPC broader community of practice: <https://gpccommunity.unhcrideas.org/Page/Home> . UN agencies NGOs, local NGOs, HQ, field colleagues are invited to participate. A topic will be launched every two months by the coordinator of the PMTT and a summary of the discussions will be produced for circulation. Members will also be able to raise their own questions as well as answer colleagues’ requests.

1. **AOB**

**Sphere revision process:**

* Stronger focus on cash as a modality
* Focus on contextualisation and specifically on how to work with standards in urban context
* Focus on Accountability and participation, fully integrating the CHS in the Sphere handbook, including cross- references in the technical standards
* Focus on national level users
* Development of multiple platforms to disseminate the standards for ease of access.
* *Sphere will be looking for experts and chapter authors for cross cutting themes, including protection*

**the Global Humanitarian Standards Partnership** (Sphere and 5 Quality and Accountability companions covering 9 sectors)

* Focus on presenting the standards in a more accessible way

**The CCCM cluste**r will start developing a training module on PSEA focussing on awareness raising and effectively participating in joint complaints mechanisms.

Next IASC AAP PSEA TT meeting: September 9th 3 PM-4.30 PM, special focus on Diaspora

PSEA specific meeting: August 12th 3 PM

*List of Participants*

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| **Organisation** | **Name** | **call** |
| IASC AAP PSEA TT Co –chair / UNHCR | Preeta Law |  |
| IASC AAP PSEA TT Co –chair / OFADEC | Mamadou Ndiaye | x |
| IASC AAP PSEA  | Astrid de Valon  | X |
| ALNAP | Alice Obrecht | X |
| Care International | Uwe Corus | X |
| Caritas Internationalis | Floriana Polito |  |
| CDAC | Sarah Mace | X |
| CHS alliance | Judith Greenwood | X |
| Community World Service | Shama Mall | X |
| Danish Refugee Council | Beatrice Mauconduit | X |
| GPPI | Julia Stets | X |
| Gencap | Merrin Waterhouse | x |
| Interaction | Liz Bloomfield | X |
| Interaction | Caroline Nichols | x |
| IOM | Yvonne Mortlock | X |
| IOM | Tristan Burnett |  |
| Independent | Lucy Heaven Taylor | X |
| International Medical Corps | Michael Gall | X |
| Groundtruth Solutions | Nick Van Praag | X |
| The NEAR Network | Smruti Patel | X |
| Protection Mainstreaming Task Team/ IRC | Adrien Muratet |  |
| STAIT team | Inger Jo Tjoflaat |  |
| Relief International | Laura Evans | X |
| The Sphere Project | Aninia Nadig |  |
| UNHCR | Terri Kratovil Meijer |  |
| UNICEF | Ayano Suzumura | X |
| UNICEF | Philip Tamminga | X |
| UNICEF | Saudamini Sigriest | X |
| UNRWA | Edwin Berry | X |
| WFP | Maria Chiara (?) | X |
| WHO | Kwame Poku |  |
| World Vision International | Luphathe Nyathi | X |

**Apologies for connection issues to:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| AFFORD | Elivina Quaison | x |
| DFID | Andy Wheathley | x |

**Annex : questions and answers on the GPPI report :** Drivers and Inhibitors of Change in the Humanitarian System

1. **Questions from the task team :**
2. **Methodological issue:**

The authors explain that the report is the result of a “thought experiment”, exploring how hypothetical changes would affect the interest of important stakeholders’ groups. They however derive conclusion from this thought experiment which are wide-ranging and generalised:

 “Those with the greatest power to affect reforms are often not those with the strongest interest in their success. The proposed reforms are only partially in line with [the most powerful stakeholders’ groups] self-interest, or in the case of accountability to affected populations, even run counter them. (page ii) “A closer look at the interest and incentives of the different stakeholders reveals the underlying reasons for why commitment to the accountability reform remains patchy. All stakeholders- except those of global accountability initiatives- have more power to hinder than to promote the reform. (page 42)

It would be interesting to understand how far the various stakeholders have been involved and consulted to determine their self-interest if the AAP reform was implemented. How accountable has the writing of the report been? Have initial hypotheses gone through evidence check with the various stakeholders’ groups, and have the initial findings been modified based on the feedback received?

The report mentions that 4 experts have been consulted. While they are all members of the IASC AAP PSEA TT, they don’t represent the variety of our task team membership, for instance none of them is an operational organisation or a national NGO.

Who was consulted to determine the **affected governments** self-interest and power to affect the accountability reform? Which **operational/ local NGO** has been consulted to determine its key win with AAP? And most important: who was consulted from the **affected community** to brainstorm on what the community would want to see happen as part of better accountability?

1. **Issues of the potential conflicts between Accountability to Affected population and Humanitarian principles.**

The authors insist in several places on the potential conflicts between AAP and Humanitarian principles, and on the fact that AAP can increase the politicization of aid or even the tension within communities.

“ The power dynamics within the affected community are largely absent from the discussion about accountability. (…) Closely related to this problem is the question of whether accountability to affected population is compatible with humanitarian principles. “ (p.32)

This statement is in contradiction with our common understanding of AAP, and its close link to protection, as described in the Guidance on AAP and Protection in the HPC:

“A broad spectrum of the community must be able to participate in decision-making in a way that is inclusive, non-discriminatory and has real influence in the humanitarian response. This influence can only be achieved through an investment by humanitarian actors in communication approaches that include clear and direct feedback loops between those involved in programme design and management and the communities themselves. Protection is furthermore enhanced because the disaggregated risks/needs of the community are recognized and enable a more targeted response; the drivers of conflict are more likely to be seen, thereby reducing the risk of humanitarian action causing further harm while, in contrast, enhancing protection by the community.” *IASC Guidance on AAP and Protection*

Accountability to Affected Populations is a rights-based approach which is underpinned by humanitarian principles. Applying humanitarian principles also contribute to strengthening AAP: “ it contributes to gaining acceptance and securing access, enabling organisations to work in proximity to communities, listen to their concern and aspirations, and address their needs in a relevant manner. *(Jeremie Labbé,” How do humanitarian principles support humanitarian effectiveness?” in CHS Alliance Humanitarian Accountability report 2015)*

**Presenting effective AAP as conditioned by the consolidation of the humanitarian sector :**

 “The reform would lead to a consolidation of actors: to allow for effective participation of affected people, humanitarian organisations would have to consolidate per area and be able to respond to varied need. “(page i)

AAP is not only about the “what” is being delivered but “How”, and the fact that organisations are single or multi mandate does not tell whether their staff is actually accountable towards communities, meaningfully listening to their needs, communicating respectfully and putting in place complaints and feedback mechanisms that are used to modify the response accordingly.

“Just as the humanitarian community cannot engage with every affected individual, affected communities cannot engage with every humanitarian organisation. (..) To become a reality, the reform proposals of the IASC and the CHS need to move beyond coordination towards a consolidation of the humanitarian sector (p.32)

If we draw a parallel with the private sector, companies can definitely not engage with every single customer, and clients are not engaging with every single company or service provider they purchase products from. However, this challenge has not led to a consolidation of companies into conglomerate serving the broad spectrum of customer needs. It has, however, led to companies considering marketing and customer relationship management as strategic priorities, in order to provide a better service or product in a way that increase client satisfaction.

It is clear that communities are not offered the “choice” of which organisation provide services or goods. However, the parallel with the private sector help us to understand that it might not be consolidation that would lead to better AAP, but rather a stronger leadership commitment on putting AAP as a strategic priority, at both individual agency and collective level.

**Additional points raised by task team members:**

* The writers use the premise of aid as a political vehicle for self-interest, and pits donors, communities, agencies, and local actors against each other, treating AAP as aside from, or indeed contrary, to the humanitarian imperative. *The reality is that the humanitarian imperative and protection responsibilities bring together donors, local governments, and agencies in implementation of assistance programmes.*
* *“The power dynamics within the affected community are largely absent from the discussion about accountability*.” p32.AAP is largely about addressing and being aware of power imbalances and not exacerbating tensions. Commitment 3 of the CHS specifically states that communities should not be negatively affected by humanitarian action, specifically citing culture, and social political relationships. An entire body of work exists on the Do No Harm principle of conflict sensitivity and micro-level conflict analysis
* Where the CHS makes recommendations to be implemented ‘as appropriate’ (p31) this relates to contextual appropriateness, practicalities, and limiting exposure to risk. It does not, as implied by the writers, refer to AAP being subject to the convenience of the humanitarian organization.
1. **Notes from the clarification by Julia Stets, Author:**

The research methodology was quite different than other studies: it had a political economy focus: how do the reform affect the different interests of stakeholders ?

* The first step was to determine what the reform proposal is.
* The second step was a thought experiment: a hypothetical reflection effort used by the economic sphere: if we really fully implement the reform, what will the humanitarian system look like? How best will that address the typical interests and incentives of the key stakeholders? The team did speak to a limited number of people for this. There is indeed a taboo regarding talking about self-interest because of the altruistic paradigm. Talking to people and getting their perspective would not bring us much further. Therefore, the team adopted the though experiment hypothetical thinking type of way found in economic research, and the team found it gave them a good starting point for having the discussions that are uncomfortable and that we are not usually having.

On the **relationship between AAP and the Humanitarian principles**, the Task Team issue with the report statement that both can be antinomic is an example of the tendency to avoid this type of discussions. In an hypothetical stage of fully implemented AAP, with very intensive participation of affected people, the communities might have different values and preferences that run contrary to the humanitarian principles. So they might not want to give out aid in a neutral and impartial way but they might want to favor a group over another or they might disagree with some of the other values such as gender and inclusiveness. Then the real question is: what happens if the will of the community that we consult with and let participate, with an actual degree of influence, clashes with the humanitarian principles.

**About inclusiveness as such:** AAP means listening to those that are usually disadvantaged and give them a voice. This is actually a very political activity that can create a lot of tensions. If you do this in communities with an established power system it is a very direct challenge, and therefore it clashes with the idea that we will not interfere with the usual systems that are there. It is necessary to recognize this tension to be able to deal with it in a better way. It does not mean that we don’t want AAP but it means we should be cautious about it and reflect about how much AAP we want, whether we want it fully or whether we want to go some steps further from where we are now and how we can better address these issues.

**On the relationship to consolidation:** the comparison with companies is the wrong comparison. In a community where 30 organizations are present, the community cant reasonably and efficiently participate in the decision making processes of each and single one of these 30 organizations. Beneficiaries don’t have purchasing power so they can not use the economic way to express their preferences. It is just not doable for communities, and the real comparison is about the democratic system, which is hugely consolidated, with one government per area, and that makes it possible for people to find a representative way to participate.

* *The task team thanks Julia for the clarifications but still insists that writing about accountability to affected populations and deriving conclusions from hypothesis on what communities or government win or lose from AAP without involving any community member nor government representative in the process is contrary to what accountability is about.*