## Emergency Director's Group – AAP Plan of Activities – Central African Republic

The IASC Principals ad-hoc meeting on 11 December called for development of an AAP Action plan, replicating the Philippine L3 AAP response plan, for the L3 Response in the Central African Republic[1]. The CAR L3 Response provides a good opportunity to implement enhanced accountability in line with the Transformative Agenda. Priority in this plan is on accountability at the Inter-Agency level, and a number of other elements of accountability may be introduced in further humanitarian responses. This plan provides what **must** be done, what **should** be done, and what **could** be done, and this second accountability plan by the EDG builds on the lessons from the Haiyan L3 response and continues the precedent for further strengthening of accountable responses in the future.
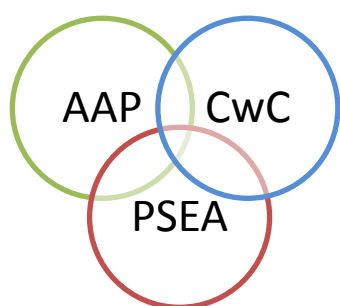
Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), Protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and Communications with Communities (CwC) are all interrelated. They interact and are to some extent interdependent, but any accountability plan should address aspects of all three and include a strong emphasis on the gendered analysis they require. A key part of AAP is providing information for, and **listening to**, affected communities, and **adapting** the international response's strategic objectives and operational planning on the basis of their inputs. This community participation requires that those involved understand and are committed to ensuring broad representation of women and men of all ages. The IASC accountability commitments highlight the importance of leadership, having efficient communications and feedback processes that inform our assessment and planning processes, being transparent about our response, and having community participation in monitoring and evaluation.

AAP priorities in CAR

Renewed fighting between the elements of Ex-Seleka and the self-defense groups (*Anti-Balaka*) since September 2013 has caused serious deterioration of the social cohesion between various communities of the CAR society. Activities related to community reconciliation, peaceful coexistence and social cohesion are one of the top priorities of the CAR Humanitarian Country Team, as highlighted in the Strategic Response Plan (100 day plan)of the Country.

Community radios in CAR have historically played a vital role across a country where communications and infrastructure are severely compromised. At times of crisis, essential information, delivered in time, can save lives highlighting communication as an important form of humanitarian aid. Local media and local journalists in CAR, also victims of violence, looting and pillage, need protection and robust, sustained and coordinated technical and financial assistance by media assistance organisations and donors so that community radio stations, media houses in Bangui, the national broadcaster and other journalists and broadcasters can continue or restart their work. Supporting local media in CAR will also assist the aid community to raise awareness on the principles that guide humanitarian action and to be more accountable and transparent to local communities.

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[1] IASC Principals Action Point 6. Asked the EDG supported by the IASC Task Team on AAP to prepare an Action Plan for Accountability to Affected People, based on best practices during the response to Typhoon Haiyan, by 16 December.

The Inter-cluster Coordination Group in Bangui has highlighted key needs related to AAP; these outline the importance given in CAR to systematically engaging in two-way communications with affected communities, and to ensuring their meaningful influence on programme development and monitoring. These include: Strengthening communication with communities, and the participation of affected communities and relevant national stakeholders through coordination mechanisms during all stages of the HPC, including assessment, design and implementation of response and monitoring.

- In the current context, trust building between humanitarian organizations and communities is crucial to ensure an adequate environment for the response and other future actions
- Information and sensitization campaigns to be strengthened with simple and clear messages
- Establish common mechanisms for receiving and processing feedback and complaints from affected communities
- Identification and involvement of community leaders / focal points in facilitation of humanitarian operations
- Definition and dissemination of clear criteria for beneficiaries when delivering humanitarian assistance
- Mainstreaming of AAP at inter cluster and cluster level (strategic and operational levels)
- Review the existence and adequacy of human resources practices and policies, including a code of conduct for staff, and disseminate relevant policies among affected communities for the purpose of being held accountable to the code of conduct
- DSS to support UN agencies' efforts to **"Stay and Deliver"** by deploying personnel to areas affected by security constraints

Recommended Actions on AAP in CAR

- The Emergency Directors recommend that a series of actions be put in place in CAR to enhance accountability to affected people.
- The Emergency Directors will underscore with donors the need to support AAP and CwC-specific project proposals, giving preference to projects with demonstrable consideration of aspects of AAP and CwC.
- The Emergency Directors will also include discussions with communities as part of planned operational peer reviews/evaluation of L3 response in order to gather direct feedback on quality of the response
- The Emergency Directors will request the HC/HCT to report back on actions taken to implement this plan within two months

They invite the HC and HCT to consider the following actions, with support from the Inter-Agency AAP Coordinator on the ground in early 2014:

'Must do' actions

Who	Actions	Indicators	Time
HC	OCHA to ensure establishment of Inter-Agency AAP role, providing coordination of AAP activities, and technical advice. Staff member should be supported by OCHA, but not required to be OCHA staff, can be seconded from any agency.	Inter-Agency AAP Coordinator in OCHA country/field office (in addition to CwC staff if deployed)	End December
HC	Ensure inter-agency assessments include questions on communications and information needs and seeks to ensure a representative sampling of the population through selection of key informants (capturing age and gender data)	Number of AAP and CwC questions in MIRA/other	End December
HC	Involve national and international NGOs in HCT processes	At least four members of HCT body to be NGOs, two being national NGOs	Mid February
HC	Ensure that community feedback is sought and disaggregated according to sex, age, disability and diversity and that it is taken into account in humanitarian planning processes.	Operations planning and monitoring processes demonstrate the link between expressed community views and programme plans	Mid February
UNDSS	To maintain a consistent level of availability and accountability to affected populations, DSS to actively support ways for UN presence to continue throughout areas of intervention – strengthening "stay and deliver"	UN staff presence maintained	Continuous
HCT	Advocate with donors to support projects with explicit AAP, PSEA and CwC aspects or goals and a strong emphasis on gender, measurable by the IASC Gender Marker	Number of projects in appeal with AAP aspects are funded	End December
HCT	Ensure AAP is an overarching concern in the development of the Strategic Statement and other strategic planning documents	AAP built into chapeau and/or objectives of SRP	End December
HCT	To establish a 'culture of accountability' in the response, include, AAP, PSEA and CwC as specific subjects in operational peer review	AAP, PSEA and CwC as subjects in operational review documentation	End December

HCT	Draft and disseminate an AAP/PSEA code of conduct to all responding agencies, including UN, INGOs NNGOs, military, private contractors, and advocate for an equivalent CoC on behalf of the GoCAR	CoC is disseminated to all agencies with instruction to inform all staff, including informing communities	Mid January
Inter-cluster group	Establish systems for receiving and processing feedback and complaints from affected communities, and ensure that all cluster member agencies have systems in place to receive and respond to complaints and feedback	Feedback is channelled via a robust referral process to relevant clusters	Mid-January 2014
Inter-cluster group	Identification and involvement of community leaders and representatives who cover all segments of affected communities to ensure that input is received by age and gender and that even the most marginalised and vulnerable are represented in all areas receiving humanitarian assistance in facilitation of humanitarian operation	List of community focal points developed and shared with cluster leads	End December
Inter-cluster group	Common beneficiary selection criteria developed in consultation with affected communities and disseminated through multiple channels	Criteria is known to beneficiaries	End December
Cluster Leads	Information and sensitization campaigns to be strengthened by two-way communication, simple and clear messages and adequate tools	Cluster messaging developed and disseminated via multiple channels – radio, print, sms, community focal points, etc	Continuous
Cluster Leads	Communicate with affected communities on programming, from needs assessment to evaluations, with clusters modifying operational planning based on local and regional priorities, ensuring that women and vulnerable groups have equal access to information	Number of Focus Group discussions held at local level	Mid February 2014
Cluster Leads	Routinely inform communities of decisions on programming, even when negative.	CLAs report number of meetings held with communities 'post' decision making	Mid February 2014
Cluster Leads	All new staff and all new organisations in clusters are aware of PSEA Minimum Operating Standards in emergencies, and are made aware of responsibilities with regards to codes of conduct.	All clusters informed of PSEA MOS	Mid February 2014
Agencies	All staff made aware of the prohibition on sexual exploitation and abuse, and their obligation to report on it	TORs reflect that staff agree to MOS on PSEA	Mid January
AAP/PSEA Task Team	Draw lessons learned from HCT report on AAP	Lessons learned document created and shared	End March 2014
AAP/PSEA Task Team	Support response by providing a conduit for information to global level clusters, donors and the IASC community and link with the/an inter-agency gender network, if it has been established	Regular updates	Continuous

'Should do' actions

Who	**Actions**	**Indicators**	**Time**
HC	Advocate to donors to ensure a degree of flexibility in funding to adapt programs to context as clearer picture of mid-to-long term needs emerge. Ensure these emerging needs reflect the different priorities and	Action Plan specifically mentions flexibility in adapting programmes	End December

	needs of targeted groups by sex and age		
HC	Ensure the establishment of an Inter-Agency feedback and complaints mechanism, under the auspices of the HC and linked to/ supporting the existing Government of CAR system	Numbers of recorded contacts, requests for information responded to, complaints referred and complaints closed, disaggregated by sex and age at a minimum	Mid-January
HC	Engage with all key stakeholders to highlight and implement the commitments on accountability to affected populations (CAAP) in responding to the crisis.	AAP reflected throughout Strategic Response Plan, in organisational inductions and TORs	End December
HCT	Ensures AAP is integrated into relevant and key processes and documentation, such as; assessments, strategies, programme and project proposals, monitoring and evaluations, cluster performance framework and linked to gender analysis in the response.	Number of AAP relevant passages in planning and monitoring documents and meaningful links to gender assessment, activities etc.	Continuous
Donors	Advocate for AAP, PSEA and CwC to be included as integral to the response, and fund projects with accountability and communications components expressly included	Number of projects in appeal with AAP/PSEA/CwC apparent are funded, number of topics in donor briefings and visits	End December
Inter-cluster group	Ensure coordinated, routine and common messaging on aid provision that includes – principles of delivery and codes of conduct including MOS on PSEA, rights of recipients, beneficiary criteria that includes core messaging on how certain groups may have been targeted and why, broken down by sex and age, limits to international aid role, etc.	Number of inter-agency messages disseminated – through multiple channels	Mid February 2014
Inter-cluster group	Community consultation is a primary means of determining cluster operational plans, including setting local response standards	As much time spent on interacting with local communities as reporting back to HQ	Mid February 2014
Cluster Leads	Clusters develop robust community information campaigns, to explain their planning and operations, as well as more traditional 'messages' such as hygiene. Multiple avenues of two-way communication are used, including community mobilisers	Number of messages developed and delivered, number of different avenues of message delivery employed	Mid January
Cluster Leads	Cluster 'self-assess' on accountability, monitor and report on AAP in the cluster	Self-assessment reports shared publicly	End March 2014
Cluster Leads	Ensure transparency with context specific channels of communication in terms of decisions made, where and how to get aid, and selection criteria.	Number of cluster specific messages disseminated – through multiple channels	Mid February 2014
Agencies	Employ national staff rather than international when possible in coordination and communication positions to minimise turnover	Change in ratio of international to national over first months of emergency	Mid February 2014
Agencies	AAP and PSEA definition included in recruitment, staff inductions, trainings and performance management, partnership agreements, reporting, etc. as per AAP Operational Framework	Number of AAP, PSEA and CwC specific mentions in HR documentation	Continuous

'Could do' actions

Who	Actions	Indicators	Time
HC	Include AAP/PSEA and CwC in reporting at HCT	Standard agenda items include AAP	End December
HCT	Publicly available statement of accountability commitments including on PSEA that highlights the specific vulnerabilities particular to women, girls, boys and men.	Statement disseminated	Mid-January
Donors	Donor coordination and dialogue on AAP, including a review of impact of donor interventions on the accountability of the response	Donor review complete	May 2014
Inter-cluster group	More detailed inter-cluster mapping of communications requirements, that include a strong gender analysis, to improve understanding of the communication needs and challenges facing different segments of the communities	Inter-agency assessment of communication needs completed	Mid-January
Cluster Leads	Ensure basic AAP training of staff is taking place, and agency approach on AAP is shared appropriately.	Number of AAP trainings held	End February 2014