

HAP International and People In Aid join forces to strengthen quality and accountability in the humanitarian and development sector

Geneva and London, 23 October 2014 – HAP International and People In Aid are pleased to announce that they have agreed to merge their assets and experience by forming a new organisation in 2015. The boards and staff of HAP and People In Aid believe that together the new organisation will provide a more comprehensive and complete service to its members and to the sector, one that will build capacity for improved quality of action on the ground and greater accountability to communities and people affected by crisis. Current members of the two organisations will benefit from, among other things, greater access to services, more streamlined membership requirements, and a stronger voice in strategic regional and international fora.

The merger builds on a six-year Memorandum of Understanding between both organisations linked to their respective standards, verification schemes and complementary services delivered to overlapping memberships and the wider sector. It is also the first response to requests from National and International NGOs, networks and donors for quality and accountability initiatives and standards to harmonise organisational structures for the sake of their many users. The merger is subject to approval by the organisations' respective General Assemblies and other customary closing conditions.

The [Core Humanitarian Standard](#) on Quality and Accountability (CHS) will underpin the new organisation and its work, replacing the existing HAP Standard and People In Aid Code. The CHS is a standard for the sector as a whole, and HAP and People In Aid do not claim to be the sole organisations providing services related to the Standard. There are, however, key activities which the new organisation is ideally placed to provide.

The main functions of the new organisation, specifically related to the CHS, will be to:

- 1) Lead and facilitate the development, promotion and maintenance of the CHS.
- 2) Manage the development, promotion and maintenance of the CHS monitoring, reporting and verification framework and related verification scheme.
- 3) Provide a way for organisations to formally commit to the CHS and to organisational monitoring and verification of the Standard.
- 4) Provide capacity development for organisations (including, but not limited to, training, deployments, mentoring, accompaniment, learning events, and the updating of guidance documents).
- 5) Provide research, policy, and advocacy support linked to the application and verification of the CHS.
- 6) Provide support to the sector on all topics covered by the CHS, on quality and accountability issues and future thinking.

The intention of the new organisation is to facilitate the development of CHS-related tools in a way that enables all stakeholders to work with them directly. Throughout the merger process in 2015, and thereafter, the service provision to members will be maintained at current levels and will

include promotion and assistance with the application of standards and verification services, as well as continued support for human resources and people management.

The new organisation will be a membership organisation, and will serve the wider humanitarian and development sector. Existing members of HAP and People In Aid, along with other stakeholders, will continue to shape the new organisation and prioritise its services, outputs and advocacy focus. The governance of the new organisation will represent not just the membership but also other key stakeholders in the sector. Discussions are currently underway with the Sphere Project to see how their way of working can add value to the structures being proposed, which includes the Standard revision process.

One exception to continuity in the new organisation will be certification: while the new organisation will develop and support a verification scheme for the CHS, certification will be carried out by a separate organisation. This separation is based on international good practice for standards bodies.

The boards of HAP and People In Aid would like to take this opportunity to thank their respective memberships and donors for their continued support and encourage continued active engagement with their management and staff teams during the merger process. Further information on the name, structure, location and constitution, including firmer timescales and fee structures, will be shared with the memberships of HAP and People In Aid in due course.

This statement is for the members and donors of HAP and People In Aid. A separate communication will be sent to other stakeholders shortly, and the two organisations will communicate separately with their respective memberships regarding the implications of the merger for their 2015 workplans.

Signed by the Chairs of HAP International and People In Aid:

Anabel Cruz, Chair of HAP International

Willem van Eekelen, Chair of People In Aid