

Introduction to the Indicators – why do we need to look at AAP?

Despite increasing numbers of humanitarian partners demonstrating considerable success in building an organizational “culture of accountability” and [the commitments made by the IASC Principals in 2011](#), accountability to affected populations (AAP) is still not sufficiently prioritised at the senior, inter-agency, or cluster levels. This reflects the need for (1) a more coordinated setting of priorities between key stakeholders and (2) regular communication with affected populations throughout a humanitarian response. Successful and effective AAP measures are not only the right of every disaster affected person but also produce better quality projects with a higher potential for enduring impact. They also ensure that an age, gender and other diversity-sensitive approach will result in diverse and varying needs within all communities being recognised and responded to appropriately. One avenue to assess how and if AAP measures are integrated into the humanitarian response is by reporting on indicators capturing the “way we do business”.

Evaluations of humanitarian response frequently highlight insufficient accountability, especially to the people affected by emergencies, such as failure to provide communities with even the most basic information on which programs are being implemented and why; beneficiary selection criteria; program duration; etc. Country offices often lack clearly defined accountability frameworks and related tools that would enable them to systematically assess performance and ensure their response meets sector-accepted quality standards for AAP. In particular evaluations of agencies’ response highlight insufficient or non-existent feedback mechanisms, participation and transparency – with regard to communicating decisions made about programmes, involving participants in decision-making processes and supplying enough information for participants to make informed decisions about that programme.

Proposal of Key Elements and three AAP Indicators

The [ECB AAP elements and associated indicators](#) inspired the five AAP [commitments on accountability \(CAAP\)](#) and text from that document has been significantly borrowed to support these indicators. Key to some of the thinking during the conception of the ECB project was the wish and need to increase and include the voices of beneficiaries in the decision-making, implementation and judgment of humanitarian responses.

The ECB project defined accountability as: the process through which an organisation makes a commitment to respond to and balance the needs of stakeholders in its decision-making processes and activities, and delivers against this commitment. This means making sure that women, men and children affected by an emergency are involved in planning, implementing and judging the response to their emergency.

The indicators that we agree as being core to all agencies and clusters need to be appropriate and measurable at this level. They can also be used as proxy indicators for impact, since more **accountable programmes** have been shown to be **better quality programmes**.

Feedback – how are we talking and listening?

The common AAP indicator on Feedback

Number of feedback received (including complaints) which have been acted upon

Feedback: (a subset of which is dealing with complaints): the systems, processes, attitudes and behaviours through which an organisation, or in this case a cluster, can truly listen to its stakeholders. Feedback is an essential part of an accountable response and is essential for clusters to understand whether they are meeting the agreed needs / wishes or wants of their stakeholders. An organisation that actively seeks to improve policy and practice on feedback will produce better results and, as a result, should expect to see a decrease in the number of complaints it receives. Clusters should ensure that they have Feedback Mechanisms in place throughout their programmes, and that these are robust enough to support complaints about breaches in planning promises, policy, codes of conduct and stakeholder dissatisfaction. Oversight of these mechanisms allows the study of trends and/or areas of concern that will then allow appropriate corrective ‘corporate’ action to be triggered.

Guidelines

- Cluster partners have a formal, appropriate feedback mechanism in place that is discussed and agreed with key stakeholders and publicly communicated.
- The feedback mechanism employed is appropriate and robust enough to deal with (communicate, receive, process, respond to and learn from) complaints.
- UN agencies/NGOs have set up oversight of feedback (incl. complaints) mechanism and learn from and react to information received.

Possible Indicators Suggestions

These indicators below are **possible suggestions** that your cluster could develop based on the common indicator above, depending on the context. Of course you may develop other indicators.

- * % of feedback & complaints received by UNHCR telephone hotline acted on by WASH cluster coordination staff
- * # of text messages received daily and acted upon according to the agreed/established procedures
- * # of separate focus group discussions organized with affected girls, women, boys and men that are routinely conducted during project implementation about the quality and accessibility of the response provided
- * % of NGOs conducting single sex consultations to discuss about how effectively humanitarian aid is responding to the distinct needs of the affected population and to address any challenges in accessing assistance
- * % of women/girls and % of men/boys satisfied with the quality and appropriateness of response at the end of the project