

Myth #2: Aid agencies are not accountable or transparent

Accountability is a responsibility and one that professional humanitarian agencies take seriously. According to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' Humanitarian Code of Conduct, aid agencies are accountable to "both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources." World Vision is currently compliant with every relevant donor accountability standard.

Accountability emphasizes providing feedback to donors and the children and families we work with by embracing accountability mechanisms to ensure high standards of program quality and the responsibilities of meaningful community participation.

Over the past several years, World Vision has strengthened its global policies and practices to ensure greater accountability, including a robust internal "whistleblower" program as well as a "community of practice" to share lessons learned. In addition, World Vision provides things like executive salaries, general income and outflow information, annual reports, and overhead rates to the general public. All of these things can be accessed on our website.

World Vision International is a signatory to the People in Aid Code of Best Practice in the Management and Support of Aid Personnel and of the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Disaster Relief. World Vision is committed to implementing the standards of the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) across its humanitarian programs. World Vision's commitment to accountability and to meeting these international standards in programs is captured in World Vision's Program Accountability Framework (PAF) which outlines how field programs can ensure transparency, consultation, participation and methods for feedback and complaints handling are integrated into our programs.

Accountability in Haiti Programs:

Accountability has been woven into World Vision's Haiti response from the beginning. We formed a Humanitarian Accountability Team (HAT), which aims to improve accountability in meeting the basic and urgent needs of children and their families in Haiti. The HAT works closely with communities living in several camps to provide camp residents with information on who we are, how we work, and what we are doing in the target location as well as communicating how children and adults can be protected from exploitation.

Community consultation is undertaken frequently through assessments, household visits, beneficiary registrations and verification, project design, camp management committees and conflict mediation. Many front-line staff and community mobilisers are hired within project locations and provide regular input into program implementation.

Another important accountability mechanism is a complaints and feedback process, which includes the dissemination of feedback forms to capture complaints and feedback each day. Issues resolved, unresolved, or requiring further action are communicated back to World Vision, and where applicable, emphasis is placed on community suggestions to resolve the issues. Suggestion boxes have been installed in project sites to build safe and strong communication channels.

Designing, monitoring and evaluating (DME) projects is another key way World Vision promotes learning and accountability, as well as good development practice. Using effective DME ensures that

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interventions are appropriate for that context and enables World Vision to remain responsive to a constantly changing environment. In Haiti, assessments have gathered information using focus group discussions, key informant interviews, contextual analysis, and technical assessments. Regular monitoring is undertaken using indicators developed during the program design phase. Evaluation of World Vision programs is carried out to ascertain its impact and to make key changes where the appropriate impact is not being achieved.

As in any emergency response, World Vision ensures staff are trained on the Sphere Standards and HAP accountability tools and Red Cross, Red Crescent and NGO Code of Conduct, highlighting and reinforcing that services are provided free of charge, on the basis of need alone, and should not be exchanged for goods or any kind of favors.

World Vision is committed to the highest levels of accountability in the Haiti Earthquake Response and will continue to practice integrity and transparency in the implementation of programs.