

MEETING OF THE FPA WATCH GROUP
BRUSSELS, 7 NOVEMBER 2005
Sale Baraldini, DG ECHO, rue de Genève 1
From 10 to 16.30

VOICE MINUTES OF MEETING APPROVED BY DG ECHO

Meeting of the WG and DG ECHO

Stefan De Keersmaecker (SdK) introduced the new version of the draft revised Annex V and he apologised for the delay. The hard copy of the document was distributed during the meeting. The FPA Watchgroup (WG) was invited to give its first reactions to the new draft.

SdK stressed that the new document reflected to the extent possible what had been discussed with the Task Force (TF), and he thanked the TF for its efforts and commitment.

SdK stated that the new Annex V would not be submitted to the Annual Partners' Conference in December. The signature of the new FPA, to include the revised version of Annex V, is planned to take place beginning of 2006.

SdK presented the main changes, some of which were commented by the WG (as indicated below):

- The draft revised Annex V provides a clearer definition of the term of Humanitarian Organizations (Art. 1.1.8.).
- The draft gives a definition of urgent humanitarian aid operations and clarification of the concept of urgency (Art. 1.1.13.).
- The draft revised Annex V replaces the rule of nationality and origin by the principle of "local preference" (Art. 2.1.6).
- Art. 2.1.7 was introduced, concerning the annual assessment of FPA partners. The WG suggested rewording this Article in order to enhance its clarity.
- Art. 2.1.9 contains a reworded provision on service contracts. The WG suggested rewording this Article in order to remove any possible ambiguity.
- The ex-post publication requirement will be replaced by the obligation to submit an annual report on the results of past procurement procedures (Art. 3.2.4.). The WG suggested that DG ECHO clarify this provision further.
- Introduction of certification firms for the verification of prices (Art. 3.5.3). This article was strongly contested by the WG (following the strategy already adopted in the Background document on Annex V and in the Dossier "ECHO-NGOs Framework Partnership Agreement – Towards a strengthened partnership". The WG raised some suggestions and questions and DG ECHO will take them into consideration.
- The WG considered that the clause in the Art. 3.7.1 - concerning the provisions guaranteeing the right of accession by the EC, OLAF and the Court - could be further clarified. A new proposal will be provided to DG ECHO.
- Concerning single quote, the threshold of 5.000 euro will no longer be mentioned. The other conditions under which a single quote may be used will remain applicable (Art. 4.1.4. and Art. 5.2).

- All contracts (work, service, supply) up to EUR 59.999 shall be awarded in accordance with the procedures established in the own procurement rules of the NGOs (Art. 4.2.4; 4.3.3; 4.4.3), provided that the latter comply with the general principles of Annex V.
- Concerning Humanitarian Procurement Centers (HPC), DG ECHO will provide a registry accessible via Internet of the recognised HPCs (Art. 5.8.2).
- DG ECHO will reword Art. 5.8.4, referring to HPCs.

Follow-up:

- By the 16th of November, DG ECHO will send to VOICE a new draft taking into consideration the suggestions proposed by the WG during the meeting.
- VOICE will send the new version of the revised Annex V to the WG in order to have concrete suggestions and proposals.
- The TF, taking into account the suggestions of the WG, will prepare textual modification proposals DG ECHO for those parts of Annex V, which in its view need further revision.
- During the following three weeks DG ECHO will consult the TF in order to revise the draft. DG ECHO will confirm the date of the next working meeting with the TF/WG.

SG/KS
8 November 2005

FPA WG Meeting with DG ECHO

List of Participants (FPA WG members)

ADRA (EU)	Mario Oliveira
CARE International	Jerome Lebouc
CINS	Cinzia Laurelli
Comite d'Aide Médicale	Sabrina Denuncq
Concern	Brid Barrett
COOPI	Simona Pogliani
DanChurchAid	Birgitte Hagelund
	Malene Romer Jorgensen
German Agro Action	Annette Wulf
Handicap International	Simonetta Risaio
ICCO	Kees Klijs
IRCUK	Chris Wilde
MDM	Laurent Backos
Mission East	Mags Bird
MSF (B)	Inma Vazquez
Oxfam (UK)	Pamela O'honde
Red Cross/ EU Office (observer)	Jeannette Adriaenssens
Save the Children	Gloria Mella
Terres des Hommes (I)	Bruno Neri
VOICE	Gilles Van Moortel
	Kathrin Schick
	Sonia Giannone

Apologies: Anna Bergman (Church of Sweden Aid), Alessandra Gjidera (Alisei), Harald Happel (Caritas Europa), John Makoha (AVSI), Jan Rodenburg (CARE), Elvira Rodriguez (ACF), Diana White (EU-CORD), Robert van der Wolff (CORDAID)