

Towards the next FPA: recommendations for an inclusive and constructive negotiation process

VOICE Note

This purpose of this note is to share with DG ECHO recommendations from the FPA Watch Group regarding the FPA renewal process including timeline, focus topics and suggestions for a co-ordinated process.

1/ Timeline

In order to prepare and ensure relevant resources are able to contribute to the process, ECHO should provide a timeline of the upcoming consultation phase.

We would suggest the following key milestones:



2/ First consultation phase: agreeing on the objectives

VOICE and the FPA Watch Group valued the opportunity, during the last FPA renewal, to have brainstorming discussions with ECHO on issues of importance ahead of the consultation phase. ECHO's preparation (through concept notes and driving questions) was welcomed by FPA partners.

Therefore, VOICE would like to suggest having similar conversations organized in the coming weeks/months.

Following on ECHO's intervention at the last FPA Watch Group meeting, the FPA Watch Group agrees that the ongoing conversation of the Grand Bargain (GB) and the proposal for simplification on the revised Financial Regulation can provide substantial base for developing the next FPA revision. Given that these two dossiers encompass many different issues; the Watch Group proposes the following key areas for discussion:

1. Results-Based Approach
 - Including payment by result / understanding of efficiency
 - GB work stream on un-earmarking
2. Accountability and simplification
 - Which information is required for which purpose /degree of flexibility
 - GB work stream on harmonized reporting and on transparency

3. Partnerships
 - Added value of NGO partners/ consortia (including with local partners) / working with private sector
 - *GB work stream on localisation*
4. Funding mechanisms and funding cycle (the partnership in practice)
 - HIPs, timely & predictable funding, context specific funding streams
 - *GB work stream on multi-year planning and funding*
5. The case for harmonisation for better coordination among donors and NGOs: the Big picture!
 - How to use GB, COHAFA, GHD and other initiatives to further increase efficiency (through FPA, HIPs, etc)
 - *Overall GB commitment and implementation*

3/ For an inclusive and coordinated process

Given the importance of the FPA (outside of its purely administrative and contractual aspects), and based on the experience from the last FPA negotiation where brainstorming sessions were held together with numerous ECHO staff (from policy to operational units); we would like to suggest that this time again operational and policy staff are invited to the first exchange sessions. ECHO's staff engaged in the Grand Bargain implementation, on ECHO daily work with partners (including TAs in the field) should have the chance to take part in these joint conversations with partners aiming at setting the overarching objectives of the next FPA.

Given the importance several Member States gives to the FPA (see point 5 above) and the consensus on the need for harmonization of rules and requirements we would like to suggest that some representatives of MS are also invited to attend the exchange and discussions in the first brainstorming meetings.

Solid experiences from previous FPA revisions have shown that the process generates an important workload both on ECHO and partners' sides. Therefore, we would like to suggest ECHO to consider appointing a focal point for the 18 months to come until the next FPA is approved and strengthen ECHO D1 unit during the process.