

Minutes of the FPA Watch Group

26-04-01

Participants: Pierre Gallien (ACF), Frédéric Bonamy (Première Urgence), Raffaele K., Salinari (Terres des Hommes Int. Fed.), Riccardo Stefanori (CISP), Diane White (EU-CORD), Floris Faber (EU-CORD), Jane Backhurst (World Vision), Maite Pacheco, (Comité Internacional de Rescate), Louise Ambler (Childrens Aid Direct), Francois Man (Save the Children), Helen Holder (HelpAge), Simonetta Risaio (Handicap International), Davide Martina (COOPI), Laure Delcros (MSF), Volkar Artmann (ADRA), Chana Bentein (Oxfam Solidarité), Karine Sohet (APRODEV), Cinzia Laurelli (CINS), Sophie Dima (IISA), Gaelle Nizery (CARE International), Jean Saslawsky (MDM), Luca Aiolfi (CESVI)

Observer: Jeanette Adriaenssens (Red Cross)

1. Representation of the Group

It was agreed that the group is currently large enough, and that the level attained so far in recognition of the Groups representivity at half of ECHO partners is good for a first attempt. More efforts are needed in this regard however.

2. Task Force

So far there are five members of the FPA Watch Group Task Force, more Group members were invited to join, the importance of commitment to such an undertaking was stressed. Group members were given a week to decide.

3. FPA Revision

ECHO still has not provided much information. FPA revision will be in line with the past review of ECHO : simplification, efficiency, "quality partnership", results orientated.

4. ECHO meeting 27-04-01

All FPA Watch Group invited for the meeting.

Some of the issues which should be included in the consultation process:

- ◆ Issue of one or two FPAs for International Organisations and NGOs as there are different rules for procurement
- ◆ Lump Sums (of great importance to the Group)
- ◆ Issue of NGO networks
- ◆ Duration of FPA
- ◆ Legal Aspects
- ◆ Matter of derogations from Document 14

ECHO appears to be considering a "lighter" FPA.

It was decided that the strategy for the meeting should be to listen and to emphasise the strength of the group on the basis of the number of ECHO partners it represents. It was also decided to have one or two spokesmen to represent the group at the meeting. A request for working documents to be issued two weeks in advance and for worries to be expressed regarding time that ECHO gives to the discussion would be make clear.

5. Document 14

By signing Doc. 14 the FPA members agree to follow the rules, but in terms of glossary there is room for discussion. FPA Watch Group must ensure that all rules are included in Doc. 14. Voice sent a derogation which was rejected.

6. FPA topics for negotiation

- ◆ The concept of partnership should be explicit in the re-negotiation of the FPA. In the framework of the partnership it is clear that NGOs are considered as employees.
- ◆ Also regarding the expat issue, ECHO will demand that expats are only EU citizens. This matter is highly complicated and may endure again beyond this FPA.

- ◆ ECHO also wants a definition of lump sums which is not in the glossary at present.

7. Division of Labour

The breakdown of the working groups was proposed and it was decided that a decision on actual composition and content would be decided upon on 27-04-01.

8. Further issues

What are the questions to be defined to ensure NGOs are protected? Need to formulate a list of ECHO and NGO responsibilities and consequences in case of non-respect. Try to list article by article concerns and priorities of NGOs. Define what is "quality" in terms of the partnership.

Question regarding control/audit responsibility and the role of experts. Matter of eligible expenses - list of both eligible and non-eligible expenditures.

Priority list for ECHO discussions:

1. Global conditions
2. Eligible expenditure
3. More theoretical approach at the end (difficult matters)

9. Budget.

Some NGOs with a small budget can't travel to Brussels, perhaps help could be given. As ECHO partners who are not VOICE members or members of the FPA Watch Group for a small contribution to support the work of the group.