

FPA Watch Group meeting

26 May 2002 at VOICE

11 - 16h

Participants: Elvira RODRIGUEZ, ACF ; Carine MALARDEAU and Gaelle NIZERY, CARE Intl ; Cinzia LAURELLI, CINS; Encarnacion GUIRAO FERNANDEZ, CIR-Spain; Davide MARTINA, COOPI; Cecilie BJORNSKOV-JOHANSEN, DanChurchAid ; Simonetta RISAIO, Handicap International ; Helen HOLDER, HelpAge International ; Chiel ROELANDS, ICCO ; Farida CHAPMAN, IRC ; Inge VANGODTSENHOVEN, MSF-Belgium; Samantha CHAITKIN and Kathrin SCHICK, VOICE ; Jane BACKHURST, World Vision

Notes:

On Documents Distributed by ECHO

The “General Conditions” draft document was discussed in detail, and more general questions about the documents of the new FPA and the remainder of the revision process were also brought forward. These concerns were collected as questions and comments in the annexed memo to ECHO, and will be sent pending final approval by the Watch Group (WG).

The WG agreed to ask the NGO Unit to keep them updated on the specific changes that would be made to the General Conditions document in the coming weeks, and to inform them expected delivery dates of the draft documents.

Regarding the process, the potential for NGO influence was also raised. The group speculates that at this point, the FPAWG can basically only seek clarifications, and thus our input on the Guidelines and similar documents is what is most likely to be taken on board by ECHO.

On the Transition Period

Oxfam GB is preparing a training materials on the new FPA, but until they have final versions of the documents, they are currently working on the background parts about ECHO structures, functioning, etc. There is still a need to clarify how long the transition period will be, whether other training besides the Oxfam project is foreseen, and how the training period will relate to the date of signature of the FPA.

On the FPA Task Force – Quo Vadis

The Task Force (TF) presented a self-critical “problem tree”, the result of a brainstorming meeting, in order to identify means of improving the energy, working methods, the effectiveness of the Task Force the Watch Group, and VOICE with regard to the FPA revision process, and a clarification of roles. Structural problems such as a lack of coordination TF-WG-VOICE-ECHO partners, and the presence of parallel initiatives (such as the Oxfam training), were mentioned, as well as problems of internal functioning, including a lack of planning and motivation, and a reduced number of TF members. VOICE also brought up the difficulty of working with ECHO when information is not available and the situation is blocked.

The WG made a point of recognizing the many positive achievements resulting from the investments of time and energy from the TF as well as efforts made by VOICE. It was suggested also to do a “lessons learned” assessment of the WG as a whole. The TF determined to be realistic about what it can do, and to be patient to see what materials can be had, and when. The TF and

VOICE resolved to try to improve the communications flow and create more involvement in the TF. The TF stressed that new FPA Guidelines, which will prove very important in the practical implementation of the FPA, should come from ECHO and submitted to the TF for comments: the TF could not be responsible for the initial drafts of this type of document but it is one of the main opportunities for direct input.

Action Points (to be followed up by VOICE)

- ◆ Submit questions on the “General Conditions” draft (and more general questions) to the ECHO NGO Unit, asking them to respond to them in a meeting with the Task Force to be held in the coming weeks
- ◆ Make a formal request to Oxfam GB (Rachel Hastie) to become a member of the Task Force
- ◆ Make a formal request to the Red Cross (Jeannette Adriaenssens) to become a full member of the Task Force
- ◆ Explore, with ECHO, ways in which the dialogue on humanitarian issues can continue within the partnership framework, beyond the FPA revision process
- ◆ Bring to the attention of the SCHA (VOICE Board of Directors) the partnership issues which may require political action.