

Country-based Pooled Fund (CBPF)-NGO Dialogue Platform

Terms of Reference

Purpose

1. The purpose of the Country-based Pooled Fund (CBPF)-NGO Dialogue Platform is to provide an informal forum for regular dialogue between OCHA and NGOs to inform global policy issues related to the management of CBPFs.
2. The Platform is established in response to the need identified by NGO partners to strengthen partnership with OCHA vis-à-vis CBPFs and to complement the dialogue between OCHA and NGOs that is already taking place at the country level.

Background and scope

3. OCHA delivers on its mandate through, *inter alia*, the management of humanitarian financing mechanisms such as the CBPFs. Since the first Emergency Response Fund (ERF) was piloted in Angola in 1997, there has been an increasing number of CBPFs (ERFs and Common Humanitarian Funds – CHFs), receiving growing contributions from a diverse range of donors, and allocating resources to support coordinated humanitarian responses. CBPFs focus extensively on international, national and local NGOs as valuable partners and as the primary recipients of funding (60 per cent of total CBPF funding in 2013 went to NGOs).
4. In recognition of the expansion of CBPFs and of their strengthened partnership with NGOs, OCHA Funding Coordination Section (FCS) and its NGO partners have identified the need to increase mutual understanding and technical collaboration. CBPFs are seen as a humanitarian financing mechanism able to ensure neutrality and impartiality in funding allocations, and to increase the predictability, timeliness and flexibility of funding to humanitarian response. However, greater effectiveness, transparency and accountability are needed to promote these funds' accessibility to NGOs, who are prominent actors in humanitarian responses worldwide and the first responders on the ground.
5. Whilst the lead role in establishing partnerships with NGOs and other stakeholders at the country level is played by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and the OCHA Country Office, who are responsible for the daily management of CBPFs, the CBPF-NGO Dialogue Platform provides a space to tackle operational issues that affect all CBPFs and, as such, need to be addressed at the global level.
6. The CBPF-NGO Dialogue Platform operates in close linkage with the Pooled Fund Working Group (PFWG), the global advisory body for CBPFs, and feeds into the work of the IASC Task Team on Humanitarian Financing as deemed relevant.

Main objectives

7. The CBPF-NGO Dialogue Platform, as a consultative forum, has three main objectives:
 - i. *Policy* – strengthening CBPF global policy to ensure that it is reflective of the views of a broader range of stakeholders, including national, regional and international NGOs;
 - ii. *Operations and management* - improving the effectiveness, accountability and transparency of CBPF management through strengthened policy and enhanced practice based on sharing of best practice and open discussion of challenges with NGO partners;
 - iii. *Advocacy* - developing joint advocacy between OCHA and NGOs in support of CBPFs, where appropriate.

Membership

8. Membership of the Platform is open to all NGOs interested in Country-based Pooled Funds. NGOs interested in the topics on the agenda can participate in the meetings, and are required to identify staff members with the relevant expertise to contribute to meaningful discussion. Agendas will be circulated in advance of each meeting to ensure sufficient time to collect inputs from the broad NGO community. Inclusiveness and diversity will be promoted through ongoing dialogue and communication with the NGO

community in between meetings. Participation of national NGOs with direct experience of CBPFs is highly encouraged.

9. The Dialogue Platform will be co-hosted by OCHA and an NGO representative.
10. OCHA will provide Secretariat functions and will circulate relevant information to the NGO community in country through OCHA Country Offices.
11. The mandate of the NGO co-host will be subject to a review on a bi-yearly basis or earlier in case of exceptional circumstances. The NGO co-host will be responsible for liaising with the NGO community in order to:
 - i.* Facilitate the development of meeting agendas;
 - ii.* Facilitate consultation and gathering of inputs ahead of meetings;
 - iii.* Manage communication with, and consultation of the NGO community before, after and in between meetings through its regional hubs, national and regional NGO consortia, and other formal and informal networks as relevant;
 - iv.* Play a liaison role between the NGOs and OCHA with regards to the Dialogue Platform.
12. ICVA, as co-founder of the Platform, will be the first NGO co-host.

Functioning

13. The CBPFs-NGO Dialogue Platform is a consultative forum that provides inputs, feedback and suggestions on CBPF global technical policy. It is a forum for NGOs to increase their understanding of CBPFs and to express their views in a coordinated way, and for OCHA to consult with NGOs and gather suggestions for improvement.
14. Discussion during meetings will be open and frank, and aimed at producing concrete outcomes that OCHA can use to inform CBPF policy. Minutes of the meeting will be drafted under the Chatham House rule and they will be circulated for feedback or information to the NGO community, the IASC Task Team on Humanitarian Financing, the Pooled Fund Working Group, and other relevant networks and fora.
15. Meetings of the CBPF-NGO Dialogue Platform will be convened on a bi-annual basis on the margins of the regular meetings of the Pooled Fund Working Group (PFWG), of which OCHA serves as co-Chair, and which take place during ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment in the summer and during the General Assembly and CERF High-Level Conference in the winter. The Platform may be convened on an ad hoc basis should the members deem appropriate.
16. Ongoing communication in between meetings will be ensured through emails and, where relevant, conference calls.