

Global Humanitarian Platform Steering Committee Meeting

16 January 2007 at OCHA Geneva

Minutes

Steering Committee Members:

- UN Co-Chair, Margareta Wahlstrom OCHA
- Non-UN Co-Chair, Tom Getman, ICVA
- Barbara Stocking, SCHR (on the phone)
- Paul Grossrieder, VOICE
- Angelo Gnaedinger, ICRC
- Markku Niskala, Federation (on the phone)
- Linda Poteat, Interaction (on the phone)

Excused: Antonio Guterres

WLG Members:

- Eva von Oelreich Non-UN Co-Chair (SCHR)
- Kasidis Rochanakorn, UN Co-Chair (OCHA)
- Ed Schenkenberg, ICVA
- Johanna Grombach, ICRC
- Robert Mister, Federation
- Nick Coussidis, UNHCR

Others:

- Marilena Viviani, IASC Secretariat
- Jamie McGoldrick, OCHA HRSU

The new Co-Chairs were introduced and welcomed.

Prior to the discussion on the agenda items, participants stressed that this initiative needs to be driven together by its UN and non-UN members and that participants must avoid falling back into old habits. The most important aim of the initiative is to build trust and a new relationship between UN and non-UN actors. There should be no unnecessary pressure for deliverables. Finding the right balance of participants at the meetings is important.

a. **Principles of Partnership**

The participants provided some new language and proposed that the rights-based approach be mentioned as well as financial competition.

Given the differences of opinion among GHP members on the issue of rights-based vs. needs-based approach, this question could be taken to the July meeting for discussion.

The Steering Committee endorsed the Principles of Partnership as a working document and agreed that the document be used as a basis for consultation in the field.

It was stressed that the Principles of Partnership should be applied at all levels and govern the relationship between all GHP members. The success of the GHP shall also be judged against those Principles.

Action I: Language will be proposed by SCHR on the rights-based approach and by VOICE on financial competition for inclusion in the text.

Action II: WLG to develop a set of success criteria or indicators to get a sense whether the Principles of Partnership are making a difference, particularly in the field.

b. Final selection of countries

- Africa: Uganda (fall-back Kenya/Zimbabwe)
- Asia: Sri Lanka (fall-back Indonesia)
- Americas: Central America (one of the countries covered by the Panama hub)

It was noted that the goal is to *consult* field representatives on the relevance and feasibility of the proposed new relationship between UN and non-UN organisations. It should not be characterised as "pilot" or "testing".

Action I: Each Steering Committee Member to consult their representatives in the countries chosen and provide Co-Chairs with feed-back if there is opposition from the field.

Action II: Principles of Partnership to be used as primary object of consultation in the selected countries.

Action III: WLG to clarify purpose of consultation in letter accompanying PoP.

• Substantive issues

The Steering Committee took note of the two proposed topics. Both topics are of interest. Capacity building (of local actors) is of particular interest to Southern partners. Accountability is of many kinds (financial, programmatic, partnership...), is complex and views differ among humanitarian actors. The topic should focus on accountability to affected population, as proposed. It would be a challenge to go deeper than simply restating the obvious. The July meeting could be an opportunity to deconstruct the issue and put the finger on the real issues, where fundamental changes are needed, maybe through a panel discussion. Southern partners could play an important role in this discussion. VOICE reminded us of also having small NGOs in mind as well and not widen the topic to accreditation.

The idea that there could be one topic by merging some of the Capacity building issues into the Accountability debate was put forward.

Action: WLG to look into this, bearing in mind that the July meeting shall not be overburdened. A new draft is expected by end February.

• Criteria for participants

Broadening participation from the South is crucial and the criteria for participation should reflect this goal. This should not happen to the detriment of important international actors, while keeping the size of the meeting manageable.

Action: WLG to circulate enhanced criteria and proposed participants by end of February.

Current focus

The Steering Committee confirmed the general direction in which the GHP is going. Participants insisted that the focus of the GHP must remain on partnership and the new relationship between UN and non-UN organisations which was the initial goal of the initiative.

July meeting preparations

Tentative date: July 12 to be confirmed, when ECOSOC dates are set in late February.

Action: Pre-announcement will be sent out indicating that the date is still to be confirmed. Formal invitations will be sent out in April.

Next Steering Committee Meeting

March 13 at 17.00 CET in Geneva (to be confirmed)

(The meeting initially planned for 30 April was considered too late for the Steering Committee to give guidance on the preparations for the July meeting.)