

Minutes from the INGO Forum Meeting, 8 September 2006

Venue : NGO RC, La Thanh Hotel
Chair : Trine Glue Doan, Co-Director VUFO-NGO Resource Centre
Minutes : Trine Glue Doan

AGENDA:

1. PARTNERSHIP GROUPS & CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING
2. PRSC/VDR07 NGO CONSULTATION
3. GLOBAL CALL FOR ACTION AGAINST POVERTY (GCAP)
4. PIT and AUDIT
5. OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS - IMF/WB

1. PARTNERSHIP GROUPS & CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING - adoption of election guidelines for 3 partnership groups, information about the timetable for the (s)elections;

The Co-Director briefly presented the 3 election guidelines that had been sent out to INGO members prior to the meeting, in addition an overview of the INGOs Representative Posts & Election Procedures and HPG election Guidelines was presented and handed out at the meeting.

* Health Partnership Group Representative: in the past Methew Frey – SCUS and Laura Wedeen – Pathfinder International are co-chair for this group. Now Methew Frey left SCUS and this group lack of one representative.

The Representative of HPG should be Representative or Country Director of an INGOs for at least one year and the participant should present an INGO which works in Health sector. The election term will be 2 years. Election time is September/October. Through the guidelines, calling for election will be circulated around INGOs.

* Election Representative for Consultative Group:

INGOs participant should elect some representatives among INGOs for this meeting. 2 person step down so we should elect 2 for replacement Representative will be responsible for preparing the statement for the CG meeting. To work together with INGOs communities through NGO RC and World bank to make the statement present for INGOs.

Question: How the Rep involve to the process, with short time?

Jeze – SCUK: updated information on the last CG meeting 4 INGOs representatives was selected for a participating to CG: Jez Stoner – SCUK; Deppali Khanna – Plan International; Steve Thomas Oxfam GB; SNV – Country Director worked together with Worldbank, NGOs communities to make the statement by raising the issue, comment and contribution on Tax issue, corruption in VN....It was powerful for NGOs. All the input has been getting from wide INGOs communities.

* For MARD – International Support Group (MARD- ISG): with the same criteria but the participant should present an INGO which works in rural development, agriculture and forestry.

* Partnership Group for Aid Effectiveness: with the same criteria but the participant can effectively represent the views and interest of the wider INGO/NGO communities

There were not comments to the Draft election guidelines and hence the Forum adopted the guidelines.

2. PRSC/VDR07 NGO CONSULTATION – briefing on the status and next steps, expected input from the NGO;

The Co-Director gave a brief introduction to the process so far; the consultation is a part of the World Bank's preparation of the Poverty Reduction Support Credit 2006-2010 as well as the Vietnam Development Report 07 (VDR 7) to be presented at the December 2006 government-donor Consultative Group meeting

Five different policy groups have been set up for discussion and drafting of policy papers, including: Bottom-up planning, Disability, Education, Civil Society, and Global Integration. More information on the process and these groups is available on the NGO RC website.

The WB will organise a consultation workshop by the beginning of October, prior to this the NGO RC will organise a NGO consultation workshop on the NGO policy papers, before submitting them to the WB on September 25. Hopefully NGOs will join the NGO consultation workshop and give the feedback on this or send written comments.

3. GLOBAL CALL FOR ACTION AGAINST POVERTY (GCAP) – introduction to the planned GCAP Activities in Vietnam 2006 and ways for NGOs to take part in the campaign.

Update from Lan, Save the Children UK:

GCAP is a growing alliance of organizations, networks and national campaigns globally committed to eradicate extreme poverty. The loose-alliance began working together in 2005 with the aim of taking action across the world to tackle the root causes of poverty and meet the Millennium Development Goals. At the global level, GCAP aims to put pressure on the World Leaders to take concrete action to deliver on the commitments they have made to reach the Millennium Development Goals and eliminate poverty.

This year to make it happen in Vietnam AAV, Plan VN, VECO, Save the Children UK and other NGOs work to organise the campaign in Vietnam in collaboration with VUFO.

Objectives of GCAP Vietnam 2006

- Respond to the global call in the month of action (Sept. to October 2006)
- Influence pro-poor policies and their effective implementation
- Raise awareness and mobilize public participation in poverty reduction; address the issue and the plan for poverty reduction in VN.

There are 7 areas of GCAP 2006 (the document was provided)

1. Newspaper article on GCAP: lead by AAV anyone would like to join please contact host organization AAV
2. Leaflet and posters – hosted by VUFO, Child fund, NGORC
3. Reportages and debate programs on VTV: “Gio Cao Diem” or “Tieu Diem” the role of participant in these – hosted by VUFO, SCUUK, SNV
4. Production and free nationwide distribution of white bands – hosted by Plan, OGB, Tdh
5. Organize a training session on GCAP issue to Local NGOs in Hanoi: hosted by Oxfam GB, VUFO, AAV, ACEP.
6. Take part in “Joining the Big hand” held by VTV and Vietnam Fatherland Front on 31/12/2006 this year make the big change about charity activities – Hosted by VUFO, Child

Fund

7. NGOs can integrate their activities into their development programmes hosted by VECO, OGB...

TOR for these activities is drafting, any organization interested please get TOR from Trine-NGORC and you can contribute by fund or others way. The activities is in the long run and need 35,000 USD. if we can work with Fatherland we can reduce the budget for activities.

4. PIT and AUDIT – briefing on present status

Co-Director, Trine Glue Doan, updated on what has happened since the last INGO forum meeting on 23 June 2006.

In extension of last INGO forum's suggestion, the NGO RC called for a meeting in the INGO PIT group, including 15 INGOs of different sizes and all three regions in Vietnam. At this meeting the INGOs discussed the PIT issue further in detail and decided to write a letter to the Prime Minister of Vietnam regarding the PIT issue of foreign staff working for INGOs. A copy of the letter was handed out). The letter was signed by 30 INGOs and was sent to Prime Minister, so far there has been no formal response. The letter was also sent to Mr. Hong COMINGO and Mr. Kien PACCOM, all related embassies, the World Bank, and UNDP.

Q: How many INGOs have signed their MoUs?

A: According to present information 5 INGOs signed their MoU, while many INGOs still haven't signed.

Q: what happen if we don't sign the MOU?

A: you may face problems in collaboration with province authorities.

PACCOM and NGO RC will organize the meeting on PIT, Audits, and permits within this month, so discuss present situation and next steps.

C: I suggest that the INGO PIT groups will meet in advance to discuss all issues of concern to the INGOs prior to the meeting with PACCOM by the end of the month.

Audit: With regard to audit, it is important to draw a division between the time period before the 2004 tax admendment and after the admendment. The audit presently carried out by Hanoi Tax Department regards the is carried out with INGOs who has not submitted PIT or sufficient reports for 2005 and/or first half of 2006, .

Regarding the period before the 2004 tax amendment the General Department of Taxation is still assessing the PIT situation during that period. The GDT has announced in a new decision that consultants, expat and local, are not liable to submitting PIT in the period before the 12/9 2004 (see decision 6170/BTC). Regarding PIT for local staff, the GDT is presently in the process of establishing a general picture of the situation within the INGO sector. PACCOM is still trying to establish an agreement with the GDT regarding selection of a small random sample of INGOs to be audited.

Permits: at the last COMINGO meeting it was proposed that in general the length of permit will be extended. PACCOM will provide more details on this at the upcoming PIT meeting.

5. OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS - IMF/WB Annual Meeting in Singapore, IPF Meeting in Indonesia: preparation meeting the 11th of September, Software Freedom Day - Friday, 2006-09-15, Development Library WG – start-up meeting, tentatively on the 20th of September, NGO RC: in process of moving server and website upgrading.