

Brussels, 10 December 2007

New EU humanitarian "kite mark" launched

The list reads like a "Who's who" of humanitarian actors – around 150 relief organisations who work with the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO). Collectively, they eased the suffering of millions of crisis victims in more than 60 countries this year alone. The relationship between the Commission and its non-governmental relief partners is set out in what is officially called the "Framework Partnership Agreement" (FPA) which is renewed every four years. Today the Commission and its humanitarian NGO partners signed the new FPA at ECHO's, annual partners' conference in Brussels. The new FPA will enter into operation on 1 January 2008.

The Agreement lays down the principles, procedures and rules of EU humanitarian assistance and sets out the criteria for becoming a partner.

Louis Michel, European Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, said: "The term "FPA" has become synonymous with quality: it is a branding that signals the most effective possible delivery of EU-funded humanitarian aid. This goes hand in hand with our commitment to transparency and accountability for the use of Commission funds. The FPA has been in existence for 15 years and has proven an ambitious and effective tool for ensuring high-quality humanitarian assistance."

With a budget of more than €700 million annually, the European Commission is one of the largest humanitarian donors in the world. It funds actions implemented by partner organisations: specialised UN agencies, members of the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and non-governmental relief organisations (NGOs).

A key feature that distinguishes the Commission's work in humanitarian aid is that it is an "active donor". ECHO has around 100 field experts permanently deployed close to or in crisis zones around the world. They are directly involved in working with partners on the ground, assessing needs and monitoring EU-funded operations.

The new FPA rules define the nature of the partnership between ECHO and NGOs, with an even greater emphasis on maximising the impact of humanitarian aid for the world's most vulnerable populations. Similar arrangements are in place with UN agencies under the "Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement" (FAFA), and with the Red Cross/Crescent movement (ICRC, IFRC) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

This large and varied partnership is important for the delivery of EU-funded humanitarian assistance. The different capabilities and comparative advantages of the partners can appropriately be matched to specific situations and the needs of beneficiaries. The variety of partners is also a recognition of the specific and diverse mandates given to them by the international community.

For further information on the new FPA:
http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/fpa_en.htm

A full list of ECHO's current partners can be found at:
http://ec.europa.eu/echo/partners/index_en.htm

Background information: "Humanitarian Aid: Frequently asked questions":
[MEMO/07/238](#)