EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
GENEVA, FEBRUARY 19TH 2004

GD Present: Tine Dusauchoit (GD, MSF Belgium), Rafa Vila SanJuan (GD, MSF Spain), Thomas Linde (GD, MSF Switzerland), Pierre Salignon (GD, MSF France), Austen Davis (GD, MSF-Holland), Marine Buissonnière (International Secretary)

I. Supply Project
An introduction of the recommendations was made by Julian Harneis.
There was general agreement in the reference group on the recommendations made. This does not mean that there was agreement on all the analysis but the document produced reflects all areas of agreement, namely that our supply policy:

1) Be Project-centric
2) That processes should be shared – there is far too much duplication for the time being in MSF’s supply chains, more specifically when it comes to sourcing goods. The idea is that these various sources be divided amongst supply centers and that each supply center negotiates for all (or makes the deal available to all).
3) Put in place measurement and control mechanisms – it is difficult at present to assess the recommendations made when one is unable to measure impact.

Finally, a recommendation is also made that a Project Coordinator be hired – this is seen as fundamental to the success of this endeavour. The next step should be about implementation.

This introduction was followed by a series of questions and comments:
Re. kits & dissemination of logistic knowledge
This had not been put on the priority list by the ExCom – so this is seen as part of the secondary recommendations

Re. the project-centric supply proposal
There are about 160 projects in 80 countries – how does this actually translate?
The idea is NOT to switch to local purchasing as a rule – the idea is that each product group is analysed and that a supply policy be decided for each context - this would be the job of the super-logs. This would not create a huge change as 45% of our purchase is local for the time being. This can therefore be taken on board by Transfer & Logistic as the present turnover can be sustained. Hubs would be created based on field analysis / requirements.

Re. possible specialization
MSF could / should according to Julien Harneis have one center for emergency response – the rest can be found in the market-place. This was not included in the report as the study had to fit within the framework set out by the ExCom. Furthermore the document had to be a consensus document for all to be on board. Still, even within the political constraints set out there are many possibilities to optimize our resources and save a lot of money / improve quality / etc…

Re. the fact that the 3 supply centers should run the hubs
Switzerland mentioned the fact that they have created a formal link with Bordeaux and that they are part of the decision-making process. Julien intervened to mention that the supply center's input to the hubs is based on know-how and technical knowledge. The involvement of the other OCs should be client-based, not based on expertise. The point is to try and avoid a duplication of the supply centers.

Re. the requirement for cost / quality & speed
Is seen as one of the reasons why we don't purchase more in the field.

Re. the project-coordinator
The project coordinator's role would be to implement the policy document that was requested by the ExCom, and to push the recommendations along. This person would need a strong endorsement by
the ExCom and the specific follow-up by one ExCom member. This is more than a logistical challenge, it's an operational challenge that needs investment in order to succeed. In regards to the profile of the project coordinator per se: it is felt that content knowledge may be less important than very good skills at facilitating processes. The post should be temporary, limited to two years and full time (the two year contract should include an evaluation after the first year). This person should be exterior to the LOGs departments and preferably not attached to any operational center.

Conclusion:

(1) The three recommendations made by the consultants were green-lighted by both the reference group and the ExCom (for more details see recommendation paper attached).

(2) The proposal to hire a project coordinator was agreed: The post will be a two-year full-time post / evaluation after one year. The TOR will be finalized by March 1st, a list of potential candidates will be drawn up by March 15th and the person should be selected by April 1st. The interview panel will be composed of one ExCom member, 1 DirLog member & 1 DirMed member.

(3) The reference group will keep its functions.

(4) The ExCom member in charge of follow-up of this project will be Thomas Linde – to be possibly taken over by the next MSF-Switzerland DG.

II. ExCom Workload
The issue was introduced by Marine around the following four points:

1) There is fear within the movement that because of the forthcoming changes in the ExCom the platform may lose its dynamic & coherence and as a result some projects could lose momentum
2) Need to draw up a strategic plan defining priorities for the ExCom, taking into account transition period within the OCs.
3) ExCom agenda: handles many issues – there may be a need to unload some of these issues to other platforms
4) Membership of MSF platforms & external platforms

Some comments were made:

Re. point 1) Feeling that this is not justified if hand-overs are handled properly and that we have done our job in terms of priority-setting.

Re. cohesion of the ExCom group
A proposal was made that the TORs and recruitment processes for the new DGs be shared within the ExCom in the coming months, and that some room be made for ExCom feedback. This proposal raised a discussion on the recognition, or non-recognition, by the National Boards of the international responsibilities of their DGs. This responsibility is seen as an added-responsibility by some sections, and as part of the DG’s responsibility for others. This is another reason why the ICB should be strengthened. It was suggested that the question be put to the national boards and discussed with the ICB.

Re. ExCom DGs hand-over dates:
Austen Davis – July 1st
Tine Dusauchoit – October 1st (hand-over in September, October as back-up)
Thomas Linde – July 1st

Re. re-distribution of the ExCom workload
In order to ensure that the project momentum remains, the ExCom discussed the redistribution of their project responsibilities – the outcome was as follows:

Finance (IFC) – Austen Davis to be possibly taken over by his successor.
Supply project – Thomas Linde to be possibly taken over by his successor
Remuneration – Tine Dusauchoit to be possibly taken over by her successor
Communication – to be taken over by Pierre Salignon (includes Fundraising*)
CAME – to be taken on by Rafa (ExCom representative on the Steering Committee).

Note: MSF-France is happy to take on another issue if there is a problem of time availability for any of the new DGs

Re. Fundraising
A proposal was made by the fundraisers to build up on the existing Fundraising working group (Nicolas de Torrente, James Kliffen & Peter Caesar) by including one or two more fundraisers whose task would be to work on the ExCom-defined priorities. This group would be reporting to the DirComs. It was decided to wait until the presentation of the Fundraising study to see how to take this a step further.

The possibility to invite Peter Caesar to this meeting was mentioned.

Re. the ExCom agendas
An on-going concern has been the lack of time dedicated to brainstorm or go more in depth on certain issues. Different possibilities were mentioned: the fact that certain issues are put under the responsibility of an ExCom member is one way of going a little further in re. to the analysis produced; another way of doing this would be to share the priorities set out in each section – the joint DirOps / ExCom March meeting generally includes an overview of the operational priorities of each section; it was suggested that this year DGs, DirMeds & DirOps from each section give a 5 minute overview of their specific priorities (ie 15 minutes per section) – this was agreed to be a good way of having a more general overview of the priorities of each section and build up knowledge of the issues that should be tackled at ExCom level.

The ExCom paper was also discussed under this heading – progress needs to be made on some of the chapters. The Roles & Responsibilities chapter is considered to be finalized but we need to go further with the different issues the paper tries to tackle. The Association chapter needs to be discussed and expanded on – one suggestion was to discuss it at the March meeting. The chapter on governance could be discussed at the joint meeting with the ICB, (not excluding other chapters being discussed by them) similarly the growth and operations chapter could be discussed within the DirOps and DirMeds forum.

Re. TCB & the Editorial Committee
Rebecca Golden, Jacquie Tong will be in charge of overlooking the English versions (replacing Fiona Terry).

Simone Rocha is replacing Jean-Marc Biquet. She is able (skills and background) and could, if necessary, play a more important role with re. to the TCB.

An update will be given after the next Editorial Committee meeting.

i. Françoise Saulnier and Laurence Binet are available to present the TCBs at the Ags from April to June.

Re. membership to external platforms
SCHR
Marine Buissonnière / SecGen of MSF
SCHR Working Group: Policy & Advocacy Director

ODI
Pierre Salignon

III. Remuneration Study
A presentation was made by Karine Traonvouez

Re. DirFin
Ruud Huurman is validated as the remuneration project representative in the DirFin platform.

Re. Steering Group
Katherine Galliano is appointed to replace Anne-Louise Jacquemain
Amanda Harvey is suggested to replace Serge Mimouni (to be approved by her)
**Re. Tariffs**
The principle of using tariffs in inter-sectional HR dealings has been endorsed in principle.

**Re. VAT**
Is a problem that has appeared and is presently being investigated – the issue is about working within the legal framework, or not. A thorough risk-assessment needs to be conducted.

**Re. Indexation**
Cannot be included into the tariffs but since the indemnity will be reviewed every two years, the margin between non-indexed and indexed indemnities (as not obligatory in all countries) will never grow too wide.

**Re. exceptions to the first year = indemnity principle**
As it is proving to be difficult to assess each association it was decided that our criteria for exemptions of the first year indemnity better be value-based than simply based on a list of organizations. We want to be restrictive when it comes to going straight to the salary-grid.

A discussion was held on the exemption criteria. A discussion was held on the full-time & overseas prime parameters to be used. A strong concern was voiced that this would penalize people with domestic NGO experience bearing in mind that their commitment may be exactly the same as ones working overseas – it was felt to be discriminatory. However, the point is to be restrictive and avoid having people shifting directly to the salary-grid. It was therefore decided that in order to go straight to the salary-system:

The previous post would need to have been full-time and overseas, and include two of the four following criteria: medical, humanitarian, voluntary & activist.

In order to address the concern raised above in regards to people who have exclusive domestic experience and in order to quantify the extent of this potential discrimination – the DirHR will have to monitor the first-time missions who’ve had domestic experience that includes some of the four criteria mentioned above during the pilot-phase.

(Questions were raised on what is being understood and defined as 'voluntary' and 'activist'.

Furthermore: outside MSF experience as well as HQ experience is valued at 50%, ie 12 months is valued at 6 MSF months. This experience is de facto capped at two years, as people will then enter the salary grid which will be based on a different set of criteria.

Finally, MSF-B requested as an exception that the 6 months Antwerp training in tropical medicine be counted as 50% MSF field time ie 3 months.

**Re. Salary-grid**
Two systems are proposed: one system favors responsibilities versus the other that tends to focus more on valuing experience (inside or outside MSF) and diplomas – it is very difficult to measure / quantify which one is best and each section is happy with their present system therefore creating a dilemma. Both are based on different HR policies, reflecting different visions.

The discussion focused on the possibility for these two systems to exist within one framework. On the bases that the different systems (Holland included) all work on a minimum of two out of three criteria (responsibility / outside MSF experience / diplomas) some argued that these can all be integrated into one system. Others argued that this may work for the time being but would become very complicated when rolled out to the 13 other sections – the system needs to be simple. Furthermore it was argued that since the projected tension within the salary grid is from 1:3, ie low, this would further complicate the system.

It was agreed that the system needs to be simple and that we need one system for all.

- It was requested that in order to further the discussion a paper be produced on this specific issue – a paper that would coin the principles at stake and their implications (Karine Traonvouez is in charge of this).
- MSF-Holland, Belgium and France are to hold a teleconference on this issue to see what common position they could come to.
- This issue could possibly be addressed at the joint ICB / ExCom meeting in April.

ExCom Meeting minutes
Geneva, February 2004
IV. International Update

Re. the joint ExCom / St. Com & DNDi discussion
The ExCom has not had the time to address DNDi / MSF relations in its forum and therefore feels it is premature to hold a joint meeting at this stage – nevertheless, discussion on this issue could be included as part of the St Com agenda but the ExCom will not be present at this point.

Re. MSF-Greece
A message will be sent from the IO to the movement re-confirming that the former MSF-Greece has observership status at our international meetings.

V. International Medical Coordination

A presentation was made by Myriam Henkens – this presentation has been forwarded to the ExCom members.

The starting point behind the new presented structure is that the medical directors recognize that they don’t play the medical role they should, both at an international level, and in the way their medical departments are presently organized and function within their national sections. They are willing to take on a more political role and need to be supported in this endeavor. This implies re-thinking the way the ExCom / DGs allocate resources to the medical departments. It also implies some reorganization of the working groups, which should reflect MSF priorities at a given time (eg. Malaria, AIDS, TB, …), reintegrate some technical issues and be given fixed leaders, gathered as a medical think-tank.

Concretely this translates into the following:
- Mimi needs to send a two-page summary on the objectives behind the new proposed structure to the ExCom (prior to the March meeting)
- Each ExCom member is to discuss this presentation jointly with their DirMed and their DirOps.
- This will then be discussed at the March meeting.

A request was also made that the DirMeds draw up a tentative strategic agenda.

VI. Finance

Due to time constraints this item was not discussed at the meeting. Remi sent out a short power-point presentation he made with Ralf de Coulon on the different OC financial policies. To be discussed at a future meeting.

VII. Arjan

The MSF network should get ready for mobilization in the near future.

VIII. Campaign review

A discussion was held on the timeliness of launching an evaluation. It is something that has been on the agenda for more than a year and a half now, something that is needed to re-validate the direction taken by the Campaign inside the movement and some felt that if this was not initiated now, it never will. Others expressed their concern re. the timing of such an evaluation, stressing that we should leave time and space for the new director to settle in its new position before proceeding with the foreseen evaluation.

The ExCom came to the following agreement:

1/ It was agreed by the ExCom that an evaluation of the campaign is required and should address the different levels addressed in Tine Dusauchoit's paper. This will be discussed with the new director and the ExCom will overlook the implementation of the evaluation

More specifically, the review should address the following issue:
- Campaign itself / objectives & raison d'être of the campaign today versus objectives & raison d'être set out at the beginning (to be addressed by both the Steering Committee & the ExCom).
b. Analysis & decisions on future objectives + plan of action (to be addressed with the new Director).
c. Admin. / accountability / decision-making processes (possibility to invest in exterior help).

2/ The paper was considered as a bases for the discussion and should be circulated for comment to the Steering Committee.

3/ The ExCom agreed to be transparent with the candidate on the present discussions around the Campaign's future evolution, and as such the present TOR presented to him may be changed following the evolution of the discussions held and to which he will be party.

4/ Resources can / should be given to the new Director to facilitate the evaluation.