

1. Why did you choose this group? Do you have a specific question?

Many partners have experienced a range of problems and / or want to share and / or understand better the EU procurement rules with particular reference to:

- judgement of timing;
- application of rules of origin;
- interpretation of the procurement rules from delegation to delegation / region to region;
- issues with taxation / VAT exemption;
- eligible and non eligible costs;
- international bidding processes;
- the role of the NAOs in enabling or complicating procurement processes;

2. What are the pros and cons of the EU procurement rules, and how can you learn to live with them?

- The importance of maintaining regular communications with Task Management Team of the EU Delegation strongly emphasized. They want to see projects succeed and always ready to help partners / grantees understand the rules better and do things right.
- The EU procurement rules are clearly outlined in the PRAG and Contracts. These must be read, understood well and applied, to avoid problems.
- The main downside of the procurement rule is the requirement to pay back expenditures which are not considered eligible.

Hence the importance of knowing the rules!!!

3. What are some important points to be noted before purchase of equipment?

- Technical specifications need to be determined well in advance and grantees should have the internal technical capacity to determine that the quality indicated in quotations is compatible with quality required.
- Need to develop / source data sheets of items quoted.
- Credibility of suppliers needs to be assessed.
- Ability of suppliers to produce genuine certificates of origin and meet procurement deadlines
- Standardization certificates.
- Questioning, questioning and questioning some more. Of course asking the right questions is key.

4. How can delays in procurement be avoided. How can time planning be made?

- Recognize from outset that following EU procurement rules requires a methodical approach and therefore requires allocation of adequate timeframe: 3-12 months for all procurements involving shipment from international suppliers, with timeframes of 9-12 months for international procurement of RE equipment.
- Understanding the policy environment and host country rules and regulations regarding duty free concessions and doing all preparatory work in good time, involving the EU Delegation from the outset, as necessary.
- Ensuring that all project financing arrangements are in line with the terms of the contract.

5. What are some important rules and handling of procurement of equipment?

- Determination of rule of origin is critical to a successful procurement process and therefore very important to have clear guidelines on where “to draw the line” regarding rules of origin

6. How can you ensure good quality work / equipment?

- Thorough baseline assessment and profiling of beneficiary needs helps with accurate determination of the scope of work and quantity / quality of equipment and training
- From outset, technical expert needed in bid preparation and evaluation committees
- Proper commissioning and supervision of installations very important to ensure good quality of work