Improvement Analysis
CIVICUS
July 2017

Feedback and complaints handling (NGO2)

The Panel appreciates that CIVICUS actively invites feedback from a multitude of stakeholders, through various means (e.g. the Annual Constituency Survey, event feedback forms, and project evaluations). The results of the Annual Constituency Survey (the link provided is to the 2015 survey, rather than 2016) are published in CIVICUS' Annual Report. It is noted positively that findings from these feedback channels are incorporated into annual planning processes, internal reviews and external evaluations.

Reference is made to managers "following correct procedure" in dealing with external complaints "as per CIVICUS' code of conduct". A link to the relevant document would be appreciated.

However, there is still no formal feedback and complaints handling mechanism in place, which is mandatory for all Accountable Now Members (see membership criteria). A formal policy and well evidenced practice on this indicator is also the basis to qualify for the biannual reporting cycle. Work on an external complaints policy began in spring 2016 and is expected to be implemented "in time for the launch of the 2017-2022 Strategic Goals" (when this will be was not indicated). It will be interesting to see how this mechanism is promoted. Other Accountable Now Members such as Sightsavers have recently introduced commendable Feedback and Complaints Policies. It is suggested to get in touch with them for peer advice.

A complaints logging mechanism, referred to in CIVICUS' previous report, due to launch by end-June 2016 as part of the new CRM, was not mentioned in this report. The Panel would appreciate further information on this.

Actions taken

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Gender and diversity (NGO4)

It is positively noted that all CIVICUS' public positions are grounded in a gender and diversity policy (which unfortunately has not been linked again). CIVICUS' Gender Working Group, launched in 2015/16, is stated to guide and input into CIVICUS' work on gender. More specific examples of this beyond the networking opportunities and safe space listed, and initial results/value add of the group's work, would be of interest to the Panel.

The theme of CIVICUS' 2016 State of Civil Society report was inclusion, but unfortunately this report is not linked. An inclusion audit on all CIVICUS' internal policies and practices, including gender, was conducted and recommendations will be adopted in 2017 – a link to the audit's findings would be appreciated in the next report, as well as an update on implementation of the recommendations.

A new Youth Action Team (YAT) has been created to mainstream youth issues into CIVICUS' activities and provide strategic advice. This is an interesting initiative, and the Panel looks forward to a reflection on the YAT's achievements in this regard, with the inclusion of the first YAT introspective report in CIVICUS' next Accountability Report.

Unfortunately, some other points from the Panel's last feedback were also missing:
- Has CIVICUS set itself any targets for gender and diversity issues?
- Could CIVICUS link to the Gender and Diversity Scorecard mentioned in the 2013-2014 report?

Furthermore, it was again unclear what CIVICUS does to drive overall inclusion in their work beyond gender and youth. The Panel echoes its previous suggestion to implement systems to identify stakeholders that are potentially excluded from CIVICUS' work due to e.g. disability, ethnicity, poverty, or illiteracy.

Actions taken

Diversity of Board and senior leadership (LA13)

CIVICUS presents the composition of their workforce and Board according to age, gender and work base. Figures for Board Members are included in this report. However, information would be appreciated on other groups that might be excluded in the workforce and governance body (e.g. religious minority groups,

people with disabilities). Furthermore, a written component to accompany the figures provided would allow CIVICUS to address the questions in the reporting guidelines more fully – particularly reflections on which groups should be represented in the workforce to improve its legitimacy and effectiveness, and the setting of targets for future improvements.

Actions taken

Greenhouse gas emissions (EN16)

CIVICUS has provided a more detailed explanation of their greenhouse gas emissions. Whilst the emissions for this reporting period were even higher than in the last report, the majority of these (89%) were due to long distance travel to the International Civil Society Week in Colombia. The use of solar power supply for 50% of the average work day is commended.

The Panel would again appreciate in the next report an overview of carbon footprint development over years in a way that depicts developments more clearly (e.g. in a table). Oxfam International provides a good example in [their reports](#).

Actions taken

Anti-corruption policies (SO3)

As in the previous year, CIVICUS states that the two relevant documents are their Fraud Prevention policy and Information Privacy policy, but links are still missing to these documents (or to the Staff Handbook in which they appear). Evidence that these policies are known by staff and work in practice is required for the next report – this is critical in view of CIVICUS' stated mission around giving a voice to communities.

CIVICUS also states in SO4 that they are informed by their external auditors annually on the latest fraud and corruption schemes as well as by their bankers on phishing schemes etc. Does this equal a systematic risk analysis on where CIVICUS' work might be exposed to corruption? CIVICUS is advised to look internally at potential bad practices as corruption is an internal threat as well as an external one. Also, the Panel refers CIVICUS to a [recent blog post on Accountable Now's website](#) which outlines the significant role of leadership in fighting corruption in the sector.

Actions taken