

INGO Accountability Charter  
c/o International Civil Society Centre  
Agricolastraße 26  
10555 Berlin, Germany

Via Email

13th June 2016

Dear Members of the Independent Review Panel

Many thanks for your feedback regarding the submission of Islamic Relief Worldwide's 2014 Accountability report. The feedback was gratefully received and your recommendations have been incorporated into our quality improvement plan. We were particularly pleased that our approach towards complaints handling from beneficiaries was cited as good practice which was heartening for our initial report.

With regards to the feedback received, we would like to make the following comments;

NGO2 – The reference to UEA should read UAE (United Arab Emirates)

In respect of the panel's acknowledgement of the challenges that the designations issue has created, we would like to clarify the facts as there appears to be a misunderstanding surrounding the situation with HSBC. After IRW was designated by Israel and then by the UAE, IRW made contact with all its main stakeholders including the banks and financial providers. Most of the financial providers worked with IRW to understand the issues and support the organisation whilst mitigating its own risks. HSBC however did not engage with IRW and instead convened a meeting involving senior management. At the meeting, HSBC explained that due to the bank being under increased scrutiny and subject to a deferred prosecution agreement with the US Government, they had decided to mitigate their risks by discontinuing relationships with some of its customers. They invited IRW to close their account but IRW declined to do this and HSBC therefore discontinued the relationship. HSBC is not the main banker; limited transactions were conducted through HSBC mainly in relation to money transfers to Sudan. IRW informed major stakeholders of the development including DEC, DFID and the Charity Commission. Sadly, the Times reported the matter as resulting from concerns about terror links and referred to a source close to IRW as being the basis for their headline whereas neither HSBC, DEC, DFID, Charity Commission or IRW said that this was the reason.

As the whole purpose of our commitment to the Charter is to improve transparency and accountability, we have no objection to an amended reference to the situation remaining in the panel feedback and greatly appreciate the support and understanding of the Panel members. At this stage we do not feel that there is anything further the INGO Accountability Charter can do to counter such allegations. Should any issues be raised directly with the secretariat, we would appreciate being kept informed prior to any response being given, due to not wishing to prejudice any ongoing procedures in our attempt to resolve matters.



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NGO8

The panel needed further clarification of how the global income figure is arrived at. The £99m of income given in the 2014 Statutory Accounts almost entirely consists of income and in-kind donations received by IRW. The additional £83m which together with IRW receipts, constitutes the Global Income of £182m is made up of income and in-kind donations received directly by the 28 IR-connected entities such as IR Pakistan, IR Yemen etc from a combination of institutions such as UN, IR Partners and Local voluntary donations.

LA12

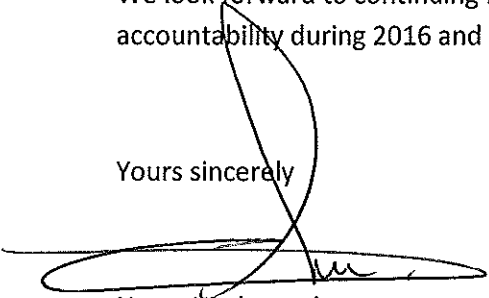
The comment that "68% of staff have been ranked in the two lowest achievement levels (achievers and low achievers)" reads as if a majority of staff are not achieving. Of the 68% of staff not ranked as high or top achiever, only one staff member was graded as a low achiever. Being an achiever should not be perceived as being in the "low achievement level "

SO3

We would like to clarify that the figure of 38 participants quoted on the number of staff trained on Anti-bribery in the report was the training of staff based in the UK in 2014. An additional 779 field office staff were trained during the reporting period, although this is likely to be much more due to records not always being kept. We started training staff on Anti-bribery in 2012 so the figures quoted in the original report and in this response are only reflecting the number of staff trained during the 2014 reporting period and not the total number of staff having completed Anti-bribery training from the overall staffing figure of 2,996.

We look forward to continuing in our efforts in improving our strategic commitment to accountability during 2016 and beyond and thank the panel for their constructive comments.

Yours sincerely



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Chief Executive Officer  
Islamic Relief Worldwide