

Improvement Analysis Terre des Hommes International Federation April 2018

Stakeholder feedback (E1)

The response focuses on avenues of feedback available to TDH member organisations. Interaction with the Secretariat is mainly via the nine working groups on various issues, which allow staff in similar functions (e.g. advocacy, communication, heads of programme) to exchange experiences and feed in to the Secretariat's decision making. A box describing TDH-Germany's actions to engage programme stakeholders in its 5-yearly priority-setting is an example of good practice regarding stakeholder engagement and the Panel would be interested to learn whether other MOs are following suit?

Are there also broader mechanisms for all staff to provide feedback – e.g. through an annual survey, a dedicated feedback and complaints policy, etc?

Regarding children and youth, the report states that consultations are made through TDH's field offices and conveyed to the Secretariat via the working groups. Again, the Panel would like to know whether there is a dedicated feedback mechanism, or what other avenues there are for all stakeholders to provide feedback. Is online feedback submission possible? Can TDH provide examples that demonstrate mechanisms have worked well, and stakeholders feel they have been heard and reacted to?

Complaints handling mechanisms and overview of complaints (internal and external) (J3)

Complaints can currently be submitted via the info email address on the TDH website's contact page – however, there is no specific reference to complaints on the website. The Panel regards this, and a lack of public policy regarding complaints and whistle-blowing policies, as weaknesses.

The Panel notes that TDH still does not have a federation-wide official complaints mechanism, at least for external complaints, but is aware that it is working towards setting one up drawing on the existing model of the "Keeping Children Safe" mechanism on child safeguarding incidents. Is there an expected timeline for its



completion and implementation? The Panel stresses that to protect its own good name, as well as its primary stakeholders, it is highly advisable for the TDH federation to agree uniformly high standards of responsiveness to both external and internal complaints, to ensure these processes are accessible and understood by relevant stakeholders, and to institute referral mechanisms (preferably independent) in the event that complainants are not satisfied with the direct response from the relevant MO. The panel suggests that the IS move discussion along these lines within the federation.

It is stated that when reports are received, the Secretariat sends on complaints to the member organisations the complaint concerns, and responds itself to those concerning the Secretariat. Does the Secretariat follow up with member organisations on the resolution of complaints?

Member organisations have their own mechanisms in place. Is there data on whether this is the case for all members?

Nine complaints relating to child safeguarding were submitted in 2016. Six cases were considered closed at the end of the year – is TDH able to provide information on whether the resolution was satisfactory to the complainant? What is the status of the remaining three cases? Was the International Secretariat not aware of any complaints (external or internal) other than those related to child safeguarding?

Minimising risk of corruption, bribery and misuse of funds (I3)

The report describes how the TDH Secretariat's accounts are subject to an independent audit every year, with the auditor's report published online and presented to the International Board as well as to donors. The Panel appreciates that TDH's Secretariat has taken its recommendations into account and is drafting an anti-fraud policy based on existing policies of TDH member organisations.

There were no reports of funds being misused in the Secretariat in 2016. Does the IS or the International Board gather information from the MOs on incidents of fraud or the misuse of funds? If so, what are the issues that this information has revealed? If not, is the board not concerned about reputational damage to the federation caused by an incident in one MO? Does the IS play a role in seeking to minimise problems of corruption and misuse of funds throughout the federation, for example by pooling and sharing information of relevance, providing guidance on appropriate policies and management practices, providing training, offering independent investigation service etc?



Scope of this accountability report and influence over national entities (K3)

The report covers the activities of the TDHIF International Secretariat, and not those of member organisations or their partners. The Panel appreciates that TDH has taken on Panel feedback and included more information and examples from member organisations in this report. It is stated that accountability is high on the agenda of member organisations, which abide by quality and accountability standards in the countries they are based. The Panel also notes positively that accountability is also on the agenda of the Heads of Programmes working group.

The Panel notes references in the report to TDHIF exploring ways to become less decentralised, more cooperative, and to adopt joint standards/policies on a number of issues. This is also echoed in the current strategic plan, which calls for greater coordination and collaboration across the federation and more emphasis on the sharing of skills and knowledge.

The Panel is aware that this will be a lengthy process. What steps are currently planned to forward these strategic priorities and what role will the IS play in these? While the Panel appreciates that TDH is a decentralised organisation, our key message is that we expect the secretariats of federations who are members of Accountable Now to be as proactive as possible in elevating standards of accountability and good governance practice throughout the federations.