

Terre des Hommes International Federation Accountability Report – Period covered: 2016

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

Accountability is generally defined as an ongoing dialogue which drives learning and change, develops trust with stakeholders and enhances the legitimacy and credibility of CSOs. As a responsible and learning organisation, accountability is at the heart of the preoccupations of the Terre des Hommes International Federation which is on a learning curve to gradually improve.

This report, which is the third submitted by the International Secretariat of the Terre des Hommes International Federation to Accountable Now, aims at demonstrating that our journey towards accountability and transparency has begun and that we are determined to continue learning, searching and developing to improve the lives, in a most respectful way, of those we seek to serve and who have placed their confidence in us.

2. Impact achieved

The vision of Terre des Hommes (hereafter TDH) is a world where the rights set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child are implemented for all children, and in which children are active participants in their own development.

The mission of TDH is to provide active support to children without racial, religious, political, cultural or gender-based discrimination, and generate positive change.

TDH works for and with children. Over the past 50 years, it has helped millions of children access their rights and a decent life by providing health care, education, a means of living, and offering protection against abuse, exploitation, violence and discrimination to children worldwide. TDH has helped children realise their full potential, and it has fought to promote human rights and the full respect for the dignity of children.

The Terre des Hommes International Federation (hereafter TDHIF) is a **network** of national organisations with headquarters in Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Spain, and Switzerland (where it comprises two organisations: Terre des Hommes Switzerland and the Terre des Hommes Foundation in Lausanne). The members of the network are independent national organisations legally registered in their own countries.

TDHIF is managed by an **International Secretariat** (hereafter TDHIF-IS). TDHIF-IS focuses on work which reinforces the TDHIF and brings an added value to the work that is done by national organisations of Terre des Hommes, it also leads joint work for children's rights. The TDHIF-IS induces and stimulates collaboration amongst the Terre des Hommes organisations, it coordinates joint campaigns as well as advocacy and communication work, it leads representation at global and European levels, it defends and protects the Terre des Hommes brand and it monitors compliance with core quality standards. The TDHIF-IS is multi-location with offices in Switzerland and in Belgium.

TDHIF-IS is engaged in three main advocacy programmes having in common a rights-based approach and a child protection focus:

- the **Destination Unknown Campaign** - to protect children on the move and offer them perspectives for the future
- the **Children Win Campaign** - to protect children in mega-sporting events
- the **Girls Advocacy Alliance**

The **main changes** which occurred during the reporting period is a **revision of the Statutes** of the TDHIF. The Statutes provide now a more elaborated definition of the role of the International Secretariat and its Secretary General in accordance with the evolution of the organisation. The Chairperson is now appointed by the International Board (and no more elected by the General Assembly) for a period of one year (instead of three). Consequently, a new Chair of the organisation, Lysiane André, has been appointed in March 2016.

A workshop on strengthening collective **implementation of the TDHIF Strategic Plan** was held on 18 November 2016. All in all, the workshop concluded that substantive progress has been made in the first period of implementation especially with regards to the campaign and advocacy work but that programmatic collaboration and growing the network are still in need of further development.

Human rights are embedded in the Statute of the TDHIF which provide that “The TDHIF is guided by the International Bill of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.” Human rights are also at the core of the TDHIF Strategic Plan which provides that “the long-term ambition of the TDHIF is to deliver impact for children, youth and communities and to realise the full implementation and respect for child rights internationally and in our home countries” so they are at the fundament of the organisation. The projects run by the TDH organisations as well as the campaigns run by the TDHIF-IS are rooted in a rights-based approach and implement the fundamental principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child including non-discrimination and the best interest of the child.

With regards to the advocacy programmes of the TDHIF-IS, the **Destination Unknown Campaign** has been affected by acute migration crisis which happened particularly in Europe and Asia. This has made the campaign all the more relevant but has also diverted some of the activities from the original plans as well as the attention of external partners and the public. An external evaluation of the campaign started in 2016 and finished in 2017 concluded that “the DU Campaign is relevant and sorely needed by child refugees and other children on the move and many of its objectives remain to be achieved.” A lessons learned exercise, based on extensive consultations of campaign participants, has been carried during this period and produced an institutional learning report which is available online. <http://www.terredeshommes.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Institutional-Learning-Report.pdf>

The **Children Win Campaign** gave a voice to children whose rights were jeopardised by mega sporting events in 2016, such as by enabling children in Rio to show how the Olympic games has caused them suffering. 2016 also saw huge strides made by the Children Win campaign in triggering change within the large sports governing bodies. Implementation of the new standards will be the challenge of the coming years.

The members of the TDHIF are actively involved in a process of “**Child Safeguarding Measures**” to ensure the most effective possible mechanisms of safeguard for children who are part of the programmes run by the Terre des Hommes organisations. Child protection has a very high priority in

the TDHIF which is a member of the Keeping Children Safe Coalition (KCS). TDHIF has been granted level 1 certification in 2015. Abiding to KCS standards is a programme which binds all TDH organisations member of the TDHIF and is mentioned in the Rules and Regulations of the organisation, therefore it is managed by the TDHIF-IS through the Working Group Child Safeguarding Measures.

The TDHIF-IS and the TDH organisations also have strict rules regarding the treatment of image of children which are based on the KCS standards. Parental consent is sought before publishing any photo of children on website or publications. The TDHIF-IS and the TDH organisations also request journalists to sign binding codes of conduct for example in case of visit to a project.

Finally With regards to **environmental footprint**, the TDHIF-IS has taken a range of measures to monitor its consumption and reduce negative impact.

3. Stakeholder involvement

The identification of **key stakeholders** is made in conformity with the Strategic Plan so as to enhance the realisation of the strategic priorities. The criteria for selecting stakeholders is also the careful consideration that they are in accordance with the fundamental values as expressed in the TDHIF Statute. The process of identification and selection as well as subsequent relations with them depends of the nature of the relation (for example, donors, partners etc.).

The TDHIF-IS has therefore several layers of stakeholders. As an International Secretariat, it is first a **service provider for the members of the TDHIF** which are national organisations of Terre des Hommes. They are very closely associated to the design of programmes (advocacy and campaigning for the case of the TDHIF-IS).

The TDHIF- IS is also an **advocacy and campaigning body**. Its advocacy is deeply rooted in the field work run by the TDH national organisations in 67 countries. Links and consultations with the directly affected stakeholders' groups is made through the field offices of the TDH organisations and conveyed to the TDHIF-IS.

The TDHIF-IS has several empirical ways of reaching out to those who are impacted or concerned by our work. For the **members of the TDHIF network stakeholders**, due to the service-based nature of the TDHIF-IS, consulting them is regular and systematic. There have been extensive consultations for the making of the Strategic Plan as well as for the mid-term review and the monitoring of the implementation. The TDHIF-IS is an association registered under Swiss law and that implies a very democratic structure with a General Assembly, composed of a representative of all member organisations, which is the supreme body of the organisation and makes decisions through votes where all members have the same rights.

The TDHIF also has set up working structures, in the form of **thematic working groups** which gather all the member organisations, which are agile structures regularly monitoring their own methods of work and guiding the work of the TDHIF-IS.

The members of the TDHIF network usually appreciate its function of coordination. They also appreciate the function of global representation as it makes their voice and impact stronger for children. The main dislikes come from the fact that the TDHIF is still a very decentralised network and this implies problems in communication between its different entities as well as loss of potential in impact due level of collaboration which are not optimised.

As a rule, the TDHIF-IS only conducts advocacy work which is rooted in its field work and chooses campaign themes on the basis of analysis of the root causes of problems encountered by the communities it works with. The TDHIF-IS strives to ensure adequacy with its stakeholders' views and expectations by dialogue and consultations in the planning and implementation of campaign phases as well as evaluations upon achievements of programme phase. The members of the TDHIF network have a long experience of working alongside the populations they serve, and this favours consultations with stakeholders and the inclusion of their views.

For the **children and youth affected by the campaigns of the TDHIF-IS** there are several ways of reaching them such as involving children and youth participants in the Campaign assemblies, using questionnaires, and supporting children and youth on the move initiatives at national level. The main exercise made in 2016-2017 was a comprehensive external evaluation of the Destination Unknown Campaign conducted on the basis of interviews with TDH staff involved in the campaign, external organisations participating in the campaign, external organisations not participating in the campaign but working on similar issues and young people involved in migration. Most of these partners have also participated in the Campaign Assembly held in September 2016 in Cyprus. Some of the likes that they provided is that the Campaign is strongly relevant at a time of migrations crisis. Some of the dislikes provided, especially by the network of youth, was that the campaign is a "tent village" in effect encompassing several projects and campaigns at the same time.

Entering into **alliances** is also part of the strategic priorities of the TDHIF Strategic Plan and has a high level of priority in the work of TDH. The TDHIF-IS is member of several alliances and networks including Child Rights Connect, CONCORD, the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD), the Sports and Rights Alliance and many more. Members of the TDHIF-IS also accept responsibilities in these alliances as for example the current Vice-Chair of Child Rights Connect. These formal alliances usually involve NGOs but also other partners as for example the Sport and Rights Alliance which involves sport groups and trade unions.

In 2016, the International Secretariat had a total **work force** of 11 staff persons (10.4 FTE not including interns) composed of 4 men and 7 women. The salary of the five most senior positions are adapted to the location (Switzerland or Belgium). There is a salary scale for each location and an equal system of salary progression irrespective of level of salary as well as currently no gender gap. The maximum ratio between the top and bottom salary in the same location is 2.5. The 2016 TDHIF **core budget** has been financed at 76% by membership fees. The second largest donor during the reporting period was the Oak Foundation. The rest amounted to less than 0.5%.

The TDHIF-IS is extremely concerned by the **right to privacy and personal data** especially in the digital age but has not yet established a privacy policy and it will be keen to learn in this regard from peer organisations, especially in light of new European regulations. The TDHIF-IS choice of service providers in the domain of IT as well as its practice to store electronic data and documents and conserve archive reflect its strong preoccupation for the protection of privacy.

4. Organisational effectiveness

The TDHIF is a **member-based network** and the member organisations recommendations have a great impact on shaping decision making at all levels of the organisation. This governance structure



ensures a truly democratic functioning of the network with a supreme governing body (GA) composed of all the member organisations of the network from which emanates the International Board. In practice, the achievement of the mission is best supported by the level of involvement of Board members and the extent to which they are able to draw the support of the national Terre des Hommes organisations and the amount of resources they are ready to

invest for the fulfilment of the TDHIF objectives. This has varied over the years but there is a constant move towards more collaboration and pulling of joint resources.

The TDHIF-IS is an association registered under Swiss law where the **General Assembly** is the supreme body of the organisation. It is composed of all the members of the organisation, having an equal vote for all decisions. The General Assembly meets once a year. The member organisations delegate a representative to the General Assembly meetings (usually the Chair and the CEO of each member organisation) who is entitled to vote for the organisation. The General Assembly elects the International Board which is a collegial body taking decisions usually by consensus, it also votes a yearly discharge to the International Board for the fulfilment of its mandate.

An **independent auditor** is appointed every year by the General Assembly, for a period of maximum five years. The Treasurer can link with the independent auditor for any matter of concern. He/she presents the financial report of the previous year and the budget of the next year to the GA and responds to questions. The financial report and the budget are voted upon by the GA. Any member of the network is entitled to have access to the accounts any time if it so requests.

The **International Board** presents a yearly report to the GA which is discussed in plenary and voted upon, so this provides space for feedback from member organisations to the Board. It can create working groups for specific purposes. The International Board elects a Chair, two Vice-Chairs and a Treasurer among its members. The Chairperson chairs the General Assembly and International Board meetings and represents the organisation whenever needed. The Vice-Chair supports the Chair and replaces him/her as appropriate. The Treasurer has a responsibility to control that the resources are used appropriately and efficiently, and that financial integrity is assured. The International Secretariat reports to the International Board. The Secretary General and Head of International Secretariat attend the Board meetings so they can convey concerns from the Secretariat through this channel. External situations needing the attention of the International Board are also conveyed to it either by the International Secretariat or by member organisations or working groups in writing and/ or during Board meetings.

The **TDHIF-IS** reports several times a year to the International Board and responds to its questions at each Board meeting. The Secretary General has a yearly appraisal with the International Board. The TDHIF-IS presents a yearly report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Strategic Plan, which can then exert a first layer of **monitoring** over the implementation of objectives and propose corrective measures in case of needs. A second layer of monitoring is the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan which involves assessment from stakeholders and external support from a consultant. The main programmes of the TDHIF-IS also have their own mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation which are then used to plan the next phase of the work.

With regards to **finance**, the accounts of the IS are annually controlled by a licensed and independent auditor in accordance with Swiss law. The auditor's report is partially published as part of the Annual Report of the TDHIF and is also fully accessible from the TDHIF website: <http://www.terredeshommes.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/AUDITOR-S-REPORT-2016.pdf>

The TDHIF Statute provide that the same auditor can control the accounts of the TDHIF-IS for a maximum period of five years in a row. The audit report is also sent to the donors of the TDHIF-IS, they include a specific part on projects financial reporting. The main external donor of the TDHIF-IS is the Oak Foundation. The TDHIF-IS provides an annual financial report to the Oak Foundation regarding the use of project funds. This report is examined by the Oak Foundation and allows for the disbursement of the yearly instalment according to project proposal.

The International Secretariat manages finances, and monitors that expenditures are in line with the budget which has been adopted the previous year by the General Assembly. It also submits a periodic written activity report to the International Board which is structured around the main priorities of the Strategic Plan and which tracks the use of resources per priorities. In kind donation received by the TDHIF-IS are composed of pro bono services from experts, interns seconded by the Swiss unemployment system and free use of sharing an office and associated services provided by TDH Suisse.

The **recruitment and selection procedures** of the TDHIF-IS reflect our commitment to help and protect children. In addition each TDH organisations, including the TDHIF-IS, has a **code of conduct** which has to be signed by staff upon recruitment and which lists the possible sanctions in case of breach. There are **Staff Rules** which are annexed to the contract of employees. There is a procedure in the Staff Rules which determines the way to follow for raising grievance to management regarding working conditions. Staff can also benefit from individual support of a work psychologist if needed, this measure is to be approved by the TDHIF-IS Secretary General. The Staff Rules provide that TDHIF encourages training for the workforce and list the modalities for deciding on training as well as the financial participation of the employer.

Health and safety at work is a question which is of great concern to the management and which is regularly reviewed. Efforts are made to have a healthy workplace including with appropriate tools such as large computer screens. In case where the office is shared with another member organisation, in Switzerland for example, common measures are taken for health and safety at work, for example to regularly check measures to protect employees against fire or having emergency telephone numbers well visible in every office.

The TDHIF-IS has been awarded **level 1 certification of KCS** and there are only two organisations in this case. In 2016, the TDH organisations managed nine new allegations, six of which involved partner staff, one of which involved other children and two of which involved members of the broader community. All cases were closely followed while prioritising the child's best interest and well-being. At the end of

the year six cases were considered as closed. Please see also a video which explains how TDH commits to ensure safeguarding measures for the children we work with:
<http://www.terredeshommes.org/child-safeguarding-measures>

The TDHIF-IS also has a website providing email address which can be used for **complaints** :
<http://www.terredeshommes.org/contacts-2/> It receives complaints, directly dispatches those which concern the TDH organisations to them, dispatches complaints concerning the situation in a specific country to the TDH organisations working there and respond to those which directly concern the International Secretariat. For internal complaints, a process is embedded in the staff rules which provides detailed steps for complaints, contact points as well as measures of prevention against suffering at work.