

## INTEGRATED, CROSS FUNCTIONAL WORKPLAN FOR THE CODE OF CONDUCT – 2019

Several global and organisational initiatives have been planned and designed over 2018 to further boost and support the implementation of DRC's Code of Conduct and its accompanying reporting mechanism (CoCRM).

The initiatives have been designed to address systemic and organisational challenges identified through a number of processes, which in some way or the other have an impact on the organisation's ability to fully implement its Code of Conduct, from the very top to the most remote corners of the organisation.

The challenges identified are the following:

- Low number of complaints from persons of concern
- High number of complaints concerning frontline staff members, incentive workers and volunteers
- General increase in number of complaints received but lack of adequate organisational capacity to handle all complaints with due quality
- Medium compliance rate in field operations with the standards for the CoCRM
- CHS identified observations and corrective actions related to the organisation's relations to persons of concern and affected communities in participation in the design of complaints mechanisms CHS standards 4 & 5 (and 3.6, 9.5, 9.6, & 8.7)

In addition to the organisation wide projects, a number of ad hoc initiatives have been taken over 2017 and 2018 to address urgent shortcomings and capacity challenges in particular areas. These are recorded elsewhere (e.g. in the Code of Conduct Annual Report (CoCAR) 2018).

The workplan at hand describes 6 main initiatives at organisation- and cross functional level which seeks to address the challenges as long-term investments and actions which will lead to more sustainable impact in the organisation as a whole. Consequently, the effect of these initiatives will materialise over longer time and may not all show immediate effect on the ground.

## ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH THE EMPLOYMENT CYCLE

Over 2017 & 2018 the organisation went through an *International Position Evaluation* process (IPE) which identified a layer of de facto middle- and lower-level managers who were responsible for the direct supervision of the vast majority of frontline staff members, volunteers and incentive workers. These managers were not always recognised as managers, neither trained and equipped to the task nor systematically held accountable as managers for the values and actions of the staff that they supervised.

Coupled with the fact that majority of complaints over staff behaviour concerns frontline staff members, and that relatively few complaints are received from persons of concern, the organisation decided to boost the training, onboarding and performance management of these managers, through rolling out of an extensive management training programme which includes a special module on upholding the Code of Conduct, along with general management training.

In addition, although not as a direct result of the IPE but as a response to previous CoCAR lessons learned, HRM has introduced a methodology for ensuring accountability and safeguarding throughout the employment cycle for all staff. This work is close to being finalised and mainstreamed through a comprehensive adjustment of already existing HRM tools and procedures.

The final element of working with accountability through the employment cycle is the development of a global training strategy for the Code of Conduct area, including the development of standard training modules for different staff groups, taking into consideration differentiated desired learning outcomes for different staff groups. External fundraising for this project has been partly successful and is about to kick off in May 2019.

## **PARTICIPATION PROJECT**

As part of DRC's global 2020 (2022) strategy, '**participation project 2.1**', DRC aims to revisit participation through the following outputs, all of which has been set in motion over the course of 2018:

- *Scoping Study – consultancy*: a study that looks at best practices in participation among the top 10 humanitarian agencies, including the extent to which complaints mechanisms are instruments of 'listening to displacement affected people' - **status: ongoing**
- *Evaluation – consultancy*: an evaluation of DRC's CMs over the past years, including selected case studies and making use of a program theory-based evaluation approach – **status: ongoing**
- *Applied Research – ("Ph.D.")*: an applied anthropological study of how notions of participation are operationalised by NGOs, how communication in fact occurs between agencies and displacement affected people, drawing on the "Communicating with Communities" initiative; evidence from community driven approaches, and how 'participation' is perceived by the people who are to 'participate' – **status: in process**

In addition, a number of linked initiatives to enhance DRC's standing and commitment to participation, are ongoing:

### **PROGRAM HANDBOOK UPDATE**

Since the development of the first DRC Program Handbook, drafted in 2000, participation has been a core feature including how the notion is to be translated into practice. This will be thoroughly revised again in 2019 to provide more concrete examples of how to mainstream participation within the various steps of the project cycle.

### **RECRUITMENT OF A PARTICIPATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT SPECIALIST**

This position has successfully been recruited as a one-year short-term position. The incumbent has joined DRC's newly restructured Programme Division. The goal of this role is to ensure that DRC participation and beneficiary-facing accountability practices are consistently of a high standard across the organisation.

### **REVISION OR DEVELOPMENT OF POLICIES, RESOURCES, TOOLS AND GUIDANCE**

DRC staff across the organisation will have access to consistent, specific, relevant, accessible, evidence-based resources, tools and guidance which will support them in the mainstreaming of appropriate and effective participation and accountability practices with People of Concern across DRC programmes.

## **GLOBAL CODE OF CONDUCT**

Under the vision of One DRC the Executive Management Group decided in the spring of 2018 to globalise the Code of Conduct and an accompanying complaints mechanism. The CoCRM has been directed at the international operations while Danish based staff and operations have been covered by a Code of Behaviour. The project has kicked off in 2019 and is expected to deliver a suggestion for a new global code of conduct which can cover both Danish and International operations, a suggestion for a reporting system which brings the best of experiences from the international work together with the best of experience from the Danish system, and finally, an organisational framework which will support the quality and compliance of the future Code of Conduct and CoCRM.

## TRANSPARENCY

In spring 2018 DRC decided to extend its transparency towards the general public with more detailed information about its complaint systems, both on statistics of complaints but also on organisational challenges and learning related to case management and case intake. So far, the Annual reports from the CoCRM have been published on the organisation's website, and details of case intake on country level has since October 2018 been published on a monthly basis.

The commitment to transparency around accountability challenges, experiences and actions of the organisation continues in 2019 and beyond as a mainstreamed activity and 2019 will see the launch of more details around the risk management activities of the organisation.

Transparency and honesty are two of the organisation's core values, and the steps to be open about complaints received and processed is expected to contribute to increasing the external stakeholders trust in DRC's accountability commitments, including those people who may wish to raise a complaint.

## REORGANISATION OF THE COCRM SETUP

Learning from the CoCAR process a number of challenges were identified where the structure and organisational setup around the complaints handling system can be adjusted to better meet the desired level of efficiency and quality, not least taking into account the increased number of complaints being reported. An organisational re-design process already going on has been the vehicle for also reviewing the options for a leaner and more efficient setup on the complaints handling system. In September 2018 the extended senior management group (E-SMG) was consulted on suggested principles and future direction for this organisational adjustment. Since then work has been carried out to demonstrate the resource- and competency implications of the suggested changes, and the results of this was presented to E-SMG in March 2019. E-SMG endorsed the direction of the changes but requested more consideration to be made on the options for further centralisation, than had originally been suggested.

## EU VOLUNTEER PROJECT

The DRC Standby Roster (SBR) already in 2017 tendered for an EU-Volunteer programme where DRC's concept included that one of the areas of voluntarism would be the Code of Conduct. In 2018 the SBR was awarded the programme contract and the design phase of the volunteer training programme is on-gong, with a focus on communication and awareness raising campaign development for frontline staff and persons of concern. The programme is a combination of HQ and field placement and is designed to add value to both the volunteers learning process and development, but also the development of organisation.