

ACFID Code of Conduct Committee Meeting

Sydney, 24 August 2018

Review of Protection from Sexual Exploitation & Abuse (PSEA)

The Code of Conduct Committee (CCC) reviewed the outcomes of compliance reporting against PSEA related Code requirements as well as a report on proposed changes to the Code and Quality Assurance Framework by Learning4 Development.

The CCC welcomed the positive engagement of members with the compliance reporting request and the work of the Code secretariat in assessing the additional reporting in a timely manner. The CCC agree that the outcomes of the compliance assessment indicated the need for additional guidance, tools and advice to members in a number of areas. The Code Secretariat will continue to work with members to become compliant and strengthen their understanding and application of the Code in these areas.

The CCC welcomed Jo Thomson and Belinda Lucas from Learning4Development (L4D), who presented their Consultation Paper. L4D were engaged to undertake the Code of Conduct Review and member consultation.

The Committee discussed the range of issues that arose during consultation and recommendations for change in the Quality Assurance Framework. The CCC supported the approach of enhancing existing systems. The proposed verifiers still allow flexibility for the scope and size of the members. The CCC also highlighted the importance of providing tools, support and guidance in implementing the recommended changes, particularly for smaller members.

The CCC discussed putting forward the single proposed change to the Code at AGM in 2018, given that the independent report would not be available at that time. The Committee agreed that the impact of sexual exploitation and abuse on survivors and the sector is significant, and the lack of data should not diminish ACFID's response. Australian NGOs have led child safeguarding practices globally, and this is an opportunity to do the same for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. There is evidence that separate targeting of an issue can contribute to effective leadership and improved practices in that particular area (rather than grouping the issue with general safeguarding and vulnerable people). The CCC recommended that the proposed change to the Code should be put to the AGM in October rather than wait until the VIFM final report is released (end October). The CCC will consider the Independent Report at their November meeting and may make further recommendations to the ACFID Board. The purpose of both Reviews is to develop a resourced implementation plan to support practice improvements in regard to the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation across the membership – and both inform each other to achieve this outcome.

Complaints handling

The Committee considered a proposed approach to addressing enquiries in high risk areas. This is aimed at escalating serious incident reporting, and sets a standard approach to receipt of allegations (which are not raised as formal complaints against the Code) in areas of high risk, namely child protection, financial wrongdoing and protection of vulnerable people. This would apply to allegations made against a member or a member's partner. The CCC agreed to forward the high-risk incident reporting process to the ACFID Board for their input. The Committee also finalised their complaints handling policy.

Membership update and applications

The CCC approved Graceworks Myanmar for Code Signatory Status and recommended them for full interim membership at the next meeting of ACFID's Board. The Committee also considered an application for a merged compliance reporting model based on two ACFID members merging, however decided it was not appropriate in this case.

Code Focus Areas, specifically Marketing & Fundraising

The [final report of research on images & messages](#) was undertaken by Emily Moreton (as part of the ANU Internship Program), and the report shared with the CCC. The research provides a critical examination of current practice, decision-making processes, motivations and challenges in the use of images and messages for online fundraising and marketing by ACFID members. The CCC commended the report and recommended provision to the Board and members for their information.

Additional definitions for the Quality Assurance Framework

It was noted that the current definitions in the Code's Quality Assurance Framework do not include definitions of financial wrongdoing or elements of financial wrongdoing, with the exception of Fraud. The CCC approved an additional 5 definitions to the General Definitions in the Quality Assurance Framework to provide guidance to Members on the scope and meaning of financial wrongdoing. These are Financial Wrongdoing, Corruption, Terrorism Financing, Money Laundering and Bribery. These changes will be provided to the Board.

CCC nominations and elections at upcoming AGM

The CCC noted that two elected CCC positions were coming to their end-of-term, and hence nominations for these two positions would be put to membership. Should there be more than two nominations for these positions, an election will be undertaken, with final results known at the ACFID AGM.

The next CCC meeting will be held on **16 November 2018**.

Information about the Code of Conduct Committee including Committee members and the Terms of reference can be found on the [ACFID Website](#).

For more information about the Code of Conduct Committee, contact ACFID Standards and Code Lead Sophie Seck on (02) 8123 2222 or sseck@acfid.asn.au