

Addendum to High Level Summary on Safeguarding Assurance Returns

Introduction

1. This is an addendum to the “High Level Summary: Safeguarding Assurance Returns from UK Charities” published by the Department for International Development (DFID) on 20 March 2018 available [here](#). The planned publication of the addendum was mentioned in the Written Ministerial Statement to Parliament on 17 May 2018 available [here](#).
2. The Secretary of State for International Development wrote to all major DFID partners asking them to assure her on the following four points which are essential to effective safeguarding:
 - i. That they provide a safe and trusted environment which safeguards anyone who their organisation has contact with, including beneficiaries, staff and volunteers;
 - ii. That they set an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding, so that it is safe for those affected to come forward, and to report incidents and concerns with the assurance that they will be handled sensitively and properly;
 - iii. That they have adequate safeguarding policies, procedures and measures to protect people and these are shared and understood;
 - iv. That they have absolute clarity as to how incidents and allegations will be handled should they arise, including reporting to the relevant authorities, such as the Charity Commission, and to funding partners such as the Department for International Development.

We also asked them to confirm:

- v. That they have referred any and all concerns their organisation may have on specific cases and individuals to the relevant authorities.
3. The purpose of the exercise was to gain assurance from our partners that they are confident that their current safeguarding measures are sufficient and appropriate. Our ratings relate to the clarity of their response. This means that those organisations that are rated ‘Green’ have stated that they have the necessary policies and procedures in place on all 5 points. The assurances and related ratings provide a snapshot in time: partners may have had weaker approaches in the past or strengthened them since. It does not represent an opinion from DFID on the quality of their safeguarding in practice and is only one step in DFID’s engagement with organisations across the international aid sector to improve safeguarding standards.
4. The 20 March High Level Summary provides additional detail, including the draft letter and key findings from the returns from UK charities. It noted that DFID was writing to other partners we fund and included a list of the top 30 suppliers and the multilateral organisations DFID planned to write to.

5. This document summarises the key trends, themes and findings from the returns from our top 30 suppliers, multilateral partners, research organisations and development capital partners. The letter sent to these organisations was similar to that included in the original High Level Summary. A list of any organisations not covered in the 20 March Summary is included at Annex A. We have now received replies from 283 organisations.
6. DFID is continuing to work collaboratively with all of our partners to further prevent and better respond to sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment in the run up to and after the international conference in London this October. We will be seeking concrete commitments and actions from donors and all of the partners we work with which go beyond the assurances received through this exercise. DFID is pushing for a joined-up, sector-wide package of practical measures which will lead to sustainable improvements in standards and practices.

Findings

a) Top 30 Suppliers

7. Of the 30 suppliers (who account for over 80% of DFID's contractual spend) we expected returns from, 24 met the deadline (5 were among the 179 charities covered in the 20th March summary). 6 were late. We followed up with those 6 remaining and received all responses due.
8. Following first assessment, 18 organisations were rated Green, 12 rated Amber and 0 were rated Red. DFID subsequently followed up with the 12 Amber-rated organisations. After further clarity was provided on their returns, they were all rated Green.

b) Multilaterals

9. In our 20 March High Level Summary we provided a list of multilateral organisations DFID provides core funding to. We also wrote to 4 further multilaterals DFID provides some funding to where another government department leads on the relationship. The list of these 4 additional multilaterals is provided at Annex A.
10. Of the total 45 multilaterals we expected returns from, 36 met the deadline. 9 were late. We followed up with those 9 remaining and received all responses due.
11. Following first assessment, 39 organisations were rated Green, 6 rated Amber and 0 were rated Red. DFID subsequently followed up with the 6 Amber-rated organisations. After further clarity was provided on their returns, all were rated Green.

c) Research Organisations

12. We sent 25 letters covering 30 research organisations that we provided more than £500,000 to in 2017/18 (list at Annex A). 6 organisations were asked to provide a coordinated response as they are part of UK Research and Innovation. All but 1 replied on time.
13. Following first assessment, 25 organisations were rated Green, 3 rated Amber and 2 were rated Red. DFID subsequently followed up with the 5 Amber and Red rated organisations. After further clarity was provided on their returns, they were all rated Green.

d) Development Capital Partners

14. Of the 5 development capital partners we expected returns from, 3 met the deadline. 2 were late. We followed up with the 2 remaining and received all responses due.
15. Following first assessment, 4 organisations were rated Green, 1 rated Amber and 0 were rated Red. DFID subsequently followed up with the 1 Amber-rated organisation. After further clarity was provided on their return, it was also rated Green.

Key trends and themes

16. The statements provided by suppliers, multilaterals, research organisations and development capital partners showed similar best practice to that provided by the statements from charities.
17. Some particular areas of good practice that were seen within these organisations include the following:
 - i. Most organisations have a code of conduct in place for all staff.
 - ii. Most organisations have clear lines of responsibility and reporting for sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.
 - iii. A range of safeguarding policies, procedures and commitments are in place and many are easily accessible to staff and the general public.
 - iv. Most organisations have relevant and appropriate whistleblowing policies in place including third party confidential phone lines to encourage staff, volunteers and beneficiaries to report concerns.
 - v. A number of organisations have mandatory training for staff on preventing and reporting sexual harassment, and some have specific training on sexual exploitation and abuse.
16. Similar to the charities' returns, there was relatively less evidence of:
 - i. Support for victims of abuse.
 - ii. Safeguarding being addressed as a core category in risk management.

- iii. Explicit references to sexual exploitation and abuse in Codes of Conduct.
- iv. Consistency in vetting and referencing processes and more specific processes linked to vulnerable adults or children.
- v. Reporting of all allegations, suggesting either a lack of transparency, weaknesses in reporting and/or limited understanding of safeguarding.
- vi. Sufficient safeguarding expertise at all levels.

Reporting of concerns

17. The returns referred to some allegations of specific cases. These were referred to DFID's Internal Audit Department
18. DFID judges that the increased reporting of allegations is a necessary and important step to driving up safeguarding standards. Anyone can report concerns, suspicions and/or allegations of fraud, sexual exploitation and abuse or other corrupt practices to DFID's dedicated secure email address reportingconcerns@dfid.gov.uk.

Next steps

19. This now concludes this process of DFID asking partners for their assurances with regards to key aspects of their safeguarding work. But as noted in the introduction, we will be seeking concrete commitments and actions from donors and all of the partners we work with which go beyond the assurances received through this exercise. DFID remains at the forefront of driving up safeguarding standards across the aid sector – to ensure all those engaged in poverty reduction take all possible steps to prevent harm, exploitation and abuse from occurring and to protect people, especially vulnerable adults and children, from that harm.
20. We will also be building an evidence base of our partners' performance against the new safeguarding due diligence standards which have been put in place since this assurance exercise began. Organisations that cannot offer assurances, organisations that cannot demonstrate in practice that they have safeguards in place, and organisations that cannot show that they are effectively managing the risks around safeguarding, will not receive funding from DFID.

Annex A – Additional partners DFID requested assurances from

Multilateral Organisations*

1. Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)
2. European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
3. European Investment Bank (EIB)
4. International Monetary Fund (IMF)

** these are in addition to the 43 in Annex D of the 20th March summary*

Research Organisations

1. Advancing Tuberculosis Vaccines for the World (AERAS)
2. African Economic Research Consortium
3. Asian Vegetable Research and Development Centre (AVRDC)
4. Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council**
5. International Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI)
6. Carbon Trust
7. Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR Fund)
8. Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative
9. Economic and Social Research Council**
10. Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)**
11. Innovate UK – Technology Strategy Board**
12. International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease research
13. International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE)
14. International Development Research Centre
15. International Partnership for Microbicides
16. John Hopkins University
17. London School of Economics
18. Medical Research Council**
19. Medicines for Malaria Venture
20. Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)**
21. PEP- Partnership for Economic Policy
22. Programme for Appropriate Technology in Health
23. The Foundation for Innovative Diagnostics (FIND)
24. The Global Alliance for TB Drug Development
25. The Innovative Vector Control Consortium
26. The Royal Society
27. The Task Force for Global Health Inc.
28. The University of Leeds
29. The University of Manchester
30. The University of Cape Town

**provided a joint response through UK Research and Innovation