

SRF Governance Role, Structure & functioning

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Last update: August
10th, 2023

Introduction

The SRF is committed to ensuring the highest standards of conduct in all that it does, and in all its responsibilities, which specifically includes preventing all forms of potential or actual conflicts of interest. Its governance, system and accountabilities have been developed to prevent, mitigate and manage all potential or actual conflicts of interest.

The governance is composed of 4 entities:

- The SRF board which act as a decision-making organ
- The FMU which ensures the management of the Funds
- The Grievance committee which will review any complaints regarding the functioning of the SRF
- The Evaluation committee which reviews all the proposals

The composition, roles and the accountability of these 4 entities are developed here below

1. SRF board

1.1. Composition of the SRF board

The SRF board is composed of the following (non-remunerated) members:

Permanent members	Non-permanent members
Donors which are funding the SRF	Six INGOs (including DRC as permanent member)
DRC (Regional Executive Director)	Three seats for the representation of national organisations (e.g. regional network and/or national forum of national humanitarian NGOs)
	One or more Observer (ICVA and other donors or other strategic stakeholders).

The Fund Director will ensure secretariat of the SRF board, without being one of its members.

Rotation: NGOs members of the SRF board will rotate every 18 months with staggered membership to maintain continuity. The modalities for rotation will be discussed with the SRF board members.

Replacement: Nominated board members can be replaced by their substitute or acting person with power of authority in case of absence. In case of departure, the board member will be replaced by the newly recruited person performing their same function in the organisation.

Selection of the non-permanent members (INGO): INGO board members need to match minimum requirements below and are selected by FCDO and DRC based on a brief written expression of interest and potentially an oral presentation / discussion. ICVA participates to the oral presentation as observer. The minimum eligibility criteria for an INGO to be a SRF board member are designed based on the ability to influence by creating synergy between project areas and the regional level as well as to support SRF strategic ambition. 4 INGOs are expected to meet all selection criteria to be selected as SRF board member to promote and support the SRF strategic ambition related to a more principled humanitarian action, cash-based emergency response, accountability to affected populations, localisation and the centrality of protection in the Sahel region. A set of lighter criteria will allow the opening of the SRF board to 1 more INGO to ensure an inclusive representation of INGO in the SRF board.

The minimum eligibility criteria for an INGO to be a SRF board member are the following	4 INGO	1 INGO
Ability to influence by creating synergy between project areas (hot spots of Liptako Gourma, Lake Chad Basin and South-western Niger in Maradi) and the regional level and support SRF strategic ambition	X	
Operational presence in hotspots in project areas (or through RRM mechanisms) to respond to humanitarian and protection needs	X	X
Number of countries in the project areas with an operational presence	3	1
Having a representation in Dakar (Senegal) or commitment to travel to Dakar, taking into consideration the need of in-person meetings	X	X
Being an organisation certified as compliant with the <i>Core Humanitarian Standards on Quality and Accountability (CHS certification)</i> or commitment to apply CHS standards.	X	
Signatory or commitment to sign the <i>Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations</i> .	X	
Active participation in Regional IASC, the Country HCT and/or in national inter-agency coordination mechanisms in the core sectors of intervention of the SRF programme strategy (protection, food security, nutrition, health, cash/livelihoods)	X	
Demonstrated coordination with other humanitarian actors in project areas	X	X
Dedicated technical staff at country and regional level to support joint advocacy initiatives	X	
Number of projects at country and/or regional level involving local partners	3	1

Selection of the non-permanent members (NGO): National NGO board members which are representing national forum and/or regional network of national/local NGO need to match minimum requirements. Minimum requirements (below) are however lighter than for INGO but are also designed based on the ability to influence and their capacity to contribute to the strategic ambition of the SRF. They are selected based on a brief written expression of interest and an oral presentation/discussion led by DRC, FCDO and the Chair of the board. ICVA participates as observer. Minimum eligibility criteria for national NGOs:

- National NGO representatives must justify their election or nomination by the country NGO forums (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Chad) or regional networks (e.g. RBM, WANEP, etc.). The legitimacy of the representation of the forum/network to which the representative-candidates belong and more broadly the group of national and local NGOs in the region should be described in the application form.
- The nominated/elected candidate must work for a national NGO that is registered as a member of the forum/network in one of the 4 SRF target countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Chad).
- The national NGO representative should assume the role of Country Director or equivalent seniority.

Selection of the observer: Upon direct recommendation from the Fund Director to the SRF board, one or more impartial Observer(s) is appointed to act as part of the SRF board. The observer member(s) is identified during the setup phase and when relevant based on the following minimum eligibility criteria:

- Capacity to advise and promote coordination and synergies with existing and future humanitarian funds and response.
- Participation in Dakar in the Inter Agency Standing Committee and in working groups or good knowledge of humanitarian needs and challenges in operationalisation of the nexus in the Sahel region.
- Having a representation in Dakar (Senegal), taking into consideration the need of in-person meetings
- Advocacy role in relation to humanitarian action; humanitarian access and the nexus

1.2. Role and responsibilities of the SRF board

- **SRF programme strategy:** Discuss, suggest amendments and approve SRF programme strategy proposed by the Fund Director based on the charter/mission statement.
- **SRF framework documents:** Discuss, suggest amendments and approve SRF framework documents (Manual of operations, MEAL Framework, the eligibility criteria for the first screening of applications and the evaluation grid to evaluate concept notes and proposals, etc...).
- **Selection of awards:** The SRF board endorses the report presented by the FMU on the initial screening process of concept notes and proposals based on the eligibility criteria for the selection of lead partners which would have been previously endorsed by the SRF board. The SRF board also approves the selection of projects proposals on anonymous basis based on evaluations and briefs from the Chair of the Evaluation Committee. Finally, the SRF board is presented the findings from the due diligence and vetting process of lead partners and their downstream partners for endorsement to initiate the contracting process with selected SRF partners.
- **Oversight on projects' progress:** Make recommendations to the Fund Director in quarterly meetings based on her/his report and presentation of progress of projects funded by SRF.
- **Management of most serious risks:** The SRF risk management framework developed by the FMU clarifies risk ownership, ensures mitigations measures and monitoring tools are in place and concepts are clearly defined; It is reviewed and endorsed by the SRF board. Risks (related to projects) will follow formal escalation requirements to the FMU and to the SRF board. When a risk is moving upwards on the risk rating scale, it means that the potential impact on the organization (DRC) and the SRF is increasing, and thus poses a significant threat on the hosting organisation (DRC) and the SRF strategic ambition. The Fund Director will have the main responsibility of ensuring that the risk register is updated on a quarterly basis and shall submit it to the SRF board. For any risk moving upwards in the top risk category, the Fund Director will be expected to immediately inform DRC, the chair of the SRF board and FCDO to assess the opportunity to call for ad hoc SRF board meeting. Monitoring of all risks identified in the SRF risk register will be formally done on a quarterly basis by the SRF board to ensure the implementation of risk mitigations are well-coordinated between the risk owners. The Fund Director will present the risk dashboard which will include information on: i) top risks identified, ii) assessments of top risks, iii) most challenging objectives, and iv) outstanding action plans. Given the presentation of the top risks, the SRF board and DRC as the main risk owner should determine what risks are acceptable (risk appetite) and develop strategies accordingly. The SRF board will collectively discuss and make recommendations based on briefs from the Fund Director where risks are escalated beyond the risk appetite that has been set, and when mitigation for very high risks are reported as likely to fail;
- **Context analysis on emerging crisis and trends:** The Fund Director provides a brief in quarterly meetings updating on emerging crises and key trends (access and safety, new displacements, food security, protection, etc.). The SRF board makes recommendations with regards to regional working groups and how that interlinkage works, and of joint advocacy initiatives; SRF members or external stakeholders could be invited to provide more in-depth update and analysis on specific topics relevant to the SRF (e.g. INSO, ICVA).
- Engage in **external relations, communication, advocacy and fundraising initiatives.**

1.3. Functioning of the SRF board

- **Chair of the SRF board:** The Chair promotes collective management of the SRF and power-sharing in decision-making. For the initial set-up, FCDO shall appoint the first Chair of the SRF board from its members representing INGOs and after 18 months, the SRF board will nominate its Chair. The Chair has a tie break power on all SRF board votes required to adopt decisions, including those pertaining to Conflict of Interest, to overcome potential deadlocks. The chair leads the meetings by prioritizing topics on the agenda, making sure these topics have enough time to be discussed and that all SRF board members have the opportunity to express their views. The Chair will also monitor the execution of tasks as per the agreed timeline by the FMU in between board meetings.
- **Observers:** The Observer(s) will oversee the transparency and compliance of the SRF board's proceedings to the standards set in the SRF constitution. The Observer shall have no voting right within the SRF board. At the exception of ICVA, observers shall not be entitled to receive any SRF grant.
- **Meetings:** The SRF board meets on a quarterly basis and ad hoc meetings takes place according to needs. At each quarterly meeting, the SRF board receives preparatory papers one week in advance and be briefed by the Fund Director on progress of actions and projects, outcomes of monitoring, most serious risks, contextual analysis on emerging crisis and key trends and other salient matters. In case of a situation where an in-person meeting cannot be organized (e.g. urgency requiring quick decision), the board secretariat will organize a virtual voting system to enable quick decisions between meetings.
- **Votes:** All decisions require a minimum presence quorum. A simple majority (at least half of members with voting rights) constitutes a quorum with at least representativity of key stakeholders: NGO, donor, observer. "Majority" is used as the voting requirement which means more than half of the votes cast. Adoption of major documents (programme strategy, SRF code of ethics, manual of operations etc.) requires a minimum presence quorum of 2/3 of members with voting rights, and representativity of each type of stakeholders: NGO, donor, observer. Results of the votes are registered in the minutes of the meetings which are prepared by the FMU and confirmed by the SRF board at the next meeting.
- **Veto:** If DRC identify a fiduciary, reputational, programmatic or safeguard risk, it reserves the right, upon consultations with FCDO and discussion with the SRF board, to take preventive or corrective measures, including measures not voted by the SRF board or voted against by the SRF board. FCDO is granted the same prerogative for risks impacting them beyond their risk appetite. It would be a conflict of interest for the SRF board to demand changes to the frameworks that would impact DRC's way of doing business (Risk management) and therefore DRC retains a veto on such significant changes.

1.4. Accountability

- As DRC is hosting the Fund, it doesn't have the opportunity to be appointed as Chair of the SRF board.
- The Governance by the board is designed to promote collegial management of the SRF and power-sharing in decision-making as described above.
- All SRF board members with voting rights are required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding describing their responsibilities and obligations and to submit a declaration of potential conflict of interest. The SRF reasserts that all pre-selected SRF board members are bound to disclose any situation that constitutes or may be construed as a conflict of interest before entering the SRF board. Subsequently, any situation which might constitute or be construed as a type of conflict of interest must be notified.
- When there is an issue regarding the implementation of a SRF project for which a board member is a SRF implementing partners, the concerned board member must not take part of the discussion and is not entitled to vote.
- No NGO shall act as lead in more than one consortium.
- All NGO (including board members) can only apply in one consortium.
- The SRF host (DRC) cannot apply to any call for proposal from the SRF.

2. The Fund Management unit

2.1. Composition and responsibilities of the FMU team

Humanitarian Fund Director	S/he exercises strategic leadership i.e. leading the development, management and implementation of SRF regional strategy and MEAL framework, as well as the Operation Frameworks. S/he ensures that the SRF is organised, managed to pursue new funding opportunities while at the same time operating in compliance with DRC minimum requirements, DRC Operations Handbook, FCDO and local legislation requirements and ensuring that proper risk management systems are in place in order to provide appropriate levels of security and controls over the organization's resources.
Compliance and Grant Specialist	S/he will assist the Fund Director on all compliance and risks issues and will perform field investigation if required. S/he will support in the partnership capacity assessment to implementing partners of SRF grantees and due diligence process for SRF grantee. S/he will review financial reports, spending plans, procurement, and staffing plans for each project and flag up discrepancies to the Fund Director on a quarterly basis.

Head of Finance & support services	S/he oversees the SRF financial management which includes final verification and consolidation of the different partners' reports. S/he is the focal point for all financial issues with donors, supervises the audit management and ensures that all the financial guidelines are well understood and implemented both internally and with the partners. S/he is in charge of consolidating the cash flows between the lead partners, FMU and the donors
MEAL Manager	Coordinates the MEAL Team and supports the Fund Director by reviewing the Theory of Change/logic of intervention, result methodology and ensure the project's MEAL system is compliant with the SRF MEAL Framework. S/he will guide the Fund Director through the MEAL framework active implementation. S/he takes a lead role in implementing and ensuring compliance to SRF Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability Strategy and Procedure. S/He organizes and plans the Monitoring field missions of his team members in each project

2.2. Role and responsibilities of the FMU

- **Developing SRF frameworks and calls for proposals:** The Charter, the SRF strategy, the operations manual, the MEAL Framework and Calls for proposals have been developed during the initial phase of the start-up period and presented to the SRF board for discussion, adjustments required and final endorsement.
- **Compliant screening of concept notes and proposals:** The FMU undertakes the first administrative screening of concept notes and project proposals to ensure eligibility based on the eligibility criteria for selection of lead partners endorsed by the SRF board. A report summarises key findings and recommendations for endorsement by the SRF board.
- **Setting up the evaluation committee:** The FMU set up a relevant evaluation committee according to the topics covered in the concept notes. The proposed panel of experts who compose the independent evaluation committee is endorsed by the SRF board.
- **Vetting and due diligence of partners:** The FMU performs the due diligence of the partners using DRC relevant tool. The FMU is also responsible to verify what due diligence process was undertaken by the partners to their downstream partners.
- **Grant & Financial management:** The FMU ensures financial verification of the quarterly reports and the payment requests from the partners. It prepares the global SRF budget follow up, supervises the audit and monitor all financial issues. It reports quarterly to the SRF board by providing financial data such as the burn ratio, the financial forecast and keep them informed on audit findings, financial mismanagement or compliance issues.
- **Monitoring and evaluation of projects funded:** The FMU develops the MEAL framework providing all approaches and Key Performance Indicators. The SRF MEAL team defines further the methodology for the proposed logic of intervention, the identity management and counting methodology. **They will support partners in the development of the TOR and design of their mid-term evaluation and will lead the design for the SRF mid-term evaluation. The FMU MEAL team will be tracking learning, support partners in undertaking corrective actions, collecting and aggregating data to support the overall SRF strategic ambition. They will also define the key learning questions to support an adaptive management strategy for the collective management of the SRF and lead the development of SRF grantee's perception surveys. The Fund Director will present key results of this monitoring to the SRF board every quarter. Mid-term evaluation in line with the MEAL Framework will be conducted by an independent third-party selected through a competitive bidding process and financed by each partner. The key results of the latter will be transmitted by the FMU to the SRF board.**
- **Risk monitoring and escalation of risks to the SRF board:** The FMU consolidates the risk register of SRF funded projects and ensures the risk management framework is implemented. It makes sure the progress on implementing mitigations measures is reported by partners and escalating risks to the SRF board according to the risk appetite and matrix set in the risk management framework. The FMU is directly responsible for the implementation and reporting to the SRF board who provide oversight on the mitigation's measures described in the FMU risk register.
- **Communication and advocacy initiatives:** The FMU reviews and provides a consolidated matrix of all the communication and advocacy initiatives proposed by the SRF grantees. The FMU will propose additional communication and advocacy initiatives to the SRF board based on clear mapping of required resources for review and endorsement and rolls them out.
- **Context analysis on emerging crisis and key trends:** The FMU prepares updates to the SRF board for quarterly meetings providing highlights on emerging crises and key trends (access and safety, new displacements, food security, protection, etc.). The FMU can suggest SRF members or external stakeholders to provide more in-depth update and analysis on specific topics relevant to the SRF (e.g. INSO, ICVA, etc) if relevant to SRF board members.
- **Secretariat of the board:** The Fund Director organises SRF board meetings and prepares meeting minutes and related communications. At each quarterly meeting, the SRF board receives preparatory papers one week in advance and is briefed by the Fund Director on progress of actions and projects, outcomes of monitoring, most serious risks, implications of emerging crisis/ trends on program and policy and other salient matters. The indicative agenda is as follow: 1) agreement on minutes of previous meeting/readouts 2) update on actions if any 3) agreement on context direction and discussion on risks and what this means for programmes/policy 4) where we are on finance of the fund and downstream partners, implementation rates and performance issues 6) updates on any grievance/litigation 7) forward look.
- **Resources mobilization:** The Fund Director actively contributes to joint fundraising efforts.

2.3. Functioning of the FMU

- DRC is hosting the Fund, and as such, has set up the Fund Management Unit (FMU) and ensure it fulfils its mandate.
- The FMU is currently hosted by DRC but has a certain autonomy from it.
- The FMU is composed of a team recruited and hosted by the host at the exception of key position where donors can participate in the recruitment process.
- The FMU team reports to the Fund Director which is in direct supervision of DRC Regional Executive director. However, the Fund Director has also a functional line with the chair of the SRF board.

2.4. Accountability

- The Fund Director is line managed by DRC Regional Executive Director and **ensures secretariat of the SRF board, without being one of its members. S/he** is accountable to the SRF board with which h/she works closely. S/he has a functional management line with the chair of the SRF board. The selection of the SRF Manager is done by DRC, with a participation of FCDO in the recruitment panel to interview final shortlisted candidates. Performance management of the SRF manager will be assessed by the direct management. Feedbacks collected from all SRF board members will inform the performance appraisal. In case of low performance, the board could make recommendations to DRC.
- Due diligence of lead agencies: The FMU organises the Due Diligence Assessment on the lead agencies.
- Due diligence of downstream partners: Lead agencies will in turn be responsible for the Due Diligence Assessment of their partners. The Due Diligence Assessment of the lead agencies will ensure that this is done to a robust standard and both the Fund Director and donors will be able to request sight of any downstream Due Diligence Assessment. Importantly, the final version of Due Diligence Assessment of downstream partners- which includes identified gaps and remedial action required- must be submitted *before* any SRF funding is advanced.

3. Project Evaluation Committee

3.1. Composition of the Evaluation Committee

The Project Evaluation Committee is composed of:

- FCDO advisors
- DRC technical experts
- External consultants (where/if relevant depending on the missing expertise, they will be identified through a competitive bidding process).

The Project Evaluation Committee is accountable to the SRF board, and the selection of its members is discussed and endorsed by the SRF board. This selection will be based on recommendations from the Fund Director who will shortlist candidates based on a transparent selection process (mixed of nomination from FCDO and DRC and selection through bidding process for missing expertise). The selection criteria for the external experts (for missing expertise) are developed by the FMU and endorsed by the SRF board.

The MEAL Manager chairs the Project Evaluation Committee and compiles the recommendations and dissident's views to be presented to the SRF board.

3.2. Roles and responsibilities of the Evaluation Committee

The role and responsibilities of the Project Evaluation Committee are to evaluate each application and to provide evaluations and recommendations according to an evaluation grid proposed by the FMU and approved by the SRF evaluation committee. The evaluation committee evaluates project proposals and submits evaluations with marks, a narrative for each mark and an overall recommendation for review, discussion, and decision-making of the SRF board.

Prior to this evaluation, the FMU ensures screening of concept notes and projects' proposal to ensure eligibility. A report will summarise key findings and recommendations for endorsement by the SRF board.

3.3. Functioning of the Evaluation Committee

According to the thematic tackled in the proposals, the FMU will set up for each funding window an evaluation committee composed of relevant experts. The composition of the evaluation committee will be validated by the SRF board. These concept notes will be reviewed and rated by the evaluation committee according to a scoring board and the chair of the evaluation committee will be responsible to prepare a summary report. This report will include the list of the concept notes organised by their scoring result and a narrative on the evaluation process including dissident's views from the Evaluation committee. The report will also include technical recommendations for areas of improvement of the proposal package (if necessary). The Fund Director will check that the work delivered by the evaluation committee is meeting expected standards before it submits its evaluations and recommendations to the SRF board – which will detail any dissenting views should these occur.

3.4. Accountability

- **Evaluation grid reviewed and endorsed by the Evaluation Committee:** The grid to be used by the evaluation committee to evaluate concept notes and proposals will be developed by the FMU and the evaluation committee which is independent from the board.
- **The Evaluation Committee is accountable to the SRF board:** The FMU ensures that the evaluation committee is established and endorsed by the SRF board, and that it evaluates project proposals and submit evaluations - according to the guidelines approved by the SRF board - for review, discussion, and decision-making of the SRF board.
- **Transparent communication from FMU on selection process:** FMU will ensure the report from evaluation committee is made public to ensure clear communication on transparency and fairness of the selection process.

4. Grievance committee

4.1. Composition of the Grievance committee's members

Permanent members	Non-permanent members
The Chair of the Grievance Committee (FCDO)	Technical experts from organisations members of the SRF board (not receiving funds from the SRF) and Third-party experts on leading high-level and sensitive investigations
The Vice Chair (DRC Safeguarding and CoC adviser)	

It is fully independent from the SRF board.

4.2. Roles and responsibilities of the Grievance Committee

The Grievance Committee (GC) is a permanent mechanism which shall decide on what action is to be taken with reports of grievances, complaints, concern and potential conflicts of interest related to the functioning of the SRF and its integrity.

Roles of the different members	
Chair (FCDO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads the Grievance Committee meetings. Inform the SRF board of the Grievance Committee's decisions. Approves, when necessary, the request and modalities for subsequent arbitration Presents trends and tendencies to the board upon request. Ensures decisions are taken in a collegial fashion
Vice Chair (DRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acts as general Secretariat to the Grievance Committee Calls for meetings upon approval from the Chair. Register complaints in the Grievance Committee database Follows up on the complaints (notifies the different parties) Focal Point for the Grievance Committee Overviews investigations when necessary and upon approval from the Chair Reviews, when relevant, potential secondary opinions from Grievance Committee members when a collegial decision is not deemed to be reachable.
Non-permanent members (members of the SRF board)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attends the Grievance Committee Take part in the collegial decision process launched by the Chair

4.3. Functioning of the Grievance committee

- **Reporting & recording mechanism:** The Grievance committee receives the complaints through the grievance@sahelregionalfund.org address and registers the information in its own dedicated and secured database. Anyone can submit a complaint or report a suspicion this email address. The Grievance Committee meets at the request of its Chair, as soon as practicable, every time a new case is registered.
- **Analysis of the situation:** Depending on initial findings, the Grievance Committee has the power to launch a full-fledged investigation into the case under scrutiny. Investigation on grievance allegations will be performed by the Committee non-permanent members under the guidance and supervision of the Committee secretariat.

The Grievance Committee reviews, assesses, and monitors at a minimum on monthly basis for active cases. The grievance committee will review processes by scrutinising all documents it may require to perform its function.

- **Notification and referral:** Organisation subject of the complaint will be immediately notified by email. In case the complaint relates to Code of Conduct Reporting mechanisms of a SRF partner (beyond Grievance committee scope of responsibility), the case will be referred to the relevant mechanism of this organisation. Members of the SRF board sitting as complainant or subject of the Conflict of Interest shall be prevented from being part of the review/investigation of the case by the Grievance Committee.
- **Decision making process:** The Grievance Committee shall decide on action to be taken by simple majority of its full membership. In urgent matters the Chair may make a preliminary decision. Such a decision, which remains an exception to the rule, shall be recorded and be reported to the plenary of the Grievance Committee, which may review and overrule the preliminary decision. The Committee's decisions and cases must be documented by its secretariat in a dedicated and secured tracking tool.
- **Feedback:** The Grievance Committee shall submit its findings, including conclusion and recommendations, to the SRF board. The Grievance committee shall ensure its recommendations are legally compliant with the country law where the incident take place. In such cases, the Grievance committee can consult the DRC Human resource department for advice (while ensuring confidentiality is maintained). All cases will be presented while meeting confidentiality standards. All SEAH risks/cases will be presented in line with best practices regarding protection of the victims / survivors (survivor-centred approach).
- **SRF board reaction:** The recommendations and findings issued by the Grievance Committee will then be reviewed by the SRF board, which shall adopt them by means of a qualified majority voting. Crucially, members of the SRF board sitting as complainant or subject of the Conflict of Interest shall be prevented from voting and be absent from the room/discussion; in the event of a tie, the Chair of the SRF board shall be granted a tie breaking power. Such necessary action by the SRF board is the second pillar of the grievance mechanism and is meant to ensure that the SRF board is accountable for endorsing the Grievance Committee recommendations and for the follow-up of their implementation. In the event of a proven conflict of interest based on the conclusion described in the investigation report, the Grievance Committee will inform the SRF board on the measures it finds to mitigate the conflict of interest's effects on the SRF's activities, including calling for further investigations and implementing sanctions.
- **Arbitration:** If the settlement of a Dispute is not reached amicably within three (3) months from the date of the decision of the board upon recommendation of the SRF Grievance Committee, either Party may make a written demand for arbitration (see MoU for board members for more details on the process).

4.4. Accountability

- FCDO is the chair of the Grievance committee.
- The board review the recommendations of the grievance committee and vote to endorse them.
- Members of the SRF board sitting as complainant or subject of the Conflict of Interest shall be prevented from voting and be absent from the room/discussion.
- Third party experts with proven track record in leading high level and sensitive investigations (e.g. CHS, OSACO) can be appointed for sensitive cases.