



SRF Governance, structure & functioning

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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 acts as a decision-making organ.
- The FMU which ensures the management of the Funds.
- The Grievance Committee which will reviews any complaints regarding the functioning of the SRF.
- The Evaluation Committee which reviews all the proposals

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1. The SRF board

1.1. Composition and selection

| Permanent members | No-permanent members |
|---|--|
| Representative of the Host | 3 INGO |
| Donors with funds operationalized by the SRF (1 seat per donor, up to a total of 4 seats) | 4 seats for the representation of national organisations (e.g. regional network and/or national forum of national humanitarian NGOs) |
| One observer | Invited observer(s) |

* The Fund Director facilitates the secretariat of the SRF board, without being one of its members.

* Members of the SRF board are non-remunerated

Selection of the non-permanent members (INGO): INGO board members need to match the minimum requirements stated below and are selected based on a brief written expression of interest and potentially an oral presentation/discussion. ICVA participates to the oral presentation as an 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 the strategic ambition of the SRF.

- ✓ Ability to influence by creating synergy between project areas-(hot spots of Liptako Gourma, Lake Chad basin, East of Chad & Southwestern Niger in Maradi) and the regional level and support SRF strategic ambition.
- ✓ Operational presence in hotspots-in project areas (or through RRM mechanisms) to respond to humanitarian and protection needs.
- ✓ Coverage of 3 countries in project areas with an operational presence
- ✓ Having a representation in Dakar (Senegal) or commitment to travel to Dakar, taking into consideration the need for in-person meetings (Quarterly)
- ✓ Being an organisation certified as compliant with the *Core Humanitarian Standards on Quality and Accountability (CHS certification)* or *commitment to apply CHS standards*.
- ✓ Signatory or commitment to sign the *Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations*.
- ✓ 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)
- ✓ Demonstrated coordination with other humanitarian actors in project areas.
- ✓ Dedicated technical staff at country and regional level to support joint advocacy initiatives.
- ✓ 3 national and/or regional projects involving local partners.

Selection of the non-permanent members (NGO): National NGO board members who represent the national forum and/or regional network of national/local NGOs need to match the 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 the host, a donor representative, the Chair of the board and an 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.
- ✓ The candidate represents the interests of NNGOs involved in humanitarian response within their forum/network.

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 the operationalisation of the nexus in the Sahel region.
- ✓ Having a representation in Dakar (Senegal), taking into consideration the need for in-person meetings
- ✓ Advocacy role in relation to humanitarian action; humanitarian access and the nexus

1.2. Role and responsibilities

- **SRF programme strategy:** Discuss, suggest amendments and approve the SRF programme strategy proposed by the Fund Director based on the charter/mission statement.
- **SRF framework documents:** Discuss, suggest amendments and approve by a 2/3 majority the SRF framework documents proposed by the Fund Director. The framework documents include the following: the charter, the fund governance document, and the strategic framework. The Operations Manual is not part of the framework documents validated by the board but remains subject to validation by DRC and FCDO.
- **Call for project proposals:** Discuss, suggest amendments and approve by simple majority the calls for proposals proposed by the Fund Director.
- **Selection of awards:** The Board approves by a simple majority the members of the evaluation committee who will oversee the technical reviews of project proposals. The SRF Board approves the report presented by the FMU on the process of initial screening of concept notes and project proposals against the eligibility criteria for partner selection. The SRF Board also approves the selection of project proposals on an anonymous basis, based on the assessments and scores of the evaluation committee and any comments from the relevant country-level working and coordination groups. Finally, the SRF Board is presented with the results of the due diligence and verification process of the partners and their downstream partners for approval to launch the contractual process with the selected SRF partners. (Appendix 3: Project selection method)
- **Oversight on projects' progress:** The Board is informed of project progress updates prepared by the FMU and is alerted in the event of major underperformance and issues recommendations in such cases.
- **Management of most serious risks:** The SRF risk management framework developed by the FMU clarifies risk ownership, ensures mitigation measures and monitoring tools are in place and concepts are clearly defined (*More information in annex 2: Risk framework*)
 - **Risks related to projects:** Project risks are subject to formal escalation requirements to the FMU and the Board of Directors. As a risk moves up the risk rating scale, the potential impact on the host organization and the SRF increases and therefore poses a significant threat to the host organization and the SRF's strategic ambition. The Fund Director is responsible for ensuring that the risk register is updated on a quarterly basis and will submit it to the Board when a risk increases. In the event of a risk upgraded to a higher category, the Fund Director will immediately inform the host organization, the Chairman of the Board and the donors, in order to assess whether an ad hoc meeting of the Board is required.
 - **SRF-specific risk:** Monitoring of all risks identified in the SRF risk register will be carried out on a quarterly basis by the SRF Board to ensure the implementation of risk mitigation measures is well coordinated between risk owners. The Fund Director presents the risk dashboard, which includes information on: i) the main risks identified, ii) the assessments of the main risks, iii) the most ambitious targets, and iv) current action plans. Based on the presentation of the main risks, the SRF Board and the host organization, as the main risk managers, must determine which risks are acceptable (risk appetite) and develop strategies accordingly. The SRF Board will collectively discuss and make recommendations based on briefings from the Fund Director when risks exceed the set risk appetite, and when mitigation of very high risks is flagged as likely to fail.
- **Context analysis on emerging crisis and trends:** The board analyzes the importance of changes in the environment and their potential impact on the fund's strategy.
- **External relations, communications, advocacy and fund-raising:** The Board decides on the advocacy and communications initiatives to be carried out, and takes these initiatives to external meetings, headquarters and partners. The Board leads resource mobilization.

1.3. Functioning

- **Chair of the SRF board:** The board appoints its chair every 12 months. The Chair promotes collective management of the SRF and the sharing of decision-making power. The Chair reviews the agenda proposed by the FMU and directs the meetings, giving priority to the subjects on the agenda, ensuring that these subjects have sufficient time to be discussed and that all SRF Board members have the opportunity to express their views. The Chair has the power to break a tie vote in all SRF Board votes required to adopt decisions, including those relating to conflicts of interest, to overcome potential blockages. The Chair is responsible for advocacy and communication initiatives, as well as resource mobilization.
- **Vice-Chair:** The Board appoints its Vice-Chair for each 12-month term. He supports the Chair in his role of facilitating board meetings. He supports the Chair in carrying out advocacy and communication initiatives. The host representative and other board members may also play an active role in facilitating meetings as required.

- **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(s) shall have no voting rights within the SRF board.
- **Meetings:** The SRF Board meets quarterly, with ad hoc meetings held as required. At each quarterly meeting, the SRF Board receives preparatory documents one week in advance and is briefed by the Fund Director on the progress of actions and projects, monitoring results, the most serious risks, contextual analysis of emerging crises, key trends and other important issues. If a face-to-face meeting cannot be organized (for example, in the event of an emergency requiring a rapid decision), the board secretariat will organize a virtual voting system to enable rapid decisions between meetings.
- **Votes:** All decisions require a minimum quorum. A simple majority (at least half of voting members) constitutes a quorum, with at least one representative of the main stakeholders: NGO, donor, observer. "Majority" is used as a voting condition, meaning more than half of the votes cast. Adoption of major documents requires a 2/3 majority of voting members, and representation of each type of stakeholder: NGO, donor, observer. Voting results are recorded in the meeting minutes, which are prepared by the FMU and confirmed by the SRF board before the next meeting. For virtual votes, the absence of a vote will be considered as absenteeism. Thus, for virtual votes, abstentions will not be taken into account in the total vote count to determine whether a quorum (simple or qualified majority) has been reached.
- **Veto:** If the host organization identifies a fiduciary, reputational, programmatic or safeguard risk, it reserves the right, after consultation with donors and discussion with the SRF Board, to take preventive or corrective action, including action not voted for by the SRF board or voted against by the SRF board. FCDO has the same prerogative for risks whose impact exceeds its risk appetite. It would be a conflict of interest for the SRF board to require changes to frameworks that would have an impact on the host organization's way of doing business (risk management), and so the latter retains a veto over such significant changes.
- **Rotation:** NGO members of the SRF Board will rotate every 12 months. INGO members will rotate 1/3 in even-numbered years and 2/3 in odd-numbered years. ONGN members will rotate by half each year. Board members will be invited to volunteer to identify the outgoing representative. If none volunteers, a draw will be held to identify the outgoing representative.
- **Replacement:** Appointed board members may be replaced by their deputy or by a person with authority to act in their absence. In the event of departure, the board member will be replaced by the newly recruited person exercising the same function in the organization.

1.4. Accountability

- The host organization does not have the opportunity to be nominated as Chair of the SRF Board.
- Governance via the SRF Board is designed to promote collegial management of the SRF and power-sharing in decision-making, as described above.
- All voting members of the SRF Board of Directors are required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding outlining their responsibilities and obligations (Appendix 1) and to submit a declaration of potential conflict of interest. SRF reaffirms that all pre-selected SRF Board members are required to disclose any situation that constitutes or may be construed as a conflict of interest before joining the SRF Board. Thereafter, any situation that could constitute or be interpreted as a type of conflict of interest must be notified.
- When there is a question concerning the implementation of an SRF project for which a Board member is an SRF implementation partner, the Board member concerned must not take part in the discussion and has no right to vote.
- No NGO may act as a lead partner in more than one consortium.
- Any NGO (including Board members) may only apply in one consortium.
- The SRF host may not apply to any SRF call for proposals.

2. The Fund Management Unit (FMU)

2.1. Composition and responsibilities of the FMU team

| | |
|---|--|
| Humanitarian Fund Director | He/she provides strategic leadership, i.e. directs the development, management and implementation of the SRF's regional strategy and MEAL framework, as well as operational frameworks. He/she ensures that the SRF is organized and managed to seek out new funding opportunities while meeting the minimum requirements of the host organization, donor requirements and local legislation. The Humanitarian Fund Director guarantees that appropriate risk management systems are in place to provide appropriate levels of security and control over the organization's resources. He/she supervises SRF fund managers at country level. |
| Compliance and Grant Specialist | He/she will assist the Fund Director on all compliance and risk issues and conduct field investigations as necessary. He/she will participate in the partnership capacity assessment of SRF grantees' implementing partners and in the due diligence process for SRF grantees. He/she will review financial reports, spending plans, procurement and recruitment plans for each project and report variances to the Fund Manager on a quarterly basis. |
| Head of Finance & Support Services | He/she oversees the financial management of the SRF, including the final verification and consolidation of reports from the various partners. He/she is the focal point for all financial issues with donors, oversees audit management and ensures that all financial guidelines are understood and implemented internally and with partners. He/she is responsible for consolidating financial flows between key partners, FMU and donors. He/she technically supervises the finance team at country level. |
| MEAL Manager | He/she supervises the MEAL team and supports the Fund Director in reviewing the theory of change/intervention logic, the results methodology and ensuring that the project's MEAL system is in line with the SRF MEAL framework. He/she will guide the Fund Manager in the active implementation of the MEAL framework. He/she plays a leading role in implementing and ensuring compliance with SRF's monitoring, evaluation and accountability strategy and procedure. He/she organizes and plans field monitoring missions for team members in each project. |

2.2. Roles and responsibilities

- **Development of framework documents:** The Charter, SRF strategic framework and calls for proposals are developed by the FMU and presented to the Board for discussion, any necessary adjustments and final approval.
- **Operations manual:** The operations manual (including the MEAL framework) is developed by the FMU and is an annex to the contract we have with our donors. The FMU is also responsible for developing contractual and financial management tools and processes (e.g. Grant agreements, and the Grants Management System). Finally, the FMU is responsible for contract management with the contributing donor(s) and for the submission of consolidated bi-annual reports.
- **Call for project proposals:** Calls for proposals are developed by the FMU. In line with the Charter principles, sectoral and geographic priorities are selected on the basis of the country's humanitarian plans and in alignment with the SRF strategic framework. The SRF strategic framework will be reviewed in the light of recommendations from SRF-funded research and evaluation reports. The FMU will also actively engage with relevant coordination mechanisms (OCHA, UNHCR, donor groups, etc.) to inform prioritization and avoid duplication. FMU will continue to identify opportunities for synergies and efficiencies, for example in relation to due diligence assessments and capacity-building initiatives.
- **Selection of concept notes and proposals:** The FMU undertakes the first administrative screening of concept notes and project proposals to ensure their eligibility on the basis of the eligibility criteria for partner selection approved by the board. A report summarizes the main conclusions and recommendations for approval by the board.
- **Setting up the evaluation committee:** The FMU sets up an evaluation committee relevant to the topics covered by the concept notes. The panel of experts proposed to make up the independent evaluation committee is approved by the SRF Board of Directors.
- **Partners' due diligence:** The FMU performs due diligence on the consortia leader or bidding organization and is also responsible for verifying that the due diligence process has been undertaken by the consortium leader with its partners.
- **Financial and contractual management:** The FMU verifies financial reports and payment requests from partners. The FMU prepares the monitoring of the overall SRF budget, supervises the audit and controls all financial matters. It reports quarterly to the SRF Board, providing financial data such as expenditure levels and financial forecasts, and keeps them informed of audit results, financial mismanagement or compliance problems.
- **Monitoring & evaluation of funded projects:** FMU develops the MEAL framework, providing all approaches and key performance indicators. The SRF MEAL team defines more precisely the methodology for the proposed intervention logic, identity management and counting methodology. It will support partners in the development of terms of reference and the design of their mid-term evaluation, and will lead the design of the SRF mid-term evaluation. The FMU MEAL team will monitor learning, support partners in undertaking corrective

actions, collect and aggregate data to support the overall strategic ambition of the SRF. She/he will also define key learning questions to support an adaptive management strategy for the collective management of the SRF and lead the development of SRF beneficiary perception surveys. The Fund Manager will present the main results of this monitoring to the board on a quarterly basis. The mid-term evaluation, in line with the MEAL framework, will be carried out by an independent third party selected through a tendering process and funded by each partner. The main results of this evaluation will be transmitted by the FMU to the SRF Board.

- **Learning:** The FMU documents and disseminates learning related to the SRF strategic framework.
- **Risk monitoring and reporting to the SRF board:** The FMU consolidates the risk register of SRF-funded projects and ensures that the risk management framework is implemented. It ensures that partners report on progress in implementing mitigation measures, and reports risks to the SRF board according to the risk appetite and matrix defined in the risk management framework. The FMU is directly responsible for implementation and reporting to the SRF board, which oversees the mitigation measures described in the FMU risk register. With regard to substantial risks, which have far-reaching consequences for the functioning of the SRF as a whole (from donors to implementing partners), the FMU will endeavor in its risk analysis to put into perspective risk-sharing efforts that cannot be effectively managed by individual organizations.
- **Communication and advocacy initiatives:** They are developed based on evidence and recommendations from SRF-funded evaluations and research. The FMU reviews and provides a consolidated matrix of all communication and advocacy initiatives proposed by the board. FMU will propose additional communication and advocacy initiatives to the SRF board, based on a clear mapping of required resources, for review and approval, and will implement them.
- **Contextual analysis of emerging crises and key trends:** The FMU prepares updates for the SRF board at quarterly meetings, providing information on emerging crises and key trends (access and security, new displacements, food security, protection, etc.). The FMU may suggest that SRF members or external stakeholders provide more in-depth updates and analysis on specific topics relevant to the SRF (e.g. INSO, ICVA, etc.) if this is relevant to the SRF board members.
- **SRF Board Secretariat:** The Fund Director organizes SRF board meetings and prepares meeting minutes and related communications. At each quarterly meeting, the SRF board receives preparatory documents one week in advance and is briefed by the Fund Director on the progress of actions and projects, monitoring results, the most serious risks, the implications of emerging crises/trends on program and policy, and other important issues. The indicative agenda is as follows: 1) agreement on the minutes of the previous meeting/reading of documents 2) update on actions, if any 3) agreement on the direction of the context and discussion of risks and what this means for programs/policies 4) where we are in terms of funding from the fund and downstream partners, implementation rates and performance issues 6) updates on any grievances/litigations 7) future prospects.
- **Resource mobilization:** The Fund Director actively contributes to joint fundraising efforts and ensures that capacity is in place to support the board's effort.

2.3. Functioning

- The host organization ensures that the FMU fulfils its mandate.
- FMU is currently hosted by DRC but has some autonomy from it. The FMU reports to the Regional Executive Director and is independent of DRC's operations in the countries of the region. The FMU remains accountable to DRC headquarters on risk management and works closely together to develop internal frameworks and policies to enable effective fund management.
- The FMU is made up of a team recruited and hosted by the host, with the exception of key positions where donors can participate in the recruitment process.
- The FMU team reports to the Fund Director, who is under the direct supervision of DRC's Regional Executive Director. The Fund Director also has a functional line to the Chair of the SRF board.

2.4. Accountability

- The Fund Director is accountable to the SRF board, with whom he/she works closely, and has a functional line of management with its President. The selection of the Fund Director is carried out by the host organization, with the participation of a donor representative on the recruitment panel to interview shortlisted candidates. The Fund Manager's performance will be assessed by direct management. Feedback from all SRF board members will be used in the performance evaluation. In the event of poor performance, the board may make recommendations to the host organization.
- Lead partner due diligence: The FMU organizes the due diligence assessment of consortia lead agencies and bidding organizations.

- Downstream partner due diligence: Lead agencies will in turn be responsible for assessing the due diligence of their consortium partners. The FMU will examine and evaluate the verification process carried out by the consortium lead agencies to ensure that it has been conducted to the highest standard possible. Please note that the downstream partners' due diligence assessment, which includes any identified deficiencies and the required corrective actions, must be submitted before the SRF funding is released. The final version of this assessment will be available to the SRF donors.

3. Project Evaluation Committee (PEC)

3.1. Composition

The FMU is responsible for proposing a composition of the project evaluation committee that includes expertise in all the fields of activity envisaged in the call for proposals. Proposed members of the evaluation committee may be drawn from:

- Technical experts from the host organization, including the FMU.
- Technical experts from donors who may or may not be funding the SRF.
- Technical experts from other humanitarian partners (INGO or NNGO) with no conflict of interest in the selection outcome
- External technical consultants

The selection of its members is discussed and approved by the SRF board. This selection will be based on the recommendations of the Fund Director, who will pre-select candidates based on technical, thematic and/or geographical experience.

Beyond considerations of inclusion, diversity within the project selection committee is seen as a means of improving transparency and independence. It mitigates the risk of one or more actors disproportionately influencing the evaluation process. In addition, it helps to counteract any bias that might arise from the specific programmatic culture and positioning technique of each organization.

3.2. Roles and responsibilities

The PEC is accountable to the SRF board. The MEAL Manager chairs the Project Evaluation Committee and compiles recommendations and dissenting opinions for presentation to the SRF Board. The role and responsibilities of the PEC are to evaluate each application and provide assessments and recommendations according to an evaluation grid proposed by the FMU and approved by the PEC. The PEC evaluates project proposals and submits evaluations with scores, a narrative for each score and an overall recommendation for review, discussion and decision by the SRF board.

3.3. Functioning

Depending on the themes addressed in the proposals, the FMU will set up a committee of competent experts for each funding opportunity. The composition of the Committee will be validated by the SRF board.

Prior to this evaluation, the FMU checks the eligibility of concept notes and project proposals. A report will summarize the main conclusions and recommendations for approval by the SRF board. The concept notes will then be examined and scored by the PEC according to a scoring table, and the chairman of the PEC will be responsible for preparing a summary report. This report will include a list of the concept notes ranked according to their scoring results, and a description of the evaluation process, including the PEC's dissenting opinions. The report will also include technical recommendations for areas of improvement in the proposal package (if necessary). The Fund Director will verify that the work provided by the PEC meets the expected standards before submitting its evaluations and recommendations to the SRF board - which will detail any dissenting opinions, if applicable.

3.4. Accountability

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

4. The Grievance Committee (GC)

4.1. Composition

| Permanent members | Non-permanent members |
|---|--|
| Chair of the Grievance Committee | Technical experts from SRF board member organizations (not receiving SRF funding) and third-party experts in conducting high-level and sensitive investigations. |
| Vice Chair (DRC Safeguarding and CoC adviser) | |

The Grievance Committee is independent of the SRF Board.

4.2. Roles and responsibilities

The GC is a permanent mechanism that decides on the action to be taken following reports of grievances, complaints, concerns and potential conflicts of interest relating to the operation of the SRF and its integrity.

Chair

- ✓ Conducts Grievance Committee meetings.
- ✓ Informs the SRF board of the Grievance Committee's decisions.
- ✓ Approves, if necessary, the request and terms of a subsequent arbitration.
- ✓ Presents trends to the SRF board on request.
- ✓ Ensures that decisions are taken in a collegial manner.

Vice-chair

- ✓ Provides general secretarial services for the Grievance Committee.
- ✓ Convenes meetings upon approval of the Chair.
- ✓ Records complaints in the Grievance Committee database.
- ✓ Follows up complaints (notifies the various parties).
- ✓ Focal point for the Grievance Committee
- ✓ Examines investigations when necessary and after approval by the Chair.
- ✓ Examines, where appropriate, potential secondary opinions from members of the Grievance Committee when a collegial decision is not deemed possible.

Non-permanent members (members from the SRF board)

- ✓ Attend the Grievance committee meetings.
- ✓ Participates in the collegial decision-making process initiated by the Chair.

4.3. Functioning

- **Reporting and recording mechanism:** The GC receives complaints via grievance@sahelregionalfund.org and records the information in its dedicated and secure database. The specific addresses of SRF donors can also be used and will be communicated on the SRF website. Anyone can submit a complaint or report a suspicion to these e-mail addresses. The GC meets at the request of its Chair, as soon as possible, whenever a new case is registered.
- **Situation analysis:** Based on initial findings, the GC has the power to launch a full investigation into a case under review. The investigation of grievance allegations will be carried out by the Committee's non-permanent members, under the direction and supervision of its secretariat. The GC reviews, evaluates and monitors active cases at least once a month. The GC reviews processes, sifting through all the documents it may need to fulfil its function.
- **Notification and referral:** The organization that is the subject of the complaint will be notified immediately by e-mail. If the complaint concerns the code of conduct reporting mechanisms of an SRF partner (beyond the scope of responsibility of the Grievance Committee), the case will be referred to the relevant mechanism of that organization. SRF board members sitting as complainants or subjects of the conflict of interest will not be able to participate in the review/investigation of the case by the GC.
- **Decision-making process:** The GC decides on the measures to be taken by a simple majority of all its members. In an emergency, the Chair may take a preliminary decision. Such a decision, which remains an exception to the rule, must be recorded and reported to the GC

plenary, which may review and overturn the preliminary decision. The GC decisions and cases must be documented by its secretariat in a dedicated and secure tracking tool.

- **Feedback:** The GC must submit its findings, including its conclusion and recommendations, to the SRF board. The GC must ensure that its recommendations comply with the legislation of the country where the incident took place. In this case, the GC may consult the human resources department of the host organization for advice (while taking care to maintain confidentiality). All cases will be presented in accordance with confidentiality standards. All SEAH risks/cases will be presented in accordance with best practice in victim/survivor protection (survivor-centred approach).
- **SRF Board reaction:** The recommendations and conclusions issued by the GC will then be examined by the SRF board, which will adopt them by a qualified majority vote. It is important to note that board members sitting as complainants or subjects of the conflict of interest will not be able to vote and will be absent from the room/discussion. In the event of a tie, the Chair of the board will have the power to break the tie. This necessary action by the board constitutes the second pillar of the appeal mechanism and is designed to ensure that the board is responsible for approving the recommendations of the GC and monitoring their implementation. In the event of a conflict of interest being established on the basis of the conclusion described in the investigation report, the GC informs the board of the measures it finds to mitigate the effects of the conflict of interest on the SRF's activities, in particular by requesting further investigations and applying sanctions.
- **Arbitration:** If the resolution of a dispute is not reached within thirty (30) days of the date of the board's decision on the recommendation of the GC, either party may request arbitration in writing (see the Memorandum of Understanding for board members for details of the process).

4.4. Accountability

- FCDO is the Chair of the Grievance Committee.
- FCDO's email address can be used to ensure that any complaints against the host organization are registered.
- The SRF Board reviews the recommendations of the Grievance Committee and votes to approve them.
- Board members sitting as complainants or subjects of the conflict of interest cannot vote and will be absent from the room/discussion.
- Third-party experts with a proven track record in conducting high-level, sensitive investigations (e.g. CHS, OSACO) may be appointed for sensitive cases.

5. Annexes

1. Annex 1: MOU between DRC and the members of the SRF Board
2. Annex 2: Risk Framework
3. Annex 3: Project selection methodology