

# Terms of Reference

## CHS Alliance Complaints Committee

### 1. Introduction

In accordance with the CHS Alliance Statutes, Article 24, the Board will have three standing committees:

1. Membership and Nominations Committee.
2. Finance, Risk and Audit Committee.
3. Complaints Committee.

The roles, responsibilities and procedures for each committee are fixed by by-laws. This ToR constitutes the by-laws for the Complaints Committee.

The Complaints Committee is elected by the Board.

### 2. Purpose

As noted in the Alliance Statutes, the committee is established for the purpose of ensuring that: there is a safe and functioning complaints mechanism in place; complaints against member agencies are addressed in line with best practice; and, technical experts quality assure the complaints procedure.

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

The Alliance Board Complaints Committee will be responsible for:

- a) Reviewing the member organisation's determination about the scope of the complaint ONLY if the agency determines the complaint is NOT within the scope of the Alliance complaints policy;
- b) Reviewing the final report submitted by the member organisation;
- c) Deciding whether it is satisfied with the investigation as described in the final report;
- d) Communicating this decision to the Secretariat complaints focal person in written form, signed-off via email by the committee members;
- e) Seeking additional information and clarification from the member organisation if not satisfied with the organisation's report;

- f) Reconsidering its earlier decision based on the additional information and clarification supplied by the organisation;
- g) Communicating the results of the review to the Secretariat complaints focal person;
- h) As a result of the review of the member organisation's reports, the committee may also recommend to the Board that the organisation's Alliance membership be suspended or terminated;
- i) Reviewing lessons learned from dealing with complaints with the Secretariat;
- j) Reviewing the quarterly 'status of complaints' report from the Secretariat.

#### **4. Committee composition**

The Complaints Committee shall be composed of no more than six individuals elected by the CHS Alliance Board. The Committee shall include:

- two CHS Alliance Board members;
- two persons with significant technical expertise in complaints handling and investigations who are not an employee, volunteer or trustee of a member organisation; and
- two persons with significant technical expertise in complaints handling and investigations from CHS Alliance member agencies.

A balance of representation by region and gender should be sought where possible.

#### **5. Quorum**

The committee is considered functional with three individuals present or online at a time to deal with or review a complaint or decision, including at least one Board member. As far as possible gender balance should be maintained.

#### **6. Eligibility criteria**

Potential members of the Committee must meet the following criteria:

- Good knowledge and understanding of how an investigation is conducted.
- Good knowledge of international guidelines on complaints and investigations mechanisms and related procedures.

- Available for dealing with complaints and reviews on short notice and within a given time frame
- Person of good standing with experience of working with aid recipients

## **7. Terms in Office**

Representatives on the Committee are elected for three years, renewable twice (maximum six years).

Except for the independent member, representation on the Committee ceases when the individual no longer has any affiliation with their agency. A call for new nominations will be made and the board will elect.

## **8. Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest**

The Committee will:

- a) Sign a confidentiality agreement covering all matters they address in the course of their work on the Committee.
- b) Sign the CHS Alliance Conflict of Interest Policy as well as the CHS Alliance Code of Conduct. In cases where a conflict of interest exists that makes it inappropriate for a Committee representative to participate in the review of a particular complaint, (including but not limited to, cases in which complaints are brought against a Committee representative's agency), the representative will step down from that investigation process.
- c) Committee representatives will follow the CHS Alliance investigation guidelines when and if conducting an investigation.
- d) When Committee representatives have begun reviewing a complaint, they will complete the review even if their term on the committee concluded part way through the review.