HOW TO MANAGE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A GRM AND ITS PARENT INSTITUTION

8 December 2021

Introductions and ice-breaker

Agenda for this meeting

Topic 1: Operating as an independent mechanism while part of a larger institution

Discussion on topic 1

Topic 2: Transparency & information disclosure at the GRM & its impact on parent organization

Discussion on topic 2

Topic 3: Managing expectations

Discussion on topic 3

Topic 1

Operating as an independent mechanism while part of a larger institution

Operating as an independent mechanism while part of a larger institution

Importance of independence for two essential values:

Fairness

Effectiveness

Each institution will take its own approach

Benefits of independence

ACCESS TO STAFF AND MANAGEMENT OF INSTITUTION

ACCESS TO INFORMATION ABOUT CURRENT PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

ACCESS TO EVIDENCE AND EXPERTISE FROM OUTSIDE INSTITUTION

TRANSLATION OF INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES INTO PROJECT/COMMUNITY SITUATIONS

Hurdles to achieving independence

Residual distrust of outsiders in institution

Specific doubts about GRM as being too independent

No absolute independence - lots of grey areas

Limitations placed on budget and staffing levels

Effectiveness relies on institution's willingness to make changes in projects

The role of GRM size in institutional relationships

Large - size and autonomy in strengthening independence

Small - may mean part-time staff and uncertain budget

- Ensure specific dedication of time
- Establish reporting line separate from line management
- Use consultants chosen for independence, expertise and credibility in their fields
- Recognize limitations even as GRM matures and grows

Possible discussion questions

What challenges have you experienced to your independence?

How have you addressed such challenges?

Have you had feedback from civil society about the fairness of your GRM?

Topic 2 | Transparency and information disclosure at the GRM and its impact on parent organization

What does transparency look like at GRMs?

Build in transparency at the beginning	Online independent registry	Ensure decision-making process is clear and disclosed
Dissemination of key documents in predictable and routine ways	Responsiveness to inquiries and requests	Accessible formats, languages, and means

The value a transparent GRM brings to a parent organization

Clarity of logic regarding findings and recommendations

Promotes long term project success

Credible fact-finding mechanism

A place to refer press and CSO inquiries

Relationship between a GRM's transparency and its parent institution's information disclosure policies

GRM is subject to the information disclosure policy

Who interprets, who decides, and how are different types of info treated?

Managing the GRM's relationship with the PR dept.

Risk in participating in parent organization's public relations initiatives

PR dept. wants to report good news

Possible discussion questions

What does transparency look like at your various parent organizations and how might this affect transparency at your GRM?

For those who have begun to or already crafted transparency policies and procedures for your GRM, has anyone faced pushback from your institution?

How might a newly created and transparent GRM impact the culture of transparency and accountability at your parent institution? And vice versa?

Topic 3 | Managing expectations with your parent organization while executing the mechanism's mandates

Managing expectations

What are the key opportunities for managing expectations?

Emphasize and manage expectations around independence, fairness, and credibility

Inherent imbalance in GRM structure

Take steps to level the playing field

Dispute resolution/problem solving

Range of opportunities when exercising different mandates

Dispute resolution:

Neutral facilitator

Stakeholders drive the process

Equal opportunities for engagement

Capacitate the complainant

Compliance review/investigations

Assessing compliance with own policies	Risk that the institution will be defensive	Attempts at direct control vs other approaches ("collaboration")
Independent fact-finding body	Don't allow institution to influence recommendations	Fact checking is different – but provide opportunity to both sides

Outreach

Raise awareness amongst potential complainants

Address unequal access to information

Requires resources – motivate its importance

Create a safe space by hosting these activities on your own

Create separate opportunities for inreach

Advisory

Lessons learnt through handling cases

Stick to your mandate and area of expertise

Help the institution implement their commitments

Increase uptake and willingness to implement

Possible discussion questions

If you have a split/dual role (i.e., you have non-GRM functions too), how will you manage conflicts in responsibilities?

Have you faced pressure from colleagues to influence the outcomes of your investigations? Do they offer to "collaborate"?

What are some of the steps you can think of to "level the playing field" amongst stakeholders (that haven't been mentioned already)?