



## Suspicion of irregularities in relation to local partner to Danish Refugee Council in Lebanon

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The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has a strategic partnership with the international NGO, Danish Refugee Council (DRC). DRC in turn had a project in Lebanon with a local partner that provided protection services for Syrian refugees. The total grant amount was DKK 10,000,000 from the MFA to DRC, while the contract with the local partner amounted to DKK 1,478,344 for a two-year period (2019-2020).

A whistleblower report pointed to alleged attempts within the local partner to pressure staff into paying back a part of their upcoming salaries to senior management. The amount in question was estimated at DKK 143,560.

DRC launched an investigation following the whistleblower report. The investigation found strong evidence that pressure had been applied to encourage staff to pay back parts of their salaries to senior management. Having confirmed significant breach of contract, DRC formally terminated the partner agreement with the local partner.

Following meetings with the local partner, DRC received all required documentation assuring that payment of salaries to the staff had taken place. As all required documentation was received in the end, no legal proceedings have taken place.

To further improve internal controls, DRC has taken the following steps: DRC has revised the checklist for supporting document requirements and introduced that all staff salaries are transferred through bank accounts. DRC also reviews all the partners' financial documents on a monthly basis and performs spot checks. Furthermore, DRC has provided refresher training on compliance.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs thus regards the case as closed without loss of Danish funds.