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Suspicion of irregularities in relation to DanChurchAid's local partner in Lebanon

With funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (MFA), DanChurchAid (DCA) provides support to the local civil society partner, Development for People and Nature Association (DPNA), as part of their multisectoral project to provide essential, life saving support to communities in Lebanon impacted by the Syrian conflict. A total of DKK 22 million has been granted for the project for the period 2022-2023 of which DKK 5 million has been disbursed to DCA and of which DKK 500,000 was transferred by DCA to DPNA.

In June 2022, the Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF) informed DCA of a whistleblower report concerning alleged financial irregularities related to contract violations by senior management, as well as sexual misconduct involving one person at DPNA. Regarding the suspected amount, DCA did not receive a direct allegation related to the project funded by the MFA. Hence, no specific amount was suspected but the full amount of DKK 500,000 could potentially be under suspicion of misuse. In response, DPNA underlined that they are committed to transparency and accountability, and support legal proceedings against anyone involved.

Several INGO and UN agencies, including The Global Save the Children International (SCI) and UNICEF, have agreements with DPNA and offered to investigate the case. SCI investigated the allegations related to sexual safeguarding, while UNICEF investigated the alleged financial fraud including misuse of DCA's funds. DCA carried out spot checks to assess financial and HR administration, complaints mechanism, and governance procedures of DPNA. No evidence was found to sustain the allegations. Consequently, DCA decided to continue their collaboration with DPNA. As an additional precautionary measure, DCA will only make transfers on a quarterly basis to DPNA, while DCA in Lebanon will monitor DPNA closely.

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