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Suspicion of irregularities with PlanBørnefonden's local partners in the Sahel

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (MFA) has a strategic partnership agreement (SPA) with PlanBørnefonden. Through this agreement, the MFA has supported Plan International Burkina Faso with DKK 33,939,504, of which 49% of this budget is allocated to local implementing partners. Of these partners, The Association for the Development and Integration of Rural Youth, Catholic Organisation for Development and Solidarity, Association for the Promotion and Integration of Youth, and Catholic Organisation for Development and Solidarity received DKK 11,147,030 of Danish funds in the period June 2021 to June 2022. The four partners worked on the PURE project with the aim of strengthening resilience of crises-affected populations in Northern and Eastern Burkina Faso.

In November 2022, a former employee alerted Plan International's Counter Fraud Unit of a risk of potential fraud in regard to the partners. The unit conducted an investigation into the allegations. It concluded that corruption had taken place during tender processes through falsification of documents and fraud when entering the contract. A total sum of DKK 2,330,035 was under suspicion after the final audit. Plan International Burkina Faso has reimbursed the amount to PlanBørnefonden in August 2024, thus confirming no loss of Danish funds.

Plan International sought legal advice, terminated the contracts with the four partners, and ended the collaboration. PlanBørnefonden has received a 3-month no-cost extension from the MFA to complete the PURE project through self-implementation and evaluation. Further steps have been taken to optimize partner and financial management procedures through training, reviews, institutionalized monthly meetings, and onboarding of a new Head of Operations in April 2023 and Country Director in October 2023.

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