

REPORT

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Anti-corruption report 2025



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1 INTRODUCTION

It is an important priority for the Danish Red Cross to prevent corruption in our activities. We unequivocally reject ourselves from any form of corruption and continuously work to prevent, combat, and uncover corruption in all its forms. Danish Red Cross is committed to maintaining the highest ethical standards and ensuring transparency at all levels of the organization. We take responsibility and continuously work to safeguard our integrity in cooperation with our stakeholders – both internally and externally – including participants, members, volunteers, employees, management, the executive board, and other governing bodies as well as partners, donors, and suppliers.

The purpose of this anti-corruption report is to provide a clear overview of the Danish Red Cross's efforts in 2025 to prevent and manage corruption. The report describes the specific measures that have been implemented, as well as the corruption cases the organization has handled during the year. In addition, the report highlights the challenges we face and how we are working to strengthen our efforts and prevent similar cases in the future.

The Danish Red Cross defines corruption as the *abuse of entrusted power for personal gain*. This broad definition includes abuse of power and resources, bribery, as well as improper exchange of gifts or services. Since 2013, Red Cross in Denmark has worked on anti-corruption based on a position paper on anti-corruption. In 2025, we transformed the position paper into a policy that is in line with the latest versions of IFRC's and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' anti-corruption policies. The Danish Red Cross's policy can be found on our website rodekors.dk: [Anti-Corruption Policy 2025](#), and it is integrated into the organization and our international operations and widely shared with our partners in Denmark and internationally.

Overall coordination of Danish Red Cross's anti-corruption efforts is led by the Integrity Committee, which reports to the top management. The HR director is the chairman of the committee. Its members include representatives from several headquarter departments: International, National, Asylum, the General Secretariat, Finance and Recycling, as well as a representative from the Danish Red Cross Youth.

The Integrity Committee is responsible for ensuring that the Danish Red Cross's policies and procedures within anti-corruption are relevant and up to date. The Committee has an advisory role on the implementation and compliance with the Danish Red Cross's anti-corruption policy and prepares an annual action plan, including this anti-corruption report.

2 OVERALL RED CROSS ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS

Awareness of the Red Cross' principles, values, as well as current guidelines and procedures is crucial to combating corruption. Therefore, all employees at the Danish Red Cross – both nationally and internationally – sign our Code of Conduct upon their employment. As part of the onboarding process, employees are also introduced to the organization's fundamental principles, leadership values, and whistleblower scheme, among other things.

To ensure a safe and responsible organization, the Danish Red Cross has a whistleblower scheme. This allows participants in Red Cross activities, volunteers, employees, partners, members, and citizens in general to anonymously report suspicions of potentially illegal or serious matters, such as financial crimes and abusive behavior. The scheme has been developed in collaboration with our external partner, the Danish law firm *Kammeradvokaten*, which handles the initial assessment of reports.

In addition, the Danish Red Cross's international work is certified under the [Core Humanitarian Standard](#) (CHS), which is a recognition that we maintain high standards of accountability and quality in our international projects. CHS certification involves, among other things, a systematic focus on engaging participants and ensuring transparency. An annual external audit contributes to the ongoing work of strengthening our efforts in anti-corruption, access to complaints, protecting participants and staff from sexual exploitation and discrimination, as well as environmental considerations. In 2025, our international operation was re-certified, thereby once again externally confirming that we have well-functioning procedures to identify and manage corruption risks.

In addition to our specific work on anti-corruption, the Danish Red Cross continuously works to ensure that all our activities are carried out in accordance with our seven principles, our Code of Conduct, and other policies. We consider it a foundation for our anti-corruption efforts that our organization, overall, operates with a high degree of integrity and acts honestly and responsibly in all respects, and that both employees and volunteers adhere to our shared values.

In recent years, several complaints have concerned offensive behavior. Therefore, particular focus was placed on this area in 2025, and the Policy on the Prevention of Offensive Behavior for employees was revised. Among other things, the policy was updated in line with international requirements and standards, the zero-tolerance approach was clarified, and guidelines and procedures were made clearer for both employees and managers.

In 2026, an overarching policy applicable to the entire National Society will be developed, which will apply to the entire national association in order to ensure a shared understanding between volunteers and employees of what constitutes offensive behavior could be cases of violations, and that everyone involved in the Danish Red Cross's activities knows both their responsibilities and possible courses of action if they were to experience abusive behavior.

2.1 Cases reported via official complaint channels

In 2025, the Danish Red Cross received 53 complaints through our various channels – 12 were received through our whistleblower portal and 41 via our complaint reporting email. The number of complaints received through channels outside the whistleblower scheme is at the corresponding level as reported for the same period in 2024. The number of reports received through the whistleblower scheme is lower than in the same period in 2024.

A large proportion of the reports, especially from volunteers, concern matters not covered by the whistleblower scheme and have therefore been referred to other complaint channels. Several complaints have been received via the whistleblower portal in 2025, concerning matters related to international projects. These were not related to the Red Cross in Denmark, but typically concerned conditions involving our collaboration partners, including other Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies.

Most complaints fall within the categories 1) offensive behavior, 2) volunteers' behavior and internal conflicts, and 3) dissatisfaction with management in Red Cross branches. Most complaints received in 2025 through both the National Society whistleblower portal and other channels are, however, of a less serious nature.

The whistleblower policy and the associated personal data policy were updated in March 2025. The text on the whistleblower portal on [rodekors.dk](#) was last updated in March 2025. The process and

guidelines for board branches regarding the handling of complaints were updated in May 2025, and standard documents have been prepared for use in connection with information on party hearings.

3 ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS INTERNATIONALLY

In 2025, we strengthened integrity and accountability in our international work through hiring a full-time employee dedicated to preventing and handling cases of corruption.

Preventive efforts in 2025 included contributions to the development of our new Anti-corruption Policy integrating both IFRC's and Danida's standards. For 2026, a plan has been prepared for the rollout of the new policy in our international activities, including training and workshops for all countries and staff. The employee has also worked on handling corruption cases and suspicions thereof, such as advising country offices, registering cases, and reporting to donors (see more below). In the International Department, a new team has been established that brings together integrity and accountability initiatives; the team leads the efforts to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse, to systematically engage participants in our accountability efforts, as well as to reduce the risk of corruption.

The number of reports of suspected corruption increased significantly in 2025 compared to 2024. This increase reflects strengthened anti-corruption efforts, which have created greater awareness of and confidence in our established systems for reporting concerns. This indicates that these mechanisms now function as a routine and reliable part of our work.

Procedures and guidelines for handling complaints (reports) are continuously updated, with particular focus on strengthening the processes for receiving, handling, and investigating the reports. This includes improved coordination with the Red Cross Movement's partners to ensure consistent and accountable practices.

By 2025, we have investigated 32 cases based on 45 reports of possible misuse of aid or corruption in connection with our international cooperation with partners of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement regarding the delivery of humanitarian aid. The reports were received through various channels:

- 3 via whistleblower scheme
- 7 via complaints system
- 7 via Red Cross and Red Crescent societies we cooperate with
- 7 via IFRC's complaints system, forwarded to the Red Cross in Denmark
- 15 via Country Offices
- 7 via other channels

As some of the above reports concern the same issues, the reports have resulted in the handling of 32 cases, of which 13 are closed and 19 are ongoing.

3.1 Closed cases

We have closed 13 cases, of which there was no basis to proceed with four of them and nine have been examined further:

Bangladesh: A case of minor theft from a community center in a refugee camp.

Myanmar and Bangladesh: Allegations of misuse of funds and diversion of aid circulated on social and local media, but none of these allegations were substantiated or linked to DRC supported activities.

Yemen, Syria, and Myanmar: Operational challenges have arisen due to external restrictions and circumstances, including international sanctions, national investigations (unrelated to our projects), and broader liquidity issues.

Syria: Looting of warehouse buildings and destruction of another warehouse building because of the armed conflict in Syria.

Ukraine: Discrepancies in the stock of information material on the risks of mines led the Ukrainian Red Cross to carry out an internal review of the procurement processes. The investigation resulted in the missing information material being found, controls being strengthened, and the staff members involved in the partner organization being dismissed. DRC supported projects were ultimately not affected.

Afghanistan: Concerns from health volunteers regarding inappropriate requests for payment in exchange for tasks led the Afghan Red Crescent to initiate a formal investigation of the complaints. The staff member involved was removed from position, and the case was referred to the national authorities. DRC funds or DRC supported projects were not affected.

3.2 Ongoing cases

We have 19 ongoing cases, of which two are close to being concluded. The ongoing cases are anonymized to protect the integrity of the investigations and inquiries that will continue in 2026. The ongoing cases include financial irregularities, insufficient documentation for expenses, procurement-related fraud, conflicts of interest and nepotism in connection with recruitment, missing assets, abusive behavior in the workplace, unpaid wages, and misappropriation of project funds.

These cases concern the Danish Red Cross's international cooperation in five countries in Eurasia, Africa, and Middle East/North Africa regions. We have informed donors, where required, about the individual cases and provide them with ongoing updates as there is progress in the cases or when they can be concluded.

4 ANTI-CORRUPTION EFFORTS NATIONALLY

At national level, incoming cases are handled both centrally by headquarters and by the management of the local Red Cross branches within the organization, depending on the nature of the case. To ensure the quality of complaint handling, the headquarter supports locally the branch boards in managing complex or sensitive cases.

4.1 Anti-corruption efforts in Red Cross branches and second-hand stores

In 2025, there have been two cases of fraud in Red Cross branches that cannot be accounted for. In addition, there has been a major case of phishing, see details below.

In the Red Cross branches 'Accounting Instructions' are the foundation for work on anti-corruption. The instructions are directed at the boards and especially the treasurers in the Red Cross branches.

The instructions set the framework for good financial management locally and help to ensure that we take good care of our funds in the Red Cross.

In 2025, the headquarters conducted financial audits in 15 branches. The branches were selected partly at random and partly based on input from the branches themselves, input from the national department consultants, the branches' accounts and financial reporting. The audits were carried out by three consultants from the headquarters' finance department. The audits were conducted as a review based on a fixed template focusing on business procedures, the branch's routines concerning banking transactions and handling of cash, as well as a general review of the branch's financial matters (bookkeeping, use of systems, reporting, etc.).

In the supervisory visits conducted, no conditions have been found that indicate there should be errors of a significant nature. It is the assessment that the branches' control environments are overall sound and support correct financial reporting. The supervision has led to new recommendations that the branches document their business procedures in writing. This will therefore be a focus area for the headquarters' cooperation with the branches in 2026.

Furthermore, there are still a few branches where the cashier has sole access to carry out banking transactions. This issue is being addressed in the 'Shared Banking Solution' project. Under this project, all branches will over the next few years switch to the same bank, where it is ensured that multiple people must approve transactions before payments can be made from the branch's account.

The need for a shared banking solution, with more controlled access to enable withdrawals from the branch's account, is highlighted by a significant number of phishing attempts in the spring of 2025. These involve branches where the cashier has received a call from an eloquent fraudster. In a very few cases, the fraudsters have succeeded in having money transferred to an account outside the Red Cross under the belief that they were speaking to the bank or the police. Such transfers would have been more difficult to carry out if there had been two different representatives from the board approving the transactions in the banking system prior to any transfer.

The Red Cross in Denmark's 267 second-hand stores are an important source of income. With 11,000 volunteers and an annual turnover of over 300 million DKK, it is important that there is transparency and security around financial transactions. In recent years, there has therefore been a focus on getting more stores to use the joint electronic cash register system FlexPOS. There are now just fewer than 20 small stores left, where the investment in the cash register system is not profitable.

In 2025, there have been reports of the dismissal of a handful of volunteers from various second-hand stores due to suspicion of enrichment of goods that had been donated to the stores. This is at the same level as previous years. These cases were handled locally. The Headquarters always encourages reporting to the police in cases of theft and assists with this if necessary.

4.2 Anti-corruption efforts in the Asylum Department

The Asylum Department has not had any cases of corruption in 2025.

The Asylum Department's accounting instructions set out the guidelines and controls put in place to prevent corruption within the Asylum Department. The accounting instructions contain clear guidelines for the division of responsibilities in relation to expense management. In addition, they describe the controls applied to cash funds at the asylum centers and centrally, which together are intended to prevent and/or limit corruption.

Procedures have also been drawn up for how cash and cash equivalents are to be handled and stored. Controls are carried out in connection with payments to creditors, manual bank transfers, and payments from debtors.

In addition to the comprehensive internal controls, the Asylum Department is subject to the supervision authority of the Danish Immigration Service, which selects expenditure areas for inspection both through random sampling and unannounced visits to the centers, in relation to the handling of cash payments for residents' allowances.

Generally, in 2025, the headquarters checked the Asylum Centers' cash holdings once a month by visiting the center, carrying out a physical count and reconciling the holdings with the financial accounts. In addition, the Asylum Department itself carries out unannounced cash audits at the locations that handle significant amounts of cash.

4.3 Anti-corruption efforts in the Danish Red Cross Youth

No reports of corruption involving the Danish Red Cross Youth were received in 2025.

In 2025, there have been no complaints related to corruption. In its international work, the Danish Red Cross Youth operate under the Danish Red Cross and thus follows the DRC's procedures and measures to prevent corruption and ensure a sound control environment. There have been no matters to report in the international field in 2025.

The Danish Red Cross Youth's activities with decentralized financial management have provided with separate financial guidelines for sound financial management. This concerns the holiday camp division, where the financial guidance is included as part of the holiday camp's comprehensive handbook. The financial guideline emphasizes that the Danish Red Cross Youth look after the money. The Danish Red Cross Youth hold annual financial courses for the holiday camp leaders, focusing on meeting the stricter supervisory requirements.