

# Humanitarian feedback charity says abuse occurs in all types of organisations and in every country

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The founder of the charity [Talk To Loop](#), which provides an open platform for feedback on experiences of humanitarian aid, has responded to the BBC documentary and related articles about whistleblowers' experiences within the United Nations system: [The Whistleblowers: Inside the UN](#).

Alex Ross, founder and Managing Director of Talk To Loop, said in response to the documentary:

*"The Loop team around the world was saddened to watch the BBC documentary and related articles about whistleblowers' experiences within the United Nations system. It is very disturbing to learn of this scale of abuse and dysfunction. Sadly, we continue to see these types of behaviours and abuse in all countries and all types of organisations, profitable or not.*

"Humanitarian and development workers enjoy a level of trust vis a vis the communities where they serve. Their sole purpose is to help people in crisis and they are expected to work for the benefit of people, and not to cause further harm. This inherent vulnerability of the situation and the consolidated power around access to essential services or goods puts people at even greater risk of abuse."

The Talk To Loop founder, who is a former international program director for British Red Cross, added:

"Within the humanitarian and development sectors there has been a lot of talk, and commitments made, to address these risks and to provide access to services, support and accountability to any possible survivors of abuse. Clearly we are not doing enough; leaving organisations themselves to find solutions is not working, and we continue to see perpetrators not being held to account and survivors and whistleblowers not being treated with respect and dignity. As long as we continue down this same path, accountability will remain elusive and abuse will be ever-present."

Ms Ross pointed out that there have been numerous initiatives to train staff, create a safe working environment and hold perpetrators to account. Some include tools developed by the CHS Alliance, the Resource Support Hub and INTERPOL, among others.

Whilst the Talk To Loop founder acknowledges that these are all important efforts, she argues that there also needs to be an independent, safe place to report if there is not sufficient action being taken or a lack of trust in organisational and institutional systems.

Such a provision needs to be independent yet integrated into the existing ecosystem, to ensure the safety of survivors and whistleblowers, and to give organisations the opportunity to listen, learn, respond and act to bring about accountability and provide assistance.

Loop has been designed to do just that, says Ross. The Talk To Loop platform, launched in October 2021, has already helped victims of trafficking, survivors of Gender-Based Violence, people reporting fraud, and others, to channel their stories to the relevant duty-bearers.

Ross explains:

"We can scale to be an integral part of all organisations' responsibilities to local populations, providing a way for people to report abuse, first or second hand. Loop then refers this on to the appropriate actors and also shares real time aggregate anonymised data on patterns of reporting and patterns of organisational response. This will help to inform funding of assistance, identify risk areas which require attention and to show the scale of concerns in any place.

"Maybe your organisation already has strong tools and systems and processes, but also using Loop ensures that when your project finishes or a community member has experienced abuse from a different, less accountable organisation, they will know about Loop and how to report. Loop provides a direct feedback mechanism so that local people don't have to report to the organisation that may be causing the harm, thereby removing a barrier to reporting abuse."

Ross argues that it takes a whole community to protect the most vulnerable and that all in the community

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have a role. Her hope is that Loop can play its part in addressing the deeply rooted exploitation, abuse and fraud that is too prevalent in the humanitarian sector.

She concludes:

*"We simply cannot continue to rely on culture-change within organisations alone. There are many good people within organisations doing good work but this is not always resulting in a safe environment. To truly be accountable to affected populations, we must have many different avenues depending on how a Survivor or Whistleblower feels safe to raise their concerns and that must include a locally adapted independent mechanism."*

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