

# Stakeholders

The individuals and organisations we interact with on a continuous basis are influenced by the activities we engage in as we assume the roles of a bank, an investor, an employer, and a business partner. Likewise, the actions of these individuals and organisations also influence our business. These are our stakeholders, and by adhering to our seven core values, we focus on building healthy and sustainable relationships with each other.

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

We firmly believe that the relationships we build with our stakeholders are key to our success. Therefore, engaging with our stakeholders in a meaningful and consistent manner is a fundamental part of our decision making processes, and fulfilling our commitment towards responsible and sustainable value creation. We engage with our stakeholders via various means and at a frequency best suited to each stakeholder group, as described below.

### **Investors**

The nature of our business is capital-intensive, and our investors help to ensure our continued growth by providing equity and debt capital. Our responsibility to our investors is to ensure that our growth offers them optimal returns on their investments.

Our Board-approved Corporate Communications Policy ensures that our investors are able to make well-informed decisions about investments in the Bank. Information about our financial performance and progress is made publicly available through the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE), and is also communicated through our Annual Report, press and media releases, and our website. Every effort is made to convey context and insight on the Bank's value creation process.

We primarily communicate with our investors through our Annual Report, the Annual General Meeting, the corporate website, Stock Exchange announcements, press conferences, media releases, the investor relations hotline, meetings, and teleconferences. Key issues debated through these channels include Board governance, sustainable performance, and initiatives to improve shareholder returns.

### **Customers**

Customers are the source of our earnings, and we exist to serve them. The relationship we share with our customers necessitates that we understand their evolving needs and requirements, in order to provide them with a relevant and comprehensive portfolio of financial products and services.

Understanding the interests and concerns of our customers helps us to provide better products and services, terms and conditions, tariffs, service standards, and financial advice. We engage with our customers through our front-line staff, relationship managers, advertising and promotion, media releases, branch personnel, our corporate website and social media platforms, alternate channels, the call centre, surveys, and other automated services.

### **Employees**

Our employees form the backbone of our organisation; they espouse our core values (refer to Institutional Capital on page 51), and it is through them that we achieve our mission and fulfill our vision. We strive to ensure that they are fostered, inspired, and rewarded for their efforts and contributions to our organisation.

The Bank's internal Code of Conduct is accessible to its employees via the internal web portal. The Code of Conduct lays out our business ethics in relation to avoidance of conflicts of interest, insider dealings, unfair business practices, and the confidentiality of sensitive information.

A Whistleblowing Policy is also in place to encourage employees to report any observations of illegal or unethical practices. A Board-approved Grievance Handling Policy and procedure ensures that employees are provided with a fair, successful and productive workplace environment.

We engage with our employees through meetings, performance reviews, the human resources intranet portal, email bulletins, the weekly newsletter, training workshops and seminars, special events, employee surveys, the suggestion box, and grievance procedures.

### **Business Partners**

Our business partners include institutions that provide lines of credit (to manage or to on-lend) and vendors that provide goods and services required for business operations; they are an important constituent of our value chain. With their support and participation, we create sustainable value.

Our international financiers are interested in the progress of programmes financed, social and environmental management practices, compliance, overall health of the Bank, and the latest developments and opportunities. We engage with our business partners through electronic exchanges of information, teleconferences, and participation in review missions.

Where our suppliers are concerned, a Board-approved Procurement Policy has been established. Discussions with suppliers primarily revolve around quality, reliability and pricing, while building mutually rewarding long-term relationships.

### **Regulators**

Regulators protect and enhance the country's financial system through the implementation and enforcement of rules and regulations. By combatting financial crime and protecting consumers, regulators increase market confidence that benefits all involved parties. We abide by these rules and regulations by complying with all applicable legal and regulatory requirements, and conducting our business in an ethical, transparent, and responsible manner.

Discussions with regulators often cover compliance with regulations, business operations, financial information pertaining to the Bank, voluntary guidelines and best practices, new legal and regulatory developments, financial inclusion, and matters affecting the financial sector. In addition to directly engaging with regulators, we also engage with them through industry bodies, through the timely submission of prescribed reports and returns, participation in meetings, forums, task forces, and conferences, as well as media releases and the corporate website.

### **Society and Environment**

The communities we operate in are a source of customers and employees. Therefore, it is our duty to understand their perceptions and expectations of us, and mould our operations and CSR initiatives around them in order to foster mutually beneficial partnerships.

We engage with our local communities through our network of branches and public events. We support them through volunteer efforts and CSR activities that cover entrepreneurial development, education, environment conservation, emergency relief, and sponsor deserving causes. Furthermore, we engage with the media through meetings, press conferences, press releases, and our corporate website.

### **External Interactions**

DFCC Bank is a member of several associations and organisations, and our staff actively participate in activities coordinated by these institutions. Refer to Business Partner Capital on page 75 for a list of industry associations and organisations that DFCC Bank has obtained membership in or established affiliations with.