



## Complaints and Response process

This document outlines ORGANISATION formal complaints and response process. We are committed to providing our stakeholders with safe, accessible and effective channels to exercise their right to raise complaints about ORGANISATION's operations, and for a response to be given.

### Definition of a complaint

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a service, action, or behaviour on the part of ORGANISATION or any of its partner organisations.

A valid complaint is one about actions for which ORGANISATION and/or our partners are responsible, and must be both relevant to and within the control of ORGANISATION and/or the partner organisation.

Both ORGANISATION and its partners should be held accountable for the promises and the commitments we make, what we do, and how we do it.

- EWB cannot respond to a complaint about:
- Other organisations (except partners)
- Issues not related to our programmes
- Local or national government, local authorities, etc.
- Individual request for support outside of our programme/project activities.

For these types of complaints, we should, as far as we reasonably can, assist the complainant to make a safe referral to the appropriate body.

### Who can make a complaint?

Individuals raising complaints about ORGANISATION may include, but are not limited to:

- Any staff member of ORGANISATION or a partner organisation
- Beneficiaries of projects programmes delivered by ORGANISATION or its partners
- Non-beneficiaries within the area where ORGANISATION or its partner work if their complaint relates to our programme or that of our partner organisations
- Delegated representatives of our beneficiaries
- Any other stakeholder affected by the work of ORGANISATION including local leaders, government representatives, representatives of other agencies, etc.
- Members of the public
- Our suppliers

**How to make a complaint?**

Formal complaints can be made either directly from the complainant or via someone acting on their behalf.

**For complaints about suspected cases of fraud or corruption**, the following channels monitored by the Internal Auditor should be used:

Internal Auditor, ORGANISATION marked “Confidential” by email to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary General by telephone to: \_\_\_\_\_ during official office hours.

Incidents will be handled in compliance with the **reference is made to the anti-Corruption Policy**. In order to ensure confidentiality, only the *Secretary General/Internal Auditor* or his/her delegate will open complaints submitted through these channels.

For **harassment/abuse incl. child abuse or sexual abuse** *Secretary General*, marked “Confidential” by email to: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Secretary General* by telephone to: \_\_\_\_\_ during official office hours.

In order to ensure confidentiality, only the Secretary General/Internal Auditor or his/her delegate will open complaints submitted through these channels.

**For general complaints** the following channels will be monitored Administration:  
Marked “Complaint” by mail to: \_\_\_\_\_ or by telephone to: \_\_\_\_\_  
during official office hours. A voice mail/answering phone facility will be available outside of these hours.

In order to ensure **confidentiality**, only authorised delegates of the Complaints Management Committee will open complaints submitted through the above-mentioned channels.

**Confidentiality**

Confidentiality is a principle that restricts access to and dissemination of information. Confidentiality helps create an environment in which people are more likely to raise ORGANISATIONS or complaints, or to stand in witness against bad practice or incidents of abuse. People might not raise ORGANISATIONS if they fear reprisal or retaliation from ORGANISATION or its partner or any other stakeholder in so doing.

Confidentiality ensures that information is shared on a strict need-to-know-basis with a limited number of specified people for the purpose of taking action. The procedures must ensure reasonable confidentiality and security of all relevant records and documents in compliance with the Data protection policy.

Breaches of confidentiality will be taken very seriously and may result in disciplinary action against any staff member involved.



### **What happens after the complaint is made?**

- 1) Board will establish a Complaints Management committee, who will review and acknowledge the complaint within ten working days on receipt of the complaint.
- 2) We will send the complainant an acknowledgement of having received the complaint and give a date when the complainant can expect to be informed about the process being followed to handle the issue. Periods for handling complaints will vary depending on their nature. We will keep the complainant informed throughout the process.
- 3) In the event that the complaint is about an issue that falls outside the control of ORGANISATION, we will advise the complainant of this in the acknowledgement letter.
- 4) Depending on the nature of the complaint, the *Secretary General* or Complaints Management Committee will identify the appropriate person to provide a response.
- 5) If the matter can be resolved directly, the designated person will provide a prompt response.
- 6) If the matter needs to be investigated, appropriate people within the organisation will be appointed to conduct this confidentially. Only a limited number of persons who need to know about the complaint will be informed. Investigations will be carried out. In instances where appropriate action is, required ORGANISATION reserves the right to keep the action confidential.

### **What happens if the complainant is unhappy with our response?**

Should the complainant not feel satisfied with the response received despite having had the opportunity to request further clarification or feedback, s/he can submit a formal written appeal directly to the administrative staff, who will pass it on to a member of Board, who is not involved in the complaint or its management. The Board member will review the management of the complaint and determine whether it has been handled properly.

This can be done in writing by mail post, marked "Confidential" to the Office or by e-mail.

At this point, the case will be reviewed, the procedures followed, the investigations conducted, the outcomes and the actions taken to date will be assessed. The Secretary General/Board member or by him/ her designated staff will respond and keep the complainant informed about the appeal process.

The response to an appeal is final in terms of the EWB complaints and response process although the complainant might continue to pursue the matter legally.



**Situations where EWB will stop responding to a complaint**

No complaint feedback will be ignored and we will treat everyone who makes a complaint with courtesy and respect. In return, we expect complainants to raise their complaints fairly and appropriately. In cases where complainants harass staff, behave abusively or unreasonably pursue their complaint, we reserve the right to withdraw our investigation of their complaint. In all such instances, the complainant will be informed by the that we do not propose to consider further, or correspond about, the complaint or any specific points raised in the complaint and the reasons for it.