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For Youth Business Innovation Network

Complaint and Response Mechanism Policy (CRM)

Mekelle-Tigray, Ethiopia

January 5, 2023





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Our Identity:

4YBIN is a non-governmental, local humanitarian organisation dedicated to the reduction of suffering and working towards the ultimate elimination of extreme poverty in In Tigray region.

Our Vision for Change:

A world where no-one lives in poverty, fear or oppression; where all have access to a decent standard of living and the opportunities and choices essential to a long, healthy and creative life; a world where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Our Mission

Talented entrepreneurial youngsters and women can contribute significantly to the development of the local economy. Vision of 4YBIN is becoming the leading Ethiopian civil society organization in providing excellent entrepreneurship and business incubation support to youth within 10 years.

To achieve this mission, we engage in long term development work, respond to emergency situations, and seek to address the root causes of poverty through our development education and advocacy work.

Our Goals

Goal of 4YBIN is to provide youth comprehensive support packages to start their own businesses including business idea generation, business plan development, entrepreneurship and technical training, technology selection, financing start-ups and creating market linkages.





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Executive summary

CRMs are formal mechanisms to help us to understand our programs from the beneficiaries' perspective, giving us the information to adjust our programs to best meet beneficiary community needs. There are many benefits, including:

Dignity and empowering stakeholders

- *When stakeholders have an issue, they are heard and responded to. Stakeholders' issues are not ignored.*
- *Stakeholder issues and opinions can be incorporated in to program implementation and future program design, increasing their influence.*
- *Aspects of programs that inadvertently reduce the dignity of stakeholders can be identified and addressed. Discouraging corruption, theft, abuse*
- *People who intend to engage in harmful activities are aware that anybody is able to identify and complain about them. The CRM in this case can act as a deterrent.*
- *Cases of corruption, theft and abuse are more likely to be identified and addressed.*
- *Increased transparency*
- *Managers are aware of the issues faced in the field, and can support field staff to resolve them.*
- *Beneficiaries can question World Vision actions and be given a response, increasing their trust and understanding of the program.*

Improved programming

- *Mistakes are identified and can therefore be acted upon and improved.*
- *Suggestions are heard and taken on board.*
- *Difficulties faced by stakeholders in accessing the program are understood and can potentially be minimized.*
- *Targeting is improved through identification of inclusion and exclusion errors and allowing for complaints during the selection process, improving the effectiveness of the program.*
- *Stakeholders including donors and partners can have confidence that issues will be raised and addressed. Some may have access to the reports on issues to increase their understanding of the program. Saving money*
- *While it is time consuming to listen to and address issues, once the issues are resolved the program will be more effective, and can be more cost-efficient particularly through improved targeting. World Vision found this to be the case, saving millions in Sri Lanka, as detailed in the Business Case referenced below.*
- *Improved relationships with communities*
- *CDA's Listening Project (referenced below) found that beneficiaries feel that the aid industry is becoming systematised and is not engaging with communities sufficiently to address real issues and have the most effective programs. A CRM is one method through which to communicate and develop relationships and trust with stakeholders.*





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1. Introduction

Most staff will have experiences of meeting people who are not fully happy with the work or behavior of 4YBIN or partners in their community or region. Most of this feedback or complaint is received informally e.g. people approach staff who are visiting the community, or visit 4YBINs office in search of assistance or resolution to their problems or grievances. Even when 4YBIN seeks feedback more formally during participation or monitoring event, the responses received can often relate to a completely different topic. It is not unusual for staff monitoring a water and sanitation program, for instance, to be approached about a food distribution program taking place in the same community. It is also not unusual for staff of one agency to receive a complaint about another agency. Receiving feedback, suggestions and complaints about our work is normal, important and should be welcomed.

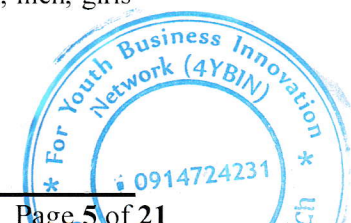
But what happens to these complaints? There are many positive examples of field staff immediately resolving issues whilst in the community, through conversation, sharing information or taking action on the spot. There are also many examples of more serious issues being conveyed back to the office and corrective action being taken. However, there are also many examples that show that staff, already overwhelmed with day to day emergency activities, find it difficult to manage the informal feedback and complaint they receive; complaints may not be prioritized, may be forgotten, or lost. A constant stream of visitors at the 4YBIN field office interrupts work and can also add to the stress and frustrations of both staff and community members, who can be poorly dealt with or turned away. Tensions can arise when a complaint is received about a member of staff and it is not clear how this complaint will be dealt with and by whom.


In addition, the reality of humanitarian situations also means that sometimes vulnerable community members may find it difficult or impossible to complain through 'normal' participation or feedback opportunities, due to fear of retaliation or lack of trust.

What we aim for is a more *formalized system* of soliciting, receiving, processing and responding to the feedback and complaints we receive. Moreover we aim to provide a *safe, non-threatening and easily accessible* mechanism that enables even *the most powerless* to make a suggestion or complaint. On the part of 4YBIN, this requires us to address and respond to all complaints, and to be timely and transparent in our decisions and actions.

The opportunity for communities (both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) to provide CARE with their feedback and complaints, and in exchange to receive feedback or response from CARE, is an important part of being accountable. This also applies to other key stakeholders, such as our partners, or local authorities, and also to our staff.

A *complaints mechanism* is the newest and most visible part of an accountability system, and as a result can grab the attention of those keen to strengthen their accountability to disaster affected communities. However accountability is about more than this. Having a complaints mechanism should not mean that we put less emphasis on our ongoing efforts to involve women, men, girls and boys from day one of our response. (See section, link)



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Whilst a formalized mechanism is a relatively new concept, experience has already begun to show that it can have enormous benefit for both communities and for 4YBIN staff. It can help to establish a relationship of trust between staff and communities and improve the impact of our response. It can help save time and money that would otherwise be wasted. It can help build a safer organization and safer environment for our staff, and for our beneficiaries, especially the most vulnerable amongst them. On the other hand, setting up a mechanism that does not function well (for example if complaints are not followed up) may contribute to frustration and worsening relationships with communities and local stakeholders.





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A feedback, complaints and response mechanism can, for example:

Help 4YBIN to:

- Learn from beneficiaries, communities and other stakeholders and be responsive to their views, opinions and complaints, so improving the quality and impact of our work
- Contribute to the real time analysis of the impact of our work, including satisfaction of beneficiaries, and the extent to which the most vulnerable are being reached and their needs met
- Identify problems as early as possible – from the less serious to the most serious, such as:
 - o Assistance not reaching the most vulnerable
 - o Assistance not having the desired impact or having unintended negative impacts
 - o Poor quality of relief items or hardware
 - o Poor process (e.g. identification of beneficiaries, or participation)
 - o Gaps in information provision
 - o Security issues
 - o Misuse of assistance by staff or communities (fraud or bias)
 - o Poor behavior or attitudes of staff
 - o Sexual exploitation and abuse
- Protect the safety and dignity of those who make a complaint, as well as those who are complained about; and provide a non-judicial but respectful means for addressing grievances, and the provision of redress where it is required
- Share information through the process of receiving and responding to feedback and complaints
- Support project and field staff to effectively manage feedback and complaints and to respond appropriately to less serious and more serious complaints, that can otherwise put certain staff under a great deal of stress
- Demonstrate our commitment to the rights of communities and our humility and commitment to achieving our goals

Help the most vulnerable community members to:

- Safely voice a complaint or grievance about 4YBIN's programming or staff, and to receive redress if required
- Influence the progress, quality and impact of a project in their community
- Hold 4YBIN to account





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Some definitions

Feedback:

People have a right to have their voices heard in judging our response to their emergency. Asking for the views of the affected population can help us understand the difference we are making during the course of the response, and not just at the end of a project, or when the crisis is over (GEG)

Complaint:

A complaint is a grievance made by an individual(s) who believes that a humanitarian agency has failed to meet a stated commitment. This commitment can relate to a programme or project plan, beneficiary selection, an activity schedule, a standard of technical performance, an organisational value, a legal requirement, or any other point. Less serious complaint may relate to poor quality or performance, more serious complaint to fraud, abusive behaviour or sexual exploitation (HAP)

Whilst a complaint in itself is negative (a grievance), making and complaint and seeking redress can be a positive process.

2. How can we set up a formal and safe feedback, complaints and response mechanism?

Although setting up a CM is challenging, it usually means building upon existing systems rather than setting up something entirely new. A CM is an important part of our *monitoring systems*, operating alongside other monitoring activities.

Communicating clearly to staff, communities and government institutions about why 4YBIN has a complaints mechanism, what it is for and how it works is absolutely crucial to its success. As such information sharing about the complaint's mechanism needs to be integrated into the *communication strategies* of program and the emergency as a whole. (Link to communications sections/information sharing with communities)

To the extent possible, the CM should also build upon local structures and systems of addressing complaints and dealing with grievances in the community. In the eyes of the user, this will facilitate and strengthen the legitimacy of the mechanism. At the same time, it is important to bear in mind power dynamics to ensure that vulnerable groups are not excluded. In emergencies we can work in new communities with existing community institutions or representatives that are new to us, and who may not represent those they *claim* to represent. Using such institutions or leaders as the *only* channel for complaint can exclude the most marginalized and most powerless. It is also important to consider the possibility of complaint about the misconduct of community members themselves, or of the staff working in the community. Relying on these same (often powerful) people as channels for complaint can also prevent people from lodging legitimate grievances.

Given the differences from one operation to the next, one standard CM cannot be developed to fit all program contexts.

As much as possible, the CM should be designed with future sustainability in mind. A future scenario may be to have the system managed by local government, and incorporating the work of all actors in the area, with communities understanding how these NGO and government systems work, and able to demand the accountability that is their right.





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3. Challenges, lessons learned and suggestions for good practice

Complaints procedures can be simple, although they need to be carefully planned and follow certain key principles. A badly designed or managed complaints procedure can be harmful. Here are 10 discussion points and suggestions for good practice to help establish a complaints mechanism

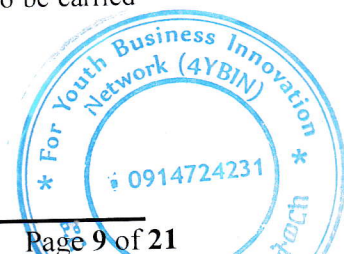
- That is **appropriate**
 - That is **safe**
 - That is **well understood**
 - That **promotes transparency**
 - That is **timely**
 - That is **effective**
 - That is **accessible to all**
1. **Plan and budget** for a complaint's mechanism from the beginning of an emergency
 2. Build **staff awareness and commitment** to a complaints mechanism
 3. Design a complaints mechanism made up of a **range of ways** people can complain
 4. Design a complaints mechanism that can handle **extreme cases of fraud and abuse**
 5. Be clear about the **scope** of the complaints mechanism and communicate this clearly
 6. Develop a complaints mechanism **procedure document and always follow the established procedure**
 7. Clearly **communicate** the complaints mechanism to all key stakeholders as part of overall information sharing systems
 8. **Complete the feedback loop**: use the complaints data to improve overall performance and to provide feedback to communities (two way communication and feedback)
 9. Be clear on **roles and responsibilities** in managing complaints, and provide adequate training and support to staff
 10. **Monitor** the complaints mechanism to verify that it is effective

4. Plan and budget for a CM from the beginning of an emergency

A CM is designed for the whole response and is adapted for different geographical areas and for the types of interventions in those areas. Ideally it is designed from the earliest stages of a response and continues sometime after 4YBIN has exited from communities. Although many programs will have been set up without a complaints mechanism, it is still better to set them up later than not at all.

They require resources to set up and maintain. Complaints mechanisms should be planned and budgeted from the beginning of an emergency response (link to 'resourcing accountability' section) and built into project budgets.

Although a separate complaints mechanism is not required for each individual project, it must be seen as part of the core work of project teams, and not as something that is parallel to be carried out by dedicated accountability staff only (link roles and responsibilities section)





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The challenges of setting up a CM for an emergency response will be much easier if emergency preparedness has addressed this issue and if CM is already a part of **4YBIN**'s organizational make up (e.g. including its practice within long term programming).

Budget flexibility is needed in order to respond fully to some of the suggestions raised by beneficiaries. Set aside funds to help address complaints e.g. eligible beneficiaries who have been left off distribution lists. Budget flexibility by donors and by **4YBIN** is needed to help respond to suggestions raised by beneficiaries.

5. Build staff awareness and commitment to a complaint's mechanism

Staff commitment to manage and use a complaints mechanism is a critical factor for its success. Team discussions and awareness raising materials can be used to build staff understanding and appreciation of the importance of complaints. Issues to highlight to staff include:

- The rights of disaster affected communities
- **4YBIN**'s organizational commitment to manage complaints
- The benefits and challenges of a complaint's mechanism

A complaints mechanism however always risks being seen as a threat by staff. In **4YBIN**, fear amongst staff that the newly established complaints mechanism would threaten their jobs was an obstacle that needed to be overcome. This was eventually overcome through clear communication with staff about the complaints mechanism, reassurance that a complaint received did not mean that staff would lose their jobs learning by doing, and a gradual acceptance that the complaints mechanism actually improved their relations in communities, and the quality of our work.

6. Design an appropriate complaints mechanism made up of a range of ways people can channel their complaint

Community members need to be able to submit complaints in ways that suit them and that takes power dynamics, cultural, geographical, and protection and safety issues into account. Women, men, children, the elderly, the non-literate, people living with chronic illness, people with disabilities, communities located in remote areas all need to be able to submit complaints with relative ease and confidence. A range of measures may therefore be required to ensure that the mechanism is accessible to all groups, including the most vulnerable and socially excluded.

Staff can be a good source of knowledge about what methods could be appropriate in the context. Ask staff to anticipate the most common types of complaints and consider whether an information campaign could pre-empt and reduce these.

Consulting with community members and other stakeholders on appropriate methods is also important and should be carried out whenever possible. Involving other actors (partners, government and communities) can also safeguard against excluded actors feeling threatened, and possibly undermining the process. Secondly it can help the agency to consider ways of handling complaints that already exist within existing national and local institutions and at the community level.





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Before consulting beneficiaries, staff should agree the local language terminology to be used and consider any context-specific sensitivities (e.g. when consulting communities where traditional leaders expect to be the sole channel of complaint, or when working in areas where security forces may be suspicious). During the consultation process, beneficiaries and their representatives should be provided with clear information regarding the purpose and rationale for complaints handling.

Methods used in recent emergencies include staffed telephone number, dedicated visiting hours in 4YBIN offices and other location, post-boxes in strategic places in district centers, villages and 4YBIN field offices, email service and village complaints and compliments book. In isolated communities, CARE and communities must be creative in finding ways to communicate, and direct contact and focus group discussion for the purpose of soliciting opinions, concerns and complaint with vulnerable groups may be a necessary solution.

Is it necessary to use the word 'complaint'? There is often concern about promoting a 'culture of complaining' by using the word complaint (as opposed to feedback or suggestions). In some contexts it can also be culturally inappropriate, or simply can be difficult to translate. However, it is good to take stock of this and challenge any assumptions. Welcoming complaints, as well as suggestions to help 4YBIN improve its work, makes it clear that the agency is willing to provide redress when justified, and is a demonstration of humility in the face of our commitment to meet our principles and our goals.

Complaints handling when working through partners

When working through humanitarian partners, special consideration is required. The complaints mechanism needs to enable beneficiaries to complain to both the humanitarian partner and to 4YBIN itself; as well as to enable the partner agency to complain to 4YBIN about its own concerns. Consultation with partners is therefore crucial.

A complaints mechanism for staff

A complaints mechanism should also be in place to deal with staff complaints, which may also require a separate channel for complaint (see below).

7. Design a complaints mechanism that can handle extreme cases of fraud and abuse

Complaints mechanisms need to be designed to handle extreme cases of abuse. Although less frequent, extremely sensitive complaints about fraud, theft, violence, intimidation and sexual exploitation and abuse need to be handled by 4YBIN.

All allegations of staff misconduct received from external stakeholders or other staff (also referred to as whistle blowing) must be investigated according to the official investigation procedures of 4YBIN. 4YBIN is required to have formal investigation procedures that adhere to the principles of confidentiality, independence and respect and that meet legal standards. The CM needs to provide clear assurances that sensitive complaints can be submitted through different channels (e.g. straight to the Human Resources Director or a nominated person) and that they will be treated separately and confidentially.





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Know 4YBIN's procedures for dealing with serious complaints against staff. Building Safer Organization's also provides guidelines on receiving and investigating allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation by humanitarian workers and details of the investigation process .

The idea is that trust in the system, and its confidentiality, will keep the number of anonymous complaints to a minimum as these will be much harder to investigate. However, anonymous complaints may still be received and the imperative to investigate serious complaints, such as sexual abuse of a project participant by a particular staff member, will present challenges. We need to keep learning about how to deal with such situations.

In the case of allegations of illegal activities, agencies may need to take legal advice, and in many cases may need to launch an investigation which may make the complainant reluctant to be exposed. Referral processes will also need to be in place.

1. Be clear about the scope of the complaints mechanism and communicate this clearly

There should be limits to the type of complaints solicited. 4YBIN can only adequately deal with complaints that are within our realm of authority and complaints should only be encouraged about activities and functions which 4YBIN is claiming responsibility for. Communities should have the right to complain about anything linked to 4YBIN and partner's activities and how we are measuring up to our own commitments, policies and standards e.g. humanitarian plans, accountability, quality of delivery of assistance, behavior of staff. What type of complaints 4YBIN is soliciting should be communicated clearly.

If complaints are submitted that 4YBIN cannot deal with, we need to notify the complainant why this is the case, and provide referral where appropriate. Where national or international law has been broken a clear referral system should be in place.

Consider developing joint mechanisms with other agencies on the basis that joining forces with can reduce costs per agency, increase overall response performance, and also raise the level of mutual transparency and trust to new levels. Often several agencies are operating in the same geographical area. Also it can often be the case that beneficiaries respond to open channels for about their problem, and are not so concerned with the issue of who their problem is directed towards)

8. Develop a complaints mechanism procedure document and always follow the established procedure

The complaints mechanism needs to be well documented. This can help describe the established process, and help ensure it is well understood.

No complaint should be ignored and 4YBIN should always follow its own procedures strictly (including confidentiality when requested). Keeping to procedure will help build trust in both the system and in 4YBIN. On the other hand, an unreliable system may mean people do not use it, and overall trust may be undermined. The formal nature of the mechanism will help to Establishing a realistic timeframe is important, and a maximum timeframe for following up and resolving valid complaints must be met. What we aim for is a timely process that can help 4YBIN become a more



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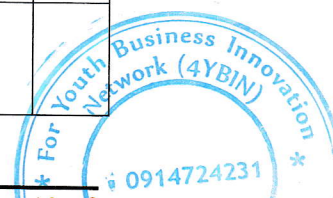
responsive agency. Early on in an emergency response, timeliness is also necessary to ensure the most vulnerable can meet their most urgent needs e.g. verifying and correcting beneficiary lists to ensure the most vulnerable are not left outside of the response.

In some cases the issue may not have been solved within the established deadline, in those cases 4YBIN staff must return to the complainant and provide information about the status of the complaint and agree upon a new timeframe.

All issues outside of the control or responsibility of the agency should be explained in the procedures document, and the document must be clear on the steps to be followed if this is the case. All complaints should be dealt with sensitively and confidentially. The safety and protection of both those submitting complaints and those handling them is paramount.

A complaints mechanism document should contain at least the following basic information:

No	Checklist for complaints mechanism procedure document	y/n
1	Statement of <u>purpose</u> and <u>organizational commitment</u> to handling complaints, including the rights of beneficiaries, and disaster affected populations to make a complaint	
2	Statement of <u>parameters</u> and limitations of the procedure <ol style="list-style-type: none">Definition of what makes a valid complaintCriteria to help clearly identify between different types of complaint (e.g. serious and less serious complaints)Explain that only complaints about activities or decisions within the control of the agency can be handled	
3	Statement of <u>referral</u> to explain what will be done with complaints received that fall outside of the agency's control	
4	Statement of <u>confidentiality</u> wherever requested by complainant. <ol style="list-style-type: none">Assurances of confidentiality and non-retaliation (particularly for complaints relating to gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse given the social stigma associated with this and the very real danger that women/children reporting such abuse could face from perpetrators, and from their own families and communities)	
5	Explanation of <u>methods</u> for submission of complaints <ol style="list-style-type: none">Methods that will be usedDetails on how the complaint will submitted and registered	
6	Explanation of <u>steps</u> to be followed once the complaint is submitted and the <u>timeframe</u> for processing the complaint <ol style="list-style-type: none">Analysis of complaints receivedInvestigationIdentification of appropriate remedial action to be taken, including informing complainant of reasons why no action will be takenImplementation and monitoring of remedial action	
7	Explanation of <u>roles and responsibilities</u> of staff (HQ and field based) in implementing the procedure. This should include explanation of how decisions are made for	



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	a. Less serious complaint	
	b. Serious complaints	
8	Identification of <u>resources</u> that will be required	
9	Explanation of <u>mechanisms</u> for monitoring the functioning and effectiveness of the complaints handling, and for making sure data received informs future decision making	

Complaints handling when working through partners

When working through partners, the procedure needs to be documented, accessible and understandable to partners, and needs to include, *in addition to the above*:

- The right of beneficiaries to complain directly to the agency instead of going through the humanitarian partner [contact details of the agency should be given on all information material concerning the complaints-handling procedures
- Commitment of the humanitarian partner and agency to give a response
- Commitment to refer complaints that the humanitarian partner and agency are unable to handle
- Outlines the process by which the humanitarian partner can complain to the agency and vice versa

Recording complaints

Develop a standard feedback and complaints form and provide clear guidance to staff on how to use it and when it needs to be used. This will help ensure each complaint is recorded in a consistently clear manner so that the complaint can be processed, and is not accidentally misrepresented as it is moved through the different steps of the complaint's procedure. It will also help to categorise the type and cause of the complaint.

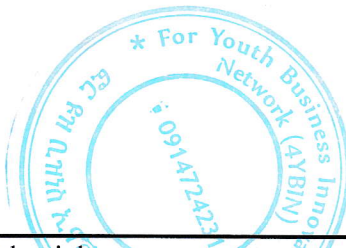
Monitor and provide support and training to those charged with recording verbal complaints on behalf of complainants (e.g. when receiving complaints over the phone). A complaint may also need to be translated, and be aware that here there is scope for misrepresentation.

The following information might be required in the form:

- **Name and address of complaint**
- **Date**
- **Description about complaint**
- **Suggestions for follow up**
- **Recommendations for who needs to follow up**
- **Room to record steps taken to follow up the complaint and final results**

To help identify what has gone wrong, help the complainant to clarify exactly what they are dissatisfied with as this will aid a prompt response process. Some prompts to help clarify the situation include:

- Was it the way you were treated?
- Was it a decision that was taken?
- Were the items distributed defective?
- Can you define exactly what went wrong?





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Help the complainant to think through what solution they would like to see occur. Asking the complainant to suggest a corrective action is a constructive way of rebuilding relationships and acknowledging your willingness to hear their point of view. For example:

- Do they want replacement of defective items distributed?
- Do they want recognition of poor treatment and an apology?
- Does an investigation need to be started?
- What would they recommend as a way to avoid this happening in the future?

The complainant should be given acknowledgement that the complaint has been received. Design an appropriate acknowledgement system. A reference number can be used, a receipt note or copy of the complaint form signed by the agency.

Investigating and addressing complaints

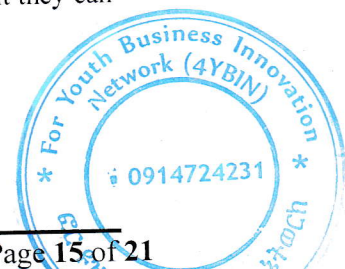
Any 4YBIN staff member who receives a complaint should have clear guidelines for how to bring the complaint into the 4YBIN system e.g. how to refer community members to the right place for lodging a complaint, or how to record a complaint on their behalf.

If the complaint is serious, then it needs to be dealt with separately through the established channel and brought to the attention of the nominated person i.e. Program Director . Complaints however should be processed by someone who has suitable qualities and is *trained* and *supported* to deal with them. They should be confident in directing complaints through the right channels, and judging the sensitivity of complaints. Even less serious complaints demand greater or lesser degrees of sensitivity or a more objective view.

If the complaint is less serious, then, as a general rule, it should be solved as locally as possible, by bringing the issue to the attention of the relevant person at the field level, such as the Field Office Team Leader, or the relevant Project manager. If it cannot be resolved at this level, it needs to be elevated to Programme Leaders, or Emergency Team Leader, and then to Program Director.

Where appropriate, local government, community leaders and other stakeholders should be involved in the investigation and resolution of complaints. It is important to make sure each complainant receives a response and appropriate action, and that similar complaints receive a similar response.

The complainant should receive a response that comprises a clear answer and explanation (even if no action will be taken) as well as an indication that the complaint has gone through an established process. People need to know they have been heard and answered. Experience has shown that in most cases, even when no action is taken, receiving a clear explanation satisfies the complainant. In other instances, people are left unhappy with the result, and ideally the mechanism should have an appeal system that users are able to access and follow up. Here the complainant should acknowledge that they have understood the answer, and know that if they do not accept it they can complain again.





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10. Clearly communicate the complaints mechanism to all key stakeholders as part of overall information-sharing systems

It is vital that communities and staff can access and understand the complaints mechanism. Particular effort is needed to communicate these to marginalized groups. This regular progress reporting and decision-making forum was used to raise issues and complaints from the community and to determine the necessary actions and by whom. In some cases, it was decided that further investigation was required before action could be taken. In other cases, the issue was referred to more senior management at 4YBIN's head office and the complaints mechanism as a key part of any activity in the community or district. Information about the complaint's mechanism and key 4YBIN contact details were included as a part of all publications and information to communities (link to information section, which includes examples of communicating about complaints mechanism).

Only if people know about the mechanism can they access it. Only if people understand how it works will they be able to judge the risks to the safety, and make a choice about whether to trust it and use it.

Complaints mechanisms should be developed alongside good quality information systems, and mechanisms for participation and feedback. A complaints mechanism should never be stand alone. Often complaints may arise because of lack of information. Also lack of participation and feedback can result in programs that are not satisfactory to beneficiaries. Furthermore, many complaints received will be relevant to many people, and so can be answered publicly through the agency's information or participation mechanisms for example.

Complaints data should be used to inform program management and to guide or revise the general information provided to beneficiaries. Information systems for beneficiaries and complaints mechanisms are linked, as often it is a lack of information that leads to a complaint.

11. Complete the feedback loop: use the complaints data to improve overall performance and to provide feedback to communities (two way communication and feedback)

Senior management's role in maintaining oversight of the complaints processes needs to be clearly identified. Complaints data and analysis of trends should be regularly analyzed and used to inform the decision making of senior management. Addressing complaints might involve changing policies and systems, changing strategy, changing attitudes and behaviors, etc. This can be a part of a regular meeting of senior staff, or a regular meeting of a senior task force established for this purpose.

Data can be tracked using a simple Tracking Form in order to record key data, for example

- No of complaints received
- Status of these complaints (e.g. no still to be addressed or completed)
- Types of complaint received
- Data on complainant e.g. location, gender, age
- Method used to lodge complaint e.g. email, phone, suggestions box, direct contact etc



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- Summary of corrective actions taken
- Time taken to resolve complaints

Accountability data, including complaints data, need to be incorporating into overall monitoring reporting on project progress and impacts. Key issues should be reported on a regular basis to senior management, bringing to their attention the satisfaction, views, concerns, feedback and complaints of communities.

In order to promote overall transparency, make reports reader friendly and share them as much as possible with all staff. Provide key complaints data in a public place e.g. on the website. Feedback to communities on complaints and overall progress should be part of 4YBIN's overall information sharing to communities.

Ensure that archives are maintained to enable a particular complaint, investigation and progress in taking remedial action to be tracked. These files need to be confidential and accessed only by those authorized to do so. Where utmost confidentiality is requested, ensure the complainant cannot be traced.

12. Be clear on roles and responsibilities in managing complaints, and provide adequate training and support to staff

Clear roles and responsibilities need to demonstrate that overall responsibility rests with senior and project management. Appoint field-based Accountability Officers to promote project accountability. Experience to date has shown that the single most effective action had been to create dedicated roles as part of project teams. Project teams must be supported and trained. Appoint an Accountability Coordinator (this person could be an existing M&E coordinator) to support project teams and to act as a focal point and ambassador of community views with senior management

If necessary, appoint additional office based staff to support the management of a formal complaints mechanism, for example, is a post required to staff a telephone line? . Critical to the success of the CM requires is support from senior leadership, Lead Member and CARE members in their provision of funding and technical support.

13. Monitor the complaints mechanism to verify that it is effective

One of the main fears of many practitioners when thinking about setting up a complaint's mechanism is that they will be inundated with complaints which they are unable to address because they concern issues outside the agency's remit or responsibility. In practice, the more common problem is the underutilization of complaints mechanism. A small number of complaints does not automatically mean there aren't any. Fear of complaining and lack of knowledge about the mechanisms will be one of the most important issues to overcome.

On a periodic basis, monitoring of the complaint's mechanism needs to be conducted to ensure the procedures are followed and are effective and to recommend adjustments.



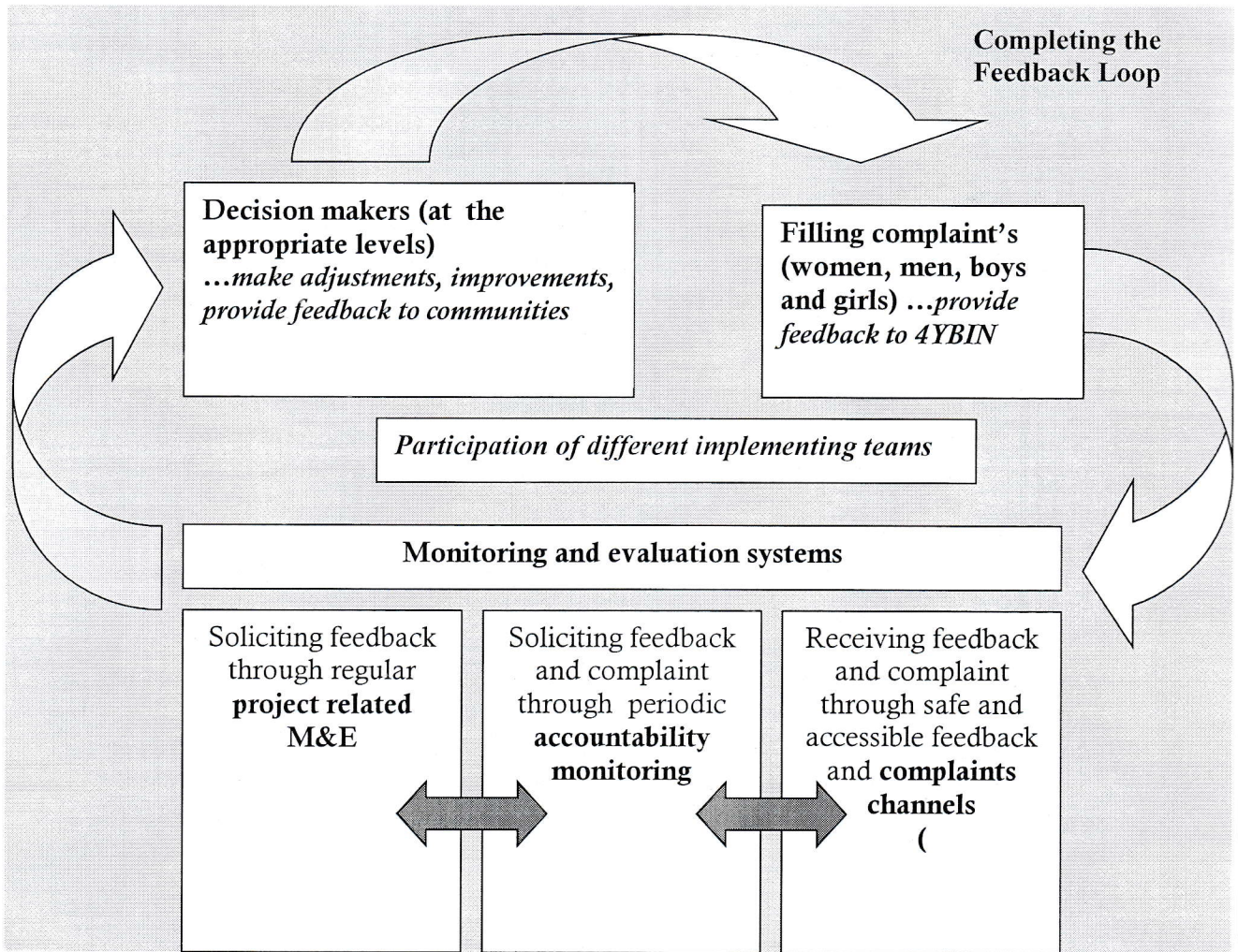


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Completing the Feedback Loop





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13. Annexes

13.1 Annex guideline for recording a complaint


As general procedure the complaints should be received and registered in the following manner:

- Identify yourself as 4YBIN staff, you name, and role in the project
- Attend each complaint with a positive attitude
- Listen to what the person is saying
- Explain that the information they give will be treated confidentially
- Inform the person that they have the right to be heard, and offer additional information if they request it, or if you consider it necessary. Explain the types of complaint 4YBIN can deal with and the types they can't deal with.
- Identify yourself with what the person is saying, but without assuming responsibility
- Complete the complaints form, and confirm with the person the details that you have registered on the format. The form must allow the following to be clearly identified
 - Date of making the complaint
 - Name, age and gender of complainant
 - Name of village
 - Description of the complaint/problem: what is the problem? When did it happen? Where did it happen? Who was involved? Any other information or evidence?
- Repeat what you have recorded back to the complainant and verify your understanding of the situation. Revise if necessary.
- Offer a solution for the situation if it is appropriate or feasible
- Verify that the person complaining understands the following steps in the complaints handling process.
- Indicate to the person that their complaint will be delivered to the attending 4YBIN staff and they will receive a x within a maximum of x days.
- Indicate to the person the reference number of their complaint.
- End with a positive attitude
- Thank the person for their trust and time
- Inform him or her about the procedure for follow-up from 4YBIN E's side, and check they understand

Each person who records complaints must be prepared in the following manner:

- Can communicate basic information about 4YBIN and 4YBIN's project in a confident and consistent manner
- Knows 4YBIN's organizational structure, and the general roles and responsibilities of each staff member in their geographical area of operation
- Has available a need to know checklist of key information (office address and contact details, areas of operation, project objectives and activities, organizations with whom we work, name of others, including authorities with whom we are coordinating)
- Can describe the complaints mechanism
- Trained to record complaints
- Has a positive attitude towards complaints as an opportunity for learning



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Annex 2 - Tools developed for field visit

Clearly explain the purpose of the visit

- 4YBIN wants to learn from the community about the quality and accountability of our response so far, so that we can improve in the future
- 4YBIN wants to have better relationships, and more transparency with the community, and we would like your opinions on how we can do this
- 4YBIN is carrying out a training exercise for staff, so that we can continue listening to the views of communities about our work

Depending on the situation, it is usually good to try to discuss with a group of people all together and then to do some cross checking by asking the same questions to a small number of individuals, separately. You should always make sure that you talk with women and children, not just to men and see if they have any different point of view.

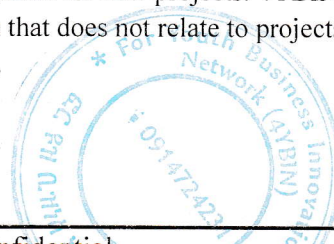
Complaints PRA exercise

Clearly explain the purpose of the exercise:

- 4YBIN would like to set up a complaint's mechanism. The reason for this is that we would like to be better at responding to your genuine complaints, questions and suggestions.
- 4YBIN wants to get your opinions on how to do this. We would like to understand better how you currently are interacting with 4YBIN if you have a problem or issue, and how we can set up a system to help better respond to any complaint you may have.

Begin the exercise:

- Start conversation using project activities. What has been their experience (food, family kits, food, bamboo, seeds). If necessary, explain who 4YBIN is, what we do and how we work.
- Show the community the cards, and explain each of the symbols. You can pass them around the group. Lay the symbols on the ground so everyone can see.
- Ask people how they currently deal with issues and complaint in their village, what do they do? How do they approach 4YBIN? What happens next? Ask what is good about this system, and what isn't.
- If people have specific complaints, ask them to wait until the end of the discussion, and allow some time to answer their questions.
- Start with 4YBIN's card, and explain why we want to set up a complaint's mechanism for 4YBIN. Explain that people have the right to complain, and to receive a response to the complaint. Explain that the complaints system will only relate to the project work of 4YBIN.
- Discuss the types of complaints that the 4YBIN can handle: e.g. complaints that relate to the quality of 4YBIN's work, and how appropriate it is, whether it is reaching the most vulnerable.
- The system is not being designed for requests for new projects. 4YBIN may not always be able to respond to requests for assistance that does not relate to projects, but may be able to share information with other agencies.





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- Next identify different channels of complaint with the community, and discuss any issues that arise in relation to each channel. Discuss how these different channels are accessible to different groups in the community, women, children, disabled etc.
- Discuss the complaints from 4YBIN want to be able to use a simple complaints form. what will happen after a complaint is received by 4YBIN.
 - Their complaint written on the complaint form will be analyzed.
 - That a 4YBIN staff will respond to their complaint – 4YBIN staff will analyses and investigate the complaint, and if the complaint is valid, they will review options for resolving the complaint. If no action is taken by 4YBIN, the reasons for this will be explained to them.
- Discuss the issue of confidentiality, that only authorized people will have access to the complaint forms. That if a complaint is very sensitive then they do not have to give their name. however not giving their name can make it more difficult however to investigate a complaint.
- Discuss how information about the complaints system can be communicated to the community (notice board, 4YBIN staff)

4YBIN- CRM Policy

Approved by the Board

5 January 2023

Mekelle -Ethiopia





Form No. HRD/005

Date _____

For youth BUSSINESS INOVATION NETWORK

Certificate of Service

This is to certify that _____ has been working in our Organization/Association from _____ to _____. He has been assigned to the following positions:

1. From _____ to _____, _____
2. From _____ to _____, _____
3. From _____ to _____, _____

His/her monthly salary at the time of leaving was Br. _____. He was also getting a monthly _____ allowance/s of Br. _____. He has paid all required income taxes and pension contributions to concerned Government authorities for the period of stay and engagement with the Association.

We wish him every success in his future endeavor,

Signed: _____

Name and Position: _____.

NB:

- This certificate of service has been given to the bearer in accordance with the labor proclamation of Ethiopia.
- This is the only official certificate given to employees upon termination of service with the organization.
- The organization's Human Resource Department may be formally contacted for any additional information regarding the employee.

