



## CARE Australia Complaints Policy

Receiving feedback from and responding to complaints from stakeholders is an important part of improving CARE Australia's accountability. CARE Australia believes that any stakeholder has the right to raise a complaint, have that complaint addressed and receive a response for mistakes, wrongful actions or breaches of the codes to which CARE subscribes.

This policy applies to CARE Australia's operations globally.

A complaint can be made by any supporter, partner organisation, community or individual with whom we work or any member of the public whether an individual, civil society organisation, government, company or other entity.

Ensuring that our stakeholders can hold us to account will improve the quality of our work. CARE Australia strives to be excellent in all that it does but recognises that this may not always be the case. When we make a mistake, we want and need to be informed. We will use the information to endeavour to put things right and to help us to become more effective.

CARE puts in place formal mechanisms to gather, monitor and act on feedback from beneficiaries and other key stakeholders. Feedback may be positive or negative, but complaints can mean that things have gone wrong. These mechanisms give beneficiaries and local communities a safe and non-threatening way to raise grievances and allegations of harm and have them responded to. An individual or group who expresses a grievance against CARE will have his, her or their complaint investigated and acted on.

CARE Australia is committed to ensuring the accessibility and transparency of its Complaints Policy, procedures and systems for making a complaint, across the breadth of our work.

### **Definitions**

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standards of service, actions or lack of action by CARE Australia or its staff, partners or anybody directly involved in the delivery of our work. It is a criticism that expects a reply and would like things to be changed. Complaints could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Concern from someone we work with about the quality of programme delivery
- Concern from a member of the public or supporter about a particular fundraising approach or campaign

- Concern about the behaviour of staff, volunteers or contractors.

A complaint has to be about an action for which CARE Australia is responsible or is within our sphere of influence.

A complaint is **not**:

- A general query about CARE Australia's work
- A request for information
- A contractual dispute
- A request to amend records e.g. to correct an address, cancel a donation
- A request to unsubscribe from a CARE Australia 'service' e.g. a campaign newsletter or email.

This process does not replace CARE Australia's own internal complaints processes and is separate from the complaints process made available to CARE Australia staff or staff employed in Country Offices managed by CARE Australia.

## **Principles**

### Accessibility

Complainants are able to make a complaint as easily as possible: written correspondence, email, telephone, verbally, via a third party, etc. We are committed to making communication with us as easy as possible

### Timeliness

CARE will endeavour to assess and respond to complaints in writing as quickly as possible (usually within two weeks). In the event that a complaint cannot be resolved within this timeframe the complainant will be informed about the progress made to date and when they can expect to receive a response. Complaints should be made within 3 months of the relevant incident. In exceptional circumstances, CARE Australia may be able to respond to a complaint that is older, although the passage of time may make it harder to resolve the complaint satisfactorily.

### Confidentiality

Some complaints need to be kept confidential in order to safeguard those making or involved in the complaint. However in some instances we might judge that the complainant will be better served if others are involved in the resolution of a complaint. Third parties will only be included in the resolution of confidential complaints on a case-by-case basis and with the agreement of the complainant.

### Right to appeal

Complainants who have launched a well-founded complaint and who are unsatisfied with CARE Australia's response to that complaint have the right to appeal. CARE Australia will refer the complainant to the CARE International Secretariat seek redress. If the issue is judged to be well founded and still not satisfactorily resolved, it will be dealt with by the CARE International Board.

After the internal appeal, there is no further internal process.

Complaints relating to a breach of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct by CARE Australia can be made to the ACFID Code of Contact Committee via

[www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/complaints-and-compliance-monitoring](http://www.acfid.asn.au/code-of-conduct/complaints-and-compliance-monitoring). CARE Australia is also a signatory to the following codes, each of which have a complaints mechanism.

- Code of Conduct for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief
- Sphere Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards
- People in Aid Code of Good Practice
- Fundraising Institute of Australia's Principles and Standards of Fundraising Practice

Everyone who makes a complaint to CARE Australia will be treated with courtesy and respect. In return, CARE Australia expects people who make a complaint to communicate their concerns fairly and appropriately. Where complainants harass staff, behave abusively, or unreasonably pursue complaints, CARE Australia reserves the right to withdraw or modify its complaints process.

### Part of a learning process

We will log and monitor all serious complaints and results of such complaints and this information will be brought, regularly, to the attention of appropriate senior managers in order that we learn from what we do and how we do it. This information will not necessarily be available to the public.

CARE Australia will keep this policy under review, with annual reports provided to CARE Australia's Senior Management Team and Board. This report will also include consideration and comment on the application of lessons learned from previous years' reports. CARE Australia's Company Secretary (as owner of this policy) will convene a regular meeting with appropriate managers to decide how CARE Australia will apply lessons learned.

CARE Australia is a member of CARE International ([www.care-international.org](http://www.care-international.org)). There are 11 other national CARE International members, listed in the CARE International website. This policy covers CARE Australia only. However, if any complaint is received which relates to CARE International or another CARE International member, we will notify the complainant accordingly and forward to the other member for attention.

### **Making a complaint**

General complaints should be addressed to:

Company Secretary  
CARE Australia  
GPO Box 2014  
Canberra ACT 2601

Or

Through e-mail to [complaints@care.org.au](mailto:complaints@care.org.au)

CARE Australia values feedback and complaints from donors and the public. These can be sent to:

Supporter Relations Team  
CARE Australia  
PO Box 372, Collins Street West  
Melbourne Victoria 8007

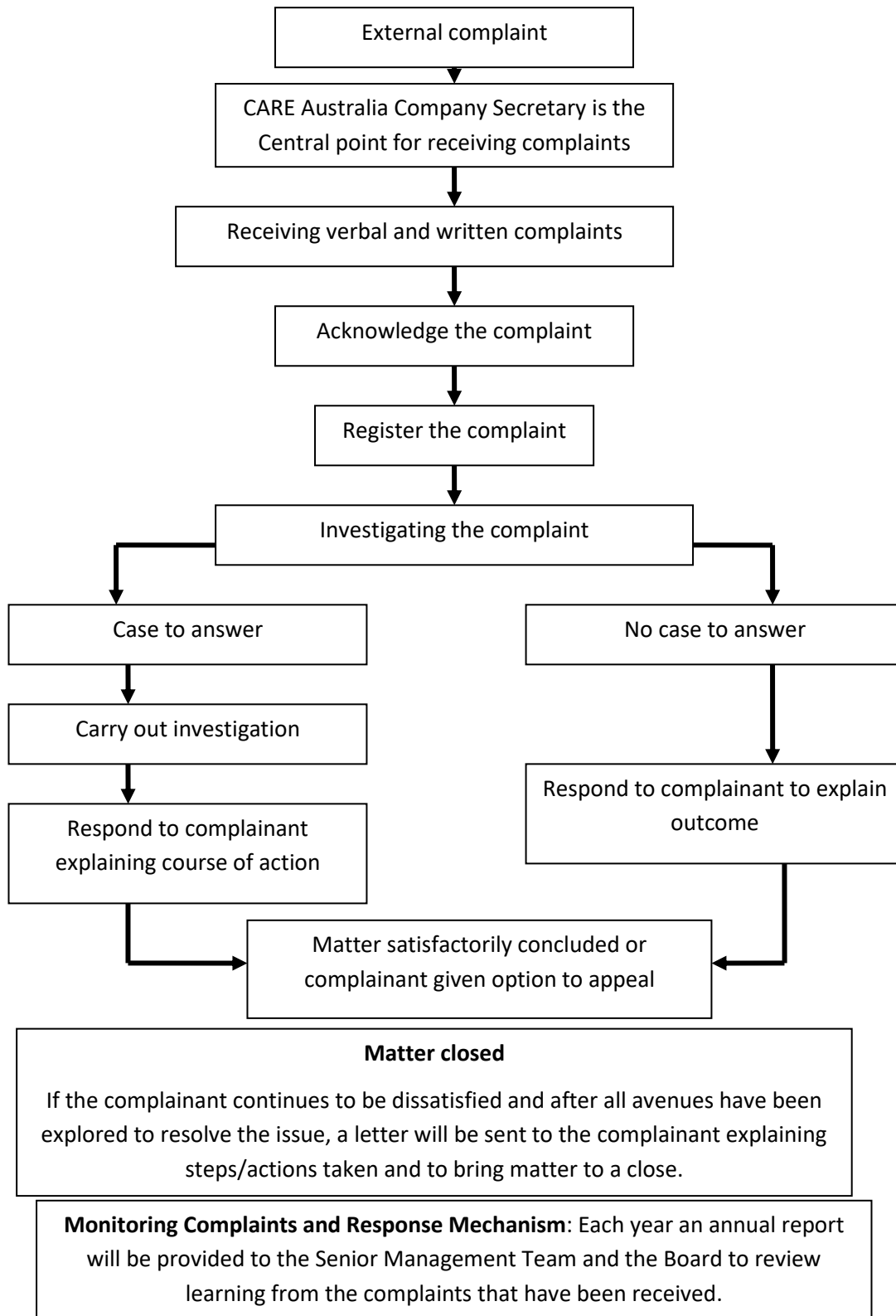
Or

By telephone: 1800 020 046

Feedback and complaints can also be lodged in each of the countries in which CARE Australia has a presence. These are provided on Attachment A.

CARE will endeavour to assess and respond to complaints in writing as quickly as possible (usually within two weeks). As long as complainants furnish a contact e-mail or postal address, they will be kept informed of unreasonable delays to the investigation of an issue (e.g. due to unavailability of concerned staff, etc.).

**Complaints System Flowchart**



Attachment A

Contact details for the lodgement of feedback and complaints in which CARE Australia has a presence are:

<p>Country Director  <b>CARE International Cambodia</b>            4th Floor            #216B, Preah Norodom Blvd            Sangkat Tonle Bassac            Khan Chamkarmorn            Phnom Penh             Tel: +855 (0) 23 727145/7/8</p>	<p>Country Director  <b>CARE International Papua New Guinea</b>            PO Box 1157            Goroka            Eastern Highlands Province            PAPUA NEW GUINEA             Tel: + (675) 532 2766</p>
<p>Country Director  <b>CARE International Lao PDR</b>            P.O box 4328 Sibounheuang Rd 329/25            Ban Sibounheuang            Vientiane            Laos PDR             Tel: + 856 (0) 21 212991</p>	<p>Country Director  <b>CARE International Timor-Leste</b>            P.O. Box:265            Dili            TIMOR-LESTE             Tel: + (670) 332 1407</p>
<p>Office Manager  <b>CARE International Vanuatu</b>            Paray Wharf Road            Port Vila            Vanuatu             Tel: + (678) 22951</p>	<p>Country Director  <b>CARE International Vietnam</b>            CO: Zone B1, 9th Fl, CDC Building,            25 Le Dai Hanh Str, Hai Ba Trung Dist,            HANOI            Tel: +(844)3 716 1929 ~ 34</p>
<p>Country Director  <b>CARE Myanmar</b>            No. 17A Phyhtaungsu Street            Sayarsan North West Ward            Yangon            MYANMAR             Tel: +(95) 1401419/20</p>	<p>Country Director  <b>CARE International Fiji</b>            Live &amp; Learn Fiji            52 Imthurn Road, Domain            Private Mail Bag            Suva, Fiji             Tel: (+679) 3315 868</p>