



FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION, AUDIT
& RESOURCE MOBILIZATION
(FAARM) COMMITTEE

COMPLAINT & FEEDBACK MANAGEMENT **GUIDELINES**

December 2021

Introduction

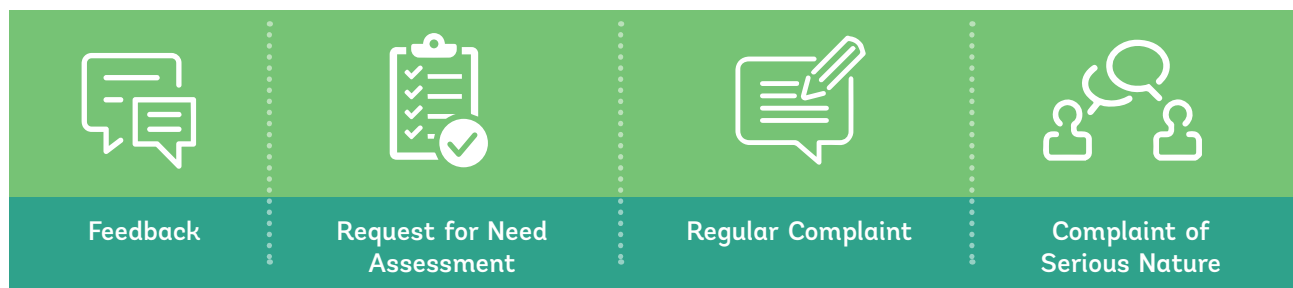
As part of the monitoring and evaluation strategy, there is a need to mainstream the complaint handling mechanisms. This will enable people to be heard, including receiving and addressing complaints, which is recognized as a key component of accountability to the stakeholders engaged by AFARD. Furthermore, handling complaints and feedback also provides an opportunity to improve our services based on the community's feedback. In this regard, therefore, the organization has developed a framework to guide the entire process of complaint and feedback handling.

Complaint and Feedback Mechanism

Accountability to beneficiaries and the communities we work with is among the core commitments of AFARD. To demonstrate this in practice, AFARD has established the Complaint and Feedback Mechanism (CFM) to affirm that our beneficiaries and communities have the right to complain if we are not abiding by the commitments we made to them. At the same time, CFM provides a communication channel for our communities to voice their suggestions and provide feedback on our program interventions; this would certainly contribute to improving the quality of our programs. CFM is intended for the people we serve or assist, and it is not intended for reporting staff grievances. However, if any staff member is found maltreating or discriminating against communities, then other staff members have the right to file a complaint using CFM.

Types of Complaints/Feedback

Information received through a hotline or real-time assessments from beneficiaries and sometimes from community members in general can be categorized into the following categories:



Feedback

Beneficiaries' comments on the AFARD program will be taken as feedback. Feedback can be both positive and negative and is generally to do with minor issues; it can be given formally or informally.



Request for Need Assessment

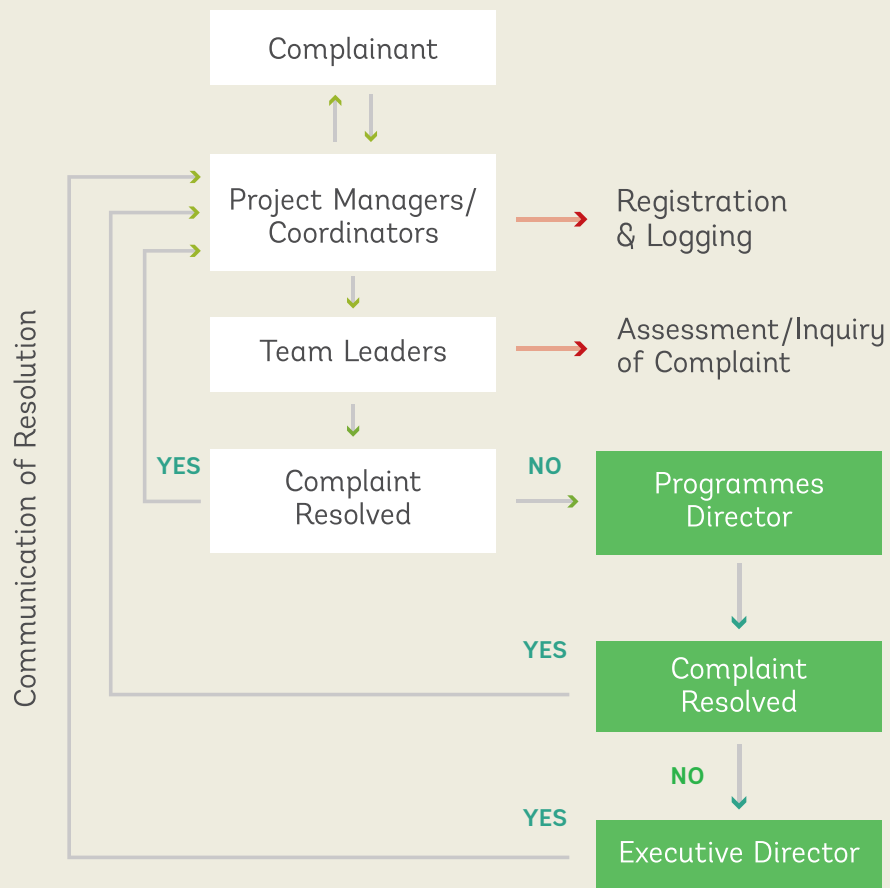
Sometimes the beneficiary or non-beneficiary requests assistance for him/her or for their village/area. In such cases, such responses will be taken as Request for Need Assessment.



Regular Complaint

A regular complaint relates to program design and implementation/service delivery e.g. changes in timings of input distribution, change in location of input distribution points etc.

Complaint Flow Chart for Regular Complaint

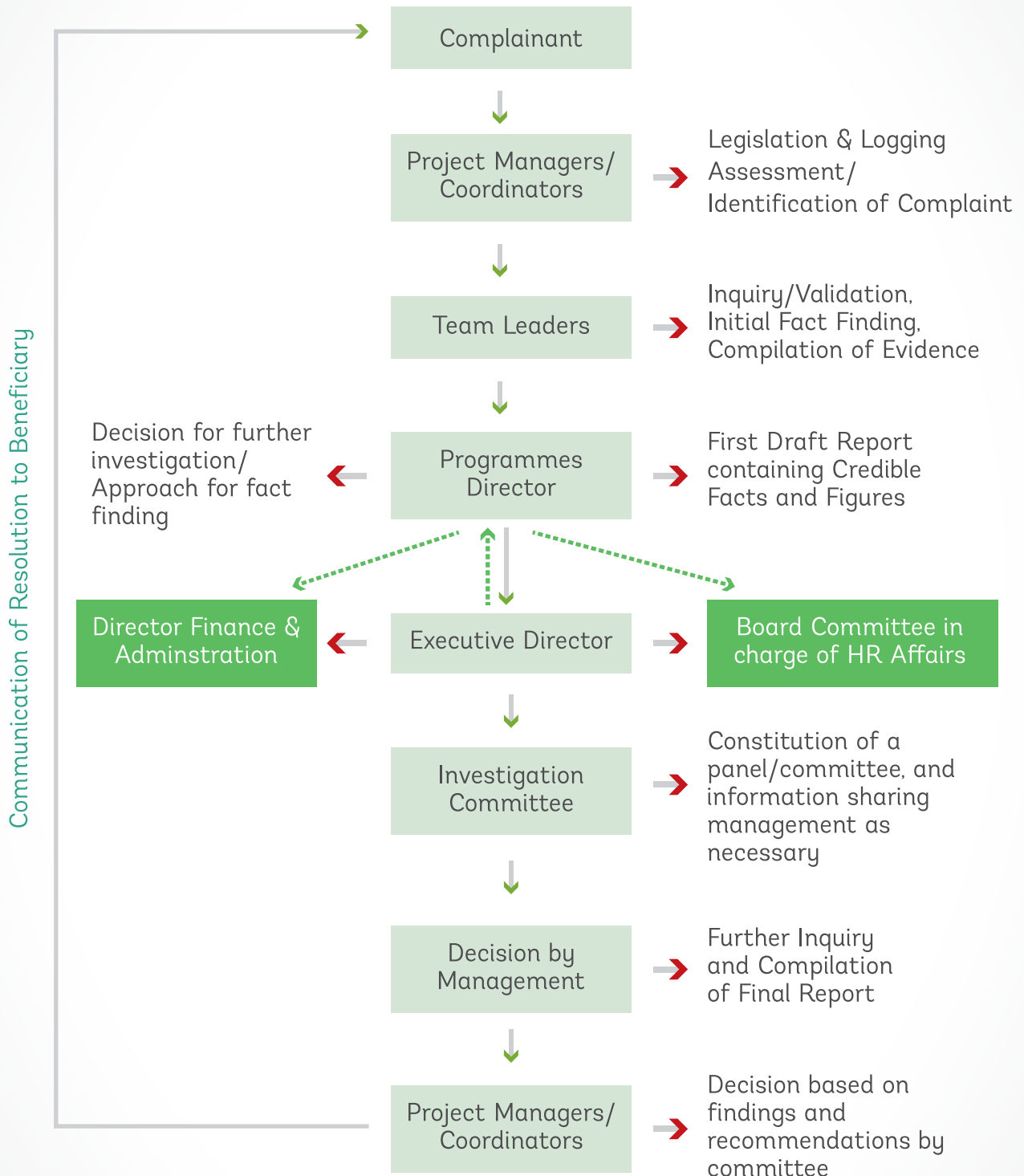


Serious Complaint

A serious complaint includes issues related to:

- Financial Corruption, Misuse/Fraud of Money or Material
- Derogatory/Immoral behavior with beneficiaries involving verbal abuse/physical assault
- Harassment of beneficiary/ Or any act that might harm AFARD's reputation
- Discrimination of beneficiaries on the basis of race, gender, creed or religion
- Any other complaint judged as serious by Project Managers

Complaint Flow Chart for Serious Complaint



The dotted lines depict that the draft report is also copied to the "Director Finance and Administration" and "Board Committee in charge of HR issues" while being sent to the "Executive Director".

Complaints Handling Mechanism DOs and DONTs

Nature of Complaint/ Feedback	What to Do	What not to Do
Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet the caller. • Log basic information and the feedback of the caller. • Ensure that the caller is informed that his/her feedback has been recorded. • Thank the caller for their feedback. • Record feedback in Feedback and Complaint Tracking Database and Close the feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not create or communicate false expectations. • Do not make any promises. • Do not behave rudely with the complainant/feedback provider.
Request for Need Assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet the caller. • Log basic information and the request of the caller. • In case of invitation for need assessment compile a list and send to program team. • Ensure that the caller is informed of the steps taken. • Close the feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not ask people not to call again. • Do not entertain complaints/feedbacks on issues which are not related to our programs. In case of calls from staff members regarding staff grievances, redirect them to HR.
Regular Complaint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet the caller. • Log basic information and the complaint of the caller. • Verify if the complaint is about AFARD interventions. [If it is not and the complainant knows the name of the other organization then PROJECT MANAGERS/ COORDINATORS may ask field program manager to reach the other organization and let them know. However, after passing on the complaint no further follow up is necessary] • Request and Record the details of the problem, the program and the geographical area. • Ask what action complainant is suggesting, though do not promise this will be done. • Assure the complainant about his/her confidentiality and transparent inquiry. • Process the complaint with the support of relevant sector(s)/Person(s). • Seek permission from complainant to visit him/her if required. • Call the person back and inform him/her about resolution of complaint. • Ask him/her whether she is satisfied with the response or not. • Record above mentioned all information along with beneficiary's satisfaction response. • Thank him/her for reaching us. • Close the complaint. <p>Note:</p> <p><i>In case a complaint of similar nature belonging to the same program in the same locality is received thrice refer the complaint to specific IP who will hold an investigation visit in coordination with the program team.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not turn off your phone or move your phone to any inaccessible

Nature of Complaint/ Feedback	What to Do	What not to Do
Serious Complaint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet the caller. • Log basic information and the complaint of the caller. • Verify if the complaint is about AFARD's interventions. [If it is not and the complainant knows the name of the other organization then PROJECT MANAGERS/ COORDINATORS may ask field program manager to reach the other organization and let them know. However, after passing on the complaint no further follow up is necessary] • Request and Record the details of the problem, the program and the geographical area. • Ask what action complainant is suggesting, though do not promise this will be done. • Assure the complainant about his/her confidentiality and transparent inquiry. • Probe for further evidence from the caller if required. • If there is no evidence found, call back the person to inform about decision being made or action taken (It should be communicated by PROJECT MANAGERS/ COORDINATORS, CC or TAs). • In case of enough evidence for further probing are available then ask PROJECT MANAGERS/ COORDINATORS to contact complainant. • Seek permission from complainant to visit him/her. • If complaint proved true, inform the complainant about actions taken on his/her complaint. • Ask the complainant if he/she is satisfied with the response. • Thank the complainant and close the complaint. 	

Closing Complaints

- All types of complaints received by any channel needs to be entered into Complaint and Response Database
- All the complaints and feedback received need to be closed in a certain manner. The resolution of a complaint must be reached as soon as possible (within maximum 15 days).
- If the caller's complaint/resolution could not be acted upon due to reasons such as budget/program constraints or if enough evidences could not be found, he is informed accordingly.
- In case of regular complaints and feedback the Project Managers/Coordinators must inform the caller of the resolution and decision on the complaint by calling him.
- In case of serious nature complaints that have proceeded till the investigation stage, the Project Managers/Coordinators must convey the resolution to the complainant.
- All complaints must be closed within 15 days. In some cases if, due to unavoidable circumstances a decision has not been reached the caller still needs to be called and updated on the progress within the specified time frame.

Confidentiality and Information Protection

- All complaints must be dealt with in confidence.
- Feedback and complaints records should be treated as confidential to safeguard sensitive information, upholding the principle of confidentiality.
- The complainant should be assured of not disclosing his/her information.
- The name and personal details of the complainant should not be disclosed while sharing the complaint database with other departments

Appendix 1: Complaints Logbook template

Details about complaint								Complaint or feedback (operational/ sensitive)
#	Date received	Location (e.g. village)	Channel through which complaint was received (e.g. feedback box, telephone line, meeting)	Name of staff who received/collected complaint/feedback	Name & contact details of complainant/person giving feedback	Complaint or feedback - description		
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Follow-up						Status	
#	Details of action to be taken	Who is responsible?	Outcome of assessment/follow-up	Details of response given to complainant	Who gave response	Response date	e.g. not yet followed up/ In process/closed
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