



Partners in Aid

COMPLAINTS AND WHISTLER-BLOWER POLICY

1. Background

Partners in Aid, as an organisation, is committed to continuous improvement and welcomes feedback from all stakeholders or members of the public. We acknowledge that we may receive complaints from time to time and view these as a genuine opportunity to review our policies and practices with a view to improvement. All complaints will be taken seriously and acted on according to this policy.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline how a complaint can be made to Partners in Aid and how we will respond.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all complaints and complainants, no matter who makes the complaint or the nature of that complaint. It applies to complaints made about the policies, practices or conduct of Partners in Aid as an organisation, its Board, sponsors, donors or volunteers.

A copy of the Partners in Aid Complaints Policy should be attached to any Partnership Agreement signed with a Partner Organization.

4. Procedures

4.1 General Complaints

- 4.1 Partners in Aid will encourage all of its stakeholders to bring to the attention of the Board any issue where they feel aggrieved by the action of the organisation.
- 4.2 The primary contact point for complaints is the Board Chair, who can be contacted via email (admin@partnersinaid.org.au), phone, direct message via social media or post with these contact details outlined on our website (www.partnersinaid.org.au).
- 4.3 Complaints related to a project overseas can also be raised with the project partner, whose details will be listed on the Partners in Aid website.
- 4.4 The website will advise complainants of their ability to make a complaint directly to ACFID on a breach of the ACFID Code of Conduct.
- 4.5 The Board will maintain multiple ways that people can lodge complaints and provide information about these mechanisms on its web site.
- 4.6 All complaints will be treated seriously and the complainant acknowledged promptly.

- 4.7 When a complaint is raised, it will be listed for discussion at the next monthly Board meeting, and the complainant advised of that date. Initial action will be determined on a resolution and the complainant advised within one week of the Board meeting.
- 4.8 If a complaint requires rapid or urgent attention, the Board Executive will convene as soon as possible (within one week) to consider a response.
- 4.9 Minor complaints should be resolved within two months of having been raised. Where complex complaints, which may require consultation with other organisations or advisors, take longer, the complainant will be kept informed of timelines and progress on resolving the complaint.
- 4.10 Should any complaint raised be in relation to a current Board member, that member will be excused from the meeting for the period of the discussion, unless the Board has questions relating to the complaint.
- 4.11 All complaints will be reviewed quarterly by the Board at a Board meeting. Any pattern of complaints, or issues which complaints alert us to, will be addressed promptly at this time.
- 4.12 The procedure for making a complaint will be publicised via the website, in newsletters, and in material provided to new members, sponsors or donors. Processes will be advised to Project Partners via the Project Agreement and to children and young people receiving sponsorship, through the Sponsorship Agreement. Project Agreements will also include provisions for partners to advise project beneficiaries of these complaints processes, when the Board cannot communicate directly with them.
- 4.13 The procedure for making and responding to complaints will be included in induction procedures for new Board members and volunteers.
- 4.14 The final response to a complaint will be signed off by a majority of the Board at a Board meeting. The outcome will be communicated to the complainant in writing within one week of the Board sign off. The complainant will be advised that if they are not satisfied, they may either complain to the ACFID Code of Conduct Committee if they feel there has been a breach of the Code or request the complaint be reconsidered if there has been a misunderstanding or omission of facts by the Board in its resolution.

4.2 Whistle-blower Policy

- 4.2.1 Staff, volunteers, contractors and partners who are aware of possible wrongdoing have a responsibility to disclose that information.
- 4.2.2 Volunteers, donors and partners who in good faith disclose perceived wrongdoing will be protected from adverse consequences.
- 4.2.3 Any disclosure of perceived wrongdoing will be handled in the manner described above for handling other complaints.

5. Review

This policy will be reviewed after two years.