

CARE International Secretariat Complaints Policy

Complaints

CARE International (hereafter referred to as “CARE”) believes that any stakeholder has the right to raise a complaint, have that complaint addressed and receive a response.

In the context of this policy, a complaint is an external grievance made against CARE or any of its members more specifically against one of its employees, associated “consultants” or partners where the organization has allegedly made mistakes, acted wrongfully, breached the codes to which CARE subscribes or failed to meet a commitment. Such a commitment might be related to CARE’s activities, our use of resources, our mission and values, staff conduct / behavior or a legal requirement.

This process does not replace CARE’s own internal complaints processes and is separate from the complaints process made available to CARE staff.

Making a complaint

The website of the CARE International Secretariat will provide information to stakeholders on how to make a complaint about CARE’s activities. The complaint will be referred to the concerned CARE member or dealt with directly by staff in the CARE International Secretariat as appropriate. Given the nature of CARE’s structure and mandate, every effort will be made to address and resolve the complaint with the concerned CARE member.

Complaints should be addressed to: “the Secretary General, CARE International” in writing either:

1. through e-mail to cisecretariat@careinternational.org or
2. by post addressed to CARE International Secretariat, Chemin de Balexert 7-9, 1219 Chatelaine (Geneva), Switzerland

CARE will endeavor to assess and respond to complaints in writing as quickly as possible (usually within two weeks). The complainant will be kept informed of unreasonable delays to investigation an issue (e.g. due to unavailability of concerned staff, etc), or where the matter has been referred to a CARE member.

CARE reserves the right to choose not to investigate complaints judged as unfounded or frivolous.

Complaints about CARE Member or CARE Country Office activities

In the first instance complaints about a CARE member’s activities will be referred to the CARE member concerned and no further action will be taken by the CARE International Secretariat. If the complainant comes back to CARE International Secretariat with a similar complaint that is, in the view of the Secretary General, well-founded but has not been satisfactorily addressed by the CARE member, the CI Secretary General or designated representative will discuss it directly with the CARE member’s National

Director. Discussions will follow the processes in the CARE International Code, and using that process, may be referred to the CARE International Board if not solved at the level of the National Director.

Complaints about CARE International Secretariat activities

Where there is a complaint directly related to the activities of the CARE International Secretariat, the Secretary General will ensure this is investigated and, if the complaint is judged to be well-founded, the Secretary General will endeavor to provide a solution. If a complaint involves staff within the CARE International Secretariat it will be dealt with by the Secretary General, or if the event that s/he is implicated, the Chairperson of the CARE International Board.

Appeal Process for Complaints about CARE International Secretariat

Where a complaint about the CARE International Secretariat has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, it will be forwarded to the Chairperson of the CARE International Board to make an initial determination. If the Chairperson determines the complaint to be well-founded, s/he can nominate up to three National Directors to deal with the issue so as to offer the complainant a separate process from the Secretariat to seek redress. If the issue is still not resolved, it will be dealt with by the CARE International Board.

Whistleblower policy

CARE International encourages Board members, managers, staff, interns and volunteers to report evidence-based instances of malpractice of CARE International Secretariat or CARE Members to their respective heads, the Secretary General or if necessary the Chair of the Board or another Board Officer. This may be done in confidence and without fear of reprisal; CARE International will protect whistleblowers from victimization and dismissal. The Secretary General is responsible for ensuring a suitable system is in place and will review its functioning on an annual basis.

Final decision

CARE reserves the right to refuse spurious or unreasonable complaints.

In any case, decisions by the CARE International Board are final. This policy creates no independent legal obligations and no legal recourse in any court against a decision by CARE is possible.

Care International may change this policy at any time.