

EXTERNAL COMPLAINTS MECHANISM POLICY

Serve Afghanistan is committed to excellence, transparency, and accountability in delivering its work, responding to the needs of its constituencies, and in conducting operations with its stakeholders and suppliers. It is the policy of Serve Afghanistan to conduct its operations in an honest and ethical manner. Staff members have the obligation to protect and promote the organization's interests, and to act with due respect with other people. Serve Afghanistan is committed to maintain confidentiality in protecting people who report what they reasonably and in good faith believe to be an ethical misconduct which seems to involve unlawful conduct or financial malpractice, from victimization.

Complaints process

In this context, a 'complaint' describes a declaration that a behavior, action, or omission of action on the part of Serve Afghanistan, a Serve Afghanistan staff member, or an implementing partner is in breach of our professional standards and as such must be addressed. The term complaint encompasses other terms such as grievance or allegation. Serve Afghanistan is committed to resolve any issues that do occur as soon as they are identified through an internal or, if necessary, external process.

Reporting a complaint

If your complaint relates to conduct you reasonably believe to be ethical misconduct (e.g., bribery, fraud, harassment, etc. that occurred during activities in the community implemented by us or one of our partners, please use the complaints process provided for the activity. If such a process is not in place or has failed to give a satisfactory answer you should contact Serve Afghanistan's Chairperson using the form below. Reports should be factual and not overly speculative and give enough detail to allow for the appropriate assessment of the nature, extent and urgency of the necessary investigation and other procedures. If possible, the report should include any relevant supporting documentation. Reports should be in one of the following languages:

1. English
2. Dari
3. Pashto

Serve Afghanistan will make every effort to protect your identity, but if concerns are related to or involve a partner, the involvement of those organizations may be necessary as part of the investigation and local legal requirements may influence the process followed.

If you are considering making a complaint or have already reported a complaint, please keep the following safety measures in mind:

- You should never contact the suspected perpetrator to get facts or demand restitution.
- You should never attempt to personally conduct investigations or interviews.
- You should never discuss the case facts or allegations with anyone inside the organization other than with those to whom the concern has been reported.

- You should exercise due caution if sharing your concerns with someone outside the organization.

Treatment of cases after reporting

All complaints received will be logged in the Head Office in Afghanistan by a designated person or by the Chairperson. A case file will be opened, and the complainant will be informed about the progress of their case. Complainants can expect to receive confirmation of receipt within six working days following their initial complaint. The designated person will review the complaint and assess whether it is appropriate for further consideration and, if so, informs the Executive Director to determine the most appropriate method to deal with the complaint. This will include the appointment of a Committee which will be responsible to manage the complaint to a high quality.

The Designated person will impartially monitor progress with the case, ensure that it is being dealt with in an appropriate manner and at the appropriate level, and confirm that relevant correspondence, reports, etc. are securely stored.

The Executive Director will bring to the attention of the Senior Management Team, or the Board and/or the relevant statutory authorities if necessary.

Should a complaint involve the Executive Director, it will be referred to the Chairperson of the Board.

Appeals

If you feel dissatisfied with the results of the initial review or if new supporting evidence has been obtained, an appeal can be made, details, including timeframes, will be provided upon request.

If you are unsatisfied with how we have dealt with your concerns, you can seek external advice from organisations such as ACAS (<http://www.acas.org.uk>) or <https://awaazaf.org/>

Contact details for Serve Afghanistan's Designated person

Phone: +93(0)705477372

Email: complaints@serveafghanistan.org

Contact Details of Board Chairperson

Email: chair@serveafghanistan.org