

## CARE Österreich External Feedback & Complaints Policy Ver. October 2017

### **Complaints and Feedback**

CARE Österreich (hereafter referred to as “CARE”) believes that any stakeholder<sup>1</sup> has the right to raise a complaint or provide feedback, have that complaint and feedback 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 / behaviour or a legal requirement.

CARE recognizes that feedback may not always be a complaint, and believes that taking account of the perspectives and suggestions from our stakeholders can help improve the quality and relevance of our work.

This process does not replace CARE’s own formal and/or informal internal complaints and feedback processes such as the complaint box available in CARE Österreich’s office for staff use.

The existence of this Policy will be mentioned on CARE’s public website.

This Policy complements the CARE International Secretariat Complaints Policy:  
<https://www.care-international.org/files/files/publications/CI-Complaints-Policy-June-2011.pdf>

### **Making a complaint**

The website of CARE will provide information to stakeholders, such as in a “Contact Us” link, on how to make a complaint about CARE’s activities. The complaint will be dealt with directly by CARE staff or referred to another CARE member or to 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 all concerned CARE entities.

Complaints should be addressed to: “the National Director of CARE Österreich” in writing either:

1. through e-mail to [care@care.at](mailto:care@care.at) or:

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<sup>1</sup> Stakeholders, in the context of this Policy, are defined as beneficiaries, partners, staff, donors, supporters, institutions, media, and the general public.

2. by mail addressed to CARE Österreich, Lange Gasse 30/4, A-1080 Vienna, Austria

Complaints against a member of the management which are legally punishable or addresses grossly negligent or discriminatory behaviour will also be addressed to the Chairperson of the CARE Österreich Board.

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 investigate an issue (e.g. due to unavailability of concerned staff, etc), or where the matter has been referred to another CARE entity.

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

### **Complaints/Feedback about other CARE Members or CARE Country Office activities**

In the first instance complaints about another CARE member's activities will be referred to the CARE member concerned and no further action will be taken by CARE Österreich. If the complainant comes back to CARE Österreich with a similar complaint that is, in the view of CARE Österreich, well-founded but has not been satisfactorily addressed by the concerned CARE member, CARE Österreich will refer the complaint to the CI Secretary General or designated representative who will follow up the complaint directly with the concerned CARE member's National Director. Discussions will follow the processes in the CARE International Code, and using that process, may be referred to CARE International 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, CARE Österreich will refer the complaint to the CI Secretary General who will endeavour 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 CARE International.

### **Appeal Process for Complaints about CARE**

Where a complaint about CARE has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, it will be, after consultation with the CARE Chairperson, forwarded to the CI Secretary General and in the second instance to the Chairperson of CARE International 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 to seek redress. If the issue is still not resolved, it will be dealt with by the CARE International Council.

The exact appeal process will be determined by the nature of the complaint, whether individual CARE staff are named, etc. Normally a judgment as to whether an appeal is well-founded will be made by the Senior Management Team of CARE and the responsibility for follow-up will be transferred to the National Director. In cases where the nature of an Appeal is potentially of a sensitive or serious nature or when the CARE National Director is the direct target of a complaint, appropriate alternative measures will be agreed by CARE senior management. If the National Director is directly targeted by



a complaint that goes to an Appeal, such decisions will be taken in consultation with the Chairperson of CARE.

### **Whistleblower policy**

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

### **Responsibility for Compliance**

Compliance with this Policy is the responsibility of the CARE Österreich National Director and delegated line management structures. CARE Österreich will periodically advise its staff of the existence of this Policy and provide relevant information to the CI Secretariat.

### **Final decision**

CARE reserves the right to refuse faked or unreasonable complaints.

*In any case, decisions by the CARE International Supervisory 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 may change this policy at any time.*

### Flowchart - Complaints directed at CARE Österreich

