



Complaints Handling Policy & Procedure

1. Purpose

Lovemore Project values feedback and takes all complaints seriously.

We are committed to addressing concerns fairly, promptly, and transparently to improve our work and uphold trust with communities, partners, donors, and stakeholders.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Lovemore Project activities in Australia and overseas.
- All staff, volunteers, directors, contractors, and partners.
- Complaints from any person or organisation, including beneficiaries, community members, donors, partners, and the public.

3. Policy Statement

Lovemore Project will:

1. Provide safe, accessible, and confidential channels to lodge complaints.
2. Handle all complaints respectfully and without prejudice.
3. Protect complainants from retaliation or disadvantage.
4. Maintain confidentiality as far as practicable and lawful.
5. Respond in a timely manner with clear communication about outcomes.
6. Use complaints data to inform learning and improvement.

4. Definitions

- Complaint: An expression of dissatisfaction about our actions, services, staff, volunteers, or partners.
- Serious Complaint: Allegations of fraud, corruption, exploitation, abuse, safeguarding breach, or other misconduct.
- Feedback: Opinions, suggestions, or expressions of interest that do not require a formal response.

5. Principles

- Accessibility – Complaints can be made in person, in writing, by phone, or electronically.
- Confidentiality – Identity of the complainant is protected where requested.
- Safety – Safeguarding principles apply to protect complainants, especially children and vulnerable people.
- Impartiality – Complaints are handled without bias.
- Transparency – Processes and timelines are clear to all parties.





6. How to Make a Complaint

Complaints can be lodged via:

- Email: complaints@projectlovemore.org
- Website: Online complaint form (with anonymity option)
- In person: To any Lovemore Project staff or volunteer
- Partner channels: Through implementing partner organisations

For safeguarding concerns, complaints can also be made directly to:

- DFAT Child Protection Compliance Section: childprotection@dfat.gov.au
- DFAT PSEAH Compliance Section: seah@dfat.gov.au

7. Complaint Handling Procedure

Step 1 – Acknowledgement

- Complaint is acknowledged within 5 business days.

Step 2 – Assessment

- Categorise as Standard or Serious.
- Determine if immediate protective action is required.

Step 3 – Investigation

- Assign an impartial investigator.
- For serious matters (fraud, safeguarding), escalate to:
 - Whistleblower Protection Officer (if relevant)
 - Board Chair
 - Relevant external authority (if legally required)

Step 4 – Response

- Provide written response within 20 business days (or update if longer is required).
- For serious complaints, provide progress updates to complainant.

Step 5 – Appeal

- If dissatisfied, complainant may request review by:
 - The Board
 - External oversight body (ACNC, ACFID Code of Conduct Committee, DFAT)

Step 6 – Close & Record

- Maintain secure records for a minimum of 7 years.
- Record complaint in Complaints Register (anonymised where required).





8. Responsibilities

- Complaints Officer: Manages the complaints process and register.
- All Staff/Volunteers: Must forward any complaint to the Complaints Officer within 2 business days.
- Board: Oversees policy compliance and reviews serious complaint outcomes.

9. Publicising this Policy

- Policy available on website in English and, where relevant, local languages.
- Posted at community activity sites where Lovemore Project works.
- Communicated to all staff, volunteers, and partners.

10. Related Policies

- Child Safeguarding Policy
- PSEAH Policy
- Whistleblower Policy
- Privacy Policy
- MEL Policy (complaints data feeds into learning and improvement)

11. Review

Reviewed every three years or sooner if required by law, donor requirements, or after significant complaints.

- Approved by: Board of Directors – Lovemore Project
- Date: _____
- Next Review: _____

