



## Complaints Policy – July 2022

**Date of Policy: 07 July 2022**

**Policy Approved By: BoT**

**Signature: CA**

**Overall Responsibility for Policy: Board of Trustees**

**Person Responsible for the implementation of the Policy: Chief Operating Officer**

**Policy Applies to:** Trustees, Executive Team and All Staff and Volunteers of COMPASS-Ghana

**Date of Next Review:** July 2023

### Section One: Introduction

1. **COMPASS-Ghana** views complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person, partner, funder, patient, care giver or volunteer, that has made the complaint.
2. Our policy is to:
  - ✿ Provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
  - ✿ Publicise the existence of our complaints procedure so that people know how to contact us to make a complaint
  - ✿ Make sure everyone at **COMPASS-Ghana** knows what to do if a complaint is received
  - ✿ To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
  - ✿ To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
  - ✿ To gather information which helps us to improve what we do
3. Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Board of trustees of **COMPASS-Ghana**, it is reviewed regularly and updated as required.

### Section Two: Definition of a Compliant

4. A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of **COMPASS-Ghana** or encompassing both our fund raising and advocacy work in the UK or project work in Ghana and West Africa

### Section Three: Where may a Complaint come from:

5. Complaints may come from any individual, volunteer or organisation who have a legitimate interest in **COMPASS-Ghana** including the general public, if something is perceived to be improper.



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6. A complaint can be received:

- ✿ received verbally;
- ✿ by phone,
- ✿ by email or
- ✿ in writing.

7. This policy does not cover complaints from staff, who should refer to **COMPASS-Ghana's** internal policy on such matters.

### Section Four: Confidentiality

8. All complaint information will be handled sensitively, telling only those who need to know and following any relevant data protection requirements. *(Please refer to **Compass-Ghana** Policies on Privacy and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR))*

### Section Five: Complaints Handling Procedure

9. **COMPASS-Ghana** is committed to developing and delivering an open and transparent relationship with all our partners. We want to make it easy for everyone to be able to engage with us in a manner that is inclusive and avoids disenfranchising any individual, sector or community.

10. To contact us and to provide feedback or make a complaint, could not be easier and these are the primary ways you can get in touch with us:

- ✿ **Face to face:** If you are dealing directly with **COMPASS-Ghana** or with one of our partners and you wish to complain, then please speak to them directly. It may be possible to resolve the issue immediately. However, if that is not possible, then he/she will record the details of your complaint and will send it through to the Chief Operating Officer of **COMPASS-Ghana**.
- ✿ You can call us on +44 (0) 1225 863 507 and your complaint will be documented. You will be provided with the contact details of the Chief Operating Officer and the name of the individual managing your complaint.
- ✿ You can email us on [info@compass-gh.org](mailto:info@compass-gh.org)
- ✿ You can write to us at our Head Office – **COMPASS-Ghana** – “Sweetlands”, 58 Monkton Farleigh, Bradford on Avon, BA15 2QN

11. In all instances where a complaint is made using the above means, **COMPASS-Ghana** will contact you within 48 hours of receiving the complaint. If you provide us with a telephone number and/or email address, we will contact you by either of those means to discuss the matter further and to officially record all necessary details.

12. Our aim and intent is to resolve the matter immediately. However, if the issue is more complex and an investigation is required, we will do the following - The person who receives a complaint will:

- ✿ Record full details of your complaint
- ✿ Record the complaint in our Complaints Register (**See Appendix 1-Complaint Register**)



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- ✦ Record details about the relationship of the complainant to **COMPASS-Ghana**, eg, donor, sponsor, beneficiary, service user
- ✦ Take all necessary steps to investigate the matter
- ✦ Contact you again within 15 working days of receiving the complaint to advise you of our findings or to give you an update on progress
- ✦ Continue to keep you informed until the matter is resolved to your satisfaction or until all appropriate steps (*in the **COMPASS-Ghana's reasonable opinion***) to resolve the matter have been taken.

13. **Oversight:** **COMPASS-Ghana's** Chief Executive (CEO) will be advised either in person or through access to the Complaints Register of the issue and actions taken or being taken to respond, address and resolve the complaint, no less than 20 days post receipt. If necessary, the CEO will escalate these to the Board of Trustees depending on the complexity or seriousness of the issue.

14. **Audit:** Scrutiny of the Complaints Register is a standing agenda item on the Boards Quarterly meetings, to ensure **COMPASS-Ghana** complies with this policy and to learn from the experience, implementing change as appropriate.

### Section Six: Resolving a Complaint:

15. **COMPASS-Ghana's** commitment to you is to address each complaint in a sensitive, fair, transparent, equitable, professional and unbiased manner through the complaints handling process.

16. We will always operate from the premise that any partner/funder/person is entitled to express his or her views on our services and that those views should be taken seriously where this is warranted. We will not, however, tolerate any abusive or discriminatory language or behaviour towards any of our staff, and may decline to investigate a complaint further in such circumstances.

### Stage 1

17. In many cases a complaint is best resolved by the person responsible for the issue being complained about. If the complaint has been received by that person, they may be able to resolve it swiftly and should do so if possible and appropriate. Whether or not the complaint has been resolved, the complaint information should be passed to the Chief Operating Officer within five working days.

18. On receiving the complaint, if not already resolved, the Chief Operating Officer will delegate an appropriate person to investigate it and to take appropriate action. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.

19. Complaints should be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within five working days. The acknowledgement should say who is dealing with the complaint and when the person complaining can expect a reply. A copy of this complaint's procedure should be attached. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within 15 working days. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.



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20. An update will be provided to the Chief Executive twenty days after the date the complaint was received. If appropriate further measures/authorities will be delegated to help bring the matter to an effective resolution.

21. Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and (subject to the terms of **COMPASS-Ghana’s (Please refer to COMPASS-Ghana’s - Privacy Policy)** any action taken as a result of the complaint.

### Stage 2

22. If the complainant feels that the problem has not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 1, they can request that the complaint is reviewed at Board level. At this stage, the complaint will be passed to the Board of Trustees. The request for Board level review should be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it. The acknowledgement should say who will deal with the case and when the complainant can expect a reply.

23. The Board of Trustees may investigate the facts of the case themselves or delegate a suitably senior person to do so. This may involve reviewing the paperwork of the case and speaking with the person who dealt with the complaint at Stage 1. The person who dealt with the original complaint at Stage 1 should be kept informed of what is happening.

24. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they should be informed and given a further opportunity to respond. Ideally complainants should receive a definitive reply within a month. If this is not possible because for example, an investigation has not been fully completed, a progress report should be sent with an indication of when a full reply will be given.

25. Whether the complaint is upheld or not, the reply to the complainant should describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint. The decision taken at this stage is final, unless the Board decides it is appropriate to seek external assistance with resolution.

### Time Lines

Stage One	Action	Days
Complaint Received	Acknowledged	2
Engage COO	COO briefed and advised	5
Follow Up to Complainant	Complaint advised of actions and due process	5
Formal update	Complaint to receive formal update on actions and due process	15
Engage CEO	Complaint register viewed by CEO – actions noted and progress report	20
Stage Two		
Board Acknowledgement	Board confirms to Complaint that they have receipt and next steps	5
Update to Complainant	Board Update, Progress, Intent end timeline	20



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### External Stage

26. As **COMPASS-Ghana** is a registered charity, the complainant can complain to the Charity Commission Regulator at any stage. Information about the kind of complaints the Charity Commission can involve itself in can be found on their website at: <https://www.gov.uk/complain-about-charity>.

### Section Seven: Review of this Policy and Complaints Received

27. This policy will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees every 12 months and all complaints received (and compliments) will be brought before the Board for review at our regular quarterly board meetings. Through this process of regular review **COMPASS-Ghana's** aim to improve our services to you and to ensure that any lessons learned are implemented within the organisation.

### Section Eight: Variation of the Complaints Procedure

28. The Board reserves the right to vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about a Chair or trustee should not also have the Chair and/or trustee involved as a person leading a Stage 2 review.

(END)



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### Appendix 1 – Complaints Register – **COMPASS-Ghana**

1. On a receipt of a complaint the details of the complaint will be recorded into COMPASS-Ghana's Complaint and Feedback register. This register will be reviewed as follows:

- ✿ Five Days post submission by the Chief Operating Officer
- ✿ Twenty Days post Submission by the Chief Executive Officer
- ✿ Quarterly at the Board Meeting review of registers.

Date of Complaint	By Whom	Nature of Complaint	Initial Response and Action Plan	Date Resolved	COO Observation	CEO Observation	Board of Trustees	Follow Up Actions and Timeline