



## Policy Complaint Handling by Hope and Soul

### Purpose

This policy aims to provide a clear, fair, and effective procedure for handling complaints made by beneficiaries, partners, donors, volunteers, and other stakeholders. The goal is to ensure that complaints are addressed promptly, respectfully, and constructively.

### Scope

This policy applies to all complaints received by Hope and Soul, including those related to its operations in Tanzania, staff, volunteers, programs, and services.

### Principles

- Confidentiality: Complaints will be handled with the utmost confidentiality.
- Impartiality: Complaints will be addressed impartially and without bias.
- Transparency: The process for handling complaints will be transparent to all stakeholders.
- Responsiveness: Complaints will be addressed promptly and efficiently.
- Accountability: Hope and Soul will be accountable for resolving complaints and will use them to improve its services.

*The five key stages in our complaint management system are set out below*



### 1. Receive

Submission: Complaints can be submitted in writing via email, letter, or through an online form on the charity's website. Contact details can be found on our website and/or social media channels.

Details Required: Complainants should provide their name, contact information, a detailed description of the complaint, and any supporting evidence.

Unless the complaint has been resolved at the outset, we will record the complaint and its supporting information. We will also assign a unique identifier/number to the complaint file.

The record of the complaint will document:

- Contact information of the person making a complaint and the date received
- Issues raised by the person making a complaint and the outcome/s they want
- Any other relevant information, and
- Any additional support the person making a complaint requires.

### 2. Acknowledge

Acknowledgement: Complaints will be acknowledged in writing within 5 working days of receipt. When appropriate we may offer an explanation or apology.

Consideration will be given to the most appropriate medium (e.g. email, letter) for communicating with the person making a complaint.

### **3. Assess and investigate**

#### **3.1. Initial assessment**

After acknowledging receipt of the complaint, we will confirm whether the issue/s raised in the complaint is/are within our control. We will also consider the outcome/s sought by the person making a complaint and, where there is more than one issue raised, determine whether each issue needs to be separately addressed. When determining how a complaint will be managed, we will consider:

- How serious, complicated or urgent the complaint is
- Whether the complaint raises concerns about people's health and safety
- How the person making the complaint is being affected
- The risks involved if resolution of the complaint is delayed, and
- Whether a resolution requires the involvement of other organisations.

#### **3.2. Investigating the complaint**

After assessing the complaint, we will consider how to manage it. We may:

- Give the person making a complaint information or an explanation
- Gather information about the issue, person or area that the complaint is about, or
- Investigate the claims made in the complaint.

We will keep the person making the complaint up-to-date on our progress, particularly if there are any delays. We will also communicate the outcome of the complaint using the most appropriate medium. Which actions we decide to take will be tailored to each case and consider any statutory requirements.

### **4. Determine outcome and provide reasons for decision**

Following consideration of the complaint and any investigation into the issues raised, we will contact the person making the complaint and advise them:

- The outcome of the complaint and any action we took
- The reason/s for our decision
- The remedy or resolution/s that we have proposed or put in place, and
- Any options for review that may be available to the complainant, such as an internal review, external review or appeal.

### **5. Close the complaint: document and analyse data**

#### **5.1. Document**

We will keep records about:

- How we managed the complaint
- The outcome/s of the complaint (including whether it or any aspect of it was substantiated, any recommendations made to address problems identified and any decisions made on those recommendations), and
- Any outstanding actions to be followed up, including analysing any underlying or root causes.

#### **5.2. Analyse data**

We will ensure that outcomes are properly implemented, monitored and reported to the complaint handling staff member, trustees or the Chair of Hope and Soul.

#### **5.3 Escalation**

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome, they may escalate their complaint to an external body, such as the Charity Commission in the UK or a relevant regulatory body in the country of operation.