

oikos
cooperação e desenvolvimento



| SATISFACTION AND
ACCOUNTABILITY
POLICY

ACCOUNTABILITY

SATISFACTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY POLICY

1.SCOPE

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction submitted to Oikos regarding the standard of services, actions, behaviours, or products provided.

Complaints relating to violations of the commitment to our beneficiaries are considered valid complaints and must be acted upon immediately. The complaint must refer to an action for which Oikos is responsible or that falls within Oikos' sphere of influence.

Complaints can be divided into sensitive and non-sensitive complaints.

Non-sensitive complaints would generally include stakeholder concerns about the quality of programme implementation, such as:

- Quality of products or services provided;
- Situations in which the complainant did not receive the services or products as promised, without proper justification;
- Dissatisfaction with methodologies or approaches adopted or not adopted;
- Concerns about the behaviour of Oikos staff and volunteers/associates during the implementation of a project or any other work on behalf of Oikos.

Sensitive complaints may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Issues relating to suspected fraud or corruption;
- Issues relating to physical misconduct by Oikos staff or volunteers/associates, including sexual harassment or abuse;
- Issues relating to other types of abuse of power by Oikos staff or volunteers/associates;
- Issues relating to gross negligence by Oikos staff or volunteers/associates in service delivery.

Sensitive complaints must be handled with the utmost confidentiality and often involve a more detailed investigation.

2. COMPLAINT SUBMISSION

A complaint may be submitted by:

- The community or beneficiaries;
- Staff members or volunteers;
- Partner or stakeholder organisations.

These individuals/entities must be able to submit a complaint regardless of the local context, their access to means of filing the complaint, or their level of literacy.

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3. POLICY COVERAGE

The conditions and obligations set out in this policy shall apply to Oikos staff members, consultants, and volunteers, as well as to partner organisations or those that may be implementing a project on behalf of Oikos.

4. SUBMITTING A COMPLAINT

All formal complaints must be submitted in writing, preferably through a complaint form (translated into the local language when necessary).

In the case of partner organisations submitting complaints, emails may be considered as formal documentation of the complaints.

For those unable to write or preferring to make a verbal complaint (as may be the case of certain beneficiaries living in areas where literacy rates are low), the person responsible for receiving the complaint will translate the verbal complaint into written form. A complaint may be submitted either directly by an individual or organisation, or via someone acting on their behalf.

5. DIRECTING A COMPLAINT

In the case of complaints specifically about Oikos field projects, these should preferably be addressed to the Country Coordinator. Sensitive complaints received by project staff or the Country Coordinator must be forwarded to Oikos' Operations Department.

For all complaints submitted through the website, the person responsible for Communications will handle the initial response, redirecting them to the Country Coordinator and the Director of Operations.

With regard to complaints specifically from Oikos' partners (which are generally communicated via email or verbally), responsibility will lie with the Country Coordinator and/or the Director of Operations.

All complaints must be brought to the attention of the Director of Operations. If a complaint cannot be resolved by the Country Coordinator and the Director of Operations, or if it requires a more intensive investigation, it will be escalated to Oikos' Executive Board.

All relevant staff involved in the implementation of the procedure must be informed if the complaint is escalated to a higher level. The Director of Operations will be responsible for monitoring the complaint response mechanism

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6. TIME LIMIT

Any complaint must be submitted as soon as possible, and no later than three months from the date on which the complaint is reported.

7. AFTER A COMPLAINT IS SUBMITTED

Oikos must take action on complaints within 10 (ten) working days of receipt. In cases where a complaint cannot be resolved within this timeframe, the complainant will be informed in writing, whenever possible, of when a full response can be expected. Nevertheless, complaints will be handled in the shortest possible time.

- Complaints received must be acknowledged verbally or in writing within 3 (three) working days.
- It is expected that most complaints and concerns about Oikos can and will be dealt with informally by staff at the local level. However, it is recognised that not all problems can be resolved in this way. As such, a formal complaints mechanism is necessary for occasions when an individual or organisation wishes to make their complaint a matter of record and receive a formal response.

8. RESPONSE

If a complainant is not satisfied with Oikos' response regarding their complaint, they have the right to appeal once, provided it is done correctly and respectfully. In this case, the appeal is referred to and becomes the responsibility of the next management level, using the same channels. Should the complainant remain dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal, they may also write to the President of Oikos. If the President considers that additional measures should be taken, the complainant must be informed of this decision.

9. SAFETY AND NON-RETALIATION

Complainants have the right to express their concerns without fear of retaliation. Oikos will ensure that complainants' details are kept confidential throughout the complaints process. In some cases, it may be necessary to disclose information to third parties. This decision will be taken on a case-by-case basis and only with the complainant's consent.

For the purposes of this policy, staff members of the organisation are understood to include all members of the Headquarters, comprising all members of the Board and different Departments, as well as the various Country Delegations where Oikos operates.

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10. NON-RESPONSE TO A COMPLAINT

Oikos will treat all complainants with courtesy and respect. In return, Oikos expects that individuals submitting complaints present their concerns in a fair and appropriate manner. When complainants harass staff, behave abusively, or act excessively in relation to the handling of complaints, Oikos reserves the right to withdraw or amend its complaints process and, depending on the nature of the behaviour, act in defence of the organisation and its staff. The decision on what constitutes a persistent, habitual, or abusive complaint will be taken by the Director of Operations. If the complaint concerns the Director of Operations, the decision will be made by the Executive Director.

11. RECORD-KEEPING AND DISCLOSURE

Complaints and resolutions concerning field project issues will be collected and archived by the Country Coordinator and/or the Director of Operations. Other general complaints must be collected and archived by the Communications Department, with viewing access restricted to the Communications Officer.

12. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

A fundamental part of the complaints process is to identify any problems that need to be addressed in project implementation, staff conduct, and/or working methods, in order to improve performance.

The review of interventions and conduct will be the responsibility of the Monitoring and Evaluation Officers at the project and/or country level (with the Country Coordinator holding ultimate responsibility).



Oikos – Cooperação e Desenvolvimento is a Non-Profit Association, internationally recognized as a Non-Governmental Organization for Development. We believe in a world without poverty and injustice, where human development is equitable and sustainable at both local and global levels. Therefore, we have assumed the mission of eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities so that all people may enjoy the right to a dignified life.

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