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# How to submit complaints related to environmental and social matters to WFP

A guide for external stakeholders to WFP's accountability mechanisms

WFP's ability to deliver emergency food assistance and support communities in strengthening food security and nutrition depends on its personnel and partners maintaining the highest standards of conduct, integrity, and accountability to the people it serves. To uphold these principles, WFP has established accountability mechanisms that allow people affected by its operations to provide feedback, raise concerns, or report grievances, including potential breaches of WFP's environmental and social standards<sup>1</sup>, and to receive timely and appropriate responses.

## Policy basis and guiding principles

WFP's accountability to affected people is anchored in *the Protection and Accountability Policy*,<sup>2</sup> and the *Community Engagement for Accountability to Affected People Strategy*,<sup>3</sup> and aligns with the *WFP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework*.<sup>4</sup> As such, WFP accountability mechanisms are designed to be accessible, effective, transparent and protective against retaliation.

Community Feedback Mechanisms in WFP are governed by six assurance standards—aligned with interagency standards for collective feedback mechanisms—that address accessibility, data collection, case management, information handling, feedback analysis, and quality assurance.

## How to submit a case

The **Community Feedback Mechanism (CFM)** is the primary entry point at the country level for receiving any type of feedback, inquiries, or grievances related to WFP

activities, including allegations of misconduct—such as sexual exploitation and abuse, fraud, or corruption—or infringement on WFP's environmental and social standards. In every country, WFP and/or cooperating partners operate **local channels** for the submission of cases through the community feedback mechanism (CFM) and ensures that information on how to access these channels is clearly communicated. The channels include but are not limited to help desks at distribution points, national phone numbers, email addresses, web-links, messaging services, community complaint committees.

Alleged infringements of WFP's environmental and social standards can also be reported through a dedicated global mailbox.

global mailbox: [environmentalsocial.complaints@wfp.org](mailto:environmentalsocial.complaints@wfp.org)

Cases of alleged wrongdoing or misconduct, including fraud and corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse, and harassment, sexual harassment, abuse of authority and discrimination, can also be reported through WFP's global **hotline**<sup>5</sup> managed by the Office of Inspector General.

## Who can provide feedback

Any person affected—directly or indirectly—by WFP-implemented or WFP-supported activities may submit any feedback or raise any concerns, through country level community feedback mechanisms. This includes all type of feedback. Concerns specifically related to environmental

or social matters may also be submitted through the dedicated E&S complaints global mailbox. Representatives, such as civil society organizations, may also do so on behalf of individuals or communities.

## Information required for submitting feedback

CFM channels will intake feedback using a standard form designed for minimum data collection allowing for case handling and trend analysis. Cases can be submitted anonymously. While WFP addresses and resolves anonymous cases, anonymity may limit its ability to gather more information or communicate resolutions to the individual. When submitting feedback outside the CFM channel—where a structured intake form collects this information—it is important to provide as much relevant detail as possible to help with addressing and resolving the issue, including at a minimum the 4 W's:

- What happened? (and how it affected the person/community)
- When did it happen? (Dates, times, frequency)
- Where did it happen?
- Who was involved or witnessed the incident? (How was WFP involved)

## Feedback management process and timeline

Cases submitted through the global E&S complaints mailbox are by default referred to the relevant country office CFM. Within 7 days, the ESS team acknowledges receipt and informs the sender that the case has been referred to the relevant CFM.

The country office CFM follows the following stages for all feedback, questions, and complaints:

1. *Acknowledgement of receipt:* Any interaction with the CFM is recorded and the person is notified.
2. *Consent and case intake:* The individual is informed about WFP's procedures for handling feedback and the expected response timeline. They are then asked to provide consent for case processing, as needed.

While anonymous complaints are accepted, CFM staff explain that this may limit WFP's ability to fully address the feedback/complaint.

3. *Actioning and resolution:* WFP will act upon the feedback/complaint in one of the following ways (a) responding with information or resolving the issue on the spot (b) escalating internally to the relevant focal points/experts in the country office or Regional Office (c) referring to headquarters' ESS team who will involve the relevant HQ functions for resolution. Cases of alleged misconduct such as sexual exploitation or abuse and fraud and corruption are referred to country office PSEA and risk focal points respectively for primary review and immediate referral to the **Office of Inspections and Investigations (OIGI)**.
4. *Case closure:* The case is closed when the resolution is documented and communicated to the person who contacted WFP. WFP has taken actions a/b/c to address the case. If a case cannot be resolved or acted upon, the person still receives an explanation as to why this was not possible.

**Timelines:** Table below summarises recommended and mandated timelines for handling cases coming through Community Feedback Mechanisms.

Priority Level	Intake (WORKING DAYS)	Actioning and Resolution (WORKING DAYS)	Loop closure (WORKING DAYS)	Total Timeframe (WORKING DAYS)
Low	3	15	3	21
Medium	3	10	2	15
High	1	4	2	7
Sexual Exploitation and Abuse(SEA)	1	2	2	5
Anti-Fraud, Anti-Corruption (AFAC)	1	18	2	21

### Reference documents

- <sup>1</sup> WFP Environmental and Social Standards, <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000102399/download/>
- <sup>2</sup> WFP Protection and Accountability Policy, <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000119393/download/>
- <sup>3</sup> Community Engagement for Accountability to Affected Populations Strategy  
<https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000132692/download/>
- <sup>4</sup> WFP Environmental and Social Sustainability Framework, <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000118147/download/>
- <sup>5</sup> <https://secure.ethicspoint.eu/domain/media/en/gui/106255/index.html>