



# Guideline Complaint and Feedback Mechanism

October 2021



## Young Power in Social Action (YPSA)

(An Organization for Sustainable Development)

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# ইপসা (ইয়ং পাওয়ার ইন সোশ্যাল এ্যাকশন)

স্থায়ীত্বশীল উন্নয়নের জন্য সংগঠন

## YPSA (Young Power in Social Action)

*An Organization for Sustainable Development*

[Organization in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council ECOSOC]

### YPSA

is a non-governmental voluntary non Political non Profit Organization for Sustainable Development registered with various departments of Bangladesh Government. YPSA established in 1985 being inspired by the spirit of International Youth Year declared by the UN. YPSA works in close co-operation with Government, INGOs & UN agencies. YPSA awarded International Youth Peace Prize 1999 for it's outstanding social development Programmes.

### Vision

YPSA envisions a society without poverty where everyone's basic needs and rights are ensured.

### Mission

YPSA exists to participate with the poor and vulnerable population with all commitments to bring about their own and society's sustainable development

### Core Values

- Patriotism and commitment to national interest, sovereignty and national pride
- Justice, transparency and accountability
- Mutual respect and gender friendliness
- Quality and excellence
- Humility and confidence
- Respect for diversity
- Support for environment and ecology

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### OFFICE MEMORANDUM

Subject: Approval of Guideline of Complaint and Feedback Mechanism

YPSA's Guideline of Complaint and Feedback Mechanism has been approved by the Executive Committee of YPSA for using by YPSA which effects on the first of October of 2021. We record our gratitude and thanks to the Executive Committee members of YPSA for providing necessary briefing and guidelines during finalizing this guideline.

Thanks to the YPSA staffs for their suggestions during developing the guideline. Our heartiest thanks to our Donors/Partners for their technical support for developing the guideline. This supersedes all other provisions guidelines and office orders on the subject.

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## 1. Introduction

It is a guideline to respond to key questions, complaints and feedback of the volunteers, beneficiaries, community people, stakeholders, partners who provides the most important tips and solutions for setting up and running it in a simplified and effective method of deliberation. This guideline provides general instructions for staffs of YPSA on steps to take when receiving complaint or feedbacks and explains the process of providing responses to those feedbacks.

This guideline will be updated after every five years to include procedures for new complaint & feedback categories that might emerge.

## 2. What is Complaint and Feedback Mechanism

### 2.1. Complaint mechanism

A complaint mechanism is a formalized mechanism for beneficiaries (victims and witnesses), staffs, community, or any other stakeholders, partners who are related with YPSA's activities to give a chance to report cases of misconduct and to deal with these complaints in a structured manner. A complaint mechanism allows recipients to confidentially report any complaints and to seek redress.

A complaint is a specific grievance from anyone who has been negatively affected by YPSA's action or who believes that YPSA has failed to meet a stated commitment. Complaints can be about either non-sensitive issues (such as dissatisfaction with activities) or sensitive issues (such as fraud, corruption, sexual exploitation and abuse).

### 2.2. Feedback Mechanism

Feedback is a positive or negative statement, a concern or a suggestion on a non-sensitive issue about an intervention provided by YPSA or its partners or the behavior of YPSA or its staff. A feedback mechanism allows community and other stakeholders to express their concerns or displeasure with YPSA's program process, actions, the ration of quality, messages.

### 2.3. Differences Between Complaint & Feedback

Area	Feedback	Complaints
Need for a response	A response is optional	Require a response and are a priority for action; refer to serious issues that require redress
Ways of sharing comments	Can be given formally or informally	The complainants can choose to address an issue/grievance directly to the relevant committee/focal person/assigned persons without first informing field staff (as the field staff may indeed be the object of the complaint)

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Types of actions that may be taken by YPSA in response	Adjustments may need to be made based on feedback	A clear system for investigating that complaint and taking appropriate action is needed as per policies
General Content	Less specific	A specific grievance
	Can be positive or negative	Complaints mean that things may have gone wrong
	Contents are related with program or project, the quality of program work which are describe in Type 1	This may include type 2
	Frequently asked questions about projects and services; inquiry; suggestion; appreciation; questions/request of information about projects or services	Staff, volunteer, vendor, partner, Program participants, beneficiaries' behavior (considered sensitive-type 2).

### 3. Reasons for establishing a Complaint and feedback mechanism

Complaint and feedback Mechanisms allow YPSA to live up to their responsibility toward donors, project participants, Government, the NGO sector and society at large. The reasons most often given for establishing a complaint and feedback mechanism are to support accountability, transparency, empowerment, monitoring and evaluation, program improvement and to provide early warning of imminent problems.

#### 3.1. Accountability and rights

YPSA will implement the feedback mechanisms to comply with internal or external requirements and standards. YPSA is accountable to those we work with and for – by providing opportunities for participants (of all ages, genders and abilities) and partners to participate in and influence decision-making.

#### 3.2. Transparency and trust

Complaint and Feedback mechanisms offer beneficiaries and other stakeholders the opportunity to approach YPSA to ask questions and receive a response, increasing their understanding of the program, reducing potential tensions and potentially developing their trust on YPSA. The resulting trust and respect also help improve and maintain relationships with the community. Feedback mechanisms improves their credibility not only with beneficiaries but also with the local government, donors and other NGOs.

#### 3.3. Empowerment

YPSA sees Complaint & Feedback mechanisms as promoting community empowerment and participation. YPSA seeks feedback from beneficiaries and community and hears and so that beneficiaries may hold ownership and become empower. YPSA's interventions are relevant and appropriate to participants' needs and aspirations and have opportunities to identify changing needs and inappropriate activities and taking appropriate action.



#### **3.4. Gender equality and women's voice**

Gender equality and women's voice are supported by identifying what is working and not working for women, men, boys and girls and providing opportunities for marginalized community members to voice their opinions and feed into decision-making.

#### **3.5. Monitoring and evaluation**

Complaint & Feedback mechanisms helps to improve monitoring and evaluation activities by feeding beneficiaries' views and perspectives into monitoring, assessment and reporting practices. A complaints and feedback mechanism provides a means for stakeholders to provide comment and voice complaints about the YPSA's work. Complaints and feedback mechanisms provide valuable insights and data for the ongoing monitoring and periodical evaluation of a project/program

#### **3.6. Program or project improvement**

The complaint and feedback mechanisms can provide unique and invaluable sources of information to be used for better project management and outcomes. They can help identify and address mistakes or shortcomings, improving the quality of the program or project. These changes and the uptake of other suggestions from beneficiaries may lead to increase effectiveness and efficiency.

#### **3.7. Informing Management**

Feedback mechanisms can also be useful for informing management of issues faced and support needed in the field, which can also lead to improved effectiveness. Getting people's feedback through the established mechanisms bring significant improvements to strengthen implementation and, ultimately, the impact of YPSA's activities.

#### **3.8. Strengthen Learning process**

As an organization, YPSA will be able to learn lessons that can inform future activities and also reflects on expected benefits from a learning perspective. The benefits of mechanisms for handling Complaint & Feedbacks include: continuous learning and improvement.

#### **3.9. Early warning**

Feedback mechanisms are also expect to help organizations identify issues and risks early and address them in a timely manner before they become larger and more difficult and expensive to manage, resolve, prevent, mitigate or resolve tensions and problems before they escalate into more serious issues that will require extra resources to address. Such responsiveness and willingness to take remedial action helps to increase the acceptance of YPSA even up to the level of government, partners or donors.

#### **3.10. Address the cases of sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse**

Actual and potential cases of sexual harassment, exploitation abuse will be identified and addressed through the mechanisms. This will be act as an early warning system and allow YPSA to respond and prevent further sexual misconduct or other sensitive issues.

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#### 4. Types of complaints and feedback

The types of complaints and feedback that YPSA receives are as follows

**Type 1: Operational complaints and feedback:** The operational complaints and feedback cover

- a) Program designs
- b) Quality of work,
- c) Project participants,
- d) Process of activities
- e) General feedback on outcome/ output of any activities/events
- f) Effectivity of the activities
- g) Queries or Suggestions on Program Activities
- h) Skills Development & livelihood related Feedbacks
- i) Any Conflict in the community and its Mitigation
- j) General query

**Type 2: Sensitive and serious complaints:** The sensitive and serious complaints cover

- a) Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
- b) Fraud and Corruption
- c) Money laundering
- d) Nepotism
- e) Misuse of funds
- f) Violation of YPSA's safeguarding policy for children, Policy of Prevention from Sexual, Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment of Adult and YPSA Gender policy
- g) Security breach/Protection related issue
- h) Aggressive or threatening behavior
- i) Discrimination
- j) Indifferent treatment or other form of disrespect for the community and its customs.
- k) Misuse of YPSA property
- l) drunkenness or smoking on the job
- m) involve/promote for trafficking, terrorism activities or any unethical/harm/country law violation such kind of activities.
- n) Any General Code of Conduct and misconduct defined by YPSA's Personnel Policy and Procedure manual
- o) Cyber crime
- p) Violation of any policies of YPSA
- q) Violation of Government law
- r) Any other serious issue

#### 5. Accessibility of the mechanism:

The Complaint & Feedback mechanisms is designed in such a way that it can be used by everyone (employees, volunteers, project participants, partners or anyone else including Persons with Disabilities who has observed misconduct by the organization)

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## 6. Process of Handling Complaints and Feedback

### Step 1: Building awareness

It is important to have clear knowledge and understanding on YPSA's Complaint and feedback mechanism to every beneficiaries, communities, staffs and other stakeholders including partners. So as a 1<sup>st</sup> step YPSA will take initiatives to disseminate the mechanism with all through the following actions

- **Arrange Training, orientation and discussion meeting-** YPSA may arrange training/orientation/discussion meeting with YPSA's staffs. This mechanism may also be included in any formal training or orientation courses or include as an agenda in a meeting.
- **Inform the community about the complaint & feedback mechanisms:** YPSA will share the mechanism with community through meeting, signboard, poster, sticker, banner etc. The signboard, banner, poster and sticker will display in a place where people can see the information easily. The information must cover the process of receiving Complaint & Feedback of YPSA. The dissemination methods depend on the modality of project and project location.
- **Disseminate the information through publication:** YPSA will disseminate the hotline number and email ID for receiving complaint/feedback through YPSA's website, facebook page, YPSA's Whatsapp groups. YPSA will also disseminate the information through displaying banners and YPSA's annual diary.

### Step 2: Receiving Complaint/feedback

YPSA has determined following options to receive any Complaint & Feedbacks-

- **Locked Complaint boxes:** YPSA will place locked complain box at project/field offices or any other suitable places where community people can submit their complaint/feedback. The locked complain box must open twice in a month and register in a registered book.
- **Receive phone calls:** Community, staffs or any stakeholders, partners can provide any feedback or complaint through YPSA's dedicated hotline number (01847536616). Complain/feedback receiver will share/refer the complain/feedback to the relevant committee, focal person, assigned person or project based on the types of complaint and feedback.
- **Email address:** Community, staffs or any stakeholders, partners can share any feedback or complaint through YPSA's dedicated Email address (complain.ypsa@gmail.com).
- **In prescribe format:** There is a prescribe format for providing complain under YPSA's safeguarding policy for children, Policy of Prevention from Sexual, Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment of Adult and gender policy. Any person can use those formats for any complaints.
- **Direct complaints to project staff members:** Community, staffs or any stakeholders, partners can share any feedback or complaint to the relevant project staffs.

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### **Step 3: Register and Identify the complaint/feedback**

- **Register and Complaint & Feedbacks by the respective assign persons of each offices-**  
Assigned persons will register the received Complaint & Feedback in a register book.
- **Identify type of complaint and refer the Complaint & Feedback**  
The assigned persons who register the Complaint & Feedback will identify if it is an operational (Type 1) or serious complaint (Type 2). If the complaint related with *Type 1* then the Complaint & Feedback will be referred to respective project staffs. if it is related with *Type 2* complaint then it should be referred to Human Resource Management and Development Department and YPSA safeguarding committee.

### **Step 4: Investigating a complaint**

#### **For Type 1 (Operational) Complaint & Feedbacks**

This type of feedback/complaint usually handle through a relevant project team member. The project team with the concern of higher authority will response to the Complaint/feedback. If needed, the project team will form an investigation team to find out the real scenario. They will discuss with complainer and take necessary action based on the discussion to resolve (if needed).

#### **For Type 2 (Sensitive and Serious) Complaint & Feedbacks**

This type of feedback or complaint will be handled by the YPSA's safeguarding committee/Child safeguarding focal/PSEAH focal/Gender focal/Human Resource Management and Development Department. The respective committee/focal person or department will form an investigation team. Based on the findings of investigation report, respective committee/department will submit evidence, analysis of findings and recommendations to Chief Executive and the Chief Executive will take the final decision as per policies. The process will be done as per YPSA's safeguarding policies/Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual/Gender policy/HRMD.

## **7. Major issues that need to be address**

This complaint and feedback mechanisms helps to build a culture of transparency and accountability, and improve program quality and practices of organization's policies. In this mechanisms, YPSA will ensure-

- Community people, staffs, stakeholders, partners will be fully informed about the complaint & feedback mechanisms, their purposes and use, and what constitutes a complaint.
- The procedure for ensuring the confidentiality will be maintained by all the related persons and committee. Confidentiality protects the victim, the complainant, the respondent and the organization, and ensures a fair and proper process.
- YPSA will consider the trusted person for assigning any responsibilities under this guideline. All the assigned persons also should show their respect, honor
- If necessary, YPSA will provide protection for the complainant or victim
- YPSA will ensure the implementation of policies consistently
- All evidences and records should be gathered and preserved properly.
- YPSA will respond promptly to valid complaints and feedback.

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