



Fairtrade Finland

Complaint and Allegation Policy

Administration

Date: 10.11.2021



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A. Objectives

Fairtrade Finland is committed to accountability as a core principal, and we strive to take responsibility for our actions. To ensure our stakeholders can hold us to account will improve the quality of our work. When we make a mistake, we want and need to be informed. We will use the information to endeavour to put things right and to help us to become more effective. By setting up channels to report any incidence or suspicion of misconduct or malpractice, a sound complaint mechanism allows for the identification of problems which might otherwise not surface, and for subsequent corrective action to be taken.

B. Scope

It is an expectation that all persons within the scope of this document familiarize themselves with this policy, which is available on the Fairtrade Finland intranet and website.

This Policy applies to:

- Board members and Board Committee members
- Employees of Fairtrade Finland (“staff members”)
- Consultants, Contractors and Vendors
- Volunteers
- interns and Student Assistants
- Partners and responsible parties engaged/contracted by Fairtrade Finland for a project or activities (“implementing partners” and “responsible parties”, respectively)

and to any behavior relating to work or in the context of work. Fairtrade Finland is committed to taking a systematic and robust approach to all allegations and complaints made against our organization, our staff and all our partners.

C. Definitions

1. Complaint

Complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction about the standards of service, actions or lack of action by Fairtrade Finland or its staff, volunteers or anybody directly involved in the delivery of our work. It is a criticism that expects a reply and would like things to be changed. A complaint has to be about an action for which Fairtrade Finland is responsible or is within our sphere of influence.

2. Complaint Mechanism



An effective complaint mechanism promotes accountability as communities and employees are better able to report abuse and access additional protection through deterrence.

A complaint mechanism can function through different ways and channels: A complaint by victim(s) or witness(es) of misconduct can be made in person or anonymously, by approaching an ombudsperson, by voicing the complaint in a public meeting etc. The complaint is then processed by designated personnel in a formalized manner.

Complaint mechanisms are used in various ways. In the context of organizations, some only target severe cases of misconduct, such as corruption or misappropriation of funds. Others include suggestions on how operations should be improved, e.g. by participants in projects or by employees. Due to the variety of cases dealt with and the different nature of organizations, mechanisms differ from organization to organization.

3. Type of Complaint

Most complaints can be distinguished into two types:

a. Operational complaints

Operational complaints can be related to practical matters e.g. project management, the quality of work, donor registration, incidents related to accidents, security threats.

b. Serious complaints

A serious complaint is related to a breach of the Code of Conduct of an organization and/or the Fairtrade Organization Code. In general, serious complaints can be divided into two categories:

- Corruption, fraud and financial issues;
- Physical, psychological, sexual exploitation or abuse of persons

D. Policy Statement

Fairtrade Finland will handle all allegations and complaints following the principles of:

1. **Legitimacy:** A mechanism must be transparent in ways that the process can be conducted fairly with respect to all parties.
2. **Accessibility:** Complainants should be able to make a complaint as easily as possible. Fairtrade Finland is committed to making communication with us as easy as possible and will also assist in cross-border complaints.



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3. Fairness: Affected persons/ suspects/ defendants shall be informed and heard unless this endangers the investigation conducted by Fairtrade Finland or prosecutors. All legally available sources of information shall be taken into account to clarify the incident.
4. Timeliness: Fairtrade Finland aims to resolve complaints within a reasonable timeframe. In the event that handling a complaint takes longer the complainant will be informed about the progress made to date and when they can expect to receive a response.
5. Confidentiality: Some complaints need to be kept confidential in order to safeguard those making or involved in the complaint. However in some instances we might judge that the complainant will be better served if others are involved in the resolution of a complaint.
6. Documented: Some complaints may be both made and resolved verbally, e.g. by telephone or face to face. Where they are unable to resolve verbally, complaints must be made in writing.
7. Right to appeal: Complainants who have launched a well-founded complaint and who are unsatisfied with Fairtrade Finland's response to that complaint have the right to appeal.
8. Mutual Respect: Everyone who makes a complaint to Fairtrade Finland will be treated with courtesy and respect. In return, Fairtrade Finland expects people who make a complaint to communicate their concerns fairly and appropriately.
9. Part of a learning process: We will log and monitor all serious complaints and results of such complaints and this information will be brought, regularly, to the attention of appropriate senior managers in order that we learn from what we do and how we do it. This information will not necessarily be available to the public.

E. Complaint Handling Process

Anyone should be allowed to file a complaint. This includes people directly involved with Fairtrade Finland as well as any "outsiders", i.e. Fairtrade Finland's employees, short-term employees, board members, management, volunteers, project participants as well as suppliers and partners or anyone else in contact with, or influenced by, the organization and anyone who has observed wrongdoing by Fairtrade Finland.

Complaints can be submitted through any channel as preferred by the complainant. Also anonymous reporting should be made possible and accessible. The reporting channel should also be free of charge, auditable, and be easily accessible to communities and seek to reduce the barriers for persons in fear or people with a special need to access the complaint mechanism.



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It is in the interests of both the complainant and Fairtrade Finland to ensure that any complaint is satisfactorily resolved. Should the person making a complaint not feel satisfied with the outcome despite having had the opportunity to request further clarification or feedback, they can submit a formal appeal directly to CEO or the Board. Appeal can be made only once.

Throughout the complaint procedure, all steps should be documented in writing, in as detailed a manner as possible. The documentation must be saved in a secured file with access limited to designated people.

To realize the potential of the complaint mechanism as a tool for learning and improvement, it is essential to analyze the cases dealt with. Knowledge can be gained from each complaint to improve the organization's operations.

F. Document Change History

Document version	Date approved and by whom	Mandatory Review	Creator
1.1	10.11.2021, Fairtrade Finland Board	Fairtrade Finland Board approves all changes.	Administration