



CHRISTIAN AID: FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS POLICY



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June 2022 J121236

Introduction:

This feedback and complaints policy is underpinned and informed by Christian Aid's wider commitment to accountability as defined in our [corporate accountability framework](#), the Charter4Change [Charter on Accountability](#), and the [ACT Alliance complaints policy](#). Christian Aid has aligned policies with relevant national and international standards including the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS), the British, Scottish, and Welsh Fundraising regulators, the Charity Commission, and The UK Information Commissioners Office.

Definitions:

The Christian Aid UK and international definitions for feedback and complaints differ due to being aligned with different domestic and international regulations and standards. In the International Department this is the Core Humanitarian Standard on quality and accountability (CHS) and in the UK (Fundraising and Supporter Engagement Department) this is the Fundraising Regulator.

Christian Aid Staff: Any individual who is paid by Christian Aid and is formally under a staff contract carrying out work of any kind for Christian Aid.

Christian Aid Representatives: Includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, interns, supporters, and any other person who is asked / contracted by Christian Aid to carry out any kind of work or interact with people in the UK or internationally, in any way.

International Stakeholders: Any people, communities, organisations, or agencies impacted by any of Christian Aid's global programming.

Supporters: Domestic stakeholders (who typically reside in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) that have interacted with Christian Aid fundraising, marketing, or communications in any or all their forms. This



predominantly refers to stakeholders who give, act and pray on behalf of Christian Aid.

Complaints (UK):

A complaint may be generally defined as an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about actions taken or a lack of action. Where it is unclear whether a communication is a concern or a complaint, it is generally best to err on the side of caution and treat it as a complaint. Complaints may include sensitive complaints related to fraud, corruption, data breaches, financial crime, and safeguarding abuses in all their forms including sexual exploitation and abuse.

Complaints (International): A specific grievance from anyone who has been negatively affected by the action or inaction of Christian Aid, partners and their staff or other representatives. Complaints may include sensitive complaints related to fraud, corruption, data breaches, financial crime, and safeguarding abuses in all their forms including sexual exploitation and abuse.

Feedback (UK):

Feedback can be defined as information provided by customers about their opinions and experiences, this could be around a specific campaign or product. Its purpose is to reveal their level of satisfaction and is invaluable in helping Christian Aid seek and identify ways to improve. Feedback can be positive or negative.

Feedback (International): Includes opinions, concerns, compliments, suggestions, rumours, misinformation, and advice, that we may adopt, or disagree with as appropriate. Feedback can be positive or negative.

Scope:



This policy applies to Christian Aid's global programmes and our interactions with supporters. It outlines how Christian Aid expects staff to welcome feedback and complaints from these stakeholders. The application of this policy will ensure that feedback and complaints are dealt with in an efficient, timely, and confidential manner in line with relevant standards and principles.

Specific guidance on establishing and managing effective complaints and feedback response mechanisms for country and regional programmes is available from the Programme Quality Handbook¹ chapter that outlines the Christian Aid Community Based Approach to Accountability (CBAA). Complaints and feedback by supporters is informed by [the supporter care charter](#) the implementation of which is laid out in the Complaints and Feedback Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).

When appropriate this policy is supplemented and supported by the following policies and procedures for serious and sensitive concerns:

- [The code of conduct](#)
- [The whistleblowing policy and procedure](#)
- The fraud and misuse policy
- [The safeguarding policy and procedures](#)
- [The financial crime and abuse policy](#)
- The anti-bribery policy
- The data breach policy

What is not currently covered by this policy?

Complaints and feedback by Christian Aid staff in relation to their employment are governed by Christian Aid's HR policies and procedures including:

- The Bullying and Harassment Policy
- The disciplinary policy and procedure
- The grievance policy and procedure_

¹ Programme Quality Handbook- Christian Aid's organisational guidance for quality programming



- Complaints and feedback from institutional donors, sponsoring churches, suppliers, and any other regulatory bodies associated with our work. These institutions have their own ways of feeding back.

Policy Statement:

Christian Aid welcomes feedback and complaints.

Christian Aid strives to offer high standards of service to our supporters at all times, but occasionally, we may not get it right. If a supporter is unhappy with the service we have provided, we encourage them to get in touch so we can improve and try to make sure the experience is not repeated.

Christian Aid's global programmes strive to deliver high quality work delivered with dignity and respect but acknowledge that this may not always be the case. When anyone representing Christian Aid makes a mistake, or causes harm, we want to be informed.

Ensuring that communities, partners, and supporters have *meaningful* access to effective complaints and feedback response mechanisms (CFRMs) is key to ensuring that all stakeholders can hold Christian Aid to account for the work we do, and how we do it.

Christian Aid is committed to ensuring that our programmes are aligned with the commitments of the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS) and to legal, open, honest and respectful fundraising. Christian Aid is registered with the Fundraising Regulator, who regulate and promote high standards in fundraising.

Policy Overview:

Christian Aid is committed to **transparency**, **accessibility**, and **accountability** in establishing, and managing effective complaints and feedback response mechanisms and legal, open, honest, and respectful communication.



Transparency:

- Christian Aid staff document how, and when, they have responded to, or referred all feedback and complaints received. In the rare occasion where a response is not possible (for example: where the information is provided anonymously and cannot be resolved in other ways) this is also documented.
- The Christian Aid Audit, Risk and Assurance team report on the management and investigation of sensitive complaints to the Audit and Risk Committee, a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees.
- Christian Aid has made this policy available to increase our transparency. Our Supporter Care Charter on our website details how supporters can expect Christian Aid to handle complaints.

Accessibility:

- The Christian Aid central supporter engagement team provides supporters with multiple methods for submitting complaints and feedback. These include letter, telephone, email, online webforms, and in-person (in certain circumstances). Details on how to contact Christian Aid are on our website and in printed and written correspondence (e.g., mailings) using plain and simple language. Supporters who prefer to correspond in Welsh may submit complaints and feedback in Welsh, and for all subsequent correspondence to be in Welsh also.
- Christian Aid will strive to include the most marginalised members within communities, where it is safe to do so, in the design and implementation of the CFRM in our global programmes.
- Christian Aid staff regularly share information with community members on the expected behaviour of Christian Aid representatives, and how to provide feedback and complaints. This explicitly covers: Fraud, corruption, financial crime, sexual exploitation, and abuse in all its forms.
- In some of our global programmes, Christian Aid's digital case management system Compass is used to document and manage



feedback. Where Compass is not available, Christian Aid's feedback trackers are used in line with the Christian Aid community-based accountability assessment.

- Christian Aid staff analyse feedback trends and identify any areas to improve access to CFRMs and improve the experience of our work.
- For sensitive complaints relevant, documented, procedures are used depending on the nature of the complaint and in line with the appropriate policies (see above).

Accountability:

- Christian Aid staff welcome feedback and complaints from any international stakeholders and supporters.
- In our global programmes, Christian Aid staff ensure that communities are involved in the design of any complaint and feedback response mechanisms (CFRMs).
- Christian Aid will manage feedback in a timely, appropriate, and legal manner.
- All staff who handle feedback and complaints are trained appropriately and provided with up-to-date resources to support them in this work.

Sensitive complaints:

It is possible that sensitive complaints may be raised through the mechanisms set out in this policy. If this happens, the Christian Aid staff member receiving the complaint is required to escalate it using the appropriate reporting processes available in the [safeguarding site](#). Examples of sensitive complaints include the following:

- Actual or suspected safeguarding incident
- Actual or suspected incident of fraud, theft, or bribery
- Actual or suspected diversion of funds to a terrorist organisation
- Actual or suspected data breach.

Limitations:



This policy does not apply to complaints that are subject to *current* investigation by any legal or official authorities in the UK or other countries in which we operate. Such complaints when raised with Christian Aid will be referred in line with our reporting of criminal wrongdoing to statutory authorities policy. Christian Aid will comply with and remain involved in such investigations when appropriate and with the consent of the relevant legal or official authority.

Policy Reference Information

Status	Final
Last Review date	August 2022
Next Review date	August 2023

