



COMPLAINT REDRESSAL POLICY

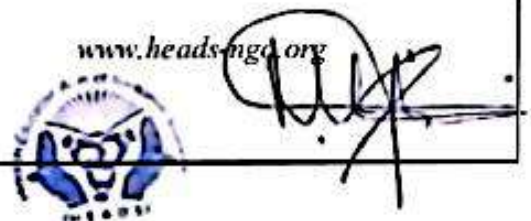
Health Education and Development Society (HEADS)



Abstract

This Complaint Redressal Policy outlines the Health, Education and Development Society (HEADS)'s commitment to transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in addressing grievances from all stakeholders. It establishes a structured, confidential, and accessible mechanism for lodging and resolving complaints, with strong protections for whistleblowers and survivors of misconduct. The policy promotes fairness, non-retaliation, and continuous improvement through monitoring, training, and referral systems.

Updated in January 2025.



Background:

Health, Education and Development Society (HEADS), is a non-profit, non-political and non-governmental organization registered in Pakistan under the Societies Act 1860. Since its establishment in 2013, HEADS has been actively engaged in the developmental and humanitarian sectors. The organization is led by a dedicated Board of Governors (BoG), consisting of professionals with diverse educational backgrounds and capabilities. HEADS operate under a comprehensive set of policies designed to ensure transparency, accountability and efficiency in its systems and operations. HEADS Currently registered in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and established an office in the capital city, Kabul.

Throughout its history, HEADS has worked closely with communities and various stakeholders, addressing a wide range of issues, including but not limited to Education, Health, Protection, Livelihoods, Community Infrastructure (CPIs), Shelter and Settlement, Community Development, Institutional Capacity Building, Research, Gender Equality, Legal Counselling, Referral Mechanisms, Social Accountability, Right to Information, and Governance.

In addition to these programmatic areas, HEADS place a strong emphasis on cross-cutting themes, including social mobilization, gender mainstreaming, inclusion, and resilience in all its core programs. These themes reflect the organization's commitment to addressing the holistic needs of communities and promoting sustainable development.

Vision: Every Individual regardless of background or circumstances enjoy equal opportunities and rights with dignity.

Mission: Empowering Communities through strategic investment in human capital and institutional capacity development, raising sustainable development at the grassroots level.

Objectives:

- Support and develop replicable models and strategies for sustainable human resource development through skills development initiatives.
- Network and collaborate with the Govt. Departments, NGO's, CBO's, WOs and international agencies/donors for sustainable development.
- Support initiatives for sustainable community-based gender sensitive development with particular focus on; Human and institutional Development, Natural Resource Management, Drinking Water Supply, Environmental Sanitation, Education, Agriculture, Health & Nutrition, Disaster Management and Micro Credit & Enterprise.
- Create economic and recreational opportunities for youth through skill enhancement programs for peace promotion.
- Enable equitable access to quality education and healthcare, raising holistic community development and well-being.
- Promoting Social Inclusion and Empowerment;
- Strengthen Resilience to Climate Change and Environmental Degradation.
- Advocacy for Peace, Human Rights, and Social Justice.
- Building Disaster Resilience and Preparedness



Introduction

Health Education and Development Society (HEADS) is committed to ensure a fair, transparent, and accessible complaint redressal mechanism for all stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries of its programs. This policy outlines the procedures for lodging, investigating, and resolving complaints in an impartial and effective manner. HEADS believes in an accountable environment where all stakeholders, including staff, beneficiaries, visitors, sub-grantees, suppliers, and implementing partners, have access to a structured complaint redressal mechanism. This policy also ensures that grievances are addressed in a timely and confidential manner while promoting trust and integrity within the organization.

Objectives of the Policy

The Complaint Redressal Policy aims to:

- Establish a transparent and accountable system for addressing complaints.
- Provide a safe and confidential process for beneficiaries to voice concerns.
- Ensure timely investigation and resolution of complaints while strengthening trust and engagement between HEADS and the community and alignment with international best practices, including PSEA and GBV protection.
- Ensure equal access to an effective and transparent complaint redressal system.
- Protect complainants from retaliation and maintain strict confidentiality.
- Provide clear procedures for filing, investigating, and resolving complaints.
- Define roles and responsibilities of the complaint redressal committee.
- Establish monitoring and referral mechanisms for legal, medical, and psychological support.
- Mandate training for employees and partners on complaint handling and reporting misconduct.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All HEADS employees, board members, and volunteers.
- Beneficiaries of HEADS programs and services.
- Implementing partners, sub-grantees, and contractors.
- Suppliers, consultants, and service providers.
- Any external stakeholders interacting with HEADS.

Reference to Relevant Policies

This policy aligns with:

- PSEA Policy (Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse)
- Gender Policy
- Child Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing & Anti-Fraud Policy

Guiding Principles



- **Equality and Non-Discrimination:** Every complaint is treated fairly, without bias based on race, gender, disability, or social status.
- **Confidentiality:** Personal details of complainants are protected throughout the process.
- **Accessibility:** Multiple complaint channels are available to accommodate all beneficiaries.
- **Impartiality:** Investigations are conducted by an independent committee to avoid conflicts of interest.
- **Timeliness:** Prompt resolution of complaints within defined timeframes.
- **Non-Retaliation:** Protection against retaliation for whistleblowers and complainants.
- **Transparency & Accountability:** Clear processes for lodging, reviewing, and addressing complaints.

Definitions

- **Complaint:** Any concern related to misconduct, policy violations, harassment, fraud, or abuse.
- **Harassment:** Unwelcome conduct, including sexual harassment, exploitation, or abuse.
- **Fraud:** Any act of dishonesty, misrepresentation, or misuse of resources.
- **Whistleblower:** An individual who reports misconduct in good faith.
- **Referral Mechanism:** Process for directing cases to legal, medical, or psychological support services.

Complaint Handling Procedure

Filing a Complaint

- Beneficiaries can submit complaints in writing, verbally, or through a designated community representative.
- Complaint forms are available in hard copy, online formats, and in multiple languages to ensure accessibility.
- A dedicated helpline and email address are provided for electronic submissions.

Acknowledgment

- HEADS will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five (5) working days.
- The complainant will receive a reference number to track progress.

Investigation

- An internal complaint redressal committee will be formed to investigate.
- The committee will include representatives from relevant program areas to ensure a well-rounded perspective.
- All investigations will follow strict confidentiality and due process.

Resolution

- HEADS will resolve complaints within five (5) working days from acknowledgment.
- Corrective actions may include policy changes, staff training, disciplinary measures, or service improvements.
- If additional time is required, regular updates will be provided to the complainant.

Communication

- HEADS will notify the complainant of the resolution in a clear and understandable manner.
- If the resolution is unsatisfactory, the complainant may appeal the decision.

Appeal Process



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- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the resolution, they may appeal within 10 working days.
- An independent review committee will reassess the case and provide a final decision within 15 working days.

Feedback and Follow-Up

- HEADS will actively seek feedback on the complaint redressal process for continuous improvement.
- A follow-up mechanism will ensure that resolutions are effectively implemented and that beneficiaries are satisfied.

HEADS will provide multiple channels for reporting complaints:

- **Verbal or Written Complaint:** Submitted to the line manager or HR.
- **Anonymous Reporting:** Secure email (form@heads-ngo.org) or suggestion boxes.
- **Confidential Helpline:** A designated helpline for receiving and processing complaints.

Anti-Retaliation & Whistleblower Protection

- HEADS maintains a zero-tolerance policy against retaliation.
- All complainants and witnesses are protected from adverse actions.
- Disciplinary action will be taken against those who retaliate against whistleblowers.
- HEADS guarantees whistleblower confidentiality and prohibits retaliation against complainants.
- Retaliation will result in disciplinary action, including termination or legal consequences.

Referral Mechanisms

HEADS will ensure timely assistance through a structured referral mechanism for victims requiring external support. For this HEADS will Establish partnerships with legal aid services, social welfare organizations, and government agencies. Ensures cases involving violations of human rights, harassment, or exploitation are promptly referred to relevant authorities. This includes:

- **Legal Assistance:** Law department, legal aid organizations
- **Medical Care:** Local hospitals, health institutions
- **Psychosocial Support:** Trained Psychologists, Social workers, NGOs
- **Child Protection Services:** Social Welfare Department, Child Protection Cells

Monitoring Mechanisms

- All complaints and their resolutions will be documented and reviewed quarterly.
- A summary report will be prepared annually to assess complaint trends and inform policy improvements.
- Regular assessments will be conducted to ensure effectiveness and beneficiary satisfaction.
- Independent third-party audits will be conducted to review complaint resolution efficiency.
- Regular reviews and audits will assess the effectiveness of the complaint redressal system.
- Periodic community consultations will be held to gather feedback on the complaint process.
- An annual report will be published summarizing complaints received, resolutions provided, and process improvements made.



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- The HR Department conducts periodic assessments of complaint trends.
- Reports are shared with the Executive Director and Board for review.

Management Responsibilities

- HEADS Executive Management will oversee policy implementation and compliance.
- A Complaint Redressal Committee will be responsible for investigating complaints.
- Program managers will ensure timely responses and appropriate actions.

Awareness and Capacity Building

- Beneficiaries will receive training on their rights and the complaint submission process.
- HEADS staff will be trained on fair complaint handling and investigation procedures.
- Awareness campaigns will be conducted within beneficiary communities to educate individuals on their rights to file complaints through Complaint Registration Mechanism (CRM).

Implementation & Adherence

- All staff and stakeholders must acknowledge and comply with this policy.
- Training sessions will be conducted to ensure awareness and adherence.
- Management is responsible for enforcing compliance and periodic updates.

Cooperative Arrangements

- HEADS will include a complaint resolution clause in all partnership agreements.
- All stakeholders, including donors and implementing partners, will be encouraged to comply with the redressal policy.

Policy Review and Updates

- This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness.
- Updates will be made in response to beneficiary feedback, legal changes, and best practices.
- The revised policy will be disseminated to all stakeholders through workshops and official communications.



Annex A - Complaint Form

Name of Complainant:		Village:	
Union Council:		Contact Number:	
Received By:		Signature:	
Receiving Date:		Complaint No:	
Method of Receipt:	Complaint box <input type="checkbox"/>	Village meeting <input type="checkbox"/>	Personal/Phone <input type="checkbox"/>
Description of Complaint:			
Discussed With:		Discussion Date:	
Signature of Person Consulted		
Decision:			
Communication Type:	Response <input type="checkbox"/>	Redress <input type="checkbox"/>	Referral <input type="checkbox"/>
Communication Date:		Communicated By:	

Complaint Acknowledgement Receipt

Complaint Received By:		Signature:	
Complaint No:		Receiving Date:	
Contact Details:	Phone:	Timing:	



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BOD Meeting Minutes

Date: January 06, 2025

Participated by:

Raza Ullah Jan	Executive Director
Uzma Amin	Chairperson Board
Samina Khanam	Board Member
Nawaz Ali Shah	Board Member
Amabareen Banori	Board Member
Muhammad Jidran	Board Member
Abid Ali	Board Member
Tahira Nasreen	Board Member
Sayed Ali Shah	Director Program
Asif Ali	Director Finance
Ramsha Khan	HR Officer

Agenda Items:

- Change in Leadership position
- Formation of the Annual Report, Annual Budget, and Strategic Plan.
- Completion of the NDRMF Capacity Improvement Action Plan.
- Processing for Charity Commission in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.
- Revision of HEADS policies.
- Renewal of Society Act Registration for 2025.

Proceedings & Outcomes:

The meeting commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by a formal welcome note delivered by the Chairperson, Ms. Uzma Amin, and the Executive Director, Mr. Raza Ullah Jan. The discussions focused on the agenda items and organizational improvements.

- The Board decided to shift Mr. Raza Ullah Jan from the position of Chairperson of the Board of Directors (BOD) to Executive Director of HEADS, following the resignation of Ms. Samina Khanam from the role of Executive Director. Ms. Khanam has now joined the Board as a Board Member. Additionally, Dr. Uzma Amin has been appointed as Chairperson of the Board, effective immediately.
- The Board emphasized the importance of preparing Annual Report/ Annual Budget and Strategic Plan to assess the organization's current standing and plan strategically for the upcoming year.
- As HEADS has been conditionally accredited by the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) for six months, the Board reviewed the shared Capacity Improvement Action Plan. It was decided to prioritize its completion within the stipulated timeframe, recognizing this as a crucial opportunity for the organization.

- The Board agreed to initiate the process for Charity Commission registration in Balochistan. Police verification for the Charity Commission in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will be expedited to obtain the certification promptly.
- A comprehensive review of organizational policies was conducted. The Board proposed and approved necessary amendments to align with current needs and best practices.
- It was noted that the Society Act Registration expired in December 2024. The Board resolved to apply for its renewal for 2025 without delay.

The meeting concluded with a thorough review of the agenda items, ensuring they aligned with the organization's strategic objectives. The Board expressed optimism about the successful execution of the discussed initiatives. The Chairperson concluded the meeting with a vote of thanks.

Signed on this Monday January 06, 2025 by authorized signatory.



Dr. Uzma Amin
Chairperson Board



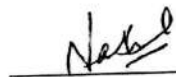
Mr. Raza Ullah Jan
Executive Director



Ms. Samina Khanam
BOG Member



Mr. Muhammad Jidran
BOG Member



Mr. Nawaz Ali Shah
BOG Member



Miss. Ambareen Banori
BOG Member



Mr. Abid Ali
BOG Member



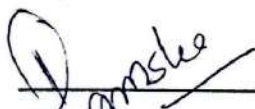
Miss. Tahira Nasreen
BOG Member



Mr. Sayed Ali Shah
Program Director HEADS



Mr. Asif Ali
Director Operations HEADS



Miss. Ramsha Khan
HR Officer



Policy Review & Update Record

A Board meeting was held on January 6, 2025, with the key agenda of reviewing and updating all organizational policies of HEADS. The Board advised the management to undertake a comprehensive policy review to ensure relevance, compliance, and alignment with organizational goals and evolving operational needs.

In line with this directive, all organizational policies were reviewed and amended on January 31, 2025, under the leadership of the Executive Director and with the involvement of the Finance & Audit Committee and relevant departments.

The review process included:

- A thorough evaluation of existing policies.
- Revisions based on internal assessments, audit findings, regulatory requirements, and best practices.
- Incorporation of feedback from staff and stakeholders.
- Updates to enhance clarity, accountability, and operational effectiveness.

Means of Verification:

Revised policy documents, review reports, and documented feedback and approval records.



(H E A D S)

Raza Ullah Jan
Executive Director