



**TREES
FOR THE
FUTURE**

**FEEDBACK AND GRIEVANCE REDRESS
POLICY**

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.....	- 1 -
Definition of a grievance.....	- 1 -
POLICY RATIONALE.....	- 1 -
POLICY STATEMENTS	- 1 -
OBJECTIVE	- 2 -
PURPOSE	- 2 -
SCOPE	- 2 -
PRINCIPLES.....	- 2 -
FEEDBACK AND GRIEVANCE REDRESS PROCEDURE.....	- 2 -
1. SENSITIZATION.....	- 2 -
2. RECEIVE	- 3 -
3. ACKNOWLEDGE.....	- 4 -
4. EVALUATION	- 4 -
5. INVESTIGATION	- 4 -
6. COLLABORATIVE RESOLUTION	- 4 -
7. IMPLEMENT RESOLUTION.....	- 4 -
8. MONITOR AND CLOSURE.....	- 5 -
POLICY INTEGRATION AND APPLICABILITY.....	- 5 -
APPROVAL.....	- 5 -
ANNEX	- 6 -

INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the formal process for handling complaints/ grievances, airing out concerns and giving feedback within the **TREES FOR THE FUTURE (TREES)** program. It outlines how employees, farmers, stakeholders and beneficiaries would raise a complaint and what steps TREES will take to resolve them. The process will involve sensitization, receiving, acknowledging, evaluation, investigation, collaborative resolution, implementation of resolution, monitoring, closure and feedback.

The custodian of the Feedback and Grievance Redress Policy shall be the office of the Community, Advocacy, Relationships and Engagement (**C.A.R.E**) Officer.

Definition of a grievance

A grievance is any discontentment or dissatisfaction of an employee, farmer, stakeholders/ beneficiaries originating from TREES project activities.

POLICY RATIONALE

TREES' grievance mechanism is outlined in this Feedback and Grievance Redress Policy as a process for receiving, recording, evaluating, investigating and ultimately resolve grievances within a reasonable period. It was designed by staff in consultation with other project stakeholders, with feedback gathered during lead farmer meetings. This policy is also in compliance with internationally accepted standards for implementation of Carbon Projects.

POLICY STATEMENTS

TREES is committed to continually train farmers in sustainable land use, improve livelihoods of impoverished farmers, foster vibrant regional economies, thriving food systems and a healthy planet.

At TREES we ensure that any person or organisation using our services or affected by our operations, has the right to lodge a complaint or appeal to a decision made.

At TREES we are committed to fostering an open, transparent, collaborative and responsive environment where every stakeholder's voice is heard and valued.

Our Feedback and Grievance Redress policy ensures we create a safe space for staff, farmers and stakeholders by ensuring that they can provide feedback, air their grievances, thoughts and concerns openly through well-established structures and procedures.

Our policy ensures that concerns, complaints and suggestions are collaboratively addressed promptly, fairly and efficiently.

OBJECTIVE

To foster a clear, open, transparent, collaborative and responsive environment where every stakeholder's concerns, complaints and suggestions are collaboratively addressed fairly and efficiently.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Feedback and Grievance Redress policy is to:

- a) Sensitize TREES staff, farmers and stakeholders on the scope and contents of this policy to foster reporting.
- b) Outline a clear process of reporting, managing, closing and monitoring grievances in a timely and effective manner.
- c) Ensure that TREES operations follow regulatory and legislative requirements.

SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all TREES employees, farmers including paid interns, volunteers, and seasonal, part-time, and permanent employees working in the organisations premises or handling the organisations operations elsewhere. A grievance can be filed against any TREES employee and stakeholders.

PRINCIPLES

- a) Confidentiality: TREES will ensure confidentiality of all parties is maintained throughout the process.
- b) Objectivity: TREES will recognise the importance of resolving grievances submitted in a manner that satisfies all parties involved.
- c) Responsiveness: TREES will receive and resolve all grievances from employees, farmers and stakeholders while maintaining open communication with all parties involved during the process. TREES will provide employees and farmers with training on the contents of this policy.
- d) Timelines: TREES will promptly address grievances and mitigate risks. TREES will provide a platform where all risks are captured and addressed with minimal repercussions.

FEEDBACK AND GRIEVANCE REDRESS PROCEDURE.

The procedure for resolving grievances will be done through the following steps:

1. SENSITIZATION

To ensure all community members, farmers, and employees are aware of the grievance process and their rights, TREES will conduct comprehensive sensitization sessions.

These sessions will inform stakeholders about the various methods available for logging grievances, the importance of documenting grievances, measures taken to ensure confidentiality/anonymity and the outlined processes of resolving grievances. Our goal is to build trust and encourage active participation in the grievance mechanism.

2. RECEIVE

A grievance from a community member/s, farmers or employees is received by an appointed/nominated **Grievance Focal Person** following TREES laid out criteria or directly to the organisations **C.A.R.E Officer**.

Lodging a complaint: A grievance can be lodged in by any direct or indirect beneficiary of the project.

Methods of lodging: Grievances can be lodged verbally or in writing. Verbal forms include phone hotlines (**0797963967**), during community meetings, in person to the grievance focal person for each project in the specific regions or directly to the C.A.R.E office. Non-verbal forms include but not limited to: online portals (<https://www.lighthouse-services.com/trees>) (link can be found at the bottom of TREES website), email (grievances@trees.org) with a response acknowledging receipt within 24hrs, grievances boxes which are placed in accessible locations in the regional offices where stakeholders can drop written grievances with regular collection and review, SMS/text message, third parties who will then lodge the complaints.

Documentation of grievances: Each grievance raised will be documented in the grievance register. All steps taken during the investigation and any interim actions taken, including interviews, evidence collected, findings and final decision will be documented.

If the complainant cannot prepare a written complaint but wishes to do so, they should ask a staff member or community grievance representative to write it for them and have them sign it.

Anonymity and confidentiality: If the matter is sensitive or the complainant fears reprisals, they can use the TREES Whistleblower hotline (<https://www.lighthouse-services.com/trees>), request anonymity and confidentiality from the grievance focal person, submit the grievance directly to the C.A.R.E officer or submit an anonymous written comment in the suggestion box.

All parties are prohibited from discussing the matter with any other TREES employee or third party. The C.A.R.E officer, the focal points and Kenyan TREES Directors will sign a **Non- disclosure Agreement** that limits them from discussing the grievance before and after it has been resolved.

3. ACKNOWLEDGE

The C.A.R.E Officer and grievance focal points will acknowledge receipt of the complaint within a specified period (within 2 working days).

Grievance register: A grievance register will be maintained at all TREES regional offices managed by the grievance focal points with a centralized register in Kisumu under the custody of the C.A.R.E Officer. The C.A.R.E Officer will register and confirm acknowledgement of all grievances received from the different regional offices within 2 working days.

4. EVALUATION

Initial evaluation: The C.A.R.E officer evaluates the grievance to determine whether it can be resolved at local level without involving a third party. This includes using a checklist to evaluate the grievance and determine the appropriate personnel based on the subject and severity. The grievance can then be classified into high risk, medium risk or low risk.

Assignment of the grievance owner: If the matter requires additional expertise after evaluation, the C.A.R.E officer takes up the matter and identifies the appropriate resolution channel. Depending on the grievance, the C.A.R.E officer may recommend a solution or a grievance resolution committee to evaluate the nature of the grievance and advise on the resolution mechanism.

5. INVESTIGATION

Comprehensive investigation: In consultation with the complainant and necessary technical experts, the grievance owner investigates to determine what happened, who was responsible, and recommends potential resolutions. The investigation forms the basis for a collaborative grievance resolution.

6. COLLABORATIVE RESOLUTION

Proposal presentation: The grievance owner proposes a solution to the complainant which is informed by the initial comprehensive investigation done.

7. IMPLEMENT RESOLUTION

Accepted solution: If the solution is accepted, it is implemented with detailed documentation of the resolution process and the outcome is maintained for transparency and future reference.

Appeals process: If the solution is not accepted, the C.A.R.E Officer will evaluate the process again and advise on a suitable alternative resolution process. If the complainant is still not contented, he/she can seek recourse through another mechanism, such as a legal process.

8. MONITOR AND CLOSURE

Monitoring: The grievance is monitored for a period of 6 months to ensure no additional concerns are raised by the complainant.

Closure: Once the grievance is resolved or the complainant chooses another process, then grievance is officially closed.

Feedback: Post-resolution feedback is gathered from the complainant to improve future grievance handling processes.

POLICY INTEGRATION AND APPLICABILITY.

The provisions of this Feedback and Grievance Redress Policy are effective throughout the working period in the organisation. The policy is used in conjunction with the HR Manual and other organisations policies including:

- Policy on Sexual Harassment Exploitation and Abuse
- Codes of conduct.
- Whistleblower.
- Conflict of interest.
- Non-Disclosure Agreement.

APPROVAL

This procedure has been approved and authorized by:
VP PROGRAMMES

Signature:  Date: August 28th, 2024

COUNTRY DIRECTOR

Signature:  Date: August 28th, 2024

DIRECTOR OF FIELD PROGRAMMES

Signature  Date: 10th September 2024

ANNEX

Annex 1 [Criteria for selection of grievance focal persons](#)

Annex 2 [Grievance log in template.](#)

Annex 3 [Farmers grievance mechanism feedback](#)