

MapAction Complaints and Disputes Policy

Introduction

1.1. MapAction holds itself accountable to its beneficiaries and stakeholders for all aspects of its behaviour as an organisation. This policy prescribes the procedures that should be undertaken in all cases where a complaint is made against the charity or a member of staff.

1.2. This procedure does not apply to complaints from staff members or volunteers within MapAction. Such matters are covered, where relevant, by MapAction's disciplinary and grievance procedures.

Responsibility

1.3. MapAction's Code of Conduct sets out the organisation's expectations of members' behaviour. It is the responsibility of all members and officers of the charity to adhere to the [SAP 02.04 Members' Code of Conduct](#).

1.4. Where a complaint is raised with the field team, it is the responsibility of the Team Leader to forward this complaint at the earliest possible point to the Programmes and Partnership Director or Chief Executive.

1.5. In the first instance it is the Programmes and Partnership Director's responsibility to investigate the complaint.

1.6. The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring the appropriate processing of any complaint. The only exception to this is if a complaint should be against the Chief Executive himself or herself, in which case the complaint should be managed by the Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Response process

2.1. It is unlikely that a beneficiary would know how to make a formal complaint about MapAction, but may do so through the hosting organisation or partner or it may be that the hosting organisation or partner has a complaint to make directly.

2.2. Any complaint made, either verbally or in writing, must receive an appropriate response from MapAction but must be coordinated at the appropriate level with the hosting organisation or partner accordingly.

2.3. Complaints made during deployed operations, of an incidental and relatively minor nature and passed on verbally, should be reported to the Team Leader who should ensure that a suitable explanation or apology is given. The complainant's contact details should be retained and details of the complaint and steps taken reported to the Programmes and Partnership Director in writing.

2.4. More serious complaints or complaints against the Team Leader, should be forwarded to the Programmes and Partnership Director as soon as practicable, with brief circumstances and contact

details. The Programmes and Partnership Director should ensure that an appropriate acknowledgement of the complaint is given to the complainant with a stated intention to respond within a reasonable period.

2.5. If a complaint is made about an individual volunteer or staff member then he/she should be informed as soon as possible about the complaint.

2.6. The Programmes and Partnership Director should investigate the complaint to the extent that is justified by its seriousness.

2.7. Within a reasonable period, all complainants should receive a formal response with a proposal of resolution of any outstanding disputed matters. An opportunity should be given for the complainant to appeal if they are not satisfied with the response.

Serious complaints

3.1. Any allegation involving serious malpractice, for example substantive financial misconduct, or theft or an assault on any person, or any act or omission likely to bring the charity into severe disrepute, must be reported as soon as possible to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive will delegate investigation of the complaint to the Programmes and Partnership Director unless there is a clear reason not to do so.

3.2. The complainant should be given written information about who within MapAction will be handling the complaint, with full contact details.

3.3. If such an allegation occurs in the field, and the Programmes and Partnership Director believes there is the possibility of a case to answer, then the team member should normally be suspended from duty.

3.4. In cases where a serious criminal offence may have been committed, the Chief Executive must take legal advice and ensure the alleged incident is appropriately reported to law enforcement authorities.

3.5. Circumstances may require the collection of information in the investigation of the complaint. The Programmes and Partnership Director may seek information from a range of different informants but will do so on a need to know basis only, and only if legal advice indicates this will not prejudice a legal case.

3.6. A confidential written report must detail the investigation and outcomes, and the communications with the complainant, defendant, relevant authorities and other stakeholders.

3.7. The Chief Executive will ensure the Board is informed of the complaint at a suitable time and that there is an opportunity to review learning arising out of such a complaint for the future