 <small>An Action Center for Social and Environmental Reform</small>	<b>POLICIES</b>			
	<b>Title: Samdhana Grievance Redress Policy</b>			
Policy No. <b>SI-011</b>	Effectivity <b>30 July 2020</b>	Issued: <b>30 July 2020</b>	Supersedes all previous guidelines on SOP	

# Samdhana Grievance Redress Policy

## Rationale

The grievance redress mechanism allows the Partners, beneficiaries and participants of projects implemented or supported by Samdhana, other stakeholders, institutional partners, and the general public to lodge complaints and receive feedback and resolution. Further, the mechanism is a tool for Samdhana partners and stakeholders to report suspected fraud<sup>1</sup> under activities/ projects supported by Samdhana or cases of misconduct. Samdhana provides a grievance redress mechanism to ensure and promote accountability and transparency.

There are three levels wherein grievances are possible to occur: first, with the projects being implemented by sub-grantees; and second, with projects or programs that are directly implemented by Samdhana in the country where it operates; and third, at the institutional level.

Grievances will be addressed, based on the following principles:

- 1) The rights and interests of the parties are protected;
- 2) Adherence to agreements/ contracts, and accountability of all parties involved;
- 3) Equity and benefit-sharing; and
- 4) In accordance with the policies, laws, and regulations of the country where the activity/ project takes place.
- 5) The whistleblower is protected.

## Unit responsible


The Knowledge Management and Resource Development (KMRD) Unit is responsible for managing the system, ensuring its accessibility and responsiveness to different Samdhana stakeholders. The KMRD Unit is responsible for channeling the grievance to the concerned unit in Samdhana or to the Partner concerned, the management or the board depending on the complaint, ensure that complaints are addressed and resolved in a professional and timely fashion, and without risk of reprisal to the complainants.

## Handling grievances

Samdhana shall create a process and system for receiving grievances, the handling process and response mechanism. Information on the procedures above should be made available on the Samdhana website. Samdhana shall ensure that persons filing grievances or “whistleblowers” will be provided with ample security and confidentiality, and allow disclosure of information without fear of reprisal from anyone associated with the grievance including but not limited from either Samdhana personnel, management, board or fellows.

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to Samdhana Anti-fraud Policy.

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Samdhana shall recognize traditional/ customary conflict resolution process that the community recognizes and practices; and accept resolutions and decisions arrived at through this process, in as far as it aligns with the principles of Samdhana. .

### **Resolution and closure**

Formal responses to a grievance will be done in writing. After investigation, a written summary of the process, the decisions/ recommendations and its bases thereof, and the entity that handled the grievance will be provided to the complainant. Samdhana will facilitate and document the process taken to discuss the options with the complainant(s) and the final agreed actions/ resolutions. All decisions/ closure on grievances will be formally relayed to relevant stakeholders, and when necessary to the Board of Trustees, through a formal letter.

### **Monitoring and documentation**

The KMRD Unit will receive the grievance through various means of communication – i.e through the website; social media; email; and any other written or recorded communications. It will also manage a database of the grievance cases. It will create a reporting system on its grievance handling to increase the likelihood stakeholders reporting issues and concerns. Lessons learned will be documented and shared for Samdhana Management and the Board to contribute in drafting policies that will mitigate and reduce the likelihood of recurrence of grievances.

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