

# Grievance management mechanisms

## How does Target Malaria address complaints?



Stakeholder engagement is one of Target Malaria's three pillars. Our stakeholder engagement strategy is built on ethical principles, one of which is to prioritize engagement with the **most ethically relevant** groups – namely, the communities where we operate. Our approach encourages co-development and consultation with these communities, allowing the project to receive and integrate their feedback and commentary into our activities.

In addition to the systems in place to receiving positive feedback, international guidance and best practice on stakeholder engagement “views grievance management as one of the pillars of stakeholder engagement. Grievance mechanisms inform and complement but do not replace other forms of stakeholder engagement”<sup>1</sup>. All feedback from our affected communities is critical to informing our activities.

To make sure that those affected by our activities can share their complaints with the project, Target Malaria has established grievance management mechanisms in each of the communities where it carries out research to understand and address any complaint or grievance that may arise as a result of project activities. The mechanism includes tools and processes through which complaints are filed, monitored, analysed, and addressed, as well as systems to track and improve the way in which the project takes decisions related to complaints.

### What is a grievance management mechanism?

A grievance management mechanism is a channel through which individuals and communities directly involved in the implementation of a project can communicate enquiries, complaints, and requests for clarification regarding project activities that affect them and seek to have these addressed. A grievance management mechanism is one part of a holistic community engagement strategy that allows the community to share both positive and constructive feedback. Grievance management mechanisms do not impact on individuals' or communities' right to use the country's legal system in any way, and they are not intended as a replacement of any other applicable public grievance and conflict-management mechanism.

### Purpose of a grievance management mechanism

Grievance management plays an essential role in the implementation of Target Malaria's commitment to openness and accountability as it allows the project to be accountable to its stakeholders and the public.

These mechanisms also provide an opportunity for the project to gather feedback and improve its work and procedures overtime. In keeping with Target Malaria's core values, a grievance management mechanism helps to:

- Ensure needs and concerns are addressed in a timely, effective, and transparent manner.
- Identify, analyse and address any potential issues linked to project activities early on, before they become widespread.
- Foster relationships of trust and mutual respect between communities and project members.
- Improve the project's operational performance by taking feedback from communities on processes and systems into account.

## Principles of Target Malaria's grievance management mechanisms

Target Malaria establishes grievance management mechanisms at the community level in the field sites and around the insectaries in which work is being conducted.

Across all communities, the project is committed to the following key principles:

- **Accessibility** – All necessary measures are taken to ensure that the grievance management mechanism and information related to its use is accessible to all affected community members at no cost.
- **Simplicity** – The mechanism is designed to be simple to understand and easy to use so that stakeholders at any level can file a complaint, should they wish to.
- **Timeliness** – The project is committed to deal with all complaints expressed by stakeholders in a timely and efficient manner.
- **Confidentiality** – Only those involved in the direct handling of the complaint have access to it, and personal information is protected in accordance with the project's confidentiality provisions.

- **Listening, thoroughness and transparency**
  - Complaints will be examined rigorously and objectively, with all available data taken into account. The complainant will be given appropriate consideration and will be informed about how his or her case will be handled in detail.

All in-country teams work from the same key principles to establish their grievance management mechanisms and have access to a set of standardised tools to facilitate this process. However, they are also free to tailor their approaches to local contexts to a significant extent, to guarantee that they are adapted to meet the unique needs, expectations, and conditions of different stakeholders.

Grievance management mechanisms are open to all stakeholders living in an area of the project implementation. They are available on a voluntary and non-exclusive basis. They are not intended to replace any relevant legal systems or recourse in national law.

## Grievance management mechanisms at the community level

Each community located close to one of the project's insectaries or field work sites has access to a dedicated grievance management committee. These committees are composed in roughly equal parts of members of the local Target Malaria team and of community leaders/trusted members chosen from among the local residents. The exact composition of the committee, and the procedures through which stakeholder representatives are selected varies from one location to another and will depend on what the community itself considers most acceptable, pragmatic, and culturally appropriate.

Members of this committee are responsible for collecting and recording grievances. To this end, a standardised form for expressing grievances has been developed, but stakeholders can also submit complaints in other formats, including by phone, email, text message, and in face-to-face conversations.

Once a grievance has been received, the committee analyses it to determine whether it is admissible (e.g. whether it refers to project activities or not), whether it is reliably founded, and how simple or complex it will be to address. The committee then decides on whether and how to address the grievance in question, clearly explaining why, how, and when it will do so to the stakeholder that raised the complaint. All grievances are recorded in a secure database, to ensure that decisions are implemented and to enable lesson-learning and the identification of trends that can help the project deliver better outcomes in the future.

## Training of members of complaints management committees

Training is provided to all members of the complaints management committee by the project to enable them to better take ownership of their roles and responsibilities. A periodic evaluation of the members of the committees is made by the person in charge of the management of complaints based on criteria agreed by the committee. Retraining sessions are also held annually based on the recommendations resulting from the evaluation of the mechanism.

## Review of the complaint management mechanism

To ensure that the mechanism operating in line with the principles a complete review of the system is carried out annually to identify difficulties in the process of handling complaints or responding to complainants. The procedures and stages of the complaints management mechanism are thus reviewed, the approaches adapted, and the system improved in order to ensure its effectiveness. All complaints management committees at all levels are involved in this review. The person in charge of complaints management within the project leads the process.

Target Malaria in-country teams are also trained to respond to requests for information or concerns from stakeholders outside of the communities where we operate.

- 1 Good Practice Note: Addressing Grievances from Project - Affected Communities – Guidance for projects and companies on designing grievance mechanisms [https://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/213556198?access\\_key=key-d387qdel3wbc9nmxk](https://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/213556198?access_key=key-d387qdel3wbc9nmxk)

