



ADRA Denmark Complaints Report 2022

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About the report

ADRA Denmark recognises the importance and value of listening and responding to concerns and complaints. The purpose of our complaints handling procedure is to ensure that the organisation is fully accountable to all of its stakeholders, enabling them to raise complaints and concerns about the work and operations of ADRA Denmark as stipulated in ADRA Denmark's Complaints Handling Procedure (2018). We focus on effective complaints handling mechanisms that reflect the needs, expectations and rights of the complainants and address complaints in an efficient, fair and timely manner. The complaints procedures are designed to promote safety, dignity, respect for all stakeholders involved with ADRA Denmark and our programmes. We align our efforts also with ADRA International's Safeguarding Standards (2020) and ADRA Denmark's Anti-corruption and Whistle-blowing policy (April 2018). This report reflects on complaints and concerns received during the year 2022. We aim to be accountable and transparent to all our stakeholders by sharing complaints received, our action taken and the lessons we learned from it for our work.

Principles of complaints mechanism

Driven by our four key organisational values, namely equality, dignity, justice, and social responsibility, ADRA's approach to welcoming and handling complaints is motivated by the following principles:

- Accessibility – including ensuring that mechanisms are culturally relevant, in an appropriate location and in a language understandable by all.
- Participation – including community input to design of complaints mechanisms.
- Confidentiality - where appropriate, protecting identity of complainants and concerned staff and handling sensitive issues with due privacy.
- Safety - seeking to ensure that no one is put at risk due to making a complaint.
- Transparency - being open about how we handle complaints, what can be complained about, and changes that have been made as a result of complaints.
- Professionalism – including acting with a high level of respect and common sense, and handling complaints in a timely manner.

Executive Summary

In 2022, ADRA Denmark didn't receive any complaints. However, most of our ADRA partners in Syria, Yemen, South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanzania received and handled complaints regarding the projects supported by ADRA Denmark as summarised below. There is a big difference in the number of complaints reported which partly reflects the type of activities in each country e.g. humanitarian activities will typically cause more complaints than long-term development activities. But it also reflects the experience each project has with implementation of complaint channels, handling of complaints, etc.

Developing complaints mechanisms for ADRA Denmark as well as our partners has been an ongoing process over the last few years, which has now resulted in solid policies and processes in most countries. In 2022, the focus has been on supporting the roll-out of the complaint mechanism procedures in all our partner countries, and in 2023 we will follow up and continuously support this effort as well as having a stronger focus at the field level.

Complaints received in 2022

Denmark

ADRA Denmark received no complaints in 2022

Types of complaints	No complaints.
Complaints channels	Send a letter to ADRA Denmark's office. Contact ADRA Denmark's chairperson of the cooperation committee or any ADRA DK staff member by phone, email or face-to-face. Fill out a form online.
Complaints handling	
Lessons learned	

Syria

Creating Opportunities for People in Emergencies (COPE) & Provision of Assistance towards Resilient Communities (SPARC), funded by Danida.

Types of complaints	1 complaint registered. Non-sensitive. ADRA received a complaint from a beneficiary the day after purchasing the livestock for him. The beneficiary was afraid that one of the purchased sheep was sick.
Complaints channels	In general: Hotline (phone), face-to-face in the field or at ADRA offices, complaint/feedback boxes on site, email. In this case the complaint was raised verbal via telephone.
Complaints handling	ADRA visited the beneficiary on 24 November 2022 with the vet and re-examined the sheep ensuring that it was not sick.
Lessons learned	

Yemen

Enhanced Life Conditions (ELC), funded by Danida

Types of complaints	319 complaints registered: 133 against block leaders, 3 against other beneficiaries, and 183 asking to join the cash for work activity.
Complaints channels	Phone calls, face-to-face, WhatsApp, and complaint boxes.
Complaints handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complaints received and verified - The subject of complaint is contacted to know the basis of the issue - Almost all cases were about exclusion from the cash for work activity - Block leaders said that the cases didn't meet the vulnerability criteria and therefore couldn't be added to the potential list of beneficiaries

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All complaints were verified against eligibility criteria and all of the complainants are contacted about the results - All complaints were followed and are now closed.
Lessons Learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Following feedback from households who did not consider their food needs met in 2021, ADRA Yemen increased the daily cash grants distributed in 2022. Additionally, lessons learned from previous years showed that one month of support through CfW was not sufficient to strengthen the targeted households' ability to meet their basic food needs. Hence, in 2022 each household participated in 3 cycles of 22 days amounting to 3 months in total. - Similarly, there are people in the target area in need of support over and above the number of beneficiaries covered by the present project funding. Thus, ADRA Denmark and ADRA Yemen will continue to search for additional funding / donors.

South Sudan

Access to Sustainable Solutions Project (ACCESS) (funded by Danida)

Types of complaints	5 complaints registered: 1 from farmer groups regarding poor seeds, 1 from fisheries groups concerning poor quality of nets and hooks procured and distributed to them, 3 from local authorities regarding delayed recruitment, tender advertisement and distribution of cash in local currency.
Complaints channels	In general: Phone calls, email (complaint contact person in Juba), face-to-face in the field. In these specific instances all complaints were raised during meetings with community members and local authorities.
Complaints handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two complaints were directed to the procurement department to 1) replace seeds and 2) the project staff providing detailed specification of fishing nets and hooks for the next procurement in consultation with the fishing groups and community members. - Three complaints were referred to the head office to address (incl. one complaint referred to the HR department.)
Lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a need for continuous engagement with the local authorities in matters of recruitment, cash transfer and procurement procedures. - The communities are not open to air out complaints or use other channels other than meetings due to high levels of illiteracy. They would prefer to share their grievances with the local authorities rather than coming forward to ADRA. This is positive in terms of sustainability of the complaint mechanisms, since when the project ends, the local leaders will remain with them in the community. To follow-up on the complaints shared with local authorities, the use of complaint forms, which is supplied to all the government departments, will need to be followed-up upon.

Sudan

Strengthening Community Engagement and Empowerment (SCEED), funded by Danida

Types of complaints	No complaints registered.
Complaints channels	Phone call

Complaints handling	
Lessons learned	- Since no complaints were recorded in 2022, it seems the single complaints channel of phone call is not sufficient. This will be followed-up upon by ADRA Denmark in 2023.

Ethiopia

Building Opportunities for Livelihoods Development and Enhanced Resilience (BOLDER) & Integrated Drought Response and Recovery (IDRR), funded by Danida

Types of complaints	3 complaints registered (non-sensitive): Women's group in Digino Kebele complained that 2 goats distributed per person were too few, beneficiaries in Higlo Kebele complained about MPCA beneficiary selection, complaint on the late delivery of cash in Higlo Kebele where 7 people complained representing the whole community of 2,900 (IDPs & Host community).
Complaints channels	In general: Phone calls, face-to-face. In these cases, the complaints were received by phone and by representatives coming in person to the ADRA Field Coordination Office in Gode town to submit their complaints to ADRA's Somali Region Area Manager. Subsequently, an Investigator team was established to verify the complaints.
Complaints handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The target group for goat distribution was reduced from 20 to 10 people. The 10 women received 5 goats each under the condition that the first round of kids was given to the remaining 10 women of the group. The first round of kids from these 10 women should then be given to the original 10 receivers of goats. - Regarding beneficiary selection, after verification the team noticed that the complaint was moderately valid. While some of the neediest HHs was not selected/registered for cash distribution but instead few better-off HHs was registered. Due to this, re-registration was done. - Water was delivered quickly, but cash was delayed due to verification of beneficiaries reached by various actors (ADRA, UNICEF, Save the Children, OWDA - Organisation for Welfare and Development in Action), so that there was no duplication. The verification was done by the Disaster Risk Manager (DRM) at Woreda level and the DRM at Zonal level.
Lessons learned	- Having a small amount of funds earmarked (by ADRA DK) for a particular activity is not a good idea. Instead, funds collected in fundraising campaigns by ADRA DK should go to activities already implemented in the projects to make most out of the funds and retain the flexibility to spend the funds on what is most needed.

Uganda

Resilience, Economic empowerment and Advocacy Program (REAP), funded by Danida

Types of complaints	2 complaints registered (non-sensitive): Claim by one member of Abateganda group that the ADRA Staff had given the group Chairperson shillings 600,000 as a Christmas gift for the members. Favouritism during selection of beneficiaries for food relief during the hunger crisis in Karamoja (this complaint was against two local village chairpersons who were accused of selecting 5 households that were all their relatives).
Complaints channels	Complaint box in each ADRA District Office or face-to-face. These two complaints were recorded personally during activities.

Complaints handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For the complaint on claims of a Christmas gift by ADRA staff a general meeting was called by the Area Coordinator with all group members. In this meeting the members opened up and requested ADRA Staff to explain their stand on the matter which made some members to drop from the group, as they termed their chairperson a dishonest person. ADRA Staff, in their clarification assured the members that there was no money given to the chairperson, by the REAP Programme and if such plan was to be there, it would be done in a transparent manner through involving all the members. It was later realized that the Chairperson had received the money from another project (General Food Assistance - GFA), where she was volunteering as a lead farmer. Members have since restored hope and trust to the chairperson, and the members who had opted out of the group returned. - Regarding unfairness by the Local Council One Chairpersons in Longaroe Sub-county, Kotido district, who were to identify vulnerable households for food relief by ADRA, the field office employed the Parish Chief and the Sub-county Chairperson to do verification of the beneficiaries. This was done in a community meeting at the sub-county where consensus was reached. This enabled the eventual distribution to go on smoothly.
Lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The complaint on the allegation of the Christmas gift took a lot of effort to sort out. However, the effort paid off as trust between group members were regained. - A lesson on participatory identification of beneficiaries with the affected communities together with their leaders was learned. Had the public verification not been done, ADRA would perhaps be labelled as an unfair organization because of the action of the village chairpersons who were acting on behalf of ADRA.

Tanzania

Kilimo kwa Masoko - Farming for the market, funded by Danida and Blue Marsh Society

Types of complaints	1 complaint registered: A few extension staff complained about the amount of money the project was giving them saying that it was too little.
Complaints channels	Hotline (phone), face-to-face. In this specific case the complaint was raised at a Complaints and Feedback Mechanism training which also involved farmers.
Complaints handling	- The project management team explained to the extension staff that the project was alleviating the burden of extension staff by providing transport and not by paying allowances. The extension staff get their salary from the Ministry of Agriculture as the SPA project is being implemented in collaboration with the local district government.
Lessons learned	- Clear stands and policies on per-diems (no per-diems, only transport costs covered) to be communicated with all project participants including government staff.

Focus areas for 2023

For the coming year 2023, ADRA Denmark is going to continue our focus on strengthening and improving the following areas:

1. Supporting partners in developing a culture of learning from complaints in order to improve the project / programme design and implementation with the input of community members. This is part of the overall focus of ADRA DK on downwards accountability.
2. Cooperate with the ADRA network on upwards and downwards accountability frameworks and methods including the role of complaints mechanisms.
3. Enhancing complaints mechanisms including complaints channels at field level. Complaint policies and manuals are now in place and in 2023, ADRA Denmark Country Coordinators will work closely with the relevant country office staff to implement and continuously improve complaint channels, complaints handling and registration / reporting of complaints at field level.