

FSAC YEMEN
Food Security and Agriculture Cluster

**FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS RESPONSE MECHANISM
(FCRM / CFM) STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**
Template for FSAC Partner Use — Annex B

Field	Details
Organization Name	
Document Owner (Role/Title)	MEAL Coordinator / AAP Focal Point
Programme/Project Title	
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Distribution	All programme and field staff; shared with FSAC cluster

Part 1: Purpose, Scope, and Principles

1.1 Purpose of This SOP

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) establishes a clear, consistent, and accountable process for [Organization Name] to receive, acknowledge, classify, respond to, and close feedback and complaints from beneficiaries, community members, and other stakeholders in [Programme/Operational Area].

This SOP covers all types of feedback and complaints received through any channel, including programme complaints, information requests, suggestions, compliments, and sensitive complaints (including those related to Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment — SEAH). It applies to all staff, volunteers, partners, and representatives of [Organization Name] working on FSAC-supported food security and agriculture programming.

1.2 Scope

Programmes Covered <i>List all relevant programmes</i>	Geographic Coverage <i>List all governorates/districts</i>

Staff Covered by This SOP <i>All programme staff, field staff, volunteers, incentive workers, and representatives. List any exclusions:</i>

1.3 Core Principles

FCRM Operating Principles — Non-Negotiable
ACCESSIBILITY: All community members can access at least one feedback channel regardless of literacy, disability, sex, or mobility. SAFETY: Feedback and complaints are treated confidentially. Complainants will not face retaliation or negative consequences for raising concerns. ANONYMITY: At least one channel allows anonymous reporting. Anonymous complaints receive the same level of attention as identified complaints. RESPONSIVENESS: All complaints are acknowledged within 3 working days. Resolution is provided within 15 working days (except SEAH complaints — see Section 6). TRANSPARENCY: Complainants are informed of how their feedback is being handled and the outcome of their complaint. NON-DISCRIMINATION: The mechanism serves all community members equally, including women, PWDs, elderly, IDPs, and minorities. SEPARATION: SEAH complaints are handled through a separate, confidential pathway — never through standard programme complaint procedures.

Part 2: CFM Channels — Description and Monitoring

2.1 Active Feedback Channels

Complete the table below for each feedback channel active in your programme. A minimum of 2 channels are required per location, including at least 1 non-literacy-dependent channel and 1 accessible to women in a culturally safe manner.

Channel	Contact Details / Location	Monitored By	Monitoring Frequency	Language(s)	Accessible To	Limitation / Note
Toll-Free Hotline	Number: _____	Call centre operator	Daily (all calls reviewed within 24h)	Arabic + local dialect	Any person with mobile phone	Requires phone ownership; not for non-literate if reading prompts
WhatsApp	Number: _____	MEAL Focal Point	Daily	Arabic	Literate mobile phone users	Not accessible to elderly/non-literate; SBA restrictions apply
Community Help Desk	Location(s): _____	Field staff (designated)	Minimum 3x/week during implementation	Arabic + local dialect	All — most inclusive channel	Requires staff presence; physical access needed
Suggestion Boxes	Location(s): _____	Field team leader	Minimum twice weekly	N/A (written)	Literate populations only	Boxes must be locked; key held by MEAL staff only
Home Visit Protocol	For women unable to access community spaces	Female field staff only	As requested / scheduled	Arabic + local dialect	Women in purdah or with mobility restrictions	Resource-intensive; plan in community profile
Community Focal Points	Names & locations: _____	MEAL Coordinator	Weekly debrief	Local dialect	All — trusted intermediary	Requires training and support; risk of filter bias
Email / Written Letters	Address: _____	MEAL Coordinator	Weekly	Arabic	Literate, educated populations	Not suitable as primary channel in Yemen context

Additional channels specific to this programme/location:
Describe any other channels not listed above

Part 3: Complaint Classification System

3.1 Classification Categories

All feedback and complaints must be classified at the point of logging. Use the following standard classification system. Only one primary category should be assigned per complaint; however, note any secondary categories in the log.

Category Code	Category Name	Definition	Examples	Handling Pathway
CAT-A	Programme Information Request	Person requesting information about eligibility, entitlements, distribution dates, targeting criteria, or programme scope.	'When is the next distribution?' / 'Why was I not registered?'	Respond within 3 working days. Refer to programme team if not resolvable by CFM operator.
CAT-B	Programme Complaint	Concern or dissatisfaction with a programme decision, delivery quality, targeting, quantity received, or timeliness.	'I received less than my neighbours.' / 'The distribution point is too far for me.' / 'I was removed from the list unfairly.'	Log; acknowledge; refer to programme staff for investigation. Respond within 15 days.
CAT-C	Staff Conduct Complaint (Non-SEAH)	Concern about behaviour, attitude, or conduct of staff member, not involving sexual exploitation or abuse.	'The distribution worker was rude.' / 'Staff gave preferential treatment to certain families.'	Log; acknowledge; refer to HR/management. Confidentiality applies. Respond within 10 days.
CAT-D	SEAH Complaint — IMMEDIATE REFERRAL	Any complaint, concern, or disclosure involving sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment, or any other form of GBV by staff or representatives.	Any report of sexual favours exchanged for assistance. Any inappropriate touching, language, or approach by staff.	DO NOT process through standard CFM. Refer IMMEDIATELY (same day) to PSEA Focal Point. Maintain strict confidentiality. Document in SEAH log only.
CAT-E	Suggestion / Positive Feedback	Unsolicited ideas for improvement or expressions of appreciation that do not require a complaint response.	'It would be better if you distributed on Fridays.' / 'The female enumerators were very helpful.'	Log; acknowledge; share with programme team for consideration. No formal response timeline required but acknowledgement within 5 days.
CAT-F	Referral Required — Other Actor	Complaint about an issue outside the scope of this programme, requiring referral to another humanitarian actor, government body, or protection specialist.	Complaint about another NGO's programme. Child protection concern. GBV concern not involving staff.	Log; acknowledge; refer to appropriate actor with consent of complainant. Inform complainant of referral.

Part 4: The Six-Stage FCRM Process

STAGE 1 RECEIVE <i>Day 0</i>	STAGE 2 ACKNOWLEDGE <i>Within 3 working days</i>	STAGE 3 CLASSIFY & REFER <i>Within 1 working day of receipt</i>	STAGE 4 INVESTIGATE <i>Within 15 working days</i>	STAGE 5 RESOLVE & RESPOND <i>Day 15 max</i>	STAGE 6 CLOSE & LEARN <i>Monthly</i>
• Monitor all channels • Collect complaint • Ensure complainant has contact info or anonymous option	• Contact complainant • Provide reference number • Record in CFM log	• Assign category • Route to correct handler • SEA → immediate referral	• Programme staff investigate • MEAL validates • Propose resolution	• Communicate outcome • Document decision • Update CFM log	• Mark case closed • Analyze trends • Report to management and cluster

Response Timeline Summary

All complaints → Acknowledge within 3 working days.

Programme complaints (CAT-B/C) → Resolve within 15 working days.

SEAH complaints (CAT-D) → Refer to PSEA Focal Point SAME DAY.

Information requests (CAT-A) → Respond within 3 working days.

If a complaint cannot be resolved within 15 days → Inform complainant of delay and new expected timeline.

Escalate to senior management if unresolved after 30 days.

4.1 Stage-by-Stage Detailed Procedures

Stage 1: Receive

- All staff who interact with communities are responsible for receiving feedback. They must not discourage or dismiss complaints.
- Suggestion boxes must be opened by 2 staff members together (never alone) and contents recorded immediately.
- Hotline calls must be answered or returned within 24 hours. Calls are recorded in the call log immediately.
- Walk-in complainants at help desks must be seen privately, not in open spaces where others can hear.

Stage 2: Acknowledge

- The CFM Focal Point contacts the complainant (or posts public acknowledgement for anonymous complaints) within 3 working days.
- Acknowledgement must include: confirmation the complaint was received; the reference number; and an indication of next steps and expected timeline.
- For illiterate complainants, verbal acknowledgement by phone or in person is required.

Stage 3: Classify and Refer

- The CFM Focal Point classifies the complaint using the Category Codes in Section 3.1.
- CAT-D (SEAH): Stop all standard processing. Contact PSEA Focal Point immediately. Record only in the SEAH log (not the standard CFM database). Do not disclose complaint details to any other staff.
- CAT-F (Referral): Obtain complainant's consent before referring to another organization. Inform complainant which organization will receive the referral.
- All other categories: Route to the responsible staff member or team per internal escalation chart (see Annex to this SOP).

Stage 4: Investigate

- Programme staff conduct a proportionate investigation. For CAT-B complaints (programme), this typically involves reviewing beneficiary data, distribution records, and targeting documentation.
- For CAT-C (staff conduct), HR or management conducts the investigation — never the staff member's direct peer.
- The MEAL team validates the investigation process and proposed resolution before communicating to the complainant.
- Complainants must not be contacted by the staff member about whom they have complained.

Stage 5: Resolve and Respond

- The programme or MEAL team communicates the outcome to the complainant in their preferred language and format.
- If the complaint was upheld, describe what corrective action was or will be taken.
- If the complaint was not upheld, explain clearly why and inform the complainant of any appeals process.
- The CFM log is updated with the resolution and communication date.

Stage 6: Close and Learn

- The CFM Focal Point marks the case as closed in the log after communicating the outcome to the complainant.
- Monthly, the MEAL team analyzes all CFM data for trends and recurring issues.
- Monthly CFM trend analysis is presented to programme management and used to inform programme adaptations.
- Quarterly, aggregated and anonymized CFM data is reported to the FSAC cluster.

Part 5: Roles, Responsibilities, and Escalation

5.1 CFM Staffing Requirements

Role	Responsibility	Minimum Qualification	Time Commitment
CFM/FCRM Focal Point (Primary)	Owns the CFM log; coordinates all complaint handling; produces monthly reports; liaises with PSEA FP	MEAL background; trained on this SOP and PSEA referral; female preferred where operationally feasible	Minimum 40% FTE for active programme periods
CFM/FCRM Focal Point (Backup)	Covers in absence of primary FP; must have equal access to CFM log and tools	Same as primary	As needed
PSEA Focal Point	Receives and manages all SEAH referrals; maintains SEAH log separately; liaises with inter-agency PSEA Network	Mandatory PSEA training; ideally female or with female backup	Minimum 20% FTE; on-call for referrals
Field Staff / Community Focal Points	First point of contact for community feedback; receive and record complaints; refer to CFM Focal Point	Trained on this SOP; CFM channels and process; confidentiality requirements	Integrated into field role
Programme Manager	Reviews monthly CFM trends; approves programme adaptations based on feedback; ensures resources for CFM	Senior management responsibility	Monthly review minimum

5.2 Escalation Pathway

Situation	Action	Escalate To
Complaint unresolved after 15 working days	Inform complainant of delay and revised timeline	Programme Manager → Senior Management
Complaint unresolved after 30 working days	Formal escalation and review	Country Director / HQ
SEAH complaint received (CAT-D)	Immediate referral — same working day	PSEA Focal Point → Inter-agency PSEA Network
Systemic issue affecting many beneficiaries	Emergency programme review	Programme Manager + FSAC Sub-National Cluster Coordinator
Security risk related to complaint	Follow organizational security protocol	Country Security Focal Point
CFM Focal Point absent/unavailable	Backup FP activates immediately	Backup CFM Focal Point

Part 6: SEAH Complaint Protocol — Mandatory Separate Procedures

⚠ CRITICAL — All Staff Must Know This Protocol

SEAH complaints are NEVER processed through the standard CFM log or procedure.
SEAH complaints are NEVER shared with staff other than the PSEA Focal Point.
ALL SEAH disclosures — however informal — must be reported to the PSEA Focal Point.
The survivor's safety, confidentiality, and wishes are the first priority at every step.
Staff who fail to report SEAH disclosures are subject to disciplinary action.

When a community member discloses or reports a SEAH complaint:

1. Listen without judgment. Do not ask for unnecessary details. Thank the person for coming forward.
2. Tell the person you take this seriously and will handle it confidentially.
3. Immediately contact the PSEA Focal Point — do not wait until the end of the day.
4. Record the basic facts (date, location, nature of disclosure — NOT identifying details of the perpetrator unless volunteered) in the SEAH log ONLY.
5. The PSEA Focal Point contacts the inter-agency PSEA Network within 24 hours.
6. Do not investigate the complaint yourself. Do not contact the accused staff member.

PSEA Focal Point Name	PSEA Focal Point Phone

Backup PSEA Focal Point Name	Backup PSEA Focal Point Phone

Inter-Agency PSEA Network Contact (Yemen) <i>Name and contact details of inter-agency PSEA coordinator</i>

Part 7: Data Protection and Confidentiality Requirements

7.1 Data Protection Standards

- The CFM log is accessible only to: the CFM Focal Point, the backup CFM Focal Point, the MEAL Coordinator, and the Programme Manager.
- The SEAH log is accessible ONLY to the PSEA Focal Point and their backup.
- Digital CFM databases must be password-protected. Passwords must be changed every 90 days.
- Physical CFM records (paper logs, suggestion box contents) must be stored in a locked cabinet accessible only to the CFM Focal Point.
- Community members' names and personal details must NEVER appear in external reports, cluster updates, or shared documents. Use reference numbers and anonymized descriptions only.
- In SBA-controlled areas, exercise heightened caution: do not include identifying information in any digital communication; use encrypted messaging where possible.
- CFM data should be retained for the duration of the project plus 12 months, then securely destroyed unless required for ongoing investigations.

Data Protection Officer / Focal Point for This Programme:

Name and contact

7.2 Community Communication on Confidentiality

Communities must be explicitly informed of the following at every orientation session and through IEC materials:

- Their feedback is confidential and will not be shared without their permission.
- Providing feedback will not affect their access to assistance.
- They may provide feedback anonymously.
- Their personal information will not be shared with government authorities or other parties.

Part 8: CFM Reporting, Analysis, and Learning

8.1 Monthly CFM Report — Required Data Points

Data Point	Description
Total feedback/complaints received	Count of all entries in CFM log for the month
Breakdown by category	Number in each category (CAT-A through CAT-F)
Breakdown by channel	Number received per feedback channel
Breakdown by sex of complainant	Female / Male / Unknown (where identifiable)
Breakdown by location	Governorate / District
Total acknowledged within 3 days	Number and % of cases acknowledged on time
Total resolved within 15 days	Number and % resolved within timeline
Total pending / overdue	Number of cases unresolved beyond 15 working days
SEAH referrals	Count only — no further details in standard report
Recurring / systemic issues	Summary of patterns or issues appearing in multiple complaints
Programme adaptations made	List of changes made to programme based on feedback this month
CFM channel functionality	Note any channels not operational this month and reason

8.2 Closing the Feedback Loop

Closing the loop — informing communities how their feedback was used — is the most important accountability action an organization can take. Without it, the CFM is a one-way extraction mechanism, not an accountability system.

Method	When	How
Individual complainant update	Upon resolution	Contact directly (phone, in person, through focal point) in preferred language
Anonymous complaint response	Within 2 weeks of receipt	Post public response at community notice boards; announce at community meetings; share on community radio if available
Collective community update	Monthly	Present CFM summary data (total complaints, how many resolved, what changes were made) at community feedback sessions
Cluster reporting	Quarterly	Report aggregated and anonymized CFM data to FSAC cluster as part of coordination updates

Part 9: Community Orientation Checklist

Complete this checklist before every distribution or service delivery activity. All items must be checked before assistance is delivered.

#	Orientation Item	Completed (✓)	Staff Responsible	Date
1	Programme objectives explained to community in local language and accessible format			
2	Targeting criteria and beneficiary selection process explained clearly			
3	Beneficiary entitlements (what, how much, when, where) communicated			
4	All active CFM channels explained and demonstrated to community			
5	Anonymous reporting option explained			
6	Confidentiality assurances given			
7	Code of Conduct and PSEA commitments communicated (what behaviour to expect from staff)			
8	Information provided separately to women's group by female staff			
9	IEC materials distributed in accessible formats (pictorial/audio for non-literate)			
10	Accessible format provided to PWDs present at orientation			
11	Community representative confirmed understanding and asked questions			
12	Community feedback channel contact details displayed at distribution point			

Orientation conducted by:	Date:

Location / Distribution Point:

Number of community members reached (disaggregated by sex): Female: ___ Male: ___ Total: ___

Annex: CFM Log Template

Use this log to record all feedback and complaints. Maintain in a password-protected spreadsheet. One row per complaint/feedback item. Print version for field use where digital access is unavailable — transfer to digital within 48 hours.

Ref #	Date Received	Channel	Complainant Sex	Location	Category	Summary (no names)	Acknowledged? (Date)	Referred To	Resolution	Date Closed	Adaptation Made?
YYYY-XXX-001			F/M/U	Gov / District	CAT-A/B/C/D/E/F						Y/N

Log Management Reminder

- Ref # format: YEAR-LOCATION CODE-SEQUENTIAL NUMBER (e.g., 2026-SAN-001)
- Complainant Sex: F = Female, M = Male, U = Unknown/Anonymous
- Channel: HEL = Helpdesk, HOT = Hotline, BOX = Suggestion Box, WA = WhatsApp, CFP = Community Focal Point, VIS = Home Visit, EML = Email
- NEVER record names or personal identifiers in the 'Summary' column
- SEAH complaints (CAT-D) are NOT recorded here — use the separate SEAH log
- This log is CONFIDENTIAL — restricted access only