

IFAD Complaints Procedures

For alleged non-compliance with the social and environmental policies and mandatory aspects of IFAD's Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP)



Investing in rural people



IFAD Complaints Procedure

IFAD-funded projects applying SECAP 2015 and SECAP 2017



IFAD Enhanced Complaints Procedure

IFAD-funded projects applying SECAP 2021

IFAD works to ensure that all IFAD financing is implemented in accordance with the Fund's policies, standards and safeguards. Nonetheless, IFAD recognizes that adverse social, environmental and climate impacts and concerns may arise during design or implementation. Therefore, IFAD requires that borrowers/recipients/partners adopt an easily accessible, project-level grievance redress mechanism to receive and resolve concerns and complaints. This mechanism enables people to report adverse effects or potential harm from IFAD-financed projects/programmes that fail to meet IFAD's Social, Environmental and Climate Assessment Procedures (SECAP) and related policies.

While most grievances will be handled at the project level, IFAD considers it equally important that project-affected people be able to raise their concerns directly to the Fund's attention if they fear retaliation or if the issue is not resolved. The objective of IFAD's Complaints Procedures is to ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place to allow individuals and communities to file complaints with IFAD directly if they believe they are or might be adversely affected by an IFAD-funded project/programme not complying with mandatory aspects of SECAP.

IFAD has two distinct complaints procedures: the **IFAD Complaints Procedure**, which applies to all IFAD-funded projects applying SECAP 2015 and SECAP 2017, and the **IFAD Enhanced Complaints Procedure**, which applies to all IFAD-funded projects applying SECAP 2021.

Part I IFAD Complaints Procedure



What is the IFAD Complaints Procedure?

The procedure facilitates the resolution of concerns and complaints from persons/communities relating to allegations of IFAD's non-compliance with the environmental and social policies and the mandatory aspects of its SECAP in the context of IFAD-supported projects.



Who can submit complaints?

A minimum of two people, who should be nationals of the country concerned and/or living in the project area.



What complaints are eligible?

- Claims that IFAD has failed to apply its social and environmental policies and/or the mandatory provisions in its SECAP.
- Claims that complainants have been or will be adversely affected by IFAD's failure to apply these policies.
- Complaints concerning projects/programmes currently under design or implementation.

Complaints concerning closed projects/programmes, those more than 95 per cent disbursed and those preceding 1 January 2015 (when SECAP became effective) will not be considered.

NB: Fraud and corruption allegations are handled by the Office of Audit and Oversight (AUO). Sexual harassment/sexual exploitation and abuse allegations are handled by the Ethics Office.



How to complain

Complainants should first bring the matter before the government or non-governmental organization responsible for the project/or programme (the lead agency) or any governmental body overseeing the lead agency.

If the above entities do not respond adequately, then the matter may be brought to IFAD. However, the issue may be brought straight to IFAD if the complainants feel they may be subject to retaliation if they were to go to the government/lead agency first. IFAD guarantees confidentiality if requested by the complainants.



How does the complaint resolution process work?

1. Project level

IFAD requires all borrowers to provide an easily accessible grievance and redress mechanism to facilitate the resolution of concerns and complaints of project-affected parties (for projects that pose special risks, this on a case-by-case basis).

The above mechanism uses existing formal and informal grievance redress mechanisms, strengthened or supplemented as needed with project-specific arrangements, proportionate to the risks and impacts of the project.

2. IFAD level

Complaints submitted to IFAD are received by IFAD's Programme Management Department (PMD), which refers the complaint to the responsible regional division director and country programme manager.

The regional division then examines the complaint and, if eligible, contacts the lead agency, or governmental body overseeing the lead agency, to decide if the complaint is justified.

If the complaint is not justified, the regional division informs the complainants in writing.

If the regional division finds the complaint justified with proof of actual or likely harm through IFAD's failure to follow its policies and procedures, IFAD will take action. This may consist of

making changes to the project/programme or requiring the government to observe its obligations under the Financing Agreement. The regional division informs the complainants of the outcome.

3. Impartial review

If complainants disagree with IFAD's response through the above offices, they may request that an impartial review be conducted by the Office of the President and Vice-President (OPV).

OPV decides how such complaints are examined, including if necessary, contracting external experts to review the matter. Complainants are informed of the results of the review.

N.B: No monetary damages are paid in response to complaints.

IFAD Complaints Procedure

IFAD-funded projects applying SECAP 2015 and SECAP 2017



Part II

The IFAD

Enhanced Complaints Procedure



What

is the IFAD Enhanced Complaints Procedure?

This Enhanced Complaints Procedure applies to all IFAD operations covered by SECAP 2021.

Projects endorsed by IFAD Executive Board before September 2021 will continue to fall under the IFAD Complaints Procedure as described in Part I.

In the case of cofinanced projects, the Financing Agreement and Project Implementation Manual specify the agreed common approach.



Who

can submit complaints?

Complaints can be submitted by:

- A group of at least two individuals who are nationals of the country concerned or residing in the project area.
- A representative of complainants residing in the concerned or another country, provided the representative indicates the persons on whose behalf he or she is acting and provides written evidence of the authority to represent them.



What

types of complaints are eligible?

- Complaints that IFAD has failed to implement its SECAP.
- Allegations that complainants have been or may be harmed by an IFAD funded-project/programme because of its failure to comply with SECAP 2021.

Complaints must relate to projects/programmes currently under design or implementation, or those closed within the past 24 months. Complainants must have made a good faith effort to address the problem with project-level grievance redress mechanism.



What

types of complaints are NOT eligible?

- Complaints submitted more than 24 months after the project's/programme's closing date.
- Matters unrelated to IFAD's actions or omissions in designing or implementing IFAD-supported projects/programmes.
- Matters already completed or considered ineligible by the procedure, unless complainants have new evidence previously unavailable to them and unless the complaint can be readily associated with an earlier complaint.
- Submissions from third parties who do not legally represent the complainants or who are anonymous.

- Matters related to the award of procurement contracts unrelated to SECAP non-compliance. These should be forwarded to the project procurement complaints mechanism.
- Matters of finance and administration. These should be forwarded to and processed by the Financial Management Services Division (FMD) of IFAD and IFAD country team. Allegations of fraud and corruption in IFAD-supported projects/programmes should be dealt with through the existing procedures in PB/2018/07 and the Revised IFAD Policy on Preventing Fraud and Corruption in its Activities and Operations (2018). Complaints related to these matters are forwarded to and processed by the Office of Audit and Oversight.
- Allegations of sexual harassment/sexual exploitation and abuse. These should be dealt with through the IFAD Policy on Preventing and Responding to Sexual Harassment, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and are forwarded to the Ethics Office in IFAD.
- Matters that are frivolous, malicious, trivial or generated to gain a competitive advantage.



How to complain?

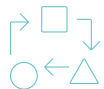
The IFAD Enhanced Complaints Procedure complements project-level grievance redress mechanisms.

Complainants are encouraged to first raise their concerns with the lead agency or the project management unit (PMU), project implementation unit (PIU), or any governmental body overseeing the lead agency.

If the above entities do not respond adequately, then the matter may be brought to IFAD. However, the issue may be brought directly to IFAD if the complainants feel they may be subject to retaliation if they were to go to the government/lead agency first.

IFAD guarantees confidentiality if requested by the complainants.

Complaints can be submitted in the language of the complainants by letter, email (SECAPcomplaints@ifad.org) and/or the web form available on <https://www.ifad.org/en/accountability-and-complaints-procedures>.



How

does the enhanced complaints resolution process work?

1. Project level

IFAD requires all borrowers to provide an easily accessible grievance and redress mechanism to facilitate the resolution of concerns and complaints of project-affected parties.

The above mechanism uses existing formal and informal grievance redress mechanisms, strengthened or supplemented as needed with project-specific arrangements, proportionate to the risks and impacts of the project.

Should the complaint not be resolved at the project level, it may be escalated directly to IFAD.

2. IFAD level

The SECAP Redress Service (SRS)

The SRS serves as the single entry point at corporate level for project-affected people to submit a complaint for alleged non-compliance with IFAD's SECAP. The SRS screens and registers complaints and assesses whether the complaint is valid. During this assessment, any complaints related to corruption, procurement, or sexual harassment/sexual exploitation and abuse are forwarded to and processed by the Office of Audit and Oversight, project procurement and the Ethics Office, respectively.

The assessment process provides complainants, borrowers/ recipients/partners and the project delivery team an opportunity to raise questions and consult with the SRS to facilitate informed decision-making and understanding of the procedure.

Problem-solving process

If the issues raised by the complainants are not successfully addressed during the assessment process, the SRS will facilitate the resolution of issues through a neutral, transparent, collaborative and constructive problem-solving approach. The PSP may involve facilitation and information-sharing, a fact-finding mission or site visit, and/or mediation.

3. The impartial review process

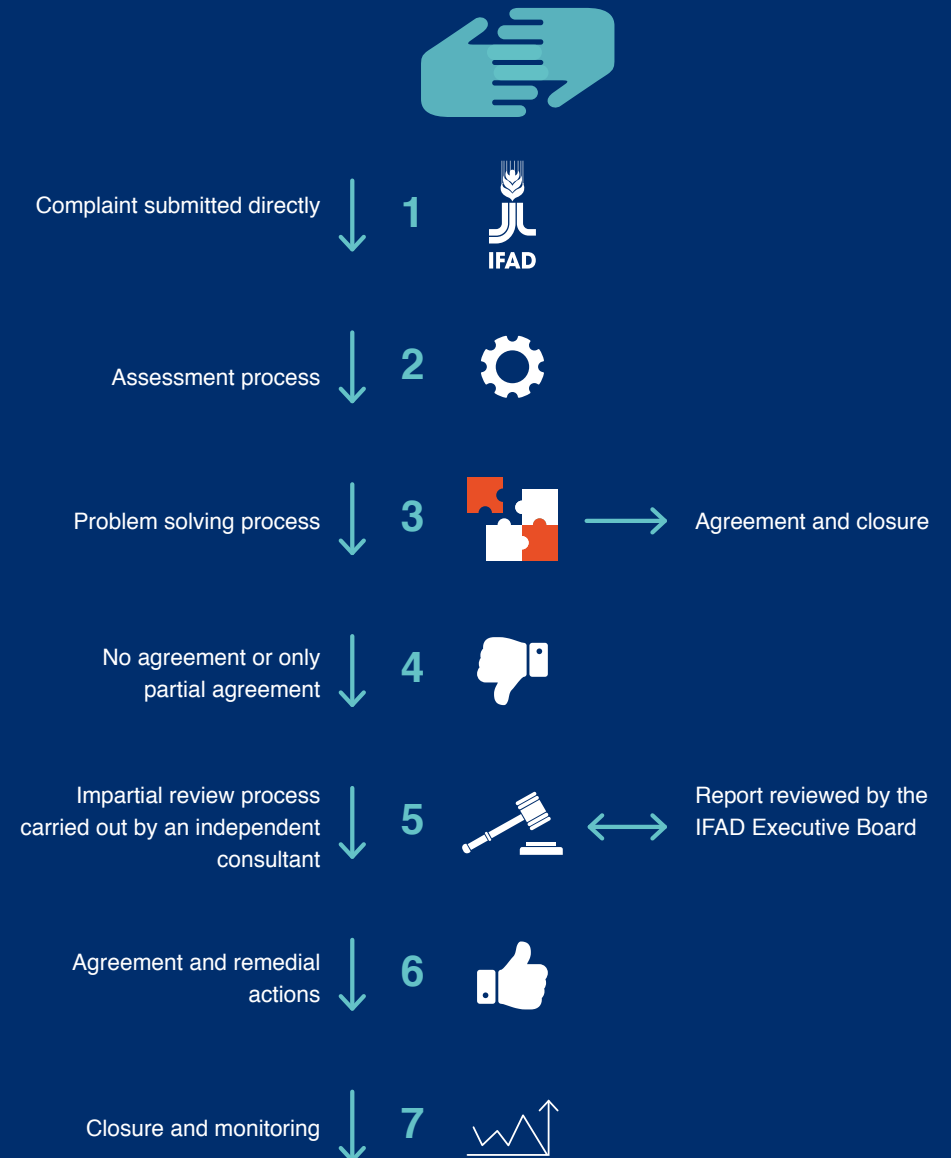
If no agreement or only partial agreement is reached during the problem-solving process, the complaint may be referred to the impartial review process. In this case, the SRS will forward the complaint upon agreement of the complainants to an independent consultant housed within the Office of Audit and Oversight.

The impartial review process provides a process to carry out impartial reviews of IFAD's compliance with its SECAP, assesses eventual harm done and recommends remedial actions where appropriate.

No monetary damages are paid in response to complaints.

IFAD Enhanced Complaints Procedure

IFAD-funded projects applying SECAP 2021





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How to complain?

Complaints can be submitted to IFAD:

By post:

SECAP Complaints,
IFAD Programme Management Department,
Operational, Results and Policy Division
Via Paolo di Dono, 44,
00142 Roma, RM, Italy

By email:

SECAPcomplaints@ifad.org

Through the IFAD webpage:

(directly or through a downloadable complaint form)

<https://www.ifad.org/web/guest/contact-us>

To read more on the accountability and Complaints Procedures on the IFAD's website:

<https://www.ifad.org/en/accountability-and-complaints-procedures>