

# COMPLAINTS MECHANISMS ON THE TEST

Many humanitarian organisations have introduced complaints mechanisms or whistleblowing systems to enable communities, staff and other stakeholders to safely raise issues of sexual violence, exploitation, abuse of power, corruption, fraud or any other form of misconduct. Implemented effectively, they can help to identify problems and misconduct at an early stage.

In this seminar, we would like to give participants a chance to refresh their knowledge and to discuss good practices and challenges of the complaints mechanisms with other NGOs.

The seminar consists of four online sessions in the morning and three group work sessions in the afternoon. All sessions include breaks, interactive expert inputs, discussions in small groups and plenary as well as working on real case studies and policies. After the seminar individual coaching sessions are offered.

It is directed at experienced staff of German humanitarian NGOs that have already taken part in one of the VENRO seminars on complaints mechanisms.

The seminar will be facilitated by Ester Dross. Ester is an accountability, PSEA, gender and child protection specialist with long experience in the humanitarian field. She has extensive expertise in conducting investigations into allegations of staff misbehavior including sexual exploitation and abuse, fraud and corruption.

The sessions will be in English. Participation is free of charge. Given that the number of participants is limited, we kindly ask you to fill in the corresponding information in the registration form. We will inform you about final admission after the registration deadline.

## WHEN?

Wednesday, 2 March,  
Thursday, 3 March,  
Monday, 7 March  
9 am – 3 pm CET each and  
Thursday, 10 March 2022  
9 am – 12:30 pm CET

## WHERE?

Online (Zoom)

## REGISTRATION

Please register [↘ here](#) until  
9 February 2022.

## CONTACT

Karoline Krähling  
[k.kraehling@venro.org](mailto:k.kraehling@venro.org)  
Tel.: +49 30 263 92 99 28

In order to facilitate an informed exchange, we ask participants to submit their own complaints policies, guidelines or code of conducts, and share a recent case anonymously and without referring to locations. The examples will be modified by the trainer and used for group works.

We ask participants to send their contributions by 11 February 2022 to Karoline Krähling ([k.kraehling@venro.org](mailto:k.kraehling@venro.org)).

The seminar is part of a joint project of the Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (IFHV) of Ruhr-University Bochum and VENRO. It is financially supported by the German Federal Foreign Office.

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## PROGRAMME

### Day 1: Wednesday, 2 March 2022

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9:00	<b>Welcome and introduction</b>
10:00	<b>Complaints handling</b> Introduction to complaints handling Explore essential components of a robust complaints response mechanism
11:15	<b>Safe and accessible entry channels</b> Participants identify entry channels in small groups using different scenarios
12:30	<b>End of facilitated session and lunch Break</b>
13:30 – max. 15:00	<b>Participants meet in individual groups for the first group work</b> Analysis of policies provided by participants

### Day 2: Thursday, 3 March 2022

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9:00	<b>Welcome and introduction</b>
9:15	<b>Policy analysis: Presentation of group work</b> Exploring existing policies, analysing highlights and gaps;
10:00	<b>Steps from receiving to handling a complaint</b> Group work on understanding processes for handling complaints
11:30	<b>Learnings from the first two days</b> What were the main learnings so far? What challenges remain?
12:30	<b>End of facilitated session and lunch break</b>
13:30 – max. 15:00	<b>Participants meet in individual groups for the second group work:</b> Risk assessment with a concrete case (provided by participants or facilitator)

**Day 3: Monday, 7 March 2021**

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9:00	<b>Welcome and introduction</b>
	<b>Responsibilities</b>
9:15	Participants define and separate responsibilities throughout the whole complaints handling process
	<b>Risk assessment: Presentation of group work</b>
10:00	Understand the different risks involved when handling sensitive complaints and link them to potential mitigation measures
	<b>Case management and investigation plan</b>
11:00	Explore and understand how to plan an investigation
	<b>End of facilitated session and lunch break</b>
12:30	
	<b>Participants meet in individual groups for the third group work:</b>
13:30 – max. 15:00	Referrals to national authorities

**Day 4: Thursday, 10 March 2021**

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9:00	<b>Welcome and introduction</b>
	<b>Referral to authorities: Presentation of group work</b>
9:15	Discuss referral rules; Identify challenges; Explore other potential necessary referrals
	<b>Implementation plan for follow-up actions</b>
10:00	Group work and role play
	<b>Key learnings, wrap up and evaluation of seminar</b>
11:45	
12:30	<b>End of seminar</b>