



Breaches of the ACFID Code of Conduct and complaints procedure

1. Purpose

MCRI is a signatory to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) *Code of Conduct*. Global health activities undertaken by MCRI are required to comply with the principles and obligations detailed in the Code. All staff involved in global health activities are required to comply with the Code and associated MCRI policy and procedures.

2. Scope

2.1 MCRI recognises the importance and value of listening and responding to concerns and complaints. A number of MCRI staff have responsibility for resolving complaints and breaches of the ACFID Code of Conduct, as well as breaches of the relevant MCRI policies and procedures, including:

- The Director or the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee have overall responsibility for the process, although certain aspects are delegated;
- The Compliance Officer who conducts a preliminary investigation to assess the complaint and provides advice to the Director or the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee;
- The Head of Department/Theme/Group where the activities are or were being conducted;
- Supervisors who authorise the conduct of activities
- MCRI staff and students involved in activities; and
- Partner organisation staff.

It is important that all staff are aware of their responsibilities, the process for receiving and resolving complaints, and the requirement to maintain confidentiality and treat all parties fairly.

MCRI will promote our commitment to the ACFID Code of Conduct and our Code complaints handling process on our website and, where appropriate, in staff orientation and training and in promotional material and documentation provided to partners and stakeholders.

MCRI will work with partner organisations to ensure that stakeholders are aware of and can access complaints procedures, taking into consideration local cultural context and appropriate forms of communication.

2.2 Complaints regarding research misconduct should be managed as per the Handling Breaches of the NHMRC Code, Research Misconduct & the Framework for Resolving Allegations at the Melbourne Children's (MCRI4001).

3. Procedure

Complaints regarding global health activities and reports of alleged breaches of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) Code of Conduct should follow the procedure below.

- 3.1 The complaint should be lodged in writing. Complaints can be sent either by mail, email or facsimile to the Compliance Officer (details below). Complaints can also be lodged on behalf of a complainant by any MCRI or partner organisation staff. MCRI will work with partner organisations to ensure that complaints mechanisms take into account local cultural context and appropriate forms of communication. In some contexts, additional complaints mechanisms should be implemented, including for example a 'complaints box' on site, or a local mobile telephone number to receive complaints lodged via text message (SMS). If uncertain about lodging a written complaint, contact the Compliance Officer by telephone.
- 3.2 All complaints will be registered and will be acknowledged within one week of receipt by Compliance Officer.

- 3.3 All complaints will be handled confidentially and all parties will be treated fairly.
- 3.4 The Compliance Officer will investigate with relevant project staff associated. Most complaints can be resolved at this level; however, the complaint may be escalated to the Director or the Audit, Finance and Risk Management Committee, if deemed appropriate.
- 3.5 A written and verbal response will be made to the complainant in relation to the course of action to be taken. Response should be provided by the Compliance Officer or delegate (as appropriate) within one month of receipt of the complaint.
- 3.6 Should this outcome not be satisfactory to the complainant and resolve the issue, an appeal can be made for review to be conducted by the Director or the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee. If the outcome is unsatisfactory and the complaint is regarding a breach of the ACFID Code of Conduct, the matter should be escalated to the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID).
- 3.7 Complaints regarding breaches of the ACFID Code of Conduct can also be lodged directly with the Australian Council for International Development (details below).

7.2.3 A report on complaints and breaches of the Code of Conduct will be provided to the Audit, Finance and Risk Committee.

Contacts

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