

BADIL's Complaint and Response Mechanism (CRM)

1. Introduction

BADIL's Complaint and Response Mechanism (CRM) is part of a holistic approach to ensuring transparency, accountability, and openness to improving the quality of our work. This CRM represents one of five processes used to gather feedback. The CRM is designed to handle specific incidences or situations that require addressing by our Management and/or Board, and is intended to respond to issues that cannot be appropriately handled within our evaluative questionnaires, group feedback sessions, project development input processes/needs assessments, or with BADIL's ongoing and regular meetings with civil society partners.

2. Purpose

The purpose of BADIL's Complaint and Response Mechanism (CRM) is to:

- Provide an avenue for rights holders, stakeholders and partners to voice concerns;
- Encourage the development of equal partnerships and a participative and inclusive culture free from discrimination;
- Ensure that complaints are addressed professionally and in a timely manner;
- Strengthen BADIL's organizational accountability and transparency.

3. Valid complaints

a) Scope

This complaint mechanism handles complaints within the scope of BADIL's work:

- Any program, project or initiative implemented by BADIL inside or outside Palestine
- Behavior/conduct of BADIL permanent staff and temporary staff, Board of Directors and General Assembly as it relates to their work with BADIL.

b) Types of Complaints

- The procedure is designed to respond promptly to both operational complaints and sensitive complaints, ensuring confidentiality unless otherwise indicated by the complainants.
- Complaints submitted by BADIL's program, project or initiative staff and stakeholders (including but not limited to beneficiaries, partners, suppliers, external facilitators, researchers, assistants and interns/volunteers, and observers) can be filed through this mechanism.
- We do not accept anonymous complaints though the online mechanism. We encourage the use of verbal feedback to our staff members if the complainant deems it sufficient so

that remedy may be sought immediately as appropriate. This complaint and response mechanism is not a substitute for BADIL's ongoing feedback methods.

- All internal employment conditions such as salary level, performance evaluations, working area, tasks and responsibilities, etc. will not be handled within this system but are referred to and handled by the procedures outlined in the BADIL Human Resource Manual (Chapter 1, Articles 13-15).

c) Definitions

Feedback is the positive or negative reaction of stakeholders in relation to BADIL's implementation of its programs, projects, and activities expressed through BADIL's formal feedback methods or expressed informally and verbally to a BADIL staff, board, or general assembly member.

Complaints are any expression of dissatisfaction from stakeholders concerning BADIL's implementation of its vision, mission, and strategic plan through its programs, projects, and activities. It may be expressed through this mechanism or verbally to any staff, board, or general assembly member.

Operational Complaints are complaints regarding implementation, quality, and applicability of BADIL's programs, projects, and initiatives.

Sensitive Complaints are complaints regarding breaches of BADIL's code of conduct, principles, and values including staff behavior, and concerns of corruption, fraud, and crimes. Specifically;

1. Complaints concerning staff behavior that is considered as inappropriate: disrespectful, ill-treatment (including any type of harassment), discrimination, or any conduct that violates BADIL's Code of Conduct.
2. Corruption is the abuse of entrusted power for private gain and may include bribery, conflict of interest, favoritism, and fraud.
3. Fraud is abuse of position, or false representation, or prejudicing someone's rights for personal gain.
4. Crimes are those defined as crimes by Palestinian National Laws. In the situation in which Palestinian National Law does not conform with international humanitarian and human rights law, principles and standards (or is in violation of international law), then crimes are those which are defined by international law.

4. Process, Design and Internal Cycle

Entry point 1: the online submission form (see <http://www.badil.org/en/badil-complaints.html>). The complainant will receive an email informing him/her of successful submission of the complaint and deadline to receive a response.

Entry point 2: by phone using 02-277-7086 and requesting the Administrative and Financial Affairs Unit Manager.

Filing: Complaints received through the online submission form will be filed in a special folder on BADIL's server that will only be accessible to the Administrative and Financial Affairs Unit Manager and the Board of Directors Secretary. Each shall receive an email that a complaint has been submitted. All complaints will be stored for 5 years. This storage will include the report document prepared for the handlers of the complaint, the outcome, including any minutes of meetings of the reviewers as well as the official response letter and appeals (if they exist).

Complaints received by phone will be entered by the Administrative and Financial Affairs Unit Manager through the online submission form.

Receiving and Reviewing: The complaint, once submitted via the online form, will be received and reviewed by the Administrative and Financial Affairs Unit Manager and by the Secretary of the Board of Directors. They will determine the validity and nature of the complaint (operational or sensitive). Assuming the complaint is valid, the complaint will be processed based on the type of complaint.

Handling:

- An operational complaint will be directed to a committee comprised of the Program/Project officer responsible and the Director.
- A sensitive complaint will be treated with confidentiality and directed to a committee comprised of the Board of Directors and the Director. If the sensitive complaint concerns any members of the Board or the Director, a special oversight committee, comprised from the General Assembly members and one staff member will be assigned to handle the complaint.
- The aforementioned committees will meet and review the complaint and determine if there is a need for the involvement of external or technical assistance or the inclusion of any other stakeholder (such as a partner) to investigate or advise on the complaint.
- At the conclusion of the investigation, the committee will meet again and discuss the complaint and any associated issues and determine the appropriate response, including any actions to be taken.
- The committee will either select a member within the committee or assign a staff member to address the administrative response procedures and any other actions to be taken following the conclusion of the handling process.

Closing: The complainant will be advised of the outcome of the complaint as soon as the investigations are completed and the committee reaches an outcome with an official written response. This response will contain the scope of the complaint, the process of handling the complaint, findings of the investigation, results, actions that will be taken (if any), and the process for appeal if he/she is not satisfied.

Appealing: If the outcome is not satisfactory to the complainant, he/she can appeal the complaint through the special committee comprised of General Assembly members.

The complaint and response mechanism will be accessed through BADIL's website and will be available in Arabic and English.

5. Consultation with Stakeholders

To design this complaint and response mechanism, BADIL consulted with its stakeholders and beneficiaries and has incorporated their inputs into its structure. The vast majority of our stakeholders expressed that they feel comfortable enough to bring forth and discuss their complaints informally and verbally but welcomed the official complaint and response mechanism initiative.

BADIL will continue to consult with its beneficiaries and stakeholders on a regular basis concerning the development, enhancement and revision of the complaint and response mechanism. This consultation will occur once a year minimum following the annual complaint and response mechanism report.

6. Training and communication

- Staff will be trained through a workshop about the CRM and how to communicate to stakeholders about the mechanism.
- Staff must inform beneficiaries about the CRM at the introductory meeting of every new project or initiative.
- Other stakeholders will be informed about the CRM through BADIL's website, staff, and midterm and annual reports.
- An annual report of all the complaints received and handled by the mechanism will be prepared and disseminated either within the organizational annual report (as a section) or with the annual report as a separate document.
- Confidentiality of the complainants (and sensitive and operational complaints) will be respected and maintained in any published document.

7. Evaluation of BADIL's CRM

The complaint and response mechanism annual report whether a separate document or section of the organizational report will be prepared by the Administrative and Financial Affairs Unit. It will include a summary of all the complaints that were handled broken down by type (operational and sensitive), the findings, outcomes, actions and any appeals. The confidentiality of the complainants will be respected at all times, including reporting; as such the report will not contain any names.

With regards to reporting on sensitive complaints, the special oversight committee will determine the appropriate information to include in the report adhering to the confidentiality of the complainant and any associated persons or issues.