

# NGO Futures

## Complaint handling mechanisms for NGO beneficiaries

Monica Blagescu, One World Trust  
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# Process background

## One World Trust:

- Oct '04 Int'l workshop in Bangkok
  - Draft C&R guidelines
- UK NGO Accountability Forum series
- April '06 joint project with BOND on C&R for NGO beneficiaries (The Baring Foundation)

## Other initiatives:

- May '06 Charity Commission study
- HAP-I Accountability Standards, ECB II
- Oxfam GB, Tearfund, Medair, DRC, ICCO

# Complaint handling mechanisms

- Provide an opportunity for stakeholders to address complaints against an NGO's decisions and actions
- Ensure that the NGO reviews and acts upon these complaints

# Complaint and **response** mechanisms

- Provide an opportunity for stakeholders to address complaints against an NGO's decisions and actions
- Ensure that the NGO reviews and acts upon these complaints
  
- Different from feedback / a “last” option
- Formalized system → new concept

# Benefits of C&R mechanisms

- Respectful and dignifying for users
- Empowers users by instilling confidence
- Allow NGOs to rectify minor and unintended mistakes → manage risks
- Alert NGOs to problems, where they exist
- Opportunity for NGOs to learn and improve the quality of their work
- Effective response enhances public trust

# C&R cycle



**complaint filing**

**Appeal**

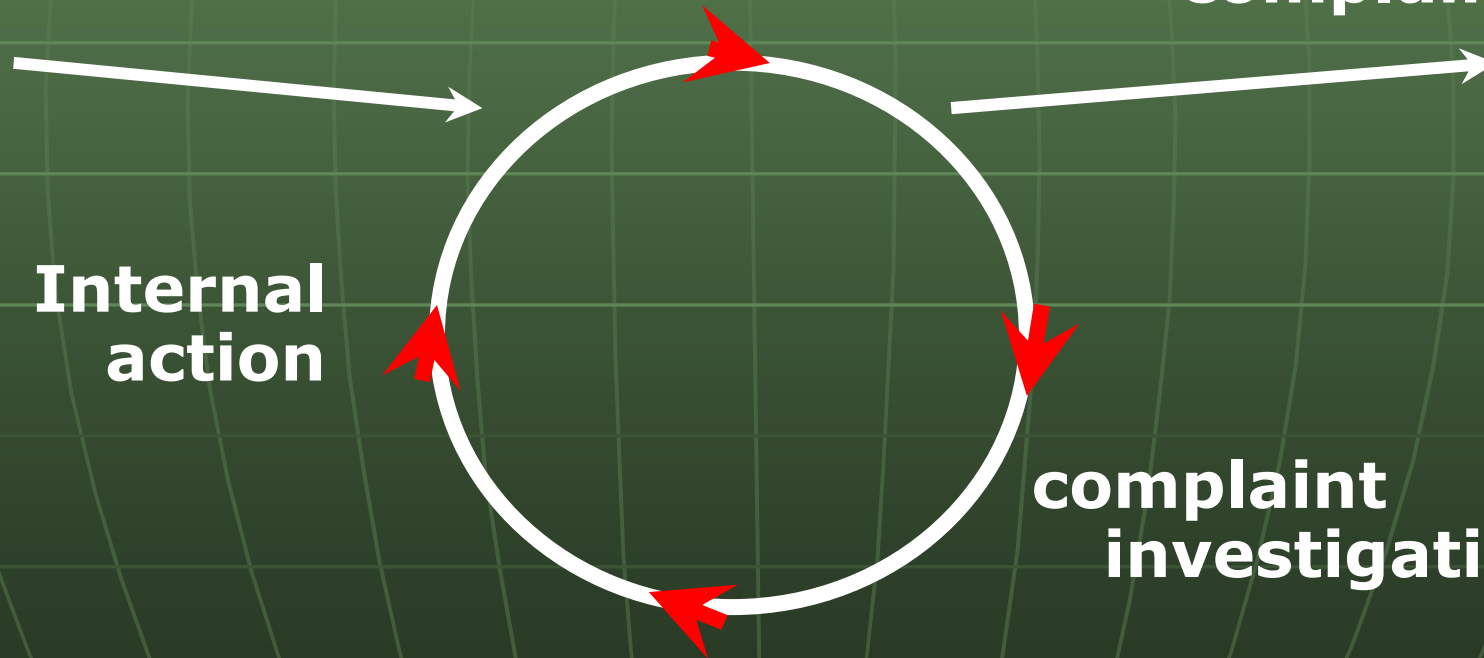
**Response to  
complainant**



**Internal  
action**

**complaint  
investigation**

**resolution**



# C&R mechanisms: basic elements

Institutional capabilities & staff values, attitudes and behaviours are equally important!

## 1. Internal capacity and scope

- Necessary resources are allocated; NB Leadership
- Possible effects are considered
- Written policy & ToR agreed and disseminated

## 2. Complaint filing

- Information on C&R is user-friendly and accessible
- Procedure is accessible and safe to use
- Non-retaliation and confidentiality are guaranteed
- Complaint recorded and filed into a database

### 3. Processing the complaint

- Impartial and independent process
- Clear timeframes for the investigation
- Complaints processes by qualified individuals
- Complainant informed of procedures / appeal

### 4. Response: for the complainant & w/ the NGO

- Clear decision on the type of response and remedy offered; ensure consistency
- Ensure that complainant receives a clear response and acknowledges receipt
- Complaints feed into learning processes
- Future planning takes into account necessary corrections



# Interested?

Contact:

Monica Blagescu

[mblagescu@oneworldtrust.org](mailto:mblagescu@oneworldtrust.org)

Charlotte Imbert

[cimbert@bond.org.uk](mailto:cimbert@bond.org.uk)