



A Global Stock-Take of Country-Owned Grievance and Feedback Mechanisms Trends and Good Practices



Abbreviations and Acronyms

FRDP	Feeder Roads Development Project	GM	grievance mechanism
ACRC	Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission	REACH	Reaching Everyone for Active Citizenry at Home
ADC	Administrative Development Circular (Malaysia)	UNFM	National Union of Moroccan Women
CIMER	Cumhurbaşkanlığı İletişim Merkezi) Türkiye		

Acknowledgments

This report was part of an effort to strengthen the right to remedy in World Bank operations and beyond by building the capacity of World Bank staff, clients, and project-affected people, especially the vulnerable and marginalized, to implement effective grievance mechanisms so that they can improve service delivery, risk management, and development outcomes.

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Part 1

Main Report



Background and Terminology

A grievance mechanism (GM) is a set of procedures and processes to receive, address, and resolve feedback, including complaints, queries, suggestions, and compliments. It is a tool for facilitating the participation of citizens in the development process and provides a consistent and accountable avenue for citizens and beneficiaries to share their views and inputs on development planning, progress, and outcomes.

Country-owned GMs are state-based, nonjudicial avenues for the public to submit feedback, led and managed by a ministry, department, or independent body based on a statutory or constitutional provision. They are positioned to address grievances on administrative matters such as service delivery. These GMs, which can be centralized or decentralized depending on the administrative structure, the regulatory and policy framework, and the sector or thematic issue, are distinct from oversight entities such as anticorruption and human rights commissions, ombud offices, and watchdog organizations such as consumer protection bureaus.

Establishing effective and inclusive GMs can significantly contribute to fulfilling Sustainable Development Goal 16 to “provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels,” particularly 16.6, to “[d]evelop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels,” and 16.7, to “[e]nsure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.”

A well-functioning GM can also facilitate citizen participation in the development process¹ and allow for potential risks and challenges to be addressed early and remedied properly. Effective GMs are instrumental in promoting progress across all Sustainable Development Goals, based on their integral role in the social accountability landscape to create or strengthen a transparent and credible public interface between states and citizens, increase trust between them, improve the state’s performance legitimacy, and expand freedom of choice and action among citizens.

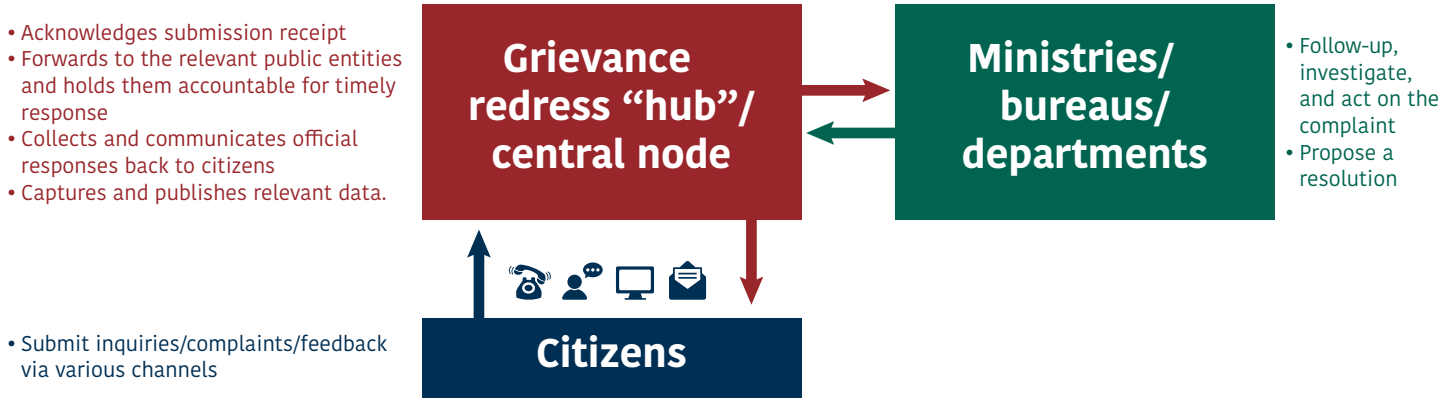
Centralized country-owned GMs are managed by a single entity that provides the main gateway for the submission of citizen feedback. In most cases, the task of such a centralized GM is to accept and acknowledge the receipt of a submission and then forward it to the public sector entity with the mandate to address the specific issue at hand (see figure 1.1). Upon receiving a submission, the appropriate ministry, bureau, or department ensures adequate follow-up, investigation, and action, with a view toward proposing a resolution agreeable to the GM user. Grievance redress units established at the central/national level typically monitor the responses of such public entities to ensure that they are abiding by legally established timeframes for an administrative response and that after receiving a suggested resolution, they are communicating it back to citizens. Furthermore, because of its position as a central node, a centralized GM can also collect and publish relevant grievance data.

1. This is in line with Article 8 of the Declaration on the Right to Development.



1. BACKGROUND AND TERMINOLOGY

FIGURE 1.1. TYPICAL SET-UP OF A CENTRALIZED GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

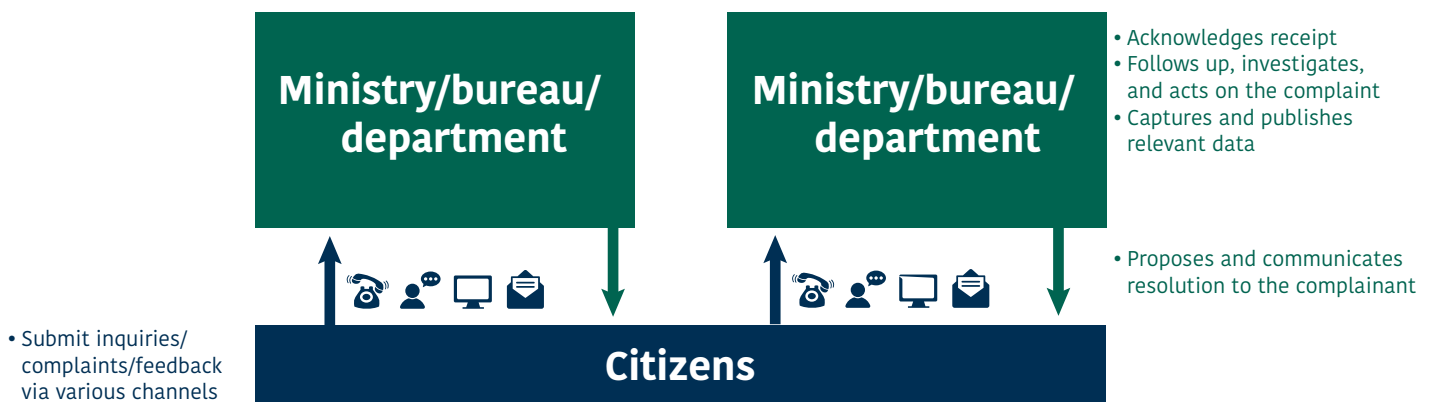


Note: The set-up and processes described in this figure are a simplified and standardized model. Actual implementation realities in various country contexts differ. This figure aims to provide a basic overview of the typical core functions that can be fulfilled by a centralized grievance mechanism.

Over the past decade, an increasing number of countries have established or expanded centralized GMs. On a pragmatic level, this surge could conceivably be linked to the realization by some governments that a unified and comprehensive GM covering multiple government departments and agencies, whether at the central/national or subnational level, brings added value by standardizing complaint-handling processes and improving the public sector’s responsiveness to citizen feedback.

Decentralized country-owned GMs are managed by national- and subnational-level agencies and departments that receive, address, and respond to citizen feedback (see figure 1.2). For example, ministry-specific hotlines and complaint-handling teams can be introduced to interact with beneficiaries and address their questions and grievances according to guidelines and timeframes set at the agency level or defined by the national legislative framework.

FIGURE 1.2. TYPICAL SET-UP OF A DECENTRALIZED GRIEVANCE MECHANISM





Rationale and Objectives

While the amount of literature on grievance and complaint-handling mechanisms is sizable, a systematic analysis of country-owned grievance mechanism (GMs) and their adoption of the principles of social inclusion has not been conducted. The World Bank's Social Sustainability and Inclusion Global Practice seeks to fill this gap by taking stock of centralized and particularly decentralized country-owned GMs in the following ways:

- **Exploring and fostering synergies between existing country-owned GMs and those established for World Bank-financed operations.** Significant investments are often made to set up parallel grievance management systems from scratch for World Bank-financed operations. But technical assistance and capacity-building efforts could instead be focused on strengthening existing systems in line with World Bank and other international grievance management standards in a way that ensures that project-related feedback is received, addressed, and responded to. The cases presented in this report can serve as a reference for World Bank teams exploring how existing GM systems might be deployed for World Bank financed projects. The guidance is supported by analyses of project GMs, which suggest that project-affected people may be more willing to
- **Supporting the establishment or strengthening of country systems for grievance redress and citizen engagement.** Such efforts align with the requirements of the Environmental and Social Framework² and the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in World Bank Group Operations (World Bank 2014).³ The Environmental and Social Framework specifies that “where possible, ... grievance mechanisms will utilize existing formal or informal grievance mechanisms suitable for project purposes” (World Bank 2017: 57). It also stresses that grievance mechanisms set up by the Borrower should be accessible and inclusive. Its requirements may lead a Borrower to undertake a diagnosis of their current GM systems, and the process may require technical assistance to analyze, establish, or strengthen the system. Providing concrete examples that span all regions can serve as a reference point for teams who are thinking about how they should introduce or strengthen GM-related legislation, policies, and practices as part of citizen engagement efforts or technical support related to the Environmental and Social Framework. Teams might also

2. Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) 10 on Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure requires that Borrowers “propose and implement a grievance mechanism to receive and facilitate the resolution of concerns and grievances” of project-affected parties. ESS2 stipulates that a grievance mechanism must be “provided for all direct workers and contracted workers ... to raise workplace concerns.” ESS5 on Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use, and Involuntary Resettlement, and ESS7 on Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities require that Borrowers ensure that a GM is in place in accordance with ESS10 as early as possible in the development of a project (World Bank 2017).

3. According to the 2014 Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement in World Bank Group Operations, and highlighted in the recommendations of the 2018 Independent Evaluation Group's report on lessons from the implementation of IDA18 (World Bank 2018), the World Bank should commit to broadening and deepening citizen engagement and utilizing available country systems to engage citizens and to more thoroughly explore synergies between the Environmental and Social Framework and citizen engagement, notably through the use of GMs—one of the most frequently used citizen engagement tools in investment lending operations.



2. RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

use these examples as a way to initiate dialogue with clients about related issues.

- **Showcasing concrete good practices of country-owned GMs to serve as inspiration for governments and World**

Bank task teams interested in setting-up or improving existing grievance redress systems.⁴ Some of the experiences outlined in the individual case studies have the potential to foster cross-country learning and experience sharing.⁵

4. See criteria for effective GMs in the World Bank research note *Gaining Traction or Spinning Wheels: Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Grievance Mechanisms in World Bank Financed Projects* (World Bank 2022b).

5. For more information on factors that influence the effectiveness of a GM, please refer to the *Gaining Traction or Spinning Wheels: Factors Influencing the Effectiveness of Grievance Mechanisms in World Bank Financed Projects* (World Bank 2022b).



Methodology

The preparation of the country case studies for this stock-taking exercise (see part 2) was based exclusively on online desk research conducted between October 2020 and July 2021. Based on a literature review and extensive online research, the research team identified and screened 30 cases. Of these, 23 brief case studies are presented, providing an illustrative overview of good practices for country-owned grievance and feedback mechanisms. The countries were selected based on two main criteria: (1) regional representation; and (2) the amount and detail of information available online and in English on the relevant grievance mechanism (GM). World Bank staff and consultants compiled the information for each case study, which was then reviewed by World Bank focal points for the respective regions.

A standard template was created to compile and document all case studies and to provide a comparable overview of feedback and grievance mechanisms. Each case study provides a brief description of the GM, its enabling environment (e.g., laws, directives, and policies), and the number of agencies or ministries it covers. The GM value chain is then outlined, including a description of the GM's uptake channels, processing systems, follow-up responsibilities, timeframes, service standards, avenues for appealing proposed resolutions, monitoring, and communication initiatives. As part of this study's deliberate focus on social inclusion, the case studies also document, to the extent possible, the efforts of country GM systems to ensure their accessibility and ease of use for

vulnerable groups, such as people with low literacy levels, linguistic minorities, refugees, internally displaced people, and people with disabilities. Case studies on advanced economies have also been included because several clients, including those from developing economies, typically look to learn from good practices adopted by advanced economies. Moreover, in some instances, desk research yielded more details on the GM value chain and social inclusion aspects of GMs that have been adopted by advanced economies than of country-owned GMs in less-developed economies.

Caveats

(1) The list of countries with country-owned GMs (see table 4.1) is not exhaustive. Case studies of the selected countries illustrate good practices of administrative GMs and feedback systems; they are not intended to serve as a comprehensive review of GM design and implementation or of social and environmental systems. In addition, this research was based on secondary sources. Because of resource constraints, it was not possible to organize individual outreach efforts to practitioners with direct involvement in the operation of the central- or national-level GMs described here. Furthermore, the level of descriptive detail on the GMs varies across the case studies based on the extent of information available online in English. Finally, because GM operations are dynamic and often evolve over time, the examples presented here reflect the status of the GMs in late 2021.



Scope

This stock-take covers 23 countries, including three from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, three from South Asia, three from the Middle East and North Africa, three from East Asia and the Pacific, two from Africa, and two from Latin America and the Caribbean.⁶ Seven of the case studies examine GMs from advanced economies and territories, including Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Japan, Singapore, the Republic of Korea,

Australia, and Hong Kong. Of these 23 countries and territories, 20 countries have centralized grievance mechanisms (GMs) (see table 4.1). Some of those also have decentralized GMs at the ministry, provincial, regional, municipal, or city-levels; illustrative examples of such are documented. Three countries—Colombia, Cambodia, and Ethiopia—only have decentralized GMs.

TABLE 4.1. LIST OF COUNTRIES WITH EXAMPLES OF COMPLAINT AND FEEDBACK MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

■ Centralized GM ■ Decentralized GM

Country	World Bank	Name of System	Responsible Agency
Armenia	Europe and Central Asia	E-request.am	Ministry of Justice
Australia	Advanced economy	Services Australia	
Bangladesh	South Asia	Grievance Redress System	Cabinet Division 5
Bahrain	Advanced economy	Tawasul	E-Government Authority
Cambodia	East Asia and Pacific	Multiple—See case study for illustrative example of decentralized GMs.	
Colombia	Latin American and the Caribbean	Multiple—See case study for illustrative example of decentralized GMs.	
Dominican Republic	Latin American and the Caribbean	311 Public Assistance System	Ministry of the Presidency

(continued)

6. These countries include Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nepal (South Asia); Malaysia, Vietnam, and Cambodia (East Asia and Pacific); Colombia and the Dominican Republic (Latin America and the Caribbean); South Africa and Ethiopia (Africa or Sub-Saharan Africa); and Armenia, Uzbekistan, and Türkiye (Europe and Central Asia).



TABLE 4.1. CONTINUED

Country	World Bank	Name of System	Responsible Agency
Ethiopia	Africa or Sub-Saharan Africa	Multiple—See case study for illustrative example of decentralized GMs.	
Hong Kong	Advanced economy	1823 service	Efficiency Office
Japan	Advanced economy	Administrative Counseling System	The Administrative Evaluation Bureau of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications
Jordan	Middle East and North Africa	Bekhedmetkom (At Your Service) platform	Ministry of Information and Communications Technology
Malaysia	East Asia and Pacific	Public Complaints Bureau	Prime Minister's Office
Morocco	Middle East and North Africa	Chikaya	Ministry of Public Administration and Administration Reform
Nepal	South Asia	Hello Sarkar	Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers
Pakistan	South Asia	Citizen's Portal	Prime Minister's Office
Singapore	Advanced economy	Reaching Everyone for Active Citizenry at Home (REACH)	Ministry of Communications and Information
South Africa	Advanced economy	Presidential Hotline	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
Korea, Rep.	Advanced economy	Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC)	
Türkiye	Europe and Central Asia	CIMER (Cumhurbaşkanlığı İletişim Merkezi) platform	Presidency's Directorate of Communications
Uzbekistan	Europe and Central Asia	President's Virtual Reception	President's Office
Vietnam	East Asia and Pacific	Government Inspectorate	
United Arab Emirates	Advanced economy	171 Tawasul	Ministry of Human Resources and
West Bank and Gaza	Middle East and North Africa	Directorate General for Complaints	Council of Ministers



Key Findings

Enabling Environment

Complaint-handling and feedback mechanisms are typically governed by legal, regulatory, and policy frameworks that guarantee or promote the right of citizens to remedy and that allow for the provision of feedback about public services. These frameworks also stipulate that a government entity will address such feedback to ensure effective service delivery. They can be found in: (1) constitutions; (2) national-level administrative legal frameworks (laws, decrees, and directives) enumerating the rights of citizens and residents to submit complaints and feedback with expected redress or response within reasonable and specified timeframes and outlining the mandate of a single complaint-handling agency or multiple administrative units; (3) guidelines and procedures that outline steps for complaint-handling agencies and/or service providers and administrative units to receive, address, and respond to feedback and appeals; and (4) national vision statements and frameworks that endorse responsive complaint management and service delivery.

Article 30 of Vietnam's constitution, for example, stipulates that

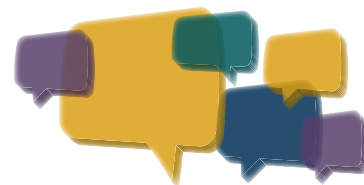
citizens have the right to lodge with any competent State authority a complaint or denunciation regarding transgressions of the law by any State body, economic or social organization, people's armed forces unit, or any individual.

Article 23 of the Colombian constitution declares the right of individuals to respectfully petition authorities on behalf of general or private interest and to secure prompt resolution.

Constitutional provisions for grievance redress can translate into national legislation. Under Vietnam's Law on Complaints and Denunciations (02/2011/QH13 and Decree No. 75/2012/ND-CP), individuals and organizations are entitled to lodge complaints against administrative decisions at all levels of government. The Law on Reception of Citizens (2013) outlines the responsibilities associated with receiving citizen feedback; the rights and obligations of a person submitting a complaint, denunciation, petition, or report; and how citizen feedback activities are organized at citizen reception offices and designated places at agencies, organizations, and units. Decree 123/2016/ND-CP outlines the role of ministry inspectorates in conducting inspections, settling complaints, and preventing and combating corruption in areas under the jurisdiction of the relevant ministry.

Colombia's constitutional provision on effective complaint resolution is substantiated and further enumerated by Law 1,755 of 2015, which outlines the fundamental right of a citizen to petition public authorities for reasons of general or particular interest and to obtain prompt, complete, and substantive resolution. It is further supported by Decree 1,166 of 2016, which establishes procedural rules for the uptake of verbal petitions, complaints, claims, suggestions, and allegations of misconduct. Under some government systems, royal directives have been issued for the same purpose. For example, in 2014, a Bahrain royal directive emphasized the need to provide seamless and direct interactions between citizens and government officials.⁷

7. These directives were issued by H. R. H. Prince Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Deputy King, Crown Prince, Deputy supreme commander of the Bahrain Defense Force, then first Deputy Prime Minister, and H. R. H. Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, then Prime Minister See [link](#).



Laws focused more specifically on the role of complaint-handling agencies include: (1) Uzbekistan's Law on Citizen Appeals (amended in 2017), which outlines the functions of the Presidential Virtual Reception and People's Receptions; and (2) Malaysia's Administrative Development Circulars (ADCs), which govern the work of the Public Complaint Bureau, particularly ADC 4 on Managing Public Complaints (1992) and ADC 1 on Improving the Effectiveness in Managing Public Complaints (2002). There are also sectoral laws focused on grievance redress, such as Cambodia's Law on Electricity, which states that administrative complaints about electricity service must be submitted to the electricity service provider. If a complainant does not agree with the service provider's decision, the complaint can be filed with the Electricity Authority of Cambodia within 30 days.

Nepal and South Africa have issued detailed guidelines on grievance management and redress. Nepal's 2020 Public Accountability Promotion Procedure itemizes the steps a citizen must take to register a grievance at the local level. It also explains the procedures for accepting, sorting, storing, and responding to grievances; the role of the grievance officer; and the formation of a grievance resolution coordination committee under the leadership of the deputy mayor. South Africa's 2013 Citizen Complaints and Compliments Management Framework applies to all line and sector departments that are responsible for the public service delivery, and it provides a uniform approach to complaint management for the public sector.

As part of the United Arab Emirates' Vision 2021, launched in 2010, a customer charter was issued for all ministries that outlines the duties of federal authorities toward customers,⁸ including simplified and efficient service delivery, the provision of fair and unbiased services, and continued engagement with customers to improve service delivery. Jordan's Third National Action Plan 2016-18 for the Open Government Partnership Initiative includes multiple commitments to enhance the complaint registration system and follow-up mechanisms in response to citizen feedback.⁹

Responsible agency

The grievance mechanism (GM) systems covered in this compendium are managed by a range of central- and national-level government entities, such as the Office of the President or Ministry of the Presidency in Türkiye, Uzbekistan, and the Dominican Republic; the Prime Minister's Office in Malaysia and Pakistan; the E-Government Authority or Ministry of Information and Communications Technology in Bahrain and Jordan; and ministries or departments of administrative reform or planning in South Africa and Morocco. Some entities have been established with specific mandates to receive and settle complaints and to handle other types of feedback; to coordinate the management of feedback with other entities under the GM system's purview; and to monitor and report on the complaint-handling process, including the number and nature of issues raised and resolution rates, to the highest levels of government in order to inform policy making, administrative processes, and reforms. Such entities include Korea's Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) and Vietnam's Government Inspectorate.

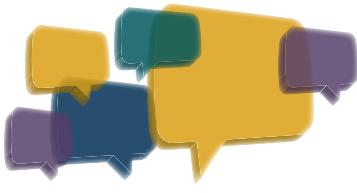
Purview and mandate

The purview and mandate of the 23 countries in this stock-taking exercise vary in terms of receiving, processing, investigating, and resolving grievances based on administrative structures and mandates of the entities hosting a centralized GM or dealing with sector-specific or localized feedback. Public institutions under the jurisdiction of Türkiye's *Cumhurbaşkanlığı İletişim Merkezi* (CIMER) platform, for example, include presidential offices; boards and affiliated bodies; public ministries; governorships; the Office of the Chief Public Prosecutor; district governorships; universities; metropolitan, provincial, and district municipalities; and special provincial administrations.¹⁰ In Malaysia, the purview of the Public Complaints Bureau extends to 16 utility companies, 25 ministries, 257 federal government agencies, 13 state secretary's offices, and 149 local authorities. The purview of Bangladesh's Grievance Redress System includes all government ministries, the departments and agencies under

8. See <https://www.Mohre.Gov.Ae/En/Laws-Legislation/Customer-Charter.AspX>.

9. "Jordan's Third National Action Plan 2016-2018 under the Open Government Partnership Initiative.Doc," 16. <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/jordan-third-national-action-plan-2016-2018/>.

10. See <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/egovernment/document/prime-ministry-communication-center-bimer>.



5. KEY FINDINGS

them, and the recently added union *parishads* (councils)—the lowest tier of government.

Some entities that manage centralized GMs lack the investigative powers to address, resolve, and respond to complaints. Others function as clearing houses for receiving and channeling feedback to entities with the legal authority to investigate and remedy various types of feedback, including complaints. For example, Hong Kong's 1823 service records the details of a complaint or unresolved query, refers the case to the appropriate bureau or department, monitors its progress, and conveys the response to 1823 service user. Nepal's Hello Sarkar system lacks investigative authority and a mandate to resolve complaints, but the Office of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers can issue injunctions that permit ministries and departments to resolve complaints under their jurisdiction.

Budget

Available information on the allocated budgets of GM systems is limited. The 2019 annual budget for Korea's Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission was Won 87.498 billion, including Won 44.873 billion for personnel expenses, Won 7.294 billion for basic expenses, and Won 35.331 billion for primary work expenses. In South Africa, frontline and citizen-based service delivery monitoring and complaints resolution was appropriated Rand 50,303,000 in fiscal 2018/19 and Rand 59,380,000 in fiscal 2017/18.

Trends and Good Practices: Centralized Grievance and Feedback Systems

Types of feedback

The type of feedback managed by the various entities in charge of GMs and other feedback systems that are examined in this stock-take varies. Several reviewed centralized systems must handle a wide range of feedback. Armenia's e-request.am portal, for example, asks users if they are submitting a request,

application, complaint, or letter. In addition to complaints about service delivery, Bangladesh's Grievance Redress System can receive complaints from government officials and autonomous organizations about their access to services and their rights as employees, as well as suggestions from citizens about simplifying services or legal and regulatory reforms. Users of Pakistan's Citizen Portal can select one of 27 feedback categories,¹¹ each of which includes further subcategories that pinpoint to the greatest extent possible the nature of the case.¹²

Some GM and feedback systems enumerate the types of complaints and feedback that they do not have the mandate to receive and manage. In South Africa, for example, issues beyond the purview of the Presidential Hotline include outcomes of legal, disciplinary, and dismissal proceedings and requests for employment and funding. In Morocco, complaints submitted through the judicial system and cases that have been the subject of a judicial decision and that have acquired the force of *res judicata* (a matter that has been adjudicated by a competent court and may not be pursued further by the same parties) are beyond the purview of its complaint and feedback management system platform, called *Chikaya*. In Malaysia, complaints outside the purview of the Public Complaints Bureau include government policies and matters under the authority of the Public Accounts Committee, the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, and the Legal Aid Department, as well as family disputes, civil claims involving individuals and companies, and complaints against entities or private companies not associated with the government.

Uptake channels

Each of the 20 centralized GM and feedback systems has deployed a range of uptake channels to provide users with a diverse set of digital and nondigital options for submitting feedback. GM users in Armenia and the United Arab Emirates can use a web portal specifically designed to receive and process feedback. In the West Bank and Gaza and South Africa,

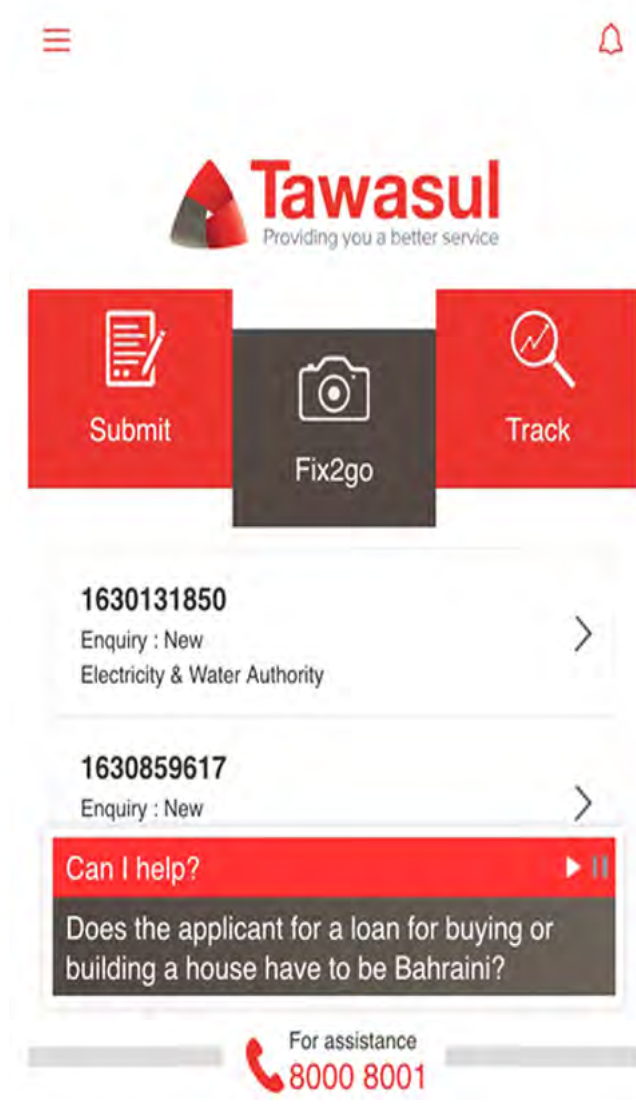
11. Categories include agriculture, banking, communications, corruption/malpractice, development projects, disaster emergency, education, energy and power, environment and forests, excise and taxation, federal board of revenue, health, human rights, immigration and passports, investment, land and revenue, law and order, licenses and certificates, media cyber crimes, municipal services, the National Database and Registration Authority, overseas Pakistanis, poverty alleviation and social safety, security and exchanges commission, transport, and youth affairs.

12. See <https://www.dawn.com/news/1616809>.



users can submit feedback using an online form. In Bahrain and Malaysia, users can submit feedback with mobile apps—*Tawasul* (see figure 5.1) and *People’s Response*, respectively. In Singapore and Australia, social media accounts can be used to submit feedback, including the Reaching Everyone for Active Citizenry at Home (REACH) page and *Services Australia* accounts, respectively. In Hong Kong and Korea, users can submit feedback via chatbot. In Nepal and Singapore, they can use SMS. And

FIGURE 5.1. BAHRAIN’S TAWASUL PHONE APPLICATION



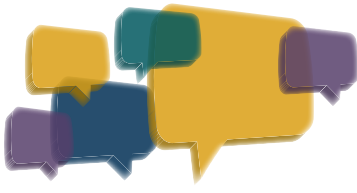
in Vietnam and the West Bank and Gaza, feedback can be submitted by email.

Nondigital uptake channels include toll-free hotlines, such as those in Jordan and Türkiye, as well as mail (post), fax, and standard telephone numbers, which most of the countries and territories considered in this stock-taking exercise allow. Some governments have instituted measures to ensure suitable in-person uptake channels. In Korea, for example, the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission’s onsite Mobile E-People Program is intended as a way to reach out to citizens in order to resolve complaints in the field. The Government Complaints Counseling Center also provides counseling to citizens regarding complex complaints that involve multiple government institutions. Singapore’s REACH program organizes face-to-face engagement sessions, including public forums, dialogue sessions, and feedback booths.¹³ See box 5.1 for additional examples of good practices with in-person uptake channels.

Several GMs provide users with the option of submitting complaints anonymously, including those in Bangladesh and Malaysia. However, in Vietnam, both written and verbal complaints that have been transcribed must be signed or fingerprinted by the complainant. Uzbekistan’s Law on Citizen Appeals stipulates that anonymously submitted complaints shall not be considered; and Türkiye’s CIMER platform only allows an anonymous submission categorized as a “whistleblower complaint.”

Typically, feedback can be submitted at no cost, although only a few of the examined GMs emphasize this aspect to potential users. For example, Korea’s 110 call center established free rates for phone calls to facilitate cost-free public access. *Services Australia* makes clear that there is no cost to submit feedback but users can incur telephone charges at varying rates depending on the service provider. Armenia’s legal framework stipulates that if an information query requires printing in excess of 10 pages, then the relevant governmental body should inform the applicant of the nominal charges for copying the information.

13. See <https://www.reach.gov.sg/about-us/about-reach>.



Box 5.1. Good Practice Examples of In-Person Uptake Channels

Bangladesh. For off-line submission of complaints, members of the public can use citizen service booths located at the gates of the Cabinet Secretariat Complex in Dhaka. These booths are staffed by authorized personnel with administrative access to the Grievance Redress System software who are tasked with recording the details of complaints, generating acceptance slips for users, and forwarding letters to the grievance redress officers of the relevant ministries. Users can refer to the information printed on their acceptance slips to track their complaints on the Grievance Redress System website. For complaints regarding departments/agencies outside Dhaka, complainants can submit written grievances in a complaint box at the relevant institution or they can mail them.

Japan. During the Administrative Counseling Week in October, the Administrative Evaluation Bureau's Administrative Counseling System sets up makeshift one-stop counseling centers at department stores and public facilities all over the country where citizens can submit complaints and make requests for administrative consultations. Specialists from the Legal Affairs Bureau, National Tax Bureau, Labor Bureau, and local public organizations are among those who participate in these administrative consultations. The Administrative Counseling System's [special administrative consultation service](#) addresses complaints and inquiries submitted by affected persons during large-scale disasters about such matters as government support measures, the loss of health insurance, and pension certificates.

Several of the GMs considered here give users the option of tracking the status of their case. Armenia's e-request.am portal allows users to track the status of their complaint by entering a 16-digit control number generated at the time of submission. Jordan's *Bekhedmetkom* ("At Your Service") platform, provides users with a reference number via email or SMS at the time of the submission of a query, suggestion, report, or compliment. This number can be entered along with a valid phone number to track the status of a case on the "Ask the Government Status" page.

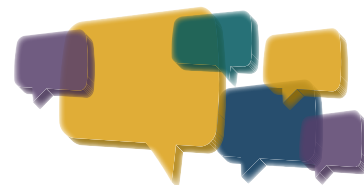
Timeframes and service standards

Most centralized GMs publicly communicate standard resolution/redress timelines, but many do not elaborate on acknowledgment timeframes. According to Services Australia's standards, complaints should be resolved within 10 working days, and if that is not possible, the user will receive an explanation for the delay and will be informed of additional options. Under Vietnamese law, the timeframe for settling a first-time complaint is less than 30 days after its acceptance. Complicated cases may require additional time but may not exceed 45 days from the acceptance of the complaint. Within

three working days of issuing a settlement/decision, the office in charge of resolving the complaint will notify the complainant of the same. The timeframe for settling a second-time complaint is a maximum of 45 days after the complaint is accepted. In remote areas with difficult travel conditions, the timeframe for settling a complaint is within 60 days after receipt. For second-time complaints, the concerned agency is expected to communicate the settlement decision to the petitioner within seven days of issuing it.

Some of the GMs examined in this report have stated timeframes for the acknowledgment of feedback, such as Nepal's Hello Sarkar, which acknowledges receipt within 24 hours. The West Bank and Gaza's Directorate General for Complaints must accept or reject a complaint within three days. In Vietnam, the responsible agency is expected to acknowledge receipt of a first-time complaint to the complainant, to the agency that forwarded the complaint, and to the appropriate state inspectorate within 10 days.

Few centralized GM systems provide information regarding other service standards or key performance indicators. Exceptions



include Malaysia's Public Complaint Bureau, which monitors progress on the overall resolution rate of complaints, the percentage of complaints responded to within 15 working days, and the customer satisfaction index, as well as South Africa's Presidential Hotline, which at the time of its launch had a benchmark complaint resolution rate of 80 percent. The performance standards of Hong Kong's 1823 service include a call abandonment rate of less than 10 percent, a customer satisfaction rate of four out of five points, a first-time resolution rate of more than 95 percent for queries, and the assignment of 70 percent of complaints to specific departments within three hours.

Processing and Follow-up Responsibilities

The majority of GM and feedback systems examined here have adopted operating procedures that make some information publicly available and provide an overview of guidance to categorize, prioritize, and process feedback. Türkiye's CIMER platform categorizes submissions as: (1) notices/allegations of misconduct, such as sexual harassment or bribery; (2) suggestions about such matters as traffic regulation; (3) requests, such as for social assistance; (4) complaints, such as uncollected trash or unpaid salary; and (5) inquiries to obtain information. Bangladesh's Grievance Redress System categorizes complaints as *severe*, *medium*, or *low* based on their sensitivity and forwards them to grievance redress officers¹⁴ at the appropriate ministry to be addressed. If the Cabinet Division cannot resolve the issue, it forwards the complaint to one or more relevant ministries to address the issue in cooperation with the grievance redress officer. South Africa's Department of Public Service and Administration requires line departments to follow three stages of complaint resolution: (1) immediate attention and resolution; (2) investigation, information gathering, and decision making; and (3) internal review, whereby if a complainant is dissatisfied with a stage-two outcome, a higher authority in the department reviews the complaint, undertakes a further investigation, and, based on the findings,

signs off on the final resolution. See box 5.2 for a closer look at Pakistan's Citizen's Portal.

Resolution of feedback and citizen satisfaction

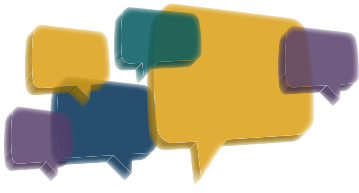
Potential outcomes of feedback submitted to most of the centralized GMs covered in this stock-take are specified in legal, regulatory, and policy frameworks, and GM user surveys are increasingly being deployed as a tool for monitoring their effectiveness. Outcomes of the complaint-handling process might include an apology, explanation, compensation, or action to right the situation in question, such as with Bangladesh's Grievance Redress System.¹⁵ In Uzbekistan, the government authority that considers a complaint is obligated to monitor the execution of the decision and take measures to compensate for material or moral damage in accordance with legal procedures. Upon receiving notification about the outcome of a case, a citizen can provide feedback through the website of a regional *khokimiyat* (subnational government administration). Further, the regional governors' offices conduct monthly inspections to assess compliance with the deadlines for resolving complaints. In addition to providing GM users with the option of submitting feedback about their experiences, such as in Armenia and Korea, some GM and feedback systems also conduct satisfaction surveys. Services Australia conducts a customer satisfaction survey to assess and report on its performance based on satisfaction drivers and criteria, including perceived quality, personalized service, communication, time to receive service, fair treatment, and effort. In the West Bank and Gaza, international organizations have conducted surveys to assess GM user satisfaction with aspects such as the conduct of frontline staff, perceptions of discrimination, and the quality of customer service.

Appeals

Appeal mechanisms for the countries and territories in this study can be internal or external, depending on the legal framework, the mandate of the agency managing the GM and

14. Grievance redress officers: (1) ensure that all staff members and the public are aware of the current grievance redress procedures; (2) ensure that all grievances are addressed and resolved fairly, impartially, and transparently; (3) ensure that all grievances are dealt with by the appropriate authority; (4) review the available measures and make appropriate recommendations in relation to mediation and conciliation to ensure early resolution of grievances; (5) depending on the seriousness of the complaint, keep the complainant informed of the process; and (6) keep all records of complaints and settlements.

15. See <http://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Enhancing-Social-Protection-Governance-through-Grievance-Redress-System.pdf>.



Box 5.2. Pakistan’s Citizen’s Portal: Processing Complaints

Federal ministries, divisions, and other government entities in Pakistan appoint two grievance focal points: one to conduct administrative tasks and the other to conduct tasks related to information technology. Their joint responsibilities include examining all submissions, initiating action and referral of complaints as needed, recording and communicating proposed resolutions to citizens, and analyzing complaints data. All heads of government entities are responsible for overseeing the process and guaranteeing its efficiency and quality. According to the *Pakistan Citizen’s Portal User’s Guidelines Manual for Complaints and Suggestions Handling*,^a public organizations should conduct regular reviews to identify potential bottlenecks in complaint handling, hold grievance focal points accountable, and ensure that staff is well trained and fully equipped with “the necessary skills and resources to process complaints.” Grievance focal points have access to the portal’s dashboard, which organizes complaints into five categories:

- (1) *New*, for incoming submissions;
- (2) *In process*, when action has been initiated, including the assignment of the complaint to a relevant officer and its processing through resolution;
- (3) *Escalated*, when a complaint has not been resolved within the standard timeframe, including two stages: (1) *initial escalation*, when a complaint has not been resolved within 10 days of its submission; and (2) *super escalation*, when a complaint has not been resolved within 21 days of its submission;
- (4) *Forwarded* when a complaint has been forwarded to another federal or provincial authority within 24 hours of its receipt; and
- (5) *Resolved*, when a solution has been offered to the complainant and the grievance focal point has recorded remarks about the resolution in the Pakistan Citizen’s Portal dashboard, attached the notification to the complainant, and clearly referred to and applied the rules and regulations in resolving the case.

a. Pakistan Citizen’s Portal User’s Guidelines Manual for Complaints and Suggestions Handling. Third Edition. January 2020. <http://www.qesco.com.pk/PDF/tender/Pakistan-Citizen-Portal-Manual-3.0.pdf>.

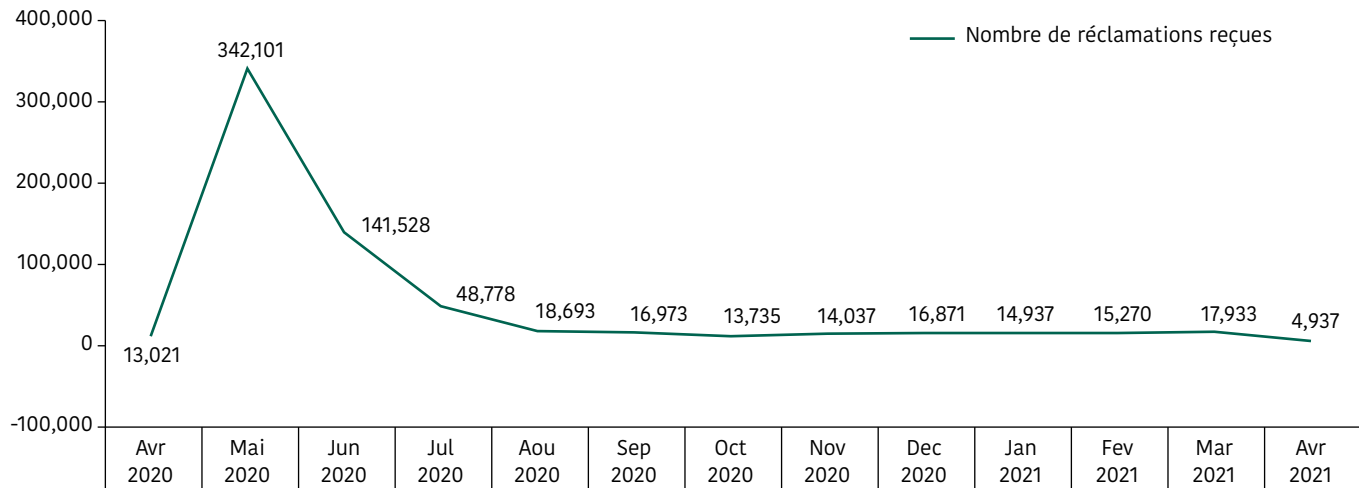
feedback system, and administrative structures. For example, Malaysia’s Public Complaint Bureau has an internal dispute resolution mechanism for cases when the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation or outcome.¹⁶ Complicated cases and systemic issues are referred to the Permanent Committee on Public Complaints, which has the mandate to instigate investigations, request explanations from public officers and staff, and direct relevant departments and agencies to take corrective actions to resolve complaints. Uzbekistan’s Law on Citizen Appeals stipulates that if an individual or legal entity

does not agree with the decision of a government authority regarding a case, that authority is obligated to explain to the complainant the procedure for lodging a complaint against the decision. A GM user who is dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint at the district administration level can submit an appeal to the People’s Receptions of the regional administration. If the complainant is dissatisfied with that investigation’s outcome, an appeal can be lodged to a higher authority or in court. Appellants in South Africa can appeal to an independent statutory institution, such as the Public Protector,

16. See <http://www.pcb.gov.my/annual/COMPLAINT.pdf>.



FIGURE 5.2. EXAMPLE OF STATISTICAL CHART ON MOROCCO'S CHIKAYA PLATFORM



the Public Service Commission, or any other legally prescribed mediator institution, based on the nature of the complaint.¹⁷ Appellants in Australia appeal to the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

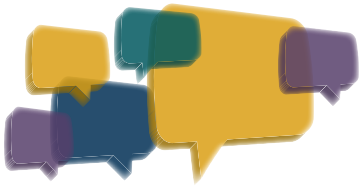
Monitoring and analysis

Based on the relevant legal framework, GM and feedback systems must publish monitoring reports on a monthly (e.g., Uzbekistan), quarterly (e.g., South Africa), or annual (e.g., Pakistan) basis. The published data typically include the aggregate number of cases received and closed, although there are several good practice examples of more disaggregated data sharing. For example, Hong Kong's 1823 service publishes data on the number of queries, complaints, and other types of feedback—such as suggestions and compliments—that are received. The West Bank and Gaza's Directorate General for Complaints discloses the total number of complaints that are received, rejected, processed, and under consideration to be processed, as well as the type of entities involved, such as ministries, nonministry government institutions, security institutions, and governorates. The annual report of the Pakistani Prime Minister's Delivery Unit includes information on the GM's user categories, including students, senior

citizens, and engineers, and the sector of complaints, such as municipal services and energy. South Africa's quarterly report provides information on changes in the case resolution rate compared with the previous quarter as well a summary of the most prevalent national- and provincial-level issues. Morocco's Chikaya portal includes a public statistics page (see figure 5.2), which presents aggregated data on complaints about all administrative bodies and allows users to search for any given period the number of complaints received, processed, and for which citizens have expressed their level of satisfaction, as well as the average number of days needed to process a complaint.

There are also examples of GMs that have proactively utilized analyses of feedback data to inform and facilitate efforts to improve service delivery and policy outcomes. In Korea, for example, the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission's "Complaints Big Data at a Glance" service analyzes data to identify weekly and monthly trends in civil complaints, as well as complaints related to major national policies, social issues, and issues of public interest. Its forecast system monitors complaints from the previous three years, selecting cases that occur more frequently at specific times and then forecasting the types of complaints and major cases that are expected to

17. See <http://www.pcb.gov.my/annual/COMPLAINT.pdf>.



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occur one month in advance, allowing the relevant institutions to prepare adequate response measures. The entities managing centralized GMs for Bahrain and Pakistan utilize feedback data analysis to incentivize better performance. In Bahrain, quarterly presentations are organized for the Crown Prince regarding the progress and performance of Tawasul entities,¹⁸ and the Prime Minister and Crown Prince present awards for the top three performing entities during the annual government summit. Pakistan's Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit publishes the names of the 10 organizations with the highest number of complaints resolved as well as those whose performance fell short in terms of having *super escalated* complaints that were not resolved within the stipulated timeframe.

Outreach

The centralized GMs included in this study have deployed myriad creative and innovative approaches to maximize public awareness of their mandate and service standards and to foster trust in their effectiveness. Bahrain's Tawasul portal and application are available in English and Arabic, and Services Australia has made information available on procedures for complaints and feedback in over 35 languages. Several GMs have developed and posted videos about their activities on their

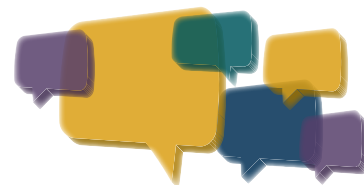
web pages, including those in Malaysia, Morocco, and South Africa; and in some cases they include staff testimonials, such as in Hong Kong and Nepal. Many GMs have deployed social media for the same purpose, including in Uzbekistan, Singapore, and Nepal. Bangladesh's Grievance Redress System portal provides access to the citizen charters of relevant ministries and divisions, a user manual, and a process map for grievance redress. Its Cabinet Division's website provides guidelines, activities, and instructions about the system for ministries and divisions. Some entities have devoted entire communication and outreach programs to their GMs, such as the website of the Vietnam's Government Inspectorate, which includes a section on news and events and another on videos elaborating on the inspectorate's activities. Its *Inspection Newspaper* and *Inspection Magazine* publicize information on the management and settlement of complaints and on the hands-on experiences of inspection-related operations. The media gallery of Malaysia's Public Complaints Bureau includes a photo gallery, an audio gallery featuring the official song of the Public Complaints Bureau, and a video gallery that includes a host of videos about its mission and initiatives. See box 5.3 for additional creative examples of GM outreach.

Box 5.3. Good Practice and Creative Examples of Grievance Mechanism Outreach

Japan. In addition to pamphlets, the Administrative Evaluation Bureau has produced: (1) posters in [Japanese](#) and [English](#) on the process for submitting complaints and seeking counsel and on other appropriate [issues](#); (2) a [video introduction](#) to administrative consultations, including procedures for [foreigners](#), and the Administrative Counseling System's [outcomes](#) and [achievements](#); and (3) a [drama](#) and [program](#) entitled "If you have a problem, don't worry alone." The Administrative Evaluation Bureau webpage includes a "kid's corner" that features cartoons and interactive activities to introduce young people to administrative counseling. A [magazine](#) for children had also been produced for this purpose. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications has introduced a specific [symbol](#) and the *Kikimimi mascot* for the Administrative Counseling System and set up a Twitter [account](#) to increase public familiarity with the administrative counseling process. Finally, MIC promotes international [exchanges](#), conferences, and events on administrative counseling with the International Ombudsman Association, the Asian Ombudsman Association, and other countries.

(continued)

18. This is not available online to the public.



Box 5.3. Continued

Korea. The Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) uses a variety of outreach channels, such as the participation of its senior representatives on television and radio shows and their contributions to newspapers and press releases. In 2019, its Task Force for Digital Communication produced familiar and fun content to help people understand the commission's policies, which was distributed through official social media channels of ACRC. The commission also launched its ACRC Vision YouTube channel, where it posts a range of content, including live-streamed events. The ACRC releases promotional content about the 110 Government Call Center, E-People, administrative appeals, and its other initiatives in various formats, including videos, posters, and leaflets; television, radio, and newspaper announcements; and bus and electronic display boards. Its news and publications section hosts a “[What’s New](#)” section that provides updates; a [photo gallery](#); ACRC’s [newsletters](#); and [publications](#), including annual reports, brochures, and assessments.

Social inclusion

Several centralized GMs in this stock-take have features that align with the eight effectiveness criteria for nonjudicial grievance mechanisms of Principle 31 of the 2011 United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights¹⁹ (see box 5.4). The majority are *predictable* in terms of communicating timeframes and processes. For example, operational guidelines for the Dominican Republic’s 311 Public Assistance System state that the status of the case must be acknowledged and changed from *open* to *in process* within 48 hours of receipt. Nepal’s Hello Sarkar system has published a chart depicting the process and timeframes for complaint redress, and Morocco’s Chikaya web page presents a user guide to observations, suggestions, and complaints. Most of the GMs in this stock-take are also transparent, typically providing users with receipts or reference numbers that allow them to track the status of cases. In fact, Malaysia’s Public Complaint Bureau keeps complainants informed by copying them on correspondence related to the investigation of their case. Most of the examined GMs publish statistics regarding cases received, resolved, and pending; some go further by sharing examples of resolved cases, such as in Nepal and Malaysia.

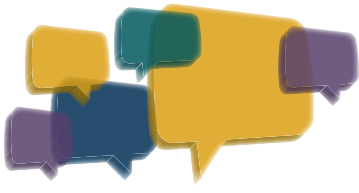
Transparency and predictability are typically precursors for fostering legitimacy. Some GMs, such as in Hong Kong and the West Bank and Gaza, monitor user satisfaction. Others assure

users that their personal data will be protected, such as in Uzbekistan and Morocco.

Most GMs have instituted accessible channels for users to submit feedback, with some focused on digital accessibility. For example, users of Bahrain’s Tawasul system who have a visual impairment can access the portal’s contents using its text-to-speech feature in its screen-reading software, which requires no additional software. In Korea, the Integrated Government Call Center’s “Visible ARS” smart counseling system offers people with hearing impairments video counseling using sign language and interpretation services. To avoid excluding petitioners on the basis of language, some GMs provide information in multiple languages, such as Services Australia, which publishes information about complaint and feedback procedures in at least 35 languages, as well as Hong Kong’s 1823 service, whose website content is available in seven languages.

Some GMs have adopted measures to promote equity regardless of age, gender, nationality, race, health, language, geographic location, and income, including Vietnam’s, which allows complainants who are ill, old, weak, have physical disabilities, or who are experiencing a valid circumstance preventing them from submitting a complaint, to authorize a parent, spouse, sibling, adult child, or other person with the full civil capacity to do so on their behalf. In Uzbekistan, some of its People’s

19. UN HR Council resolution HRC 17/21 of March 21, 2021.



Box 5.4. Effectiveness Criteria for Nonjudicial Grievance Mechanisms According to Principle 31 of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights

To ensure their effectiveness, state- and nonstate-based nonjudicial grievance mechanisms, should be:

1. **Legitimate.** Enabling trust from the stakeholder groups for whose use they are intended, and accountable for the fair conduct of grievance processes.
2. **Accessible.** Being known to all stakeholder groups for whose use they are intended, and providing adequate assistance for those who may face specific barriers to access.
3. **Predictable.** Providing a clear and known procedure with an indicative timeframe for each stage and clarity on the types of processes and outcomes available, as well as the means of monitoring implementation.
4. **Equitable.** Seeking to ensure that aggrieved parties have reasonable access to the sources of information, advice, and expertise necessary to engage in a grievance process on fair, informed, and respectful terms.
5. **Transparent.** Keeping parties to a grievance informed about the progress of the case, and providing sufficient information about the mechanism's performance to build confidence in its effectiveness and capacity to meet any public interest that is at stake.
6. **Rights-compatible.** Ensuring that outcomes and remedies are in accord with internationally recognized human rights.
7. **A source of continuous learning.** Drawing on relevant measures to identify lessons for improving the mechanism and preventing future grievances and harm.

Operational-level mechanisms should also be:

8. **Based on engagement and dialogue.** Consulting stakeholder groups for whose use they are intended on design and performance, and focusing on dialogue as the means for addressing and resolving grievances.

Source: UN 2011: 33-34.

Receptions Offices have special onsite rooms for children and for medical emergencies to ensure that all citizens have an equal opportunity to lodge complaints. To improve service delivery to culturally and linguistically diverse people, Services Australia has appointed service officers to work with multicultural community groups, staff, and other government departments to understand the diverse needs of the population, to provide support and assistance in complex cases, and to help staff communicate with them. In 2019, Korea's Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission launched an onsite program outreach bus that operates counseling tours in public places, such as stations, terminals, and local festivals. The bus also has

a window for submitting civil petitions in foreign languages. The efficacy of such measures, however, is not always apparent. For example, concerns have been raised about the extent to which technologically disenfranchised persons can use Pakistan's Citizen's Portal because it is primarily designed to function via a smartphone application. Data from August 2020 suggest that 93.1 percent of the portal's users are male.

Satisfaction surveys, such as those in Morocco and the Dominican Republic, as well as social media channels, such as those in Malaysia and Uzbekistan, appear to be the most common modalities for engagement and dialogue. Singapore's



REACH program stands out in this regard because, beyond handling complaints, it offers multiple ways for the public to engage with public issues, for example, by joining a WhatsApp Group Chat to provide feedback on national policies, join public consultations and events, or participate in e-polls.

There is less information available about GMs that use the feedback that they receive as a source of continuous learning. In addition to Korea's Complaints Big Data at a Glance, South Africa's Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation uses data from the Presidential Hotline to inform its unannounced frontline service delivery monitoring visits and to engage with departments and municipalities for which complaints are more frequently lodged.

Trends and Good Practices: Decentralized Grievance and Feedback Systems

This stock-taking exercise documents illustrative examples of decentralized GMs at the ministry level, including health, energy, and education; at the provincial or regional level, and at the municipal or city level. In countries with centralized GMs, decentralized GMs operate in parallel with them and emulate several of the good practices described above.

Depending on the governance structure, decentralized GMs may be governed by overarching legal provisions for grievance redress, by sector-specific legal provisions, or by both. For example, Colombia's Law No. 1,755 of 2015 provides general and specific rules that apply to the right of petition and to all public authorities, including national-level ministries, districts, and municipalities. Provincial-level ministries in Nepal have introduced grievance management mechanisms, although the implementation of these vary across the seven provinces. Province 1,²⁰ Gandaki,²¹ and Karnali²² have launched an online GM portal; Bagmati and Sudurpaschim provinces have formulated a provincial Good Governance Act modeled on the national-level Good Governance Act 2,064 (2008), and Madhesh Province is

on the verge of approving a similar public hearing and public audit procedure. In Ethiopia, Regional Public Grievance Hearing Offices derive their authority from different legal bases that vary from regulation to regional constitutions and are therefore housed in different departments of the respective subnational governments.

Several GMs have adopted a range of uptake channels through which GM users can submit feedback. In Ethiopia, for example, the Addis Ababa City Roads Authority and the Hawassa City Municipality have established multiple mechanisms for clients to voice their concerns (Teshome et al. 2013: ii). Usually, a group of community members present their complaints directly to the respective agencies. Both agencies have implemented a system through which community members submit their complaints to the manager every Thursday. Radio, television, and newspapers are other voicing mechanisms. Community members can also use a suggestion box to forward their complaints (Teshome et al. 2013: 29). In addition, monthly public discussions are conducted in each kebele, during which residents present their complaints. In Cambodia, community members can submit their complaints to the commune council of the jurisdiction in which they reside; to provincial accountability working groups, particularly on matters related to the misuse of the subnational budget, abuse of power, or local governance issues; and to district ombudsmen—neutral citizen representatives with the mandate to address complaints about the district administration.

Several decentralized GMs clearly communicate their *timeframes and service standards*. The United Arab Emirates' Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization is committed to providing a response to complaints submitted through its web page within 10 working days. The Clients Charter of Malaysia's Energy Commission indicates that if the submitted information is complete, each complaint is scrutinized and can be resolved within 15 working days. However, complicated cases that require a site visit for review, involve additional documents from a third party, or encompass policy issues that require scrutiny from a legal point of view take four to six weeks.

20. See <http://139.5.73.146/policy>.

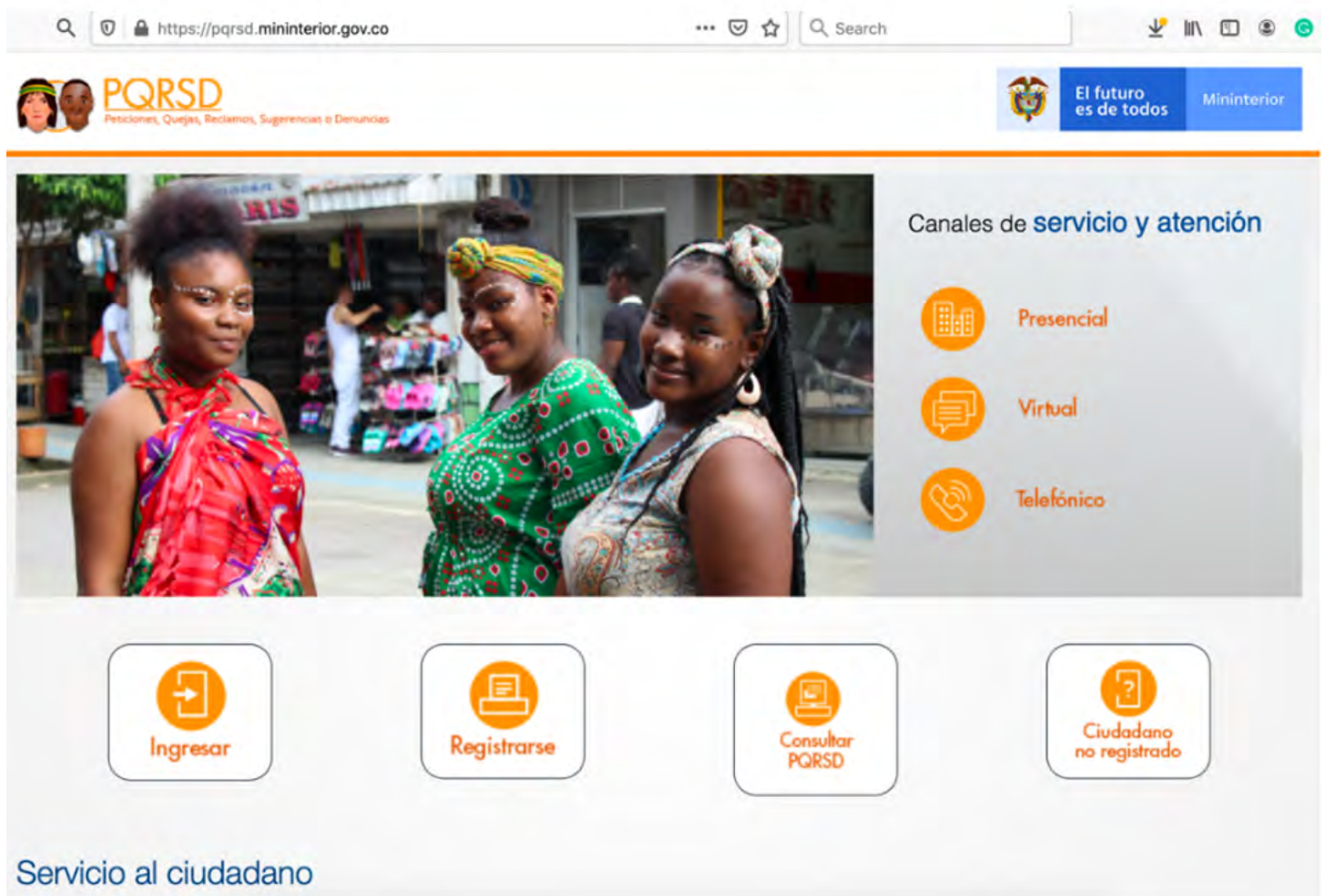
21. See <https://hellocm.gandaki.gov.np/>.

22. See <https://hellocm.karnali.gov.np/>.



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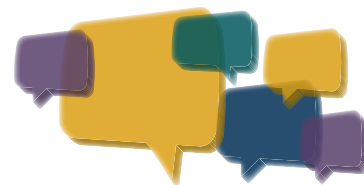
FIGURE 5.3. CITIZEN SUBMISSION PORTAL ON COLOMBIA'S MINISTRY OF INTERIOR WEBSITE



Overall, *processes and responsibilities for follow up* are not described in as much detail as those for centralized GMs, possibly due to variations at the sectoral and administrative level. However, there are examples of GMs that have elaborated on these procedures in some detail, such as GMs for health-related matters in South Africa and Türkiye, GMs for labor-related issues in Bangladesh, and GMs for the land and electricity sectors in Cambodia. Moreover, complaint factsheets, such as those published by Australia's Department of Education, Skills and Employment, and client charters, such as those

adopted by Malaysia's Department of Wildlife and National Parks, provide an overview of the processes involved.

Some decentralized GMs also publish statistics regarding the feedback received, processed, and resolved as a part of their *monitoring and analysis* efforts. For example, data for Patients' Rights Units in 54 public hospitals under the authority of the Istanbul Health Directorate from 2005 to 2011 indicate that 218,186 complaints were filed. Each year, the number of complaints increased over the previous year, and nearly half



(48.9 percent) of the applications were submitted in 2010 and 2011. The three most frequent complaints were “not benefiting from services in general” (35.4 percent), “not being treated in a respectable manner and in comfortable conditions” (17.8 percent), and “not being properly informed” (13.5 percent). In the case of Bangladesh’s Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments, most complaints pertain to legal benefits, due wages, and dismissal from work. The *Complaint Resolving Efficiency Report* on the department’s website allows members of the public to generate aggregate statistics for complaints received and resolved during a specified time interval, as well as the average number of days taken to address specific types of complaints.

Finally, this stock-taking exercise captures some examples of outreach efforts by decentralized GMs and feedback systems. South Africa’s Department of Health has provided feedback forms, posters, and a patients’ rights charter in numerous

languages, including English, Sesotho, Sepedi, Afrikaans, Tswana, Xhosa, and Zulu. In Colombia, some authorities, such as the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Interior’s National Firefighter Department, and the City of Medellin, have created YouTube videos to explain the differences between petitions, complaints, claims, suggestions, and allegations of misconduct, as well as how to file them. In Uzbekistan, various regional administrations use social media to share news regarding the activities of the People’s Receptions, such as news channels, their respective websites, and social media (e.g., Samarkand’s Instagram account and Fergana’s Facebook and telegram accounts).

Finally, illustrative good practice examples of issue- or theme-specific GMs are covered in this compendium, such as those specifically focused on gender-based violence (box 5.5) and natural resource management (box 5.6).

Box 5.5. An Issue-Specific Grievance Mechanism for Gender-Based Violence: Morocco’s Kolonamaak Platform

In January 2020, Princess Lalla Meryem, President of the National Union of Moroccan Women (UNFM), launched the *Kolonamaak* (“We are all with you”) platform, which provides nationwide 24/7 support and guidance for female victims of violence. The platform, operated by UNFM, is connected to institutional services, including the Ministry of Solidarity, Social Development, Equality and Family; the Office of the Public Prosecutor; police authorities; the Ministry of Health; and other relevant stakeholders. It is accessible through a toll-free number (8350) or through a mobile application that locates the victim’s phone to provide the needed assistance, directing her to the most relevant of the 12 regional listening centers. The centers are part of a national network of psychological and social support staffed by experts in the fields of psychology, sociology, family mediation, and social work. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Solidarity, Social Development, Equality and the Family announced the creation of 63 accommodation and care centers for women victims of violence. In July 2020, with the support of UN Women Morocco, UNFM mobilized an artificial intelligence expert to centralize data management, monitor the complete support system provided to survivors of violence, and optimize collaboration between the national platform and its regional listening centers. Publicity videos regarding the objectives and functions of the Kolonamaak platform are available on UNFM’s [web page](#).



Box 5.6. Issue-Specific Grievance Mechanisms for Natural Resource Management: Hong Kong and Malaysia

Hong Kong. The performance [pledge](#) of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) outlines uptake channels for feedback, service standards, the appeal process, and contact information for its regional offices. The EPD’s customer service center addresses and responds to various types of [feedback](#) on pollution-related issues (e.g., improper disposal of livestock and chemical and electronic waste disposal). It also provides an “enquiry service” for the public to obtain information on EPD services, such as waste recycling and plastic shopping bag levy schemes, as well as “help desk service for trade” to assist the business community comply with environmental law. The EPD has also made [available](#) summary statistics and detailed information on the number and nature of complaints. The customer service center hotline is backed by a customer relationship management system that uses a geographic information system (GIS) module to enable spatial analysis of complaints submitted by the public. The EPD’s access to information officer is responsible for ensuring confidentiality and adherence to the Code on Access to Information. The EPD’s [web page](#) has a responsive design that enables users to change the text size to accommodate their visual needs; and a mobile/accessible version of the web page is available.

Malaysia. The Department of Wildlife and National Parks at the Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources has set up a hotline, and there are e-forms for [inquiries](#) and [complaints](#) available on its website that citizens can use to report human-wildlife conflict and violations of the Wildlife Act. The department’s client charter asserts that complaints containing complete information will be acted on within 24 hours. Complainants can check the status of their complaint and can provide feedback after the case is resolved. The department also publishes monthly “Client Charter Achievement” [reports](#), which include progress made in every state with regard to responding to wildlife-related complaints in under 24 hours.



Conclusions

The broad array of centralized and decentralized grievance mechanisms (GMs) covered in this stock-taking exercise yield the following insights, which could be useful for development practitioners seeking to design or strengthen GM systems or who are focused on utilizing existing country-owned GMs for development projects and interventions.

Overall, it appears that centralized GMs are increasingly well used. One of the factors that could be at play here is that centralized GMs are typically topic-independent, which allows them to address a variety of issues across sectors and can encourage a virtuous cycle of competition by tracking key performance indicators linked to the quality, accessibility, timeliness, and citizen satisfaction level with feedback handling across state ministries and agencies. Furthermore, because they are built into the very governance structure of the state, institutionalized, country-owned GMs are potentially more sustainable than ad hoc feedback mechanisms set up for individual projects that are often dismantled at the end of a project's life cycle.

Several centralized GMs have established state-of-the-art processing and monitoring systems, which produce regular statistics on the number and nature of feedback cases (e.g., Morocco and Korea). Such systems could be emulated by other countries and/or utilized by development projects supported by external partners.

Despite several good examples of processing and monitoring systems that have been put in place, fewer GMs seem to have adopted the practice of publicizing progress on their key performance indicators, such as GM user satisfaction levels and the average time needed to resolve a complaint, the types of complaints resolved, and the rate of resolution. It would therefore be helpful to consider establishing performance benchmarks in GM design to strengthen GM accountability and serve as a testament to its legitimacy.

In addition to publishing GM statistics to foster public trust and legitimacy, country-owned GM systems should demonstrate how GM data analyses are being utilized for impact. Examples from Korea and South Africa demonstrate how GM entities are using feedback data to inform and facilitate efforts at anticipating challenges and improving service delivery and policy outcomes.

Despite the successful proliferation of digital uptake channels for GMs, options to provide in-person feedback through “old tech,” such as hotlines, remains extremely important. Singapore's REACH program is one such good practice example as it organizes face-to-face engagement sessions, such as public forums, dialogue sessions, and feedback booths. Another is Japan's Administrative Counseling System's Administrative Counseling System, which proactively set up makeshift one-stop counseling centers for in-person consultations. Such approaches are also found in contexts with



6. CONCLUSIONS

decentralized GM systems, such as Cambodia and Ethiopia, where complainants may be more familiar with localized and communal approaches toward grievance redress, as well as in situations where there is limited access and/or familiarity with using digital options to provide feedback.

There is limited transparency regarding GM budgets, which makes it difficult to elaborate on the resources needed to launch and maintain GM systems at the national, sectoral, and local levels. Entities managing GM systems should share their indicative budgets with citizens and other stakeholders in the interest of transparency and accountability and to serve as a point of reference for other GMs being set up by government entities in other countries.

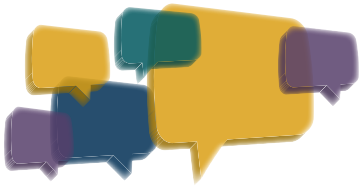
Linkages between centralized and decentralized GMs are unclear. Although there are numerous examples of centralized GMs that are functional and effective, the extent to which they are linked with decentralized GMs at the local level and/

or in other sectors in the same country is not always clear. This could be partially due to the ongoing efforts at including the remaining government entities under the umbrella of centralized GMs—or perhaps no linkages exist. In such cases, interim guidelines or instructions would be useful for GM users and for development practitioners looking to utilize country-owned GMs for project interventions.

Accessibility to vulnerable groups must be ensured. This stock-taking exercise uncovered limited documented efforts to ensure that GMs are accessible to and easily used by vulnerable groups. There are a few examples of GMs that have focused on in-person uptake channels and awareness-raising campaigns for people with limited literacy, language barriers, or visual impairments, such as in Japan, Korea, Uzbekistan, Australia, and Bahrain. Nevertheless, in general, there appears to be significant scope to mainstream GM design considerations in a way that would make them more accessible.

Part 2

Case Studies



1. Armenia

E-request.am

CONTEXT

Brief description

In Armenia, citizen feedback and complaints can be handled in a number of ways:

- ✓ In 2018, a unified platform for electronic inquiries (e-request.am) was launched, allowing electronic requests to be sent to state bodies via a one-window format; inquiries are then sorted and sent to the responsible officials.
- ✓ Government authorities and local self-government authorities are mandated to conduct “citizen receptions” to consider applications, complaints, and suggestions.
- ✓ The newly established Citizens’ Feedback Monitoring System¹ (started in 2021) allows citizens to electronically assess the quality of services received from governmental bodies.
- ✓ The government is currently working on its www.e-hotline.am portal, which will house all of the state unit hotlines as a unified portal for citizen requests, grievances, and inquiries.

Enabling environment

[E-request.am](http://e-request.am), the unified online portal for citizen requests, run by the Ministry of Justice, was introduced by the [Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 24-N of April 26, 2018](#).

The portal allows citizens to electronically submit a request, application, or complaint to state authorities using the country’s electronic digital signature system and to receive an answer electronically.

The right to remedy is framed by Armenia’s [2015 constitution](#):

- ✓ Article 50 on the Right to Proper Administrative Action reads:
 1. Everyone shall have the right to impartial and fair examination by administrative bodies of a case concerning him or her, within a reasonable time period.
 2. In the course of administrative proceedings everyone shall have the right to get familiar with all documents concerning him or her, except for the secrets guarded by law.
 3. State and local self-government bodies and officials shall be obliged to hear the person prior to the adoption of an interfering individual act thereon.
- ✓ Article 51 on the Right to Receive Information reads:

Everyone shall have the right to receive information and get familiar with documents relating to the activities of state and local self-government bodies and officials.

Furthermore, the Law on Freedom of Information, adopted in 2003, defines the duties of the information holder as well as the procedures, forms, and conditions for obtaining information.

According to the [Presidential Decree on Establishing the Procedure to be Followed in Government Activities](#) (articles 81-83), the government and its staff must organize the

reception of citizens” and the “consideration of their applications, complaints, and suggestions.” It spells out that “the Government shall examine and process such applications, complaints, and suggestions of citizens, which have not been addressed by the respective bodies of executive authority, as well as in cases in which complaints are filed against the heads of such bodies. ... The Staff of the Government shall: a) Discuss, analyze, and consolidate the applications, complaints, and suggestions of citizens to the Government,

1. As of June 2021, the link to the platform piloted by the e-Government Infrastructure Implementation Office is only accessible by devices with an Armenian Internet Protocol (IP) address.



and periodically report to the Republic of Armenia Prime Minister on the status of applications; and b) Regularly monitor the measures taken by bodies of executive authority towards receiving citizens and examining their applications, complaints, and suggestions, and propose ways of improving this work. The findings of citizen receptions by the Staff of the Government and the results of reviewing their applications, complaints, and suggestions, as well as the progress of measures in this respect shall be reported by the bodies of executive authority in sessions of the Government.

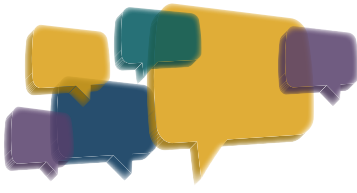
This Presidential Decree was [canceled in 2007](#). The [legal act](#) canceling it was adopted on March 2018 and [amended in 2019](#), however the amendments do not include any provisions for the reception of citizens and their applications, complaints, and suggestions, revealing a legislative gap in this regard. The Charter of the Office of Prime Minister currently defines the need and procedures for the reception of citizens and their applications, complaints, and suggestions. Procedures are also stipulated for each ministry charter. The charter enumerates the responsibilities of staff to organize the “reception of citizens and discuss, analyze and summarize their applications, complaints, and suggestions.” It also directs staff to periodically inform the prime minister about received inquiries (chapter 2, point 8). The charter specifies the need to register and disclose petitions (in cases required by law), to accept or reject petitions, and to inform applicants of same. The charter also defines the roles and responsibilities of the Citizens’ Reception and Application Review Department (chapter 6, point 41), including accepting, registering, analyzing, and redirecting received applications, complaints, and suggestions, as needed; organizing the reception of citizens; and ensuring the operation of the hotline that serves the prime minister’s staff.

The [2002 Law on Local Self-Government](#), amended in 2020, establishes a duty for all communities with a population of over 3,000 to have an official website with the following information publicly available:

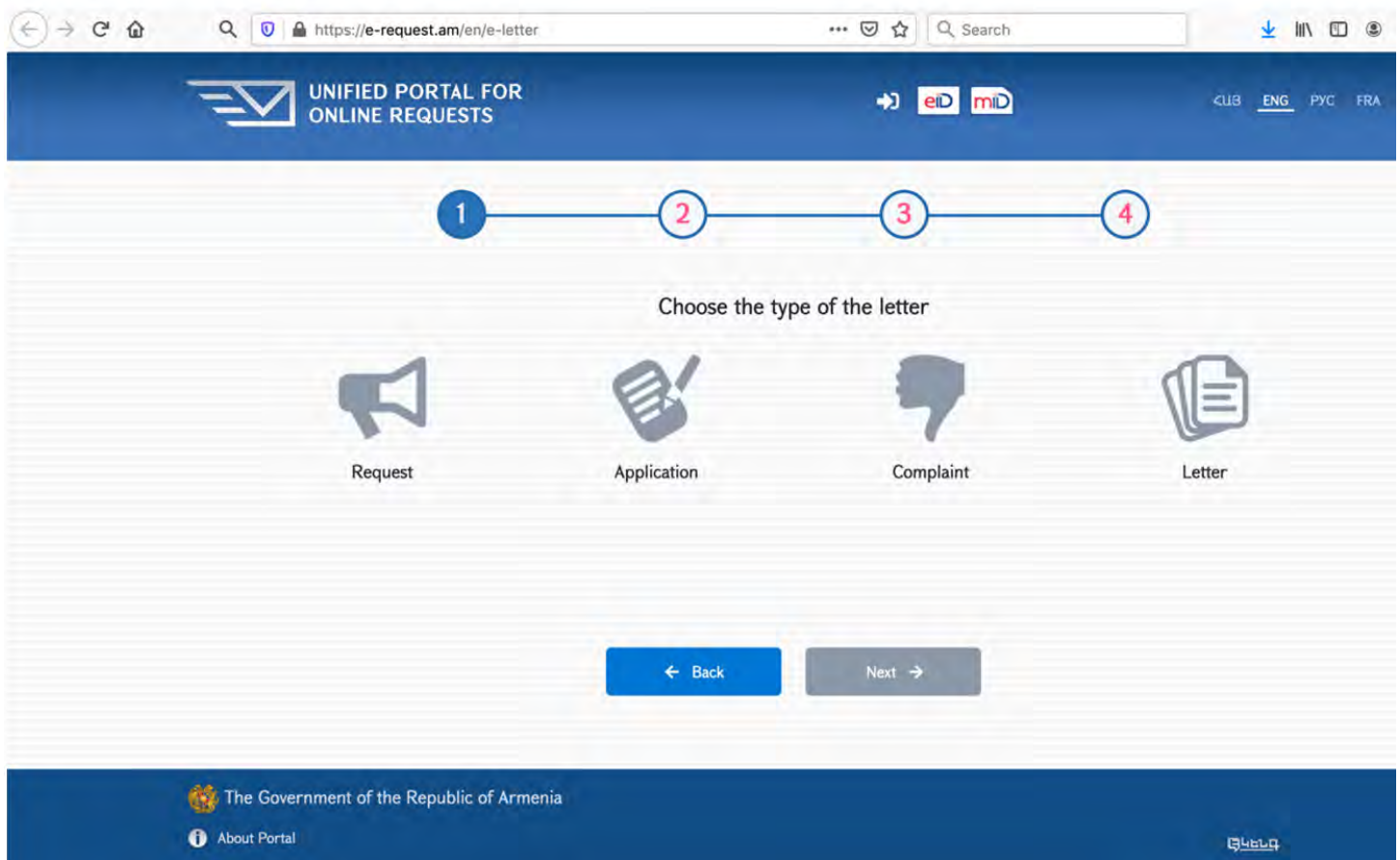
- ✓ Documentation, procedures, location, and timelines of meetings;
- ✓ Public hearings and discussions with community residents;
- ✓ The results of public hearings and discussions regarding decisions made by the community council and community head and other documents as prescribed by law;
- ✓ Procedures for the participation of local community residents in the self-government process;
- ✓ Procedures for the formation and operation of consultative bodies to conduct open public hearings and discussions; and
- ✓ Other procedures and relevant information (Council of Europe 2020: 23).

Amendments to the Law on Local Self Governance, adopted in early 2020, stipulate that in communities with a population of over 20,000, the laws and regulations should be posted on community websites for public discussion and should include a link to the [e-request.am](#) web page. According to these amendments, beginning in 2022, all communities must have an official website regardless of their population size. These amendments also define a broader circle of information to be disclosed on community websites, including contact details for other communal organizations, services provided by the community administrative office and structures subordinated to it, construction activities in the community, and community-owned real estate.

In articles 30 and 33, the [law](#) specifies that the “chief of a community” must “conduct receptions of citizens; **consider complaints, applications and proposals of citizens** in a manner specified by law and take necessary measures in their respect.” The secretary of staff must ensure “respective arrangement for reception of citizens by the Chief of the Community and the Community Council” as well as “the process of consideration and progress of their proposals, applications and complaints.”



UNIFIED PORTAL FOR ONLINE REQUESTS: [HTTPS://E-REQUEST.AM/EN/E-LETTER](https://e-request.am/en/e-letter)



Number of agencies and ministries

According to the Law on Government Structure and Activities, adopted on March 23, 2018, and amended in 2019, there are 11 bodies under the government and three under the prime minister. There is one council and 33 intergovernmental commissions. The regional government is implemented through 10 regional governor offices (*marzperarans*) in addition to the Yerevan Municipality, which is considered a self-governing body.

According to the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 524-N of April 26, 2018, all state bodies and local governments are required to post the link to the e-request.am platform on their official websites.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

According to Government Decision 524-N of 2018, official websites of state bodies and local governments should have a section allowing citizens to “send inquiries/applications/ requests for information,” in a manner adequate to their specific field of activity.

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

The e-request.am portal asks users to choose if they would like to submit a request, application, complaint, or letter. It also asks for a name and surname (compulsory), address, citizenship status (compulsory), telephone number, email address, the



essence of the inquiry, and the manner in which the user would like to be notified. Once submissions are logged in the e-request.am, they are sorted and sent to the relevant officials. The unified portal allows users to [track the status](#) of their complaint by entering the 16-digit control number generated at the time of submission.

Timeframes and service standards

According to the Law on Freedom of Information, an official response to an information request should be given within five days of receipt if the information already exists as published or unpublished sources in the requested format. If additional work is required, the information should be provided within 30 days.

The [Government Decision 1204-N](#), adopted on October 15, 2015, defines procedures for copying and providing information by state, local self-government, governmental entities, and organizations. It supplements the Law on Freedom of Information. The decision stipulates that information inquiries should be addressed within five days. In cases where copied information exceeds 10 pages, the relevant governmental body must inform the applicant about the required payment for the information (a minimal payment for printing). If additional work is required to prepare information, the relevant entity should inform the applicant of the delay within five days, also indicating a potential date for the expected response.

The [Government Decision 524-N](#) of 2018 envisages amendments to Government Decision 1204-N, adopted on October 15, 2015. It stipulates the procedures for the submission of electronic inquiries and requires that applicants be given the means to follow up online regarding the processing of their submitted inquiries after identity verification.

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

The e-request.am portal features a section on [statistics](#) that shows the number of applications, requests, and complaints submitted each month. It tracks user feedback in two ways:

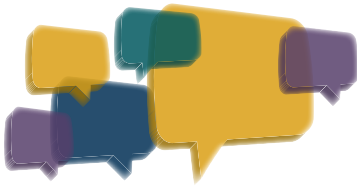
1. Was the user satisfied with the provided response? (yes/no/partly)
2. Was the response provided within the timeframe established by law?

However, the statistics section was a pilot that will soon be removed from the e-request portal and replaced with a more comprehensive citizen feedback monitoring system that can assess all types of services. Indeed, the [e-Government Infrastructure Implementation Office](#) recently established a portal that lets citizens assess the quality of services received from state government bodies using a service identification code. The platform, which began operating at the beginning of 2021, will include a section—currently under construction—presenting assessment statistics.

Monitoring and analysis

The pilot version of the e-request.am portal presents statistics on the number of submitted applications, requests, and complaints received by various entities. As of May 2021, the police had received the most feedback, with 117,765 submissions (93 percent applications, 4.5 percent requests, and 2.5 percent complaints), followed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, with 33,868 submissions (2,609 or 7.7 percent of which were complaints), and the Office of the Prime Minister, with 10,523 submissions (1,770 or 11 percent of which were complaints).

According to 2019 data on freedom of information requests submitted by citizens, published by the Freedom of Information Center in Armenia, 15 percent of requests were answered late (violating the statutory five-day period), an improvement over 2017 data, when 30 percent of requests were not answered in the stipulated timeframe. In terms of the content of responses, as of September 2019, 63 percent were comprehensive and provided within the required timeframe—a clearly positive trend compared with the 2017 rate of 34 percent. The rate of incomplete answers was down to 13 percent in 2019 compared with the 2017 rate of 23 percent. The rate of inquiries that did not receive any response (“refused inquiries with no response”)



declined from 11 percent in 2017 to 1 percent in 2018 and then increased slightly to 3 percent in 2019 (Chakryan 2019).

According to the monitoring report of Armenia’s anticorruption strategy for 2019–22, the www.e-request.am portal has received over 8,000 grievances and 14,000 inquiries from citizens. As of the first quarter of 2021, 140 state units were connected to it. However, statistical data on the portal’s operations are still lacking; the portal has a section for statistics, but it remains under construction.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

There are currently no provisions allowing for the anonymous feedback of citizens. Moreover, in the absence of alternate uptake channels, such as telephone or SMS, residents of remote rural areas and others may not have equal access because they lack online connectivity.

On the positive side, several ministry websites allow users to adjust font size, contrast, and colors to improve readability. The [Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs’ website](#) also offers audio.

OTHER MECHANISMS

Office of the Prime Minister

The Office of the Prime Minister clearly indicates contact details for the person in charge of freedom of information—the [head of the Department for Information and Public Relations](#)—and the person overseeing citizen receptions and application review—the [head of the Department for Reception of Citizens and Discussion of Petitions](#). Citizens can also contact the Office of the Prime Minister by email (hotline@gov.am) or by using the toll-free hotline: 1-17. The international hotline number is +374 (10) 527-000.

[Statistics published on the website](#) suggest that during calendar year 2020, the prime minister’s office “received 378 online inquiries, of which 278 were answered, 96 were redirected, and 4 are in progress,” and that the head of the Department for Information and Public Relations would receive an average of 10–15 verbal questions per day. In 2019, the office received 324 online inquiries, of which 311 were answered and 13 redirected).



2. Australia

Services Australia

Brief description

Services Australia² is responsible for the delivery of advice and high-quality and accessible social, health, and child support services and payments through:

- ✓ The Medicare program, including the pharmaceutical benefits scheme, Australian immunization register, and Australian organ donor register,
- ✓ Centrelink, including the delivery of payments and services for seniors, job seekers, families, caregivers, people with disabilities, and indigenous Australians; and
- ✓ The child support program.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

Complaints, suggestions, and compliments can be submitted [online](#), in person, by email, or by regular mail. Queries can be submitted through Services Australia's social media [accounts](#). Services Australia users can also submit feedback via telephone, including the free direct-call TTY service and the National Relay Service for persons who are deaf, have hearing loss, or have a speech disability. Users based overseas can use an international phone number for this purpose. Specific options have been provided for [businesses](#) and [health professionals](#) to provide their feedback.

Timeframes and service standards

As per the service commitments outlined in Services Australia's service standards, complaints are to be resolved within 10 working days. If they cannot be resolved within this timeframe, the Services Australia team explains the reasons for the delay and options available to the user.

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

A Services Australia user who does not agree with a decision about Centrelink payments or services, Medicare debt, or child support has the right to ask for a review of the decision. Such users can [write](#), [call](#), or visit a [service center](#) for this purpose. Authorized review officers generally aim to complete their review within 49 days. Petitioners who disagree with an officer's decision can request a review by the independent Administrative Appeals Tribunal. Details about processes and timeframes to address various issues under review are available on the Services Australia [web page](#). Customer satisfaction surveys implemented by Services Australia are used to assess and report on its performance based on satisfaction drivers or criteria, including perceived quality, personalized service, communication, time to receive service, fair treatment, and effort. However, some concerns have been raised regarding challenges in submitting complaints and seeking a review of a Centrelink decision, particularly for persons with physical or mental disabilities; those without a fixed address or who are unable to store personal documentation and records; those with limited access to phone or Internet services; and those facing language barriers or who lack support in navigating the complex bureaucratic process.³

Appeals

Petitioners unsatisfied with the outcomes of their complaints can appeal to the [Commonwealth Ombudsman](#).

Monitoring and analysis

Services Australia uses data analytic techniques to identify the root causes of complaints and determine the actions needed to resolve these issues. Analyses have resulted in targeted improvements to their digital services and claims processing procedures. Services Australia publishes data in [annual reports](#)

2. Case studies on advanced economies like Australia have been included because: (1) several clients, including those from developing economies typically look to learn from good practices adopted by advanced economies, and (2) in some instances, desk research yielded more details on the GM value chain and social inclusion aspects of GMs adopted by advanced economies compared with country-owned GMs in less developed economies.

3. See https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Community_Affairs/SocialWelfareSystem/Report/c03.



and on the [Transparency Portal](#) to share progress on key performance standards.

Budget

The 2020-21 allocated budget for the continuation of Services Australia's remote service provision was US\$24.7 million. The budget is available [online](#); additional details about the department's budget are available in its [annual reports](#).

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Services Australia's multicultural service [officers](#) work with multicultural community groups, staff, and other government departments to improve service delivery to a culturally and linguistically diverse population. These officers seek to understand the diverse needs of the citizenry, provide support and assistance in complex cases, and help staff communicate using language services. The multicultural service provides free interpretation and translation services in over [200 languages](#), including Auslan or sign language, aboriginal and Torres Strait Island languages, and international languages.

There is [no cost for submitting feedback](#), although Services Australia clarifies that there are phone service charges, the rates for which vary by telephone service provider.

The [servicesaustralia.gov.au](#) website has text-to-speech functionality and allows users to change the size, font, and color of the text on the screen. Moreover, the department achieved a readability score of 119.3—higher than the benchmark of 100

on the [2021 Readability Scorecard](#) for Australian Government agencies.

The department's service centers meet the Australian standard for physical access. They are equipped with assistive listening devices, and help is available for customers and petitioners to complete forms.

OUTCOMES

Statistics

In 2019-20, the agency received 276,350 complaints, which represents 0.07 percent of over 395 million interactions, including calls handled, visits to service centers, and self-service interactions. It also received 15,028 suggestions and 15,803 compliments, 80.8 percent of which were about services provided by staff, 12.7 percent about programs, and 6.5 percent about products. Fifty-one percent of Centrelink-related complaints, 91 percent of Medicare-related complaints, and 93 percent of child-support-related complaints were resolved within 10 working days.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

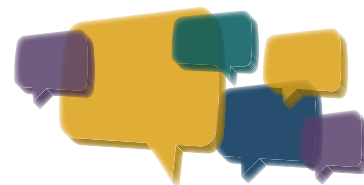
Information on procedures for submitting complaints and feedback is available in over [35 languages](#). The department's "Media Hub" section on media releases posts periodic [news articles](#) about customer feedback and complaints. It responds to queries and other feedback through its social media channels, including [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Other Departments

Department of Education, Skills and Employment

The department has multiple uptake [channels](#) for receiving feedback about their numerous programs and services via phone, email, or online form. A complaint [factsheet](#), published by the department, indicates that anonymous complaints are considered, but they may not be able to be properly investigated or responded to. Complaints are acknowledged within five business days, although the length of time it takes for the

department to investigate and respond to a particular complaint depends on the nature and complexity of the issues involved. In some cases, the department may offer an internal review of how the complaint was handled and resolved, taking into account any additional information provided by the complainant. The complainant has the right to pursue an independent review of the outcome by the Australian ombudsman. Complaints regarding [employment services](#) can be submitted through a



national customer service line. Feedback related to training in the vocational education and training sector can be relayed through the [National Training Complaints Hotline](#) to the most appropriate authority for consideration.

Department of Social Services

The Department of Social Services (DSS) encourages all clients to provide [feedback](#) on their experiences with the department or with a DSS-funded service provider. In addition to other types of feedback, petitioners can submit complaints regarding unreasonable delays; inadequate service; legal, human, or factual errors in decision-making processes; procedural

deficiencies; discriminatory actions or decisions; flawed administrative processes; unprofessional behavior or inadequate knowledge/training of staff; breach of duty/misconduct by an officer; or fraud and compliance-related issues. Complaints can be submitted [online](#), in person, or by email, telephone, or regular mail. The department keeps petitioners informed regarding the progress of addressing their complaints; written responses are provided within 28 days. DSS publishes data and statistics about many cases in their annual reports. For example, in 2018-19, 557 formal complaints were received through the Feedback Management System, most about the National Redress Scheme and the National Rental Affordability Scheme.

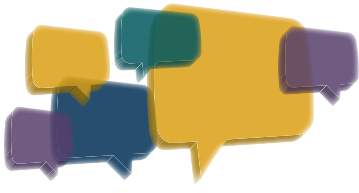
States

Victoria Department of Health and Human Services

If petitioners are dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint through the local health and human services (HHS) office, they can file a formal complaint with the Victoria HHS about services that it has provided, contracted, funded, or regulated. [Feedback](#) can be submitted online or via regular mail, email, or telephone. The department can arrange an interpreter to help with language services, as needed, and complainants can grant permission for someone else to lodge a complaint on their behalf. Complaints are acknowledged within three working days. The timeline for resolution depends on the complexity of the issue, ranging from 10 to 20 working days. When an investigation or review is complete, the outcome is communicated to the complainant within three days, including advice on alternative courses of internal or external review. The department's *Feedback Including Compliments and Complaints Management Policy* provides details on complaint management. It has produced a [poster](#) on how to file a complaint and has issued instructions in [easy English](#); [accessible](#) easy English; and over 20 languages, including Arabic, Karen, Russian, and Telugu.

New South Wales Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

The department's *External Service-Related Complaints Policy* outlines the principles and procedures for addressing and responding to expressions of dissatisfaction with their services, their employees, or the handling of a complaint where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected. Service-related complaints can include matters related to a service delay or failure to provide a service or the quality of an action that has been taken. Complaints are acknowledged within three working days and are to be resolved within one month. If the resolution takes longer than one month, petitioners are kept informed of the progress of their complaint and the likely date of its completion. Citizens can contact the "[Environment Line](#)" to submit questions, via online contact, email, and telephone. The department has also provided the public with options to [report](#) major and nonemergency incidents of pollution, such as air pollution, chemical pollution, noise pollution, waste, and litter.



Queensland Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships

The department has provided uptake channels for citizens to submit feedback via telephone, mail, email, and online form. Complaints can be submitted regarding services provided (or not provided) by the department, financed by the department, and the behavior of their employees and actions taken (or not) by the department. Complaints regarding a decision made or action taken by the department must be made within 12 months. Privacy complaints about the collection, management, use, disclosure, or overseas transfer of personal information can be submitted by completing and emailing the privacy complaint form to the department. According to the Human Rights Act of 2019, complaints can only be made about alleged breaches that occurred after January 1, 2020, and they are to be addressed

within 45 days. The department has published factsheets on [making a complaint](#), [making a human rights complaint](#), and an [internal review](#). It provides professional interpreting services for clients who have difficulties communicating in English, and it can arrange for interpreters in Auslan and other sign languages, as required. A citizen dissatisfied with the handling of a complaint can request that the department conduct an internal review. If the internal review's outcome is still unsatisfactory, they can contact the Queensland Ombudsman to request an independent review. Between July 2018 and June 2019, the department received a total of [118 complaints](#), of which, 28 resulted in no further action and 84 resulted in further action, including internal reviews, at least one resultant recommendation, and the outcomes or solutions achieved as a consequence of action taken.

Cities

Sydney

The City of Sydney's [complaint](#) and [feedback](#) procedures provide a framework for the management of both positive and negative inputs to improve services and facilities. Citizens can submit anonymous complaints, although the city may request that such a complaint be submitted in writing. Feedback can be submitted via telephone, regular mail, email, in person, or on the city's website. Users with hearing or speech impairments can submit their complaints or feedback through the National Relay Service. Where possible, interpreter services are provided for users from non-English speaking backgrounds. The city aims to resolve complaints within 10 working days (or within 24 hours for social media complaints). If a complaint cannot be resolved within 10 working days, the petitioner is kept informed of progress and

provided with the name of the person responsible for resolving the complaint, the estimated length of time it may take to do so, and the timeframe for when the complainant can expect to receive an update.

Melbourne

The City of Melbourne's [complaint](#) resolution policy indicates that complaints can be lodged in person at the town hall, online, by telephone, or in writing. A petitioner receives an acknowledgment of the receipt of the complaint as well as a reference number for tracking the case. Complaints are generally resolved within 10 working days; when this is not possible, petitioners are kept informed of the case's progress.



3. Bahrain

Enabling Environment

In 2014, royal directives were issued that stressed the need to provide seamless and direct interactions between citizens and government officials so that citizens' aspirations for service improvement could be properly fulfilled.⁴ The [2012-2016 e-Government strategy](#),⁵ with the motto "ADVANCE," comprises several e-Government initiatives that resulted in key achievements, including the launch of [Tawasul](#), the national suggestions and complaints system. The mission statement of

the e-Government Authority's [national customer charter](#) includes "providing a platform for customers to give their feedback and participate in framing government policies and enhancing service delivery."⁶ Among the e-Government Authority's objectives is to "provide mediums such as the National Suggestion and Complaint system 'Tawasul,' social media, live chat, discussion forums and/or blogs to citizens and businesses to participate and comment on policies and issues."⁷

Centralized Feedback System: Tawasul

CONTEXT

Brief description

Tawasul (the Arabic word for *communication*), the national suggestion and complaint system, was launched in January 2014 by the e-Government Authority in close coordination with the Bahrain Center for Excellence. Tawasul is intended to receive public feedback on the quality of government services, complaints about shortcomings, failure of or dissatisfaction with service delivery, and issues related to all aspects of government entities involved in the system. Tawasul is also intended to ensure the processing and follow-up of complaints. This system has already been deployed at 42 government entities.⁸

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

Tawasul's uptake channels include: (1) a [web portal](#)⁹ that allows citizens, residents, and corporations to submit their inquiries, complaints, and suggestions to government entities at any time; (2) a [mobile application](#) (available for Android and Apple OS); (3) a 24/7 telephone line; (4) an email address; (5) the e-Government Authority's social network accounts

(@iGABahrain); and (6) Skype for people with hearing or speech difficulties.

To register a case on the web portal, users select from drop-down lists the name of the concerned government entity and the appropriate user category (*citizen/resident, visitor/investor, or corporate*). Citizens/residents should enter their first name, personal identification number, mobile phone number, and an email address if they prefer to be contacted that way. They must select the type of case (inquiry, complaint, or suggestion) and write a message summarizing their feedback; they have the option of attaching photos. A user may choose to include a family name and address but this is not required. Visitors/investors are required to follow a similar process, except instead of a personal identification number, they must indicate their nationality and can choose to provide their passport number as well as a telephone number or email address. Persons submitting feedback on behalf of corporations must provide a first name, the name of the organization, a commercial registration number, a telephone number, and an email address prior to choosing the type of case and leaving a message. There

4. These directives were issued by H. R. H. Prince Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Deputy King, Crown Prince, Deputy supreme commander of the Bahrain Defense Force, then first Deputy Prime Minister, and H. R. H. Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, then Prime Minister See [link](#).

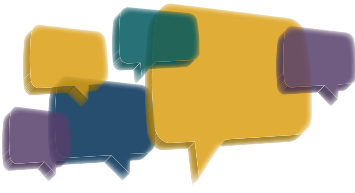
5. "Bahrain 2016 EGovernment Strategy." https://www.iga.gov.bh/Media/Publications/pdf/eGovernment_Strategy_2012-2016.pdf

6. "Kingdom of Bahrain—EGovernment Portal." See [link](#).

7. Portal. See [link](#).

8. "@iGA Bahrain Jan 13 Tweet." https://twitter.com/iGABahrain?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor

9. See www.bahrain.bh/tawasul.



is also an option to leave a last name and an address. It is therefore possible for visitors and investors to leave anonymous complaints, although citizens, residents, and corporations cannot. The Tawasul mobile application has a camera feature to capture and upload documents and reports as attachments (up to five images). Users can immediately report public damages via the Fix2Go feature, which is connected to concerned entities. The option of geotagging the location of the complaint enables government bodies to instantly locate faults in roads or buildings to within a few meters. Users of the mobile app are required to enter their personal data (personal identification number for an individual and commercial registration number for a corporate user), making it faster to use but not allowing for the logging of anonymous complaints. Users experiencing difficulties with Tawasul uptake channels, who are unsure of the responsible entity, or who have a concern regarding an entity not included in Tawasul can email the e-Government Authority at Customer.Care@iga.gov.bh to review and transfer their complaint to the relevant entity or, if the entity is not part of Tawasul, they can communicate with it off-line.¹⁰

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

Upon successful submission of feedback, Tawasul users receive an acknowledgment message with a reference number via email and/or text message (for local submissions only). The reference number can be used to follow up on a case in the [“track your case” section](#). Once the case has been passed to the appointed Tawasul representative in the concerned government entity, the complainant receives notification. The representatives review the case and pass it on to the relevant expert, who may reach out to the petitioner to obtain additional information and carry out the investigation. Once the investigation has been carried out and the case resolved, the expert(s) share the outcome with the Tawasul representative(s), who in turn responds to the petitioner via email or SMS. The petitioner can view the details of the resolution on the Tawasul portal by using the reference number. If a complainant has not received a response within the timeframe

defined by the entity’s service-level agreement, an automated process escalates the complaint to the relevant ministry office.

Timeframes and service standards

Complaint resolution times range from 24 hours for urgent cases to three to seven working days for nonurgent cases.¹¹ Service-level agreements have been put in place with each individual government body to define the amount of time in which users should expect an issue to be addressed.¹²

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

Once cases are resolved, petitioners are asked to express their level of satisfaction on the response provided by the government entity. If feedback regarding satisfaction is not provided within one week, the system automatically marks the case as closed. The e-Government Authority implements annual customer satisfaction surveys for Tawasul and other e-Government services. Findings of the 2018 survey indicate that an average of 76 percent of users were satisfied with the Tawasul platform. Eighty percent expressed satisfaction with features and functions, including readability (font size and style as well as word and line spacing), 77 percent were satisfied with the time it took them to submit feedback, and 75 percent were satisfied with the protection of users’ personal data.¹³

Appeals

If petitioners are not satisfied with a proposed resolution, they can reopen the case.¹⁴ They are asked to provide the concerned government entity with an explanation of their feedback so the entity can adequately respond or reroute the case to concerned parties for further investigation. The case may be reopened to apply the same initial process until the petitioner is satisfied with the outcome or until the matter is discussed with the petitioner for closure.

Monitoring and analysis

Each government entity is required to address individual complaints, analyze them, identify preventive solutions, and

10. “Kingdom of Bahrain—EGovernment Portal.” See [link](#).

11. Tawasul “FAQs.” See [link](#).

12. “Kingdom of Bahrain—EGovernment Portal.” See [link](#).

13. Customer Satisfaction Report 2018. “Information and EGovernment Authority—CS and CSI Surveys” See [link](#).

14. About National Suggestions and Complaints System. See [link](#).



take action to improve services.¹⁵ The software used for Tawasul automatically identifies common complaints, flagging them to managers for agile and proactive service improvement.¹⁶ A [public page](#) on the Tawasul portal presents aggregated data on feedback cases for all government entities that use the system, including the total number of cases per year and the percentage of closed cases. In 2019, of the 106,115 complaints submitted, 95 percent were closed; in 2018, 96 percent of received cases were closed; and in 2017, 94 percent of the 14,991 received cases were closed.¹⁷ In 2020, according to the e-Government Authority's chief executive, Tawasul quickly responded to all received submissions, achieving a 99 percent fulfillment of its service-level agreement.¹⁸ Findings from the 2018 customer satisfaction survey conducted by the e-Government Authority¹⁹ indicate that 38 percent of survey participants had used Tawasul, and 55 percent of those had used the Tawasul system between two to five times over the past year. Sixty-three percent of people who were aware of Tawasul are Bahraini, and 19 percent are Asian but its users are 73 percent Bahraini and 13 percent Asian.²⁰ Women represent 37 percent of those who are aware of Tawasul and 39 percent of its users.²¹ One percent of its users are under the age of 18; 29 percent are 18–25; 40 percent are 26–35; 29 percent are 36–55; and 3 percent are older than 55.²²

In addition, ministry offices receive monthly reports outlining the entities' performances.²³ They can access a visual dashboard²⁴ that displays the performance of the organization in terms of managing complaints and that measures progress against key performance indicators.²⁵ The system has a dedicated monitoring team that manages the dashboard, conducts an overview of

feedback cases, and ensures high-quality service delivery. The team is staffed by the e-Government Authority, supported by professionals from across the ministries. Finally, the quarterly presentations are organized for the Crown Prince regarding the progress and performance of Tawasul entities.²⁶ The prime minister and Crown Prince present awards for the top three performing entities during an annual government summit.²⁷

Promotional materials

A YouTube [video](#) presentation on Tawasul's objectives and functions is available in Arabic with English subtitles. The portal and the application are available in [English](#) and in [Arabic](#). People with hearing or speech difficulties can communicate with the Government Services Contact Center via Skype (Sunday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., username: *egovbahrain*).²⁸ Users who are visually impaired can read the portal's contents by using screen-reading software—two free programs are offered: [NVDA](#) and [System Access To Go](#). It also has a text-to-speech feature to help users read text on the portal without the need to activate any other software. Petitioners are protected by [Law 30 of 2018](#) on Issuing the Personal Data Protection,²⁹ under which they have a right to view personal data (right to access), the right to correct or delete personal data, and the right to legally object to the way personal data are being processed. The e-Government Authority uses personal data in limited situations, such as answering customer service requests, sharing updates with users about the release of new government services, improving the national portal ([bahrain.bh](#)) and related services, and requesting feedback from customers.³⁰

15. About National Suggestions and Complaints System. See [link](#).

16. "United Nations Public Service Awards Case Studies." <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/Research/Case-Studies/unpsacases/ctl/NominationProfilev2014/mid/1170/id/5217>.

17. Tawasul "Statistics." See [link](#).

18. "IGA's 'Tawasul' App Named Best Smart Government Application." *The Daily Tribune, Kingdom of Bahrain*. November 28, 2020. <https://www.newsfbahrain.com/bahrain/68391.html>

19. See "[Information and EGovernment Authority—CS and CSI Surveys.](#)"

20. "Information and EGovernment Authority—CS and CSI Surveys," 101.

21. Customer Satisfaction Report 2018. "Information and EGovernment Authority—CS and CSI Surveys," p. 102. See [link](#).

22. Customer Satisfaction Report 2018. "Information and EGovernment Authority—CS and CSI Surveys," p. 103. See [link](#).

23. Not publicly available online.

24. Not publicly available online.

25. "United Nations Public Service Awards Case Studies." <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/Research/Case-Studies/unpsacases/ctl/NominationProfilev2014/mid/1170/id/5217>

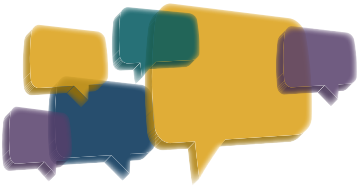
26. Not publicly available online.

27. "United Nations Public Service Awards Case Studies." <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/Research/Case-Studies/unpsacases/ctl/NominationProfilev2014/mid/1170/id/5217>

28. "Kingdom of Bahrain—EGovernment Portal." See [link](#).

29. [ي.ن.وناقولنا ي.أ.ر.ل.او.ع.يرش.تل.ا.ق.ت.يه.](#)

30. "Kingdom of Bahrain—EGovernment Portal." See [link](#).



4. Bangladesh

Enabling Environment

The government of Bangladesh's 2014 [Secretariat Instructions](#) (chapter 8, 262 (1) and (2)) include provisions mandating that the receipt of opinions from citizens and the redress of grievances be conducted transparently and neutrally. The Cabinet Division's Coordination and Reform Unit issued a revised version of the 2015 [guidelines](#) on the government's grievance redress system

in 2018, which provides instructions on a range of issues, including the classification and monitoring of grievances and the responsibilities of various ministries, including the Cabinet Division. Additionally, sections 2 and 5 of [Bangladesh's Vision 2021](#) emphasize effective systems to curb corruption and promote good governance.

Grievance Redress System

CONTEXT

Brief description

In 2007, the government of Bangladesh established a framework for a grievance redress system to address complaints and improve public service delivery in all line ministries. In 2014, the Cabinet Division launched the [Grievance Redress System](#) (GRS), an online centralized system that includes line ministries, government departments, and subordinate departments/agencies. The GRS is intended to address: (1) [public grievances](#) about service provision under the purview of the government, semigovernment organizations, or autonomous organizations; and (2) staff complaints that can be submitted by government, semigovernment, or autonomous organization officials regarding their access to services or rights as employees. Citizens can also use the GRS to make [suggestions](#) regarding the simplification of services, laws, regulations, or other ideas. However, complaints related to religious matters, the right to information, departmental cases against government officials or employees, and issues pending in any court are beyond the scope of the GRS.

Number of agencies and ministries

The GRS includes all government ministries and departments/agencies under them, as well as union parishads—the lowest tier of local government in Bangladesh and the most recent addition.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

The GRS has online and off-line uptake channels. To use the online option, complainants must register on the GRS web page, after which they can submit their feedback and receive email and SMS-based notifications acknowledging receipt. The GRS web page includes an option for submitting [anonymous](#) complaints but such cases do not receive email notifications, and their status cannot be tracked. For off-line submission of complaints, members of the public can download and print a [grievance form](#) from the GRS web page or use citizen service booths located at the gates of the Cabinet Secretariat Complex in Dhaka, which are staffed by authorized personnel with administrative access to the GRS software. They are tasked with recording the particulars of the complaint in the GRS software, generating acceptance slips for the users, and forwarding letters to the grievance redress officer (GRO) of the concerned ministry. A complainant can use the information printed on the acceptance slip to track the complaint on the GRS website. For departments/agencies outside Dhaka, a complainant can submit a written grievance in a complaint box at the respective institution's premises or send it by regular mail. Some ministries have deployed additional uptake channels as well, including the [Ministry of Land's internal hotline](#) (16122), the Ministry of Power, Energy and Mineral Resources' [e-form](#) and [online feedback page](#), and the Road Transport and Highways Division's [complaints and feedback page](#).



Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

The GRS has a three-tier redress mechanism. Upon receipt, a complaint is classified as *severe*, *medium*, or *low* based on its sensitivity. It is then forwarded to the GRO³¹ of the respective ministry, division, or agency. If a complaint is forwarded successfully, a receipt specifying the case tracking number and information about the GRO is emailed to the self-identified complainant. The GRO addresses and responds to the complaint. If there is no resolution, the Cabinet Division forwards the grievance to one or more relevant ministries that will endeavor to address the issue in cooperation with the GRO. If a third-party decision is required as a last resort, the complaint is forwarded to an authority superior to the GRO. A self-identified complainant can track the status of the complaint and is notified via SMS and email when it has been resolved. Procedures for grievance redress are outlined in detail [here](#).

Timeframes and service standards

GROs are expected to address complaints within 40 working days of receipt and to resolve cases for which an investigation has been initiated in no more than an additional 20 working days.³²

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

Potential outcomes of the grievance redress process may include an apology, an explanation, compensation, or actions to right the situation in question.³³ Once a complaint or appeal has been resolved, the complainant can provide [feedback](#) through the GRS web page.³⁴

Appeals

An appeals officer is responsible for redressing grievance-related appeals in all government departments within 30 days from the date of receipt. If the appeals officer is unable to resolve

an issue to the complainant's satisfaction, the complainant can submit their case to the Cabinet Division's Grievance Management Cell, which is then expected to address the appeal within three months.³⁵

Monitoring and analysis

Every government entity is expected to generate and publish monthly reports on the total number of complaints received and addressed and to share that information with the Cabinet Division by letter. The Cabinet Division (with the support of GROs) monitors the overall progress of the GRS and convenes monthly coordination meetings that include a discussion on the GRS.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Complainants can submit public grievances anonymously through the GRS. The online complaint form on the GRS web page provides complainants with the option of identifying as *male*, *female*, or *other*, and to provide multiple data points about themselves, including occupation status (e.g., unemployed, retired, housewife, student, or self-employed), education level, and nationality. Moreover, public grievances can be submitted by people living in other countries and by petitioners of Bangladeshi or other nationalities. Appeal officers have the right to blacklist subsequent petitions submitted by people who have lodged earlier complaints that proved to be untrue or motivated by nefarious purposes.

OUTCOMES

Several ministries publish monthly, quarterly, or annual reports on the total number of complaints received and addressed, such as the [Ministry of Finance](#), the [Bangladesh Water Development Board](#), the Road Transport and Highways Division, and the [Ministry of Agriculture](#).

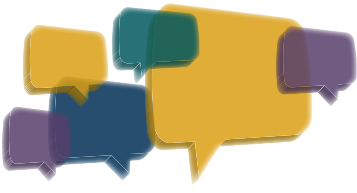
31. GROs: (1) ensure all staff members and the general public are aware of the current grievance redress procedures; (2) make sure that all grievances are addressed and resolved fairly, impartially, and transparently; (3) guarantee that all grievances are dealt with by the appropriate authority levels; (4) review the available measures and make appropriate recommendations in relation to mediation and conciliation to ensure early resolution of grievances; (5) depending on the seriousness of the complaint, keep the complainant informed of the process; and (6) keep all records of complaints and settlements.

32. See "Frequently Asked Questions" at <http://grs.gov.bd/>.

33. See "Enhancing Social Protection Governance through Grievance Redress System (GRS)—A Pilot Initiative" at <https://socialprotection.gov.bd/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Enhancing-Social-Protection-Governance-through-Grievance-Redress-System.pdf>.

34. See the user manual at http://grs.gov.bd/assets/grs_user_manual.pdf.

35. See <http://grs.gov.bd/groInformation.do>.



OUTREACH AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

The [GRS portal](#) provides access to citizen charters for the various ministries and divisions, a user manual, a process map for grievance redress, a list of frequently asked questions, and

forms for GRS users to file complaints and appeals. The Cabinet Division's [website](#) provides information on GRS guidelines and activities, GROs appointed to ministries and divisions, and instructions on the GRS for ministries and divisions.

Subnational Grievance Mechanisms

In addition to the GRS, citizens can use other uptake channels at the district or upazila (subdistrict) level to submit their complaints or feedback, including public hearings convened by the deputy commissioner's offices, such as those for [Chattogram district](#) and Chandpur district; web portals, such as those for

[Feni district](#) and [Cox's Bazar district](#); regular mail, email, and telephone numbers for the various district offices; and complaint boxes and in-person petitions at district offices. Upon receipt, the feedback is sent in writing to the concerned officials so they can take necessary action.

Themes

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN

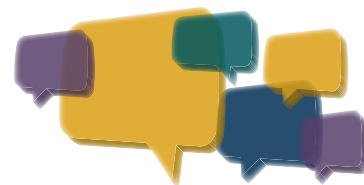
The National Helpline Centre for Violence against Women and Children was launched to help victims of physical and sexual violence and harassment, trafficking, early marriage, and kidnapping, and other concerns. Assistance and referral services provided by helpline center staff include rescue, legal, and research assistance; medical support; and psychosocial counseling.³⁶ Victims, as well as their families and associates, can contact the helpline center via email or by mobile phone or landline to a toll-free hotline that operates 24/7. Moreover, the “Joy” (*victory* in Bangla) mobile application enables victims to record images and send the files with their GPS coordinates to specify their location to the helpline center and other designated contacts. The center is staffed with qualified personnel who can set into motion a variety of referral pathways, depending on the nature of the case.³⁷ Each case is recorded in a digital database that upholds confidentiality standards. Moreover, protocols have been outlined to record and follow up on the details of each type of case (UNDP 2016). [Statistics](#) regarding the nature of feedback submitted to the center attest that most of them are queries or related to “other” issues, followed by requests for police or legal assistance.

LABOR ISSUES

The Ministry of Labour and Employment's **Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE)** has a grievance mechanism to address worker complaints, such as abuse, child and adolescent workers, employment conditions, maternity benefits, occupational health and safety, accidents and compensation, social security and welfare, working hours and holidays, workplace disputes, and wrongful termination. Workers can submit their complaints at no cost through an e-form on the DIFE web page, a mobile application, regular mail, or the 24/7 complaint helpline. To ensure privacy, the helpline only collects the personal information necessary for providing workers with the information or services they need (name, address, factory number, and phone number) and submits the information to the DIFE for further action. If a complainant requests that personal details not be revealed, the helpline submits the complaint to the DIFE without them. Most complaints submitted to the DIFE pertain to legal benefits, due wages, or dismissal from work. A complainant can [track](#) the status of a case and provide feedback online after receiving a response. The *Complaint Resolving Efficiency Report* on DIFE's web page allows public users to generate aggregate statistics

36. See [http://nhc.gov.bd/images/stories/English%20Helpline%20Liflet\(1\).pdf](http://nhc.gov.bd/images/stories/English%20Helpline%20Liflet(1).pdf).

37. See http://nhc.gov.bd/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=9.



on complaints received and resolved during a specified time period, as well as the average number of days taken to address specific types of complaints. DIFE's General Section department addresses gender-related complaints, and its five-member Complaint Committee addresses complaints related to sexual harassment (DIFE 2020).

The **Bangladesh Accord on Fire and Building Safety**³⁸ is a legally binding agreement between workers, factory managers, and apparel companies that requires brands and retailers to open their supplier factories to fully independent inspections by qualified experts and engineers. The agreement also states that the results of these inspections are to be reported publicly in a searchable database and that the brands and retailers must help pay for essential safety renovations and must cease doing business with any factories that fail to make needed safety repairs.

Additionally, the Accord has a **Safety and Health Complaints Mechanism** that receives and processes complaints from workers and their representatives on the occupational safety and health issues in factories that are covered by the accord. In addition to building safety, these issues include personal

protective equipment, maternity leave, excessive working hours, forced overtime, sexual harassment, and workplace violence. Other issues include payments related to occupational safety or health, such as sick pay, maternity pay, and payments of any nature that may have been impacted as a result of reprisals against a person who has pursued such a claim. The accord also accepts complaints related to reprisals against workers who have raised safety concerns. Workers can file a complaint anonymously or choose to identify themselves by calling the safety complaints' phone number, via email, or in person at the accord's Dhaka office. Upon receipt of a grievance, a complaints handler conducts an initial assessment to verify the alleged issue at the accord-covered factory. Once verified, the accord sends an engineer to the factory to investigate allegations related to fire, structural, or electrical safety, or a case handler to carry out an onsite visit for other types of complaints. Subsequently, if the violation is confirmed, a report is prepared that includes time-bound steps to remediate the problem. If a follow-up visit confirms that the issue has been remediated, the case is closed. If not, then the apparel company signatories are informed, and the brands issue a notice and warning that leads to the termination of the business relationship between all accord signatory brands and the factory (ILRF 2019).

38. See <https://www.workersrights.org/our-work/bangladesh-accord/>.



5. Cambodia

Enabling Environment

The Cambodian constitution provides a framework for legal protection against administrative measures and outlines a system that protects the public rights of individuals. Article 39 clearly states that a citizen can complain about any type of administrative measure. Consequently, most administrative laws provide complaint mechanisms against administrative decisions. Many pieces of national and sector-specific legislation require information to be disseminated to the public and confirm the right to file complaints. Recent national strategies and plans have further highlighted the importance of engaging with stakeholders at all levels.

Desk-based research suggests that more can be done on public disclosure prior to investment project decision making and to create entry points that allow for better grievance

management. Provisions for receiving complaints are often, with few exceptions, through the legal system and therefore often have associated costs and take additional time to address. For example, the 1994 Law on Investment and subsequent decrees include a general provision for “amicable settlement through consultation between parties in dispute” without mentioning public disclosure and grievance redress explicitly. The implementation of grievance mechanisms in investment projects appears to be mixed. While many government stakeholders view local participation, grievance redress, and information sharing as important and useful, others do not and have neglected to fully operationalize them. This is substantiated below with additional examples from select laws³⁹ and entities at different levels.

National level

Electricity

The Law on Electricity stipulates that administrative complaints related to electricity service provision should be submitted to electricity service providers. If the complainant does not agree with the decision of the service provider, the complaint can be filed with the Electricity Authority of Cambodia (EAC) within 30 days of receiving the decision. Categories of complaints against electricity service provision include issues related to voltage, interruption/failure of supply, meters and meter reading, nonreceipt of an energy bill or receipt of an incorrect bill, disconnection or reconnection, and delay in providing a new connection. Complaints must be submitted in written form with relevant attachments. They should contain information about the complainant, details of the complaint, specific references to relevant laws and regulations, relevant attachments, and the complainant’s signature. EAC’s complaint handling comprises a five-step process:

(1) *Filing of complaint and notice to defendant.* Upon receipt, the EAC registers and allocates a number to a complaint. The EAC chair then conducts a preliminary examination and decides if the complaint is eligible for consideration. Acknowledgments informing complainants if their complaints have been accepted or rejected are sent within 15 days of receipt. If accepted for consideration, the EAC also sends the copy of the complaint to the defendant for their input.

(2) *Reconciliation, if decided.* In cases where there is no violation of laws, rules, or regulations, the EAC first tries to resolve the complaint through a reconciliation process, initiated by a reconciliation officer who invites the complainant and defendant to attend a reconciliation session. If a complainant fails to attend the session and/or fails to apply for an alternative date for it, the complainant is assumed to have dropped the matter, and the case is cleared from the complaint register. If a

39. This is not an exhaustive stock-take of all the laws that include GMs or entities operating GMs in each country. It focuses on a few key laws encompassing entity-wide GMs.



defendant fails to attend a reconciliation session and/or fails to apply for an alternative date; the EAC will determine that the party is unwilling to reconcile and that the reconciliation has failed. In cases where both parties agree to the terms of the reconciliation session, the EAC issues a decision based on the terms agreed by the parties. If the reconciliation fails, the case is investigated.

(3) *Investigation.* The investigation process involves the collection of additional information or records from the complainant and defendant, the collection of statements from witnesses, and field visits. The investigating officer then compiles a complete report and submits it to the EAC chair for approval. If the report is complete and approved by the chairman, the case is taken up at an EAC hearing.

(4) *EAC hearing and judgment.* Hearing notices are sent to the complainant and defendant at least 15 days prior. A complainant or defendant who is unable to attend must inform the EAC in writing at least three days before the hearing and seek an alternative date.

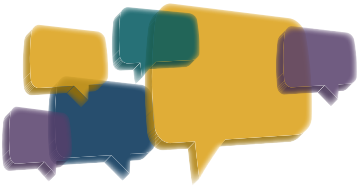
(5) *Appeals.* EAC judgments can be appealed in the courts of Cambodia within three months of the judgment date. Although there is a clear rule that all documents related to complaint handling, including relevant statistics, should be made publicly available, the information is not accessible on the EAC website. However, EAC's hearings are public; copies of its judgments are provided to interested parties free of charge (Haustein and Menzel 2014); and records of all proceedings, orders and, findings (except those determined to be confidential by the EAC) are made public and open to public examination at EAC offices.

Land

Administrative land dispute resolution mechanisms in Cambodia include commune councils, administrative commissions, the Cadastral Commission, and the National Authority for Land Conflict Resolution (NALDR). A commune council can only help to reconcile differences of opinion among citizens

of a commune; it does not have decision-making authority. Administrative commissions, which have been established in all areas undergoing systematic land registration, represent the first step in resolving cases that arise during the land registration process. They seem to lack the power to issue decisions but rather seek to assist conflicting parties resolve disputes. If an administrative commission is unable to resolve a dispute, the issue is forwarded to the Cadastral Commission. The Cadastral Commission is responsible for resolving disputes over unregistered lands occurring outside the areas under adjudication for systematic land registration, as well as disputes emerging during adjudication that cannot be resolved by the administrative commission. The Cadastral Commission comprises the National Cadastral Commission (NCC); the capital and provincial cadastral commissions (CPCCs) in all 24 provinces; and the municipal, district, and khan cadastral commissions in 194 districts and khans—whose investigations take no longer than six months. Cases where no agreement is reached are referred to the CPCC. If parties do not agree on the CPCC's decision, they can appeal to the NCC within 30 working days. The NCC makes decisions regarding all cases that cannot be resolved at lower levels and has full jurisdiction to decide on the lawful possessor/owner of unregistered land. The Cadastral Commission has no jurisdiction over land disputes over registered land or contractual and inheritance disputes over registered land.

The National Authority on Land Dispute Resolution (NALDR) is mandated to hear cases beyond the competence of the National Cadastral Commission. Led by a deputy prime minister and comprising members from 26 ministries and authorities, it accepts land-related complaints and forwards them to the relevant offices and ministries. Complainants must lodge written documents in person with the NALDR at its only office in Phnom Penh. The complaint does not have to be in any particular format but supporting documents, such as copies of identification cards and family records, must be attached. A collective complaint must also include a document showing that the families have transferred their rights to a representative (Menzies and Ketya 2008). The role of NALDR is to coordinate



all land disputes; the NALDR's general secretary can conduct investigations and inspections based on complaints and can halt work on land where conflict has occurred.⁴⁰ In 2019, NALDR received 1,896 cases and solved 1,766 of them (Koemsoeun 2019). The Ministry of Land Management, Urban Planning, and Construction also has the mandate to address complaints. During 2019, it received 817 land dispute complaints. Eighty-one cases were solved and 24 were referred to relevant authorities (Koemsoeun 2019). There are no costs involved in lodging a complaint through these dispute resolution institutions.

The 2010 Law on Expropriation, establishes the mandate of the Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) to resolve complaints, establishes the criteria, describes the process for submitting a grievance, and stipulates timeframes for the GRC to submit its report on the grievance. The law states that:

... the complaint shall be filed in a written form with the GRC as stipulated in Article 14 of this law within 30 working days following the receipt of the declaration of the expropriation project. The main contents of the complaint shall include: the name of the owner of and/or holder of real right to the immovable property, address and telephone number; reason for the complaint; description of the legalities regarding the land; and interests of the owner of and/or holder of real right to the expropriated land.

Furthermore, the 2018 Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for Externally Financed Projects in Cambodia on Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement provide even more details on the establishment of the grievance redress mechanism. They discuss the constitution and role of the GRC, the structure and steps involved in grievance handling, the process for handling group complaints, and suggestions for grievance indicators and formats related to grievance collection and reporting.

Subnational level

At the subnational level, the recently approved National Program on Sub-National Democratic Development, Phase 2 continues to prioritize activities for enhancing the accountability of subnational administrations to citizens, strengthening mechanisms for resolving citizen complaints, and providing information to citizens, including through the use of information technology. Additionally, the Strategic Plan on Social Accountability for Subnational Democratic Development provides a road map for government and other stakeholders implementing social accountability under the national program. The grievance management roles of the key subnational level entities are discussed below.

District ombudsmen (DOs) are neutral citizen representatives whose mandate includes monitoring and addressing complaints regarding the services of One Window Service Offices (OWSO), addressing complaints about the district administration, and

negotiating between parties to solve complaints. DOs have the power to seek all relevant documents to solve a complaint, to serve as mediator between citizens and authorities, and to send recommendations to the district governor (or to the provincial governor if the complaint relates to the district governor's position). Nominations for the DO position are based on good moral behavior within the community. Candidates for the DO position must be independent; they must not be employed by the government and must not be a civil servant, member of the national police, military, or any political party. Citizens can submit their complaints verbally, by post, or by completing and submitting a complaint form. This complaint form can be obtained at the DO's office and can then be dropped into a DO complaint box or handed directly to the DO. Upon receipt of the complaint, the DO or his/her secretary assesses the complaint's content. The investigation process involves interviewing complainants and any witnesses and may include

40. KHAM Vanda and SOU Sorpea. July 2015. "Land Dispute Resolution outside Judicial System in Cambodia and the Philippines." Parliamentary Institute of Cambodia. <https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/gdc/gdcovop/2018333257/2018333257.pdf>.



consulting with specialists from government institutions or the private sector. In all situations where the DO investigates a complaint, persons who are subject to the complaint must be notified of both the complaint and the outcome of the solution. In addition, strict confidentiality is required for all documents and information obtained during an investigation, such as the complainant's identity, witnesses, and the person subject to the complaint. The DO must also obtain consent from all citizens, merchants, businesspersons, companies, or firms that are involved with a particular investigation before any material surrounding the investigation is made publicly available.

The DO then writes a report on the investigation, including a recommendation based on the evidence presented and compiled. If the investigation's findings recommend the sanctioning of poorly performing OWSO staff, for example, the relevant line ministry decides on the course of action. The DO is required to produce monthly and quarterly reports that are integrated into overall OWSO/DO reports. However, there are no provisions to ensure that these reports are made publicly available. The National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development has increased public awareness of the OWSO/DO initiative by facilitating presentations at public meetings, such as citizen forums, biannual business forums, and monthly citizen hours, in all districts and municipalities. Each district administration has its own separate budget and is responsible for ensuring that the OWSO/DO receives financial support (Transparency International Cambodia 2014; Read and Chea n.d.).

Provincial-level accountability working groups

Established by the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development, the purpose of provincial-level accountability working groups is to support administrative reform at the subnational level by ensuring accountability with regard to public investments. Each working group is chaired by a provincial governor and comprises provincial-level officials and private sector and civil society representatives. The mandate of the working groups is to:

- ✓ Receive and address complaints on issues related to the misuse of the subnational budget (commune/*sangkat*⁴¹ funds), abuse of power, or local governance;
- ✓ Propose sanctions;
- ✓ Monitor, evaluate, and publicize solutions for different cases; and
- ✓ Publicize their roles, obligations, and procedures.

Provincial-level groups are supported by national-level accountability working groups mandated to provide advice and training and to oversee and monitor provincial-level complaint handling—but not to resolve complaints.

A citizen can submit a complaint to a provincial-level accountability working group in person or in writing via the 2,545 accountability boxes installed at all provincial, district, and commune offices, as well as at the offices of some community-based organizations. The boxes are opened every month, and the citizens' petitions are relayed to the working group and read aloud at monthly meetings. Based on the outcome of investigations, the working group recommends actions to be taken or refers cases to the appropriate entities or institutions that can take punitive measures or resolve issues based on relevant legislation. The relevant body has 15 days to decide whether or not to authorize disciplinary action and to report back to the working group regarding its decision. After sanctions are authorized, they are communicated to complainants. The working group is expected to uphold the confidentiality of reports and complaints from citizens. All provincial-level accountability working groups are required to provide monthly and annual reports to the national-level accountability working groups, summarizing the work completed, complaints investigated, and results of their investigations—although limited information is available on the National Committee for Sub-National Democratic Development's web page. Contact information for the provincial working group members is available on leaflets at all accountability box sites, and citizens

41. The communes of Cambodia are the third-level administrative divisions in Cambodia. They are the subdivisions of the districts and municipalities of Cambodia. Communes can consist of as few as 3 or as many as 30 villages (*phum*), depending on the population.



PART 2. CASE STUDIES

can receive information about the groups from posters and the media.

Commune councils

At the local level, citizens permanently residing in the jurisdiction of their commune councils can submit complaints to the council on a wide range of issues. Commune councils

have the power to monitor and intervene with officials at the provincial, municipal, district, or khan level. They can investigate complaints and their resolution through the issuance of written instructions to the commune/sangkat council. If the commune/sangkat council cannot solve the problem, the case is transferred to the district level or to the courts (Dara 2014).



6. Colombia

Peticiones, Quejas, Reclamos, Sugerencias y Denuncias (PQRSD)— Petitions, complaints, claims, suggestions and allegations of misconduct

CONTEXT

Brief description

In Colombia, a citizen's right to address the public administration with petitions, complaints, claims, suggestions, and allegations of misconduct is guaranteed by the country's legal framework. Law 1755 of 2015 constitutes the cornerstone of a citizen's right of petition because it establishes the manner by which public entities are obligated to respond to citizens.

Enabling Environment

The right of petition is enshrined in article 23 of [Colombia's constitution](#): "Every individual has the right to present respectful petitions to the authorities on account of general or private interest and to secure their prompt resolution." The right to information is enshrined in article 74: "Every person has the right of access to public documents except in cases established by law." Law 1712 of 2014 further establishes the Right of Access to Information.

[Law 1755 of 2015](#) outlines a citizen's fundamental right to petition public authorities for reasons of general or particular interest and the right to obtain prompt, complete, and substantive resolution. It provides general and specific rules regarding the right of petition, thereby updating articles 13-33 of Law 1437 of 2011 on the Code of Administrative Procedure and Litigation.

[Decree 1166 of 2016](#) establishes rules of procedure regarding the uptake of verbal petitions, complaints, claims, suggestions, and allegations of misconduct.

Number of agencies and ministries

Law 1755 applies to all public authorities, including national-level ministries, districts, and municipalities. For example, as of April 2021, the [Presidency of the Republic](#), as well as Colombia's 15 ministries—the [Ministry of Agriculture](#), [Ministry of Commerce](#), [Ministry of Culture](#), [Ministry of Defense](#), [Ministry of Education](#), [Ministry of the Environment](#), [Ministry of Finance](#), [Ministry of](#)

[Health](#), [Ministry of Housing](#), [Ministry of Information Technology and Communication](#), [Ministry of Interior](#), Ministry of Justice, [Ministry of Labor](#), [Ministry of Mining and Energy](#), and [Ministry of Transport](#) all provide subsections on their websites called "Attention to the Citizen" or "Services to Citizens," which present comprehensive information and options for citizens to submit petitions, complaints, claims, suggestions, and allegations of misconduct. The same applies for cities, whether small or major, such as [Bogota](#), [Medellin](#), and [Cali](#).

HOW DOES IT WORK?

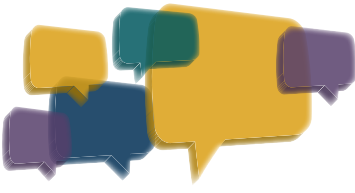
Uptake channels

According to article 15 of Law 1755, submissions "may be submitted verbally or in writing, and through any suitable means for communication or data transfer." Decree 1166 highlights that all authorities must centralize the reception of citizens' verbal and written submissions in a single office or department and that these need to be staffed with a sufficient number of officials knowledgeable about the entity's competencies. In other words, public authorities must provide a centralized access channel (typically a hotline) for the reception and filing of citizens' requests, and must make available additional options (e.g., electronic or in-person channels) to further allow for the receipt of submissions.

To illustrate, the Ministry of Health provides a comprehensive overview of its access channels on its website, including brick-and-mortar facilities, a general hotline, dedicated phone lines (e.g., for disasters or COVID-19), fax, chat functions, social media ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#)), and online submission forms for [petitions](#), [complaints](#), [claims](#), [suggestions](#), and [allegations of misconduct](#).

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

Submissions are categorized according to different categories: *peticiones* (petitions), which are requests for information and/or consultation on a matter of personal or general interest; *quejas* (complaints), which are expressions of dissatisfaction in relation



to irregular conduct by one or more public servants in the performance of their duties; *reclamos* (claims), which are linked to the improper provision of a service or the lack of attention to a request; *sugerencias* (suggestions), which are written or verbal proposals to improve the service or management of an entity; and *denuncias* (allegations of misconduct).

According to Law 1755, public authorities are responsible for setting up adequate internal procedures to handle and make decisions related to citizens' submissions. Article 22 reads:

The authorities shall regulate the internal processing of the petitions they are responsible for resolving, and the manner of dealing with complaints to ensure the proper functioning of the services in their charge.

Decree 1166 and Article 16 of Law 1755 outline the manner in which verbal and written requests must be filed and the information that must be provided by citizens or captured by the public authorities (e.g., date and time received, object of the petition, and correspondence address). Whether presenting verbal or written requests, citizens are entitled to receive proof of receipt.

Law 1755's article 21 specifies that

if the authority to whom the request is directed is not the competent one, the interested party will be informed immediately if he acts verbally, or within five (5) days following receipt, if he acted in writing.

The petition is then forwarded to the competent person and a copy of the official letter sent to the petitioner. The timeline for deciding or responding will be counted beginning the day after the competent authority receives the petition.

Timeframes and service standards

According to article 14 of [Law 1755](#), every submission must be resolved within 15 days following its receipt.⁴² Requests for documents and information must be resolved within 10 days of

receipt. If the petitioner has not received an answer within that period, the request will be considered legally accepted and the administration cannot consequently deny the delivery of the documents to the petitioner within three days.

When it is not possible to resolve a request within the imparted time period, the authority must inform the interested party of this circumstance before the expiration of the term indicated in the law, stating the reasons for the delay and offering a reasonable period for resolution or response, which may not exceed twice the amount of the originally allotted time.

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

There are no centralized guidelines regarding how to evaluate citizen satisfaction with proposed resolutions; approaches therefore vary from one public authority to another. For example, the Ministry of Information Technology and Communication offers citizens the option of rating their satisfaction about timeliness, clarity, and relevance of the provided response on a scale of one (excellent) to five (appalling) via an [online survey available on the ministry's website](#).

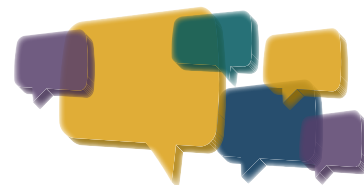
Monitoring and analysis

Article 22 of Law 1755 suggests that public authorities should consider and react accordingly to multiple citizen submissions on a single topic:

When more than ten people make similar requests for information, of general interest or for consultation, the Administration may give a single response that will be published in a newspaper with wide circulation, will put it on its website and will deliver copies of it to those who request them, without prejudice to the fact that a response must be sent to all those who have made the request.

The degree to which public authorities publish data that reflects their monitoring and evaluation of citizens' submissions varies. The Ministry of Information Technology and Communication, for example, publishes trimester [reports](#) that highlight the type of feedback obtained. In 2020, the ministry received

⁴² Article 5 of Legislative Decree 491 of 2020 expands the timeframe for resolving requests during the health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to 30 days after receipt.



26,029 submissions from citizens: 97.39 percent petitions, 2 percent allegations of misconduct, 0.56 percent claims, 0.01 percent complaints, and 0.04 percent suggestions. The ministry also reports on the number of submissions that were attended to within the imparted timeframes, which uptake channels were used, what the average resolution time was, in-person waiting times, and other information.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Law 1755 specifies that

anonymous petitions must be admitted for processing and substantive resolution, when there is a serious and credible justification for the petitioner to keep his or her identity hidden.

Article 20 of Law 1755 on Priority Attention to Petitions specifies that

the authorities will give priority attention to requests for recognition of a fundamental right when they must be resolved to avoid irreparable harm to the petitioner, who must summarily prove the ownership of the right and the risk of harm invoked.

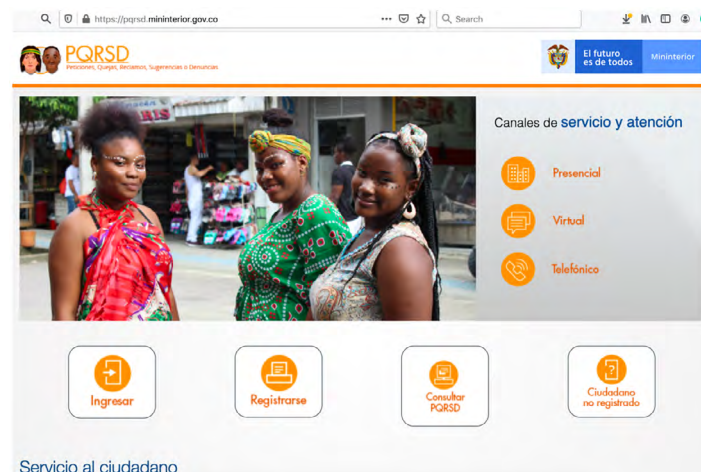
Article 2.2.3.12.8 of Decree 1166 on Social Inclusion specifies that

for the reception and filing of verbally submitted petitions, each authority must, directly or through suitable mechanisms, adopt measures that promote the social inclusion of people in situations of vulnerability on the basis of disability, special protection needs, gender and/or age. In this sense, the authorities may adopt measures such as granting priority and differential attention to these groups, having specialized personnel to receive requests or provide in their development etc.

Article 2.2.3.12.9 of Decree 1166 specifies that

people who speak a native language or an official dialect of Colombia may submit verbal requests to any authority in

CITIZEN SUBMISSION PORTAL ON THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR WEBSITE: [HTTPS://PQRSD.MININTERIOR.GOV.CO/](https://pqrsd.mininterior.gov.co/)



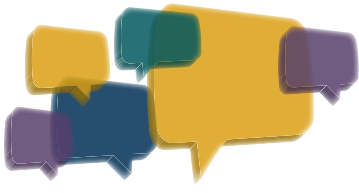
their language or dialect [and that] the authorities will enable the respective mechanisms that guarantee the presentation, record and filing of said petitions. When the entities do not have interpreters on their staff to directly translate the request, they will record this fact and record the right to request in any technological or electronic means, in order to proceed with its subsequent translation and response.

Article 2.2.3.12.12 of Decree 1166 on Accessibility prescribes that

the authorities will disclose in a visible place of access to the public, as well as in their institutional electronic headquarters, official billboards or others, the procedure and suitable channels of reception, filing and processing of verbal petitions.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

As previously noted, all involved public institutions must advertise the various uptake channels for citizen submissions on their websites. Some authorities, such as the [Ministry of Transport](#) and the [National Firefighter Department](#) (under the Ministry of Interior), as well as the [City of Medellin](#), have created YouTube videos to explain the differences between petitions, complaints, claims, suggestions, and allegations of misconduct, and how to file them.



7. Dominican Republic

311 Public Assistance System

CONTEXT

Brief description

The Dominican Republic's [311 Public Assistance System](#) allows citizens to lodge complaints, claims, and suggestions with any public service provider at the national level or to their subdivisions at the subnational level.⁴³

Enabling environment

Established by [Presidential Decree 694-09 \(2009\)](#), the 311 Public Assistance System is the main grievance redress mechanisms for the public administration (article 1). Its operation is supervised by the Ministry of the Presidency.

The [Dominican Republic's constitution](#) (2010) specifies in article 22 (paragraphs 4 and 5) that it is a citizen's right

to formulate petitions to the public powers to request measures of public interest and obtain a response from the authorities in the time established by the laws dictated in this regard ... [and] to denounce the faults committed by public functionaries in the performance of their office.

Article 49 (paragraph 1) sets out the right to seek, receive, and investigate public information; and article 138 quotes transparency as one of the principles of public administration.

Number of agencies and ministries

All ministries and government entities and their subdivisions at the subnational level are involved in the system. They advertise System 311 on their respective websites and have links that directly lead to the 311 web portal.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

Uptake channels include a 311 toll-free telephone line (available Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), the website www.311.gob.do, and an app (available free of charge through the Google Play store).

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

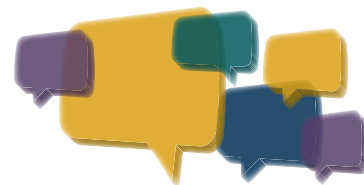
The GRM system includes four categories for filing and processing complaints:

- ✓ [Denuncia](#) (denunciation/allegation of misconduct): A formal complaint concerning a public official who is violating the law;
- ✓ [Queja](#) (complaint): a complaint about undesirable conduct by public service providers, contracting companies, or private entities that provide public services;
- ✓ [Reclamacion](#) (claim): A complaint about a public entity that has failed to comply with a contract or other legal document; and
- ✓ [Sugerencias](#) (suggestions): Written or verbal proposals to improve the service or management of an entity.

An identification or passport number is required to file a complaint.⁴⁴ According to the operational guidelines, 311 submissions are registered and then directly channeled to the corresponding government entity for resolution. Once the government entity has completed its investigation, it documents the resolution of the case in the system. Complainants are notified of the results. Upon resolution, the status of the case is changed to *closed* or *declined*.

43. While the categories of complainants in the online form and the official statistics seem to be restricted to public service providers and their subdivisions at the subnational level, the link to system 311 also appears on the websites of municipalities such as Ayuntamiento Santo Domingo Este. República Dominicana, "Ayuntamiento Santo Domingo Este," n.d., <http://asde.gob.do/#>.

44. See <http://311.gob.do/documentos/marco-legal/>.



Institutions responsible for the operation of the 311 system are:

- ✓ The **Ministry of the Presidency**, which has the authority to view all cases registered in the system regardless of type or institution or official involved; and which is in charge of guaranteeing the compliance of public agencies and entities in the system;
- ✓ The **Presidential Office of Information and Communication Technologies**, which is responsible for developing and maintaining the technological platform that supports the 311 System;
- ✓ The **General Directorate of Government Ethics and Integrity**, which is responsible for receiving and advising entities after receiving complaints regarding administrative corruption;
- ✓ The **Ministry of Public Administration**, which is the coordinating entity for the resolution of complaints related to public services and public servants; and
- ✓ The **Office of the Attorney General of the Republic**, which is the institution responsible for exercising public criminal action for cases that warrant it.

Finally, all state institutions involved in the 311 system are responsible for following up on, documenting, and resolving complaints and claims submitted by citizens through the system.⁴⁵

Timeframes and service standards

The operational guidelines state that, upon receipt, the status of a case must be acknowledged and changed from *open* to *in process* within 48 hours. Some complaints, depending on their nature, are resolved immediately. A complaint marked for an immediate solution is resolved within a maximum of five calendar days, extendable for the same number of days if needed. Complaints requiring investigations must be resolved within a maximum of 30 days, extendable for 15 additional

days if warranted. The Ministry of the Presidency's regulations stipulate cases should be resolved in no more than 45 calendar days. If the case remains open for over 30 days (or 45 days if the extension is registered in the system prior to the 30-day expiration, the Ministry of the Presidency will communicate with the person in charge of the institution to determine a response.

Appeals

If a citizen does not agree with all or part of the institution's proposed resolution to their complaint or claim, the decision can be appealed to the Ministry of the Presidency through the 311 System.

Monitoring and analysis

In 2019, over 300 public institutions received citizen inputs via the 311 system. The platform reports a citizen satisfaction rate of 98.7 percent. The 311 system also collects [statistical data](#) that the government and its institutions can use to improve their management and service delivery. This is mentioned in the "About Us" section of the platform: "the Government will have at its disposal a series of statistical data that will serve as support for decision making."

SOCIAL INCLUSION

311's objective is to promote the creation of a culture of transparency, quality, and efficiency, both in the management of institutions and in the performance of public servants.⁴⁶ Additionally, Decree 486-12, article 6 (19), offers immunity and protection to witnesses and whistleblowers; and Law 200-04 on Access to Information allows citizens public access to governmental information.

OUTCOMES

Statistics

The Dominican Republic's main government online portal reports that by October 2017, the 311 hotline had answered over 3.8 million calls. 311 data, published quarterly, reveal that between April and June 2020, the system received

45. See <http://311.gob.do/documentos/marco-legal/>.

46. See <http://311.gob.do/quienes-somos/>.



295 complaints. Of these, the largest number were directed at the National System of Attention to Emergency and Security (12.88 percent), the social protection program *Progresando con Solidaridad* (9.83 percent), the Ministry of Education (7.80 percent), the Institute for Telecommunications (6.44 percent), Santo Domingo Aqueduct and Sewerage

Corporation (4.41 percent), and the Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance (4.07 percent).

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

As of April 2020, 311's latest [Facebook](#) post was dated 2016.

Other Mechanisms

Dedicated hotlines for information provision and the reporting of child abuse

There is a dedicated 462 toll-free hotline to provide information about the more than 1,300 services offered by more than 70 public administration institutions; and a dedicated 700 hotline exists to report child abuse. Both initiatives involve the Presidential Office of Information and Communication Technologies, which also runs the 311 platform.

The Citizen Portal

The [Citizen Portal](#) of the Government of the Dominican Republic is the national gateway and one-stop-shop for accessing all online services, information, transactions, and interactions with the Dominican state. Users can submit questions and suggestions by phone, fax, email, or in person, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. The Citizen Portal does not accept complaints, it directs users with complaints to the [311 Public Assistance System portal](#).

Energy

The General Electricity Law 125-01 created [PROTECOM](#) (the Office of Electricity Protection of the Electricity Superintendence) in 2001. Its main objective is to process and settle grievances that service users lodge against electricity distribution companies. PROTECOM has a responsive web page design that is accessible to users with disabilities. It receives complaints through the 311 Public Assistance System portal. Customers can contact the office by email, phone, fax, or in person. PROTECOM also uses social media networks such as [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#) to provide up-to-date information.

Electricity users can file a complaint against an electricity distribution company as long as it has already been lodged through the distributor's own grievance redress mechanism and the complainant is either dissatisfied with or has not received a response. Accordingly, a user can lodge a complaint with PROTECOM within 10 days of receiving an unsatisfactory response from the electricity distribution company.

The regulatory agency makes resolutions reached through PROTECOM available on their website but does not provide aggregated statistics about the types of complaints received.



8. Ethiopia

Enabling Environment

The Ethiopian constitution establishes a broad framework for systematizing GRMs with an emphasis on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially the right of access to justice and the rule of law. The [Grievance Handling Directive](#) (2002) lays out public sector regulations for GRMs in multiple jurisdictions, particularly in regional states. The 2004 Business Process Reengineering initiative for public organizations led

to the creation of GRMs in regional states⁴⁷ and municipalities (Randolph and Edjeta 2011: 14). Additionally, Ethiopia instituted several regulations to govern [alternative dispute resolution mechanisms](#), including the [Ethiopian Civil Code](#), [Labor Proclamation 377/2003](#), and the [Institution of the Ombudsman Establishment Proclamation 211/2000](#).

National-Level Grievance Mechanisms

Administrative Tribunals

[Administrative tribunals](#) were established to resolve administrative disputes and review the internal decisions of authorities and agencies. Examples of these tribunals include the Social Security Appeal Tribunal, the Tax Appeal Commission, and the Federal Civil Servants Administrative Tribunal.

Agriculture

The [Productive Safety Net Program](#) (PSNP), a safety net for food insecure rural households, created the Kebele Appeals Committee (KAC), to hear grievances about its food security programs from people claiming that they had been unfairly excluded from participation in one or more food security programs.

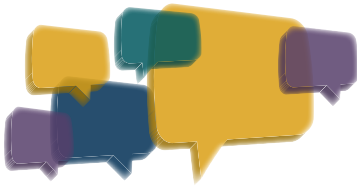
The KAC, which reports directly to locally elected councils, consists of the following members: an elected *kebele* (municipal) council member (not the chair); a development agent (agricultural extension worker); one or two members of the community care coalition (if it exists in the kebele); a health extension worker or volunteer community health worker; a social worker; and two elder representatives, including one woman. The role of the KAC is to:

- ✓ Hear and resolve complaints, claims, and appeals from kebele residents on the targeting process and other implementation issues in a timely manner;
- ✓ Submit a complete list of appealed cases by sex of appellant, resolutions provided to appeals, and unresolved appeals on a quarterly basis to the kebele council, which reviews and forwards it to the *woreda* (district) council and the Woreda Office of Agriculture.
- ✓ Convene within one month of the establishment of a new annual listing of clients to hear appeals submitted in their jurisdiction and to resolve a minimum of 95 percent of these cases within a month.
- ✓ Provide the listing of the appeals and the associated resolutions to the kebele council no later than two months after the announcement of the listing of the clients.

Energy

The [Ethiopian Electricity Agency's GRM](#) addresses complaints concerning the provision of services since the failure of the utility's formal complaint handling processes. The agency's uptake channels include in person, letter, fax, email, and telephone. The agency addresses complaints in accordance with Proclamation 86 of 1997 and provides feedback to complainants within 11 working days.

47. Subnational GRMs are now operating in the following regions: Tigray, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Regional State, Benishangul Gumuz, Harar, Oromia, Somali Regional State, and Addis Ababa.



Labor

The [Labor Conciliation Office](#) receives and addresses labor disputes based on the voluntary submission of the parties to its mediation efforts. The Labor Conciliation Office follows the following procedures in the mediation process:

1. Upon receipt of the request to mediate a labor dispute, the Labor Conciliation Office sends a letter to the other party asking if it agrees to the mediation process.
2. If the parties agree to the mediation process, a conciliator assigned to the case by the ministry has a preliminary discussion with them.
3. The conciliator collects all information and evidence connected to the case.
4. The conciliator examines the written applications and responses of the parties and requires an oral explanation of

issues that are not clear on the written submissions of the parties.

5. The conciliator attempts to build consensus between the parties, taking the following points into consideration: allowing the parties to propose solutions to their problems; tackling issues in the order of their importance; and understanding the expectations of the parties out of the mediation process. The conciliator then helps the parties develop a framework of agreement on the amicable settlement of the dispute and advises on the implementation of the agreement. If no agreement or amicable settlement is reached, the conciliator writes and sends a report to all concerned parties containing the issues of the dispute, the demands of the parties, the efforts made by the conciliator to reach an amicable settlement; and the parties' weak and strong points in the mediation process.

Regional Public Grievance Hearing Offices

Brief description

Regional public grievance hearing offices are regional entities accountable to their respective regional presidents who are responsible for receiving complaints related to public services and good governance, investigating, and providing recommendations and making decisions to redress them. Most regions have established regional public grievance hearing offices with branches at the zonal, woreda, and kebele levels, which are accountable to their respective chief administrators. There are wide variations in the quality and availability of GRMs in the regional states and independent cities of Ethiopia. The existing GRMs are located in multiple subnational government departments and have legal bases that vary by regulation and regional constitution.

EXAMPLES OF REGIONAL GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS

Amhara

The Regional Grievance Office in Amhara addresses complaints regarding maladministration and service delivery (Randolph and

Edjeta 2011). Amhara has a multilevel GRM. Complainants are first required to launch their grievances at the kebele level. If dissatisfied with that decision, complainants can appeal to the district-level preliminary grievance hearing body, then to the public grievance hearing body, then to the chief administrator of the woreda, then to the zonal public grievance hearing body, then to the zonal administrator, and then finally to the regional public grievance hearing body.

Addis Ababa

Addis Ababa's GRM is based on the authority of the Business Process Reengineering Initiative. It is housed in the mayor's office. The grievance office of first instance is located at the woreda level. Appeals can be made to the subcity, and a final appeal can be made to the mayor's office. The majority of the cases involve land and land-lease issues.



Land

The Ethiopian constitution gives regional states jurisdiction over dispute resolution regarding land and natural resources.⁴⁸

Oromia Regional State. Land disputes are first addressed by the kebele within 15 days. If parties do not agree with the kebele's decision, they can appeal to the Woreda Court, attaching the results of the arbitration within 30 days of the date registered by the kebele. The right of further appeal to the High Court is reserved for parties dissatisfied by the decision of the Woreda Court.⁴⁹ When the High Court reverses the decision rendered by the Woreda Court, the dissatisfied party may appeal to the Supreme Court. The decision of the Supreme Court is final (Wabelo 2020).

Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region State.

Parties are expected to submit their dispute claims to the kebele land administration. Appeals can be made to the woreda, and anyone who does not agree a decision made by the Woreda Court can appeal the case to the High Court. If a party does

not agree with the decision made by the High Court, it can be appealed to the Supreme Court, whose decision is final.⁵⁰

Amhara Regional State. Rural land disputes arising between landholders and users are addressed by the kebele land administration. If the dispute is not resolved at this level, a petition can be filed with the Woreda Court within 30 days of the termination of the effort to resolve the concern.⁵¹

Tigray Regional State. The kebele rural land administration committee has first-instance jurisdiction over rural land dispute settlements. If parties are not satisfied with the decision of the kebele rural land adjudication committee, they can appeal to the Woreda court within 15 days. If the Woreda Court fully confirms the decision of the committee, then the decision is final. However, if the Woreda Court fully or partially reverses the decision of the committee, then the aggrieved party can appeal to the zonal High Court within 15 days. The decision rendered by the zonal High Court is final.⁵²

Municipal Level

EXAMPLES OF MUNICIPAL-LEVEL GRMS

Water Sector: Addis Ababa Water and Sewerage Authority (AAWSA) and Hawassa Water and Service Enterprise (HWSE)

The Addis Ababa Water and Sewerage Authority (AAWSA) and the Hawassa City Water Service Enterprise (HWSE) have established complaint-handling units at their head offices and branch levels, where customers are encouraged to submit their concerns in writing or orally. Clients can also use other channels, such as newspapers, audio (radio), audio-visual media (television), kebele-level public meetings, and direct meetings with officials. For example, AAWSA sponsors a 30-minute weekly radio program when customers can ask questions and express their

dissatisfaction with services (Regional and Local Development Studies 2013). The Mayor's Office of Hawassa City sponsors live FM radio programs where city residents can voice their concerns with service delivery. Other available channels include the monthly newsletter (*Hawassa Newsletter*) and regional and national television services. Personal visits to head and branch offices of the water supply agencies are the most common means for submitting water service delivery complaints.⁵³ Appeals can be made to the mayor's office. In Addis Ababa, AAWSA is accountable to the cabinet, which is then accountable to the Council of the City Government.

48. Article 52(2d) of FDRE Constitution, Proclamation 1/1995.

49. See Article 16(1) (a-j) of Oromia Rural Administration and Use Proclamation (130/2007).

50. See Article 12(1) of Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples Region State Rural Land Administration and Use Proclamation (110/2007).

51. See preamble of the revised Amhara National Regional State Rural Land Administration and Use Determination Amendment Proclamation (148/2007).

52. Article 17(1), a Proclamation to Provide the Power and Duties of Kebele Rural Land of Tigray National Regional State (240/2014).

53. See <http://www.ppa.gov.et/>.



Road Sector: Addis Ababa City Roads Authority (AACRA) and Hawassa City Municipality

The two roads agencies—Addis Ababa City Roads Authority (AACRA) and the Hawassa City Municipality—have established multiple mechanisms through which clients can voice their complaints. Usually, a group of community members present their complaints directly to the respective agencies. Both agencies have implemented a system by which community members can submit their complaints to the manager every Thursday. Radio, television, and newspapers are other voicing

mechanisms. Suggestion boxes serve as an alternative for community members to forward their complaints. If complaints are not effectively and satisfactorily addressed by the roads agencies, the public can take the issue to the mayor's office, the city council, or the regional government. In addition, monthly public discussions are conducted in each kebele when residents can present their complaints. The results of such discussions are compiled and brought to the attention of the city council (Regional and Local Development Studies. 2013: ii).



9. Hong Kong, SAR China

Enabling Environment

The constitution of the People's Republic of China (article 41) and the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China (article 48) provide citizens the right to criticize, make suggestions, and file complaints against any state organ or state employee for violations of the law or dereliction of duty. The Basic Law

stipulates that the relevant state entity must ascertain the facts concerning complaints, charges, or reports made by citizens and take responsibility for their handling, and that no one shall suppress such complaints, charges, or reports, or engage in retaliatory action.

1823 Service

CONTEXT

Brief description

Established in 2001, the 1823 service is managed by the Efficiency Office, which provides around-the-clock service to respond to queries for 23 participating departments and to receive complaints, suggestions, and compliments about all government services. The 1823 service does not have investigative functions and powers. It records details of complaints and unresolved queries; refers them to the appropriate bureau or department; monitors the progress of their responses; and, if requested, conveys the responses to 1823 service users. For inquiries related to departments that do not participate in the 1823 service, citizens are given the appropriate contact information to reach out directly.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

Users can submit their queries, complaints, suggestions, and compliments via e-form, email, SMS, phone/fax, regular mail, and the "Tell me@1823" mobile application for iOS and Android. Attachments with a maximum size of 15 MB (e.g., photos) can be submitted via email, e-form, or mobile app. The Tell me@1823 app accepts up to 10 attachments per submission, which can be geotagged. If a message is too lengthy to type, users can record a voice message. In 2019, the 1823 website adopted a new design to improve the experience of mobile device users. It is also piloting the use of Chatbot to respond to simple public inquiries.

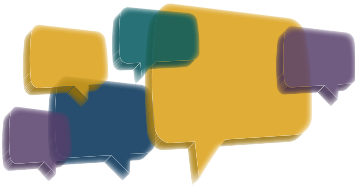
Processing

The 1823 service has set up a dedicated complaint-handling team and developed a comprehensive network with bureaus and departments to strengthen communication and facilitate prompt responses to complaints and queries. 1823 agents obtain case details, log them, and refer cases to responsible departments for consideration and action. The 1823 team also monitors the progress of complaints at four levels to ensure that: (1) departments receive the 1823's referral and provide timely interim and final responses; (2) departmental supervisors are aware of delays and reassignment of requests; (3) complainants are informed when complaints are reassigned; and (4) complaints are escalated to departmental management.⁵⁴ However interim and final responses are relayed either directly to the complainant or through the 1823 service, at the department's discretion.

Timeframes and service standards

Complaints about 1823's service are investigated, and an interim reply is provided within 10 calendar days. If a substantive reply cannot be provided within 30 calendar days, the 1823 service provides an update to the complainant within this timeframe. Performance standards for the 1823 service include a call abandonment rate of less than 10 percent, a customer satisfaction rate of 4 out of 5 points, a first-time resolution rate of over 95 percent for queries, and the assignment of 70 percent of complaints within three hours.

⁵⁴ Beginning in 2006, 1823 has required each department to nominate a department coordinator and a complaint officer for liaison, monitoring, and escalation.



Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

The 1823 service has instituted an ongoing customer survey to monitor satisfaction with the services and staff, and it is using an interactive voice response system to interact with service users.

Appeals

A complainant who is dissatisfied with a resolution can use the appeals mechanism for the relevant government entity (e.g., the Hospital Authority's Public Complaints Committee or the Lump Sum Grant's Independent Complaints Handling Committee set up by the Social Welfare Department to address nongovernmental organization grant-related complaints). As a final appeals mechanism, the ombudsman is mandated to investigate complaints regarding maladministration by government departments and public bodies.

Monitoring and analysis

- ✓ 1823 [monitors](#) communications between citizens and government departments and coordinates with relevant departments to provide a joint response in cases involving multiple departments.
- ✓ The 1823 team compiles and publishes [data on service requests and performance](#) (e.g., first-time resolution of inquiries and cases involving more than one department), as well as [data on customer satisfaction](#), which is analyzed to determine and [publish progress](#) on key performance standards.

Budget

The 2020–21 [budget provision](#) for the Efficiency Office is US\$27.1 million (9.4 percent) higher than the revised estimate for 2019–20. This is intended to cover expenses for all of the Efficiency Office's programs.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

- ✓ The 1823 service team and government departments are expected to handle anonymous complaints in the same way as others.
- ✓ The 1823 service clearly asserts its commitment that collected personal data may only be disclosed to government departments, related organizations, and contractors

responsible for handling a case. It also offers service users the option of making special arrangements to handle their personal data, such as not disclosing this data to the concerned government departments or contractors.

- ✓ The 1823 web page has a responsive web design that enables users to easily change the text size to fit their visual needs. Its content is available in seven languages: Indonesian, Hindi, Nepali, Punjabi, Tagalog, Thai, and Urdu. This multilingual feature is designed to assist overseas workers, particularly household workers, in accessing these services.

OUTCOMES

Statistics

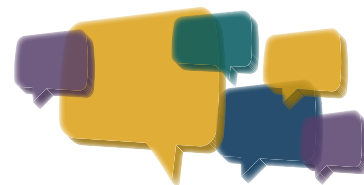
Between January and September 2020, the 1823 service received 1,345,297 queries; 353,727 complaints; and 86,022 cases of feedback, such as suggestions and compliments. During this period, the call abandonment rate was 11 percent, the average customer satisfaction rate was 4.51 on a 5-point scale, the first-time resolution rate for queries was over 99 percent, and 97 percent of complaints were assigned within three hours.

Examples of impact

One of 1823's customer service officers was awarded the [Ombudsman's 2019 Award for Officers of Public Organizations](#) for excellent performance in handling inquiries and complaints. Additionally, the customer [satisfaction survey](#) of 2020 affirmed the overall satisfaction of citizens with the 1823 service, including specific aspects, such as waiting time, manner and attitude, understanding of needs, and access to information that is clear and adequate.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

The frequently-asked question (FAQ) section of the 1823 web page provides detailed information about service [categories](#), participating [departments](#), and top [inquiries](#). The "About Us" section presents information about the work of the 1823 service, including awards, service performance, and [video testimonials](#) from the 1823 team. The [Facebook page](#) for the 1823 service presents news and updates, and the [website of the Efficiency Office](#) includes a feature story about the 1823 service.



Other Departments

Health

Citizens can provide feedback to the Department of Health's Client Relations Division through various [uptake channels](#) and can rely on timeframes and service standards outlined on its [web page](#) (10 calendar days for an interim reply and 30 calendar days for a final reply). Complaints and other feedback can also be provided to the Hospital Authority, the statutory body that manages public hospitals in Hong Kong. Both the [Department of Health](#) and the [Hospital Authority](#) have published statements on their data protection policies and practices.

Environment

The [performance pledge](#) of the Environmental Protection Department outlines uptake channels for feedback, service standards, the process for appeals, and contact information for its regional offices. The department's customer service center addresses and responds to various types of [feedback](#) regarding pollution complaints, services, and the help desk established to meet the needs of the business community. The department has also made [available](#) summary statistics and detailed information on the number and nature of complaints. The customer service center hotline is backed by a customer relationship management system, which uses a geographic information system (GIS) module to enable spatial analysis of complaints submitted by the public. The department's access to information officer is responsible for ensuring confidentiality and adherence to the *Code on Access to Information*. The department's web page has a responsive design that enables users to change the text size to suit their visual needs, and a mobile/accessible version of the [web page](#) is available.

Education

The Education Bureau launched a [pilot](#) on Revised School Complaints Handling Arrangements in 2013 and established the Committee on Enhancement of Complaint Management in Schools in 2011 to improve the handling of complaints about schools. Based on lessons learned from the pilot and recommendations from the committee, [guidelines](#) were finalized and have been applicable to schools since February 2020. The guidelines indicate that complaints may be lodged within one calendar year from the occurrence of the incident, that anonymous complaints will only be considered under special circumstances, and that anyone who seeks to file a complaint on behalf of the person concerned has to obtain prior written consent. They also emphasize the confidentiality of complaints and elaborate on the role of the Review Board on School Complaints to address appeals. A host of reference materials and guidelines on complaint handling are available on the bureau's [web page](#).

Transport

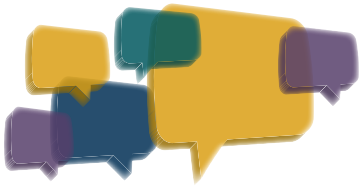
The Transport Complaints Unit has a mandate to receive and address suggestions and complaints from the public on transport matters. Its web page refers to the various [uptake channels](#) that can be used to submit feedback. Its [quarterly](#) and [annual](#) reports provide details on the number and nature of complaints and suggestions that they have received regarding public transport, taxi services, and traffic and road conditions, as well as noteworthy measures taken to address received feedback.

Other Issues

Gender-based violence, child abuse, and elder abuse

The Social Welfare Department's web page includes links to [hotline services](#) for victims, [welfare services](#), and other [supportive services](#) that are mainly provided by charities and nongovernmental organizations. The department's hotline

provides information on welfare services in the form of voice messages or facsimile transmission to callers through a 24-hour interactive voice response system, and department social workers are on hotline duty to provide counseling and referrals for those in need from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through



PART 2. CASE STUDIES

Friday, and from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Saturday. Calls received after hours are transferred to the hotline and outreach service team, operated by Tung Wah Group of Hospitals. The Social Welfare Department publishes aggregate statistics on domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual violence on a [quarterly](#) and [annual](#) basis, as well as annual statistics and

the number and nature of cases to date in a given [year](#). The department's web page includes links to public education materials as well as leaflets in numerous languages, including English, Hindi, Nepali, Tagalog, Thai, and Chinese, to provide [guidance](#) on how to seek assistance.



10. Japan

Enabling environment

In Japan,⁵⁵ legislation instituted to govern administrative grievances includes the Administrative Management Establishment Act, the Administrative Complaint Review Act, and the Administrative Counselors Act. The Administrative Management Establishment Act provides the [Administrative Evaluation Bureau](#) with the mandate to receive administrative complaints and resolve them in collaboration with other government institutions. The Administrative Counselor Act sets

out the status and functions of administrative counselors. The Administrative Complaint Review Act establishes a system for citizens to file complaints against administrative agencies regarding illegal or unjust administrative dispositions or acts involving the exercise of public authority. It is aimed at ensuring citizens' rights and interests as well as effective public administration.⁵⁶

Administrative Counseling System

CONTEXT

Brief description

The Administrative Evaluation Bureau (AEB) of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications reviews the activity of the central government of Japan and enables the realization of reliable and high-quality governance. The AEB's Administrative Counseling System (ACS) accepts complaints, opinions, and requests regarding the central government, incorporated administrative agencies, special corporations, prefectures, municipalities, and other entities. The ACS provides guidance on issues when it is unclear where citizens can seek assistance, enables the quick resolution of complaints, and prevents the recurrence of chronic issues by providing recommendations to improve administrative systems and operations.

ACS's special administrative consultation [service](#) addresses complaints and inquiries submitted by affected persons during large-scale disasters, such as support measures by the government, loss of health insurance, and pension certificates. After the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to the ACS, other government entities, such as the Prime Minister's Office; the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare; the Ministry of

Education; and the Ministry of Justice, set up public consultation [counters](#) to address a range of issues, such as medical assistance, subsidies, and school closures.

Number of agencies and ministries

In addition to the AEB's head office in Tokyo, there are eight regional AEB offices, 35 administrative inspection and counseling centers, and seven local offices for each prefecture,⁵⁷ all of which provide administrative counseling services. Citizens can reach out to 5,000 administrative counselors⁵⁸ nationwide (at least one for each municipality), as well as general administrative counseling offices that have been established in department stores in [19 cities](#). In 2020, AEB introduced consultation counters to address questions regarding the coronavirus and to provide guidance on support measures and special procedures in [specific areas](#).

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

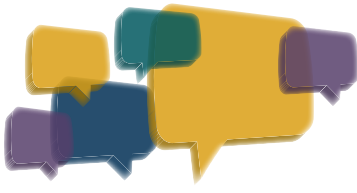
Citizens can submit complaints and requests for administrative consultations through the online reception [page](#) on AEB's website, the national phone number 110 for administrative

55. Please note that information in this case study is intended to an illustrative snapshot of good practices; it is not an exhaustive description of Japan's administrative complaint handling systems or environmental or social systems.

56. <https://www.japaneselawtranslation.go.jp/en/laws/view/2984/en>.

57. The prefectures are Tokyo, Kanagawa, Niigata, Ishikawa, Hyogo, Kumamoto, and Okinawa.

58. Information on the selection and functions of Administrative Counselors is available at https://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/hyouka/soudan_n/iin_katudou.html.



complaints, letter or [fax](#), administrative counseling desks, and general administrative counseling [offices](#). During “Administrative Counseling Week” in October, makeshift one-stop counseling centers are set up at department stores and public facilities all over the country with the participation of specialists from the Legal Affairs Bureau, the National Tax Bureau, the Labor Bureau, and local public organizations. The schedule for Administrative Counseling Week is posted in advance [online](#).

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

When administrative counselors receive routine or less complicated complaints from citizens, they direct them to the appropriate government office and collaborate with relevant authorities for resolution. For more complex cases, they contact the AEB’s local offices to facilitate resolution with relevant administrative agencies. Complaints related to national agencies must be addressed by the AEB’s head office.

Complaints that cannot be resolved without revising existing laws or that require multiministerial coordination are referred to the Administrative Grievance Resolution Promotion Council—a third-party advisory board to the Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications comprising private sector experts. In addition to the national council, there are 12 regional councils that advise AEB’s regional directors on the resolution of similar types of grievances in each region. Issues that are repeatedly reported are taken up by AEB’s Administrative Inspection Program to be addressed by relevant ministries at the request of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications. AEB monitors the issue—twice within the first six months and then within 18 months upon communication of the request.

Timeframes and service standards

Citizens can contact AEB for consultation services from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Requests for consultations after hours on weekdays, over the weekend, and on national holidays are addressed the following business day. The timeframe for complaint handling is not stipulated in AEB’s grievance redress [procedures](#). However, if a case is not closed within two weeks, the system prompts the official(s) in charge of the case to follow up.

Appeals

The [Administrative Appeal Act](#) outlines rules and procedures for the appeal and review of government decisions. It stipulates that an appeal against the deciding government entity must be filed within 60 days of receiving notice of the act in question and within one year of the act itself. Outcomes of the appeal could include dismissal on merit, for procedural reasons, or because overturning the original decision would cause major harm to the public, or acceptance, whereby the act in question may be overturned in whole or in part and any past enforcement may be declared invalid (and the appellant restored to their pre-enforcement position).

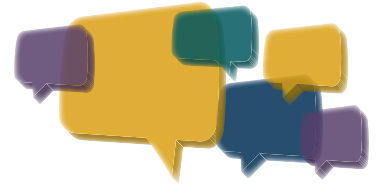
Monitoring and analysis

The AEB’s administrative counseling database comprises four sections:

1. The complaints case database, which includes the personal information of complainants (e.g., name, address, telephone, email, gender, and age), receipt status (e.g., data and name of the officer); case summary (e.g., summary of issue, administrative field, or relevant authority), and context for redress (e.g., conclusion, handling process, and follow-up status);
2. The administrative counselors database that includes contact information and information on their activities and territories;
3. The Article IV suggestions database;⁵⁹ and
4. The Administrative Grievance Resolution Promotion Council’s case database (list of cases).

The AEB website includes a section on the results and achievements of [administrative consultations](#) for each year and a section on [examples of improvements](#) achieved through administrative consultation.

59. These suggestions were submitted by administrative counselors to the minister at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.



SOCIAL INCLUSION

- ✓ Consultations are free of charge, although there are charges for telephone use since the call charge discount service of the Nepon Telegraph and Telephone Company and the mobile phone flat-rate plan do not apply.
- ✓ Consultations are confidential. The AEB has provided disclaimers that telephone conversations are recorded to achieve an accurate understanding of the consultation's contents; that submitted feedback may be forwarded to related departments and ministries and used as a reference for future policy planning; and that the petitioner's information may be used to respond to inquiries, to confirm contact details, and to deliver email news.
- ✓ Petitioners using the AEB's Internet counseling reception are asked to review and confirm their agreement with the Privacy Policy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications before registering and sharing the particulars of their concerns.
- ✓ Petitioners have the option of submitting feedback in [English](#) through the online reception desk for administrative consultation, and AEB is seeking to cooperate with organizations that can provide multilingual support for petitioners unfamiliar with the Japanese language. Pamphlets that summarize the role of the administrative counseling system are available in [English](#) and multiple [other languages](#), including Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Nepali, Indonesian, Tagalog, Thai, Portuguese, Spanish, French, and Malay.
- ✓ To make administrative consultations accessible to citizens, AEB sets up one-stop counseling centers in public spaces during Administrative Counseling Week in October. Moreover, administrative inspection and counseling centers provide

[information](#) regarding their locations and accessibility features, such as wheelchairs available for rent, provisions for petitioners with hearing disabilities, elevator signs in Braille, and accessible parking and toilets.

- ✓ To make administrative consultations accessible to disaster victims, AEB opened special administrative counseling [offices](#) in the vicinity of the impacted areas.

OUTCOMES

The Evaluation Bureau and Administrative Counseling System of Japan publishes [examples](#) of solutions for administrative consultation, such as a complaint regarding forest registration procedures resulting in a partial revision to the Local Autonomy Law by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.⁶⁰

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

In addition to the pamphlets mentioned above, the AEB has produced posters in [Japanese](#) and [English](#) on the process for submitting complaints and seeking counsel, as well as the [issues](#) about which citizens can seek counsel; videos on administrative consultations, administrative consultations for [foreigners](#), and ACS [outcomes](#) and [achievements](#); and a [drama](#) and [program](#) entitled "If you have a problem, don't worry alone." The AEB web page includes a children's corner, which uses cartoons and interactive activities to introduce youngsters to administrative counseling. A [magazine](#) for children was also produced for this purpose. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications has introduced a specific [symbol](#) and a [mascot](#) known as *Kikimimi* for the ACS, and it has set up a [Twitter account](#) to increase public familiarity with the administrative counseling process. Finally, the ministry promotes international [exchanges](#), conferences, and events on administrative counseling with the International Ombudsman Association, the Asian Ombudsman Association, and other countries.

60. See https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=ja&u=https://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/hyouka/soudan_n/kaiketujirei.html&prev=search&pto=aue.



Environmental Dispute Settlement System

Japan's environmental dispute resolution system is governed by the *Act on the Settlement of Environmental Pollution Disputes*. Its mandate includes the resolution of complaints related to seven types of pollution: air pollution, water pollution, soil contamination, noise, vibration, ground subsidence, and offensive odors. The [Environmental Dispute Coordination Commission](#) has jurisdiction over conciliation, mediation, arbitration, and adjudication of environmental disputes at the national level. At the local level, the prefectural pollution review boards have the mandate to address environmental complaints. Moreover, consultation desks for pollution complaints are set up in prefectures and municipalities to handle or refer pollution complaints. Detailed procedures for the redress of environmental complaints are available [here](#).

As of March 31, 2020, the Environmental Dispute Coordination Commission had received 1,063 cases, 1,026 of which had been resolved, and the prefectural pollution review boards had received 1,649 cases, 1,606 of which had been resolved.⁶¹ The commission also conducts an annual pollution complaint survey to understand the number and status of pollution-related complaints received at local government pollution complaint consultation desks located nationwide. For example, according to a survey in 2018, 66,803 complaints were received at the consultation desks of local governments nationwide. Among them, 47,656 related to the seven major types of pollution; and 19,147 complaints related to other types of pollution, such as the dumping of waste.⁶²

61. See <https://www.soumu.go.jp/kouchoi/english/characteristics.html>.

62. See <https://www.soumu.go.jp/kouchoi/english/complaint.html>.



11. Jordan

Enabling environment

The 2016 bylaws on the development of government services (No. 156)⁶³ provided the Ministry of Public Sector Development the mandate to establish a central system for complaints about government services. Moreover, Jordan's [Third National Action Plan 2016-18](#) under the Open Government Partnership Initiative includes a commitment to enhance the complaints registration system and follow-up mechanisms in response to citizen

feedback⁶⁴ by: providing additional channels in a more organized manner to receive complaints submitted by citizens and those who deal with the government on a broader level; developing an electronic system to manage the registration of complaints and grievances related to service delivery; and addressing complaints and identifying appropriate solutions based on justice, equality, and transparency.

Centralized Feedback and Grievance Mechanism: “Bekhedmetkom”

CONTEXT

Brief description

Launched by the government to fulfill its commitment to complaint management, the Bekhedmetkom (“at your service”) platform was established in August 2017 and is hosted by the [e-Government web page](#) of the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology. The platform aims to increase communication with citizens and serves as a sorting house for receiving complaints, suggestions, corruption reports, and requests for information. It holds the different institutions connected to the platform accountable by conducting an annual assessment aimed at identifying concerns with resolution time, recurrent complaints, and other issues, and then proposing related remedies that the different agencies are requested to implement to improve their GRM performance. The platform also has an assigned liaison officer in each entity connected to the platform who oversees the receiving, handling, and dispatching of received complaints to the relevant internal departments. By the end of 2017, 89 government institutions were linked to this platform (Jordan Times 2017).

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

Uptake channels include a web platform, a toll-free phone number (065008080)⁶⁵ for the National Contact Center for Government Services, a smartphone [application](#), an email address (scc@sd.com.jo), and hard copies of an uptake form available onsite in government offices, which are to be completed and deposited in suggestion and complaint boxes, which are located on office premises.

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

To submit a query online, platform users receive a reference number through email or SMS. To track the status of a query, the user can enter the reference number and phone number on the [“Ask the Government Status” page](#). The process is similar for users tracking the status of [submitted suggestions, complaints, reports, and compliments](#).

Approximately 100 liaison officers at government institutions are responsible for addressing feedback received through the platform (Jordan Times 2017). A training workshop for these officers in ministries, institutions, and government departments was held on July 27, 2017.⁶⁶ Feedback received via email or

63. “Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM), Jordan Progress Report 2016-18,” 32. http://www.partners-jordan.org/files/Jordan_Midterm_Report_2016-2018_for-public-comment.pdf.

64. “Jordan’s Third National Action Plan 2016-18 under the Open Government Partnership,” 16. <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/jordan-third-national-action-plan-2016-2018/>.

65. Information about available hours was not publicly available online.

66. “Summary of RASED’s Assessment Report—3rd National Action Plan Within the Open Government Partnership 16-18,” Hayat Center -RASED. November 2018.



through the suggestion and complaint boxes is first checked to ensure that they contain the relevant information and are then recorded in the online Bekhedmetkom system. Feedback is received and compiled from the uptake channels by a liaison officer, who sends an official letter to the head of the Suggestions and Complaints Committee at their institution along with the attached forms that were deposited in the boxes. The head of the committee gathers the committee members, reviews and analyzes the feedback, and forwards it to the concerned administration, which sends a response through the platform.⁶⁷ In cases where the subject matter of a complaint is related to a member of the committee, that member is recused from discussions and investigation of the issue.

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

Users of the Bekhedmetkom platform rate their level of satisfaction on the e-Government web page by selecting and clicking a happy, neutral, or unhappy rating icon on the bottom left of the screen.

In 2018, the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology published the [Usage Statistics of e-Government Services Report](#) and the [Satisfaction of Citizens on](#)

[e-Government Services Report](#), which are only available in Arabic on the e-Government web page.

Monitoring and analysis

The system had received over 14,000 applications by mid-January 2019 (Jordan Times 2019) of which 6,274 (44.4 percent) were submitted to the “Complaints” section; 5,491 (38.8 percent) to the “Ask the Government” section; 1,343 to the “Suggestions” section; 682 to the “Compliments” section, and 335 to the “Report” section.

Jordan’s Third National Action Plan 2016–18 under the Open Government Partnership Initiative includes a pledge by the Jordanian government to periodically issue and publish reports regarding complaints received by the system, the means of addressing them, and pending complaints reports.⁶⁸ These reports are not available online.

Promotional materials

The Bekhedmetkom portal is available in [English](#) and [Arabic](#). The Jordanian e-Government website includes a frequently-asked-question [\(FAQ\) section](#).

Ministries and Public Authorities

Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education’s feedback and grievance system is overseen by the Guidance and Orientation Division Department, which oversees three sections: complaints and grievances, protection and safe environment, and educational counseling.⁶⁹ Uptake channels to provide feedback to the ministry include an online form on the ministry’s website (in Arabic only), the ministry’s homepage, email (moecs@moe.gov.jo), fax (+962 65666019), phone (+9626 5607331 from Sunday to Thursday,

8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.), and hard copy of a complaint form submitted at the ministry’s office.

The complaints and grievance section handles complaints received from teachers and covers 42 education directorates.⁷⁰ It deploys six staff members who are trained on administrative control and internal investigation. The staff documents and records complaints via an electronic filing system and a paper-based archiving system where complaints are filed before

67. See “Suggestions and Complaints and Compliments Management Methodology.” https://www.sdc.com.jo/english/images/stories/pdf/suggestions_complaints_management_methodology.pdf.

68. “Jordan’s Third National Action Plan 2016–2018 under the Open Government Partnership Initiative,” 17. <https://www.opengovpartnership.org/documents/jordan-third-national-action-plan-2016-2018/>.

69. Jordan—Education Reform Support Program: Environmental and social systems assessment. November 2017. <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/146381505276859197/environmental-and-social-systems-assessment>.

70. Ibid.



being forwarded to the concerned staff. Complaints records are maintained for three years in a safe cabinet before being discarded.⁷¹ The protection and safe environment section has three staff members and receives complaints from students and parents, including concerns about various forms of violence—verbal and physical. On average, this department receives 60–70 complaints per semester through their own hotline. This section maintains a complaint log and follows up with the education directorates to close each complaint case. They manage the 2,000 educational counselors deployed at 2,000 schools all over Jordan (the total number of schools in the country is about 3,500). The management of the section has been trying to recruit additional counselors to cover the remaining gap of about 1,500 schools that lack a counselor.

The ministry's complaint management system logged 4,211 complaints in 2019, 3,514 of which were recorded as resolved.⁷² There is no classification or categorization of the types of complaints received. Informally, the Guidance and Orientation Division Department tries to use their experience to make improvements in the system, but there is no systematic analysis of the grievance data to inform management.⁷³

Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources

Uptake channels for complaints include completing and submitting a hard copy of a complaint form at the ministry, an online form on the ministry's web page, email (memr@memr.gov.jo), fax (+96265865714), and phone (+96265803060) during working hours (Sunday to Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) A petitioner must provide a name, email address, phone number, and the issue at hand, including clarifying if it is a suggestion or a complaint. There is also an option for providing a fax number, job title, and mailing address.

Ministry of Labor

Complaint handling by the Ministry of Labor (MoL) is shared by different divisions and directorates. Under the Directorate of Inspections, the hotline and complaints, child labor, inspection and follow-up, and monitoring divisions each play a role.⁷⁴ Feedback can be submitted via a free hotline, which is operational on all the land and cellular networks in the country (landline: 080 022 208, Zain network: 0796580666, Orange network: 0777580666, and Umniah network: 0785602666). The hotline has an answering machine that registers complaints after 3:30 p.m. Complaints can also be submitted through the ministry's WhatsApp number (0790955557), email (hotline@mol.gov.jo), or online through the ministry's complaints and suggestions [web page](#). At the subnational level, the directorates of the ministry also receive complaints, albeit mostly via walk-ins. These complaints are referred to the ministry only if the complainant does not speak Arabic (34 percent of foreign workers are non-Arabic speaking). Staffed with eight people who receive complaints,⁷⁵ the ministry's Division of Hotline and Complaints has some capacity to receive complaints in languages other than Arabic, including English, Tagalog, Hindi, Sri Lankan, Bangladeshi, Chinese, and Indonesian. However, migrants who speak other languages are not able to use the hotline easily or to communicate well with ministry staff, particularly at the directorate level. The ministry has a basic manual that outlines the procedures for filling internal processing of complaints. It has six databases for registering complaints, although they are not interlinked. The Complaints and Hotline Division has a database that records complaints received at the central (ministry) level. Since 2017, it has connected the central database to two directorates. The Child Labor Unit receives reports manually, which are then entered in an Excel sheet by the information technology staff to generate a report. As a result, a comprehensive register and tracking of all of the complaints received by the ministry at the central and decentralized levels require extensive manual cross-checking.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid.

74. Economic Opportunities for Jordanians and Syrian Refugees Program for Results: Additional Financing. Addendum to the environmental and social systems assessment. April 16, 2020. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/822311589370401687/pdf/Final-Addendum-to-Environmental-and-Social-Systems-Assessment-ESSA-Additional-Finance-Economic-Opportunities-for-Jordanians-and-Syrian-Refugees-PforR-P171172.pdf>.

75. Ibid.



There is little information regarding complaints received at the directorate (subnational) level: the complaints that are received directly at the directorate level are not registered in a central database; rather, they are tallied at the end of the month and included in a monthly report that is sent to the ministry.

In 2019, the ministry recorded over 6,500 complaints that resulted in citations, warnings, or were referred to the court.

There is insufficient information to assess how many complaints are resolved.⁷⁶ No systematic practice for providing feedback to the complainants is in place. Ministry staff report that they inform complainants by calling them back. However, the feedback date and communication are not logged in the system.⁷⁷

Thematic Feedback and Grievance Systems: Gender-Based Violence

The governmental organizations that work on gender-based violence are the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Social Development, and the Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs.

The Ministry of Health works mainly through its network of health centers and hospitals. It is assigned the role of detecting and identifying victims of domestic violence. There is no national registrar established at the Ministry of Health to ensure that health service providers in the public and private sectors register cases registered by or on behalf of victims of violence.

The Ministry of Education's area of work is focused on awareness raising and preventive mechanisms despite the fact that it has developed a set of procedures and protocols to receive and refer detected cases of domestic violence. The ministry's work is mainly to train school counselors to enhance students' skills in self-protection and to train school-level core teams to follow up on violence issues, particularly school violence and corporal punishment.

The activities of the Ministry of Social Development are limited to a program on family counseling that entails holding workshops for the families of children who are subjected to domestic violence. The ministry was involved in proposing and adopting the Family Protection Law and in setting the standards

and criteria for 25 public and private institutions that host the elderly, children at risk, and women's shelters, in addition to supervising their work.

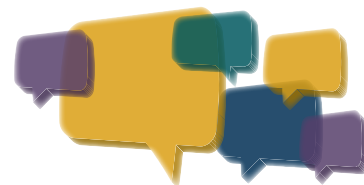
The Ministry of Justice had a pivotal role in passing the law on family protection as well as in suggesting legal amendments and laws protecting the family that are in line with the National Framework for Family Protection. Similarly, the Ministry of Justice and the Judicial Council, in cooperation with the Judicial Institute, supervise the training of judges and clerks at national courts on how to deal with victims of violence. The cooperation has also led to the introduction of a specialized education curricula prepared for the Judiciary Institute, which targets prosecutors and judges.

The Ministry of Awqaf and Religious Affairs is responsible, through its network of religious clerks, for raising awareness on various subjects related to violence against women, including women's rights and the roles and responsibilities in the family from the Islamic perspective.

The [Jordanian National Commission for Women](#), initiated and headed by HRH Princess Basma since its establishment in 1992, is a semigovernmental organization that advocates and promotes women's diverse issues. Its mission is to support the mainstreaming of a gender-equality perspective in all policy areas and to narrow the gap between the formal

76. Ibid.

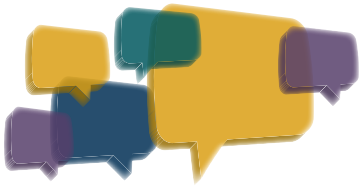
77. Ibid.



acknowledgment of women's rights as detailed by legislation and the actual societal attitudes toward women. It has developed the National Strategy for Jordanian Women 2006-10 to limit gender-based violence, develop a multidisciplinary and institutional approach to protect women from violence based on human rights, and to change social attitudes that support gender-based violence.

The [National Council for Family Affairs](#) was established in 2001 as an umbrella organization and coordinating body for relevant governmental and nongovernmental agencies in the field of human and social development and family affairs. It is chaired by Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah. It acts as the secretariat for the National Team for Family Protection, which was established in 2000 as a multiagency task force entrusted with limiting domestic violence and sexual abuse, and which

includes representatives from the Security Directorate, the Judicial Council, the Family Protection Department, the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Awqaf, and the Jordan River Foundation, JNCW, the Jordanian Women's Union (JWU), the Centre for Family Counselling (CFC), the National Centre for Human Rights (NCHR), the Institute for Family Health, and Queen Zein Al-Sharaf Institute for Development (ZENID). The main tasks of the National Team are to: provide technical consultation to national projects on family protection that are supervised by the members of the team; supervise and implement the National Framework for Family Protection and the National Strategy for Family Protection and issue relevant reports; follow-up on regional and Arab conference recommendations that relate to family protection; and seek funding for programs and projects in line with the National Strategy for Family Affairs.



12. Malaysia

Enabling environment

The Public Complaint Bureau's authority and powers are governed by Administrative Development [Circulars](#) (ADCs) and ADC Letters issued by the chief secretary to the Malaysian government. Specifically, ADC 4 of 1992 on Managing Public Complaints and ADC 1 of 2002 on Improving the Effectiveness in Managing Public Complaints governs the work of the Public Complaint Bureau. There is a high level of commitment to

manage public complaints. The Permanent Committee on Public Complaints is a high-powered committee chaired by the chief secretary to the government (head of the civil service), and its membership comprise other top senior officials, including the director-general of the Public Service Department, who is also the committee secretary. The committee reports to the cabinet.

Public Complaints Bureau

CONTEXT

Brief description

Established in 1971, the [Public Complaints Bureau](#) (PCB), which is under the jurisdiction of the Governance, Integrity and Anti-Corruption Centre, investigates complaints about maladministration, administrative actions, and decisions of the Malaysian government, ministries, departments, and agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. The PCB does not have any legislative powers. It relies on its administrative powers and powers vested in it by the high-powered committee. A detailed description of specific categories and types of complaints that can be addressed by PCB can be found [here](#). Complaints that are beyond PCB's purview include government policies and matters under the authority of the Public Accounts Committee, the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, and the Legal Aid Department, as well as family disputes, civil claims involving individuals and companies, and complaints against entities or private companies not associated with the government.

Number of agencies and ministries

The PCB's jurisdiction includes all 700 government ministries, departments, and agencies at the federal and state levels. The list and contact details of the respective entities is available [here](#).

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

Users can submit complaints and feedback using a web-based [integrated complaint management system](#), with a chatroom, by email, by phone, via fax, by post, [in person](#), or with a [mobile app](#).

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

After registering a complaint or other feedback, the PCB team generates a case number and sends a letter of acknowledgment to the complainant, categorizing the case as simple, moderate, or complex. A user can check the status of a complaint through the online [tracking](#) system by using the provided case number or their national registration identification number. A complainant is copied on correspondence related to the [investigation](#) of the case. When an investigation is complete, the PCB informs the complainant of the result. A detailed visual that outlines the PCB's complaint-handling process can be found [here](#). Complaints of public interest are brought to the attention of the Permanent Committee on Public Complaints, which in turn can escalate selected issues to the attention of the cabinet.

Timeframes and service standards

PCB's Standard Operating Procedures and [client's charter](#) stipulate that all complaints must be resolved within 15 days. Simple cases may be resolved immediately or within three days, moderate cases may be settled within five to



15 days, and complex cases may take two to four months. PCB monitors progress on key performance [indicators](#), such as the overall resolution rate of complaints, the percentage of complaints resolved within 15 working days, and the customer satisfaction index.

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

The PCB compiles feedback from complainants through the [feedback form](#) on its web page, the [Respons Rakyat app](#), and survey forms sent through email. The PCB allows users to file complaints regarding the quality of services delivered by the PCB and the conduct of PCB officers and staff. The [Committee on Management of Complaints Against PCB](#) is responsible for investigating and taking appropriate measures to address complaints related to the PCB's services and staff conduct.

Appeals

PCB has an internal dispute resolution mechanism if the complainant is not satisfied with the investigation or outcome (Teck 2007). Complicated cases and systemic issues are referred to the Permanent Committee on Public Complaints, which has the mandate to institute investigations, request explanations from public officers and staff, and direct the relevant departments/ agencies to take corrective actions to resolve complaints.

Monitoring and analysis

The PCB's performance is monitored by the Permanent Committee on Public Complaints. PCB's 2020 report on [key performance indicators](#) attests that the overall complaint resolution rate is 85 percent, 75 percent of complaints received are resolved within 15 working days, and the customer satisfaction score is 80 percent. Additionally, 25 letters of recommendation for corrective and preventive actions were issued to government agencies (Teck 2007).

SOCIAL INCLUSION

- ✓ The PCB's [web page](#) has a responsive web design that enables users to easily change the text size to fit their visual needs, and its reports are published in a reader-friendly [format](#). Its web page contents are available in [Bahasa Melayu](#), and the website uses leading technologies such as encryption software to safeguard [personal data](#).
- ✓ Complaints can be submitted without charge. They can also be lodged on behalf of another person with consent. Anonymous complaints are permissible if the complaint involves the public interest and if the details provided are sufficient for conducting an investigation.
- ✓ The PCB emphasizes that it serves the community by resolving complaints fairly, effectively, and efficiently.
- ✓ Advocacy groups, such as the Association for Improvement of Mass Transit (TRANSIT), the Consumer Association of Penang, and SUHAKAM (Human Rights Commission) advocate for improved service delivery for citizens and encourage service users to [share their complaints and other feedback](#) with them.

OUTCOMES

Statistics

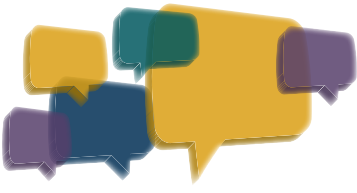
The PCB publishes detailed complaint management statistics for each year and includes these statistics in its [annual reports](#).

Examples of impact

The PCB publishes [success stories](#) on its web page.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Citizens can access information regarding the PCB through its [website](#), the [Respons Rakyat](#) mobile application, and its [Facebook](#) page. Its media gallery includes a [photo gallery](#), an [audio gallery](#) featuring the [official song](#) of the Public Complaints Bureau, and a [video gallery](#) that includes a host of videos about the PCB's mission and its initiatives.



Malaysia Government Call Centre

Established by the [Malaysian Administrative Modernization and Management Planning Unit](#), the Malaysia Government Call Centre ([MyGCC](#)) is a [one-stop call center](#) for citizens to make requests and complaints; provide suggestions, feedback, and compliments; and use online public services without having to visit a government agency or ministry.⁷⁸ Citizens can contact MyGCC via phone, SMS, fax, interactive voice response service,

[Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Portal](#), or [SITI@1MOCC](#)—the MyGCC mobile application. Operating hours for the voice channel are from 7.30 a.m. to 9.00 p.m., seven days a week, and the nonvoice channel can be reached 24/7.⁷⁹ Members of the public who have questions about an agency or ministry can reach out to MyGCC customer service officers or subject matter experts through a live [chatroom](#) on the [MyGovernment Portal](#).

Other Ministries and Departments

The Energy Commission

Energy consumers are encouraged to first try to address their complaint with the energy [licensee](#) or the parties involved before contacting the Energy Commission. The Energy Commission has the mandate to address complaints related to piped electricity and gas (such as billing errors and improper licenses),⁸⁰ procedures, late licensees, incompetent installation, incompetent contractors, unsafe wiring or gas piping systems, unapproved electrical and gas equipment, unsatisfactory service, hazardous activities near electrical or piped electrical installations, supply disruption, and other matters related to the supply of electricity and piped gas.⁸¹ Citizens can submit their complaints and other feedback through the [e-Aduan](#) online complaints system, e-form, email, phone, fax, telegram, and in-person at the Energy Commission Office Counter. There is also the option of reaching out to the Energy Commission's area offices. Information needed to file a complaint can be found [here](#).

The [Clients Charter](#) indicates that if the information submitted is complete, each complaint is scrutinized and can be resolved within 15 working days. However, complicated cases that require a site visit for review or additional documents from a third

party, as well as those involving policy issues that require legal scrutiny, will take four to six weeks. Complainants can track the status of a case using the e-Aduan system, [e-form](#), phone (03-8870-8800, Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., excluding public holidays). Upon completion of the complaint resolution [process](#), the complainant is informed about the outcome via letter, email, or telephone.

Department of Wildlife and National Parks, Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources

The Department of Wildlife and National Parks, which is under the Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources, has set up a [hotline](#) and e-forms for [inquiries](#) and [complaints](#) on its [web page](#) that citizens can use to report human-wildlife conflicts and violations of the Wildlife Act. Its [client charter](#) indicates that complaints with complete information will be acted upon within 24 hours. Complainants can check the status of a complaint and provide feedback after it has been resolved. The department publishes monthly client charter achievement [reports](#), which include its progress in each state in responding to wildlife complaints with complete details in no more than 24 hours.

78. See <https://www.malaysia.gov.my/portal/content/30044>.

79. See <https://www.malaysia.gov.my/portal/feedback/2>.

80. A licensee is a company that has been licensed by the commission to supply electricity or gas through pipelines to consumers. The licensee is subject to the Electricity Supply Act 447 of 1990 and the Gas Supply Act 501 of 1993, which are both within the jurisdiction of the commission.

81. See <https://www.st.gov.my/en/microsites/index/4/10>.



Other ministries

The ministries of [health](#); [education](#); [tourism](#); [transport](#); and [women, family, and community development](#) use [SisPAA](#), an online complaint management system, to receive complaints, compliments, inquiries, and suggestions from the public, in addition to other channels, including phone, email, letter, fax, and in-person visits. Service standards and timelines for resolving simple, moderate, and complex cases are outlined in the client charters of the respective ministries, and their performance on these and other key performance indicators is reported in monthly or quarterly client charter achievement reports. Complainants can verify the status of a case through [SisPAA's Check Feedback](#) function using the case number issued when registering the complaint. Complainants are notified of the outcome when the investigation of the case has been completed.

Tribunal for Consumer Claims⁸²

The Tribunal for Consumer Claims was established under the Consumer Protection Act of 1999 (Act 599). It operates under

the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs. Its purpose is to provide an alternative to civil courts as a forum for consumers to seek redress regarding purchased goods and services.

Tribunal for Homebuyer Claims⁸³

The Tribunal for Homebuyer Claims was established under the Housing Development (Control and Licensing) Act of 1996 in December 2002. It is a special tribunal established to hear disputes between home buyers and housing developers.

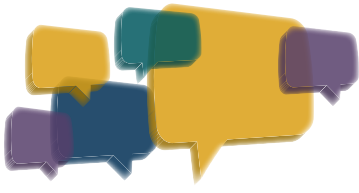
Ombudsman for Financial Services (OFS)⁸⁴

The Ombudsman for Financial Services operates the Financial Ombudsman Scheme that was approved by Bank Negara Malaysia pursuant to the Financial Services Act of 2013 and the Islamic Financial Services Act of 2013. The Ombudsman for Financial Services is a nonprofit organization that functions as an alternative dispute resolution channel for resolving disputes among its members, who are financial service providers licensed or approved by Bank Negara Malaysia and financial consumers.

82. See <https://www.malaysia.gov.my/portal/content/30891>.

83. See <https://ehome.kpkt.gov.my/resources/index/fileupload/Scope%2C%20Functions%20and%20Jurisdiction%20of%20the%20Tribunal%20For%20Homebuyer%20Claims1897.pdf>.

84. See https://www.ofs.org.my/en/company_overview.



13. Morocco

Enabling Environment

The 2011 [constitution](#) of Morocco (article 156) states that “The public services listen to their users and follow-up on their observations, proposals and grievances.”⁸⁵ In his [Royal Speech](#) of October 2016, His Majesty King Mohammed VI emphasized the need to deal with citizens’ queries and complaints and to provide citizen’s feedback:

It is equally unacceptable that the Administration does not respond to people’s complaints and queries, as if the citizen were worthless, or as if it were a mere element in the general configuration of the space. Without the citizen, there is no administration. The citizen has the right to receive answers to his queries and solutions to the problems he presents to it. The Administration is obliged to explain things to people and

to motivate its decisions, which must be made on the basis of the law.⁸⁶

Morocco’s [2018–2021 Public Administration Reform Program](#) planned to “Develop the system for receiving users’ observations and proposals, and for monitoring and processing their complaints.”⁸⁷ [Decree 2-17-265](#) of June 23 2017, which came into force on January 1, 2018, set out “the procedures for receiving users’ comments and proposals, and for monitoring and processing their complaints.”⁸⁸ To this end, Morocco has established a unified national portal: [Chikaya](#) (*claim* in Arabic). The recently released *New Development Model report*⁸⁹ reiterates the importance of this compact between citizen and state, and the Chikaya platform could be instrumental in reinforcing this compact.

The Chikaya Platform

CONTEXT

Brief description

Launched in January 2018 by the Ministry of Public Administration and Administration Reform in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry, Trade, Investment and Digital Economy, the Chikaya platform is intended to receive citizen complaints and other feedback. Its objectives include ensuring that their observations, proposals, and remarks are collected, that there is processing and follow-up of citizen feedback, and that solutions to problems are presented. According to [Chikaya.ma](#), as of April 2021, the platform was deployed by 1,730 administrations, public institutions, and organizations providing public services at the national, regional, provincial, and communal levels. Complaints submitted through the judicial system and cases that have been

the subject of a judicial decision and that have acquired the force of *res judicata* are beyond the purview of Chikaya.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

Chikaya’s uptake channels include a [portal](#) for citizens to send complaints, observations, and suggestions; a mobile application; and a call center (open Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., at 3737 within Morocco and +212 5 37 67 99 06 for overseas users). Citizens submitting feedback through the portal must follow a step-by-step process. First, they choose the type of administration concerned: ministries and high commissions, local authorities (regional, provincial, communal, or all); or public institutions and companies (e.g., agriculture and fishing, environment, energy, and mining). After selecting the specific

85. Morocco’s Constitution of 2011. https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Morocco_2011.pdf.

86. “Texte Intégral Du Discours Prononcé Par SM Le Roi à l’ouverture de La 1ère Session de La 1ère Année Législative de La 10-Ème Législature.” Maroc.Ma.

87. “Morocco 2018–2021 Public Administration Reform Program,” 44.

88. “Projet de Décret N° 2-17-265 Fixant Les Modalités de Réception Des Remarques et Propositions Des Usagers, Du Suivi et Du Traitement de Leurs Réclamations.”

89. https://www.csmd.ma/documents/CSMD_Report_EN.pdf.



administration, a user selects a theme and subtheme,⁹⁰ a region, a province, and a municipality. The user then writes a message to which they can attach files (including photos). When submitting an observation or suggestion, the user must indicate the category of their identity (citizen, company, association, other, or Moroccan living abroad), first name, family name, national identification number, and contact information (phone number or email address). When citizens submit feedback through the online portal, they receive an instant email notification of receipt (if they have shared their email address) as well as a tracking number and the subject of their complaint. They can use this number to track the complaint through the portal's [complaints tracking section](#). When citizens submit a complaint through the call center and provide a mobile phone number, they receive an instant notification via SMS with a tracking number and the name of the administration. They can use this number to track the complaint by phone. If citizens choose the option of lodging a complaint directly with a given administration via mail, telephone, or fax, the concerned administration is obliged to log it into the centralized national complaints register.

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

Once a complaint is filed through Chikaya, it is recorded in the national complaints register and then sent to the relevant administration unit. These units have been established at every public institution to follow up on citizen complaints. They receive and log submissions into the national complaints register, process them, maintain records, and respond to citizens. When citizens lodge complaints directly with a given institution, their cases are registered and logged into the national complaints register. If the complaint is not formulated in accordance with the guidance provided by the Ministry of Administration Reform, it lacks clarity, or it is not accompanied by required supporting documents, the administration sends a response seeking clarification from the complainant within 15 days of receiving the case. The administrative units are also responsible for preparing a report on their activities⁹¹ at the

end of each fiscal year and submitting it to the head of the administration to which they belong.

Timeframes and service standards

The concerned administration is obligated to examine the complaint and send a reply within a maximum of 60 days from the date of receipt. This reply is recorded in the national complaints register.

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

If citizens are satisfied with the response to their feedback from the concerned administration, they can choose to close the request and express their level of satisfaction through the online portal.

Appeals

If citizens are not satisfied with the response they receive from the administration, they can reopen a case through Chikaya for a new processing of their complaint.

Monitoring and analysis

Within three months after the end of each fiscal year, each administration prepares an activity report⁹² on complaints, observations, and suggestions that they have received. This report must contain the measures taken and those envisaged to improve the quality of services provided. The Department of Administration Reform submits a consolidated summary report to the prime minister by the end of June each year⁹³ based on the reports of public administrations and the statistics and indicators from the national complaints register. The web portal includes a [public statistics page](#), which presents aggregated data on complaints for all administrative bodies. This page presents the number of administrative bodies involved (1,730 as of April 2021), the number of complaints received (900,984), the average timing for addressing complaints (45 days), the proportion of total complaints processed (69.62 percent), the number of complaint cases reopened (34,984), and the rate of satisfaction expressed by citizens (55.48 percent). It also allows

90. Examples include *environment* as a theme and *renewable energies* as a subtheme or *economic development* as a theme and *regional touristic activities* as a subtheme.

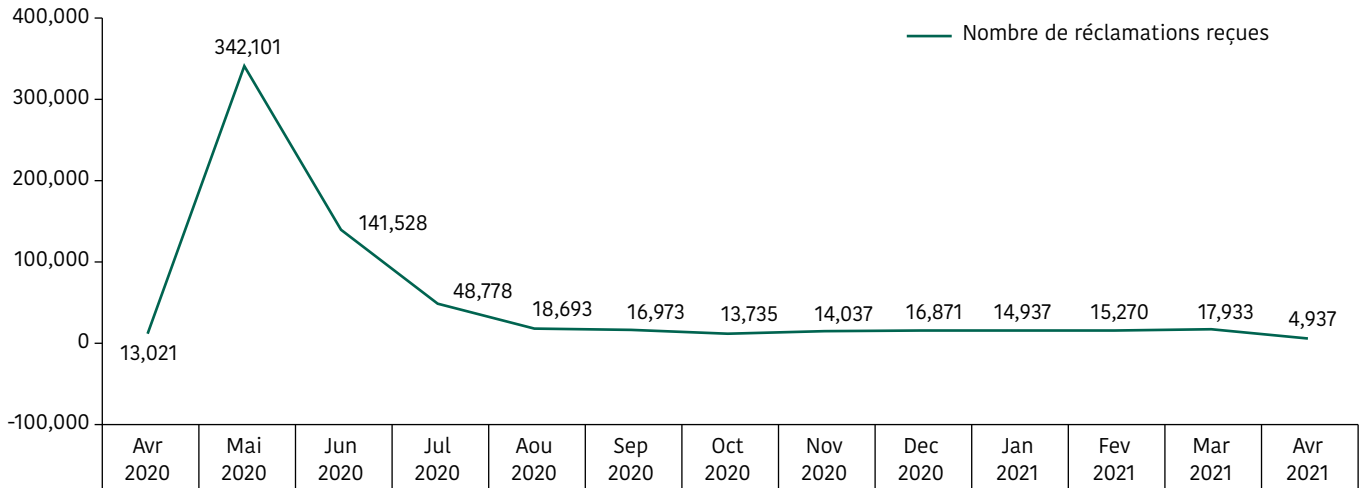
91. No report is publicly available online.

92. Not publicly available online.

93. Not publicly available online.



NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED THROUGH CHIKAYA BETWEEN MAY 2020 TO MARCH 2021



users to search the number of complaints received, the number of complaints processed, the number of complaints for which citizens have expressed their level of satisfaction, and the average number of days that it took to process a complaint over any specified period. It also shows a graph with the number of complaints received in the past year.

Promotional materials

The Chikaya portal is available in [French](#) and [Arabic](#) to maximize citizen access. Decree 2.17.265 on Defining the Methods of Receiving, Tracking and Processing Users' Comments, Suggestions, and Complaints and a *Guide to Observations, Suggestions and Complaints* are available on the Chikaya web

page. The guide presents the various channels for submitting a complaint, the stakeholders involved in their processing, the description of how the complaints are processed, how they are tracked while being processed, the work of the teams involved, and some case examples. A presentation [video](#) on the Chikaya platform is also available in Arabic. The website makes it clear that all data, texts, information, images, photographs, and any other content published on the site are protected by intellectual property law. It also clarifies that all personal data that citizens may share through the portal are protected in accordance with [Law 09-98](#) relating to “the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data.”

The “Kolonamaak” Platform

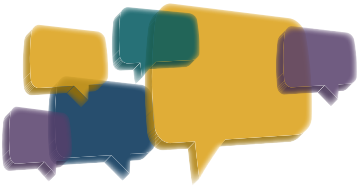
In January 2020, Princess Lalla Meryem, President of the National Union of Moroccan Women ([UNFM](#)) launched the *Kolonamaak* (“we are all with you”) platform that provides 24/7 support and guidance nationwide for female victims of violence. The platform is operated by UNFM and connected to institutional services, such as the Ministry of Solidarity,

Social Development, Equality and Family; the Office of the Public Prosecutor, police authorities, the Ministry of Health, and other relevant stakeholders. The platform, which is accessible through a toll-free number (8350, available 24/7) and a mobile application (available on the [AppStore](#) and the [PlayStore](#)), locates the victim’s phone in order to provide the



necessary assistance and directs her to the most relevant of the 12 regional centers. The centers are part of a national network of psychological and social support, staffed by experts in the fields of psychology, sociology, family mediation, and social work. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Solidarity, Social Development, Equality and the Family announced the creation of 63 accommodation and care centers for women victims of violence (Maroc Diplomatie 2020). In

July 2020, UNFM mobilized an artificial intelligence expert with the support of UN Women Morocco to centralize data management, monitor the complete support system provided to survivors of violence, and optimize collaboration between the national platform and its regional listening centers (UN Women n.d.). Publicity videos regarding the objectives and functions of the Kolonamaak platform are available on UNFM's [web page](#).



14. Nepal

Enabling Environment

Nepal's [Good Governance Act 2064 of 2008](#),⁹⁴ clause 31, elaborates on the government's procedures to address and disclose follow-up actions on complaints.⁹⁵ Section 20 of the [Good Governance Regulation 2065 of 2009](#) requires each government office to designate a nodal officer to handle complaints and to make provisions for monitoring and evaluation to improve service delivery, including periodic public hearings. The [Service Campaign Operation Guidelines 2065](#) state that it is the service provider's primary responsibility to ensure the satisfaction of service receivers by prioritizing their

grievances and suggestions. The *Hello Sarkar* Room Operating Directive 2068 highlights the right of citizens to register grievances about government-provided services and to make suggestions to the government. The 2020 Public Accountability Promotion Procedure lays out the provision for citizens to register grievances at the local level, detailing the steps for accepting, sorting, storing, and responding to grievances; the role of the grievance officer; and the formation of a grievance resolution coordination committee under the leadership of the deputy-mayor.

Hello Sarkar

CONTEXT

Brief description

Launched by the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers (OPMCM) in 2011, [Hello Sarkar](#) (hello government) is the official portal mandated to receive public grievances related to service delivery, such as discrimination or obstruction in accessing public services, and irregularities in service deliveries. While Hello Sarkar does not have investigative functions or a mandate to resolve complaints, OPMCM has the power to issue injunctions to ministries and departments under their jurisdiction to resolve complaints.

Number of agencies and ministries

Hello Sarkar's grievance mechanism is linked to [42 ministries](#) and will be expanded to [753 local level](#). (Himalayan News Service 2019).

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

Citizens can use various [uptake channels](#) to submit complaints using Hello Sarkar's grievance mechanism, including a toll-free phone number (1111), fax, regular mail, email (1111@opmcm.gov.

np), SMS, a [website form](#), a [Facebook page](#), and a Twitter handle (@Hello_sarkar).

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

The Good Governance Regulation 2065 made it mandatory for every ministry, department, and office to assign a nodal officer to handle complaints. Upon lodging a complaint, a petitioner is given a reference number that can be used to track the status of the case. Complaints are classified as *most urgent*, *urgent*, or *ordinary*. Nodal officers forward cases to the relevant higher authority or department, who keeps the Hello Sarkar team updated on the progress of the investigation and who addresses the complaints. In the event of a delay or failure by a department to address complaints under its jurisdiction, the OPMCM writes to the concerned ministry to initiate action toward resolution (Himalayan News Service 2019).

Timeframes and service standards

Citizens can avail themselves of the portal's online services 24 hours per day and can access the call center from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. every day (Setopati 2017). Complaints are acknowledged within 24 hours of receipt. Most urgent

94. Nepal was the first country in the South Asia region to promulgate Good Governance Act in 2006.

95. Rule 19 of Good Governance Act stipulates that government offices conduct at least one public hearing every four months. See <http://www.gogofoundation.org/downloads/Good%20Governance%20Act-2006.pdf>.



complaints are addressed within two hours, urgent issues are resolved within three days, and ordinary cases are handled within seven days.

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

Resolved cases are publicized on the portal.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Hello Sarkar web page is available in English and Nepali.

OUTCOMES

Statistics

As of January 2022, 16,591 complaints had been received, 10,938 of which had been closed, 2,542 of which were being processed,

1,463 of which had been seen, and 1,648 of which had not yet been seen, according to the portal. Currently, most complaints received relate to the National Information Technology Center, Nepal Police, Nepal Electricity Authority, Nepal Telecom, Department of Transport, and Kathmandu Metropolitan City. Resolved complaints are categorized, made public, and published on the portal.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Citizens can access Hello Sarkar's website, Facebook page, and Twitter handle (@Hello_sarkar) to get updates. A YouTube video about Hello Sarkar's mandate and its staff is also available online.

Other Departments

Department of Roads, Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport

The grievance mechanism of the Department of Roads is mandated with addressing complaints related to road infrastructure and transport. Citizens can submit their complaints to the department via phone or by using an online web form. Upon receipt of their complaint, they are issued with a reference number to track the status of their case. The department's grievance redress manual and quarterly reports on complaint handling are available on its web page.

Nepal Electricity Authority

Electricity consumers can use the Nepal Electricity Authority's (NEA) grievance mechanism to submit complaints about electricity services, including mistreatment of customers, staff negligence, and bribery. Uptake channels for complaints include an e-form, the 1150 toll-free number, Facebook, Twitter, and complaint boxes. Furthermore, the NEA plans to introduce an information-technology-based customer relation

management system that will allow consumers to post a complaint through a mobile app or through the NEA portal (NEA 2021). NEA's annual report for FY 2020–21 indicates that 15,471 complaints were submitted through the hotline number, all of which were settled;⁹⁶ 266 were lodged through the Hello Sarkar portal, 258 of which were resolved; and 492 complaints were submitted through NEA's social media accounts, 491 of which were addressed.⁹⁷ In addition, the NEA received cases for redress from the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority and the Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation.⁹⁸ Additional annual reports for NEA that include statistics on complaints are available here.

Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

In 2017, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology developed and implemented a complaint hearing procedure. Many schools are using the complaint box on their premises to mitigate and minimize sexual harassment and violence.

96. https://www.nea.org.np/admin/assets/uploads/annual_publications/Annual_report_2020.pdf.

97. Ibid.

98. Ibid, p. 200.



Provincial Level

Provincial ministries have introduced grievance management mechanisms, although their implementation varies across the seven provinces. Province 1,⁹⁹ Gandaki,¹⁰⁰ and Karnali¹⁰¹ have launched an online portal; Bagmati and Sudurpaschim have formulated a provincial Good Governance Act modeled on the national-level Good Governance Act of 2008. It details the

provision of a GRM procedure at the provincial level. Madhesh Province is on its way to approving a similar public hearing and public audit procedure. As of February 2022, the website of Lumbini province did not describe detailed procedures for grievance management.

Themes

Migrant workers

The Department of Foreign Employment is charged with handling migrant worker complaints against institutions (recruitment agencies) and individuals (unregistered agents). Its Complaints Registration and Investigation Section investigates all complaints received by the department. It also has the power to impose penalties in certain cases brought against recruitment agencies and to refer other cases to the police or to the Foreign Employment Tribunal. Complaints can be submitted to the department by the victim, a family member, or any other person, and may be made on behalf of a single migrant worker or group of workers. Although they can be lodged at any time for issues such as sending minors for foreign employment and falsifying documents, there is a statute of limitations for other offenses related to compensation, contract violations, and charging of excessive recruitment fees. The most common complaints involve individual agents taking money from prospective migrant workers but then failing to send them abroad as well as the treatment of migrant workers while abroad (e.g., contract termination or physical abuse). In addition to having authority over the investigations of all foreign employment cases, the department can also make a determination of and order the payment of fines, suspension

or revocation of a recruitment agency license, and in certain cases, to make a determination and order a recruitment agency to compensate a migrant worker. If either party is unhappy with a determination or order, they can appeal to the government of Nepal within 35 days of the decision (Open Society Foundation 2014).

In 2019, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security established a call center to address the complaints of Nepali migrant workers. Workers can access the call center via telephone, Messenger, or Viber.

Gender-based violence

Khabar Garau (Inform Us) is a 24-hour toll-free gender-based violence (GBV) helpline at the National Women Commission, which was supported by the World Bank through the Integrated Platform for Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response. The commission receives and responds to GBV-related calls through this line. A person can either call, SMS, complete an online complain form, or walk-in to the commission to file cases of GBV. The helpline is also backed by a case management system.

99. See <http://139.5.73.146/policy>.

100. See <https://hellocm.gandaki.gov.np/>.

101. See <https://hellocm.karnali.gov.np/>.



15. Pakistan

Citizens Portal

CONTEXT

Brief description

[Pakistan's Citizens Portal](#) (PCP), an online-based complaint registration system that connects all government organizations at the federal and provincial level, was launched by the prime minister in October 2018, with a view toward addressing people's problems in a timely and effective way and collecting their feedback on public service delivery. A similar system had first been introduced in 2016 at the provincial level in the [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa](#)¹⁰² province.

Enabling environment

The PCP is managed by the Prime Minister's Performance Delivery Unit (PMDU) and regarded as an information-and-communications-technology-based extension of the Prime Minister's Public Affairs and Grievances Wing under the 1973 Rules of Business article 28.¹⁰³

Number of agencies and ministries

The app is reportedly connected with 4,000 government offices.¹⁰⁴

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

The portal is primarily conceived as a [smartphone app](#). Complaints received by public authorities through other channels (e.g., phone calls, regular mail, electronic mail, walk-in visits to offices, websites, or social media) are inserted into the system manually and treated the same way as those submitted directly through the application.

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

Users begin by registering on the platform with either their identification number, passport number, or username. This creates a long-term account that allows the user to be in touch with multiple government authorities and keeps track of all submissions and their status. The registration process categorizes users according to three different categories: Pakistani citizen, overseas Pakistani, and foreigner. Once users are registered, they can use the system to lodge complaints, seek guidance or information; and offer suggestions to resolve any issue pertaining to the general public (e.g., the simplification of existing procedures). For complaints, users can select one of 27 categories¹⁰⁵ as well as a subcategory (e.g., under the agriculture category: farmers, fisheries, livestock and dairy, seeds and fertilizers, soil conservation, and water management). The most recently added category for lodging complaints is *land grabbing*, with the aim of helping the public not only lodge complaints regarding individual land grabs but also blow the whistle on state land being encroached upon by criminal networks (introduced in April 2021).¹⁰⁶

The brunt of the grievance follow-up work lies with two grievance focal points—one with administrative, the other with information technology expertise, which are nominated by the respective federal ministries or divisions and all other government entities. They bear the joint responsibility of ensuring that the complaint resolution process is carried out in a timely and consistent manner. They examine all submissions, initiate action, and refer complaints as necessary, recording and communicating proposed resolutions to citizens and analyzing data. All heads of organizations and government entities are responsible for overseeing the process and guaranteeing its

102. <http://kp.gov.pk/page/ecomplaintgrievanceredressalsystem>.

103. 2020 User Guidelines Manual for Complaints and Suggestion Handling.

104. <http://pakrtidata.org/2018/11/28/pakistan-citizen-portal-one-month/>; <https://nation.com.pk/29-Oct-2018/pm-launches-citizens-portal-to-spruce-up-governance>.

105. Categories include: agriculture, banking, communications, corruption/malpractice, development projects, disaster emergency, education, energy and power, environment and forests, excise and taxation, federal board of revenue, health, human rights, immigration and passports, investment, land and revenue, law and order, licenses and certificates, media cyber crimes, municipal services, the National Database and Registration Authority, overseas Pakistanis, poverty alleviation and social safety, security and exchanges commission, transport, and youth affairs.

106. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1616809>.



efficiency and quality. According to the *2020 User Guidelines Manual for Complaints and Suggestion Handling*, public organizations should conduct regular review meetings to identify possible complaint-handling bottlenecks, hold the grievance focal points accountable, and ensure that the latter are well-trained and fully equipped with “the necessary skills and resources to process complaints.”

The PCP provides government authorities with a dashboard that organizes complaints into five categories: (1) new; (2) in process; (3) escalated; (4) forwarded; and (5) resolved. Incoming complaints are hosted under the new complaints icon. The in-process stage involves steps such as initiation of action, assignment of complaints to the concerned officer, and processing until resolution. The complaint automatically moves to the escalated category when it is not resolved within the standard timeframe. The system records escalation in two stages. The first stage, *initial escalation* (red icon) is activated if the complaint has not been resolved within 10 days of submission. The complaint moves on to the second stage, *super escalation* (black icon) on the 21st day after submission. The *forwarded* complaints category highlights complaints that have been sent to other federal or provincial authorities. Focal persons should ensure that complaints are forwarded to the concerned organization as necessary within 24 hours of receipt. The category of resolved complaints keeps track of the resolution proposed to the citizen. While marking a complaint as *resolved*, the grievance focal point must enter remarks regarding the proposed resolution in the dashboard, attach the notification made to the complainant, and clearly refer to the rules and regulations that were applied to resolve the case. Complaints marked as resolved or that were closed in error can be reopened either by a grievance focal point or by the PMDU if a determination is made that the concerned organization has not properly resolved the complaint on its merits. Upon resolution, users receive a notification message of the outcome of the complaint; they can indicate on the application whether or not they are satisfied with the proposed solution.

Submissions falling under the suggestions section are divided into three categories: financial/development; policy/legislative; and administrative/procedural. They undergo a phase of initial examination followed by an appraisal by the relevant authority.

Monitoring and analysis

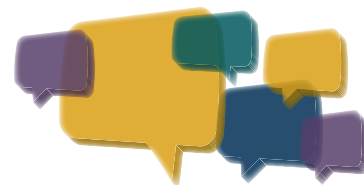
The *2018 User Guidelines Manual for Complaints and Suggestion Handling* suggests that common complaints should be considered as *trending*, and authorities should focus on such matters to develop permanent or long-term solutions. The manual also calls for the submission of monthly reviews of complaint data and regular reports about complaint resolution processes to the respective heads of organizations. The PMDU’s team is supposed to conduct regular reviews of complaint handling at all levels and to evaluate the performance of public organizations based on the time it takes to resolve complaints, the number of complaints received, the quality of responses to citizens, the quality of the proposed resolution, and citizen feedback.

Appeals

Citizens can provide feedback about a proposed resolution on the application. If a citizen is dissatisfied, the PMDU administration can reopen the case.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

According to the *2018 User Guidelines Manual for Complaints and Suggestion Handling*, three core principles of the PCP are that the system should be: (1) accessible; (2) approachable; and (3) fair and factual. The portal is available in Urdu and English. However, the PCP is designed to function primarily via a smartphone application, which raises concerns about the extent to which technologically disenfranchised people can use it. August 2020 data suggest that the portal’s users are overwhelmingly male (93.1 percent versus 6.7 percent female and 0.2 percent other). In terms of confidentiality, the portal allows users to choose a “hide identity” option, but some nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) suggest that government departments tagged in complaints can still see or access the identity of users (Yousafzai 2020).



OUTCOMES

Statistics

In January 2020, the Prime Minister’s Office reported a complaint resolution rate of 91.32 percent (Prime Minister’s Office 2020) and that over 1.3 million registered users had submitted over 1.6 million complaints (94 percent originating from Pakistan; 5.7 percent from overseas Pakistanis, and 0.3 percent from foreigners). By February 2021, the number of registered users had increased to 3.1 million (DNA 2021).

The PMDU publishes data about the PCP’s statistics once per year on average. In January 2020, it reported that out of the nearly 1.4 million registered users, 48,349 were students; 34,995 were businessmen; 33,277 were engineers; 20,025 were civil servants; 16,437 were teachers; 14,579 were from the corporate sector; 9,542 were in the armed forces; 8,816 were doctors; 6,841 were social workers; 4,616 were lawyers; 2,990 were senior citizens or retired; 2,615 were political workers; 2,309 were journalists; and 1,695 were from NGOs. Data provided also include a regional breakdown revealing that the majority of complaints (43.93 percent) originated from Punjab. Data also includes a breakdown of the percentage of complaints received and resolved by provinces. Statistics also reveal that the majority of complaints (around 20 percent) were related to

municipal services, followed by energy and power (18 percent), education (11 percent), and human rights (8 percent). The report includes the 10 heads of organizations with the highest numbers of complaints resolved and the officers with the highest number of super-escalated complaints (complaints that have not been resolved in the stipulated timeframe) (Prime Minister’s Office 2020).

Despite the high officially reported complaint resolution rate, some NGOs question the extent to which the portal truly helps citizens (Yousafzai 2020). According to August 2020 figures, only 38.52 percent of users had expressed satisfaction with the response provided by government departments (The Express Tribune 2020), and many pointed out that complaints seem to be frequently marked as resolved even though the issue is not actually solved from the complainant’s point of view. As of April 2021, the smartphone application had a ranking of 3.8 out of five stars on Google’s Playstore.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

It appears that the main communication efforts surrounding the PCP are done by the PMDU and the prime minister himself, who repeatedly encourages citizens to use the platform.

Other Departments

Provincial health care commissions

Some of Pakistan’s provinces have their own health care commissions—statutory bodies that regulate the delivery of health care services. The [Punjab Healthcare Commission](#), for example, was established in 2011 to regulate both public and private sector hospitals and to improve the quality of health care across the province. It manages a complaint management system according to 2014 regulations. Section 6 mandates it to investigate citizens’ complaints linked to “medical negligence, maladministration, malpractice, or failure in the provision of health care services” (Chaudhry, Ebrahim, and Naqvi 2015). The [Sindh Healthcare Commission](#), established in 2013, presides

over the Directorate of Complaints. It was constituted to develop and implement charters that enumerate the rights and responsibilities of patients, health care service providers, and health care establishments, and to ensure that all complaints are managed efficiently and effectively. The commission distinguishes between complaints linked to management, clinical care, relationships, and behavior (see the complaints categories developed [here](#) and a complaints flowchart [here](#)). The [Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Healthcare Commission](#) (KPHCC), established by the KPHCC Act of 2015, has a Directorate of Complaints Management and Legal, which explicitly advises health care facilities in establishing their own complaint



management systems with the support of and facilitation by the KPHCC. The Balochistan Healthcare Commission, established in 2019, has similar provisions (see [article 24 of the act](#) that established it).

Provincial education departments

Some Provincial School Education Departments have developed their own complaint management systems. For example, the government of Punjab's [School Education Department](#) provides a [web-based complaint management platform](#) combined with an official helpline (042 111 11 2020),¹⁰⁷ which receives and investigates any complaints related to public or private school. The five main proposed complaint categories are: (1) administrative (insufficient teachers, new school required, proposed school upgrade, school timing, textbooks not received, illegal occupation in school, security, cleaning, school funds, and e-transfer system); (2) facilities (boundary wall, classrooms, dangerous building, drinking water, electricity, furniture, playgrounds, and toilets); (3) teacher behavior (homework and punctuality); (4) unfair treatment (corporal punishment, discrimination, financial extortion, and harassment); and (5) stipends.

Ombud system

Pakistan's constitution of 1973 provides for a federal ombudsman; the institution was created by Presidential Order 1 of 1983 establishing the Office of Ombudsman (*Wafaqi Mohtasib*). It is incorporated into the constitution in article

270-A. The ombudsman is headquartered in Islamabad, with regional offices in Lahore, Sukkur, Quetta, Faisalabad, Multan, Dera Ismail Khan, Peshawar, Karachi, and Hyderabad. Other ombud agencies in Pakistan include Provincial Ombudsman (Mohtasib-e-Aala), with offices in Punjab, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Sindh; a banking ombudsman; a federal insurance ombudsman; and a federal tax ombudsman. Under the [Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2010](#), the position of *federal ombudsperson for protection against harassment of women at workplace* was established. The act also provides for similar offices at the provincial level.

Waste management bodies

The Sindh Solid Waste Management Board in Karachi created an [online app](#) to receive feedback from customers about all waste-collection and sanitation-related issues (SAMAA 2020). After opening the application, a complainant must log in by entering a name and contact number. The system provides a one-time password for that number to verify the identity of the complainant. The complainant is able to register the complaint by noting the location of the concern, inputting a name and mobile number, and uploading related images. The complainant is then able to view the status of the submission in a dedicated folder titled "My Complaint." All complaints are forwarded to the board's command and control center for processing, and every complaint must be resolved within eight hours.

107. See <http://www.pakistanhotline.com/2019/05/online-schools-complaint-system-punjab.html>.



16. Singapore

Enabling Environment

Opportunities for citizens to submit complaints and provide feedback to the government are governed by the [Prevention of Corruption Act](#) and the [Penal Code](#), which give citizens the right to complain about maladministration and corruption, and

the [Community Mediation Centers Act](#) and the [Mediation Act](#), which promote and facilitate the resolution of disputes through mediation.¹⁰⁸

REACH

Spearheaded by the Ministry of Communications and Information, REACH¹⁰⁹ (Reaching Everyone for Active Citizenry at Home) is the lead agency facilitating whole-of-government efforts to engage and connect with citizens on national and social issues. REACH began as the Feedback Unit in 1985. In October 2006, the unit was renamed REACH and restructured to move beyond gathering public feedback to become the lead agency for engaging and connecting with citizens. In January 2009, REACH was appointed as the Singapore government's e-engagement platform. Citizens can lodge complaints through an [online feedback form](#), email, regular mail, Twitter, [Facebook](#), discussion forum, a toll-free hotline, fax, or SMS. REACH also organizes face-to-face engagement sessions, such as public forums, dialogue sessions, and feedback booths.¹¹⁰ Upon receipt of feedback, complainants are provided with a reference number to track the status of their complaint by telephone or email.

Ministry of Communications and Information staff review the feedback and convey it to relevant government agencies for investigation and resolution.¹¹¹ The approach to addressing feedback submitted through the REACH discussion forum is similar, and responses from government agencies are posted on the relevant discussion thread.¹¹² Citizens can share their assessment of the response to complaints through the online feedback mechanism. They can use the [REACH web page](#) to acquire up-to-date information, as well as other sources, such as the [REACH Bytes](#) e-newsletter, [REACH News](#), the REACH [mailing list](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

Beyond handling complaints, REACH offers multiple ways for citizens to engage with public issues, including joining a WhatsApp Group Chat to provide feedback on national policies, join public consultations and events, and participate in e-polls.

OneService

Singapore's Municipal Services Office works with key government agencies, town councils, and community partners to improve feedback management and customer service for municipal services. Its OneService application is one-stop community platform to address residents' diverse needs. In addition to

its other features, this app has a "submit case" feature that allows users to submit feedback without needing to know the appropriate agency to direct it to. Users select the relevant category (e.g., roads and footpaths or drinking water), upload a photo, and provide a short description of the concern. The case

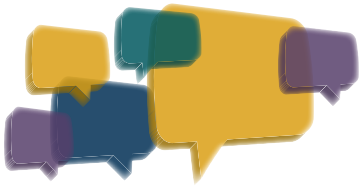
108. The information in this case study based solely on desk-based research.

109. See <https://www.mci.gov.sg/portfolios/public-comms/initiatives/others/reach-portal>.

110. See <https://www.reach.gov.sg/about-us/about-reach>.

111. See <https://www.mci.gov.sg/portfolios/public-comms/initiatives/others/reach-portal>.

112. See <https://www.reach.gov.sg/read/terms-of-participation-for-reach-events>.



is automatically routed to the relevant agency or town council for follow up, and a user can track the progress of a case on the “history” tab. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Municipal Services Office has introduced a dedicated *safe*

distancing feedback category that lets users submit feedback on safe distancing infringements, which helps agencies identify hotspots where restrictions must be more effectively enforced.

Other Departments

Public Utilities Board

The [Public Utilities Board](#) is responsible for the collection, production, distribution, and reclamation of water in Singapore. Citizens can submit queries and other feedback regarding water leaks; water bills; unscheduled water interruptions; drainage cleanliness; sewer chokes; and other issues related to water supply, drainage, or sewerage. They can use online help and [feedback forms](#) as well as local and international numbers for a 24-hour-a-day call center. Upon submission of a complaint, the petitioner receives a receipt of acknowledgment with a reference number for following up.¹¹³ General feedback and inquiries are answered within three working days, and complex concerns are resolved within 14 working days. Another feedback mechanism instituted by the Public Utilities Board is the Whistleblowing Channel, an independent line for employees, contractors, customers, and other stakeholders to report in good faith for investigation and action any unethical, fraudulent, or corrupt practices without fear of retaliation, subject to applicable laws. Users can submit complaints electronically or by mail. Whistleblowers must identify themselves; share their contact information; and provide specific details, including dates or period of the suspected activity, the staff involved, place (name and location), the value of any money or assets involved, and other details.

Health

The Ministry of Health’s guidance on the health care dispute resolution process encourages complainants to first raise their concerns with the relevant health care institution via regular mail or email for issues such as medical care management, service quality of medical staff, queries regarding

itemized billing, and financial discrepancies. In their petition, complainants are asked to define the cause of dissatisfaction and to share their particulars (name, gender, age, and contact information). The response time for a health care institution to respond to a complaint is 7–21 days.¹¹⁴ If complainants are dissatisfied with the institution’s response, they can contact other institutions, depending on the nature of the feedback. If the feedback relates to national-level health care services, safety issues related to public health, or queries about the health finance policy, citizens can use an [electronic form](#) on the ministry’s website or hotline. The Ministry of Health has an electronic system that logs every public query and assigns it a system number with a date and time stamp. Expected response times are 7–21 days.

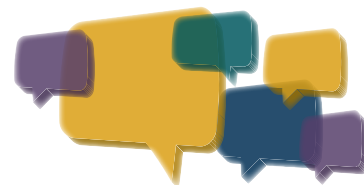
Complaints against medical practitioners are lodged with the Singapore Medical Council, which responds to general queries in three to seven working days and takes up to nine months to resolve complex cases. Feedback regarding the professional conduct of nurses is submitted to the Singapore Nursing Board, which responds to queries within seven working days and resolves complex cases within five to six months. Additional instructions regarding the management of complaints about dental and pharmaceutical issues, service quality, and billing and financial disputes are available [here](#).

Transport

Citizens can share feedback regarding service delivery by using the number listed for the Ministry of Transport’s quality service manager and submit general feedback and queries via the online feedback form. They can also provide feedback on any

113. See <https://app.pub.gov.sg/feedback/Pages/HelpAndFeedback.aspx>.

114. See <https://www.moh.gov.sg/contact-us/inquiries-and-complaints-guide>.



matter relating to bus, train, and taxi services—such as fare regulations and penalty fees—to the [Public Transport Council](#). They can use the feedback form on the [council's website](#) or contact the council via mail, telephone, facsimile, or email. For issues related to land transport infrastructure and systems, citizens can reach out to the [Land Transport Authority \(LTA\)](#). They can use one of the LTA's hotlines, such as the customer service hotline for giving feedback on matters such as parking requirements for automobiles, commuter facilities, road maintenance, and traffic conditions, or the illegal parking hotline. Users can submit queries through LTA's chatbot or through the contact form on its web page. LTA's service charter outlines service standards, including answering calls within 20 seconds, attending to 100 percent of walk-in appointments within 15 minutes, responding to simple email feedback and inquiries within three working days, and responding to more complex issues within three calendar weeks. Guidelines on complaint management for maritime- and port-related [issues](#) and civil aviation [matters](#) are available online.

Land

The [Singapore Land Authority](#) is a statutory board under the Ministry of Law. It addresses feedback related to land administration and management. Citizens can use its web page to submit compliments or feedback on [service improvement](#) or to share feedback on nonservice-related [issues](#), such as maintenance or rental of state property or land and registration of property transactions. They can also [contact](#) the e-service help desk or make an in-person appointment with the Singapore Land Authority's customer service counter. The timeline for addressing general queries and feedback is three working days. For case-specific issues, the timeline is 14 working days.

Appeals related to compensation awards for the compulsory acquisition of land are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Law's [Appeals Board](#). For a petitioner to be entitled to appeal a Collector of Land Revenue's award to the Appeals Board, he or she must first receive the awarded compensation amount under protest of its sufficiency. Procedures and timelines for lodging an appeal are accessible on the ministry's [web page](#).¹¹⁵

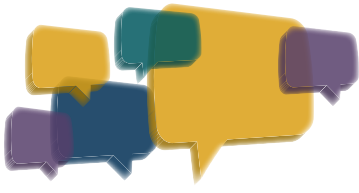
Labor

The [Ministry of Manpower](#) receives and addresses feedback regarding [violations of the Employment Act](#), particularly those related to work passes, employment practices, workplace safety and health, employment agencies, foreign workforce management, and general feedback. Feedback and queries can be submitted [online](#), by phone, and at the ministry services center. The ministry also utilizes the [Tripartite Alliance for Dispute Management \(TADM\)](#) to receive and resolve workplace grievances.¹¹⁶ TADM helps employees and employers manage employment disputes. Self-employed people manage payment-related disputes through [advisory and mediation services](#). Mediation is used to address salary-related claims, breaches of the employment contract, and [wrongful dismissal](#) claims. Complainants can contact TADM via e-form, email, letter, or [in-person appointment](#), and they are required to pay a nonrefundable registration fee for mediation. Upon receiving the complaint, TADM sends an acknowledgment email and a case reference number for following up; a case officer then contacts the complainant within two weeks.¹¹⁷ TADM's [YouTube video](#) and [brochure](#) provide information about the mediation process, and its website provides [more detailed information](#) on mediation rules and procedures.

115. See <https://www.moh.gov.sg/contact-us/inquiries-and-complaints-guide>.

116. The Tripartite Alliance for Dispute Management (TADM) is jointly set up by the tripartite partners: the Ministry of Manpower, National Trades Union Congress and Singapore National Employers Federation.

117. See <https://www.tal.sg/tadm/FAQs/Contact-Us-Form/Case-Officer>.



17. South Africa

Enabling Environment

In addition to South Africa's [constitution](#) (chapter 10, section 196), which gives citizens the right to complain about public service delivery, the [2001 Public Service Regulation](#) stipulates that each department shall put in place mechanisms to redress complaints related to service delivery. The White Paper on the Transformation of Service Delivery (also known as the [1997 Batho Pele Principles](#)) constitutes the backbone of South

Africa's Complaints and Compliments Management System for public services. The 2013 Citizen Complaints and Compliments Management Framework applies to all line and sector departments responsible for public service delivery and provides a uniform approach to complaint management in the public sector.

The Presidential Hotline

CONTEXT

Brief description

Launched by the Presidency in 2009, the [Presidential Hotline](#) has been hosted by the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME) since 2011. It is intended to provide citizens with an avenue for lodging complaints and queries when there is a lack of response from other complaint mechanisms and to underscore the importance of complaint management as a strategic issue for public sector management. The DPME manages three types of complaints and queries through this hotline. Its call agents respond to requests for information about government services. They also allocate requests for detailed information and complaints that require resolution by specific departments (e.g., issues related to employment, housing, social services, citizenship, electricity, education, and health). The DPME's hotline team provides facilitation and coordination support for issues involving more than one department and resolution of special cases requiring urgent attention. Issues beyond its purview include outcomes of legal, disciplinary, and dismissal proceedings and requests for employment and funding. The DPME also monitors responsiveness and resolution rates and provides technical support to other departments to improve responsiveness. It also analyzes complaints data and presents its findings to the cabinet.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

[Uptake channels](#) for the hotline include a call center, fax, email, regular mail, [e-form](#), and a [mobile app](#).

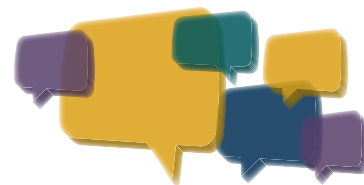
Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

Fifteen DPME hotline agents are on call between 6:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., Monday to Friday. They log details of complaints and queries in an automated information system and provide a [reference number](#) to the hotline user. Each complaint is assigned to a specific line department or agency (national or provincial) to investigate and address. For complaints related to provinces and municipalities, the Office of the Premier must provide oversight to ensure that the complaint is investigated and resolved.¹¹⁸ All departments and provinces have live access to the call log and reporting system and can view the complaints they have been assigned.

The [Department of Public Service and Administration](#) requires line departments to follow three stages in resolving complaints.

Stage One (immediate attention and resolution). Verbal complaints should be acknowledged immediately or within 24 hours and resolved accordingly. An unresolved verbal complaint should be documented and referred to the stage two.

118. See [https://www.dpme.gov.za/keyfocusareas/hotlineSite/FAQ/Presidential Hotline FAQ's 01.pdf](https://www.dpme.gov.za/keyfocusareas/hotlineSite/FAQ/Presidential%20Hotline%20FAQ's%2001.pdf).



Stage Two (investigation, information-gathering and decision making).

Complaints should be acknowledged within five working days and resolved within 15 working days of their receipt. If a complaint cannot be resolved within 15 working days, it should be escalated to stage three for internal review, and the complainant should be advised about the escalation in writing. Alternatively, if a line department needs more than 15 working days to resolve a complaint, it can write to the complainant to explain the reasons for the delay and when the complainant can expect a response. A copy of this notice is sent to the head of the Department of Public Service and Administration. Each line department uses the call log and reporting system to record how the complaint was addressed if the case is closed.¹¹⁹

Stage Three (internal review). If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of stage 2, a higher authority in the department reviews the complaint, undertakes further investigation in no more than ten working days from the date it was received at stage 2, and signs off on the final solution based on the findings.

Timeframes and service standards

The DPME's [Annual Report](#) for 2018-19 indicates that complaints are acknowledged within five days of receipt and that preliminary investigations are conducted and complaints referred to relevant departments or institutions within seven days. [Line departments](#) are expected to resolve complaints within 25 working days from the date of receipt. Soon after the launch of the hotline, the DPME had set a [benchmark](#) for resolving complaints at 80 percent. Monthly scorecards assessing the performance of each department and province were submitted to senior managers and to the cabinet.¹²⁰

119. See [https://www.dpme.gov.za/keyfocusareas/hotlineSite/FAQ/Presidential Hotline FAQ's 01.pdf](https://www.dpme.gov.za/keyfocusareas/hotlineSite/FAQ/Presidential%20Hotline%20FAQ's%2001.pdf).

120. See <https://www.dpme.gov.za/keyfocusareas/hotlineSite/Presidential%20Hotline/Four%20Years%20of%20the%20Presidency%20Hotline.pdf>.

121. See <https://www.dpme.gov.za/keyfocusareas/hotlineSite/Presidential%20Hotline/Four%20Years%20of%20the%20Presidency%20Hotline.pdf>.

122. See "A Framework For Strengthening Citizen-Government Partnerships For Monitoring Frontline Service Delivery." <https://www.dpme.gov.za/publications/Reports%20and%20Other%20Information%20Products/CBM%20Framework%20Cabinet%20July%202013.pdf>.

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

Since 2012, the DPME has conducted satisfaction surveys regarding the performance of the Presidential Hotline. This entails implementing a telephonic survey of citizens whose complaints have been recorded as resolved and asking them to rate the hotline's service. Findings of DPME's 2018-19 annual report indicate that the average client satisfaction rate was 67.65 percent. Hotline users gave the lowest rating for communication (specifically insufficient or infrequent communication during the investigation process) and the time taken to resolve complaints.

Appeals

The [Promotion of Administrative Justice Act](#) indicates that citizens have the right of review and internal administrative appeal. When the 25 working days that a department has to resolve a complaint have elapsed or if complainants are not satisfied after stage 3, they can approach an independent statutory institution, such as the Public Protector, the Public Service Commission, or any statutorily prescribed mediator institution, based on the nature of the complaint.¹²¹

Monitoring and analysis

The DPME [monitors](#) the hotline, publishes quarterly [data](#) on complaints, and issues regular performance reports to the cabinet, which manages the hotline's performance as a strategic project and discusses the complaint management performance of each department and province. Additionally, the DPME is using data from the hotline to inform its unannounced frontline service delivery monitoring visits and has begun to engage with departments and municipalities against which complaints are more frequently lodged. In line with this mandate, the DPME supports government departments, provinces, and municipalities in monitoring and managing their performance in line with the Framework for Strengthening Citizen-Government Partnerships for Monitoring Frontline Service Delivery.¹²²



Budget

The budget appropriation for frontline and citizen-based service delivery monitoring and complaints resolution was Rand 59,380 for fiscal year 2017/18 and Rand 50,303 for fiscal year 2018/19 (Republic of South Africa. 2020).

SOCIAL INCLUSION

South Africa's Complaints and Compliments Management System is based on the eight Batho Pele Principles ("people first" in Sesotho), which calls for consultation, service standards, redress (citizens should be offered an apology and a solution when standards are not met), equal access, courtesy, information, openness and transparency, and value for money. Moreover, the [Presidential Hotline](#) can be used by any member of the public who has a query, complaint, or compliment about public service; and complainants have the option of communicating in the South African language of their choice (Republic of South Africa 2019).

OUTCOMES

The DPME publishes quarterly reports with statistics on complaint management and impact/success stories from users of the Presidential Hotline. Its report for the first quarter

of fiscal 2020/21 (April–June) provides an overview of the Presidential Hotline's performance with a special focus on COVID-19-related cases during the lockdown period. The hotline team logged 2,619 cases for all nine provinces, with the highest number of calls received from Gauteng (44 percent), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (20.3 percent). Overall, the number of calls peaked in April and declined in May and June. Most calls were queries about food parcels, the Unemployment Social Relief Grant, the Unemployment Insurance Fund, health services, and law enforcement. Only 19.7 percent of the received calls related to basic service delivery. The quarterly report for December 2016 indicated that the case resolution rate increased from 93.25 to 94.5 percent between April and November 2016. During that time, appeals against sentences and issues related to employment and social benefits were the top three national issues reported to the hotline. Housing, employment, and electricity were key provincial-level issues.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

The DPME's [web page](#) provides information regarding the Presidential Hotline. A [YouTube video](#) has also been published to this effect.

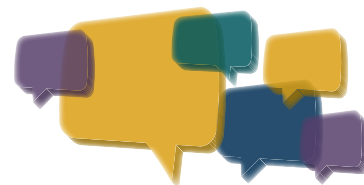
Other Departments

Department of Health

Complaints regarding the provision of health services can be [reported](#) directly to the Department of Health or through provincial-level complaint lines. Procedures outlined by the [National Health Act](#) for health care providers include acknowledging complaints within five days, allocating reference numbers to complaints and informing complainants of the estimated time it will take to address their concerns, resolving complaints within 25 working days, and reporting on complaint indicators in monthly reports to provincial offices. Guidance for primary health care facilities includes national guidelines for managing complaints, compliments, and suggestions; guidelines for districts; guidelines for hospitals to develop standard

operating procedures to manage complaints, compliments, and suggestions; and a training manual about the reporting of complaints, compliments, and suggestions.

The national guidelines for reporting a patient safety incident and for managing complaints, compliments, and suggestions went into effect on April 1, 2018. A web-based information system (<https://www.idealhealthfacility.org.za>) for managing complaints and incidents was developed to help facilities implement the guidelines. The purpose of the information system is to assist provincial departments of health in implementing the then newly published national guidelines, to adhere to the norms, standards, and regulations applicable



to different categories of health establishments, and to collect data on complaints and incidents with the aim of improving quality and safety of care by preventing the recurrence of similar incidents. The 2020–21 national annual patient safety incidents and complaints report provides a detailed overview of statistics on complaint indicators, categories, number of patient safety incidents, severity of patient incidents, and other issues.

Feedback forms, posters, and a patient’s rights charter are [available](#) in numerous languages, including English, Sesotho, Sepedi, Afrikaans, Tswana, Xhosa, and Zulu.

Department of Social Development

Housed in the Department of Social Development, the [Gender-Based Violence Command Centre](#) (GBVCC) operates a national call center 24/7. Members of the public can [contact](#) the call center by using an emergency phone number, a Skype address (Helpme GBV) for people with hearing impairments, an SMS number for people with disabilities, and a number for Unstructured Supplementary Service Data messages. All calls are referred to field social workers for GBVCC telephonic trauma counseling. [Cases](#) of gender-based violence referred to the GBVCC include domestic violence, rape, physical abuse, indecent assault, verbal abuse/intimidation, abandoned children, stalking, economic abuse, emotional abuse, sexual harassment, forced marriage, forced prostitution, forced abortion, human trafficking, exploitation of domestic workers, and elder abuse. Non-GBV-related cases include issues of substance abuse, family disputes, adoption, and child custody. The center’s web page includes [annual reports](#) and anonymous testimonials from its service users. Its fiscal 2019 annual report indicates that GBVCC received and responded to 120,707 calls;

19,005 Unstructured Supplementary Service Data messages in the form of short messages that read “please call me,” and 582 SMS communications. The GBVCC has been selected as the winner of numerous service awards, including the 2015 Global Best Technology Innovation Award and the 2014 AfricaCom Changing Lives Award.

Department of Employment and Labor

Citizens can submit their complaints, queries, and other feedback regarding inspection and enforcement services, labor policies, and industrial relations, the Compensation Fund, the Unemployment Insurance Fund, and other issues via email, SMS, phone, regular mail, or [e-form](#), or via customer care boxes at local [labor centers](#). Recently, the Department of Employment and Labor launched the [Impimpa Hotline](#) for workers to report cases of employer noncompliance with the national minimum wage.

Road Traffic Management Corporation

As part of its mandate to ensure the safe, secure, and responsible use of roads in South Africa, the Road Traffic Management Corporation established the National Traffic Call Centre to collaborate with road users and commuters in identifying the nature, time, location, and frequency of road traffic offenses, as well as fraud, bribery, and corruption in traffic management, control, and law-enforcement. Road users and commuters can report these issues via the call center or facsimile. The Road Traffic Management Corporation’s web page provides [details](#) about the information that should be reported to the National Traffic Call Centre and how this information is utilized to improve road safety.



18. Republic of Korea

Enabling Environment

Legislation governing civil complaint management and functions of the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission (ACRC) include the Act and Enforcement Decree on the Prevention of Corruption and the Establishment and Management of the Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission and the Act and Enforcement Decree

on Administrative Appeals. In 2018, the government created an official online channel on the website of the Presidency where citizens can file petitions. The idea was that if a petition received the backing of over 200,000 people within 30 days, a responsible senior-level government official would respond to it.

Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission

CONTEXT

Brief description

The ACRC was launched on February 29, 2008, by integrating the ombudsman of the Republic of Korea, the Korea Independent Commission Against Corruption, and the Administrative Appeals Commission. The ACRC's complaint management functions include: (1) addressing civil complaints that inconvenience or burden citizens; (2) protecting people's rights from illegal and unfair administrative practices through the administrative appeals system; and (3) making recommendations to improve laws or systems that are unreasonable and that could lead to civil complaints or a corruption-prone environment. As of December 2019, ACRC ombudsmen were operational in 42 local communities.

Number of departments and entities

The ACRC's purview includes all central administrative agencies, local autonomous bodies, metropolitan and provincial offices of education, and major public service-related institutions. Members of the public can submit petitions and proposals and report on budget waste and public-interest violations. They can also contribute to policy discussions, specifically through the E-People portal. Repetitive or unusual complaints¹²³ are under the purview of the ACRC's special complaints investigation team, and petitions submitted by businesses are managed by the

business complaints team. The ACRC has meetings with entities experiencing low acceptance rates of their recommendations to devise strategies for handling civil complaints. It reports on the compliance of each institution with its recommendations during cabinet meetings and during policy consultation meetings between central administrative agencies and local governments to encourage agency heads to adopt the ACRC's recommendations.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

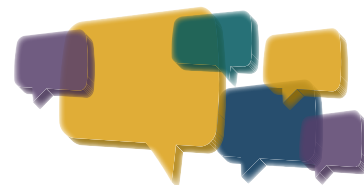
Uptake channels

Complaints and other feedback can be submitted by mail, fax, or in person, or through [channels](#) such as the E-People government [portal](#)¹²⁴ and the [110 Integrated Government Call Center](#).¹²⁵ Petitioners can access the 110 service on its [website](#) or mobile application. They can also make reservations for a phone counseling session. Other options for counseling include ACRC's "Visible ARS" Smart Counseling System and online counseling through chat and social media. Moreover, ACRC's onsite outreach program, Mobile E-People, is intended to reach out to citizens to resolve complaints in the field, and its Government Complaints Counseling Center provides counseling for complex complaints involving multiple government institutions "in one place at one time."

123. These include cases where the petitioner files a complaint repeatedly or engages in aggressive activities such as protests, disturbances, violations, blackmail, threats, and accusations.

124. The E-People portal interconnects 47 central agencies, 144 embassies and consulates, 195 educational agencies, 244 municipalities, the court administration agency, and major public institutes.

125. See ACRC Annual Report 2019. Anti-Corruption and Civil Rights Commission. <https://www.theioi.org/ioi-members/asia/korea-republic-of/anti-corruption-civil-rights-commission-of-the-republic-of-korea>.



Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

Feedback submitted to the ACRC is directed to one or more suitable agencies that can address the issue most effectively. There are counselors available to respond to people reaching out to the 110 Call Center and process simple issues. The call center has also introduced a “call back” option to respond to nonurgent issues at a later time or when an immediate response cannot be provided. Counselors direct more complex matters (such as those related to taxation, labor, or welfare) to specialized call centers or the complaint-handling systems of the concerned agency. When a complainant is connected to the relevant agency, details of the case that are documented by the call center are transferred electronically. The relevant agency investigates and resolves the issue and notifies the complainant about the outcome. Complaints that require a more thorough investigation are investigated and deliberated by the ACRC. ACRC investigators collect relevant information from the concerned administrative agency(ies) and the complainant. They may also request the attendance and testimony of complainants, respondents, and other stakeholders; conduct onsite investigations of related premises; and seek advice from specialists. Subsequently, the ACRC recommends corrective measures or issues an official opinion regarding the complaint based on the investigation’s findings.

Timeframes and service standards

The ACRC notifies complainants of the progress on the processing of cases within 30 days of receiving the petition. Resolutions are communicated within 60 days of receipt, a period that may be extended by 30 days in exceptional circumstances.

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

For complaints that are directed to relevant agencies and addressed by them, complainants have the option of using the E-People platform to submit an evaluation of their satisfaction level with the resolution of their complaints.

Appeals

The ACRC’s rulings on administrative appeals, including appeals for revocation,¹²⁶ affirmation of nullity,¹²⁷ and performance of obligation,¹²⁸ are legally binding on administrative agencies. An appellant can submit an administrative appeal to the disposition agency or the ACRC via personal visit, mail, or the online administrative [appeals system](#). Appellants can also use the online system to check the status and result of their appeal after submission. The disposition agency responds to the appellant’s appeal within ten days of receipt of the application and presents it to the ACRC, at which point the ACRC’s Central Administrative Appeals Commission (CAAC) sends a response to the appellant explaining the agency’s opinion. It then sets the date for deliberation after a thorough examination of statements submitted by the parties. After deliberating and adjudicating as to whether the appealed case is illegal or unfair, it provides written notification of the results to the disposition agency and the appellant. In 2017, the commission introduced an indirect enforcement system, which requires respondent authorities that have delayed implementing administrative appeal decisions to compensate appellants based on the duration of the delay.

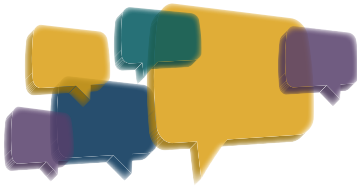
Monitoring and analysis

The ACRC collects big data on civil petitions through E-People and local government channels (e.g., city and provincial portals). It publishes periodic reports called “Voices of the People” by analyzing complaint-related big data to identify weekly and monthly trends in civil complaints and complaints related to major national policies, social issues, and issues of public interest. The ACRC’s complaint forecast system monitors the complaints of the previous three years. It selects cases that occur more frequently at specific times and then forecasts the types of complaints and major cases it expects one month in advance so relevant institutions can prepare adequate response measures.

126. Appeals for revocation or modification of an illegal or unjust disposition rendered by an administrative agency.

127. Appeals for affirmation of the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of a disposition, or the existence or nonexistence of such disposition.

128. Appeals for a specified disposition against an illegal or unjust disposition of refusal or omission.



The ACRC's Complaints Big Data at a Glance service visualizes complaints data, enables users to download core data (e.g., the current state of complaints by region, institution, and sector), and makes it possible for users to generate statistics customized to their needs. The next generation of the service, introduced in 2019, includes additional data analysis tools, such as natural language processing and machine learning, as well as more advanced data visualization tools.

Budget

The ACRC's annual budget for 2019 was KRW 87.498 billion. This included KRW 44.873 billion for personnel expenses, KRW 7.294 billion for basic expenses, and KRW 35.331 billion for primary work expenses.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Korean citizens and foreigners living in the Republic of Korea can file complaints to the ACRC and other agencies. Anonymous complaints and petitions are not allowed. The Integrated Government Call Center's "Visible ARS" Smart Counseling System provides video counseling using sign language and interpretation services for people with hearing impairments. The 110 call center established free rates for phone calls in October 2019 to facilitate cost-free public access. The ACRC's On-site Outreach Program is aimed at communicating with and providing opportunities for socially disadvantaged groups to submit their petitions. It is categorized into local programs and customized programs. The local onsite program arranges for comprehensive complaints consultations during monthly visits to two to four local governments. The customized onsite program provides specialized counseling services for petitioners who need social care, such as foreign workers and people with disabilities. In 2019, the ACRC launched the onsite outreach program bus to operate counseling tours in public places, such as stations, terminals, and local festivals. Moreover, the ACRC provides translation services for foreigners,¹²⁹ its On-site Outreach Program has windows for the submission of civil petitions in foreign languages, and the E-People platform provides multilingual services in 14 languages.¹³⁰ The Central

Administrative Appeals Commission launched a state-appointed agent system for administrative appeals in 2018, through which it provides support to state-appointed agents for claimants who cannot afford them.

OUTCOMES

Overall, the ACRC has delivered corrective recommendations and opinions on 3,002 complaints over the past five years, 2,632 of which (87.7 percent) were accepted by the relevant agencies. In 2019, the ACRC delivered 330 corrective recommendations and 340 opinions for complaints related to finance and taxation (14.2 percent); housing and construction (13.3 percent); urban areas and water (13.1 percent); and industry, agriculture and forestry and environment (12.5 percent). It also organized over 100 sessions through its On-site Outreach Program, with an onsite complaint resolution rate of 50.4 percent. ACRC's business complaints team received and handled 372 grievances cases in 2019, 131 of which were accepted, 6 resulted in corrective recommendations, 11 resulted in opinions, and 114 resulted in mediation and settlement. The ACRC received 185 complaints through its corporate grievance meetings in 2019: it resolved 75 cases, provided detailed information on policy and institutions in 43 cases, and was in the process of addressing 67 cases. Among petitioners who participated in the meetings, 73 percent indicated that they were satisfied with the sessions and that they found them to be helpful to their business operations. The Central Administrative Appeals Commission received 24,076 administrative appeals in 2019, 21,534 cases of which were closed during the year.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES AND PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

The ACRC uses a variety of outreach channels, such as the participation of its senior representatives on television and radio programs, contributions to newspapers, and press releases. In 2019, to help people understand the commission's policies, the ACRC's task force on digital communication produced familiar and fun content that was distributed through its official social media channels. The commission also launched its ACRC Vision YouTube channel, where it posts a range of

129. Translation services are provided in collaboration with the Korea Tourism Organization, Foreigner Service Center, and Korea Support Center for Foreign Workers.

130. The languages are English, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Mongolian, Indonesian, Thai, Uzbek, Bengali, Cambodian, Sinhala, Nepali, Russian, and Myanmar.



content, including live-stream events. The ACRC releases promotional content about the 110 Government Call Center, E-People, administrative appeals, and other initiatives in various formats, including videos; posters; leaflets; television, radio, and newspaper announcements; and bus and electronic display

boards. The “News and Publications” page on ACRC’s website hosts a [“What’s New”](#) section that provides updates; a [photo gallery](#); ACRC’s [newsletters](#); and other [publications](#), including annual reports, brochures, and assessments.



19. Türkiye

Presidency's Communications Center (CIMER)

CONTEXT

Brief description

In 2006, Türkiye's Office of the Prime Minister issued a circular underlining the importance of public participation in governance and public administration. It asserts that

a functional, fast and effective system for the transmission of citizen complaints, requests, views and suggestions regarding administration is a fundamental necessity for the success of administration and for the functioning of democracy" (Botan 2021).

Accordingly, BIMER (the Prime Ministry's Communication Center), was established within the Prime Ministry's Department of Public Relations in the same year to accept any notices, complaints, proposals, or requests submitted by citizens; to forward them to the relevant public institutions for necessary action; and to provide general oversight of the process. With Türkiye's 2018 switch from a parliamentary to an executive presidential system, the name of the Prime Ministry's Communications Center (BIMER) was changed to Cumhurbaşkanlığı İletişim Merkezi (the Presidency's Communications Center, or CIMER) and put under the authority of the Presidency's Directorate of Communications.

Enabling environment

Türkiye's [constitution](#), article 74, grants

citizens and foreigners resident in [Türkiye the right to] apply in writing to the competent authorities and to the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye with regard to the requests and complaints concerning themselves or the public.

[Law 4982 of 2003 on Access to Information](#) entitles individuals to access information held by public authorities and obligates the administration to provide requested information within 15 working days (article 11).

Law 3071 of 1984 on the Right to Petition¹³¹ governs the rights of the citizens of Türkiye and foreigners residing in Türkiye to submit their requests and complaints to the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye and competent authorities in writing.

Number of agencies and ministries

The public institutions falling under CIMER include the presidency's central organizations; presidential offices; boards and affiliated bodies; public ministries; governorships; the Office of the Chief Public Prosecutor; district governorships; universities; metropolitan, provincial, and district municipalities; and special provincial administrations. Data from 2009 suggest that over 25,000 public institutions could be reached through the system.¹³²

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

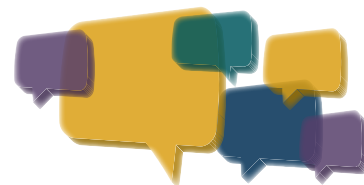
Citizens can log their submissions electronically via the [centralized CIMER platform](#); the government's main [e-Government portal](#), which easily redirects users to CIMER; the ALO 150 hotline, operated by provincial governorates; letter or fax to the directorate of communications; or in person by submitting an application to a public relations office located in the offices of the president, ministries, governorates, and district governorates.

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

Submissions are categorized into one of the following categories: notices/allegations of misconduct (e.g., reporting of sexual harassment or bribery), suggestions (e.g., about traffic regulations), requests (e.g., for social assistance), complaints (e.g., garbage not collected or salary not paid), and obtaining information based on Law 4982 on Access to Information. Photographs can be attached to submissions, and citizens can also tick a "share my location" function if desired (e.g., in the case of an emergency or incident). The CIMER platform allows users to directly select the institution with which they want

131. See <https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/mevzuat?MevzuatNo=3071&MevzuatTur=1&MevzuatTertip=5>.

132. See <https://joinup.ec.europa.eu/collection/egovernment/document/prime-ministry-communication-center-bimer>.



to file their request. However, if the user does not know which institution to choose, the request is sent to the Directorate of Communications by default, where it is forwarded to the relevant institution after a preliminary assessment. Requests delivered to relevant government authorities are only available to the CIMER focal points of the respective institutions. These focal points evaluate and respond to the requests.

Once a submission has been logged, the user can follow the status of the cases using the tracking number generated at the time of the application or by calling the ALO150 hotline. Answers are sent to applicants at the email address indicated or, if no email address is available, by mail to their correspondence address.¹³³

Timeframes and service standards

The public institutions to which citizens submit feedback must provide a definitive *yes* or *no* answer or an interim response within 30 days of submission. If the subject of the application is a request for information or a document that falls under Law 4982 on Access to Information, the prescribed response time is 15 working days. An applicant can submit only one request per day.

Appeals

For cases that receive a negative response, the applicant should be given information about available legal remedies and the time periods within which appeals can be made. For example, the administrative litigation period is 60 days. Applicants who do not receive feedback within this time period can resubmit the

complaint to CIMER or elevate it to the Ombudsman Institution (www.ombudsman.gov.tr).

Monitoring and analysis

The Directorate of Communications is in charge of monitoring and analyzing complaints received over time.

SOCIAL INCLUSION

When filing a submission with CIMER, users must indicate their identity card number. The system only allows anonymous submissions if the request is submitted as a whistleblower complaint. The broad range of uptake channels makes the system universally accessible except that the application must be filed in the Turkish language.

OUTCOMES

Statistics

According to the Presidential Communications Director, in January 2021, the number of CIMER petitions had increased by 90 percent over the previous year, with a total of 6 million inquiries received (DuvaR.english 2021). However, neither this data, nor any information on the types of petitions received annually, or the public institutions most frequently addressed via the system are publicly available.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

In 2019, CIMER won the “Best Project” award for access to information and knowledge by the United Nation’s International Telecommunication Union during the *World Summit on the Information Society* in Geneva (Doğantekin 2019).

Other Mechanisms

YIMER 157

YIMER 157, which was launched as an emergency helpline for victims of trafficking in 2005, started working under the name *Foreigners Communication Center* in August 2015, when it was placed under the responsibility of the General Directorate of Migration Management. It provides information to and collects

grievances from foreigners, including refugees, via a hotline (157) and a [website](#) accessible in seven languages (Turkish, Russian, Arabic, Pashto, Farsi, German, and English). Additional communication channels include a phone number (+90 312 157 11 22) and a fax number (+90 312 920 06 09). YIMER allows easy access to answers about questions related to issues

¹³³. See <https://www.cimer.gov.tr/>.



such as visa, residence permits, international protection, and temporary protection but also provides 24/7 services to victims of migrant smuggling and human trafficking at sea, including for the identification of victims of rescue operations. As a result of 501 denunciations received between August 20, 2015, and January 19, 2020, the YIMER platform reports that 11,606 lives were saved.¹³⁴ The [website](#) indicates the number of received calls on any given day, during the current month, during the current year, and overall. In 2020, YIMER won a gold medal at the EMEA (Europe, Middle East, and Africa) regional competition for “Best Emergency Services.”¹³⁵

Ministry of Health: Communication Centre (SABIM) service line “ALO 184”

The Ministry of Health instituted a [communication center](#), called SABIM, in 2004 to receive patient complaints, problems, and suggestions. Users can submit feedback to SABIM by phone (ALO 184 line, which operates 24/7), online, or in person at a patient communication unit.

Operators at the 184 SABIM call center record and reply to applications using specialized software. The recorded applications are assessed by SABIM officials and transferred to related administrators. Analysts working at ministry headquarters or field units have online access to the system where they can view the duties assigned to them, take required actions, and report results. From 2004 to 2009, 36,640 complaints were reported to the ALO 184 line (Bostan, Kilic, and Ciftci 2014).

Ministry of National Education’s, communication center service line

MEBIM, the Ministry of National Education’s communication center and 444 0 632 contact center (known as the ALO 147 call line until 2018) allow the ministry to provide teacher-oriented services on issues such as relocation procedures, salaries, additional course fees, professional studies, education and training allowances, personnel procedures, social facilities, and

lodging. MEBIM aims to answer citizen requests within three working days (72 hours) via telephone, SMS, or email.

Statistics available for the period 2012–18 reveal that citizens used MEBIM’s ALO 147 primarily to obtain information (91 percent), but also to submit requests (3.7 percent), suggestions (3.6 percent), and notices or complaints (1.8 percent). About 95 percent of citizen applications were answered during the first point of interaction. About 5 percent of applications were forwarded to the central and provincial units of the Ministry of Education for further examination, research, or investigation.¹³⁶

During the COVID-19 pandemic, MEBIM’s contact center also worked as a psycho-support hotline. With the help of school and psychological counselors from 81 cities, it provided 24/7 psycho-social support for people suffering from COVID-19-related mental health issues.

According to a statement made by minister of national education in 2020, the communication center was “revamped with robots equipped with artificial intelligence systems,” which helped it to win second prize for “Best Communication Center” out of more than 50 countries at Contact Center World’s Awards 2020.¹³⁷

Ministry of Labour and Social Security: Work Life Communication Centre: ALO 170

[The ALO 170: Work Life Communication Center](#), which was launched on November 15, 2010, responds 24/7 to all calls relating to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Social Security Institution, and the Turkish Employment Organization. When calling ALO 170, a reference is created in the name of the citizen, and an application tracking number is provided. The user may receive information regarding their applications by calling again after 72 hours. The call center will address all types of notifications, applications, complaints, and feedback about work issues and social security. Complaints usually address administrative transactions, social assistance mechanisms, and

134. See <https://yimer.gov.tr/EN/About/90776bf3-fd30-45e9-bd26-1516853f3503>.

135. See <https://www.contactcenterworld.com/view/contact-center-article/awards-winners-celebrate-with-gold-best-in-europe-middle-east-africa-2020.aspx>.

136. <http://datca.meb.gov.tr/www/mill-egitim-bakanligi-iletisim-merkezi-mebim-alo-147/icerik/296>.

137. See <http://www.meb.gov.tr/ministry-of-national-education-communication-center-mebim-is-awarded-with-second-prize/haber/21896/en>.



staff behavior, such as honesty in the determination process for receiving assistance.

The website provides data on the number of citizens currently using the hotline, the number of citizens who have used the hotline on a given day, how many calls were resolved on that same day, and how many applications were handled in a given month and in the current calendar year.¹³⁸

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry: Agriculture's communication center

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has its own communication center called TİMER (Tarım İletişim Merkezi—Agriculture Communication Center). Applicants can communicate requests; suggestions; complaints; compliments; inquires for information; whistleblower complaints; and questions about livestock, agriculture, administration, food, forest, and water. Communication channels include web pages (<https://timer.tarimorman.gov.tr> or www.turkiye.gov.tr); a hotline (ALO 180); and mail (T.C. TARIM VE ORMAN BAKANLIĞI, Tarım ve Orman İletişim Merkezi, Üniversiteler Mahallesi Dumlupınar Bulvarı, No: 161, 06800, Ankara).

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry's service line, "ALO Gıda 174"

Calls to ALO Gıda 174 are forwarded to a [call center](#) that allows the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to respond to citizens' questions, complaints, and suggestions related to food issues. Details are available at <http://www.alo174.gov.tr/>.

Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources

Complaints handling for natural gas distribution is regulated by the [2002 Natural Gas Market Distribution And Customer Services Regulation](#), which requires distribution companies to "establish a customer service department for the purposes of receiving customer applications and complaints and assessing them in the shortest time practicable" (article 55 paragraph d).

Complaints handling for electricity distribution is regulated in the [2014 By-law on Electricity Market Customer Service](#), which

covers principles and procedures related to the collection and assessment of customer complaints and provision of information to the customers (article 2d).

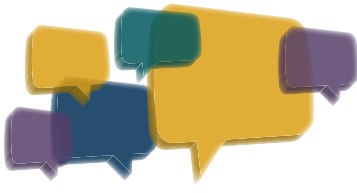
The Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources currently has a web page with a specific "Information Request" section that works jointly with CİMER. CİMER allows people to ask for information, make requests or suggestions, submit a complaint, or share a compliment. However, the ministry's platform only allows for information requests; it does not cover other types of inquiries and grievances. The ministry does not have a grievance procedure that provides guidance to the applicants about the steps to follow for submitting grievances or feedback about ministry activities, and it does not communicate procedures for resolving requests submitted for the ministry's attention.

Health sector: Patient Rights Units and Patient Rights Boards

In 2003, the Ministry of Health issued a directive entitled "Practice of Patient Rights in Healthcare Facilities," which sought to increase the recognition of patient rights and their implementation into services. The directive describes the mechanisms of the complaint procedure in the event of a rights violation. The document also defines the structure and duties of the newly created patient rights units and a Patient Rights Board (PRB), which serve as the foundation for the application system and are the organs for the evaluation of any alleged incident. A patient rights unit must be present in a hospital with 100 or more beds; a hospital with fewer than 100 beds must have a patient rights communication unit. The Ministry of Health has also enabled the establishment of patient rights units in private hospitals by changing their directives.

According to the complaint-handling process, the unit officer—the first officer who meets the patient—is a health care worker (e.g., social worker, psychologist, or nurse) who commences work after receiving public relations compliance training. If a problem cannot be resolved through oral communication at the patient rights unit, the patient files a written complaint, and the case is referred to the Patient Rights Board. Applications filled out via an online form are also referred to the board. The board

¹³⁸. See <https://www.alo170.gov.tr/>.



is chaired by the vice chief of the hospital and comprises a patient rights unit officer, the chief of the accused department, a representative of a nongovernmental organization working in the field of patient rights (if needed), the patient's attorney, a union representative authorized by the institution, a citizen, and a member of the city council appointed by the city governor. The board has no sanctioning power; it refer cases to the hospital administration for disciplinary interrogation if necessary.

A decision is made within one month if the medical staff or the medical institution is at fault. The applicant or patient, the medical staff in question, and the top executive of the medical institution are informed of the decision. If the medical staff or institution is at fault, the top executive has the authority to make inquiries regarding staff and to impose penalties.

The results of a retrospective study performed using the complaint database of written and oral applications made to patient rights units in 54 public hospitals operating under the authority of the Istanbul Health Directorate from 2005 to 2011 indicate that 218,186 complaints had been filed. The number of complaints increased year on year, and nearly half (48.9 percent) of the applications were made in 2010 and 2011. The three most frequent complaints were “not benefiting from services in general” (35.4 percent), “not being treated in a respectable manner and in comfortable conditions” (17.8 percent), and “not being properly informed” (13.5 percent). Two-thirds (63.3 percent) of the overall applications were found in favor of the patient, but this rate has decreased in recent years. The study found that 90.7 percent of the applications were resolved onsite at patient rights units, and the percentage of complaints resolved by the Patient Rights Board in favor of health care workers has been steadily increasing. A simple explanation and verbal apology resolved a significant number of complaints (Önal and Civaner 2015).

Municipal GMs

Municipalities have their own communication services, and the hotline ALO 153 is accessible to citizens and visitors in every province of Türkiye. When citizens call 153, they are directed to the citizen communication center of their respective province. The hotline accepts any type of citizen queries, including requests, complaints, compliments, denouncements, inquiries for information, and whistleblowing—and offers solutions to them.

Citizens can also submit requests through social media accounts or any available intake channel at the municipal level, including email, regular mail, WhatsApp, SMS, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, mobile applications, and face-to-face at communication centers.

In addition to the ALO 153 hotline, all municipalities have their own help desks with unique phone numbers and email addresses, which are available to all citizens.

Water and Sewerage Systems GMs

All water and sewerage administrations in Türkiye have their own grievance mechanisms that are accessible to all and that enable citizens to raise their concerns and complaints.

For example, to cater to the four million households in the Istanbul area to provide reliable water and sewage services, the [Istanbul Water and Sewage Administration](#) (İSKİ) created a centralized contact center, ALO 185, to handle complaints and requests from customers.¹³⁹ Calls to the center are recorded so the quality of the conversation can be evaluated. Feedback is requested from customers by calling them to ask whether their query was addressed and how satisfied they were with İSKİ's services. According to [İSKİ's 2019 Annual Report](#), the number of calls answered by the call center in 2019 was approximately 3.8 million. Forty-eight percent of users completed their calls after their request was met by Interactive Voice Response. Fifty-two percent of users contacted a customer representative for further information or to report problems. In 2019, the measured customer satisfaction rate was 85.2 percent. In the same year, İSKİ answered 3,813 CIMER applications.

139. See <http://www.gensys.com/resources/brochures/iski,-customer-success-story.pdf>.



20. Uzbekistan

Context

The 2017 Presidential Decree on the Establishment of the Agency for Public Service Delivery and the new Law on Administrative Procedures are aimed at systematizing the procedures for complaint resolution, introducing standardized administrative procedures for key public services, and improving the quality of public services.¹⁴⁰ Moreover, the amended Law on Citizen

Appeals (2017) outlines the functions of the Presidential [Virtual Reception](#) and the People's Receptions; and Uzbekistan's Five-Area Development Strategy for 2017-21 requires all district authorities, ministries, agencies, law enforcement, and supervisory authorities to launch "People's Receptions," where citizens can submit complaints.

Virtual Reception

The President's Virtual Reception (VR) is an online portal launched in September 2016 that enables citizens to complain, ask questions, or make suggestions directly to the President's Office on any issue related to the performance of government agencies, officials, and service providers at the national or local level. In addition to guidance on how citizens can submit their feedback directly to the President's Office and People's Receptions, the VR web page includes a section entitled "Get Answers to Your Questions," which categorizes various types of issues (e.g., legal, taxes and fines, transport, and social protection), and lists frequently asked questions and corresponding responses for each of them. It also includes an online chat option where members of the public can submit and receive responses to common or standard questions.

In addition to submitting feedback to the VR online, citizens also have the option of dialing the "1000" hotline number or visiting the People's Reception Office of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Complaints are processed by the Presidential Administration and directed for investigation and resolution to relevant authorities. Responses from the relevant authorities are then recorded into the VR database and scrutinized by the Presidential Administration. Citizens who have submitted their feedback through the VR can track the status of their case by entering the request number and the status check code that was issued when their complaint was registered. As of June 2019, nearly 3 million queries had been directed to the VR, with a monthly average of 100,000 queries. Reportedly, 98 percent of these cases have been "considered." The VR web page is accessible in Uzbek and Russian languages and has features to accommodate users with poor eyesight.

People's Receptions

Brief description

Established in December 2016, People's Receptions (PRs) can receive feedback regarding any government authority or public service provider. They are subordinate to the Presidential Administration and are not separate legal entities. Their primary

functions include: (1) collecting citizen complaints, suggestions, and queries and directing them to the State Services Agency or to other relevant authorities; (2) coordinating activities and conducting quality control of public service delivery by state agencies in the field; (3) monitoring the work of the State

140. Additional procedures related to complaint handling are further enumerated in the President's Decree 341 on Regulating the Mechanisms for Work with Appeals Submitted by Citizens or Legal Entities to State Agencies in May 2018. This decree requires each state agency to establish a complaint-handling department to oversee the timely receipt, registration, investigation, and monitoring of the grievance redress process. It also sets out standards of professional behavior of department staff. The decree also mandates GRM capacity-building activities every three years.



Services Agency; (4) monitoring and coordinating the local implementation of the state programs Obod Qishlok and Obod Mahalla; and (5) coordinating personal receptions for local public officials (e.g., *khokim* [administrator] and prosecutors).

There are 215 PRs across Uzbekistan, including one at the national level, 14 at the regional level, and 200 at the district level. PRs have deployed approximately 730 full-time staff. Each PR is headed by a manager who is selected from law enforcement or judicial officials and is staffed by other professional and administrative talent.

Uptake channels

Citizens can use an array of channels to submit their feedback to various public and private entities (e.g., ministries, local government bodies, and foundations). They can use the VR web page to send their feedback to the relevant entity (rather than to the Presidential Administration team). They have the option to use the VR web page to access the telephone numbers, addresses, and schedules of public reception days for certain entities to submit their feedback in person. The VR web page also provides a summary of the mandates and functions of each entity, as well as a list of reception rooms in each region.

Citizens can submit their complaints to the local *makhalla* (neighborhood, local community, or state administrative unit), committee, or the PR of the district-level *khokimiyats* (urban administrators). They can also submit feedback through the PRs of the regional governor's offices or through a *khokimiyat*. For example, the *khokimiyats* of the Samarkand¹⁴¹ and Bukhara¹⁴² regions have set up phone lines with specific service hours, email addresses, and e-forms, which enables citizens to reach out to them. The *khokimiyat* of the Fergana region¹⁴³ and the Tashkent City¹⁴⁴ administration have deployed these channels

in addition to Facebook, Telegram, and Instagram to solicit feedback from citizens.

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

People can lodge complaints directly with the local *makhalla* committees or submit their feedback to designated officers of PRs for the district *khokimiyats*. After reviewing the complaint, the PR officer forwards it to the relevant party for investigation. The officer must inform the regional PR about the complaint and the actions required to resolve it. For complaints that are not resolved or in instances where petitioners are unsatisfied with the outcome, appeals can be made to the PR of the regional *khokimiyat*. If the issues raised in the complaint or appeal are not within the purview of the regional administration, they are directed to the relevant authorities within five days and the petitioner is notified accordingly.

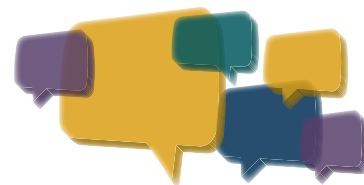
If the issue is within the purview of the regional *khokimiyat*, the regional PR reviews the case and forwards it to the respective department(s) while specifying the deadline and procedure for its resolution. This process is supervised by a leading specialist of the regional *khokimiyat*. If a case requires more time and resources for resolution, the PR establishes a complaint-handling team comprising representatives from its team, the PR of the district *khokimiyat*, and the *makhalla* committee. Citizens can track the status of their cases on the web page of the regional *khokimiyat* by inputting their identification number and the access code they were issued when their case was registered (see examples from [Fergana](#), [Tashkent](#), and [Samarkand](#)). Responses from the relevant authorities are recorded in the VR database and scrutinized by the Presidential Administration team. At the end of the process, a written response is issued to the complainant.

141. [Telegram](#) and [e-form](#) can be used to submit feedback to the *khokimiyat* of the Samarkand region. The [schedule](#) for citizens' receptions are organized by the governor's office, and [procedures](#) for the public to participate in these receptions are publicly available.

142. The hotline and e-form can be used to submit feedback to the *khokimiyat* of the Bukhara region. The service schedule is available at https://www.buxoro.uz/full_content.php?dt=reglament&status=ishonch&id=0.

143. Citizens can submit feedback via [telephone](#), [Facebook](#), or [telegram](#) to the *khokimiyat* of the [Fergana region](#). The regional office's [service hours](#) and the [schedule](#) for the people's reception are available online.

144. The [Tashkent city](#) administration uses multiple channels for citizens to submit feedback, including [e-form](#), [telephone](#), email, [telegram](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [in person](#).



Timeframes and service standards

Complaints lodged with makhalla committees or district khokimiyats are expected to be resolved within 15 days. Complaints submitted to the regional khokimiyat are typically resolved within 15 days, but complaints requiring additional verification are considered within one month of the date of receipt. For cases requiring complex investigations, the period can be extended by the regional governor for a maximum of one month. The complainant is notified of the outcome within 10 days of the completion of the investigation. Guidelines and procedures for processing applications, appeals, and complaints are published by the PR of the regional khokimiyats, such as those for [Fergana](#), Bukhara, and [Samarkand](#).

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

The government authority that considers a complaint is obligated to monitor the execution of the decision taken regarding the case, and to take measures to compensate for material or moral damage in accordance with procedures established by law. Upon receiving notification about the outcome of their case, citizens have the option of providing feedback on the website of the regional khokimiyat, such as those for Bukhara, [Tashkent](#) and Samarkand. In addition, the regional governor's offices conduct monthly inspections to assess compliance with complaint resolution deadlines.

Appeals

The Law on Citizen Appeals stipulates that the government authority that has made a decision regarding the petition is obligated to explain the procedure for lodging a complaint against it if an individual or a legal entity does not agree with it. Citizens dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint at the level of the district khokimiyat can submit their complaint to the PR of the regional khokimiyat. If they are dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation by the regional PR, they can lodge an appeal to a higher authority or to the court.

Monitoring and analysis

Data compiled for monthly inspections conducted by governors' offices are analyzed and published in monthly reports, such as those for [Fergana](#), [Bukhara](#), [Tashkent](#), and [Samarkand](#).

SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Law on Citizen Appeals stipulates that anonymous petitions will not be considered. When considering complaints, employees of government authorities are prohibited from disclosing private information about the petitioners without their consent or subjecting petitioners (and their representatives and family members) to actions that infringe on their rights, freedoms, legitimate interests, and expression of opinion. The law also states that, if possible, the response to an appeal should be stated in the language of the appeal and should contain specific justifications to rebut or confirm the arguments on each matter specified in the appeal. Moreover, to ensure that all citizens have an equal opportunity to lodge a petition, some PR offices have special onsite children's rooms and a medical room for emergencies. The regional PR staff also conduct field visits, mainly to rural and remote areas, to discuss problems and issues of concern to the local population. Furthermore, web pages for some of the regional khokimiyats have useful accessibility features. For example, on the [website](#) of the Tashkent City Administration, users can increase the size and contrast of the font and engage text-to-voice translation; there is also a mobile-enabled version of the website.

OUTCOMES

Statistics

Between January 2017 and April 2019, PRs across the country received 692,000 complaints, all of which were also registered in the VR. As of April 2019, 73 percent of complaints had been resolved, with the remainder having been rejected or still under consideration.



Interviews with PR staff reveal that complaints are most commonly lodged against housing and communal service providers and that several petitions are in fact requests for assistance, such as that for subsidized housing (dormitories) or land plots and general financial support (e.g., subsidized loans). Findings of qualitative research indicate that women who are most likely to approach PRs are above 35 years old, come from a lower or middle-income strata, and live in makhallas that are part of the Obod Makhalla or Obod Kishloq programs. The men most likely to approach PRs are between the ages of 25 and 38 and are primarily from lower-income backgrounds (World Bank 2019).

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

The “news” section of the VR web page is a useful resource for updates regarding regional- and district-level PRs. Moreover, various regions use social media to share news regarding the activities of the PRs, such as the [News channel](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), Website, and [Instagram](#) for Samarkand; [Facebook](#) and [telegram](#) for Fergana; and [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#) for Tashkent City.



21. Vietnam

Enabling Environment

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam's [constitution](#) stipulates that

citizens have the right to lodge with any competent State authority a complaint or denunciation regarding transgressions of the law by any State body, economic or social organization, people's armed forces unit or any individual.

[Law 02/2011/QH13](#) on Complaints and Denunciations and Decree 75/2012/ND-CP prescribe that individuals and organizations are entitled to lodge complaints against administrative decisions at all levels of government. Complaints are settled by the chairman of the local government against which the complaint is lodged.

After the first settlement, the complainant can escalate the complaint to higher-level government authorities or go to court. The [Law on the Reception of Citizens](#) (2013) outlines the responsibility for receiving citizens; the rights and obligations of people submitting complaints, denunciations, petitions, and reports; the organization of activities at citizen reception offices and reception areas of agencies, organizations, and units; and conditions to ensure citizen reception activities. Finally, Decree 123/2016/ND-CP outlines the role of ministry' inspectorates to conduct inspections, settle complaints and denunciations, and prevent and combat corruption in areas under the ministries' respective jurisdictions.

Government Inspectorate

Brief description

The Government Inspectorate is a ministerial-level agency. Its overall functions include the state management of inspections, citizen reception, complaint and denunciation settlement, and anticorruption across the country. Its specific functions are to: (1) organize citizen receptions, receive, handle, and settle complaints and denunciations in accordance with the law; (2) act as the coordinator, in cooperation with concerned agencies, to receive citizens at the reception offices of the State and Party Central Committee and in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City; (3) verify complaints and propose denunciation settlement measures within the jurisdiction of the prime minister as assigned; and (4) assist the prime minister in supervising, examining, and speeding up the efforts of ministries and People's Committees at all levels in terms of receiving citizens, handling complaints, and implementing measures to address complaints.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

Citizens, agencies, organizations, party cadres, and civil servants can submit complaints by [email](#), letter, phone, or through citizen's reception offices.¹⁴⁵ Written complaints must clearly

indicate the date of the complaint; the full name and address of the complainant; the name and address of the pertinent agencies, organizations, or individuals; contents of and reason for the complaint; complaint-related documents; and the complainant's request for settlement. The written complaint must be signed or fingerprinted by the complainant. For verbal complaints, the complaint's recipient guides the preparation of a written complaint or records the complaint in writing and requests that the complainant sign or fingerprint the document for confirmation. In cases where many people file a joint complaint, similar procedures are followed, including the appointment of a representative. A representative of a joint complaint must also be one of the complainants and must produce legal proof of his/her role. The authority responsible for resolving the complaint can meet with the complainant, those who the complaint was lodged against, and witnesses and representatives from relevant sociopolitical, or socio-professional organizations. If a complaint is lodged a second time by the same complainant, the responsible authority is obliged to meet with the person and has 45 days to find a solution.

145. See Vietnam Reception of Citizen Law 42/2013/QH13 at <https://vietnamlawenglish.blogspot.com/2013/11/vietnam-reception-of-citizen-law-2013.html>.



The statute of limitation to file a complaint is 90 days after receiving an administrative decision or knowing or being informed of an administrative decision or act. If complainants fail to exercise their right to complain in accordance with the statute of limitation due to objective obstacles,¹⁴⁶ the period during which such obstacles exist is not counted in the statute of limitation for filing a complaint. Complaints that are not eligible to be accepted for settlement include those whose written petition is devoid of the complainant's signature or fingerprint, those for which a second-time complaint settlement decision has already been issued, and those that have been accepted by a court for settlement.¹⁴⁷

Processing System: Follow-up Responsibilities

The Office of the Government Inspectorate's website provides user-based access to a national database on complaints and denunciations as well as a document management and operating system.¹⁴⁸ To request an administrative decision or administrative act of a People's Committee chairperson in a province or centrally run city,¹⁴⁹ the complainant can file a first-time complaint with the chairperson of the provincial-level People's Committee. Chairpersons of People's Committees at all levels personally receive citizens on a regular basis, as well as in urgent situations. Chairpersons of commune-level committees receive citizens at least one day per week; chairpersons for district-level committees receive citizens at least two days per month; and chairpersons of provincial-level committees receive citizens at least one day per month. The People's Committee meets monthly to discuss people's complaints with the management board, the chairman, and specialized divisions at the district level. Moreover, one-stop shops are regularly inspected by People's Committees and People's Council members.¹⁵⁰ If the complainant disagrees with the first-time complaint settlement decision of the chairperson of the provincial-level People's Committee, or if the complaint remains unsettled past the prescribed time limit, a second complaint can be filed with the minister who is managing the related sector. To request an administrative decision or act by

a minister, head of a ministerial-level agency, or government-attached agency, the complainant may file a complaint with the ministry. The inspectorate in charge of the complaint reviews the complaint and assigns it to the responsible agency for resolution. When necessary, while investigating the complaint, the responsible agency's representative may follow up and meet with the complainant(s) to request clarification of the claims. A first-time complaint settlement decision must include the date of the issuing decision; names and addresses of the complainant and the subject of concern; the contents of the complaint; results of verification and dialogue (if any); the legal grounds for complaint settlement and conclusion(s); the specified amount for compensation (if any); and information on the right to file a second-time complaint and the right to institute an administrative lawsuit at court. The same is required for second-time complaint settlement decisions, although those also entail public notifications that could take the form of an announcement during a meeting of the entity that is the subject of the complaint, a written listing at the entity's office or citizen reception, or notification in the mass media.

Timeframes and service standards

Within 10 days of receiving a first-time complaint under its purview, the responsible agency acknowledges receipt to the complainant, to the agency that has forwarded the complaint, and to the state inspectorate at the same level. If an agency refuses to accept a complaint, it must clearly state its reasons. Under the law, the time limit for settling a first-time complaint is 30 days after the complaint is accepted. For a complicated case, this may be extended but must not exceed 45 days after the complaint is accepted. Within three working days of issuing a complaint settlement/decision, the office in charge of resolving the complaint notifies the complainant of the settlement. Within three working days of issuing a complaint settlement decision, the agency is obligated to send it to the complainant, a direct superior or competent person, and the state inspectorate at the same level. If the complainant disagrees with the decision, he/she has the option of filing another complaint with

146. These would include illness, natural disaster, enemy sabotage, and working mission or study in a distant place.

147. See Law on Complaints and Denunciations. Article 11 at <https://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/vn/vn080en.pdf>.

148. This is in addition to the role of subnational entities and line sectoral ministries in complaint management.

149. Most complaints are addressed at the local or district level.

150. See <https://vanbanphapluat.co/law-no-02-2011-qh13-on-complaints>.



someone with the authority to settle second-time complaints within 30 days of receiving the decision. The time limit for settling a second-time complaint is 45 days after the complaint is accepted. For a complicated case, this time limit may be extended but must not exceed 60 days after the complaint is accepted. In remote areas with difficult travel conditions, the time limit for settling a complaint is 60 days after receipt. For a complicated case, this time limit may be extended but must not exceed 70 days. For second-time complaints, the concerned agency is expected to communicate the settlement decision to the petitioner within seven days of issuing it.

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

When a complaint settlement decision takes effect, relevant agencies and persons must abide by it and coordinate with other competent agencies to implement it. Complainants are obliged to collaborate with the competent entity to restore the rights and interests that were infringed upon by the administrative act that was the subject of the complaint.

Appeals

If a complainant disagrees with a second-time complaint settlement decision or a complaint remains unsettled past the prescribed time limit, an administrative lawsuit can be initiated in court in accordance with the Law on Administrative Procedures.

Monitoring and analysis

The Law on Complaints stipulates that ministerial-level and government-attached agencies as well as provincial-level People's Committees must report to the government regarding complaint settlement by their agencies or localities periodically or at the government's request. Local People's Committees also periodically report to the People's Councils and notify committees of the Vietnam Fatherland Fronts of the settlement of complaints and adjudication of administrative cases in their localities. The Office of the Government Inspectorate is responsible for the overall management and monitoring of complaint settlement work nationwide.¹⁵¹

SOCIAL INCLUSION

The Office of the Government Inspectorate's web page has an accessible design with a read-aloud function. If a complainant is ill, old, weak, has physical disabilities, or encounters an objective circumstance that makes it impossible to file a complaint, a parent, spouse, sibling, adult child, or other person can be authorized with full civil capacity to lodge a complaint. While receiving citizens, citizen reception officers are to wear the civil servant or public employee card/badge, demonstrate a professional and respectful attitude, provide explanations and instructions for persons making complaints, and listen to and receive written complaints. They are prohibited from obstructing the submission of complaints, retaliating against complainants, or reporting people who are intentionally not resolving complaints or illegally interfering in the settlement of complaints.

OUTCOMES

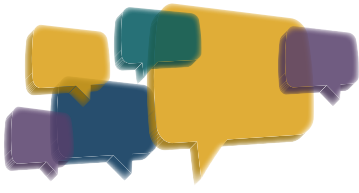
Statistics

According to a news article on the Office of the Government Inspectorate's web page, in September 2020, 131 cases of complaints and denunciations were checked and verified by the prime minister. Of these, 123 cases were resolved and eight cases were still ongoing. [Another news report](#) highlighted that, in 2019, 6,601 administrative inspections and 227,386 specialized inspections were conducted, discovering violations worth VNĐ 173.4 trillion (US\$7.5 billion) in addition to the mishandling of 22,548 ha of land. The inspectorate issued recommendations for administrative punishments to be handed down to almost 2,000 organizations and individuals.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

The inspectorate's *Inspection Newspaper* and *Inspection Magazine* publicize information related to the management and settlement of complaints as well as hands-on experiences of inspection-related operations. Its web page has a section on news and events as well as a section on videos that elaborate on the inspectorate's activities.

151. See <https://vanbanphapluat.co/law-no-02-2011-qh13-on-complaints>.



22. United Arab Emirates

Enabling Environment

[UAE Vision 2021](#) was launched in 2010 by H. H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, vice president and prime minister of the United Arab Emirates and ruler of Dubai, to make the United Arab Emirates “among the best countries in the world”¹⁵² by the Golden Jubilee of the Union. As part of

this effort, a customer [charter](#) was issued for all ministries. It highlights the rights and duties of federal authorities toward customers,¹⁵³ including simplified and efficient service delivery, fair and unbiased service provision, and continued engagement with customers to improve service delivery.

Centralized Feedback System: The 171 Tawasul Platform

The United Arab Emirates’ centralized portal for observations, suggestions, and inquiries, [171 Tawasul](#) (“communication” in Arabic), was launched in May 2020 by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation under the framework of initiatives approved by the Federal Government Services Continuity Committee. 171 Tawasul is intended to receive and ensure the addressing of the public’s feedback and complaints regarding the administrative services of ministries and public institutions. The 171 Tawasul portal, which is used by 35 government and public entities,¹⁵⁴ is available in [English](#) and [Arabic](#). Uptake

channels for 171 Tawasul include a web portal, a 24/7 toll-free number (171), and a 24/7 WhatsApp number (047771777). The portal also provides email addresses and phone numbers for all 35 government and public entities that participate in 171 Tawasul. For complainants to use the web portal, they must enter a “UAE Pass”—a single trusted digital identity for citizens, residents, and visitors. The performance of the Tawasul 171 system is monitored by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation in cooperation with the Telecommunications Regulatory Authority.¹⁵⁵

Feedback Systems for Ministries and Public Authorities

Ministry of Health and Prevention

The Ministry of Health and Prevention has developed a system for citizens to submit complaints against medical or pharmaceutical facilities under the ministry’s license, including private health facilities and the ministry itself, via email (suggestions@mohap.gov.ae or feedback@mohap.gov.ae), a toll-free phone number (80011111), live chat available on the website, and on its social media accounts ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)). Petitioners can submit complaints in Arabic or English. After creating an account on the website, which requires providing a

name, address, citizenship status, and identification number, the complainant can visit the website’s [e-services](#) page. This page provides access to the “Complaints and Grievances” icon, from which one can access a dashboard to create a new complaint or receive updates regarding the processing of existing complaints.

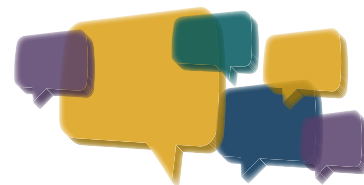
Once a complaint has been submitted, customer care staff records it, acknowledges that it has been received, classifies it, and forwards it to the responsible business unit within the ministry. Complaints are acknowledged within one working day.

152. See 171 Tawasul Homepage at <https://171.ae/en/>.

153. See Customer Charter, Laws and Regulations, Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation at <https://www.mohre.gov.ae/en/laws-and-regulations/uae-government-charter-for-future-services.aspx>.

154. “171 Tawasul Contact Us” <https://171.ae/en/ncrm-contact-us>.

155. There is no publicly available information about the outputs.



Timeframes for complaint resolution are one day for an urgent complaint, five days for normal complaints, and 15 days for complicated complaints. Once the complaint is investigated and resolved, the decision is communicated to the complainant. If the complainant accepts the ministry's decision, the complaint is closed, and short-term and long-term measures are taken to avoid its recurrence. If the complainant is not satisfied with the proposed action, the issue can be escalated to the ministry's highest authority. Special procedures to investigate and resolve the complaint are followed. To ensure confidentiality, all customer care staff members are required to adhere to the ministry's confidentiality pledge.

Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization

The Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization has developed a process for petitioners to submit complaints related to the violation of the United Arab Emirates' Labour Law (Federal Law 8 of 1980), including issues pertaining to the lack of a safe and secure working environment; the withholding of maternity leave, annual leave, and public holidays; and delays in receiving wages or salaries.¹⁵⁶ Citizens can submit complaints by using a toll-free number (+971-4-607-3555),¹⁵⁷ the [ministry's website](#), or the [Tasheel online system](#), which simplifies labor-related processes for employers and employees. If a complainant calls the toll-free hotline, a customer care representative answers and attempts to address the complaint right away. If the representative is unable to do so, the complaint is forwarded to the Department of Complaint and Advise. If the department resolves the issue, the case is closed. If it does not, the complainant can file a legal motion. A complainant using the ministry's website, must select "Register Labour Complaints," click on the "Start Service" icon, select "Complaint Type," and enter the applicant type, the work permit number, and other details. A response is provided within 10 working days. Complaints submitted through Tasheel require supporting documents, such as a visa, company number, and work permit.

Two days after submission, if the dispute is not settled and if the complainant wants to pursue the complaint, the ministry calls and schedules an appointment with the complainant. In terms of process, complainants are provided with a reference number when a ministry employee records the complaints so they can check the status of the case. The person in charge at the ministry investigates and helps both parties reach a settlement. If reconciliation does not work, the complaint is referred to the court of jurisdiction.

Ministry of Education

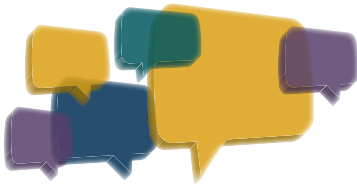
Petitioners can lodge a complaint on the Ministry of Education's [website](#). They are required to provide a name, contact number, email, and message, and can choose to provide an identification number and documents relevant to the case. They receive a response within five days.¹⁵⁸ In April 2021, the ministry launched a toll-free hotline (800 51115) to receive suggestions, complaints, and information requests in English and Arabic from students, parents, and teachers (Edarabia 2011). The call center team comprises six people who record the details of the feedback and channel it to the relevant departments. Petitioners receive a response to their feedback within five days.

In terms of feedback systems established by specific educational institutions, the University of the United Arab Emirates has established a Complaints and [Proposals Management System](#). The university can be reached by email (letstalk@uaeu.ac.ae) or phone (037673333), and it is possible to submit online [complaints](#) and [suggestions](#). To submit a complaint, petitioners must provide a name, a mobile number, an email address, a designation, and a message describing their feedback. A complainant can also provide an identification number and attach relevant documents. The timeframe for receiving a response from the university about a complaint is five working days. To submit a suggestion, one must provide a name and message and can choose to provide an identification

156. See "How to File a MOHRE Complaint: Process, Status and More—MyBayut" at <https://www.Bayut.Com/Mybayut/How-to-File-Track-Mohre-Complaint/>.

157. Ministry working hours are 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Sunday–Thursday; it is not indicated on the web page] if these hours correspond to the availability of the toll-free number.

158. See <https://www.Moe.Gov.Ae/En/EServices/ServiceCard/Pages/Complain.aspx>.



number, a mobile phone number, a designation, and relevant documentation. The university's timeframe for responding to queries is 48 hours.

Ministry of Climate Change and Environment

The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment can be reached by email (info@moccae.gov.ae), by phone (+971 02 4444747), fax (+971 02 4444747), in person (7.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m., Sunday through Thursday), or via [an online form](#) on the ministry's website.

Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure

The Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure can be reached by phone (800 6634), in person (7.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m., Sunday through Thursday), by email (info@moei.gov.ae), and via an online form. Only an email address and a message are required to submit feedback.

Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates

The Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates is the government-owned regulatory authority that oversees banks, finance and investment companies, exchange houses, and financial and monetary intermediaries operating in the country. The Consumer Protection Department of the bank is responsible for safeguarding consumers against financial misconduct by the above-mentioned organizations and helping customers resolve disputes with financial institutions. Consumers who have a dispute with a bank or financial organization are expected to first communicate it directly to the organization and give it a chance to respond. If consumers are not satisfied with the grievance redress process of the concerned organization, or if they have not received a response within a reasonable

timeframe, they can submit a complaint to the central bank. Consumers can lodge a complaint if they think a financial institution has been misleading or deceiving them, holding back documentation, delaying remittances, dealing in unfair practices, violating consumer protection laws and regulations, or discriminating against them in the issuance of a loan.

Complaints can be filed online through the complaint form on the bank's website, by faxing the complaint to +971 2 6916004, or in person at any of the bank branches in Dubai, Sharjah, Al Ain, Ras Al Khaimah, or Fujairah. They can also call the bank's Consumer Protection Department 800 CBUAE (800 22823) regarding consumer complaints and inquiries; the department can provide information on the process for registering a complaint and answer any questions. A complainant must submit copies of statements, receipts, and related paperwork that support the claims and provide documents needed to verify that they first brought the matter to the concerned organization. Once a complaint has been filed, a reference number is generated by the bank, and a complainant must provide this number to monitor the status of the case. Complainants are notified by phone, email, or SMS when a decision has been reached regarding the complaint.¹⁵⁹

As indicated in the Central Bank's 2018 Annual Report, some of the top concerns of banking customers in the United Arab Emirates include debt-level management; denial or delay of the issuance of necessary documentation by banks; aggressive credit card selling and lack of disclosure; issues related to the opening, operating, and closing of bank accounts; and issues regarding the remittance of funds.¹⁶⁰

159. <https://www.souqalmal.com/financial-education/ae-en/how-to-complain-to-the-uae-central-bank/>.

160. <https://www.souqalmal.com/financial-education/ae-en/central-bank-reveals-most-common-customer-complaints-in-the-uae/>.



Feedback Systems for Emirates

Dubai

The Dubai Roads and Transport Authority offers users the opportunity to submit complaints [online](#), by phone (8009090), by email (ask@rta.ae), through social media accounts, in person, and via a complaint box at a service center. It takes seven working days to process a complaint. An agent calls the complainant to inform him/her of the actions taken to address the issue.¹⁶¹ The Land Department of the Government of Dubai has developed an online [portal](#) through which petitioners can submit reports of real estate company [violations](#), queries regarding contractual [disputes](#), and malicious [calls](#). The Dubai Healthcare City Authority also has a [web page](#) where complaints can be submitted. Finally, the consumer protection team has launched Dubai Consumer, an [application](#) that protects the rights of consumers and serves as a bridge between them and businesses to ensure that their comments, complaints, and suggestions are recorded and that issues are resolved (The Filipino Times 2019). Customers can also provide feedback by calling a toll-free number (600 545 555), sending an email (consumerrights@dubaided.gov.ae), or contacting Dubai Consumer through social media channels (e.g., [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts).

Abu Dhabi

The National Consultative Council has the mandate to receive and address feedback from citizens in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.¹⁶² Complaints can be submitted [online](#); the user must provide a first and last name, an Emirate identification number, a family book number, an email address, a mobile number, and a message. Complainants can also share the nature of their work, the name of their workplace, a phone number, an address, and relevant documents.

In May 2019, the Abu Dhabi Executive Council established four new subcommittees, including one to review and resolve

complaints and grievances made against government entities. The Complaints and Grievances Committee is chaired by the chairman of the Department of Transport (Arabian Business 2019). In addition to reviewing complaints against government entities and companies, the committee is responsible for referring employees with proven negligence to disciplinary action in accordance with standard operating procedures. It is also tasked with identifying the reasons behind the complaints, guiding disputing parties to resolve the issue, and following up on resolution.

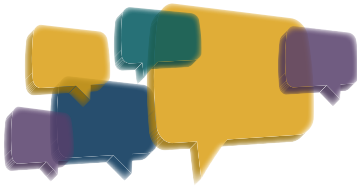
The government of Abu Dhabi developed a mobile app, CityGuard, which allows residents to submit complaints or report public safety concerns directly to the government (Emirates 24|7 2014). Residents can take a photo, video, or audio clip of the reported incident and submit it through the app, which also provides the option of geotagging the location. A complainant must provide a first and last name and email address. It is possible to submit complaints in Arabic and in English for over 25 incident types, from *sewerage* to *sand obstruction* to *homeless nuisance*. If none of the predefined types apply, complainants can report their specific case using the *others* category. Once a case is submitted, it is automatically registered, and a case number is created with the Abu Dhabi Government Contact Centre, which will then assign the case to the appropriate government entity for resolution. A complainant can monitor the progress of a case by logging on to www.abudhabi.ae or by contacting the Abu Dhabi Government Contact Centre and providing a case number.

Sharjah

It is possible to submit inquiries, suggestions, and complaints to the Sharjah City municipality [online](#) or through a toll-free number (993). One must leave a name, an email address, a mobile number, and a message.

161. See “Roads and Transport Authority—Complaint Handling” at <https://www.Rta.Ae/Wps/Portal/Rta/Ae/Home/about-Rta/Our-Customers/Complaint-Handling>.

162. See “National Consultative Council Personal Complaints at <http://ncc.ae/en/complaintspetitions/personalcomplaints.aspx>.”



The Sharjah Economic Development Department has developed a complaint management system. One can file a complaint in Arabic or English at the reception desk, with an [online form](#), or by fax, phone (80080000), email (Complains.Committee@sedd.gov.ae), or website chatbot.¹⁶³ A complainant receives acknowledgment that the complaint was received within three working days. The timeframe to respond to a complaint with a proposed action is 15 working days. If the proposed solution is not satisfactory, the complainant can file a grievance by email within five working days from the date of receipt of the proposed action. In the first quarter of 2019, the department solved 1,411 complaints, a growth of 16 percent over 2018, amounting to 1,093 complaints:¹⁶⁴ 1,053 about consumer protection, 113 about service agents, and 245 about commercial fraud. In the third quarter of 2020, the department received 2,818 complaints: 2,564 about consumer protection, 153 about commercial fraud, and 101 about service agents. In the first quarter of 2021, the department received 2,515 complaints: 2,228 about consumer protection, 147 about commercial fraud, and 140 about service agents.¹⁶⁵

Ajman

Complaints regarding services provided by the Municipality and Planning Department of Ajman can be submitted [online](#), via email (digitalajman@Ajman.ae), or through a chat bot (<https://80070.ae>). Calls can also be submitted through a toll-free number (80070), and calls are received in three languages (Arabic, English, and Urdu). Responses are provided within five working days of the submission of the complaint.

Complaints regarding services provided by the Department of Economic Development of the government of Ajman can be submitted [online](#). The complainant must leave a name, an email address, a mobile number, a preferred communication channel, and a message, and it must state if the complaint is about services at centers, online services, consumer protection, or

other. Complainants have the option of providing information about their nationality and to share relevant documentation.

Complaints about services provided by the Department of Land and Real Estate Regulation can be submitted [online](#). The complainant must leave a name, a contact number, an email address, and a message, and must indicate if it is an inquiry, a suggestion, or a complaint.

It is possible to submit labor-related complaints [online](#) on the website of the Ajman government. The complainant must share the contract, a passport copy, and evidence. The complainant receives a response within 17 days.

Al Ain

Al Ain Distribution Company has made it possible for customers to submit complaints about its services using a toll-free number (8009008, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.), fax (038117000), and via an [online form](#). Customers must indicate whether their feedback is a complaint, request, inquiry, suggestion, or compliment, and they must select the nature of the feedback from a drop-down menu. They must provide a name, phone number, email address, and comments, and they have the option of attaching relevant documents. A case number is generated upon submission of the feedback and can be used to track the status of the case.

Ras Al Khaimah

The government of Ras Al Khaimah and the Ras Al Khaimah Municipality have established a Unified Customer Complaint System to receive suggestions and complaints related to government services and to respond to the needs and expectations of complainants. Customers can submit complaints [online](#) and receive a reference number that can be used to track their cases' progress. Upon resolution of a complaint, customers are asked to complete a service evaluation form.

163. See <https://Sedd.Ae/Web/Sedd/Complaints-Policy>.

164. See "SEDD Receives 1411 Customer Complaints in 2019 First Quarter" at <https://www.Sharjah24.Ae/En/Articles/2020/11/18/Sedd-Receives-1411-Customer-Complaints-in-2019-First-Quarter>.

165. See <https://Sedd.Ae/Web/Sedd/News-Details?ArticleId=95597&templateId=23620>.



23. West Bank and Gaza

Enabling Environment

The Regulation on Complaints (No. 6) issued in 2009 by the [Council of Ministers](#) of the Palestinian Authority,¹⁶⁶ later amended by the Regulation on Complaints (No. 8) issued in 2016¹⁶⁷ as well as the Procedure Manual on the Regulation on Complaints (No. 17/20) issued in 2017, establish a system for handling citizen complaints based on rights-based approaches. It applies

to every complaint filed by any recipient of service, or any person requesting a service who was harmed by the decisions of a Palestinian Authority department, its procedures, practices or failure to perform services.¹⁶⁸

It also provides for the establishment of the Directorate General of Complaints (DGC) in the Council of Ministers' Secretariat General and outlines the role, mandate, and procedures for complaint units in Palestinian ministries, nonministerial Palestinian Authority agencies,¹⁶⁹ security services, and governorates. As a result, 68 units have been established in various ministries and governorates to receive complaints regarding programs and services implemented by their ministries.

The Directorate General for Complaints

CONTEXT

Brief description

Established in 2009, the Directorate General for Complaints was established in the Council of Ministers. It reports directly to the [Secretary General of the Council of Ministers/Chairman of the Office of the Prime Minister](#) and consists of three departments: the Department of Follow-up with Units and Offices; the Department of Coordination with the Complaints Unit at the President's Office, at the Legislative Council and with Nongovernmental Organizations; and the Department of Documentation, Archive and Reception. The directorate examines every complaint submitted by a recipient of any service or any person requesting a service who was harmed by the decisions of a Palestinian Authority department, its procedures, practices, or failure to perform services. It addresses complaints filed by individuals against Palestinian Authority departments, those

filed by civil society organizations, those related to the failure to enforce definite judicial rulings against Palestinian Authority departments, those involving cases about which a decision has been made in the event new substantial data appear and change the course of the complaint, complaints against financial aid programs of the Ministry of Social Development, and those of public interest.

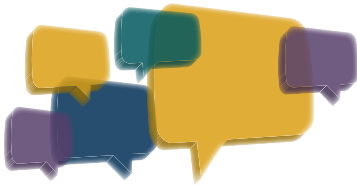
Specialized units, called *complaints units* at ministries and *complaints offices* at governorates, are established in all Palestinian Authority institutions and report directly to the Directorate General of Complaints at the Prime Minister's Office. In ministries, the complaints units also report directly to the minister. An employee assumes the administration of each unit and office.

166. Amending the Regulatory Framework for Handling Palestinian Citizens' Complaints. May 2014. Working Paper. Ramallah and Geneva. The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces.

167. "Decision of the Council of Ministers No (8) of 2016 on the Regulation on Complaints." State of Palestine Council of Ministers, Directorate General of Complaints. https://www.marsad.ps/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/12/NewComplaintsRegulation_English-AWDA.pdf.

168. "Decision of the Council of Ministers No (8) of 2016 on the Regulation on Complaints," 2. State of Palestine Council of Ministers, Directorate General of Complaints. https://www.marsad.ps/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/12/NewComplaintsRegulation_English-AWDA.pdf.

169. According to the Eighth Annual Report for Complaints in Government Departments for 2020, 21 non-ministry government agencies reported to the DGC, such as the Palestinian Water Authority, the Palestinian Land Authority, the Commission for Social Affairs, and the Central Bureau for Statistics.



Article 5 of the Regulation on Complaints (No. 8), issued in 2016, establishes a computerized central government complaints system and links it with the unit and the section, through which the Directorate General is entitled to access complaint reports.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Uptake channels

It is possible to submit a complaint to the DGC [online](#) (the complainant must enter a login name and password). Complaints can also be filed onsite in the units and offices, in writing, or by email, fax, regular mail, or phone. In the West Bank, grievances are usually submitted either by completing a ministry-specific [complaint form](#) (1,949 complaints in 2020), by email (9,899 complaints in 2020), by fax (588 complaints in 2020), or in writing with a personal letter (2,360 complaints in 2020). Although it is possible, almost no respondents submit grievances by phone. In the Gaza Strip, fax or email complaints are the most widely used channels. Phone calls are also used to verbally file complaints.¹⁷⁰

Processing system: Follow-up responsibilities

Once it receives the complaints, the DGC reviews each case and discusses it with relevant parties to find solutions or send it to court if a solution cannot be reached through legal negotiations. It coordinates with the General Administration for Legal Affairs to follow up on complaints about ministries not implementing Supreme Court decisions.

After submitting a complaint, the complainant is assigned a unique identification code by email. Complainants can log into the system and see the status of the case. Internal users of the system are able to see exactly where in the ministry's workflow the complaint stands.

Complaints can also be lodged in the complaint units in ministries and Palestinian Authority agencies and governorates. The DGC monitors and evaluates complaint units with a focus on problems or delays in the resolution process. It makes direct recommendations to the prime minister's office but its authority over ministry complaint units is limited, although given the DGC's strategic position in the Council of Ministers, several of its recommendations to the prime minister's office have been positively received. Its recommendations generally focus on suggested amendments to laws or regulations that are impeding the resolution of complaints. Ministry complaint units are accountable to their respective ministries but also report to the DGC.

Timeframes and service standards

A complaint unit has three days to accept or reject a complaint and two weeks to resolve it. If that amount of time is insufficient, the unit informs the complainant, and it is allowed to take up to one month from the date of the complaint was filed to resolve the issue and respond to the complainant in writing, as stipulated in article 14 of the Regulation on Complaints 6 of 2009¹⁷¹ and in article 11 of the Regulation on Complaints 8 of 2016.¹⁷² Complainants are not systematically informed about the results of their complaints.¹⁷³

Modalities for resolution and citizen satisfaction

The complaint management system allows citizens to voice their opinions about the software. It includes a brief user satisfaction survey to receive immediate feedback from users regarding their experience with the system.

In 2016, over half of complainants who were dissatisfied with the result of their complaint intended to appeal the decision.¹⁷⁴ In the West Bank, the percentage of respondents who agree

170. World Bank, *Strengthening the Citizen-State Compact through Feedback*, 31. 2016. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/26217/ACS18685-REVISED-PUBLIC-CHMs-in-Palestine-Final-Report-Nov-2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

171. "Decision of the Council of Ministers No (8) of 2016 on the Regulation on Complaints," Article 14, p 11. State of Palestine Council of Ministers, Directorate General of Complaints. https://www.marsad.ps/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/12/NewComplaintsRegulation_English-AWDA.pdf.

172. "Decision of the Council of Ministers No (8) of 2016 on the Regulation on Complaints," Article 11, p. 6. State of Palestine Council of Ministers, Directorate General of Complaints. https://www.marsad.ps/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2016/12/NewComplaintsRegulation_English-AWDA.pdf.

173. World Bank, *Strengthening the Citizen-State Compact through Feedback*, xvii. 2016. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/26217/ACS18685-REVISED-PUBLIC-CHMs-in-Palestine-Final-Report-Nov-2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

174. World Bank, 24. 2016. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/26217/ACS18685-REVISED-PUBLIC-CHMs-in-Palestine-Final-Report-Nov-2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.



that the complaint unit staff is respectful, neutral, and nondiscriminatory is highest for the Palestinian Land Authority (75 percent) and lowest for the Ministry of Local Government—a mere 30.4 percent. In the Gaza Strip, the highest recorded customer service satisfaction rates are for the Palestinian Land Authority (70 percent); the lowest was for the Ministry of Health (58.3 percent). Gender-based discrimination was not mentioned by West Bank complainants. In the Gaza Strip, however, a majority of respondents cited gender-based discrimination to explain their dissatisfaction with complaint unit staff (up to 56 percent for the Ministry of Education and Higher Education respondents). Additional reasons included the absence of a “first-come, first served” rule and the belief that more attention is given to some complainants over others.¹⁷⁵

Appeals

The DGC handles complaints referred to it and appeals of complaints that ministry and lower-level complaint units cannot resolve. There is a fairly widespread willingness among dissatisfied complainants to appeal the results of the complaint handling process (over half would do so) but at the same time, many express a reluctance because of the system’s reputation for being slow.¹⁷⁶

Gender violence

Gender violence

It is possible to submit complaints about gender violence through the Women’s Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling (WCLAC), which can be reached by email (info@wclac.org), phone (+970 2 295-6146), or contact form (one must leave a name, email address, mobile number, and message). The center provides legal aid, social counseling, and protection services to women. WCLAC was established in 1991 to forge a feminist vision based on equality and social justice. It addresses gender-based

Monitoring and analysis

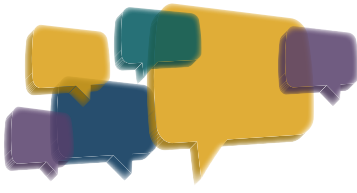
Article 19 of the Regulation on Complaints (No. 8) issued in 2016 and Article 23 of Procedure Manual issued in 2017 mandate that Palestinian Authority departments submit annual reports to the DGC. Article 19 of the Regulation on Complaints (No. 8) also stipulates that the Directorate General must publish an annual report on the status of complaints in Palestinian Authority departments and make it publicly available after it has been ratified by the council. In its 2019 annual report, the DGC indicates that all 67 government public institutions have submitted reports, representing 8,645 submitted complaints. Eighty-seven percent (7,362) were processed; 12 percent (1,015) were rejected; and 1 percent (88) had been submitted but not yet studied. Six hundred and fifty-eight complaints from 2018 were processed in 2019, and 692 complaints were going to be processed in 2020; 2,890 complaints were received by ministries, 820 by nonministerial government institutions, 712 by security institutions, and 4,043 by governorates. Among the ministries, it was the Ministry of Social Development that received the most complaints (601); among nonministerial government bodies, it was the Authority for Environmental quality (366); among the security institutions, it was the police (339); and among the governorates, it was the Governorate of Qalqilya (859). Women submitted 1,522 complaints (19 percent of the total).¹⁷⁷

violence in both the public and private spheres and has a special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In 2009, along with another nongovernmental organization (NGO)—Juzoor for Health and Social Development—WCLAC began work on a national referral system called *Takamol* (*complimenting* in Arabic). It was designed as a comprehensive working framework for service providers that detailed protocols for the referral of women victims of violence within the civil and governmental social/legal/health services in the West

175. World Bank, 31–33. 2016. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/26217/ACS18685-REVISED-PUBLIC-CHMs-in-Palestine-Final-Report-Nov-2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

176. World Bank, xvii. 2016. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/26217/ACS18685-REVISED-PUBLIC-CHMs-in-Palestine-Final-Report-Nov-2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

177. “Seventh Annual Report for Complaints in Government Departments, for the Year 2019,” 14–16.



Bank. Takamol's procedures are intended to ensure efficient cooperation between partners so that women can receive the service(s) they most urgently require, such as counseling, legal aid, emergency protection, medical treatment, or a combination of services.

In 2018, there were five sheltering services in the West Bank and Gaza: the Mehwar Centre (run by the Palestinian Authority), the

Nablus Safe Home (run as an NGO), the Jericho shelter in the West Bank (run as an NGO), the Hayat Centre (run as an NGO), and the Aman Centre/Safe Home in Gaza (run by the Palestinian Authority).¹⁷⁸ These sheltering services provide women and children protection; counseling; legal aid; medical, educational, and employment support; and support to help them reintegrate into society. They can be reached by phone or email.

Within Ministries

Health

It is possible to submit a complaint to the [Ministry of Health](#) in writing as a letter, a dedicated ministry form, or an [online form](#) (for the West Bank) and by fax, phone (+97092384771-6 in the West Bank, +972-8-2847894 in Gaza), and email (info@moh.ps in the West Bank, info@moh.gov.ps in Gaza). A complainant needs an official account to lodge a complaint. The Complaints Unit registers and either accepts or declines grievances/complaints immediately upon receipt. The complaint is then transferred to the relevant specialized units or departments (based on its nature). For cases alleging medical mistakes, a committee is typically formed by the Ministry of Health to investigate the complaint and resolve the issue or provide redress. These committees report to the legal unit at the minister's office. In the West Bank, 12.3 percent participants of a phone survey conducted in 2015 by the World Bank were satisfied with the grievance process, while 79.2 percent of the complainants in the Gaza Strip were satisfied with the results of their complaint.¹⁷⁹ Data provided by the Ministry of Health in the West Bank regarding outcomes showed that 153 complaints were accepted out of 208 received (over 74 percent) in 2020. All 153 complaints received by the complaint unit were resolved, and ministry officials said that most complaints are resolved quickly due to their urgent character—e.g., patient treatment. The Ministry of Health complaint unit has four employees who use the

management information system to help analyze trends in its performance and identify problem areas.

Environment

The [Environment Quality Authority](#) is the Palestinian Authority's body in charge of addressing issues related to the environment. It is possible to submit a complaint through an [online form](#): the complainant has to leave a name, an email address, and a phone number, and can also leave a company name. It is also possible to contact the authority by phone (022403495,6,7), fax (022403494), social media account ([Facebook page](#)), and email (info@environment.pna.ps).

Transport

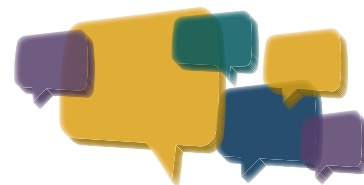
It is possible to contact the ministry through an [online form](#) (the complainant must leave a name, email address, physical address and a message); by phone (0594222436); fax (02-297645); and through its complaints office.

Agriculture

In addition to its complaints office, complaints can be submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture by email (info@moa.pna.ps) or by phone (022403304/6/7 during working hours from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. from Sunday to Thursday) or and fax (022403312).

178. Assessment of the Services of Anti-Violence Centres and Shelters in Palestine. 2018. UN Women. <https://palestine.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/10/assessment-of-sheltering-services^p>.

179. World Bank. 2016. *Strengthening the Citizen-State Compact through Feedback*, 70, 71.



Social Development

There are three different types of formal and informal mechanisms to receive and respond to complaints. The first, which is formal and quite effective, involves the complaint unit, entrusted with the responsibility of receiving, responding to, and resolving all complaints. The second involves written complaints received by the ministry's operational staff at the national and regional levels. The staff investigates and responds to the complaints. Grievances received through this mechanism are not captured in the complaint management information system nor are they reported to the complaint unit, but cases are opened for them, and they are documented in regional offices. Data on these types of complaints are not readily available. The third and final mechanism deals with verbal complaints received by Ministry of Social Development's operational staff at all levels. Because there is no documentation for complaints received this way, tracking, monitoring, and analysis are not possible. However, informal estimates suggest that this is the most common channel used.¹⁸⁰ Once a case is resolved, complainants are informed of the proposed solution. The ministry can also be reached by phone (02-2405641) and email (info@mosa.pna.ps).¹⁸¹

Local government

While most West Bank complainants submit their grievances in person via a letter to the ministry, Gaza Strip complainants favor phone, fax, and email to communicate their complaints to the complaint unit.¹⁸² Once received, a complaint is registered in a

database to be tracked.¹⁸³ The team in charge of resolving the cases informs the complainant of its handling and the proposed solution once the complaint has been resolved. Existing focal points for complaint handling in regional offices do not have clearly defined responsibilities or reporting requirements, so while they do contribute to complaint-handling efforts, their role is not formalized. Municipalities with citizen service centers at the local government level often appear to have well-functioning complaint handling mechanisms, creating opportunities for potential synergies.¹⁸⁴

Land Authority

Established by presidential Decree 10 of 2002 as a legal entity with its own budget, subordinate to the Council of Ministers, the Land Authority is responsible for both the survey and registration departments.

Uptake channels to submit complaints in the West Bank include in-person visits, the filling of an official complaint form, and letter writing. In Gaza, options include email, fax, letters, in person, and phone. Once the complaint is registered, the complainant is informed by the Land Authority of its handling. One employee is responsible for registering all the complaints, along with other tasks,¹⁸⁵ which means that most complaints are sent to the chairman's office to be addressed. It is possible for complainants to request information from the Land Authority, which informs them when the case is resolved.

180. World Bank 2016, 16.

181. In June 2021, its website (<http://www.mosa.pna.ps/>)

182. World Bank, *Strengthening the Citizen-State Compact through Feedback*, 59. 2016.

183. World Bank 2016, 61.

184. World Bank 2016, 63.

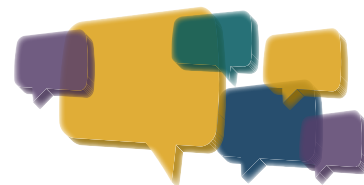
185. World Bank 2016, 67.



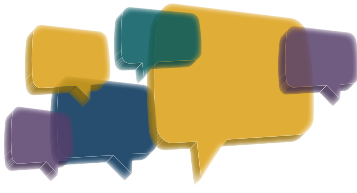
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