

PREVENTION AND ADDRESSING OF COMPLAINTS

PROCEDURE

CODIGO: ETI – PR
Prevention and
Addressing of
Complaints

DRAFTED BY:

REVIEWED BY:

APPROVED BY:

EFFECTIVE AS OF:

Our Mission

"Rooted in the global South, Fundación Avina works to drive collaborative processes that bring about systemic changes in favor of human dignity and care for the planet."

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1. DOCUMENT TYPE

DOCUMENT TYPE: PROCEDURE Derived from ETI – PG Code of Ethics

2. CONTEXT

Fundación Avina's management style and institutional culture are based on the core values expressed in the organization's Code of Ethics, a general policy from which all its specific policies are derived, including: "Gender and Diversity," "Respect for and Protection of People," and Prevention and Management of Conflicts of Interest.

These policies are intended to respect, care for, and protect **Human Rights**. At Fundación Avina we work to ensure that all individuals and groups involved with the organization are treated with dignity and respect as core values. For this reason, we have a **zero tolerance policy for any form of violence, discrimination, inequality, and inequity**.

These policies express the expectations we have for every individual and organization directly or indirectly involved with Fundación Avina. Nevertheless, it is possible that the type of conduct prohibited by these policies may arise at any level or setting within the organization or the surrounding community.

This is why it is necessary to establish a procedure for Fundación Avina to follow in situations where prohibited conduct clearly occurs, doubts or concerns about prohibited conduct arise, or circumstances could potentially lead to prohibited conduct.

3. GOAL

The goal of this policy is to establish a channel for submitting complaints and addressing grievances that is accessible, transparent, effective, and efficient, with procedures for prevention, redress, and intervention in cases of prohibited conduct.

It is of the utmost importance that personal data is handled securely and confidentially in each of the several channels available for submitting complaints. These channels must remain permanently open and accessible for every individual and organization directly or indirectly involved with Fundación Avina to communicate if they are negatively affected by the actions of our staff or the organization in

general. Reports of possible prohibited conduct at the individual or institutional level must be managed and resolved in a responsible and transparent manner, taking care to ensure the safety of the party presenting the complaint and adequately following up with the party accused of prohibited conduct, as appropriate and according to the circumstances of each situation.

4. SCOPE

This policy applies to any individual involved with Fundación Avina, including staff, consultants, interns, and volunteers, as well as individual partners, partner institutions and allies, investors, and co-investors.

In the event that a situation arises with individuals involved with a partner organization, Fundación Avina will respect the internal protocols of the partner organization, which should be in line with Fundación Avina's Code of Ethics.

5. DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Complaint: An individual's written or verbal expression of disagreement, grievance, or complaint regarding a situation in which they are directly or indirectly involved. At Fundación Avina, we extend the definition of the term "complaint" to include any notification or report of conduct prohibited by the organization's policies.

Prohibited conduct: Any behavior that is counter to organizational values and principles. The Code of Ethics outlines expected and prohibited conduct for individuals involved with Fundación Avina. Furthermore, this procedure deals with any conduct prohibited by other institutional policies and protocols.

Committee: A team of people whose knowledge, training, and experience equip them to make significant, valuable contributions to raising awareness, preventing, assessing, addressing, and resolving the specific issues they are tasked to handle. At Fundación Avina, the committees most relevant to this procedure are the Ethics, Gender and Diversity, and Risk Committees.

6. POLICY DETAIL

As part of Fundación Avina's commitment to the institutional values and principles outlined in its Code of Ethics, the following procedure is hereby established for the prevention, mitigation, and repair of harm caused as a result of conduct prohibited by Fundación Avina.

The procedure is broken down into the following stages:

6.1 PREVENTION AND AWARENESS

Each committee proposes and implements actions, according to their respective issues of focus, with the goal of raising awareness and promoting equal, equitable, and respectful behaviors in all of Fundación Avina's relationships, transactions, and conversations.

Each committee monitors how institutional values and principles are applied throughout the Avina ecosystem and how they are living concepts present in every project, program, and service area.

6.2 IDENTIFICATION

Any individual involved with Fundación Avina's programs or processes can identify situations or potential cases where one or more people or organizations in direct relationship to Fundación Avina via legal agreement display behavior counter to the institutional values and principles laid out in the Code of Ethics and the specific policies concerning discrimination, inequality, inequity, harassment, or abuse of power.

Avina's different oversight committees are also responsible for identifying behaviors or situations that are not reported or are not able to be solved through self-regulation at the team level. They are also tasked with identifying and resolving situations that are not specifically addressed by the Code of Ethics or related policies.

6.3 ADDRESSING COMPLAINTS

6.3.1 Addressing internal complaints

The individual that identifies prohibited conduct or potential situations involving unacceptable behavior on the part of our organization should notify their direct supervisor to explain, share, or report their concerns.

Any individual on staff with Fundación Avina or one of our partner organizations can report misconduct or submit a complaint about this type of situation through the "Complaints" section on Avina's website www.avina.net. Another channel is to contact the corresponding oversight committee, either in person or via email, to report the situation, submit a complaint, or raise a concern.

Ethics Committee: comiteetica@avina.net

Gender and Diversity Committee: genero@avina.net

Any individual that reports prohibited conduct or submits a complaint can do so with the assurance that their confidentiality will be respected. The Ethics Committee, in coordination with the Risk Committee, will determine if there is an ethical, programmatic, financial, or human resources issue at hand in order to direct the initial information or question to the relevant division or program area.

In the event of a serious offense, the committee that initially takes on the case must report it simultaneously to both the senior staff of the relevant program area or division as well as the executive team, specifically the Executive Director who will, in turn, inform the Board of Directors of the situation.

If a complaint or report submitted to the committees involves an individual that would normally be involved in the above process, that individual shall be excluded from the process and replaced by the Executive Director or another individual appointed by the Executive Director.

If the complaint is concerning the Executive Director, the committee shall refer the situation to the Board of Directors. If the complaint is concerning a member of the Board of Directors, that individual shall be recused from the rest of the Board's evaluation of the situation.

First course of action: Complaints or reports involving minimal risks or related to lack of communication, requests for more information, tensions with social capital, etc. shall be handled by those responsible for managing risk in their program area or division (directors and managers) and the individual or team involved in the case. For the sake of transparency, the case should be recorded in CRM and shared with the Risk Committee to oversee the process. Following the principle of self-regulation, the managers of the corresponding team are responsible for determining the strategy for intervention. Their approach must be based on the principles laid out in the Code of Ethics, the risk policy, and the procedures for handling complaints.

The situation will be considered resolved when there are agreements to repair or offset any harm done and when the party presenting the complaint confirms that they are satisfied by these agreements. Agreements concerning ongoing monitoring, follow-up, or withdrawal of the complaint may also be reached by the parties.

In the event that no resolution or agreement is reached and the process becomes more complex, the managers in charge of the process shall escalate the matter to the Ethics and Risk Committees to initiate the second course of action.

The managers and directors involved in the situation should maintain open channels of communication to ensure that any individuals involved with Fundación Avina that desire to express their concerns may do so freely and without fear of retaliation or adverse consequences.

Second course of action: In the event that a complaint is not able to be resolved through the first course of action, it should be reported to the Ethics and Risk Committees, which shall determine which organizational division should address the matter. During the second course of action, the committee involved in the case should keep the Executive Director directly informed, copying the Risk Committee on all communications.

Assessment and resolution: The corresponding committee has 15 business days to assess the information revealed by the complaint and offer action steps toward resolution, such as:

- Determining how to address situations of this nature.
- Referring the case to external arbitration, mediation, or legal action, if warranted by the complexity of the situation.
- Dismissing the complaint, always providing supporting information for this decision.
- If it is determined that the situation should be addressed by the corresponding committee, notifying the direct supervisor of the involved parties so they may provide input on the assessment, resolution, and implementation of action steps.

The corresponding committee records the matters that they address in CRM to properly address, monitor, and resolve them.

6.3.2 Addressing external complaints

Based on our principles of transparency, respect for the vulnerable populations with whom we work, and responsibility for our actions, Fundación Avina is committed to maintaining several open channels of communication for individuals and organizations outside of our institution to submit complaints or concerns.

All questions or complaints must be related to active Fundación Avina projects or alliances or within 12 months after a project or alliance ends. The procedure detailed in this document shall not apply to any

matters or complaints submitted beyond this time period. A special procedure may be followed for such complaints if warranted by the circumstances.

- a. Submission of complaint or concern:** Complaints and concerns may be submitted via the "Complaints" section of the organization's website www.avina.net, email to the Ethics Committee (comité.etica@avina.net), letter, or during meetings with communities, Fundación Avina staff, or the staff of implementation partner organizations contracted by Fundación Avina.
- b. Assessment by Ethics Committee:** Once the complaint or concern has been received, the Ethics Committee has a maximum of 5 business days to review it, conduct any necessary investigations, and determine if the case warrants further action. A formal response must be made to the individual, organization, or community submitting the complaint to inform them if no further action will be taken or if Fundación Avina will follow an internal process to address it. The Risk Committee must be notified to record the case in CRM. Once the case has been received and taken on, the Executive Director must be notified.
- c. Investigation, resolution, and agreement process:** While each case may require a different amount of time, as a general rule the process should take a maximum of 15 business days. If the process will take longer, supporting information must be provided to justify the extension and the party submitting the complaint must be notified. Depending on the committee and the organizational division involved in the case, the following guidelines should be followed:
 - Responsibly gather information from several internal sources and thoroughly listen to the individual, organization, or community that is formally submitting the complaint or concern.
 - In the event that tensions are high, it is recommended that the Risk Committee get involved and that facilitation or mediation is utilized to manage the conflict.
 - In the event that the case involves not only Avina but also implementation partner organizations contracted by Fundación Avina, an immediate inquiry should be made to determine what happened as well as to assess whether or not there is any legal responsibility or liability, in order to make decisions in accordance with the legal agreement.
 - Always keep the party submitting the complaint informed of the status, based on the principle of equity and equal access to information and resources. If necessary, engage in dialogue to reach agreements and understanding between the parties and preserve relationships.
 - Identify agreements, adjustments, and changes in the organization's actions to compensate, remedy, repair, and restore the rights of the people and communities submitting the complaint.

d. Tracking agreements and closing cases of concern or complaints: In the event that a remediation or restitution agreement is made to repair harm caused by an individual on staff at Avina or an implementation partner organization contracted by Avina, it must be ensured that there is a mechanism in place to track the fulfillment of the agreement and confirm that the response is satisfactory to the party submitting the complaint before closing the case.

In the event that the individual, organization, or community submitting the complaint is of the point of view that the agreements were not satisfactorily fulfilled, it is recommended that they are informed of alternative means of resolving conflicts, such as mediation, facilitation, or ultimately legal action.

6.3.3 For a case to be closed, both internal and external complaints must be reviewed by Fundación Avina's legal team to ensure that the resolution is in accordance with applicable laws and does not expose the organization to potential lawsuits. Should the legal team make recommendations, they must be followed in the implementation of any agreements to resolve the case.

6.4 METHODOLOGY FOR PREVENTING AND ADDRESSING COMPLAINTS

Fundación Avina operates with a restorative justice approach, with sensitivity and empathy for the victim and the offender taking responsibility for their actions. We strive to create processes for restoration and healing that do not penalize or revictimize the vulnerable parties and that preserve institutional relationships. The Ethics Committee, along with the senior staff, makes decisions and determines action steps to prevent, mitigate, or repair negative effects or harm caused.

Any proposed solution should seek to:

- Respect, care for, and protect the injured individual or group and repair any harm.
- Generate a change in behavior in the individual or group that caused the harm, in the case of a minor offense.
- Minimize the negative effects or repair any harm to the surrounding environment.

The action steps or measures taken will depend on the severity of the behavior or situation, in terms of its impact on people, teams, processes, and/or institutions. These are categorized as **minimal, serious, or very serious**.

Actions taken may include preventative measures, conversations geared toward reconciliation and mediation, restorative measures, training on specific issues, modifications to the responsibilities of the

person who engaged in prohibited conduct, sanctions, suspensions, and disengagement or termination of consulting contracts, among others.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Strategic Communications Division:

- Ensure the proper functioning of the complaints submission form on Fundación Avina's website.
- Ensure that each type of situation reported can be referred to and handled by the corresponding committee.

Executives and managers:

- Ensure that everyone on our team understands this procedure.
- Identify and deal with possible prohibited conduct.
- Guide our team should they have doubts about a situation.
- Resolve situations that arise from prohibited conduct through self-regulation.
- Escalate situations that, given their severity or magnitude, require the assessment and support of the committees.

Staff, interns, volunteers, and consultants:

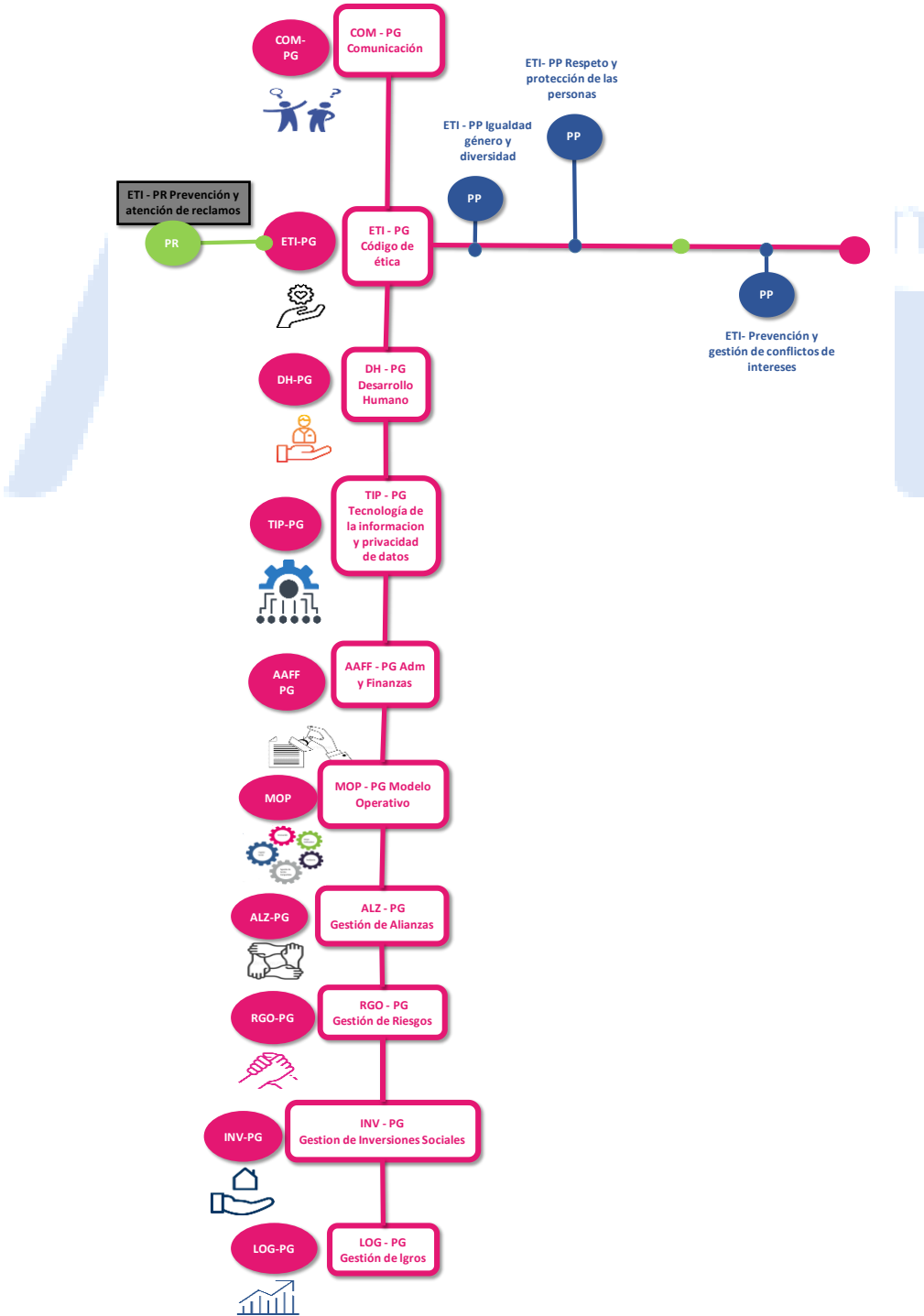
- Familiarize ourselves with this procedure.
- Identify and report any behavior that is counter to the Code of Ethics, following the guidelines on this procedure.
- Consult supervisors and/or the corresponding committee to seek guidance if we have doubts about a situation or if it requires special attention.
- Formally report situations via the "Complaints" submission form, if necessary.

Ethics, Gender and Diversity, and Risk Committees:

- Define and propose actions and programs with the goal of raising awareness about issues and practices concerning the organization's ethics and values, as well as to prevent any unethical behavior.

- Identify situations or behaviors that are counter to Fundación Avina's ethics and values through ongoing monitoring.
- Provide advising and support concerning prohibited behavior to any individuals that require it.
- Assess situations reported through the different communication channels (in person, email, "Complaints" form, direct supervisors).
- Determine whether report situations warrant further action and record the situations that will be addressed in CRM.
- Incorporate senior staff and other individuals as necessary into the assessment and resolution process.
- Determine the course of action in order to thoroughly assess each situation.
- Define action steps for the prevention and repair of harm and monitor their implementation.
- Report serious cases to the Executive Director.
- Evaluate the consequences of the actions for the individuals involved, the surrounding environment, and the entire Avina ecosystem.
- Create and present an annual/biannual report of cases addressed, actions taken, impact, results, and lessons learned.

8. RELATED DOCUMENTS



9. VISUAL SUMMARY

