

Participation Standards

MAY/2025

**amfori Speak for
Change**



1. Introduction

The amfori Speak for Change Participation Standards outline the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder involved in the grievance mechanism process. This document provides clear guidelines on how stakeholders, including complainants, business partners, amfori members, and partner organisations, should engage in the process.

The document aims to foster collaboration, transparency, and accountability, ensuring that grievances are handled effectively and that all stakeholders are engaged positively in the resolution process.

2. amfori's Role and Coordination Responsibilities

amfori is the central coordinator of the Speak for Change grievance mechanism. It oversees every step of the grievance process, from intake and admissibility checks to resolution and closure. Its role adapts depending on the complexity and sensitivity of each case, always aiming to ensure efficiency, fairness, and meaningful remedy.

As the lead facilitator, amfori:

- Conducts the intake and admissibility assessment within 5–7 business days
- Evaluates the level of complexity and urgency to determine appropriate coordination efforts
- Engages members and business partners based on the relevance and materiality of the case
- Coordinates remediation strategies and ensures they align with amfori's values and due diligence expectations

In straightforward cases, amfori may lead interactions directly with business partners and implement standard corrective measures. For more sensitive or systemic issues, it convenes relevant members and stakeholders to agree on next steps. When consensus cannot be reached, amfori may issue an expert recommendation to guide next steps.

To support implementation at the local level, amfori also works with a team of local engagement specialists. These locally based professionals:

- Provide cultural and contextual insight to support grievance verification and resolution
- Communicate directly with complainants and business partners in local languages
- Engage with relevant local institutions (e.g., labour authorities, civil society organisations)
- Propose context-specific remediation options and document findings through the case platform

These specialists are assigned by amfori on a case-by-case basis. They operate under amfori's oversight and do not engage directly with member companies. Their role is to support local dialogue and resolution, while ensuring consistency with the overall grievance process.

3. Member Responsibilities and Accountability

Members of amfori have both a duty and an opportunity to contribute to remedy in cases where they are linked. Engaging in this process helps them fulfil their duty of care, honour their commitments under the amfori BSCI Code of Conduct, and protect their reputation. Their responsibilities are calibrated to the specific case context, ensuring effective engagement without overburdening them.

All members must:

- Confirm or contest their connection to the case within 20 business days
- Submit a written justification if they believe they are not relevant to the case *delinking*^{*1}
- Appoint and maintain a designated *Single Point of Contact (SPOC*^{**2}) and backup contact.
- Respond to communications from amfori within 10 business days

Where applicable, members may be asked to:

- Review and approve resolution plans
- Coordinate investigations or engage third-party services
- Contribute financially to remediation efforts on a fair-share basis
- Appoint a Lead Respondent among themselves to centralise communication

Failure to respond, refusal to engage in good faith, or non-compliance with established responsibilities may result in escalation to amfori management, temporary exclusion from the grievance mechanism, or, if systemic or repeatedly, a membership review process.

4. Business Partner Engagement

Business partners implicated in a grievance are expected to participate constructively in the resolution process. Their engagement is critical to ensure the credibility of the mechanism and its outcomes.

They are expected to:

- Provide accurate and timely information, including a named *SPOC*^{**}
- Participate in fact-finding processes and support verification efforts
- Respect confidentiality protocols and prevent retaliation against any involved stakeholders

Where a business partner is found to be obstructing the process or retaliating against complainants or those supporting the mechanism, members may jointly consider measures such as contract termination, disclosure of the facility involved, or legal escalation, depending on the severity of the case.

¹ *delinking*: Formal process by which a member provides justification that it is not connected to a case and update his status on the amfori Sustainability Platform.

² *SPOC*: Single Point of Contact: the primary person responsible for handling a case on behalf of a stakeholder

5. Investigation and Remediation Support

5.1 Investigation

The investigation process involves a thorough examination of the issues raised. This includes collecting evidence, interviewing relevant parties, and analysing the data to determine the root cause of the problem. amfori decides on the necessary efforts for each step, determining whether data gathering is sufficient or if a local investigator needs to be assigned to the case. The investigation should be conducted in a fair and unbiased manner, ensuring that all perspectives are considered.

5.2 Remediation

Once the investigation is complete, the remediation process begins. This involves implementing corrective actions to address the issues identified during the investigation. Remediation should include specific guidelines on how to resolve the problems, prevent future occurrences, and monitor the effectiveness of the actions taken. Key steps in the remediation process may include:

- Developing a corrective action plan
- Communicating the plan to all stakeholders
- Implementing the corrective actions
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions
- Making necessary adjustments to ensure long-term success

Members have a crucial role in the remediation process. They are responsible for collaborating and engaging positively with their business partners (BP) to ensure effective remediation. This includes:

- Actively participating in the development and implementation of the corrective action plan
- Maintaining open and constructive communication with BP
- Providing support and resources to BP as needed
- Encouraging a culture of continuous improvement and mutual respect
- Monitoring the progress and effectiveness of the remediation efforts together with BP

6. Complainant Participation and Protection

amfori Speak for Change is grounded in principles of inclusive access and safety for those affected. Complainants should be treated with dignity and included meaningfully in the resolution process where feasible and safe.

Key safeguards and participatory steps include:

- Confidential or anonymous submission channels
- Ongoing case updates in a language and format accessible to the complainant
- Involvement in shaping resolution plans or validating outcomes, when possible
- Access to post-resolution feedback mechanisms

All cases are screened for potential risks of retaliation. In situations where concerns are heightened, amfori implements additional protective measures, such as handling the case anonymously, delaying certain communications, or removing or obscuring sensitive data. Local engagement specialists may also be involved to support communication with the complainant in their local language and help ensure the process remains inclusive and safe.

7. Final Resolution and Right to Appeal

Once a case has reached the end of the resolution process, amfori classifies the outcome under one of three categories:

- Fully Remediated: All key concerns were addressed and verified by the involved parties
- Partially Remediated: Some critical issues were resolved, while others remain open or require longer-term monitoring
- Not Remediated: The case could not be resolved due to disagreement, disengagement, or insurmountable barriers

The appeal process, including eligibility, grounds, and procedure, is detailed in the official Speak for Change Rules of Procedure (Chapter 7) (“RoP”). All stakeholders are encouraged to consult the RoP for full guidance on how to initiate and navigate an appeal.

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