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Guidance Note
UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (SES)

Stakeholder Engagement

UNDP Guidance Notes on the Social and Environmental Standards (SES)

This Guidance Note is part of a set of operational guidance materials related to the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (SES). UNDP's SES seek to (i) strengthen social and environmental outcomes of UNDP Programmes and Projects; (ii) avoid adverse impacts to people and the environment; (iii) minimize, mitigate, and manage adverse impacts where avoidance is not possible; (iv) strengthen UNDP partner capacities for managing social and environmental risks; and (v) ensure full and effective stakeholder engagement, including through mechanisms to respond to complaints from project-affected people.

Each of the SES guidance notes follows a similar structure to facilitate the ease in which users can find the information or guidance they are seeking. The set of guidance notes will develop over time and will include specific guidance on each of the SES Overarching Principles, Project-Level Standards, and elements of the Project Delivery Process (see key SES elements below). An online [SES Toolkit](#) provides additional information.

How to Use This Guidance Note

The target users for the SES guidance notes are staff, consultants, stakeholders and partners who are involved in developing and implementing projects. To facilitate use of the overall package of SES guidance, users should understand that the guidance notes:

- Are structured around the process of **screening, social and environmental assessment, and management**.
- Provide assistance in determining the applicability of relevant SES requirements in the screening process for all projects.
- Provide additional guidance for projects that require assessment and development of management measures (i.e. projects with potential Moderate or High Risks related to a certain Principle or Standard).
- Provide a practical resource for implementing SES requirements to address potential social and environmental impacts within the context of the project cycle. Users do not necessarily need to read them in full but rather may select information that is specific to their needs.
- Complement and elaborate on the SES, which must be read in conjunction with the guidance notes (SES language is generally not repeated in the notes).
- Will continue to be developed as lessons are derived from implementation. Feedback is always welcome and can be sent to info.ses@undp.org.

Key Elements of UNDP Social and Environmental Standards

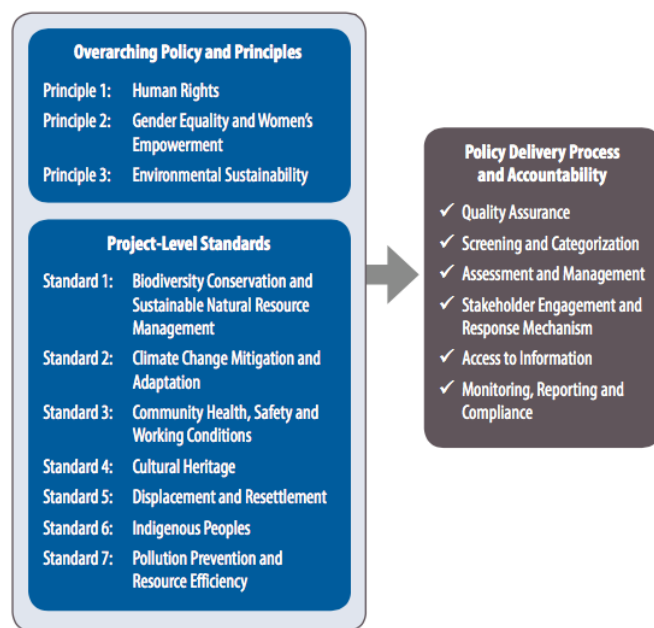


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1 Introduction

This Guidance Note describes how the SES requirements regarding Stakeholder Engagement are to be operationalized during the development and implementation of UNDP projects.¹ It begins with a summary of the policy basis and key objectives and concepts relevant to addressing the SES stakeholder engagement requirements (**Section 2**).

Section 3 discusses the need for stakeholder analysis and the development of stakeholder engagement plans. Initial engagement and involving stakeholders early in project planning is also addressed.

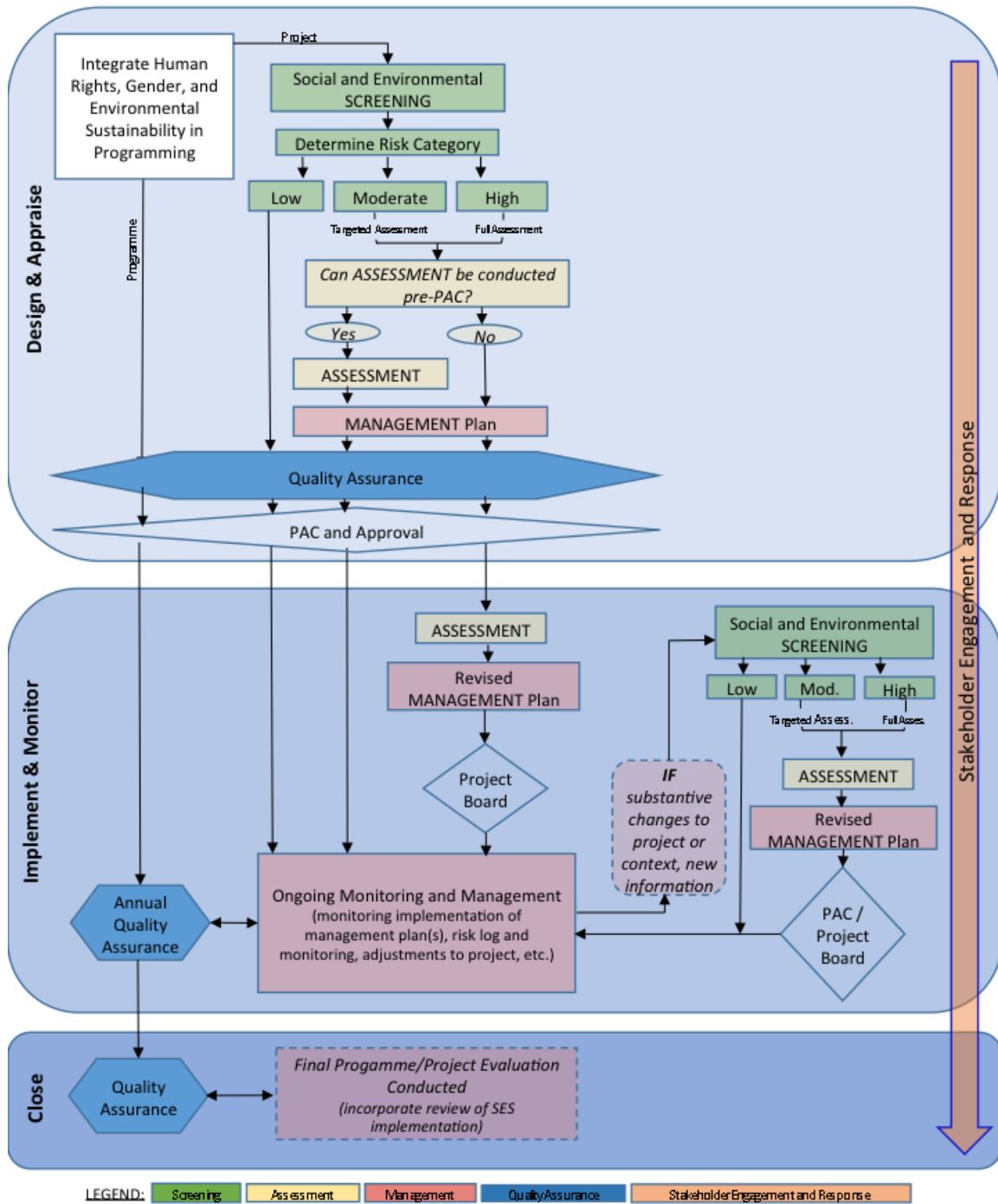
Section 4 addresses stakeholder engagement in screening the project for potential social and environmental risks and impacts, assessing a project's potential social and environmental impacts, and in the development of management plans and in monitoring project implementation.

Annex 1 outlines a common method for conducting stakeholder analysis, and **Annex 2** contains a further guidance and a generic outline for developing a stakeholder engagement plan.

Figure 1 provides a general overview of SES implementation in UNDP's project cycle, noting that stakeholder engagement occurs throughout all stages.

¹ SES requirements for stakeholder engagement apply to both UNDP Programmes as well as Projects (similar to the SES Overarching Principles). This guidance note addresses stakeholder engagement in projects. See UNDP SES, Policy Delivery Process, para. 12.

Figure 1. SES Implementation – Screening, Assessment and Management in the Programming Cycle



2 Understanding the Basics

2.1 Policy Basis

UNDP is committed to meaningful, effective and informed stakeholder engagement in the design and implementation of all UNDP projects.² Effective stakeholder engagement is a cornerstone to achieving sustainable development. Civil society actors and organizations, indigenous peoples, local communities and other key stakeholders are crucial partners for advancing human rights-based development.

Effective stakeholder engagement is fundamental to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and applying the principle of ‘leave no one behind’ in combatting inequality and ensuring equity and non-discrimination across all programming areas. For example, SDG Goal 16 – promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels – includes critical targets for achieving progress, including among others 16.7 – ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels – and 16.10 – ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.³ Stakeholder engagement is critical to secure multi-stakeholder partnerships to advance the SDGs (see SDG 17).

UNDP’s commitment to stakeholder engagement arises from internal policies, procedures and strategy documents as well as key international human rights instruments, principles and numerous decisions of international bodies, particularly as they relate to the protection of citizens’ rights related to freedom of expression and participation. See, for example: Article 19 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (guaranteeing freedom of expression and the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas)⁴; Article 25 of the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights (guaranteeing the right of all citizens to participate in the conduct of public affairs); Article 5(c) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racism (guaranteeing all the right to participate in public life without discrimination)⁵; Articles 3 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (affirming rights of persons with disabilities to full and effective participation in the conduct of public affairs).⁶

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) further affirms the right of indigenous peoples to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, as well as to be consulted and to give their free, prior and informed consent to a variety of matters.⁷

UNDP also follows the UN Statement of Common Understanding on Human Rights-Based Approaches to Development Cooperation which provides for “*Participation and Inclusion: Every person and all peoples are entitled to active, free and meaningful participation in, contribution to, and enjoyment of civil, economic,*

² As noted in ft. nt. 1, while stakeholder engagement requirements also apply to UNDP programmes, this guidance addresses stakeholder engagement in projects.

³ See the Sustainable Development Goals, targets and indicators at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>.

⁴ UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>.

⁵ International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Racial Discrimination, at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CERD.aspx>.

⁶ UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, at <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>.

⁷ See UNDRIP Articles 10, 11(2), 18, 19, 28(1), 29(2), 30(1), 32(2)). Further, Article 45 specifically mandates the organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to promote respect for and full application of the rights affirmed in UNDRIP.

social, cultural and political development in which human rights and fundamental freedoms can be realized.”⁸

2.2 Objectives and Requirements

Stakeholder engagement supports the development of strong, constructive, and responsive relationships that are critical for sound project design and implementation. Effective stakeholder engagement enhances project acceptance and ownership and strengthens the social and environmental sustainability and benefits of supported interventions. It is both a goal in itself – upholding the rights of citizens and others to participate in decisions that may affect them – as well as an effective means for achieving project outcomes, including those related to democratic governance, protecting the environment, promoting respect for human rights, and preventing and resolving conflict. The objectives of stakeholder engagement therefore include the following:

- strengthening development results through effective partnerships;
- identifying stakeholder priorities to better tailor project activities, opportunities and benefits;
- identifying potential constraints and conflicts that could affect project effectiveness;
- learning from and incorporating local knowledge to improve project design in order to avoid and mitigate project-related risks and impacts;
- providing a feedback and monitoring mechanism to ensure the project is achieving its intended results, and identifies potential unintended consequences; and,
- providing meaningful access to dialogue and decision-making in development processes.

Box 1 summarizes the SES requirements regarding stakeholder engagement that support these key objectives.

Box 1. Summary of Requirements of Stakeholder Engagement (refer to full text in SES, Policy Delivery Process, paras. 12-20)

- *Ensure meaningful, effective, informed participation of stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of UNDP Programmes and Projects, providing stakeholders opportunities to express their views at all points in the Project decision-making process on matters that affect them (SES, para. 15; SES, Policy Delivery Process (PDP), paras. 12, 14)*
- *Ensure that stakeholder analysis and engagement are conducted in a gender-responsive, culturally sensitive, non-discriminatory and inclusive manner, identifying potentially affected vulnerable and marginalized groups and providing them opportunities to participate (SES, PDP, 12).*
- *Develop appropriately scaled stakeholder engagement plans. The scale and frequency of engagement will reflect the nature of the activity, magnitude of potential risks and adverse impacts, and concerns raised by affected communities (SES, PDP, paras. 13, 15).*
- *Meaningful, effective and informed consultation processes need to meet specified criteria, including free of intimidation and external manipulation; inclusive; gender and age responsive; culturally appropriate and tailored to language preferences; and based on timely disclosure of accessible information (SES, PDP, para. 14)*
- *Ensure that stakeholders who may be adversely affected by the project can communicate their concerns and grievances (SES, PDP, paras. 17, 18)*
- *For projects that affect rights, lands, territories, resources, and traditional livelihoods of indigenous peoples, ensure free, prior informed consent (FPIC) (SES, PDP, para. 16, SES, Standard 6, para. 9)*

⁸ Available at <http://hrbportal.org/the-human-rights-based-approach-to-development-cooperation-towards-a-common-understanding-among-un-agencies>.

- *Provide ongoing reporting to affected communities and individuals for projects with significant adverse social and environmental impacts (SES, PDP, para. 25)*
- *Undertake measures to ensure effective stakeholder engagement occurs where conditions for inclusive participation are unfavourable (SES, PDP, para. 12)*

2.3 Key Concepts of Stakeholder Engagement

A number of key concepts and terms need to be understood regarding the SES stakeholder engagement requirements. These are noted below.

Stakeholders: Stakeholders are persons, groups, or institutions with an *interest* in the project or the ability to *influence* the project outcomes, either positively or negatively. Stakeholders may be directly or indirectly affected by the project. The range of potential stakeholders is diverse and may include target beneficiary groups, locally affected communities or individuals, national and local government authorities, civil society actors, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (both domestic and at times international), indigenous peoples, politicians, religious leaders, the academic community, private sector entities, workers organizations, UN agencies and donors, and other special interest groups. Importantly, stakeholders may include groups opposed to proposed interventions. The “stake” that each of these different groups has in the project will vary.

Stakeholder analysis: Stakeholder analysis is the process of identifying a project's key stakeholders and assessing their interests in the project and the ways in which these stakeholders may influence the project's outcomes. An understanding of power relations and potential alliances and conflicts among stakeholders is necessary. Stakeholder analysis provides the foundation for planning stakeholder engagement throughout the project cycle. Annex 1 provides further information on undertaking a stakeholder analysis.

Stakeholder engagement: Stakeholder engagement is an overarching term that encompasses a range of activities and interactions with stakeholders throughout the project cycle. The SES defines stakeholder engagement as an ongoing process that may involve, to varying degrees, the following elements:⁹

- stakeholder analysis and planning
- disclosure and dissemination of information
- consultation and meaningful participation
- dispute resolution and grievance redress
- stakeholder involvement in monitoring and evaluation
- ongoing reporting to affected communities and other stakeholders.

The intensity and scale of stakeholder engagement will vary with the type of project, its complexity, and its potential risks and impacts. It starts early in project planning and spans the entire life of the project.

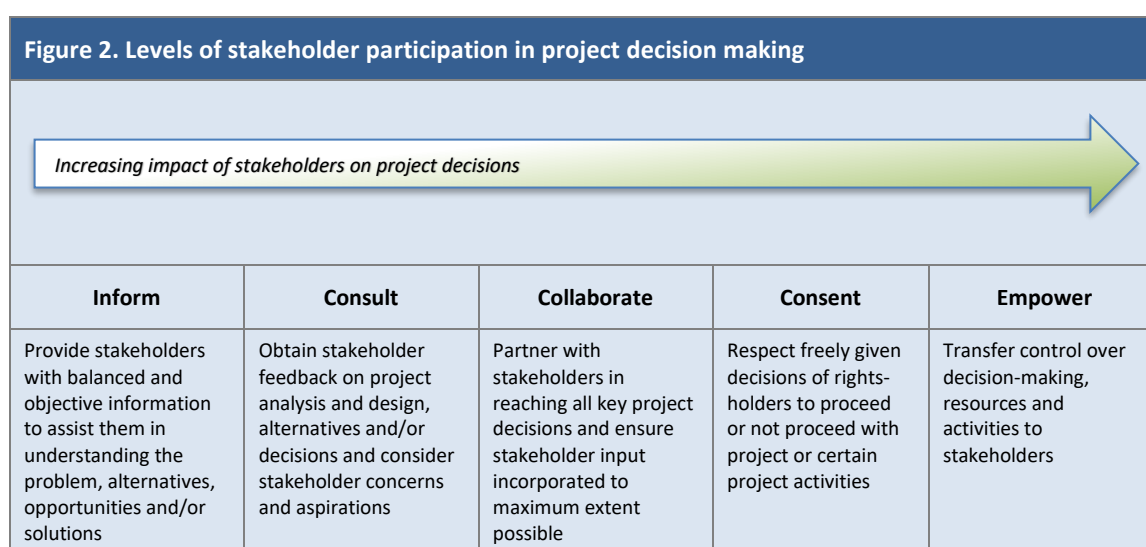
Information Disclosure: Information disclosure here refers to the provision of timely, accessible information regarding the project and its potential social and environmental impacts to stakeholders in order to facilitate their meaningful, effective and informed participation in project design and implementation. The SES contain requirements for the disclosure of screening reports; draft and final social and environmental assessments and management plans; and any required social and environmental monitoring reports. See Annex 3 for further guidance.

Free, prior and informed consent (FPIC): At the earliest stage of project conceptualization and design, and iteratively throughout implementation and closure, mechanisms need to be identified and implemented to

⁹ UNDP, Social and Environmental Standards (SES), Policy Delivery Process and Accountability, para. 12.

guarantee the meaningful, effective and informed participation of indigenous peoples¹⁰ on all matters.¹¹ Culturally appropriate consultation will be carried out with the objective of achieving agreement, and FPIC will be ensured on any matters that may affect the rights and interests, lands, resources, and territories. For issues regarding indigenous peoples and FPIC, please consult the SES Standard 6 on Indigenous Peoples and its companion Guidance Note.

Types and levels of stakeholder participation: The nature, scope and frequency of stakeholder engagement needs to be proportionate to the nature and scale of the project, its potential risks and impacts, and the level of stakeholder concern. The extent to which the project may impact various stakeholder rights and interests and the power and influence of certain stakeholders will affect needed engagement strategies and approaches. Stakeholder analysis (see Annex 1), together with project screening and assessment of social and environmental risks, assists in developing appropriate engagement strategies for different stakeholder groups, which will then be articulated in the project's stakeholder engagement plan. Figure 2 provides a simplified overview of degrees of stakeholder participation in project decision making.



Source: International Association for Public Participation, *Public Participation Spectrum*; UN-REDD Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent, *Types of Participation* (Annex II)

¹⁰ The term “indigenous peoples” is used in a broad sense. There is no universally accepted definition of indigenous peoples. SES 6 Indigenous Peoples establishes criteria for the identification of indigenous peoples, no matter the terms that may be applied in a certain country, such as as national or ethnic minorities, or Native Americans, or Scheduled Classes, or Forest Peoples, aborigines, tribal, hill people, pastoralists, etc.

¹¹ This means affecting indigenous peoples regardless of (i) whether the Project is located within or outside of the lands and territories inhabited by the indigenous peoples in question, (ii) whether or not title is possessed by the affected indigenous peoples over the lands and territories in question, or (iii) whether the indigenous peoples are recognized as indigenous peoples by the country in question. (See Standard 6, Indigenous Peoples, para. 3.)

3 Stakeholder Analysis and Engagement Plans

3.1 The Earlier the Better

UNDP is committed to ensuring meaningful, effective and informed participation of stakeholders throughout the programming cycle. Crucially, this begins early in planning, including problem identification, and design.

Stakeholder involvement in planning builds local ownership, strengthens project integrity and design, and helps to create foundational relationships that may contribute to constructive problem solving if difficulties or challenging issues arise. Early and iterative stakeholder engagement helps to create good faith and mutual trust and contribute to sustainable development outcomes that extend beyond the project.

Effective project planning is done with the participation of key stakeholders. Early and iterative stakeholder engagement can help identify:

- key issues and problem areas that need to be addressed
- risks and constraints that may affect proposed activities
- the degree of local support, concern, and/or opposition to potential interventions
- opportunities for relationship-building and partnerships
- discriminated and marginalized groups that may normally be left out of planning processes (see Box 2).

Box 2. Inclusive Planning

“There is a tendency for core planning teams not to involve certain stakeholders in planning. This typically occurs with complex programmes and projects and work that involves developing policy. Marginalized groups, poor rural community members, minorities and others are often left out because planners assume that these groups are not well informed or educated enough to contribute to the planning process. This assumption often turns out to be very costly. A good planner should always ask: “Whose voice is normally not heard on this issue?” Planners are often pleasantly surprised at the insights that previously unheard stakeholders have to offer.” UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (2009), p. 25.

Meaningful, effective and informed participation builds on a strong stakeholder analysis and engagement plan.

3.2 Stakeholder Analysis and Initial Engagement

An initial **stakeholder analysis** needs to be undertaken in order to identify key stakeholder groups and individuals to be involved in the project planning process (see **Annex 1** for additional guidance and tools for stakeholder analysis). The initial stakeholder analysis and engagement processes are key elements of quality programming and should inform project design.

In early planning stages, the full scope of potential project activities and locations may not yet be known, and, consequently, the full range of potential stakeholders may not be apparent. Nevertheless, the planning process at its earliest stages should be as inclusive and gender responsive as possible. A key objective at this stage is to properly identify key stakeholders who may have a strong interest in or ability to influence what is being planned, including potential groups who may benefit from the project, those who may also be adversely impacted, and groups potentially opposed to the planned interventions.

Early stakeholder involvement may build off of previous stakeholder engagement processes (e.g. similar projects, country programme development, etc.). However, each project is likely to generate its own specific configuration of stakeholders (see Annex 1 for a general list of stakeholder categories and detail on undertaking stakeholder analysis).

It is important to be transparent about uncertainties and knowledge gaps during early project stakeholder engagement. Working with a broad range of stakeholders will likely help to define project parameters and fill key knowledge gaps, and, if necessary, generate alternative ideas regarding project design and potential risks and mitigation measures, monitoring, and grievance mechanisms.¹²

Identification of stakeholders and early consultations during planning can lay the groundwork for partnerships with key stakeholder groups as well as help identify potential stakeholder representatives for the Local Project Appraisal Committee, Project Board and/or steering committees.

The stakeholder analysis will need to be updated as the project is further defined and additional interested and potentially affected stakeholder groups are identifiable. The stakeholder analysis should be a transparent, participatory process which provides the basis for the stakeholder engagement plan.

3.3 Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The SES stipulate that “[s]takeholder engagement plans will be developed for all Programmes and Projects, scaled to reflect the nature of the activity and its potential impacts (e.g. from relatively simple measures for Programmes or Projects with few if any social and environmental risks to comprehensive plans for High Risk activities with potentially significant adverse risks and impacts.” (SES, Policy Delivery Process, para. 15.)

At a minimum, every UNDP project must briefly identify key stakeholders and an engagement strategy in Section III, Results and Partnerships, of the Project Document (see Box 3).

In many cases, it will be important to have a more detailed **stakeholder engagement plan** to both inform and accompany the Project Document. This section and **Annex 2** provide additional guidance on how to develop a stakeholder engagement plan.

The stakeholder engagement plan guides stakeholders and project implementers as to when, how and with whom consultations and exchanges should be undertaken throughout the life of the project.

Development of the stakeholder engagement plan is based on the project’s stakeholder analysis (see Annex 1). Among other things, the plan needs to be developed with the stakeholders themselves.

As a starting point for any stakeholder engagement plan, it is important to consider the key factors in ensuring meaningful, effective and informed consultation processes, as articulated in the SES. These criteria and considerations for stakeholder engagement plans are elaborated in Table 1 below.

UNDP’s SES are aligned with the UN Human Rights-Based Approach to development programming and the commitment to uphold principles of equality and non-discrimination, noting that prohibited grounds of discrimination include race, ethnicity, gender, age, language, disability, sexual orientation, religion, political or other opinion, national or social or geographical origin, property, birth or other status including as an

Box 3. Stakeholder Engagement in ProDoc

UNDP’s Project Document template includes a mandatory section on stakeholder engagement (sec. III):

Stakeholder Engagement

- Identify key stakeholders and outline a strategy to ensure stakeholders are engaged throughout, including:
 - *Target Groups: Identify the targeted groups that are the intended beneficiaries of the project. What strategy will the project take to identify and engage targeted groups?*
 - *Other Potentially Affected Groups: Identify potentially affected people and a strategy for engagement and ensuring they have access to and are aware of mechanisms to submit concerns about the social and environmental impacts of a project (e.g. UNDP’s Social and Environmental Compliance Review and Stakeholder Response Mechanism).*

¹² IFC, Stakeholder Engagement: A Good Practice Handbook for Companies Doing Business in Emerging Markets, (2007), pp. 5-7.

indigenous person or as a member of a minority.¹³ Stakeholder engagement processes need to respect these commitments. It is critical for the engagement process to be gender responsive (see Box 4 and Annex 1).

It may be necessary at times to undertake differentiated approaches to engaging with certain groups and communities to protect their safety and security if they are subject to forms of discrimination and harassment in the project areas (e.g. LGBTQI groups and individuals). For example, private meetings that ensure a degree of anonymity may be needed.

In addition, special measures may be required to ensure access and appropriate accommodation and facilitation for stakeholders who may have disabilities. Groups and individuals subject to potential exclusion due to health status (e.g. people living with HIV) should be identified among potential stakeholder groups.

If the project may involve indigenous peoples stakeholders, additional measures will be required to ensure their full and effective participation. As noted above (section 2.3), if the project may affect indigenous peoples rights and interests, lands, resources, and territories, FPIC processes will need to be initiated early and respected throughout the project. SES Guidance Note 6 on Indigenous Peoples outlines provides important background on consultations and FPIC processes with indigenous stakeholders (in particular, see section 3 of that guidance note).

Table 1. Meaningful, effective and informed consultation processes (SES, PDP, para. 14)	
<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Considerations for Stakeholder Engagement Plan</i>
<i>Free of external manipulation, interference, coercion, and intimidation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No acts of intimidation or violence or provision of bribes, gifts, and unregulated and questionable patronage ✓ Timelines for stakeholder engagement need to be realistic and respectful of stakeholder decision-making processes ✓ Carefully consider security arrangements to ensure safety but also to avoid perceptions of intimidation. Where possible, security arrangements should be discussed with all parties.
<i>Gender and age-inclusive and responsive</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure stakeholder analysis accounts for differentiated roles and interests of men and women, and that women stakeholders are appropriately identified ✓ Include culturally appropriate mechanisms/processes to facilitate the increased participation of women, youth and the elderly (see below and Box 4), and ensure feedback is reflected in project design
<i>Culturally appropriate and tailored to the language preferences and decision-making processes of each identified stakeholder group, including disadvantaged or marginalized groups</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cultural understanding and awareness is central to meaningful stakeholder engagement. Design consultations/workshops to specificities of each stakeholder group, including respect for local decision-making processes (including appropriate time frames) ✓ Ensure materials and outreach methods are understandable and accessible to the range of stakeholders involved. Tailor materials for different stakeholders to ensure equity in information access ✓ Apply principles of accessibility and make reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities ✓ Consider diverse forms of communication: fact sheets, flyers, community postings, press releases, newsletters, hotlines, graphics, oral representation, posters, community bulletin board postings, local press announcements, public hearings, community meetings, informal meetings, videos, electronic

¹³ See UNDP SES, para. 21.

	media (websites, SMS messages), community radio, local plays and dramas, use of liaisons (community elders, religious leaders, NGO supporters)
<i>Based on prior and timely disclosure of accessible, understandable, relevant and adequate information, including draft documents and plans</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure information on project's purpose, nature, scale, duration, and potential risks and impacts is available in timely, accessible manner ✓ Ensure that draft social and environmental assessments and management plans are disclosed and stakeholder feedback is considered ✓ Disclose final social and environmental assessments, management plans, and screening reports (appended to Project Document or disclosed during implementation) ✓ Provide summaries of technical information in accessible and understandable manner
<i>Initiated early in the Programme and/or Project design process, continued iteratively throughout the project life cycle, and adjusted as risks and impacts arise</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Engage stakeholders early in project planning process ✓ Identify in stakeholder engagement plan key junctures where stakeholder engagement is required before further project activities can advance ✓ Update stakeholders about upcoming activities and issues that may require their input ✓ Provide adequate lead time to accommodate stakeholder decision-making processes
<i>Addresses social and environmental risks and adverse impacts, and the proposed measures and actions to address these</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Involve stakeholders in screening of project for social and environmental risks/impacts (SESP) ✓ Consult with stakeholders on assessment of social and environmental risks and development of mitigation and management measures. Ensure those who may experience potential adverse impacts are fully consulted ✓ Consider participatory assessment techniques
<i>Seeks to empower stakeholders, particularly marginalized groups, and enable the incorporation of all relevant views of affected people and other stakeholders into decision-making processes, such as Project goals and design, mitigation measures, the sharing of development benefits and opportunities, and implementation issues</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provide iterative opportunities to stakeholders to express concerns, ideas and knowledge and reflect stakeholder input in project goals, objectives and design ✓ Seek to transfer as much decision-making as possible to stakeholder groups ✓ Provide for stakeholder representation on project boards, monitoring committees and other key project structures ✓ Allocate budget for capacity building where needed (and available), as well as payment for accessibility and reasonable accommodation, and expenses incurred by stakeholders, especially rights holders, to secure technical advisors and/or legal counsel to accompany them to consultations and if applicable, negotiations
<i>Documented and reported in accessible form to participants, in particular the measures taken to avoid or minimize risks to and adverse impacts on the Project stakeholders</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure that stakeholders are regularly informed of relevant information and new developments, including setbacks and delays, throughout the life of the project. ✓ Include reporting intervals in stakeholder engagement/communications plan ✓ Include feedback mechanism for stakeholder input on project progress, and how feedback is addressed ✓ Disclose monitoring reports in a culturally appropriate format
<i>Consistent with the States' duties and obligations under international law</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensure stakeholder engagement plan consistent with domestic laws and regulations regarding public engagement (e.g. public hearings and access to environmental and social assessments and comment periods) ✓ Support international obligations of governments to ensure public participation and, where relevant, consent processes, transparency, redress for grievances, and accountability

Prior to project appraisal, a validation workshop should be held with stakeholders that in addition to confirming the project plan also includes review and agreement on the stakeholder engagement plan. With the start of project implementation, an inception workshop should be held to assist project partners to understand the approved project design, understand their role and responsibilities in the project including stakeholder engagement during project implementation and monitoring, including communications, reporting, and conflict resolution and grievance redress.

Challenging environments. Projects may at times be undertaken in especially challenging environments, such as areas experiencing armed conflict or where human rights violations are rampant. Government stakeholders may object to engaging with certain other stakeholder groups, or civil society stakeholders may be fearful of expressing opposing or critical perspectives. Stakeholder engagement specialists with up-to-date familiarity of local contexts will most likely be required to devise and help manage engagement processes in such contexts. Decentralized, targeted meetings with specific stakeholder groups may be necessary. Where direct consultation with certain stakeholder groups is politically impossible, other avenues need to be explored, such as utilizing third-parties as go-betweens. Third-party monitors will likely be required to closely monitor risks to project stakeholders.

Box 4. Tips for Conducting Gender Responsive Stakeholder Consultations¹⁴

- Gender is often a key factor in determining access to project benefits and vulnerability to potential adverse impacts. Consultations need to be gender responsive and should be based on the project's gender analysis and stakeholder identification process (see Annex 1).
 - Project team members should be aware that relations between men and women will influence all stages of a project. Male and female stakeholders may have different interests in and abilities to influence the outcome of a project. The project team should be aware of the cultural context and the different barriers (geographical, physical, attitudinal, informational and communicational) that may undermine equal gender participation. For instance, women who have low literacy levels may lack access to information. To address this issue, project information could be disseminated through various media, including notices, leaflets, announcements in community forums, market days and picture-based texts (to serve those who cannot read).
 - Framing questions, and listening to the responses in a gender-responsive way will reveal points where there are significant differences between men and women in terms of existing economic and social conditions, opportunities, priorities for action, planning approaches, implementation abilities, training needs and ideal outcomes. In particular, good facilitation is required so that everyone has adequate explanation and information needed to make informed decisions.
 - To facilitate women's participation, planned activities need to be mindful of women's daily routines and where their activities take place. A critical issue is the lack of child care, either so that women can attend the meetings and their children are cared for or child care facilities should be available at the meetings. The project should budget for childcare for all meetings and involvement of women in project activities. In many countries of the world, meetings should not be planned for evenings, as women can feel insecure in the dark. Timing should be adapted to working schedules of men and women.
 - Some meeting locations may undermine women's participation because they may not be culturally appropriate. Women may not be allowed to stay in public places or they may feel embarrassed or even threatened in some unfamiliar environments. Gender training or consultations should take place within the community to avoid men feeling threatened and to reduce the risk of male violence against women. It is ideal to identify leaders in the community and to raise their awareness of gender and how including it can benefit the whole community so that they can act as local ambassadors.
- ##### **Gender and age inclusive consultation methods**
- Women/elderly/youth-only interviews
 - Gender or age specific focus groups and group consultations
 - Separate meetings with women's cooperatives or youth associations
 - Reserved seating in steering committees, decision-making & monitoring bodies for females, youth & elderly
 - Choosing consultation times & places that will increase gender and age inclusiveness
 - Providing child care during consultations
 - Tailored capacity building sessions

¹⁴ Section from Guide to Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP Supported GEF Financed Projects, v.1, 30 September 2016, pp. 8-9.

3.4 Ensuring Stakeholders Have Access to a Grievance Mechanism

UNDP's SES recognize that even with strong planning and stakeholder engagement, unanticipated issues can still arise. Therefore, the SES are underpinned by an [Accountability Mechanism](#) with two key components:

1. A Social and Environmental Compliance Review Unit (SECU) to respond to claims that UNDP is not in compliance with applicable environmental and social policies; and
2. A Stakeholder Response Mechanism (SRM) that ensures individuals, peoples, and communities affected by projects have access to appropriate grievance resolution procedures for hearing and addressing project-related complaints and disputes.

UNDP's Accountability Mechanism is available to all of UNDP's project stakeholders.

The Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU) investigates concerns about non-compliance with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards and Screening Procedure raised by project-affected stakeholders, and recommends measures to address findings of non-compliance.

The Stakeholder Response Mechanism helps project-affected stakeholders, UNDP's partners (governments, NGOs, businesses) and others jointly address grievances or disputes related to the social and/or environmental impacts of UNDP-supported projects.

Various national and sector forums may provide important opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback on project implementation. Utilization of existing structures and processes to engage stakeholders is to be encouraged, as this may provide opportunities for issues to be raised before they develop into more significant grievances. However, such fora would not substitute for specific project grievance redress mechanisms that may be required, as outlined below and in the [Supplemental Guidance on Grievance Redress Mechanisms](#).

In some UNDP-supported projects, where there is potential for social and environmental impacts, and risk of grievances arising from those impacts, UNDP will require and support the establishment of a project-level grievance redress mechanism (GRM). Though UNDP's SRM remains available to stakeholders in every UNDP-supported project, project-level GRMs can be better suited to respond to project-related grievances because they are tailored to the project context, staffed by individuals with good understanding of risks and issues related to the project, and able to engage more directly and rapidly to address concerns raised by project stakeholders.

If, in the process of completing Part B of UNDP's Social and Environmental Screening, one or more risks are categorized as moderate or higher (Part B, Question 3), a project-level GRM must be identified as part of the management measures in response to that risk (Part B, Question 6).

Projects have the option to identify either 1) separate mechanisms to address potential grievances specific to each of the medium/high risks identified in the SESP; or 2) one mechanism to address all potential grievances related to the project. The decision on whether to develop one or several mechanisms will depend on a number of factors, including what mechanisms the implementing partner has in place to address potential project-related grievances, the potential to use existing national grievance mechanisms (e.g. a national human rights ombudsman) for project-specific concerns, and the quality and effectiveness of those existing mechanisms.

[UNDP's Guidance Note on GRM](#) includes more information on the core functions and design principles of a GRM and how to assess the quality and capacity of an existing GRM. Once UNDP (ideally jointly with the implementing partner) has screened and identified the moderate/high risks and potential associated GRMs, and has assessed the capacity and suitability of existing GRMs, UNDP will make one of the following determinations:

- If it is found that an implementing partner has sufficient capacity and means of addressing potential project-related grievances, the SESP and project should further elaborate how the existing GRM(s) will be accessed and utilized during project implementation.
- If it is found that an implementing partner requires additional capacity to address potential project-related grievances, the project could include activities and budget to strengthen existing GRM capacity while also identifying an interim or alternative means of addressing project-related grievances while those activities are occurring (e.g. a project-GRM based within the project steering committee or project board).
- If it is found that the implementing partner has no capacity or interest in hosting the entry point for receiving and responding to project-related grievances, the project could designate the project governing body (e.g. project steering committee or project board) as the project-GRM. The project could include a Terms of Reference outlining the roles, responsibilities and functions of this project-GRM (see example ToR in [Guidance Note on GRM](#)).

Accessibility is a key principle for any accountability mechanism. Accessibility starts with awareness raising. Therefore, every project needs to ensure that project-affected people and communities are informed of UNDP's Accountability Mechanism and, if available, the project level GRM. The stakeholder engagement process provides a key entry point to do this awareness raising. In all interactions with stakeholders (e.g. consultations, meetings, project websites) information about UNDP's Accountability Mechanism should be made available. Communication materials are available in [UNDP's SES Toolkit](#) to support this effort.

4 Stakeholder Engagement in Social and Environmental Screening, Assessment and Management

UNDP's SES are addressed at the project-level primarily through a process of *screening* the project for potential adverse social and environmental impacts, *assessing* moderate and high risk impacts that have been identified, and *managing* the potential impacts that could not be avoided through the application of appropriate mitigation and management measures and plans. The “screening – assessment – management” process of applying the SES is integrated throughout the project cycle. Specific SES requirements need to be addressed at each stage, including stakeholder engagement (see Figure 3).

4.1 Screening

UNDP's Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) is designed to help integrate the SES Overarching Principles (i.e. human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment, environmental sustainability) into project design and to identify potential social and environmental risks and impacts, leading to an overall risk categorization that helps to determine the appropriate level of needed social and environmental assessment and management/mitigation measures. Screening naturally affects key stakeholder interests; consequently, stakeholders should be involved in the screening process.

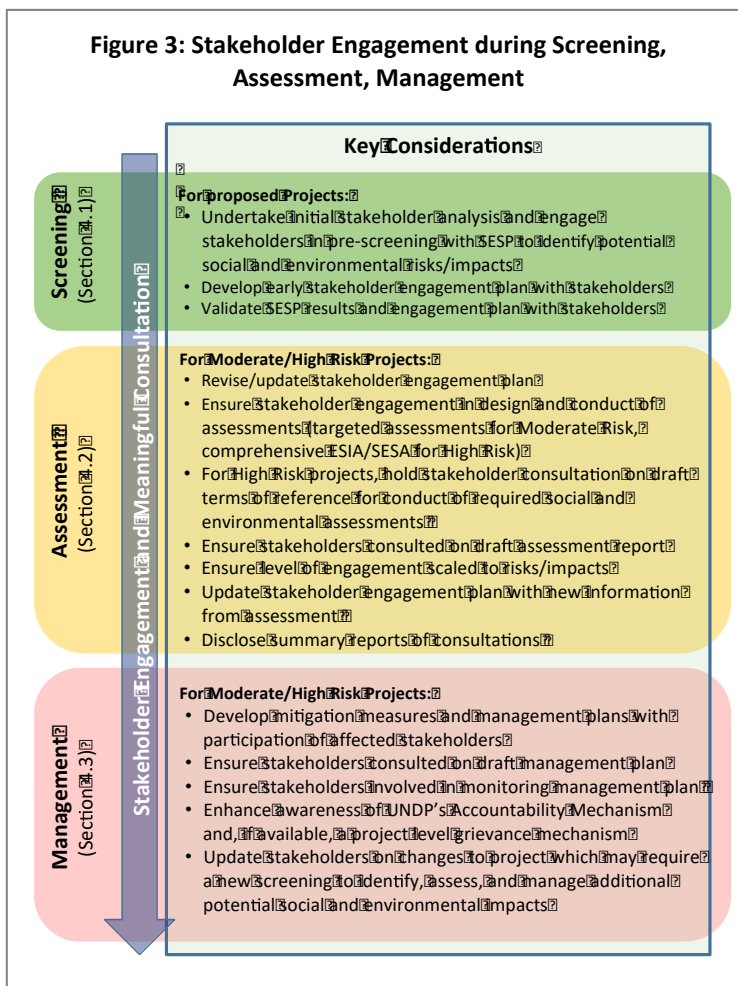
Pre-screening for potential adverse social and environmental risks and impacts can lead to necessary changes to the project strategy and design in order to avoid identified

potential impacts. A range of key stakeholders – not just project promoters, but importantly stakeholders who may be adversely affected – should participate in and review the pre-screening. A workshop with stakeholders and relevant experts may be organized in order to discuss the pre-screening, gather additional stakeholder input, and identify measures to prepare the project for full appraisal.

Final screening of the Project Document must be completed prior to appraisal of the project by the LPAC/PAC. As this comes at the end of the design process, the final screening considers additional design elements since pre-screening and confirms that the project has incorporated relevant SES requirements, including any needed social and environmental assessment and management measures (for Moderate and High Risk projects).

A stakeholder consultation should be organized prior to full appraisal in order to incorporate their comments and concerns into the project and then seek their validation of the screening results. In addition,

Figure 3: Stakeholder Engagement during Screening, Assessment, Management



stakeholders should review the project stakeholder engagement plan that they participated in developing (see Annex 2), which is incorporated into the Project Document.

To participate effectively in the screening process, stakeholders need to be provided all relevant information about the project, including any social and environmental assessment and management plans that may have been developed to date (see Table 1, row 4). Where there are uncertainties and unknowns, these should be transparently discussed with the stakeholders.

To foster trust and relationship-building, efforts should be made to avoid having the screening results, including the overall social and environmental risk categorization, be a surprise to stakeholders upon project approval.

4.2 Assessment

A key objective of the social and environmental assessment process is to promote public participation in crucial decisions regarding projects that may present adverse social and environmental impacts. The assessment process must provide opportunities for stakeholders to express their views on matters that affect them and for these views to be considered and responded to by the project team. Project-affected stakeholders should be involved in identifying means to avoid or mitigate potential impacts.

The timing of assessments may vary.¹⁵ The default position of project teams should be to ensure that assessments are undertaken prior to the Project Appraisal Committee (PAC) review. However, in some cases, the assessment process may need to be undertaken after project approval. In all cases, ***UNDP requires that social and environmental assessments and adoption of appropriate mitigation plans/measures must be completed, disclosed, and discussed with stakeholders prior to initiation of any project activities that may cause adverse social and environmental impacts.***

The project team should inform stakeholders of the assessment process and ask them how they would like to be consulted, including types of information and formats, frequencies, and appropriate locations and venues. The applicable regulatory requirements (e.g. national environmental impact regulations, public notice and hearing requirements) as well as UNDP's stakeholder engagement requirements should be clearly explained.

The project's stakeholder engagement plan should identify key entry points in the assessment process to undertake stakeholder consultations. Table 2 outlines general opportunities and milestones for projects that require formal assessment studies – that is, all High Risk projects and some Moderate Risk projects with potentially significant adverse impacts.¹⁶ For Moderate Risk projects that do not require additional studies and assessment, stakeholders should be provided the draft Project Document and clear, culturally appropriate, summaries on the project and its potential impacts prior to the LPAC/PAC and asked to comment on the environmental and social management plan/measures outlined in the documentation. The plan/measures should be revised accordingly, as should the stakeholder engagement plan.

¹⁵ See SES Guidance Note on Social and Environmental Assessment and Management, section 4.1.

¹⁶ The SES require targeted forms of social and environmental assessment for Moderate Risk projects and comprehensive assessment of potential social and environmental impacts for High Risk projects, either in the form of an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) or Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment (SESA).

Table 2. Key entry points for stakeholder consultations in the assessment process	
<i>Scoping</i>	An initial “scoping” exercise is undertaken in order to identify and focus the social and environmental assessment on key issues and to establish a logical roadmap for the assessment process. Scoping involves gathering primary information with an emphasis on listening to issues of greatest interest and concern to stakeholders. Consultations should be held with project stakeholders (on a selective basis, with a focus on potentially affected persons/groups). Input from stakeholder consultations would supplement research and review of secondary sources.
<i>Draft terms of reference for assessment studies</i>	The scoping exercise typically informs the drafting of a terms of reference for the assessment (e.g. Environmental and Social Impact Assessment, Strategic Social and Environmental Assessment). Project stakeholders, with a focus on project-affected communities, should be consulted when the draft terms of reference for the assessment is developed in order to help identify any additional issues or concerns that may require further attention in the conduct of the assessment.
<i>Undertaking assessment studies and development of management plan</i>	Components of the assessment studies may require targeted consultations with project-affected stakeholders. Stakeholder input may assist in “designing out” activities that may give rise to adverse impacts. Also, participatory assessment techniques may be employed (see below). A key output of the assessment process is a management plan to mitigate and manage residual adverse impacts (typically an Environmental and Social Management Plan, or ESMP). The management plan needs to be developed in close consultation with project stakeholders. Consultations should aim to enhance mitigation and agree on project benefits.
<i>Draft assessment findings and management plans</i>	<p>Once the draft assessment and management plan are developed, organized consultations with project-affected stakeholders should be undertaken in order to ensure that they adequately respond to potential issues and concerns. The draft assessment and management plan are to be disclosed (see Annex 3). At a minimum a summary of the draft assessment and management plan should be translated into local languages and made accessible with appropriate lead-time before consultation meetings. A summary of the consultation should be produced and disclosed and the draft assessment and management plan should be revised as appropriate per input from project-affected stakeholders.</p> <p>It should be noted that the management plan is to include an updated stakeholder engagement plan to promote meaningful, effective consultations during project implementation and should include identification of milestones for consultations, information disclosure, and periodic reporting on project implementation and issues of concern to project stakeholders. The plan should also include a description of effective processes for receiving and addressing stakeholder concerns and grievances regarding the project’s social and environmental performance.</p> <p>Also, the assessment and management plan must address the requirements of applicable SES Project-level Standards, which may include further and more extensive stakeholder engagement (e.g. FPIC requirements per Standard 6 Indigenous Peoples, stakeholder participation in development of Livelihood Action Plans per Standard 5 Displacement and Resettlement)</p>
<i>Final assessment and management plans</i>	Stakeholders should be properly notified on the availability of the final assessment documents, and access facilitated.

Throughout the assessment process it may be necessary to undertake targeted consultations to ensure that marginalized or disadvantaged groups and individuals affected by the project also have the opportunity to participate. Gender-inclusive methods should be employed (see section 3).

Careful documentation of stakeholder consultations can demonstrate to stakeholders that their input has been considered and incorporated into the project. Summary reports of each consultation should be produced, circulated to participants, and publicly disclosed. Any commitments made to stakeholders should be carefully recorded. In addition, stakeholders should be provided regular updates as the social and environmental assessment studies progress and project design is modified.¹⁷ It is important for project implementers to log and track meetings, communications, exchanges, responses, disclosures, responses to grievances, summary reports, etc. This is particularly important if/when disputes arise regarding the extent to which stakeholders were engaged in project development and implementation.

Participatory assessments. Participatory assessment methods and approaches have been developed to better understand the social and cultural context of development and to design interventions for local conditions. The approach enables stakeholders to examine their own concerns and problems. The technique uses local knowledge, strengthens stakeholders' influence on decision making, and encourages ownership by people whose lives the project will affect. Participatory assessment includes a spectrum of approaches that vary in their level and extent of participation. Core principles of participatory assessment include the following (i) involves stakeholders as active participants – not just passive sources of information; (ii) promotes learning between project developers and stakeholders; (iii) strengthens local people's capacities to analyze, reflect, and act; and (iv) catalyzes commitment into actions.¹⁸

4.3 Management

The assessment process leads to the development of appropriate management plans and measures to address any remaining potential adverse social and environmental impacts that could not be avoided through changes in project design. Stakeholders, especially project-affected groups and individuals, need to be closely involved in the development of management plans and measures. In addition, it is equally important for stakeholders to be involved in monitoring any anticipated potential impacts throughout project implementation.

Address Stakeholder Engagement Requirements in Action Plans and Management Measures

Mitigation and management measures need to be developed for each potential adverse impact and risk identified in the social and environmental assessment. The SESP and scoping phase of the assessment determine and confirm which Project-level Standards are applicable to the project. Tailored management plans – typically integrated into the project's overall Environmental and Social Management Plan, or ESMP – may be required. For example, projects with significant adverse impacts (e.g. High Risk projects, some complex Moderate Risk projects) may require a Biodiversity Action Plan (Standard 1), a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (Standard 4), a Resettlement or Livelihood Action Plan (Standard 5), an Indigenous Peoples' Plan (Standard 6), or plans related to wastes or hazardous materials (Standard 7).

Stakeholder input is required in the elaboration of project management plans. Consultations with stakeholders should be utilized to broaden and discuss the range of options available to eliminate and reduce potential adverse social and environmental impacts. The local knowledge of directly affected stakeholders and the wider experiences of many non-governmental organizations and the scientific

¹⁷ IFC, Stakeholder Engagement, p. 124.

¹⁸ Asian Development Bank, "Participatory Assessment" in Strengthening Participation for Development Results: An Asian Development Bank Guide to Participation (2012), pp. 37-40. See [SES Toolkit](#) for further references on participatory assessment.

community may help identify innovative approaches and make mitigation measures more effective. Consultation is also an essential tool for coming to agreement with project-affected stakeholders on the key measures to be adopted as well as on the design of benefits programs that are targeted and culturally appropriate.¹⁹

The project's stakeholder engagement plan should be updated and modified to reflect the key actions, decisions, and timelines developed as part of the management plan. The plan should define when, how, and about what matters stakeholders shall be consulted, and how information relevant to the management plans should be shared with stakeholders (see Annex 2). Stakeholders should also be made aware of those project activities that must not be undertaken until appropriate management measures are in place.

Stakeholder consultations should be utilized to verify whether the draft management plan appropriately reflects concerns of project-affected groups and individuals.

Involve Stakeholders in Monitoring

It is critical to involve affected stakeholders in monitoring the project's anticipated impacts and management measures throughout implementation. With the launch of project activities (potentially including construction), coupled with an urgency to complete work on schedule, there are risks that impact mitigation measures or employment and other intended benefits may not be as effective as anticipated. Engagement during project implementation is essentially about involving stakeholders in assessing whether previously agreed measures are being implemented and working as intended, being responsive to grievances, and identifying alternatives where there are failings.²⁰

UNDP's Monitoring Policy requires the active participation of stakeholders in monitoring activities (see Box 5). The SES also calls for direct participation of affected stakeholders in project monitoring, particularly for projects with potentially significant adverse risks and impacts.²¹

Box 5. UNDP Monitoring Policy requires stakeholder involvement

UNDP's Monitoring Policy for projects and programmes requires stakeholder involvement in monitoring activities (para. 10):

- *"Monitoring activities must be carried out with the active participation of relevant stakeholders including national and international government agencies, NGOs and CSOs, the private sector, and representatives of local communities including representatives of indigenous peoples, where relevant. The use of real-time monitoring and collection of beneficiary feedback should be deployed when justified and feasible to track effects (good or bad), perceptions, unintended consequences, specific bottlenecks to results for disadvantaged communities, and to engage citizens in monitoring."*

The project's stakeholder engagement plan should include mechanisms for inclusion of key stakeholders in monitoring project implementation. Various mechanisms can be considered. Stakeholder representatives, including for project-affected groups, may be included as members of monitoring committees and bodies. This is particularly important for projects with potentially significant adverse social and environmental risks and impacts. Mechanisms should be in place for stakeholders to verify monitoring results.

Participatory monitoring techniques may be employed. Participatory monitoring means more than mere stakeholder access to monitoring data. Typically it involves stakeholders themselves defining meaningful monitoring indicators and processes and participating actively in field visits and elaboration of monitoring reports and recommendations. Participatory approaches focus on building stakeholder capacity, ownership

¹⁹ IFC, Stakeholder Engagement, p. 123.

²⁰ IFC, Stakeholder Engagement, p. 136.

²¹ UNDP SES, Policy Delivery Process, Monitoring, Reporting and Compliance, para. 26.

and commitment to implement any corrective actions. A range of methods may be utilized, for example community-based monitoring, citizen report cards, and social audits.²²

Complex projects and those with potentially significant adverse impacts may require engaging independent third-party monitors. If it is determined that an independent advisory panel is needed for the project, it may be composed of stakeholder representatives as well as internationally recognized independent experts.²³

Reporting. For projects with significant social and environmental risks and/or impacts (i.e. High Risk projects, some complex Moderate Risk projects), the SES require that affected communities be provided periodic progress reports on implementation of project management plans and mitigation measures and on issues of concern to stakeholders. Any material changes or additions to the mitigation measures or action plans must also be communicated through the periodic reports, the frequency of which should be proportionate to the level of stakeholder concerns, but not less than annually.²⁴

It is also good practice as part of the engagement process to report back periodically to communities and other stakeholder groups as to how the project implementer has been responding to grievances it may have received.

²² See the SES Toolkit for references to participatory monitoring techniques.

²³ The SES requires the use of independent advisory panels during preparation and implementation of projects that are highly risky or contentious. SES, Policy Delivery Process, Assessment and Management, para. 10.

²⁴ UNDP SES, Policy Delivery Process, Monitoring, Reporting and Compliance, para. 25.

Annex 1. Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder analysis (also referred to as stakeholder mapping) is the process of identifying a project's key stakeholders and assessing their interests in the project. Stakeholder analysis provides the foundation for development of the project's stakeholder engagement plan and facilitates prioritization of engagement activities with particular stakeholder groups and individuals.

Stakeholder analysis seeks answers to the following fundamental questions:

- Who are the key stakeholders of the proposed project?
- What are the interests of these stakeholders related to the project?
- How will stakeholders' interests be affected (positively/negatively) by the project?
- Which stakeholders are the most vulnerable and subject to potential adverse impacts?
- Which stakeholders wield the most influence to affect project outcomes?
- Whose capacity needs to be supported to enable them to participate?

A systematic approach is needed to ensure that all potential stakeholders are identified and their interests well understood so that they will be appropriately engaged throughout the project. Various methodologies exist for undertaking stakeholder analysis.²⁵ This annex outlines common key steps for undertaking stakeholder analysis in development projects.²⁶

While the stakeholder analysis can initially draw on secondary data (e.g. desk study, review of past consultations), direct collaboration with key stakeholder groups is required in order to accurately identify stakeholders, their interests, and to plan for their participation. Workshops, public meetings, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, surveys and other methods can be used to gather primary data on stakeholders. In many countries, experienced national institutes, research centers, government officials, social scientists, academics, or NGOs can be recruited to assist in carrying out stakeholder analysis.²⁷

Stakeholder analysis typically involves three main steps: identifying stakeholders, specifying stakeholder interests, mapping power relations and influence, and prioritizing engagement across different stakeholder groups. These steps are outlined below and in the following tables. Of course, the ultimate goal of stakeholder analysis is to identify those entities, groups and persons that may be most impacted by the project or who may influence its success so that their engagement in the project can be sought, prioritized, and tailored to ensure maximum benefits, minimal harms, and project success. The stakeholder engagement plan is critical to this success, outlining the specific engagement activities to be carried out over the course of the project. The stakeholder engagement plan is addressed in **Annex 2**.

Step 1 – Stakeholder identification

The first step of stakeholder analysis is to identify relevant stakeholder groups. Key questions to ask are:

- Who are the project's targeted beneficiaries?
- Who might be adversely impacted (directly or indirectly)?
- Will the project impact (positively or negatively) any marginalized groups?
- How will the project affect women and men stakeholders?

²⁵ For example, the World Bank has outlined a game-theoretic model to better understand potential stakeholder dynamics in complex policy reforms. See

<http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/anticorrupt/PoliticalEconomy/stakeholderanalysis.htm>.

²⁶ This Annex utilizes information outlined in UNDP, Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results (2009); IFC, Stakeholder Engagement; World Bank, Participation and Social Assessment: Tools and Techniques (1998); African Development Bank, Handbook on Stakeholder Consultations and Participation in ADB Operations (2001); Inter-American Development Bank, Meaningful Stakeholder Consultation (2017).

²⁷ African Development Bank, Handbook on Stakeholder Consultations, p. 25.

- Who are the projects main supporters and opponents?
- Who is responsible for carrying out planned activities?

Projects will typically involve a broad range of stakeholders. General categories of stakeholders include those listed below, noting however sub-categories and specific stakeholder groups will need to be identified:

- Intended beneficiaries
- Adversely affected groups and individuals
- Project workers and their representatives
- Government ministries, implementing agencies, regulators and consultants
- Local authorities
- Community and traditional leaders
- Civil society groups (community based, local or international NGOs)
- Women's organizations
- Organized interest groups (business associations, trade unions, others)
- Project-related private sector companies
- Academia and research institutions
- Donors and financing institutions

The stakeholder analysis needs to be initiated early in order to identify key stakeholder groups and individuals to be involved in the project planning process. Since the full scope of project activities and potential stakeholders are not yet defined at this stage, an initial list of stakeholders – encompassing government, civil society, and, where relevant, the private sector – should be generated, relying on a desk review and expert input from the country focal points as well as governmental and civil society groups. Special care must be taken at this stage to ensure that the stakeholder identification exercise is an expansive one so that relevant groups are not inadvertently excluded.

To emphasize: Stakeholder identification should be as specific as possible. Use of overly general categories – such as “local communities,” “CSOs,” “indigenous peoples groups” – should be avoided, as they tend to communicate a lack of outreach and engagement.

The initial list of identified stakeholders should be verified, modified, and enhanced through interviews with key informants (e.g. government officials, donor representatives, issue/sectoral experts, NGO staff, community leaders), consultations/workshops with already identified stakeholders, and site visits. The list should be disseminated with an explanation on how other groups may be suggested or put themselves forward. It is important to not just rely on known entities, and to reach out to groups who typically may be excluded from decision-making processes, in particular women and marginalized groups that may be affected by the project.

Box 6. A gender responsive stakeholder analysis should respond to the following questions

- Who are the different stakeholders?
- Are men and women represented?
- What are their interests?
- What are the project priorities for men and women?
- How will men and women be affected differently by the proposed project?
- What is the capacity for men and women to participate in the project, particularly at the decision-making level?
- What are the key constraints to women's participation?
- Who does what work? How does the work differ for men and women?
- Who has access to and who has control over environmental resources?

From Guide to Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP Supported GEF Financed Projects, p. 8.

Gender responsive analysis. Gender is often a key factor in determining access to project benefits and vulnerability to potential adverse impacts. It is vital that the stakeholder identification and analysis process be gender responsive in order to determine how and when women and men stakeholders should be involved and to address potential existing gender gaps in participation and decision-making. Stakeholder identification should be informed by the project's gender analysis which should provide insights regarding (a) the distribution of tasks, activities, and roles associated with the division of labour among women and

men, and (b) the relative position of women and men in terms of representation, influence and decision-making. The gender analysis should provide key information on the number of men and women potentially affected by the project, literacy levels and access to and control over resources. Cultural norms may exist that make gender differences more pronounced, or difficult to interpret, and identifying these allows for a more successful implementation of an inclusive stakeholder engagement plan. **Box 6** outlines some key gender-related questions that should be addressed in the stakeholder analysis. To strengthen identification and participation of women stakeholders, it may be necessary to consult with civil society organizations focused on women's rights and areas of work related to the project, local committees, and relevant coalitions of women's organizations as well as ministries of women's affairs or equivalent institutions, and gender focal points in other ministries who may have a role in the project.

It is important for the stakeholder identification process to also encompass groups and individuals with other sexual and gender identities (e.g. lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) where relevant in the project context. Certain sexual and gender identities may be subject to discrimination and exclusion. Targeted outreach may be necessary to ensure that these groups and individuals are engaged where relevant.

In addition, groups and individuals that may face exclusion due to disabilities or health status (e.g. people living with HIV) should be appropriately identified among stakeholder groups.

Indigenous Peoples.

Additional due diligence may be required in identifying potential indigenous peoples stakeholders. Although indigenous groups may be clearly recognized by national governments, this is not always the case. There is no universally accepted definition of indigenous peoples. SES Standard 6 Indigenous Peoples sets out criteria for identifying distinct collectives as "indigenous peoples" even in the absence of State recognition or the use of other terms to refer to such groups. See the SES Guidance Note 6 for more information on identification of indigenous peoples.

Box 7. Who represents stakeholders?

The stakeholder analysis should seek to understand how stakeholder groups are represented, from their decision-making structures, specific constituencies, and accountability. This is especially important for civil society organizations.

Generally self-selection should be supported. The rights of key stakeholders, such as indigenous peoples, to organize themselves and be represented by the institutions and individuals of their choosing needs to be respected. Attention must also be given to who represents the respective stakeholders at the national level versus the local level (not necessarily the same). Support may need to be provided to ensure that representatives of certain stakeholder groups can meaningfully participate.

The representativeness of stakeholder participants should be verified. One way to do this is by talking directly to a sample of project-affected people. 'Ground-truthing' is not about "exposing" or undermining a stakeholder's position. It is about understanding how information is being relayed and processed, and assessing the extent to which the project can rely on the inputs received. Where gaps are identified, the project team should determine if greater capacity, resources, information, or expertise could fill the void. Verification measures should not overstep cultural boundaries (e.g. seeking access to groups that should not be spoken to in private or undermine the decision making structure put in place by the stakeholders themselves).

The identification process must then be updated and refined as the design of the project takes shape and the full scope of the project's activities – and range of potential stakeholders – is better understood. This should occur during the social and environmental assessment process (for Moderate and High Risk projects) whereby the project's full social and geographical scope (e.g. "area of influence") will be identified and provide a more comprehensive view of who may be affected – either directly by project components or

indirectly by associated activities or potential cumulative impacts.²⁸ At times this may involve groups far beyond planned project areas.

Where stakeholder groups may be represented by a leader or spokesperson, their representativeness needs to be understood in order to design effective engagement approaches. Verifying that certain representatives actually speak for a given stakeholder group can be a tricky process. (see Box 7).

For projects that may involve a large number of stakeholder groups or require the development of highly tailored engagement approaches, a stakeholder log or database may need to be developed in order to collect and organize useful information.²⁹

Step 2 – Identify stakeholder interests in the project

Once relevant stakeholder groups have been identified, the next step is to discern their interests in the project and how their interests may be affected. Identification of stakeholder interests can help illuminate the motivations of different actors and how they may influence the project, including potential project opponents.

Key questions to be answered include, at a minimum:

- How does each group of stakeholders perceive the problem at hand and proposed solutions?
- What are stakeholders' expectations of the project?
- What does each group of stakeholders stand to gain/lose as a result of the project?
- Would the rights of some stakeholders be adversely affected?
- Do some stakeholders face greater risks than others?
- What stakeholder interests conflict with project goals?
- What resources might the stakeholder be able and willing to mobilize?

Some stakeholder interests are less obvious than others and may be difficult to define, especially if they are "hidden," multiple, or in contradiction with the stated aims or objectives of their own stakeholder group, organization or representative. Interests may be quite diverse and extend far beyond potential material project benefits, such as maintenance of cultural practices and livelihoods.

The above questions can guide the inquiry into the interests of each key stakeholder or group. It is critical to understand potential perceptual differences among women and men regarding the project and its potential benefits and impacts.

To increase consensus and ownership, these questions are best answered by stakeholders themselves, typically in the context of a stakeholder workshop (and/or through focus groups and interviews).

Step 3 - Stakeholder Prioritization

The group of potential stakeholders and their interests will naturally be quite diverse. It is not practical nor warranted that the same level of engagement be sustained for each stakeholder group throughout the project. Prioritization between stakeholders, especially in complex projects with multiple phases and impacts, will likely be necessary. ***To be clear, prioritization is not tantamount to exclusion or discrimination but is objectively based on the identified rights, interests, and influence of each stakeholder.*** Prioritization facilitates identifying appropriate forms of engagement for different stakeholder groups.

²⁸ A Project's area of influence encompasses the primary Project site(s), associated facilities, areas and communities potentially affected by cumulative impacts, and areas and communities potentially affected by project-induced impacts. See SES, ft. nt. 98. For projects with a physical footprint, mapping the project's key components, identifying broad "impact zones," and overlaying the stakeholder groups may be helpful. See IFC, Stakeholder Engagement, p. 15.

²⁹ For example, see IFC, Stakeholder Engagement, Appendix 4.

Key questions to address include:

- What is the degree influence of each stakeholder group to affect project outcomes?
- What is the importance of each stakeholder group to the success of the project?
- What type of stakeholder engagement is mandated by national law, international obligations or other requirements?
- Who are the project's targeted primary beneficiaries?
- Who may be adversely impacted by the project?
- Who is it critical to engage with first, and why? (e.g. enhance project design, assist in early project scoping, avoid adverse impacts)
- Are special measures needed to protect the interests of marginalized stakeholder groups?
- Does opposition from any of the stakeholders or stakeholder groups put the project at risk? If so, are there ways to engage with them to ensure that their concerns are being addressed?

A common tool to assist in prioritization is creation of a matrix that organizes stakeholders according to their “importance” and “influence” (see Table 3 and 4).³⁰ **Importance** in this respect relates to who the project is most likely to affect (adversely or positively), which may be different from the level of **influence** they may have to affect project outcomes.

The results of the first three steps of stakeholder analysis can be summarized in table form (see Table 3 below) to provide an overview of stakeholder interests, importance and influence. Completion of the table should be undertaken as a participatory exercise with stakeholders.

Tables 5 and 6 provide a simplified, illustrative example of a stakeholder analysis for an election support project.

The stakeholder analysis facilitates development of tailored engagement approaches for specified stakeholder groups. This is outlined in the project's stakeholder engagement plan, which is discussed in Annex 2.

³⁰ The ‘interest-influence matrix’ is one tool to help prioritize stakeholder engagement, and has been recommended in other UNDP guidance. Others tools may also be appropriate and will be identified in the SES toolkit.

Table 3. Identification of stakeholders and their interests

Stakeholders	Interests at stake in relation to project	Effect of project on interests (+ 0 –)	Importance of Stakeholder for Success of Project 1=Little/No Importance 2=Some Importance 3=Moderate Importance 4=Very Important 5=Critical player	Degree of Influence of Stakeholder over Project 1=Little/No Influence 2=Some influence 3=Moderate Influence 4=Significant Influence 5=Very Influential

Table 4. Stakeholder importance and influence matrix

Importance low----->high	Group 1: High Importance/Low Influence Stakeholders	Group 2: High Importance/High Influence Stakeholders
	Group 3: Low Importance/Low Influence Stakeholders	Group 4: Low Importance/High Influence Stakeholders
	Influence low----->high	

From UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (2009)

Group 1 stakeholders are very important to the success of the activity but may have little influence on the process. For example (see Tables 5 and 6), the success of an electoral project will often depend on how well women and minorities are able to participate in the elections, but these groups may not have much influence on the design and implementation of the project or the conduct of the elections. In this case, they are highly important but not very influential. They may require special emphasis to ensure that their interests are protected and that their voices are heard.

Group 2 stakeholders are central to the planning process as they are both important and influential. These should be key stakeholders for partnership building. For example, political parties involved in a national elections project may be both very important (as mobilizers of citizens) and influential (without their support the project may not be possible).

Group 3 stakeholders are not the central stakeholders for an initiative and have little influence on its success or failure. They are unlikely to play a major role in the overall process. One example could be an international observer group that has little influence on elections. Similarly, they are not the intended beneficiaries of, and will not be impacted by, those elections.

Group 4 stakeholders are not very important to the activity but may exercise significant influence. For example, an informal political leader may not be an important stakeholder for an elections initiative aimed at increasing voter participation, but she or he could have major influence on the process due to informal relations with power brokers and the ability to mobilize people or influence public opinion. These stakeholders can sometimes create constraints to project implementation or may be able to stop all activities. Even if they are not involved in the planning process, there may need to be a strategy for communicating with these stakeholders and gaining their support.

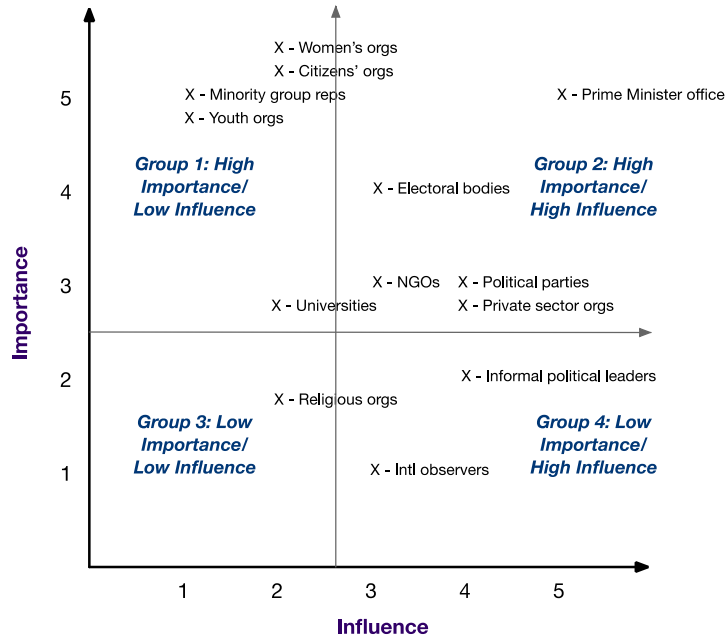
Simplified example of stakeholder analysis: Election support project

From UNDP, *Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation* (2009)

Table 5. Identification of key stakeholders and their interests, importance and influence for electoral support project					
	Stakeholders (examples)	Interests at stake in relation to project	Effect of project on Interests (+ 0 –)	Importance (scale 1 to 5, 5 = highest)	Influence (scale 1 to 5, 5 = highest)
1	Office of the Prime Minister	Greater citizen participation	+	5	5
2	Universities	Political culture and civic behaviour	+	3	2
3	Main political parties	Free and fair elections, opportunities for greater influence?	+ +/-	5	4
4	Religious umbrella organizations	Ethics in politics, fairness	+	3	2
5	NGO groups (e.g. a watchdog NGO)	Fairness, greater influence	+	3	3
6	Private sector organizations	Opportunities for influence, fairness	+/-	3	4
7	Minority group representatives	Opportunities to participate	+	5	1
8	Youth umbrella organizations	Opportunities to participate	+	5	1
9	Electoral administrative body	Maintain own neutrality	+	4	3
10	International observer group	Fairness	+	1	3
11	Citizens' organizations	Rights of citizens, fairness	+	5	2
12	Women's organizations	Rights of women, fairness	+	5	2
13	Informal political leaders	Threats to their power	–	2	4

The ratings regarding stakeholder importance and influence can be mapped out on a simple grid, resulting in the following table:

Table 6. Stakeholder importance and influence matrix for electoral support project



Annex 2. Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Appropriately scaled plans. No one type or format of a stakeholder engagement plan will accommodate all projects. Its content will depend on various factors, including the nature, scale, location, and duration of project; the diverse interests of stakeholders; the scale of the project’s potential positive and adverse impacts on people and the environment; and the likelihood of grievances.

For a relatively small project with few if any potential adverse social and environmental impacts or initial stakeholder concerns (e.g. Low Risk project, straightforward Moderate Risk project), it is likely that only a “simplified” stakeholder engagement plan would be needed, focusing primarily on initial consultations, information disclosure and periodic reporting (see Box 8). In such cases, the “plan” would be relatively simple and easily described in the body of the Project Document (that is, no separate plan would be needed).

A project with greater complexity and potentially significant adverse social and environmental impacts (complex Moderate Risk project or High Risk project) should elaborate a more strategic plan. A “comprehensive” plan would outline mechanisms that buttress not just disclosure and good communications, but iterative consultations and possibly consent processes over the course of the social and

environmental assessment process, development of mitigation and management plans, monitoring project implementation, and evaluation. A separate, detailed stakeholder engagement plan should be appended to the Project Document (see outline below).

All stakeholder engagement plans – whether simplified or comprehensive (see below) – should address basic minimum criteria. The following checklist (Table 7) will help ensure that the plan addresses key issues and components.

Box 8. Triggering the appropriate scale of stakeholder engagement plans

- *Simplified stakeholder engagement plan:* Project funding aimed at providing technical support (training in survey equipment) and materials (office space, computers, GPS equipment) to a national land and survey commission will likely have minimal impact on stakeholders other than the government.
- *Comprehensive stakeholder engagement plan:* Project funding to the same land and survey commission to actually conduct land titling in indigenous and forest-dependent communities across the nation, however, would require a comprehensive plan.

Table 7. Key questions for developing a stakeholder engagement plan³¹

<i>Who</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Which stakeholder groups and individuals are to be engaged based on the stakeholder analysis? ✓ Have potentially marginalized groups and individuals been identified among stakeholders?
<i>Why</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Why is each stakeholder group participating (e.g. key stakeholder objectives and interests)?
<i>What</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What is the breadth and depth of stakeholder engagement at each stage of the project cycle? ✓ What decisions need to be made through stakeholder engagement?
<i>How</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How will stakeholders be engaged (strategy and methods, including communications)? ✓ Are special measures required to ensure inclusive participation of marginalized or disadvantaged groups?
<i>When</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What is the timeline for engagement activities, and how will they be sequenced, including information disclosure?

³¹ As modified, see Asian Development Bank (ADB), Strengthening Participation, p. 43.

<i>Responsibilities</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ How have roles and responsibilities for conducting stakeholder engagement been distributed among project partners (e.g. resident mission, executing agency, consultants, NGOs)? ✓ What role will stakeholder representatives play? ✓ Are stakeholder engagement facilitators required?
<i>Resources</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ What will the stakeholder engagement plan cost and under what budget?

Building mutual trust and ensuring meaningful and effective engagement is facilitated by stakeholder ownership of the relevant processes. All efforts should be made to work with the relevant stakeholders to design by mutual agreement the engagement and consultation processes, including mechanisms for inclusiveness, respecting cultural sensitivities, and any required consent processes.³² Cultural understanding and awareness is central to meaningful stakeholder engagement.

Moreover, a general solicitation of feedback or input cannot be relied upon, nor accepted as the sole method of consultation. Information laden questions presenting various options, the reasons for those options, and their consequences may be a better method in that it presents information in a relationship-building manner, does not assume full stakeholder knowledge of the project plans, and solicits input on specific project instances instead of placing the impetus on the stakeholder to make seemingly high-level suggestions.

Recall that stakeholder engagement may be minimal at certain times and intense at others, depending on the issues and particular project phase. Also, targeted input from select stakeholder groups may be needed at key points in project development and implementation.

As project information changes – perhaps from subsequent risk assessments, the addition of project activities, stakeholder concerns – the stakeholder engagement plan should be reviewed and modified accordingly to ensure its effectiveness in securing meaningful and effect stakeholder participation.

The stakeholder engagement plan should also anticipate if/when professional, neutral facilitators might be needed to lead key engagement activities. For projects where the stakeholder engagement process is likely to be complex or sensitive, social advisors or other expert staff should help design and facilitate the process and assist with participatory methodologies and other specialized techniques.³³

Grievance redress processes for the project need to be described in the stakeholder engagement plan. Section 3.4 above elaborates on relevant SES requirements.

The plan should also outline a reasonable budget for stakeholder engagement activities, including potential support for groups to facilitate their participation where necessary (noting that meeting locations should be as convenient as possible and stakeholder acceptance of such support should not be interpreted as endorsement of the project).

Table 8 below provides a rough outline for a simplified stakeholder engagement plan. Many approaches exist, and this is one example of outlining key elements. It is important to not simply list stakeholders and say they will be consulted, but to identify **why** they are being engaged, **how** engagement will proceed, **who** will do it, **when**, and **how** it will be financed/supported.

³² Practical Approaches to Ensuring the Full and Effective Participation of Indigenous Peoples in ReDD+ (September 2013), BMZ, FPCP, UN-ReDD, p.12.

³³ IFC Stakeholder Engagement, p. 101.

Table 8. Rough template of simplified stakeholder engagement plan					
Stakeholder Group	Why included (interests)	Participation methods		Timeline	Cost est.
		Method	Responsibility		

Below is an example of elements that should be addressed in a comprehensive stakeholder engagement plan. The scope and level of detail of the plan should be scaled to fit the needs of the project.

Outline of a Comprehensive Stakeholder Engagement Plan³⁴

1. Introduction

- Briefly describe the project including design elements and potential social and environmental issues. Where relevant, include maps of the project site and surrounding area.

2. Regulations and Requirements

- Summarize any legal, regulatory, donor/lender requirements pertaining to stakeholder engagement applicable to the project. This may involve public consultation and disclosure requirements related to the social and environmental assessment process as well as relevant international obligations.

3. Summary of any previous stakeholder engagement activities

- If any stakeholder engagement activities had been undertaken to date, including information disclosure and/or consultation, provide the following details:
 - Type of information disclosed, in what forms and languages (e.g., oral, brochure, reports, posters, radio, etc.), and how it was disseminated
 - Locations and dates of any meetings undertaken to date
 - Individuals, groups, and/or organizations that have been consulted
 - Key issues discussed and key concerns raised
 - Responses to issues raised, including any commitments or follow-up actions
 - Process undertaken for documenting these activities and reporting back to stakeholders

4. Project Stakeholders

- List the key stakeholder groups who will be informed about and engaged in the project (based on stakeholder analysis). These should include persons or groups who:
 - Are directly and/or indirectly affected by the project
 - Have “interests” in the project that determine them as stakeholders
 - Have the potential to influence project outcomes or operations
 - [Examples of potential stakeholders are beneficiaries and project-affected communities, local organizations, NGOs, and government authorities, indigenous peoples; stakeholders can also include politicians, private sector companies, labor unions, academics, religious groups, national environmental and social public sector agencies, and the media]

³⁴ Outline relies on content provided in IFC, Guidance Note 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts (2012), Annex B.

- Consider capacities of various stakeholder groups to effectively participate in the stakeholder engagement activities, and include measures to support them where capacity is limited

5. Stakeholder Engagement Program

- Summarize the purpose and goals of the stakeholder engagement program
- Briefly describe what information will be disclosed, in what formats and languages, and the types of methods that will be used to communicate this information to each of the stakeholder groups identified in section 4 above. Methods used may vary according to target audience, for example:
 - Newspapers, posters, radio, television
 - Information centers and exhibitions or other visual displays
 - Brochures, leaflets, posters, non-technical summary documents and reports
- Briefly describe the methods that will be used to engage and/or consult with each of the stakeholder groups identified in section 4. Methods used may vary according to target audience, for example:
 - Interviews with stakeholder representatives and key informants
 - Surveys, polls, and questionnaires
 - Public meetings, workshops, and/or focus groups with specific groups
 - Participatory methods
 - Other traditional mechanisms for consultation and decision-making
- Describe how the views of women and other relevant groups (e.g. minorities, elderly, youth, other marginalized groups) will be taken into account and their participation facilitated
- Where relevant, define activities that require prior consultation and FPIC from indigenous peoples (and refer to Indigenous Peoples Plan and FPIC protocols)
- Outline methods to receive feedback and to ensure ongoing communications with stakeholders (outside of a formal consultation meeting)
- Describe any other engagement activities that will be undertaken, including participatory processes, joint decision-making, and/or partnerships undertaken with local communities, NGOs, or other project stakeholders. Examples include benefit-sharing programs, stakeholder-led initiatives, and training and capacity building/support programs.

6. Timetable

- Provide a schedule outlining dates/periodicity and locations where various stakeholder engagement activities, including consultation, disclosure, and partnerships will take place and the date by which such activities will be undertaken

7. Resources and Responsibilities

- Indicate who will be responsible for carrying out the specified stakeholder engagement activities
- Specify the budget and other resources allocated toward these activities
- [For projects with significant potential impacts and multiple stakeholder groups, it is advisable to hire a qualified stakeholder engagement facilitator to undertake all or portions of the stakeholder engagement activities]

8. Grievance Mechanism

- Describe the process by which people concerned with or potentially affected by the project can express their grievances for consideration and redress. Who will receive grievances, how and by whom will they be resolved, and how will the response be communicated back to the complainant? (see [Guidance Note on Grievance Redress Mechanisms](#))
- Ensure reference is made to and stakeholders are informed of the availability of UNDP's Accountability Mechanism (Stakeholder Response Mechanism, SRM, and Social and Environmental Compliance Unit, SECU) as additional avenues of grievance redress.

9. Monitoring and Reporting

- Describe any plans to involve project stakeholders (including target beneficiaries and project-affected groups) or third-party monitors in the monitoring of project implementation, potential impacts and management/mitigation measures

- Describe how and when the results of stakeholder engagement activities will be reported back to project-affected and broader stakeholder groups. Examples include newsletters/bulletins, social and environmental assessment reports; monitoring reports.

Annex 3. Supplemental Guidance: Disclosure of Project-related Social and Environmental Screenings, Assessments, and Management Plans

1. Introduction

Transparency is essential to building and maintaining public dialogue, increasing public awareness, enhancing good governance, accountability, and ensuring programmatic effectiveness. UNDP is committed to ensuring that relevant information about UNDP programmes and projects will be disclosed to help affected communities and other stakeholders to understand the opportunities and risks of proposed activities and to facilitate meaningful, effective and informed participation of stakeholders in project formulation and implementation.

UNDP's [Information Disclosure Policy](#) establishes a presumption in favor of disclosure whereby information concerning UNDP programmes and operations is made available to the public unless there is a compelling reason for confidentiality.³⁵ The Policy stipulates that general project information and project documents are to be disclosed.³⁶

UNDP's [Social and Environmental Standards](#) (SES) stipulate further requirements regarding disclosure of project-related information concerning stakeholder engagement, social and environmental screening, assessments, management plans, and monitoring reports. This note provides guidance on addressing these SES requirements.

2. Timely, accessible, and appropriate disclosure

UNDP is committed to ensuring meaningful, effective participation of stakeholders in its projects. Stakeholders require access to relevant project information in order to understand potential project-related opportunities and risks and to engage in project design and implementation.

For projects with potential adverse social and environmental impacts, stakeholders need access to screening reports, draft and final assessments and management plans. This information is to be disclosed in a timely manner, in an accessible place, and in a form and language understandable to affected persons and other stakeholders. These elements of effective disclosure are briefly elaborated below:

- **Timely disclosure:** information on potential project-related social and environmental impacts and mitigation/management measures should be provided in advance of decision-making. Draft screenings, assessments and management plans should be provided in advance as part of the stakeholder consultation process. In all cases, draft and final screenings, assessments and management plans must be disclosed and consulted on prior to implementation of activities that may give rise to potential adverse social and environmental impacts.

³⁵ The Information Disclosure Policy defines a range of exceptions to disclosure in Part III.

³⁶ UNDP Information Disclosure Policy, Annex 1, para. 9.1: (e) General UNDP Project Information: General information on UNDP development projects worldwide, including funding and implementing organization, actual start and end dates, status of the project, recipient country and subnational geographic location, is available in [UNDP Transparency Portal](#); (f) Project Documents: Project Documents, Country Programme Action Plans and Annual Work Plans, constitute the legal agreement between the programme country Government and UNDP to implement a project. Project documents are available in [UNDP Transparency Portal](#) and on UNDP Country Office websites.

- **Accessible information:** Stakeholders need to be able to readily access information regarding assessments and management plans. While local regulatory requirements might mandate availability of environmental assessments in government offices, this may not be sufficient to ensure that local stakeholders can access the information. Other means of dissemination may need to be considered, such as posting on websites, public meetings, local councils or organizations, newsprint, television and radio reporting, flyers, local displays, direct mail.
- **Appropriate form and language:** Information needs to be in a form and language that is readily understandable and tailored to the target stakeholder group. Summary information from assessments and management plans may need to be translated and presented by various means (e.g. written, verbal). Level of technical detail, local languages and dialects, levels of literacy, roles of women and men, and local methods of disseminating information are important considerations in devising appropriate forms of disclosure. A general solicitation of feedback on project documents may not be an appropriate form of information sharing and solicitation of input. Rather, the material may need to be presented in a contextual manner, such as the presentation of options with key information and questions designed to solicit feedback. Appropriate forms of proactive disclosure should be utilized beyond web posting of information. These may include radio broadcasts, brochures, community postings, SMS, oral presentations, etc. Also, it is vital to ensure that appropriate communication methods are devised to reach potentially marginalized and disadvantaged groups.

The stakeholder engagement process is an excellent moment to solicit from stakeholders the types of information they want and need and the most appropriate formats and languages and mechanisms for dissemination.

3. SES disclosure requirements

As part of the stakeholder engagement process, UNDP's SES require that project stakeholders have access to relevant information. Specifically, the SES (SES, Policy Delivery Process, para. 21) stipulates that, among other disclosures specified by UNDP's policies and procedures, UNDP will ensure that the following information be made available:

- Stakeholder engagement plans and summary reports of stakeholder consultations
- Social and environmental screening reports with project documentation
- Draft social and environmental assessments, including any draft management plans
- Final social and environmental assessments and associated management plans
- Any required social and environmental monitoring reports.

As outlined in the SES and [UNDP's Social and Environmental Screening Procedure](#) (SESP), the type and timing of assessments and management plans vary depending of the level of social and environmental risk associated with a project as well as timing of the social and environmental assessment. Table 9 below outlines various scenarios for disclosing both draft and final screenings, assessments and management plans.

TABLE 9. SES/SESP DISCLOSURE GUIDANCE

WHAT to Disclose		WHEN to Disclose	HOW to Disclose
<u>Draft</u> Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During project design stage stakeholder consultations, gathering input to SESP If assessment takes place during project design, then the SESP can also be shared and consulted as part of scoping process for assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appended to Project Concept Note and/or draft Project Document and distributed to project stakeholders
<u>Final</u> Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post PAC, when Project Document disclosed (SESP included as an Annex) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As an Annex to the Project Document, the SESP will be disclosed on open.undp.org once it is uploaded in the Corporate Planning System.
<u>Draft</u> social and environmental assessments, including any draft management plans			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate Risk Project with <u>no</u> stand alone assessment 	When no separate assessment is needed, ³⁷ a summary of the analysis contained in the SESP and ProDoc, together with the documents and proposed management measures, should be shared with project-affected stakeholders, and revised per relevant stakeholder feedback prior to finalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 30 days prior to PAC Part of stakeholder consultations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary should be translated in local language and distributed locally Disclose draft ProDoc Posted on UNDP unit (e.g. CO) website³⁸

³⁷ “In cases where potential adverse impacts are limited in number, well understood, clearly circumscribed, and can be easily avoided or mitigated (where avoidance is not possible), the assessment may consist of the analysis of social and environmental risks and impacts conducted as part of the SESP and incorporated in the Project Document (with management measures/plans incorporated into budget, risk log, and monitoring framework).” UNDP Draft Guidance Note on Social and Environmental Assessment, sec. 4.3.

³⁸ This is now standard practice for UNDP projects that seek support from the Global Environment Facility (GCF). To address the GCF requirements, UNDP discloses the ESMP for Moderate Risk projects at least 30 days before GCF Board consideration on the relevant UNDP country website in both English and the local language(s). UNDP completes the GCF “Environmental and Social report(s) disclosure” template with the relevant weblinks to the posted documents and submits the template together with the GCF proposal.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderate Risk Project with stand-alone assessment and management plan 	<p>Drafts of any stand-alone targeted assessments and management plans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 30 days prior to PAC if assessment conducted as part of project preparation If undertaken as part of project, must be disclosed and consulted on at least 30 days <u>prior</u> to implementation of any activities that may cause adverse social and environmental impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a minimum, ensure that a summary report of the draft assessment and management plan is translated into local languages and made available in an accessible location together with the draft assessment and management plan Disclose draft ProDoc Posted on UNDP unit (e.g. CO) website
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Risk Project 	<p>Disclose draft ESIA or SESAs including any draft management plans. ESIAs and SESAs also require that a summary report be prepared in order to provide an adequate, accurate and impartial evaluation and presentation of the issues and conclusions of the technical assessment. This report must be presented in an understandable format and in an appropriate language(s), including a non-technical summation that can be understood by many stakeholders in order to facilitate and encourage comments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 120 days prior to PAC if assessment conducted as part of project preparation If undertaken as part of project, must be disclosed and consulted on at least 120 days prior to implementation of any activities that may cause adverse social and environmental impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a minimum, ensure that a summary report of the draft assessment and management plan is translated into local languages and made available in an accessible location together with the draft assessment and management plan Disclose draft ProDoc Posted on UNDP unit (e.g. CO) website
<p><u>Final</u> social and environmental assessments and associated management plans</p>	<p>Stand-alone targeted assessments for Moderate Risk projects and ESIAs/SESAs for High Risk Projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upon receipt. Needs to be prior to the PAC if assessment conducted as part of project preparation, or if undertaken as part of project, before implementation of any activities that may cause adverse social and environmental impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At a minimum, ensure that a summary report of the final assessment and management plan is translated into local languages and made available in an accessible location together with the final assessment and management plan Posted on UNDP unit (e.g. CO) website

Annex 4. Supplemental Guidance: Grievance Redress Mechanisms

1. What is a Grievance Redress Mechanism and what is its purpose?

Definition: For purposes of this guidance note, GRMs are defined as organizational systems and resources established by national government agencies (or, as appropriate, by regional or municipal agencies) to receive and address concerns about the impact of their policies, programs and operations on external stakeholders. The stakeholder input handled through these systems and procedures may be called “grievances,” “complaints,” “feedback,” or another functionally equivalent term.

GRMs are intended to be accessible, collaborative, expeditious, and effective in resolving concerns through dialogue, joint fact-finding, negotiation, and problem solving.³⁹ They are generally designed to be the “first line” of response to stakeholder concerns that have not been prevented by proactive stakeholder engagement. GRMs are intended to complement, not replace, formal legal channels for managing grievances (e.g. the court system, organizational audit mechanisms, etc.). Stakeholders always have the option to use other, more formal alternatives, including legal remedies. It is important to emphasize that national GRMs are **not** intended to replace the judiciary or other forms of legal recourse. The existence of a GRM should not prevent citizens or communities from pursuing their rights and interests in any other national or local forum, and citizens should not be required to use GRMs before seeking redress through the courts, administrative law procedures, or other formal dispute resolution mechanisms.

Purpose: GRMs act as recourse for situations in which, despite proactive stakeholder engagement, some stakeholders have a concern about a project or program’s potential impacts on them. Not all complaints should be handled through a GRM. For example, grievances that allege corruption, coercion, or major and systematic violations of rights and/or policies, are normally referred to organizational accountability mechanisms or administrative or judicial bodies for formal investigation, rather than to GRMs, which are designed for collaborative problem solving. For all UNDP-supported projects, it is important to inform project stakeholders of the existence of the UNDP Accountability Mechanism, including the Stakeholder Response Mechanism (SRM) and the Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU), its purpose, and of the procedure they should follow to raise complaints with SRM and/or SECU if they are not satisfied with the GRM’s response.

2. What principles should guide the design of a GRM?

Several guiding principles should drive the design of GRMs. GRMs designed according to these principles are more likely to provide effective resolution of stakeholder grievances.⁴⁰

³⁹ GRMs may also offer adjudication or arbitration (meaning a judgment rendered by a neutral party to resolve a dispute). In GRMs, adjudication/arbitration is an option that the participating stakeholders may choose, rather than a process to which they must submit.

⁴⁰ UN Human Rights Council, 2011. Report of the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, John Ruggie: Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework. A/HRC/17/31, 21 March. Though developed initially as a guide for businesses with potential operational impacts on the rights of affected communities and other stakeholders, these Guiding Principles, and particularly the guidance on grievance mechanisms as a key component of remedy, are rapidly gaining global support among multilateral agencies as a basis for developing and refining their organizational grievance mechanisms. Likewise, though the Principles are

a. Legitimate: enabling trust from the stakeholder groups for whose use they are intended, and being accountable for the fair conduct of grievance processes. Accountability for ensuring that the parties to a grievance process cannot interfere with its fair conduct is typically one important factor in building stakeholder trust.

b. Accessible: being known to all stakeholder groups for whose use they are intended, and providing adequate assistance for those who may face particular barriers to access. Barriers to access may include a lack of awareness of the mechanism, language, literacy, costs, physical location and fears of reprisal.

c. Predictable: providing a clear and known procedure with an indicative timeframe for each stage, and clarity on the types of process and outcome available and means of monitoring implementation. In order for a mechanism to be trusted and used, it should provide public information about the procedure it offers.

d. Equitable: seeking to ensure that aggrieved parties have reasonable access to sources of information, advice and expertise necessary to engage in a grievance process on fair, informed and respectful terms. Where imbalances are not redressed, perceived inequity can undermine both the perception of a fair process and the GRM's ability to arrive at durable solutions.

e. Transparent: keeping parties to a grievance informed about its progress, and providing sufficient information about the mechanism's performance to build confidence in its effectiveness and meet any public interest at stake. Providing transparency about the mechanism's performance to wider stakeholders, through statistics, case studies or more detailed information about the handling of certain cases, can be important to demonstrate its legitimacy and retain broad trust. At the same time, confidentiality of the dialogue between parties and of individuals' identities should be provided where necessary.

f. Rights compatible: these processes are generally more successful when all parties agree that outcomes are consistent with applicable national and internationally recognized rights. Grievances are frequently not framed in terms of rights and many do not initially raise human rights or other rights concerns. Regardless, where outcomes have implications for rights, care should be taken that they are consistent with applicable nationally and internationally recognized standards and that they do not restrict access to other redress mechanisms.

g. Enabling continuous learning: drawing on relevant measures to identify lessons for improving the mechanism and preventing future grievances and harms. Regular analysis of the frequency, patterns, and causes of grievances; strategies and processes used for grievance resolution; and the effectiveness of those strategies and processes, can enable the institution administering the GRM to improve policies, procedures, and practices to improve performance and prevent future harm.

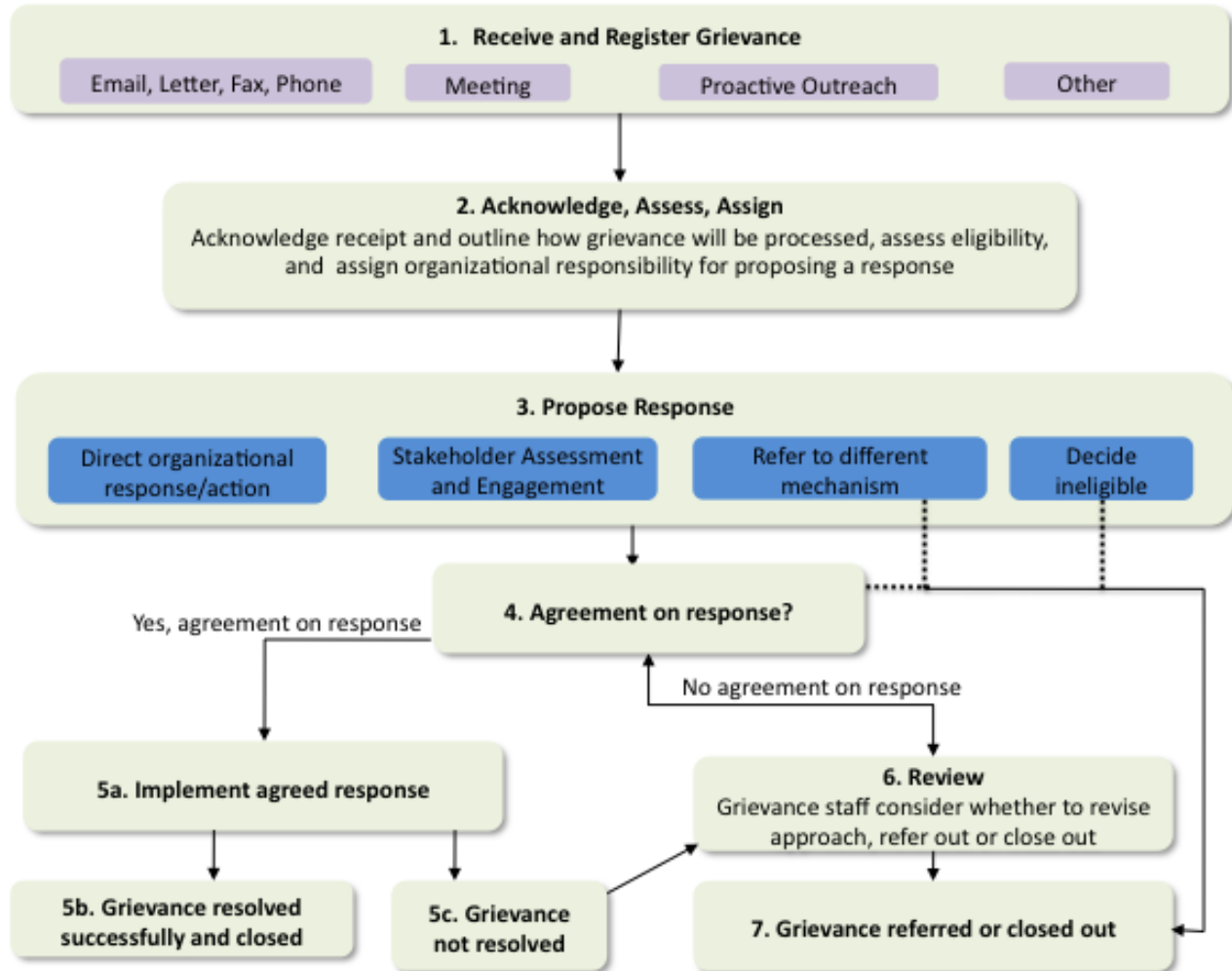
h. Based on engagement and dialogue: consulting the stakeholder groups for whose use they are intended on their design and performance, and focusing on dialogue as the means to address and resolve grievances. For an operational-level grievance mechanism, engaging regularly with affected stakeholder groups on the GRM's design and performance can help to ensure that it meets their needs, that they will use it in practice, and that there is a shared interest in ensuring its success.

3. What does a GRM typically look like?

not officially addressed to government agencies or NGOs, they provide a strong foundation for Governments in reviewing, developing and refining their GRMs.

The diagram below shows typical steps in a grievance resolution mechanism, which can be tailored to the particular institutional context, capacities, and concerns of a project and their stakeholders.

Following is some guidance on these steps.



1. Receive and register grievance

GRMs should enable aggrieved stakeholders (“complainants”) to communicate their grievances through a variety of channels (e.g. phone, letter, email, website, meeting, etc.).

As noted above, the purpose of the GRM is to provide an accessible, rapid, and effective response to concerned stakeholders, especially to vulnerable groups who often lack access to the formal legal system. It is important to ensure that potentially affected stakeholders understand what the GRM is for, the different options that they have for communicating their grievances, and where they get help and advice about whether and how to communicate a grievance. Appropriate oral and written communication in local languages through the media and in higher-risk communities is essential, as is proactive, ongoing outreach and trust-building with the full range of potentially affected stakeholder groups, especially vulnerable groups.

Once outreach and engagement have begun, designated staff at the site or local level should be empowered to receive grievances and take initial steps in responding to them. It is also essential to establish a centralized database supported by a central office/staff, and to require that all grievances received be logged into that database using a common protocol and means of recording grievances received. Centralized logging and tracking is important both for accountability and for enabling continuous learning. GRMs should make information about each complaint available to the public, including date received, whether determined eligible, the main concern(s) raised in the complaint (general categories such as “noise impact” or “compensation” can be used, with any additional detail to be determined case by case), status of response, and ultimate resolution. If complainants request confidentiality with regard to their identities, and/or the details of complaints and responses, GRMs should honor those requests, while still making basic information about the complaint publicly available.

While recognizing that many complaints may be resolved ‘on the spot’ and informally by relevant authorities, there are still opportunities to encourage these informal resolutions to be logged into a GRM database to (i) encourage responsiveness; and (ii) ensure that repeated or low-level grievances are being noted in the system.

2. Acknowledge, Assess, Assign

Acknowledging receipt: The staff who have received the grievance, or a central grievance office, should provide a timely communication back to the complainant(s) that their grievance has been received, will be logged and reviewed for eligibility, and if eligible, will generate an initial organizational response. Normally, initial acknowledgement should come within 3-5 days of receipt, and can be in the form of a standard letter or email, with a clearly identified point of contact in the implementing organization/agency (hereafter referred to as organization), a brief description of the process that will be followed, and a reference name or number for the complaint. Where those receiving the complaints for the organization are themselves authorized to log the complaint, they can immediately acknowledge receipt and logging of the complaint, and inform the complainant of the procedure for assessing eligibility and generating an initial response.

Assessing eligibility for the GRM: This should be a procedural step to ensure that the issue being raised is relevant to project. It is often better to ensure a relatively low barrier to entry with quick turn-around rather than to prevent users having their issues considered. A decision on eligibility is only meant to trigger an initial assessment and response. It is not an admission that the organization has caused an impact, or a commitment to provide the complainant with any specific form of redress. The staff responsible for the initial response need to follow clear guidelines on what kinds of issues are eligible to be handled through the GRM, what issues should be referred to other mechanisms (such as internal audit departments, internal and external anti-corruption offices, police, etc.), and what issues or contexts may require further clarification in order to determine eligibility.

Those assessing eligibility also need to decide whether the complaint should be directed to a different office within the organization, or to a different organization altogether. For example, complaints alleging economic impact as a result of corrupt procurement procedures may need to be referred immediately to the organization’s own internal audit department, and/or to an external anti-corruption office.

Eligibility is often determined on the basis of four broad criteria:

- a. Does the complaint indicate that the program has caused a negative economic, social, or environmental impact on the complainant, or has the potential to cause such an impact?
- b. Does the complaint specify what kind of impact has occurred or may occur, and how the program has caused or may cause that impact?

- c. Does the complaint indicate that those filing the complaint are the ones who have been impacted, or are at risk of being impacted; or that those filing the complaint are representing the impacted or potentially impacted stakeholders at their request?⁴¹
- d. Does the complaint provide enough information for GRM staff to make a determination on the first three questions?

Assigning responsibility: Complaints should be referred to the most appropriate institution or individual. When multiple partners are implementing project activities, clarity on roles and responsibilities for GRM implementation and response to particular complaints is essential. The referral process will likely depend on the type of issue raised and whether it is low or high risk. A simple categorization of complaints – i.e. type of issue raised and the effect on the environment/claimant if the impacts raised in the complaint were to occur – may support faster referral to the appropriate party. The process of assigning cases is generally more successful when it is done in a way that is transparent for complainants. Ideally, the GRM would include criteria to refer cases to certain agencies or implementing partners so that GRM managers and stakeholders have a better understanding of the process and referrals are made consistently for similar cases and not seen as arbitrary.

3. Develop a proposed response

GRMs typically generate three primary types of response to complaints:

- Direct action to resolve the complaint
- Further assessment and engagement with the complainant and other stakeholders to determine jointly the best way to resolve the complaint
- Determination that the complaint is not eligible for the GRM, either because it does not meet the basic eligibility criteria, or because another mechanism (within the organization or outside it) is the appropriate place for the complaint to go, or both.

The person/team responsible for crafting a response needs to determine whether the grievance can be addressed directly through a relatively simple action agreed with the complainant; or whether the grievance is complex enough that it requires additional assessment and engagement with the complainant and other stakeholders to determine how best to respond.

Many complaints can be resolved through direct and relatively straightforward action on the part of the organization or program: e.g. investigating alleged damage caused by a vehicle; changing the time and location of a consultation; making public information more accessible in a community.

In other cases, further assessment involving multiple stakeholders and issues, and potentially an extended process of joint fact-finding, dialogue and/or negotiation, will be necessary to resolve the complaint. In these cases, the GRM should propose a *stakeholder assessment and engagement process* to respond to the complaint (see steps 4 and 5 below).

4. Communicate proposed response to complainant and seek agreement on the response

⁴¹ In practice, there is a range of views on the question of representation of affected stakeholders in filing complaints. UNDP-supported GRMs should allow complaints to be filed by representatives, as long as those acting as representatives can provide credible documentation that those whom they represent have given their consent to be represented by the individual or group acting on their behalf.

The GRM is responsible for communicating the proposed response back to the complainant in a timely fashion, in writing (and orally as well if that is a more effective means of communication) using language that is easily accessible to the complainant. Responders may also contact the complainant by telephone or set up a meeting to review and discuss the initial approach with the complainant. The response should include a clear explanation of why the response is being proposed; what the response would be; and what the complainant's choices are, given the proposed response. Those choices may include agreement to proceed, request for a review of an eligibility decision or a referral decision, further dialogue on a proposed action, or participation in a proposed assessment and engagement process or pursuit of the complaint through other channels. To ensure that the GRM functions in a completely open and non-coercive manner, the response should note any other organizational, judicial or non-judicial but official government avenues for redress that the complainant may wish to consider, with or without a direct referral from the GRM.

Though practice varies, communication of the proposed response should normally occur within 14-21 days from receipt of a complaint. In the case of complaints alleging serious harm or risk of harm, and/or serious rights violations, the GRM's standard operating procedures should call for a fast-track response, whether by the GRM or by immediate referral to another office or organization and immediate notification to the complainant of that referral.

The complainant may or may not agree with the proposed response. If there is agreement, then the organization can proceed with the proposed response, whether direct action, further assessment, or referral. If the complainant challenges a finding of ineligibility, rejects a proposed direct action, or does not want to participate in a more extensive process of stakeholder assessment and engagement, the GRM staff need to clarify the reasons why the complainant does not accept the proposed response, provide additional information, and, where possible, revise the proposed approach. In general, GRM staff should meet with complainants who are not satisfied by the initial eligibility determination and/or by the proposed response, rather than use correspondence to attempt to resolve issues.

If there is still not agreement, GRM staff need to make sure the complainant understands what other recourse may be available, whether through the judicial system or other administrative channels, and to document the outcome of the discussions with the complainant in a way that makes clear what options were offered and why the complainant chose not to pursue them. The GRM staff should also make it clear that even if the complainant rejects the proposed response, the GRM remains available to the complainant if the complainant wishes to revisit the response, or to raise a different concern in the future.

For sensitive and challenging cases, the GRM may seek agreement to use independent assessments, mediation or adjudication to seek appropriate resolution of the case. If mediation is used, it may be appropriate to safeguard the integrity of the process by incorporating, for example, requirements for technical expertise, pre-approved rosters or sources of qualified mediators to be selected by agreement of the parties, or observers of the mediation process such as senior representatives of key stakeholder groups (e.g. government, international partners, communities, NGOs, and/or businesses involved). In the case of adjudication, in addition to rigorous and unbiased selection of adjudicators, other mechanisms to ensure impartiality and strategic oversight of the process can also be put in place, such as a review board to whom a party could appeal in case of bias.

5. Implement the response to resolve the grievance

When there is agreement between a complainant and the GRM staff to move forward with the proposed action or stakeholder process, then the response should be implemented.

In cases where the initial response is to initiate broader stakeholder assessment and engagement, the assessment process may be conducted by GRM staff themselves, or by consultants or others perceived as

impartial and effective by the organization, the complainant, and other stakeholders. The main purpose of the assessment and engagement process is to clarify:

- The issues and events that have led to the complaint
- The stakeholders involved in those issues and events
- The stakeholders' views, interests, and concerns on the relevant issues
- Whether key stakeholders are willing and able to engage in a joint, collaborative process (which may include joint fact finding, dialogue and/or negotiation) to resolve the issues
- How the stakeholders will be represented, and what their decision making authority will be
- What work plan and time frame the stakeholders could use to work through the issues
- What resources they will need, and who will contribute them

In some cases, the stakeholder assessment will produce clarity and agreement among the key stakeholders on a collaborative approach to resolving the issues raised in the complaint. In others, the assessment may determine that one or more key stakeholders are unable or unwilling to participate. Whether or not a collaborative process appears viable, the GRM staff needs to communicate the assessment findings to the complainant and other stakeholders, with a recommendation on whether and how to proceed.

If a collaborative approach is possible, then GRM staff is usually responsible for overseeing it.⁴² GRM staff may directly facilitate the stakeholders' work on the issues, contract with a consultant facilitator, or use traditional and local consultation and dispute resolution procedures and leaders/facilitators.

If the engagement process produces agreement on actions to resolve the complaint, then the GRM staff is responsible for overseeing implementation of those actions. In a multi-stakeholder context, several actors may be involved in the solution. It is important for GRM staff and the stakeholders to monitor implementation jointly, and to "come back to the table" when needed to deal with challenges during implementation.

6. Review the response if unsuccessful

As noted above, in some cases it may not be possible to reach agreement with the complainant on the proposed response. In a multi-stakeholder dispute, an assessment process may lead to the conclusion that a collaborative approach is not feasible. When a collaborative approach is used, good faith efforts may not succeed in resolving key issues. In any of these situations, the GRM staff should review the situation with the complainant, and see whether any modification of the response might meet the concerns of the complainant, the organization, and other stakeholders (see step 4 above). If not, the GRM staff should inform the complainant about other alternatives that may be available, including the use of judicial or other administrative mechanisms for recourse. Whatever alternative the complainant chooses, is important for GRM staff to document their discussion with the complainant and the complainant's informed choice among alternatives.

7. Close out or refer the grievance

⁴² As noted above, for highly complex and sensitive cases, senior stakeholder representatives may oversee an independent mediation process.

The final step is to close out the grievance. If the response has been successful, the GRM staff should document the satisfactory resolution, in consultation with the complainant. In cases where there have been major risks, impacts and/or negative publicity, it may be appropriate to include written documentation from the complainant indicating satisfaction with the response. In others, it will be sufficient for the GRM staff to note the action taken, confirm that the response was satisfactory to the complainant and the organization, and document those facts. In more complex and unusual grievance situations, it may be useful to document key lessons learned as well.

If the grievance has not been resolved, GRM staff should document steps taken, communication with the complainant (and other stakeholders if there has been substantial effort to initiate or complete a multi-stakeholder process), and the decisions made by the organization and the complainant about referral or recourse to other alternatives, including legal alternatives.

In general, GRM documentation on particular cases should maintain confidentiality about details, while making public aggregate statistics on the number and type of complaints received, actions taken and outcomes reached. It may be appropriate in some cases to make basic information about the identity of complainants publicly available, with the consent of the complainant.

Accurate case documentation using an electronic database is essential for public accountability, organizational learning, and resource planning.

5. Assessing and strengthening national partners' GRMs

Following is a brief summary of key steps that national and international partners can take to assess and strengthen GRMs.

1. Review and analyze the historical and current context for potential project-related grievances, and characterize current grievance patterns and trends

The first step is to understand the historical and current context for grievances in the project sector. This contextual understanding provides the basis for:

- forecasting the kinds of issues that are likely to be at the heart of project-related grievances.
- mapping the key *stakeholders* for each of these issues; their current interests and perceptions of the issues; and the history and current state of their interaction on the issues (e.g. constructive, polarized, absent, etc.). Attention should be paid to the local dispute resolution culture and, particularly, to the capacity and track record of stakeholders to settle disputes through constructive dialogue, negotiation, and problem solving.
- identifying current systems and capacities available to address grievances, as a basis for more detailed assessment of existing GRMs and other institutional capacities that national partners are most likely to need to respond to those grievances.

When there is one or more existing agencies with a track record of receiving grievances and seeking to resolve them, then it should also be possible to review patterns of grievances: their frequency, profile of complainants, types of issues raised, responses used, their effectiveness and efficiency, and perceptions of their legitimacy and fairness. It is also important to identify and characterize grievances that could in principle be handled through the agency's GRM, but in practice are being resolved using other formal (e.g. courts, administrative appeals) or informal (e.g. personal appeals to local leaders) recourse mechanisms. This baseline information should inform further assessment of the GRM's performance, and the main factors affecting performance.

2. Assessing strengths and gaps

It is seldom the case that there are no relevant GRMs in place, no matter how weak they may be. The review should cover the availability, credibility, capabilities of **local and national institutions** to address the issues that are at the heart of project-related grievances. For each of the institutions that are expected to deal with these issues, there will be a credibility assessment.

Transparency, accessibility and predictability can be assessed by surveying actual and potential users to assess their level of awareness and understanding of the GRM; their perceived and experienced ease or difficulty of gaining access to it; and the extent to which procedural guidelines on key steps, time frames, documentation, and other standard elements are actually followed in practice. Transparency should also be assessed in terms of the public availability and accessibility of documentation of the GRM's mandate, procedures, and case experience (using aggregated statistics and qualitative descriptions).

Legitimacy, equity, and rights compatibility can be assessed through a combination of institutional assessment (e.g. clarifying the level of independence of the GRM staff from agency line managers who may be directly involved in grievances), and stakeholder surveys and interviews, to clarify the range of stakeholder views of the GRM's independence, credibility as a vehicle for grievance resolution, fairness of process and outcomes, and consistency of outcomes with applicable nationally and internationally recognized standards. Review of documentation on a sample of cases, and direct observation of several cases, can also inform the assessment of independence, equitable treatment of stakeholders, and respect for rights.

Stakeholder engagement and dialogue can be assessed at two levels: design and oversight of the GRM; and processes used for grievance resolution. Assessment of stakeholder engagement in design and oversight should consider whether multi-stakeholder consultation mechanisms, processes and/or advisory bodies are established, and look at the evidence on whether and how their advice has influenced decision making about the GRM's goals, principles or actual operations. The use of voluntary, dialogue-based processes for individual complaints is best assessed through a combination of case record review, interviews with past and current participants in cases that the GRM seeks to resolve, and direct observation of a set of cases.

Continuous learning by the organization(s) operating the GRM can be assessed by reviewing the history of decisions on its design and operation, seeking evidence that data and analysis about the actual operation of the GRM influenced decision making. Evidence can also be gathered about the extent to which there is ongoing management review of data and records, and the extent to which that review influences current production of new guidance and assessments. Interviews with current and former GRM leadership to explore how they learned from operational experience and how that learning led to changes over time in GRM's goals and/or operations can also inform the assessment of organizational learning capacity.

Based on the contextual assessment, and the assessment of current GRM strengths and gaps, national and international partners should be able to categorize a) primary issues with medium/high grievance risks; and b) national and sub-national institutional capacity to address those risks. Where capacity and credibility of national institutions are low and the stakes are high, the risk of grievances going unaddressed will be significant. A risk analysis table like the simplified, illustrative one below can be a helpful tool.

		How High is Institutional Capacity?			
		Local Community Boards or Councils	National Courts	National Human Rights Commission	National Ombudsman
How high are risks?	Property/Tenure disputes	High risk/ medium capacity	High risk / Low capacity	High risk/ High capacity	
	Benefit Sharing	Etc.			
	Participation in Decision-making				

Finally, where a new GRM must be set up, this type of risk/capacity mapping should drive the process of defining the GRM's goals, institutional form, structure, and performance measures. The process of establishing a new GRM should involve government and international partner representatives, representatives of potential GRM users, and representatives of any civil society, business, or other groups with a stake in the GRM's design and operation.

3. Develop a joint plan for building on strengths and closing gaps

Building directly on the strength and gap assessment, national and international partners should create a plan to improve the performance of the GRM. The planning process should strive to produce agreement on the changes in agency policies, programs/projects, and activities, and in the design, operation and resourcing of the GRM, that would most substantially contribute to a reduction in grievances and in more effective resolution of grievances when they occur. The plan may include

- policy, regulatory, procedural, and leadership changes to reduce the risk of grievances and address perceived limitations in the GRM's legitimacy, equity and/or rights-compatibility;
- changes in GRM procedures, reporting lines and accountability mechanisms, allocation of additional resources, and/or reallocation of existing resources to address limitations on access, transparency, and predictability;
- staff development to build skills in grievance resolution, institutionalize knowledge capture and transfer, and promote continuous learning;
- changes in structures, procedures, and practices for stakeholder engagement and oversight, to promote ongoing dialogue and joint commitment to grievance prevention and resolution among agency managers, representatives of GRM users, and other relevant external stakeholders;
- other strategies and actions necessary to reduce the risk of grievances and improve GRM performance.

4. Implement the plan with joint organizational and external stakeholder participation and monitoring, and refine based on lessons learned.

As grievances come in and are addressed, the national government agency or office hosting the GRM should gather data and discuss progress with users and external stakeholders as part of a commitment to joint learning and continuous improvement. Lessons learned and patterns identified should result in ongoing refinement of agency/office procedures, leadership, knowledge management, accountability mechanisms, budgets and/or human resources devoted to the GRM.

GRM Supplemental Guidance, Attachment 1: GRM Evaluation Tool

Note to User: This is a checklist of questions that can be used to help evaluate an existing grievance redress mechanism. The questions should be used to guide a discussion with the goal of identifying areas that are working well and areas that need improvement.

Questions to Consider		
Design Stage		
What environmental and/or social impacts, risks or concerns led you to include a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) in your project? Where/how did you locate the GRM? How did you determine it would be effective? Was the GRM designed with participation from the communities it is intended to serve?		
Implementation Stage		
1. Organizational Commitment	Do the project's management and staff recognize and value the GRM process as a means of improving public administration and enhancing accountability and transparency? Is grievance redress integrated into the project's core activities? Is grievance redress integrated into staff job descriptions and responsibilities? Is it appropriately resourced and monitored?	
2. Principles:		
2.1 Legitimacy	Does the GRM operate independently of interested parties? Is the GRM widely-perceived as independent?	
2.2 Accessibility	Is the GRM accessible to all stakeholders, irrespective of their remoteness, language, education or income level? Are procedures to file grievances and seek action easily understood by project beneficiaries? Can grievances be filed anonymously? Are there a range of contact options? Is the GRM appropriately advertised and communicated to project-affected people?	
2.3 Predictability	Is the GRM responsive to the needs of all complainants? Does the GRM offer a clear procedure with time frames for each stage and clarity on the types of results it can (and cannot) deliver?	
2.4 Fairness	Are grievances treated confidentially, assessed impartially, and handled transparently?	
2.5 Rights Compatibility	Are the GRM's outcomes consistent with applicable national and international standards? Does it restrict access to other redress mechanisms?	
2.6 Transparency	Are the GRM's procedures and outcomes transparent enough to meet the public interest concerns at stake?	

2.7 Capability	Do GRM officials have the necessary technical, human and financial resources, means and powers to investigate grievances?	
3. Staff	Are there dedicated and trained staff available to handle the GRM? Are they given learning opportunities and do they receive any systematic reviews of their performance?	
4. Processes:		
4.1 Uptake	Do multiple uptake channels exist?	
4.2 Sorting and processing	Is there a system to categorize, assign priority, and route grievances to the appropriate entity?	
4.3 Acknowledgement and follow-up	Are complaints acknowledged in writing? Does the acknowledgement outline the GRM process, provide contact details and indicate how long it is likely to take to resolve the grievance? Are there clear timetables that are publicly available?	
4.4 Verification, investigation and action	Is the merit of each grievance judged objectively against clearly defined standards? Are investigators neutral or do they have a stake in the outcome? Is action taken on every grievance?	
4.4 Monitoring and Evaluation	Is there a process to track grievances and assess progress being made to resolve grievances? Are there indicators to measure grievance monitoring and resolution? If there is data being collected, is this data used to make policy and/or process changes to minimize similar grievances in the future?	
4.6 Feedback	Does a user survey exist to get feedback on the credibility of the process? Is such feedback publicly available? Is there right to appeal? If yes, are GRM users informed about this right?	
4.6. Analysis	Is there a process to analyze the effectiveness of the GRM? Is there a timeframe?	

GRM Supplemental Guidance, Attachment 2: Assessing and Strengthening National GRMs: Key Steps, Stakeholders,

Questions and Information Sources

GRM capacity development step	Primary stakeholders to engage	Key questions	Sources of information; other resources needed
Review and analyze GRM context; characterize current grievance patterns and trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency leaders GRM staff GRM users (actual and potential) External experts (academics, journalists, consultants etc.) Other external stakeholders affected by the agency's programs and operations (e.g. public interest groups, community associations, related government agencies, business associations) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History of grievances directed at the agency? Evolution of agency responses? Stakeholder perceptions of the agency's responses? Recent/current grievances: number, frequency, type, responses, outcomes; trends? Agency policies, programs and actions associated with grievances? Organizational, political, social and economic factors driving grievances and responses? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grievance-related legislation, policy, regulations, procedures Agency historical records Academic analyses, news articles, consultant and NGO studies Agency case records/database Stakeholder interviews Review of agency policies, programs and actions associated with grievances
Review or define GRM goals and principles; identify potentially conflicting agency policies, procedures and actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All of the above Legislators and senior government officials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRM goals and operating principles? Legal and policy basis? Alignment with national and international good practices? Tensions with agency policies, programs and actions that trigger grievances? Opportunities to clarify and/or align GRM and other agency goals with good practice? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GRM enabling legislation, policy, regulations, procedures National law, policy and practice governing other GRMs UNDP guidance and references to international good practice standards Stakeholder interviews and joint workshops
Assess current processes for grievance resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency leaders GRM staff GRM users External experts Other external stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How closely do current practices conform to law, policy and regulations? How well do current practices meet key performance criteria: transparency, accessibility, predictability, legitimacy, equity, rights compatibility, stakeholder dialogue, continuous learning? other national and international guiding goals/principles? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review of agency and external evaluations user surveys site visits review of random sample of case files direct observation stakeholder interviews
Identify current institutional strengths and capacity gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agency leaders GRM staff GRM users External experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key drivers of current performance? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> agency policies and procedures, leadership, accountability, resources, knowledge management GRM user awareness, empowerment, resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative and quantitative analysis of information on current practices Stakeholder interviews and workshops

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Other external factors (e.g. legislation, political, economic and social context) 	
Develop a joint plan for building on strengths and closing gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency leaders • GRM staff • GRM users • External experts • Other external stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What changes within the agency (including changes to policies, procedures and actions that trigger grievances), and/or among current and potential GRM users, will have the most positive impact on performance? • Who needs to decide, support, implement and monitor these changes? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative planning process with stakeholders • National and international benchmarking and experience sharing • Pilot testing
Implement the plan with joint organizational and external stakeholder participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above • Legislators and/or senior government leaders as appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What actions will agency and external actors take to make the changes needed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency/government authorization and leadership • Implementation plan • Budget and non-budget resources (e.g. qualified staff; NGOs specializing in community outreach)
Jointly monitor, evaluate and learn from implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is implementation of changes affecting performance? • What other factors are affecting performance? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case tracking and review • User and GRM staff surveys
Refine the GRM based on joint learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can the GRM be further improved based on learning from monitoring and evaluation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative stakeholder planning • Agency/government authorization and leadership • Implementation plan • Budget and non-budget resources

GRM Supplemental Guidance, Attachment 3: Sample Terms of Reference: Project-level Grievance Redress Mechanism

I. Mandate

The mandate of the GRM will be to:

- (i) receive and address any concerns, complaints, notices of emerging conflicts, or grievances (collectively “*Grievance*”) alleging actual or potential harm to affected person(s) (the “*Claimant(s)*”) arising from Project;
- (ii) assist in resolution of Grievances between and among Project Stakeholders; as well as the various government ministries, agencies and commissions, CSOs and NGOs, and others (collectively, the “*Stakeholders*”) in the context of the Project;
- (iii) Conduct itself at all times in a flexible, collaborative, and transparent manner aimed at problem solving and consensus building.

II. Functions

The functions of the GRM will be to:

- (i) Receive, Log and Track all Grievances received;
- (ii) Provide regular status updates on Grievances to Claimants, Project Board (PB) members and other relevant Stakeholders, as applicable;
- (iii) Engage the PB members, Government institutions and other relevant Stakeholders in Grievance resolution;
- (iv) Process and propose solutions and ways forward related to specific Grievances *within a period not to exceed sixty (60) days* from receipt of the Grievance;
- (v) Identify growing trends in Grievances and recommend possible measures to avoid the same;
- (vi) Receive and service requests for, and suggest the use of, mediation or facilitation;
- (vii) Elaborate bi-annual reports, make said reports available to the public, and more generally work to maximize the disclosure of its work (including its reports, findings and outcomes);
- (viii) Ensure increased awareness, accessibility, predictability, transparency, legitimacy, and credibility of the GRM process;
- (ix) Collaborate with Partner Institutions and other NGOs, CSOs and other entities to conduct outreach initiatives to increase awareness among Stakeholders as to the existence of the GRM and how its services can be accessed;
- (x) Ensure continuing education of PB members and their respective institutions about the relevant laws and policies that they will need to be aware of to participate in the development of effective resolutions to Grievances likely to come before the GRM;
- (xi) Monitor follow up to Grievance resolutions, as appropriate.

III. Composition

The GRM will be composed of:

[Name of Implementing Partner] as the Secretariat and either:

- (a) A standing GRM Sub-Committee [made up of x, y, z PB members]

and/or

- (b) Ad hoc GRM Task Teams in response to specific requests for grievance

The GRM Sub-Committee will be balanced in composition (government and non-government) and should not include any PB members with a direct interest or role in the grievance/dispute.

IV. [Name of Implementing Partner]

In its role as GRM Secretariat, [Name of Implementing Partner] will perform the following core functions:

- Publicize the existence of the GRM and the procedure for using it;
- Receive and log requests for dispute resolution;
- Acknowledge receipt to the requestor;
- Determine eligibility;
- Forward eligible requests to the PB for review and action, and
- Track and document efforts at grievance/dispute resolution and their outcomes.

V. Project Board/GRM Sub-Committee/GRM Task Team

The Project Board/GRM Sub-Committee and/or GRM Task Team will perform the following core functions:

- Take direct action to resolve the grievance/dispute (e.g. bring the relevant parties together to discuss and resolve the issue themselves with oversight by the PB);
- Request further information to clarify the issue, and share that information with all relevant parties, or ensure that a government agency represented on the PB took an appropriate administrative action to deal with a complaint;
- Refer the grievance/dispute to independent mediation, while maintaining oversight; or
- Determine that the request was outside the scope and mandate of the PB and refer it elsewhere (e.g. Ministry of Justice and Police or to the courts).

VI. Communicating a Grievance

- (i) *Who can Submit a Grievance?*

A Grievance can be sent by any individual or group of individuals that believes it has been or will be harmed by the Project.

If a Grievance is to be lodged by a different individual or organization on behalf of those said to be affected, the Claimant must identify the individual and/or people on behalf of who the Grievance is submitted and provide written confirmation by the individual and/or people represented that they are giving the Claimant the authority to present the Grievance on their behalf. The GRM will take reasonable steps to verify this authority.

(ii) *How is the Grievance Communicated?*

The GRM shall maintain a flexible approach with respect to receiving Grievances in light of known local constraints with respect to communications and access to resources for some Stakeholders. A Grievance can be transmitted to the GRM by any means available (i.e. by email, letter, phone call, meeting, SMS, etc.). The contact information is the following:

[Implementing Partner to add address, phone number, fax, etc.]

To facilitate communications with and between the GRM and potential Claimants, the GRM will receive support from the PB members' institutions, local government and civil society organizations

(iii) *What information should be included in a Grievance?*

The Grievance should include the following information:

- (a) the name of the individual or individuals making the Complaint (the "Claimant");
- (b) a means for contacting the Claimant (email, phone, address, other);
- (c) if the submission is on behalf of those alleging a potential or actual harm, the identity of those on whose behalf the Grievance is made, and written confirmation by those represented of the Claimant's authority to lodge the Grievance on their behalf;
- (d) the description of the potential or actual harm;
- (e) Claimant's statement of the risk of harm or actual harm (description of the risk/harm and those affected, names of the individual(s) or institutions responsible for the risk/harm, the location(s) and date(s) of harmful activity);
- (f) what has been done by Claimant thus far to resolve the matter;
- (g) whether the Claimant wishes that their identity is kept confidential; and
- (h) the specific help requested from the GRM.

However, complainants are not required to provide all of the information listed above. Initially, the complainant need only provide enough information to determine eligibility. If insufficient information is provided, the GRM has an obligation to make a substantial, good faith effort to contact the complainant to request whatever additional information is needed to determine eligibility, and if eligible, to develop a proposed response.

VII. Logging, Acknowledgment, and Tracking

All Grievances and reports of conflict will be received, assigned a tracking number, acknowledged to Claimant, recorded electronically, and subject to periodic updates to the Claimant as well as the office file.

Within one (1) week from the receipt of a Grievance, the GRM will send a *written* acknowledgement to Claimant of the Grievance received with the assigned tracking number.⁴³

Each Grievance file will contain, at a minimum:

- i. the date of the request as received;
- ii. the date the written acknowledgment was sent (and oral acknowledgment if also done);

⁴³ Oral acknowledgments can be used for expediency (and also recorded), but must be followed by a written acknowledgment.

- iii. the dates and nature of all other communications or meetings with the Claimant and other relevant Stakeholders;
- iv. any requests, offers of, or engagements of a Mediator or Facilitator;
- v. the date and records related to the proposed solution/way forward;
- vi. the acceptance or objections of the Claimant (or other Stakeholders);
- vii. the proposed next steps if objections arose;
- viii. the alternative solution if renewed dialogues were pursued;
- ix. notes regarding implementation; and
- x. any conclusions and recommendations arising from monitoring and follow up.

IX. Maintaining Communication and Status Updates

Files for each Grievance will be available for review by the Claimant and other Stakeholders involved in the Grievance, or their designated representative(s). Appropriate steps will be taken to maintain the confidentiality of the Claimant if previously requested.

The GRM will provide periodic updates to the Claimant regarding the status and current actions to resolve the Grievance. Not including the acknowledgment of receipt of the Grievance, such updates will occur within reasonable intervals (not greater than every thirty (30) days).

X. Investigation and Consensus Building

Within one (1) week of receiving a Grievance, [Implementing Partner] will notify the **PB/GRM Sub-Committee (GRM SC)/GRM Task Team (GRM TT)** and any other relevant institutions of the receipt of the Grievance.

[IF THE PB, RATHER THAN A PRE-DESIGNATED GRM SC OR GRM TT IS THE PRIMARY BODY RECEIVING COMPLAINTS: The PB will identify a specific team of individuals drawn from the PB and/or their respective institutions to develop a response to the Grievance. The names of these individuals will be made available to the Claimant.]

The designated PB members/GRM SC/GRM TT will promptly engage the Claimant and any other relevant Stakeholders deemed appropriate, to gather all necessary information regarding the Grievance.

Through the PB members/GRM SC/GRM TT, the GRM will have the authority to request from relevant Government institutions any information (documents or otherwise) relevant to resolving the Grievance and avoiding future Grievances of the same nature.

As necessary, the PB members/GRM SC/GRM TT will convene one or more meetings with relevant individuals and institutions in [national capital], or elsewhere in [name of country] as needed.

The objective of all investigative activities is to develop a thorough understanding of the issues and concerns raised in the Grievance and facilitate consensus around a proposed solution and way forward.

The PB members/GRM SC/GRM TT will procure the cooperation of their respective staff with the investigation.

At any point during the investigation, the PB members/GRM SC/GRM TT may determine that an onsite field investigation is necessary to properly understand the Grievance and develop an effective proposed solution and way forward.

XI. Seeking Advisory Opinion and/or Technical Assistance

At any point after receiving a Grievance and through to implementation of the proposed solution and way forward, the PB members/GRM SC/GRM TT may seek the technical assistance and/or an advisory opinion from any entity or individual in [country] or internationally which may reasonably be believed to be of assistance.

XII. Making Proposed Actions and Solutions Public and Overseeing Implementation

The PB members/GRM SC/GRM TT will communicate to the Claimant one or more proposed actions or resolutions and clearly articulate the reasons and basis for proposed way forward.

If the Claimant does not accept the resolution, the PB members/GRM SC/GRM TT will engage with the Claimant to provide alternative options.

If the Claimant accepts the proposed solution and way forward, the GRM will continue to monitor the implementation directly and through the receipt of communications from the Claimant and other relevant parties. As necessary, the GRM may solicit information from the relevant parties and initiate renewed dialogue where appropriate.

In all communications with the Claimant and other stakeholders, the GRM will be guided by its problem-solving role, non-coercive principles and process, and the voluntary, good faith nature of the interaction with the Claimant and other stakeholders.

XII. Monitoring and Evaluation

Bi-annually, the GRM will make available to the public, a report describing the work of the GRM, listing the number and nature of the Grievances received and processed in the past six months, a date and description of the Grievances received, resolutions, referrals and ongoing efforts at resolution, and status of implementation of ongoing resolutions. The level of detail provided with regard to any individual Grievance will depend on the sensitivity of the issues and Stakeholder concerns about confidentiality, while providing appropriate transparency about the activities of the GRM. The report will also highlight key trends in emerging conflicts, Grievances, and dispute resolution, and make recommendations regarding:

- (i) measures that can be taken by the Government to avoid future harms and Grievances; and
- (ii) improvements to the GRM that would enhance its effectiveness, accessibility, predictability, transparency, legitimacy, credibility, and capacity.

XIII. Mediation

For the option of independent mediation, mediators on the roster/panel should have at least the following qualifications:

- professional experience and expertise in impartial mediation;
- knowledge of [project type and activities in the country] and the region, including an understanding of indigenous and tribal culture and practices;
- [national and local language, as appropriate] proficiency;
- availability in principle for assignments of up to 20 days; and
- willingness to declare all relationships and interests that may affect their ability to act as impartial mediators in particular cases.

If mediation succeeded in resolving the dispute or grievance, the outcome will be documented by [Implementing Partner] and reviewed by the Task Team. If it is unsuccessful, stakeholders will have the option to return to the PB members/GRM SC/GRM TT for assistance.

XIV. Without Prejudice

The existence and use of this GRM is without prejudice to any existing rights under any other complaint mechanisms that an individual or group of individuals may otherwise have access to under national or international law or the rules and regulations of other institutions, agencies or commissions.